



Reliability, Safety, and Growth

Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative is tackling an aggressive work plan for the next four years. Capital investments to our distribution plant are necessary to ensure safe and reliable electric service. This includes building services to new accounts, upgrading power lines, and replacing aging equipment.

The total of the work plan proposed for years 2022 through 2025 totals around \$24,576,000. About 28% of this amount will be designated for work during 2022. An investment of more than \$3.5 million is designated for new line extensions, line conversions, and line changes during this year. A similar amount will be needed to cover the expense of purchasing and installing electric distribution equipment.

The distribution capital expenditures proposed for the next four years will result in the distribution plant increasing at an average annual rate of approximately 6.54 percent. Historically, this rate of growth is higher than the four-year period of 2017 – 2020, immediately following the acquisition of territory and assets through SMEC, that was 4.97 percent. #1861201 In comparison, the average annual plant additions during the 2012 – 2015 four-year period before the SMEC acquisition was 7.02 percent.

When deemed practical, the cooperative may carry more inventory than normal during the next year or two as a hedge against supply chain disruptions and in preparation for major storm repairs, if needed.

MAJOR SUBSTATION RENOVATION UNDERWAY

A major rebuild of the entire 161KV transmission portion of the Adams substation began in February 2022. The work by ITC Midwest will allow for additional transmission lines to enter and exit the substation. These additional 161KV lines are required due to the planned development of additional solar and wind generation in the area. The work is expected to be completed by early September.

The Adams substation is the largest in the FMEC system, extending to an approximate 100-mile radius and providing power to tens of thousands of homes and businesses. To ensure reliability, the transmission system is redundant with multiple feed points and back feed points. During this project some of those feeds will be unavailable in case of emergency. There are no member outages planned during this rebuild project.

ceo message

Jim Krueger, President & CEO



STAYING IN BALANCE

Balance on the power grid rests with electric generation and distribution utilities working together to ensure a region with electricity — all the electric demand (load), exactly when consumers demand it. There are many aspects to maintaining this complex balance of power.

It's important to understand that the total demand for electricity is in continuous fluctuation. It changes throughout the day. It fluctuates from season to season. Similarly, just as consumer usage patterns fluctuate, so can the availability of electricity. At any point in time, the availability of electricity can be affected by such things as temperature extremes, power plants or solar/wind facilities being unexpectedly taken offline, or a combination of reasons.

To deal with this, Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative (FMEC) utilizes load management techniques. These include controlled electric water heating, space heating/cooling programs, and electric vehicle charging. Load management helps shift electric load from periods of high demand (peak hours) for electricity to off-peak hours. This helps ensure safe, reliable, and affordable electricity to all our members and the broader region. The cost to produce and transmit electricity during times of peak demand is considerably higher than during off-peak times. So, being effective in leveling the demand

for electricity results in keeping the cost of electricity affordable to all. Summer electric demand is typically the highest, and hence, most costly to meet.

There is more that you can do to help control wholesale power costs to FMEC. **We call it the Summer Shift — and it's powering down (or shifting usage) this summer. During weekdays shift electric use to times outside of 11:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.** #812400 We ask for your voluntary help. It's easy!

- Delay the start of the dishwasher and laundry equipment.
- Turn up the thermostat a few degrees.
- Be conscientious of electric use during that time frame. Turn off unnecessary lights and electronic devices.
- Take advantage of natural light in offices and homes.
- Put the dehumidifier on a timer.

“We promote the Summer Shifts to lower our cooperative’s entire demand for electricity during the costly summer peak demand hours, therefore preventing higher wholesale charges from being passed along to you.”

Key factors impacting the availability and price of electricity in the Midwest portion of the Midcontinent Independent Supply Operator (MISO) region this summer are:

1. An increase in electricity use following the pandemic.
2. The retirement of fossil fueled power plants.
3. The ability to maintain required power generation reserves in the region.

MISO oversees the regional power grid that includes the states of Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Texas, and

Wisconsin, plus the Canadian province of Manitoba. Summertime projections already indicate the potential for large increases in the cost of electricity purchased from the grid. While wind and solar generating sources continue to be added, it is important to know that half of MISO's coal generation is set to be shuttered by 2030, a conservative estimate that doesn't take into account forthcoming EPA regulations.

During the summer periods of peak demand for electricity, the zones that do not have sufficient generation to cover their load plus their required reserves will be at risk of temporary, controlled outages to maintain system reliability.

member news

OFFICE CLOSED FOR THE 4TH OF JULY

Our office will be closed on Monday, July 4th for Independence Day. Have a safe and happy holiday.

PREPARING FOR THE INDUSTRY'S FUTURE

Congratulations to these four recipients of the 2022 FMEC Lineworker Scholarships! Each is receiving a \$1,000 scholarship to be used in pursuing a post-secondary education in an electric lineworker program.

Electric lineworker is a career in high demand. The industry needs professionally trained individuals to safely tackle the rigors of this field. Scholarships are funded from unclaimed capital credits in compliance with state statute. Best wishes to:

- **AARON ROCKLIN** – Albert Lea High School - Northwest Lineman College in Edgewater, Florida
- **PAYTON FRISTEDT** - Blooming Prairie High School - Dakota County Technical College in Rosemount, MN
- **DAWSON DAHLUM** – Glenville-Emmons High School – Minnesota West Community & Technical College in Jackson, MN
- **GARRETT LAHANN** - Austin High School - Northwest Iowa Community College in Sheldon, IA

CALENDAR REMINDER

FMEC needs photos for a 2023 calendar. For more information go to www.fmec.coop/photos-wanted or submit photos to michelle.rayman@fmec.coop. Deadline to submit is September 1, 2022.

BEWARE OF SCAMS

Scammers pressure customers to act fast. Take your time. FMEC never demands immediate payment and we do not accept bitcoin, prepaid cards, or third-party payment apps.

If you think you're being scammed hang up and contact the co-op directly or log into your SmartHub account to verify any concerns.

For your convenience — Introducing Paperless Billing



SIGN UP TO WIN!

Sign up via SmartHub between July 1 and December 31, 2022 to be entered into a drawing for one of four prizes:

\$1,000 CASH

\$500 CASH

YETI® COOLER

\$100 BILL CREDIT

LEARN MORE AT WWW.FMEC.COOP



ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP

A dirty filter causes your air conditioner to work harder than necessary. Change your filter to avoid dust build up and save energy.



Operation Round Up® Supports Community

At FMEC, we believe in on-going member and community engagement. Included is the idea of members helping members.

Applications from 69 organizations were approved for funding from Operation Round Up® in the first quarter of 2022. This funding totaled \$49,310.21.

Applications must be for charitable, educational, or non-profit organizations only. A five-member volunteer Board of Trustees meets quarterly to review applications.

Our Operation Round Up® program is an opt-out program. This means members' electric bills are automatically rounded up to the next nearest dollar amount. The monthly contribution could be as little as a penny, but never more than ninety-nine cents. The average donation per member, per year, is around \$6.00. This donation is also tax deductible.

POLLINATOR MEADOWS

Dairyland Power, Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative's wholesale power provider, supports pollinator habitat in the upper Midwest through planting native prairie plants to add diversity and abundance at multiple locations.

Within the Dairyland Power system, there are 300 substations. Adjacent to each structure, Dairyland typically purchases additional property as a site buffer. Not only do the sites provide beneficial habitat for pollinators, but also create public green space near residential developments to encourage healthy lifestyles and pollinator awareness. #139400 In addition to helping sustain and grow bee and butterfly populations, the pollinator gardens help reduce storm water runoff, increasing site protection from erosion.

Dairyland is also creating dual-purpose spaces at solar array and substation sites. The Goose Lake Solar Project, east of Albert Lea, is one of these pollinator sites. It has been seeded with native seed mixes of grasses and flowering forbs to create a certified pollinator garden. Dairyland is committed to protecting natural resources through sustainable practices and environmental stewardship. The electric generation and transmission



cooperative is a founding member of the Electric Power Research Institute's (EPRI) Power-in Pollinator Initiative, the largest pollinator protection collaboration in North America.



Scan this QR code to bring up a video that shows how Dairyland is supporting pollinator habitat.

Pollinators are insects and small animals that pollinate plants, making our gardens and world greener. Unfortunately, according to the Pollinator Partnership, an estimated 40% of invertebrate pollinator species, especially bees and butterflies, face the danger of going extinct due to scarcity of habitats and human activities.

ELECTRIFY YOUR LAWN CARE



Summer is just around the corner, and you can practically smell the freshly cut grass. If you're in the market to upgrade your lawn care equipment, you may want to consider electric (or battery-powered) options.

Gas-powered lawn mowers and trimmers may be your go-to, but times are changing. Electric lawn care equipment options are becoming more popular than ever, offering consumers faster charging times, longer battery life, and quieter, greener products compared to their gas-powered counterparts. Here are three ways you can electrify your lawn care this spring.

ELECTRIC LAWN MOWERS

Electric lawn mowers have come a long way over the last few years. Early models required corded connections, which were tricky to manage—but the cord has been cut. Newer cordless electric mowers are certainly more expensive than gas-powered mowers, but much of the upfront cost can be recovered since electricity is a less expensive fuel than gas, and electric engines generally require less maintenance than gas engines. Cordless electric mowers typically range from \$200 to \$500.

Electric mowers are suitable for most lawn care needs, with batteries that typically require about one to two hours to fully charge, and most batteries can run for a full hour. #1861201 That said, if you have a large yard (half an acre or larger), a gas-powered option may be best to suit your needs.

ELECTRIC TRIMMERS

Cordless electric string trimmers are a great option for most lawns. Traditionally, like lawn mowers, string trimmers have typically been powered by gas. But new

versions of electric trimmers are improving and are now considered worthy competitors of gas-powered models.

Cordless electric trimmers are much quieter and easier to use, but most batteries last about 30 to 45 minutes. So, if you have a lot of space to trim, you may want to consider a back-up battery or plan to work in short bursts. If you're interested in purchasing an electric trimmer, the main factors to consider are the battery's life, charge time, and power. Costs can vary depending on your needs, but you can find a quality version for about \$100.

ELECTRIC LEAF BLOWERS

After cutting and trimming your lawn, you'll need to clear off those walkways and patios for the finishing touch. If you don't want to deal with the maintenance of a gas-powered blower or the restraints of a corded blower, a cordless electric version is a great option.

Cordless electric leaf blowers are lightweight and easy to maneuver, but they don't offer quite as much power as gas-powered and corded blowers. If your leaf blowing and clearing needs are minimal, a cordless electric leaf blower can get the job done. Costs for a cordless electric blower vary depending on power and battery quality, but you can purchase a dependable model for about \$150 and up.

If you're looking to electrify your lawn care equipment, be sure to do your homework. Search online for the latest reviews, and check trusted websites like ConsumerReports.org. With a little research, you'll be well on your way to Lawn of the Month – with less maintenance, hassle, and noise. (These would also make great Father's Day Gifts).

TAOPI TORNADO

The management and employees of Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative (FMEC) express their concern for the cooperative members who lost homes and property with horrendous storms late in the evening on April 12.

Especially hard-hit was Taopi when an EF2 tornado demolished buildings, created damage from blowing debris, and snapped trees and power poles. #812400 According to Allan Stadheim, Director of Operations and Engineering, about 800 customers throughout Albert Lea, Taopi, and London were without power due to the storms. Thirty-nine customers in Taopi lost power, twelve of which are not able to have power restored due to the building and power feed lines being destroyed. The tornado had winds estimated between 111 and 135 mph.



WHEN THUNDER ROARS, GO INDOORS

Did you know lightning can strike from 10 to 15 miles away from the area in which it is raining? You don't even have to see clouds! If you can hear thunder, you're within striking distance and it is time to take safe shelter. It is dangerous to be outside during a storm. It is preferable to go inside a house or a building. If you seek shelter in a hard-top vehicle, close the windows and avoid contact with electrical conducting paths, such as the steering wheel, ignition, gear shifter, or radio.

Never seek shelter under a tree, canopy, pavilion, or an open-frame vehicle such as a golf cart or ATV. Avoid water, high ground, and open spaces.

Do not stand near power, light, or flag poles. The same goes for machinery, metal bleachers, fences, and even other people. If you are in a group, spread out so that you are at least 20 feet apart.

If your skin tingles and hair stands on end, lightning may be about to strike. Squat down low to the ground with your head between your knees, making yourself the smallest target as possible.

Wait at least 30 minutes after the last roar of thunder to go outside.

**LIGHTNING SAFETY AWARENESS WEEK:
JUNE 19 – 25, 2022**

⚡ OUTAGE REPORTING

CALL (800) 734-6421 TO REPORT A POWER OUTAGE. Calls are answered 24/7. Provide the following info:

- Name
- Service location
- Phone number where you can be reached
- Cause of outage (if known)

OUTAGE REPORTING IS ALSO AVAILABLE THROUGH THE SMARTHUB APP.

EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR



Freeborn Mower Electric Cooperative proudly recognizes Allen Hendriks as its Employee Volunteer of the Year.

Allen spends his workday as a GIS Technician, but he finds plenty of spare time to volunteer his talents and leadership with numerous organizations. He is also a Staff Sergeant in the Minnesota Army National Guard. He volunteers with Albert Lea Youth Football, Albert Lea Grizzlies Board of Directors, his children's school and PTO, and is a member of the local Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and Chamber Ambassadors. #139400 We thank Allen for the many ways in which he serves the community. Congratulations on this well-deserved award.

CLASSIFIED marketplace

FOR SALE

FARM:

350 INTERNATIONAL UTILITY TRACTOR w/ bucket, full 3-point hitch, TA works good. \$3,000 OBO. Call (507) 402-8124.

SKID LOADER EXTENSION FORKS.

6', heavy-duty. \$200. Call (507) 383-0802.

IMPLEMENT TIRE. 7.50 x 24,

mounted on 8-hole rim. \$25 OBO. Call (507) 373-3891.

HOUSEHOLD:

MONARCH MALLEABLE WOOD

COOKSTOVE. Good condition. \$250 OBO. You haul. Call (507) 318-2178.

BEDROOM FURNITURE.

Chest of drawers, 2 nightstands, and dresser with mirrors. \$800. Call (507) 391-2462.

CEILING FAN/LIGHT. 52". \$80.

Call (651) 249-3068 or (651) 739-2715.

MISC:

ACETYLENE TORCH SET. New hoses, new cart, full tanks. \$575. Cash only. Call (507) 402-2579.

JON BOAT w/cushion seats. \$250.

Call (507) 383-7390.

USED SIMPLICITY ZERO TURN MOWER

ZT2000 SERIES with 52" mower. Good condition. \$975. Call (507) 402-7800.

NECHI SERGER SEWING MACHINE.

2 years old, never used. \$190. Texts only (507) 396-1688.

LINCOLN IDEALARC WIRE FEED

WELDER SP 200. 220-volt single-phase, spare parts, spool of wire. \$925. Call (507) 402-2821.

LEATHER JACKETS. (3) Harley-Davidson,

(1) First Leather, size XL. \$100-\$175. Call (507) 481-6435.

UNIVERSAL HITCH in like-new condition

& **RAILS** for 5th wheel plate for camper. \$100. Call (507) 448-3491.

AUTOHARP. Like new with case. \$60.

Call (507) 373-8858.

2-BIKE CARRIER. Heavy duty. For a 2"

hitch. \$250. Call (507) 402-4660.

OSTER SHEEP SHEARING MACHINE w/2

heads, blade, sharpener, and tail docker. Best offer. Call (507) 324-5680.

CAMPING EQUIPMENT.

Hiking backpack, Coleman propane stove, dome tent, & Cabela's ultralight tent. Call (507) 373-2234.

BOOTS. Harley-Davidson Hondo, size

8.5M. Durango Rebel, 12" cowboy top, size 8.5D. Call (507) 481-6435.

WANTED

SMALL BALL HITCH TRAILER.

To haul snowblowers and lawnmowers. Call (507) 377-2119.

WOOD BOXES.

Call (507) 402-0880.

WEDDING DÉCOR.

Used or unused, rustic theme. Call or text (507) 481-6412.

Classified Marketplace ads are printed in our monthly **County Lines** newsletter **FREE OF CHARGE** to our current members. You can review the Classified Marketplace Rules and/or submit an ad at www.fmec.coop. Select **MY COOPERATIVE**. Click on **NEWSLETTER** under **NEWS & INFO** tab. You may also email ads to michelle.rayman@fmec.coop

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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 in the newsletter, each two times.

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

FREEBORN MOWER ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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Office Hours:

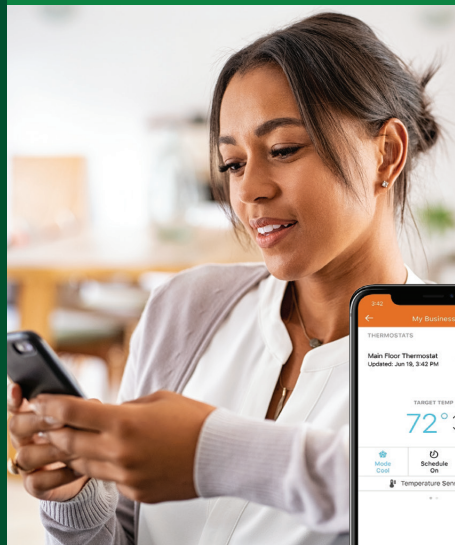
Monday - Friday, 7:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Board Meetings:

Typically the last Tuesday of each month.

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

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LET'S COOK



SWEET CORN PUDDING

Submitted By: Corliss Ellingson

Ingredients:

- 4 C. frozen corn
- 4 large eggs
- 1 C. whipping cream
- ½ C. milk
- 6 tbsp. sugar
- ¼ C. butter - room temp
- 2 tbsp. flour
- 2 tbsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. salt

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350. Butter 9 x 13 glass dish. Blend all ingredients in processor until almost smooth. Pour batter into dish. Bake pudding 1 hour, until brown & center just set. Cool 10 minutes & serve.

Members may submit one short recipe per month by email at 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.