

## Applications Now Open for 2026 MEA Board of Directors Elections

MEA is now accepting applications from members interested in serving on the MEA Board of Directors - a vital role that helps power strong communities and shape the future of our member-owned electric cooperative. Two seats are up for election this April 2026: the Eagle River District Seat (representing Eagle River, Chugiak, Birchwood, Peters Creek, and Eklutna) and the At-Large Seat (representing MEA's entire service area). Members can determine their district by using MEA's District Map Search Tool, checking their monthly billing statement, or contacting Member Services at 907-761-9300.

MEA's seven-member Board provides policy direction, oversees the cooperative's financial strength, and guides long-term planning to ensure a sustainable energy future for our fast-growing region. Board members serve four-year terms with a limit of three consecutive terms. Regular Board meetings are held the second Monday of each month at 4:00 p.m. at MEA Headquarters in Palmer. Board candidate applications must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, February 6, 2026, and can be completed online via DocuSign or downloaded as a printable PDF at [www.mea.coop/2026elections](http://www.mea.coop/2026elections). MEA encourages members who are passionate about leadership, cooperative values, and community service to apply.

## MEA Extends Firm Natural Gas Supply Contract and New Storage Agreement with Hilcorp

MEA's Board of Directors has approved an extension of its existing natural gas supply contract with Hilcorp Alaska, along with a new Firm Storage Service (FSS) Agreement, both of which have been filed with the Regulatory Commission of Alaska for review. The extension secures firm Cook Inlet natural gas supply through March 2029 at costs that remain below current market prices, while the new storage agreement adds a critical reliability tool. Together, these agreements help ensure dependable fuel during Alaska's coldest months, improve energy security, and give MEA added flexibility to manage winter demand, supply variability, and long-term planning.

For MEA members, this agreement provides stability and predictability during a rapidly changing energy landscape.

While electric rates are expected to increase gradually—about 5% per year beginning April 1, 2026—a typical residential member using approximately 642 kWh per month would see an average increase of about \$7.58 per year, assuming all other factors remain the same. By comparison, without firm natural gas in place, MEA would be forced to rely more heavily on higher-cost diesel generation. Extending the contract also buys valuable time for MEA to continue evaluating long-term energy solutions, including LNG imports, in-state gas pipeline options, additional regional supply, and diversified and renewable resources. MEA will continue to keep members informed as regulatory review and future planning progress through 2026.

## Scholarship Applications Now Being Accepted

MEA is now accepting 2026 Scholarship applications, supporting students who are starting college for the first time, returning to the classroom, entering a vocational trade program, or pursuing professional development toward a degree or certification. This year, a total of \$35,000 will be awarded through 10 scholarships in varying amounts, selected by MEA's member-led, volunteer Scholarship Committee. Applicants must be active MEA members or a dependent of a member living within MEA's service territory, and awards are available for graduating seniors, returning students, and those planning to attend an accredited college or vocational program in summer or fall 2026. Applications are due by March 27, 2026 and can be submitted online at: <https://scholarsapp.com/scholarship/matanuska-electric-association-scholarship>

## Stay Prepared this Winter: Utility Energy Watch Program to Safeguard Gas Supply

In preparation for the winter season, MEA has collaborated with local utilities and government officials to implement the Utility Energy Watch Program. The program aims to proactively manage and communicate natural gas delivery conditions to ensure the stability of our energy supply during peak winter demand. MEA members are encouraged to be aware of the program's three-tier alert system—Green, Yellow, and Red—each indicating different levels of caution based on natural gas deliverability. The goal is to maintain energy stability by guiding residents in reducing gas consumption through simple, practical actions during a cold snap or emergency conditions.

During a Yellow Caution level, customers are urged to set thermostats to 65 degrees, minimize natural gas usage, and postpone activities like laundry and dishwashing. Should a Red Alert be issued, customers are asked to further reduce energy consumption by lowering thermostat settings to 60 degrees, using only essential rooms, and avoiding the use of natural gas fireplaces and decorative heaters. MEA will keep members informed of the color code status through updates on our Facebook page, website, and email during a gas supply emergency.

If there's a natural gas delivery concern, utilities and local officials might issue an alert using the chart below

Know what to do if we ask for your help:

### Energy Watch Customer Action Plan

GREEN	STABLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use energy wisely; be conservation minded</li> <li>• Your utilities can provide tips on saving energy</li> </ul>
YELLOW	CAUTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set thermostat to 65 degrees in living areas, and 40 in the garage</li> <li>• Lower water heater setting to "warm" or "vacation"</li> <li>• Minimize usage of natural gas range</li> <li>• Postpone doing laundry and dishes</li> <li>• Turn off unnecessary lights and electronics</li> </ul>
RED	ALERT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set thermostat at 60 degrees in living areas (55 if away)</li> <li>• Turn water heater gas valve to "pilot"</li> <li>• Do not use natural gas fireplaces, decorative heaters or gas grills</li> <li>• Consolidate household activities into as few rooms as possible</li> </ul>



Every little bit counts. Together we can make a difference.

## Windstorm Recovery Resources Available for Mat-Su Residents

The Mat-Su Valley was hit hard this December by historic, hurricane-force windstorms that left a trail of damage across our communities—from downed trees and power outages to roof, home, vehicle, and property destruction. If you or someone you know experienced storm-related damage or unexpected emergency expenses, help is available through the Alaska State Individual Assistance and Temporary Housing Grant programs. Property owners seeking assistance can visit: <https://ready.alaska.gov/Recovery/IA> or call (844) 445-7131.

## Reminder: Future Co-op Elections are Primarily Electronic Voting

As a reminder, MEA now conducts Board and cooperative elections primarily through secure electronic voting on SmartHub to reduce costs and increase efficiency. This member-led change helps save the cooperative up to \$140,000 each year by cutting down on paper, printing, and mailing. Members can create a free SmartHub account at [www.mea.coop](http://www.mea.coop) to vote online in the April election and access their MEA account information. Those who prefer not to vote online may still vote in person at the Annual Meeting or request a paper ballot in advance of the April election by calling Member Services at 907-761-9300.

### NEED A PAPER BALLOT?

Members who prefer to vote by mail can still request a paper ballot in one of two easy ways:

Call Member Services at 907-761-9300,

OR

Log in to your SmartHub account and select "2026 Paper Ballot Request" under the "Other Actions" section.

