

NOVEMBER 2025 • VOLUME 86 • NO. 11



FMEC JOINS COOPERATIVE DAY OF SERVICE TO SUPPORT LOCAL COMMUNITY



Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative (FMEC) proudly joined fellow cooperatives and Dairyland Power Cooperative (DPC) to celebrate National Co-op Month through the 3rd Annual Cooperative Day of Service on Wednesday, Oct. 1. The event brought together co-op employees across DPC's service territory to put cooperative principles into action, especially Concern for Community and Cooperation Among Cooperatives.

FMEC employees partnered with staff from DPC and People's Energy Cooperative at a service site in Albert Lea, Minnesota, supporting both the United Way of Freeborn County and the Albert Lea YMCA. Volunteers assisted with:

- Staging pantry items and unloading a food truck delivery
- Preparing for a Winter Gear Drive
- Painting the YMCA gymnasium
- General cleaning and organizing

"This is what being a cooperative is all about—coming together to support the communities we live and work in," said Carter Dahlum from FMEC. "We're proud to stand alongside our fellow co-ops to make a positive difference, right here in Albert Lea."

The Cooperative Day of Service also included projects across Wisconsin and Iowa, organized by DPC in collaboration with ten member cooperatives and the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association. #394002 From cleaning cabins at local camps to clearing trails in state forests, the event showcased the collective impact co-ops can make when they work together.

FMEC is honored to be part of this shared effort and looks forward to #404204 continuing to serve our community—not just during National Co-op Month, but all year long.

Visit the [FMEC Facebook page](#) for more pictures from the day.

ceo message
Jim Krueger, President & CEO



CELEBRATING CONNECTION,
COMMITMENT, AND COMMUNITY

As we move into the holiday season, I want to take a moment to extend my heartfelt gratitude to both our members and our dedicated employees. At Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative, our members are at the heart of everything we do. Your trust and support continue to drive our mission forward.

To our employees—thank you for your unwavering commitment to providing reliable, high-quality service each and every day. Your hard work is truly the backbone of our success, and it does not go unnoticed.

As mentioned in last month’s update, we have completed our strategic planning process, and I’m pleased to share that the board of directors has officially approved our new strategic plan. #394002 This is an exciting time for our cooperative, as we now have a clear roadmap that outlines our key priorities for the years ahead.

These initiatives will focus on improving reliability, enhancing member services, investing in system upgrades, and ensuring long-term financial stability. Most importantly, they reflect the

values and feedback we’ve received from you—our members. Implementing these goals will be a collaborative effort across our entire team. We anticipate that 2026 will be a year of strong progress, and we look forward to sharing milestones with you along the way.

Some of the key work initiatives will begin right away, starting with a review of our current rates to ensure they are equitable and simple to understand.

Additionally, we will begin a review of our internal processes to ensure we are efficient and effective in all we do.

Thank you for being a part of the Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative community. From all of us here, we wish you a safe, joy-filled, and peaceful holiday season.

- Jim Krueger



WELCOME MARISSA VOGT

Please join us in welcoming Marissa to Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative as our new Events & Engagement Specialist! She joined the team on Thursday, October 2.

Originally from the metro area, Marissa relocated to Albert Lea in 2015 and now calls rural Alden home. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with friends and her two dogs, Brinnley and Murphy.

With a strong background in event planning, Marissa brings valuable experience and energy to our team. We’re excited to have her on board and look forward to the contributions she’ll make.

Welcome to the cooperative, Marissa!

member news

HOLIDAY HOURS

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

Our office will be closed on Thursday, November 27 and Friday, November 28 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).

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.

NOTICE TO MEMBERS

The Nova Power portal application fee for distributed generation projects is \$125 + \$1 per kW ac for certified systems and \$125 + \$2 per kW ac for non-certified systems.

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

DUAL FUEL WINTER PREPAREDNESS TEST FOR INTERRUPTIBLE HEAT WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19

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 19, 2025. Heating services will be fully restored by 11:00 a.m. Please contact our Energy Solutions Department with any questions regarding this test.



THANKFUL FOR
OUR VETERANS

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

With deepest respect, we honor and salute our veterans. Your courage, sacrifice, and unwavering dedication to protect our freedom does not go unnoticed. Each of you have sacrificially given to serve our country, and we extend our gratitude to you and your families for your service, strength, and the exemplary example you’ve set for generations to come.

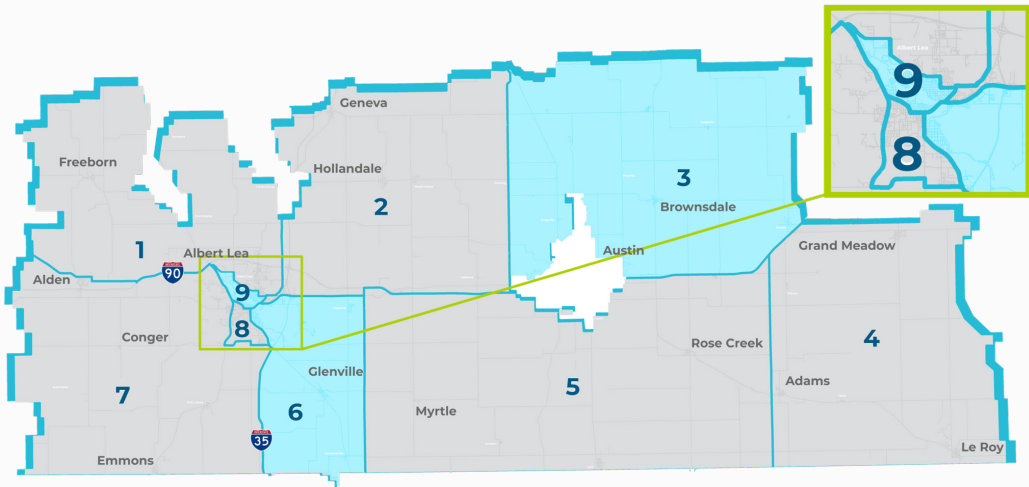
NOTICE OF RIGHTS FOR HOUSEHOLDS
OF MILITARY SERVICE PERSONNEL



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 three districts:

DISTRICT 3:
Represents areas northwest of Austin, Sargeant, Brownsdale, Nicolville, and Dexter.

DISTRICT 6:
Represents Hayward, Glenville, and areas west of Gordonsville.

DISTRICT 9:
Represents the northern 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, 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 #278004 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 at (507) 373-6421 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 January 5, 2026 at 3:30 p.m.

MEMBER GOVERNANCE

Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative is owned and controlled by the members using its services. This core principles set 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 3, District 6, and District 9. 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. #404204 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. 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 cooperative 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 January 5, 2026. 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 Monday, February 17, 2026.

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 Monday, March 3, 2026. Returned ballots will be due on Wednesday, March 19, 2026.

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 21, 2026.

Get the Scoop!

at

 Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative's

Youth Scholarship Night

JOIN US

in the Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative Conference Center on Monday, November 10, 2025, from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. for an open house event where you can learn more about the scholarship opportunities that FMEC offers.




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 #278004 dropped off at the Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative office until December 12. Donations will be disbursed by the local Salvation Army.



HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

Thursday, December 11, 2025 | 8-11a.m.
Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative Lobby Area
3366 Bridge Avenue, Albert Lea

HOLIDAY TREATS AND REFRESHMENTS
Join us for holiday treats, apple cider, and coffee.



HOLIDAY SWEATER CONTEST

Wear your most festive sweater for a chance to enter and win a prize basket. Ugly sweater or stylish, thrifted or new, we're looking forward to visiting with you!

REBATE REMINDER

Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative offers a wide variety of rebates to our members. We encourage members to visit the REBATE tab on our website (www.fmec.coop) for more details on these savings opportunities.

Current rebates available are in place until December 31, 2025 or until funds are depleted. Members should submit rebate forms and associated documentation within three months of the purchase date of new equipment or appliances. Rebates submitted within three months but after December 31, 2025, will not qualify if the rebate is no longer offered in 2026.



CLASSIFIED *marketplace*

FOR SALE

VEHICLES/MOTORIZED:

1996 DODGE INTREPID ES. Excellent running motor and trans. Interior like new. Call (507) 324-5275.

FARM:

FLARE BOX WAGON WITH NEW FLOOR. \$350. Call (507) 383-6382.

4X5 ROUND BALES OF HAY. Some grass, some Alfalfa grass mix. No rain. Call (507) 852-2502.

HOUSEHOLD:

ALL AMERICAN PRESSURE COOKER/CANNER. Model 941. Racks, book, original box. 41.5 quart capacity. Call (507) 383-6546.

OAK SWIVEL CAPTAIN'S CHAIR WITH CASTERS. Perfect condition. Call (507) 383-4909.

ANTIQUE NEW HOME SEWING MACHINE. \$50. Call (507) 261-8174.

WORKING LEFSE GRILL, ROLLING PIN, RICER. \$100. Leave message. Call (507) 273-2141.

MISCELLANEOUS:

SILVER COINS. Call (507) 373-0464.

6 FT LITTLE GIANT MULTI-USE LADDER. Good shape. \$100, OBO. Call (507) 402-7800.

STEEL SIDING. 60+ used sheets. 10 & 14 footers. \$5/sheet. Text or leave message (507) 208-0571.

BANDSAW BLADE WELDER WITH BLADE STOCK. Text or Call (507) 402-3954.

MTD GOLD SNOWBLOWER.

24-inch wide, electric start. 6 forward & 2 reverse speeds. \$300. Call (507) 383-3976.

3-DOZEN QUART KERR & BALL CANNING JARS. Wide & regular mouth. \$8 per dozen. Call (507) 383-6572.

TOTAL GYM - CHUCK NORRIS. Call (507) 440-0679.

EARLY 50'S BARBER CHAIR KOKEN BRAND. Good shape. Text or Call (507) 438-5607.

BOB CAT PALLET FORKS - 48". Call (507) 383-0410.

WANTED

OLD WRIST & POCKET WATCHES. Call (507) 402-0880.

FREE

EARLY 1970'S SINGER SEWING MACHINE IN CABINET. All attachments & book. Tension needs work. Call (507) 261-0749 before 8:00 p.m.

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 15th of the month prior to the issue in which it will be printed. Ads received after the 15th of the month will be printed a month later. Example: An ad received on or before June 15th will appear in the July issue. If it is received on June 16th 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. Select **MY COOPERATIVE**. Click on **NEWSLETTER** under **NEWS & INFO** tab.

You may also email ads to info@fmec.coop or go to the website, use the instructions above, and click on the **NEWSLETTER** tab to electronically submit an ad.

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Postmaster: Send address corrections to:
County Lines, P.O. Box 611, Albert Lea, MN 56007-0611

County Lines is published monthly, except for the Annual Report edition, by Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative, 3366 Bridge Avenue, Albert Lea, MN 56007. This monthly publication is designed to provide information about the cooperative to the member-owners of Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative.

President: Jim Krueger, President & CEO
Telephone: (507) 373-6421

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 15th of the current month to claim your \$25 bill credit. Congratulations to Monica Wallace for spotting her account number in the October newsletter.



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



Business Hours:

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

Lobby Hours:

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

Friday, By appointment only

Kiosk, Available 6:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

7 Days a Week

Board Meetings:

Typically the last Tuesday of each month.

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

ATTENTION MEMBERS: UPCOMING MEMBER SATISFACTION SURVEY

At Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative, your voice matters. To help us better serve you, we'll be conducting a Member Satisfaction Survey in mid-November. If you have an email address on file with us, you may receive an invitation to participate.

WHY YOUR FEEDBACK MATTERS:

Your insights help us improve our service, understand your needs, and ensure we're meeting your expectations as your local electric cooperative.

WHAT TO EXPECT:

Keep an eye on your inbox in the coming weeks. The survey will only take a few minutes, but your input will have a lasting impact.

Thank you for taking the time to help us grow and improve. We appreciate your participation—and your continued membership in our cooperative community.



LET'S COOK



SLOW COOKER POTATOES

Submitted By: Barbara Dickman

- 1 ½ lb. medium red potatoes
- ¼ C. chicken broth or water
- ¼ C. melted butter
- 3 Tsp. minced fresh parsley - optional
- 1 Tsp. minced chives - optional
- Salt & pepper to taste

Directions:

Cut a strip of peel from around the middle of each potato. Place broth and potatoes in a slow cooker. Cook on high for 3 hours, then turn heat to low for 1 hour. Combine butter, parsley, and chives in a small bowl. Pour over potatoes, season with salt and pepper, or serve with gravy.

Members may submit one short recipe per month by email to info@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.