



Freeborn  
Mower  
Electric  
Cooperative

People. Power. Possibilities.

# county lines

## NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2024 • VOLUME 85 • NO. 11



## WARM UP YOUR WALLET THIS WINTER AND SAVE

One of the many benefits of being a member of Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative is that we offer several different opportunities for our members to save money through our rebate and financing programs.

Maybe your heating, ventilation, or air conditioning (HVAC) equipment is outdated and not providing you the desired energy efficiency during the peak of winter or hot summer months? Let's face it. We know that replacing this type of equipment can come with a hefty price tag and we have some good news for members that wish to enhance their home by making it more energy efficient.

Members of our cooperative have the opportunity to apply for Beneficial Electrification Financing which is a low-interest loan (\$1,000-\$7,500) that can be borrowed over two to five years. This opportunity is available to help our members, and reduce the financial burden of paying for upgrades all at once. The monthly loan payment is simply added into your regular monthly electric utility bill.

This loan can be used for the purpose of not only installing energy efficient HVAC equipment, but also electric water heating equipment, insulation, windows, doors, permanent standby generators, whole house battery back-up, electric vehicle charging equipment and Energy Star Appliances. The process is simple and by calling our office at (507) 373-6421, one of our Energy Solution Specialists would be happy to provide more information.

Another way for our members to get cash back into their pockets is through a wide variety of rebates offered on Energy Star appliances, water heaters, LED lighting, heating, ventilation or air conditioning, and much more. #2162303 New equipment rebate(s) must be submitted no later than 3 months after the purchase date and must be installed on the cooperative's lines.

Rebates for 2024 must be submitted no later than December 31, 2024. FMEC members are encouraged to apply as soon as possible because funds are limited. Visit our website at [www.fmec.coop](http://www.fmec.coop) for more details.



## ceo message

Jim Krueger, President & CEO



## GIVING THANKS FOR OUR COOPERATIVE FAMILY AND OUR HEROES

As the season of thankfulness is upon us, we reflect as a cooperative on all that we have to be thankful for. First and foremost, we are thankful to be able to operate our electric utility business as a not-for-profit organization led and governed by our members. Our members are important to us. They are not just consumers of our services, but they are people that we get to serve everyday; they are our neighbors, supporters, and friends.

In recent months, we've seen the devastation across the south-eastern corner of our nation as Hurricane Helene and Milton left paths of destruction, leaving over 3 million people without power. But at the same time, thousands of lineworkers from across the nation stepped up to say, "We're here to help." We are thankful to be a part of the cooperative network where mutual support is considered standard practice. It's simply what we do.

As we look to the future, we do so with a profound sense of gratitude and optimism, continuing to be guided by the seven cooperative principles that make us who we are.

Our commitment to the communities we serve, and our members will remain unwavering.

I am incredibly proud of our employees, who continue to deliver high standards of service and reliability, keeping safety a top priority. #110700 Our employees are the backbone of the daily operations of the cooperative, and we couldn't do what we do without each of them.

We also extend our heartfelt gratitude to the veterans who have sacrificially served our country with dedication and bravery and also, to active-duty servicemen and women whose commitment to protecting our freedoms does not go unnoticed. To these selfless and courageous individuals, we give our respect and gratitude.

Happy Thanksgiving.

With gratitude,  
Jim Krueger

## ATTENTION MEMBERS: UPCOMING MEMBER SATISFACTION SURVEY

We value your feedback and are committed to continuously improving our services. To better understand your needs and experiences, we will be conducting a Member Satisfaction Survey in mid-November.

If you have an email account registered with us, you may receive an invitation to participate in this survey. Your responses will help us enhance our service quality and ensure we meet your expectations.

Please keep an eye on your inbox and take a few moments to share your thoughts. #1488202 Your input is invaluable to us, and we appreciate your time and participation.

Thank you for being a valued member of our cooperative.



## member news

### HOLIDAY HOURS

Our office will be open during regular business hours on Veterans Day, Monday, November 11.

Our office will be closed on Thursday, November 28 and Friday, November 29 to allow our employees time with their families over the Thanksgiving Holiday.

### NOTICE OF INTERCONNECTION DISTRIBUTED ENERGY: CO-GENERATORS AND SMALL POWER PRODUCERS

In accordance with the adopted Cooperative Rules implementing 216.B.164, Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative is obligated to interconnect with and purchase electricity from cogenerators and small power producers that satisfy the conditions and become a Qualifying Facility. A Qualifying Facility is a cogeneration and small power production facility that satisfies the conditions in the 18 Code of Federal Regulations, Section 292.101 (b).

Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative has posted the current interconnection documents on the cooperative's website ([www.fmec.coop](http://www.fmec.coop)). Click on Energy Services and then Renewables. Proceed by using the NOVA Power Portal. A complete Distributed Energy Document Library is available online.

All interconnections require an application and approval to become a Qualifying Facility. Any disputes over interconnection, sales, and purchases are subject to resolution by the cooperative.

For further information contact our office at (507) 373-6421 or (800) 734-6421.

### DUAL FUEL WINTER PREPAREDNESS TEST FOR INTERRUPTIBLE HEAT WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20

This load control test is performed in advance of the winter Full Load Control season to ensure member familiarity with the control sequence and to ensure that backup heating systems have been validated for proper function.

The control test will begin at 6:55 a.m. on Wednesday, November 20, 2024. Heating services will be fully restored by 11:00 a.m. Please contact our Energy Solutions Department with any questions regarding this test.



*We are proud to have four Veterans in the Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative workforce: T. J. Kalis, Army National Guard; John Kalis, U.S. Air Force; Nick Roling, Army National Guard; and Allen Hendriks, Army National Guard.*

We salute all who have served and those currently serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. We recognize that our freedom comes with a cost, and we owe our sincere gratitude to these individuals and their families for their sacrifices and contributions.

## NOTICE OF RIGHTS FOR HOUSEHOLDS OF MILITARY SERVICE PERSONNEL

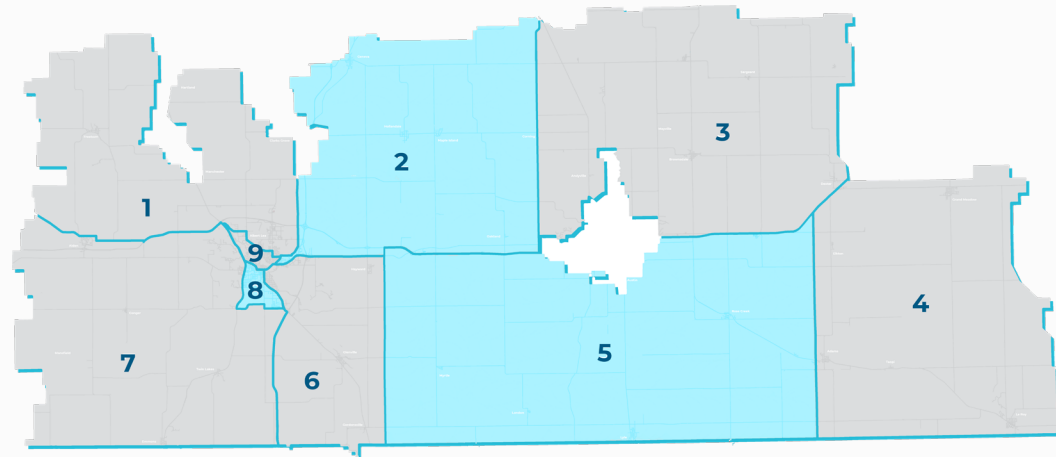


The Minnesota State Statute (325E.028 Utility Payment for Military Service Personnel) provides protection against a utility disconnection if a member of your household has been ordered into active military duty, for deployment, or for a permanent change in duty station during a period of active duty.

For more information or to apply for shut-off protection contact our office or go to <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/325E.028>.



# SEEKING APPLICANTS FOR THREE DIRECTOR SEATS



**Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative is governed by a nine-person board of directors. The directors are elected by their fellow FMEC members residing in the district. Elections are held in three districts each year, with each director elected to serve a three-year term.**

Applications are now being accepted for the position of Director in the following districts:

**DISTRICT 2:** Represents the Lerdal, Hollandale, Geneva, Maple Island, Corning, Moscow, and Oakland areas.

**DISTRICT 5:** Represents the areas east of Hayward, Gordonsville, Myrtle, London, Lyle, Rose Creek, and Johnsburg.

**DISTRICT 8:** Represents the south part of the city of Albert Lea.

Applicants must meet all eligibility requirements as specified in the Cooperative’s Bylaws. Among the qualifications and responsibilities outlined in the Bylaws, nominees must be:

1. a current member receiving electric service at their primary residence, and
2. the primary residence must be in the district in which the director is elected.

No person shall be eligible to become or remain a director of the Cooperative who:

1. is not a natural person and a member of the Cooperative, receiving service at the member’s primary residence in the district from which the director is elected;
2. within five (5) years preceding a director candidate’s nomination was or during service on the Board of Directors is finally adjudged to be guilty of a felony;
3. within three (3) years preceding a director candidate’s nomination was an employee of the Cooperative;

4. is an employee of the Cooperative or a grandparent, parent, spouse, co-habitant, child, or grandchild of an employee of the Cooperative;
5. is a person that is a grandparent, parent, spouse, co-habitant, child, or grandchild of an incumbent director whose district seat is not up for re-election at that time;
6. is in any way employed by or substantially financially interested in an enterprise competing with the Cooperative or any Cooperative-affiliated business;
7. is or becomes the full-time employee or agent of, or who is or becomes the full-time employer or principal of, another director;
8. is engaged in conduct that is a violation of law or violation of a Cooperative policy or policies, or whenever a director has materially failed to satisfy his/her duties as a director, including the duty to regularly attend meetings of the Board of Directors; or
9. is employed by, materially affiliated with, or has a financial interest in, any individual or entity possessing a material or substantial conflict of interest with the Cooperative or a Cooperative subsidiary.

***If you are a member of Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative residing in one of the districts holding an election and would like to run for the position of FMEC director, please contact our office for an information packet. If you are unsure of the district in which you reside, it is shown on your electric statement.***

***Applications are due in our office by 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday, December 11, 2024.***

## MEMBER GOVERNANCE

Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative is owned and controlled by the members using its services. This core principle sets us apart from other forms of utilities. Additionally, we operate on a not-for-profit basis through our Capital Credit retirement (return) of margins. Because we are so close to the members and their communities, we take pride in being both accountable and accessible.

Any member who meets the Bylaw Qualifications and has a desire to become a Director of Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative may apply for an open board position. This includes minorities, women, and individuals with a disability. Nominations are now open for members of District 2, District 5, and District 8. If you are unsure of the District in which you reside, see your monthly billing statement or call our office.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF DIRECTORS

While representing the members of their district, elected directors become a part of a nine-member board tasked with making decisions in the best interest of all members and the cooperative business. Directors work with the management team to provide direction and general oversight of the cooperative. Directors set policies, including retail rates.

To be effective, Directors must be able to read financial statements, forecasts, and strategic reports. Director oversight ensures the democratic functioning of the cooperative in accordance with the Cooperative’s Bylaws and respects the confidentiality of information provided or discussed. #110700 Directors must attend monthly meetings at the cooperative headquarters, typically on the last Tuesday of each month. They may also be called to additional meetings and training sessions.

## RECORDATORIO:

Cualquier miembro que cumpla con los requisitos de los reglamentos internos y que tenga interes en ser director/a de la cooperativa puede aplicar para puestos vacantes en la mesa directiva. Esto incluye miembros de grupos que son minorias, mujeres, y personas con discapacidades.

## ELECTION PROCESS

Completed applications are due by 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday, December 11, 2024. After applications have been returned, members in each of the three districts holding an election will be notified of those who have filed.

### POST FILING DEADLINE — NOMINATION BY PETITION

After the filing application deadline has expired, persons may still be nominated by filing a petition form, also available from our office. To become a nominee by petition requires fifteen (15) members from the district in which the election is being held to sign in support of a particular nominee on the petition form.

The petition form must be submitted to the cooperative office by 3:30 p.m. on Friday, January 17, 2025.

### WHEN THERE IS A SINGLE NOMINEE

Should only one nominee in a district come forward before the final deadline by petition, that applicant will be deemed elected as director.

### WHEN THERE ARE MULTIPLE NOMINEES

Should more than one nominee come forth by the petition deadline, either by direct nomination or petition, a biography of each nominee and a mail ballot will be sent to all members in the district on Friday, January 31, 2025. Returned ballots will be due on Thursday, February 20, 2025.

Please return mailed ballots in the proper envelopes to the third-party ballot company and not to our cooperative. Also, allow for any possible mail delays.

### DIRECTORS BEGIN TERM

The elected directors will be seated during the Annual Meeting on Tuesday, April 1, 2025.



## REBATE REMINDER



Don't miss the opportunity to apply for one of our many rebates offered on the installation of a variety of equipment and appliances. Check out the REBATE tab on our website ([www.fmec.coop](http://www.fmec.coop)) for more details.

Current rebates available are in place until December 31, 2024 or until funds are depleted. We encourage you to turn in your application within three months of installation. #2162303 Rebates submitted within three months but after December 31, 2024, will not qualify if the rebate is no longer offered in 2025.



## UPCOMING YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

### LUCK OF THE DRAW SCHOLARSHIP

Did you know that Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative is committed to supporting our area youth? If you or someone you know is a graduating high school senior who resides in the FMEC service territory (student/parent with active account), he or she is eligible to apply for a \$1,000 LUCK OF THE DRAW Scholarship. The application deadline is Friday, March 21, 2025 by 3:30 p.m. The drawing will be held on Tuesday, April 1, 2025 at the cooperative's Annual Meeting at the Albert Lea High School, 2000 Tiger Lane, Albert Lea, MN. Students must be present to win. Applications can be found on the website [www.fmec.coop](http://www.fmec.coop).

### YOUTH TOUR

The Youth Tour is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to take an all-expense paid trip to Washington D.C. with over 1,900 other students from across the country for leadership training, interactions with elected officials, and to tour the city. #1488202 Students will come away from the trip with a better understanding of government, advocacy, and the cooperative business model. FMEC is proud to sponsor two individuals, junior or senior high school students, for the upcoming tour in 2025. The application deadline is Friday, February 7, 2025, by 3:30 p.m. with the interview process beginning Monday, March 10, 2025.

### LINEWORKER SCHOLARSHIP

Are you or someone you know interested in becoming a lineworker? We have two \$1,000 scholarships that will be awarded to two applicants pursuing a post-secondary education in an electric lineworker program. The applicants must apply by March 1, 2025 to be considered for this opportunity. Details can be found on our website ([www.fmec.coop](http://www.fmec.coop)).

## Recycle Holiday Light Strings

You can recycle strings of holiday lights at FMEC, beginning on December 2 by depositing them in the bin located inside the front lobby entrance. They will be given to a southern Minnesota organization where workers will reclaim the usable components.

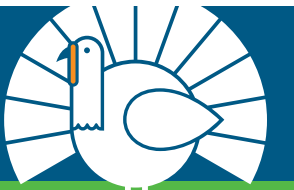
## TOYS, HATS AND MITTENS COLLECTION



Help make this holiday season brighter for those less fortunate in our communities.

Donations of new and unopened toys, winter hats, and mittens may be dropped off at the Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative office until December 16. Donations will be disbursed by the local Salvation Army's in Austin and Albert Lea.

## HAPPY THANKSGIVING FROM FMEC!



## CLASSIFIED marketplace

### FOR SALE

#### VEHICLES/MOTORIZED:

**2007 CHEVY IMPALA.** \$2,000 cash. Call (507) 406-1219.

#### FARM:

**SMALL SQUARE BALES.** Alfalfa, grass, or mixed. Call (507) 383-2432.

**2 FEED BINS.** 7.5 ton. Excellent shape. \$1,000 ea. Call (507) 402-6411.

#### HOUSEHOLD:

**2 CHOCOLATE SUEDE FABRIC ROCKER RECLINERS.** Like new. \$300 for both. Call (507) 373-8991.

**LARGE ROLL-TOP DESK.** In good condition. \$250. Call (507) 256-4666.

**4 SUDDEN COMFORT FOLDING CHAIRS.** High back, double padded. Like new. \$20 ea. Call (507) 373-0093.

**LIFT CHAIR.** Ladies size, dark brown. Only used for 1 month. \$600. Call (507) 383-4555.

**39" TV.** \$200. Call (507) 481-8797.

#### MISCELLANEOUS:

**ELECTRIC TREADMILL.** New, never used. \$200 OBO. Call (218) 324-1821.

**TREATED POST 6 X 6 X 8' & GATES.** Call (507) 383-4250.

**SNAPPER SELF-PROPELLED LAWMOWER.** 21". In excellent shape. Make an offer. Call (507) 383-3613.

**LITHELI SNOWBLOWER.** 20v, battery powered, 12". Used one time. Paid \$190. Asking \$130. Call (507) 460-8601.

**4 GOODYEAR WRANGLER TIRES.** 265/70 R17. Good condition. Mounted & balanced on 6-hole Chevy pickup rims. \$250. Call (507) 297-5703 or (507) 402-5701.

**49 LOUIS L'AMOUR NOVELS.** Hardbound covers. \$10 each. Call (507) 279-1565.

#### 2 ANTIQUE RED WING CROCKS.

15 gallon, 1 with handles, 1 without handles. Good condition. \$100. Call (507) 373-3633.

#### ARIENS SNOWBLOWER.

12.5 hp, 28" width, 4 years old. Just like new. Call (507) 402-0660.

**WINTER CLOTHING.** Kids snow pants - (8) & (18). - \$10 ea. (18-20) jacket & snow pants - \$20. XL men's jacket - \$20. Call (507) 448-3491.

**CUB CADET GARDEN TRACTOR** with mounted snowblower. Works good! \$1,600. Call (507) 273-6063.

**6' PENCIL CHRISTMAS TREE** with stand, lighted, decorated. \$25 OBO. Call (507) 373-6191.

**100# PROPANE TANKS** that are full. Call (507) 402-7629.

**EMPIRE HANGING LP FURNACE.** 80,000 BTU. \$150. Call (507) 383-1714.

**5 ANTIQUE WAGON WHEELS.** 4 metal, 1 wooden, assorted sizes. \$100. Text only (507) 269-8992.

### WANTED

**CAST IRON SKILLETS & WAFFLE IRONS.** Call (507) 402-0880.

**VINTAGE HANDMADE CERAMIC DÉCOR** for any holiday & **GLASS/LUCITE GRAPES** from the 70's. Call (507) 440-4312.

### FREE

**2 LAWN CHAIRS.** Call (507) 852-3499.

**9 WEEK OLD KITTENS.** Litter box trained and very friendly. One black, one grey with white paws. Both females. Call (507) 318-0075.

## CLASSIFIED MARKETPLACE RULES

Classified Marketplace ads are printed in our monthly *County Lines* newsletter **FREE OF CHARGE** to our current members.

- Ad deadline is the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to the issue in which it will be printed. Ads received after the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month will be printed a month later. Example: An ad received on or before June 15<sup>th</sup> will appear in the July issue. If it is received on June 16<sup>th</sup> or later, it will appear in the August issue.
- No business ads will be accepted. Ads must be submitted in writing or electronically, not by phone call.
- Ads will not be repeated.
- One ad/item per member, per month.

You will find a downloadable form on our website: [www.fmec.coop](http://www.fmec.coop). Select **MY COOPERATIVE**. Click on **NEWSLETTER** under **NEWS & INFO** tab.

You may also email ads to [michelle.rayman@fmec.coop](mailto:michelle.rayman@fmec.coop) or go to the website, use the instructions above, and click on the **NEWSLETTER** tab to electronically submit an ad.

## SPOT YOUR NUMBER

### WIN A \$25 BILL CREDIT

To reward our faithful newsletter readers, we've randomly selected and hidden three (3) member account numbers and placed them in the newsletter, each two times. Hidden account numbers are spelled out numerically. (Ex: #123456)

If you spot your full account number, contact the cooperative by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the current month to claim your \$25 bill credit.



### FREEBORN MOWER ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

PO Box 611  
3366 Bridge Avenue  
Albert Lea MN 56007

(507) 373-6421 or (800) 734-6421  
www.fmec.coop  
info@fmec.coop



#### Office Hours:

Monday - Friday, 7:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

#### Board Meetings:

Typically the last Tuesday of each month.

*Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*



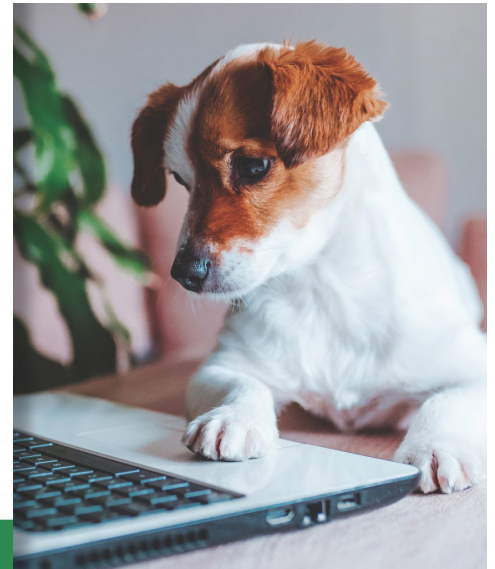
**ATTENTION: OUR PAY-BY-PHONE NUMBER  
HAS CHANGED TO (800) 734-6421.**

## Protect your pets

Our monitored smoke and carbon monoxide sensors automatically alert dispatchers, who will notify you and emergency services.



888.264.6380 • heartlandss.com



## LET'S COOK



### SPOON BURGERS

Submitted By: Nancy Minehart

- 1 lb. 85% ground beef
- 2/3 C. onions, chopped
- 1 Tbsp. yellow mustard
- 1 Tbsp. ketchup
- 1/2 Tsp. salt
- 1/8 Tsp. (scant) pepper
- 1 - 10 1/2 oz. chicken gumbo soup
- 1/4 C. water

#### Directions:

In skillet, brown ground beef, onion, salt, & pepper. Mix in the rest of the ingredients and simmer until done, stirring occasionally.

*Members may submit one short recipe per month by email to [michelle.rayman@fmec.coop](mailto:michelle.rayman@fmec.coop) or by mail at FMEC Newsletter, PO Box 611, Albert Lea, MN 56007. The member whose recipe is published will receive a \$10 electric bill credit.*