



# 2026 Legislative Session underway

Key energy issues to watch. . .

Minnesota's 2026 legislative session began February 17 and runs through May 18. With the state budget already passed, lawmakers are expected to focus on policy matters and the capital investment bill. A closely divided Legislature and an election year are likely to shape discussions at the Capitol.

Electric cooperatives will be monitoring and participating in conversations on several energy-related topics. One area of focus is Minnesota's net metering framework, which was established years ago and is now being reviewed to reflect changes in the electric system while continuing to support renewable energy. Cooperatives are also following discussions related to the state's nuclear energy moratorium, as well as long-term planning for reliable, carbon-free power resources.

Other issues of interest include wildfire mitigation, data center development, and electricity demand growth tied to Minnesota's energy standards. Wild Rice Electric Cooperative will be meeting with legislators to share perspectives and discuss issues important to rural energy communities.



Join fellow cooperative members  
and stay connected on key issues at . . .

[voicesforcooperativepower.com/minnesota](http://voicesforcooperativepower.com/minnesota).



# STAFF COMMENTS

Director of Operations

by Thomas Guenther

## AROUND THE CO-OP ...

We're happy to have made it through the brutally cold months of January and February and are looking ahead to warmer days. We hope all of our members stayed safe and warm during the cold spell, and that it served as a good reminder to keep backup heating sources in proper working order and ensure adequate fuel is available during control periods.

During the coldest months of the year, our crews are out performing required line inspections. We inspect our entire system every three years, and winter provides an opportunity for our linemen to complete this important work when temperatures drop into the negative teens. During inspections, they look for damaged poles and equipment, stranded wires, and loose or missing hardware. Any issues found are documented and repaired to keep the system safe and reliable.

Throughout the winter, crews are also busy replac-



**Wild Rice Electric crews replace a three-phase pole as part of ongoing system maintenance.**

ing poles that have been rejected through the pole testing process. Each year, approximately 400 poles are scheduled for replacement across our system. Wild Rice crews typically replace about half of these poles before construction season begins, with the remaining work completed by a contractor.

As we look toward spring, if you're planning any projects that may require electrical upgrades, we encourage you to contact us sooner rather than later. Early notice helps us plan and order the necessary materials and equipment. While supply chains have improved, some



**Crews use an Easy Spotter to safely retire line during the project.**

materials still have longer-than-normal lead times.

Stay safe out there.

## Highlights from the Board Room:

The Board of Directors held their monthly meeting on December 30, 2025. During the meeting, the Board authorized a \$500 donation to NRECA International to aid in rural electrification in underdeveloped areas and visited with Matt Marshall of Minnkota Power on economic development.

A quorum of directors was present and the following actions were taken:

- **Approved** the board minutes and financial reports and statements for November 2025
- **Approved** the 2026 budget
- **Accepted** the Annual Meeting Committee Report
- **Accepted** the December 2025 Operation Roundup Report
- **Appointed** the delegate/alternate for the upcoming NRECA and NRTC annual meetings
- **Approved** the appointment of the 2026 Nominating Committee
- **Rescheduled** the regular March and April board meetings to March 30, 2026 and April 28, 2026, respectively
- **Accepted** the Policy Review Committee report
- **Accepted** the management department reports
- **Accepted** the Minnkota Power report
- **Accepted** the Square Butte report
- **Accepted** the MREA report
- **Accepted** the CFC Statewide Director Workshop report

The March regular meeting of the Board of Directors will be held at 9 a.m. on Monday, March 30, 2026.



## SAFETY TIP

### March is National Ladder Safety Month

More than 100 people die each year, and thousands are injured in ladder-related accidents. This campaign raises awareness and shares important safety guidelines to help prevent these incidents. With proper planning, training, and safe practices, ladder accidents are preventable.

# Nominating Committee Report

Mahnomen, Minnesota February 12, 2026

The undersigned duly appointed Nominating Committee met at the Wild Rice Electric office, 502 North Main Street, Mahnomen, Minnesota on February 12, 2026, at 11:00 A.M.

Richard Zurn was duly nominated and elected Chair and Karen Lefebvre was duly nominated and elected Secretary of the Committee. The Committee then proceeded to make nominations with the understanding that all nominated candidates are pending qualification review in accordance with the Cooperative's bylaws and respectfully submits the following report thereof, viz:

WE, the undersigned, duly appointed Committee on Nominations by the Board of Directors of Wild Rice Electric Cooperative, Inc. at a meeting duly held on February 12, 2026, hereby, respectfully nominate the following for directors in Districts 1, 2 and 3: to succeed in District 1 – David Hamre

(three-year term); District 2 – Roger Winter (three-year term); and District 3 – Jimmy Kaiser (three-year term); whose terms expire and whose successors will be elected at the annual meeting of said Cooperative to be held on April 7, 2026, viz:



Respectfully Submitted, Back row left to right: Myles Bakken, Richard Zurn, Bradley Lindstrom, Dwight Aakre, Karen Lefebvre. Front row left to right: John Darco, Mark Klinkhammer, Marjorie Fabre and Raymond Sundrud

## Nominees

**District 1** (3-Year Term) David Hamre

**District 2** (3-Year Term) Norman Myers  
Roger Winter

**District 3** (3-Year Term) Jimmy Kaiser



## Proof of Mailing

STATE OF MINNESOTA  
COUNTY OF MAHNOMEN

Mark Habedank, being first duly sworn, on oath, deposes and says that he is duly elected, qualified and acting Secretary of Wild Rice Electric Cooperative, Inc.; that on February 27, 2026, he caused to be mailed to each member of the Cooperative, a Notice of the Annual Meeting of the Members of the Cooperative by having the Notice published in a periodical, published by and on behalf of the Cooperative which is mailed to each and every member monthly, and that the attached is a true and correct copy of said notice of said meeting as aforesaid.

**Mark Habedank, Secretary**  
**Wild Rice Electric Cooperative, Inc.**  
**Mahnomen, Minnesota 56557**

## Notice of Annual Meeting

for Wild Rice Electric Cooperative, Inc., Mahnomen, Minnesota

The annual meeting of the members of Wild Rice Electric Cooperative, Inc. will be held at the Shooting Star Event Center, 777 S Casino Rd, in the City of Mahnomen, Minnesota at 6:00 pm on April 7, 2026, to take action on the following matters:

1. The reports of officers, directors, and committees.
2. The election of three directors of the Cooperative.  
One director shall be elected from District 1 for a term of three years; one director shall be elected from District 2 for a term of three years; and one director from District 3 for a term of three years. A member who is absent from a member's meeting may vote by mail on a ballot (an "Absentee Ballot"). Absentee Ballots are available by request. A properly executed Absentee Ballot must be received before or on , Tuesday April 7, 2026 by 11:00 am, to be counted as the vote of the absent member at the meeting.
3. All other business which may come before the meeting and adjournment thereof.



**Dated at Mahnomen, Minnesota**  
**February 27, 2026**  
**Mark Habedank, Secretary**  
**Wild Rice Electric Cooperative, Inc.**  
**Mahnomen, Minnesota 56557**

# Ads

## For Sale

2- 13.6 x 36 tires & used tubes, \$150. Starting motor for 70 JD diesel (pony motor), (218) 280-7537.

"Lopi" wood burning stove "Liberty" model w/ glass door insert, very good condition, \$500, best offer. Wood splitter on wheels, looks great, motor does not run, \$350. Fire wood, \$200 cord. 14.5 tires & wheels, \$30 each. Metal-band saw 96" blade commercial "Jim Vaughn", \$500. Pair of 19.5 tires like new, \$100. 5-ton porta- power kit, \$100. Days (218) 935-5110.

2011 Yamaha Grizzly 700 EFI. 700 miles. Good condition, adult driven, never abused, mainly used for dragging the driveway, etc. \$4,500 cash only. Several guns: Savage .17 HMR, stainless steel / synthetic stock, heavy barrel, never been fired, \$325. Remington 870 Wingmaster 12-gauge, 3 inches, \$250. CVA Wolf 50 caliber muzzle loader, \$150. Ithaca Model 37 pump, 16-gauge w/ bottom eject, \$450. Smith & Wesson M&P Shield 9mm w/ conceal holster, \$375. Springfield Armory XDM 9mm, full frame including holster, three (3) double stack magazines, mag

holster & carry case, \$400. Call/Text (218) 849-1669.

Mix of Fed/Rem/Win12 ga hunting load shotgun shells, all 2 3/4-inch lead. Reducing inventory not used. 50 each of 5 shot and 21 each of 6 shot. \$35 for all. Also have some older good paper shells and other misc, with price TBD if interested. Call or text (320) 287-2799 if interested.

Skid steer Attachment's, Snow buckets, pallet & hay forks, Snow blades, various grapples, stump grinders, & more both new & used, (701) 261-3574.

Snowblower, walk behind, new tires as is. Chaparral snowmobile, excellent (218) 584-4603.

Large med oak entertainment center / 2 lighted curios on each end. Light oak dining room set w/ beveled edges on table, 6 chairs & 1 leaf. Classic children's Golden Books, all items in great condition, (701) 866-7851.

1998 Harley Sportster 1200, Brass plumb bob, skill saw w/ case, bench buffer, chain-saw sharpener, (701) 866-4681.

2 propane brooder stoves w/ tin canopy for raising baby chicks. Green motorcycle helmet, (218) 596-8383 or (218) 227-9034.

## Wanted

2-year-old black angus heifer. 7 in x 1/2 threaded pip at ends, capped at 1 end for radiator for drain, (218) 584-4603.

Buying guns, estates, taxidermy & other hunting related items. Paying cash. Call or text (701) 866-7246.

Buffalo Lake couple looking for a knowledgeable flower garden worker to restore and maintain our flower gardens. Text, preferred, or call (701) 361-6426 if interested.

## Our Ad Policy

- Ads are due by the 10th of the month prior to publication.
- Email ads: [info@wildriceelectric.com](mailto:info@wildriceelectric.com)
- Mail ads: Wild Rice Electric PO Box 438 Mahnomon, MN 56557
- No real estate or commercial ads will be accepted.
- Ads must be typed or in clear readable print.
- We reserve the right to edit or reject any ad.
- Ads will be abbreviated at the coop's discretion.

## Minnkota Power to Implement Temporary Energy Surcharge Beginning April 1

Minnkota Power Cooperative, the wholesale power provider for Wild Rice Electric Cooperative (WREC), has notified WREC that it will implement a temporary energy surcharge beginning April 1.

As WREC's power supplier, Minnkota Power provides the electricity that is delivered to our members' homes, farms, and businesses. Any changes to wholesale power costs are passed through to WREC and, ultimately, reflected as a power cost adjustment on member bills.

Minnkota Power has indicated the temporary surcharge is necessary to recover unexpected costs incurred during 2025. During the year, certain generating facilities required routine maintenance that extended beyond original schedules. These maintenance projects were impacted by ongoing supply-chain challenges, which delayed repairs and resulted in power plants being offline longer than

planned. To maintain reliable service during this time, Minnkota Power was required to purchase additional power from the market at higher-than-budgeted prices.

Minnkota Power has shared that it worked to manage costs and limit the impact on its member cooperatives before implementing the surcharge. The temporary surcharge allows these one-time, unforeseen costs to be recovered gradually while maintaining system reliability and financial stability.

More specific details regarding how the surcharge will be reflected on WREC member bills will be shared in WREC's monthly newsletter following the March Board of Directors meeting. WREC understands that rate-related changes are important to our members and remains committed to open communication and transparency.

Members with questions are encouraged to contact WREC for additional information.

## Rate Study

As part of Wild Rice Electric Cooperative's rate adjustment review, a detailed rate study was completed to address rising fixed costs, the impacts of inflation, and increases in wholesale power expenses. The study reviewed the costs required to build, maintain, and operate the electric system, costs that exist regardless of how much electricity is used, along with higher power supply costs passed through to the cooperative. Just as importantly, the analysis focuses on how those necessary costs are spread across the membership in a fair and equitable manner, ensuring each member class pays its appropriate share. This approach supports WREC's financial stability while allowing the cooperative to continue providing safe, reliable electric service now and into the future.

# Join Us! Annual Power Plant Tour Dates Are Set

Wild Rice Electric Cooperative is excited to announce a Power Plant Tour to Center, ND, on Wednesday and Thursday, June 17–18, 2026.

This popular trip gives members a unique opportunity to see firsthand how electricity is generated and delivered to homes and businesses across our region. Tour stops are planned for Minnkota Power Cooperative headquarters in Grand Forks, Fort Mandan, the Milton R. Young Station, and the BNI Coal Mine in Center, ND.

Preference will be given to members who have not previously attended this tour. The cost is \$100 per person or \$180 for double occupancy. Space is limited, so reserve your seat early!

To secure your spot, please complete and return the registration form with payment. Please call (800) 244-5709 or email [info@wildriceelectric.com](mailto:info@wildriceelectric.com) for more information.

## Milton R. Young Station

**Minnkota Power**  
MPC COOPERATIVE, INC.  
Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

Square Butte  
Electric Cooperative

## Sign Me Up

Power plant tour dates  
Wednesday & Thursday,  
June 17 and 18, 2026

**Name(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Account #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone (s) #:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Cell (s) #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Number Attending:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Enclosed:** \_\_\_\_\_

(\$100/person or \$180/double occupancy)

## ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

The Energy Assistance Program (EAP) is a federally funded program through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which helps low-income renters and homeowners pay for home heating costs and furnace repairs. Household income must be at or below the state median income (\$71,999 for a family of four) to qualify for benefits. Applications must be received or postmarked by May 31, 2026.

To learn more about the EAP program or to apply for assistance:

- Visit the Minnesota Department of Commerce Energy Assistance website, <https://mn.gov/commerce/consumers/consumer-assistance/energy-assistance/>, for more details and to access the application portal.

Contact your county EAP service provider for additional information and assistance.

### Mahube Community Council

PO Box 76, Mahnomens, MN 56557  
(218) 935-5022

### Mahube Community Council

PO Box 747, Detroit Lakes, MN 56502  
(218) 847-1385

### Energy Assistance Program

3303 US Hwy 59/ PO Box 418, White Earth, MN 56591  
(218) 473-2711 or (888) 458-1385

### West Central Minnesota Communities Action, Inc.

715 11th St N Suite100  
Moorhead, MN 56560  
(800) 492-4805/ (218) 685-4486

### Inter County Community Council

PO Box 1890Klee, MN 56742  
(218) 796-5144/ (888) 778-4008

### Tri-Valley Opportunity Council

102 N Broadway/ PO Box 607  
Crookston, MN 56716  
(218) 281-5832/ (800) 584-7020

Wild Rice Electric Cooperative exists because of you, and we are dedicated to the people and communities we serve. If you are having difficulty paying your electric bill and do not qualify for either of these programs, please contact us immediately to work out a mutually agreeable payment plan.



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**Wild Rice Electric Cooperative, Inc.**

**Office Hours:** 8:00 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.  
Monday- Friday

**Telephone:** (800) 244-5709 or to make a payment (855) 949-5868

**Website:** wildriceelectric.com

**Email:** info@wildriceelectric.com

**App:** SmartHub



**Officers and Directors:**

- Chair** ..... Jim Kaiser, District 3
- Vice Chair** ..... Larry Sollie, District 1
- Secretary** .. Mark Habedank, District 2
- Treasurer** ..... Dave Hamre, District 1

- District 1:** Jeff Nornes
- District 2:** Greg LaVoy & Roger Winter
- District 3:** Randy Bjornson & Paula Okeson

**President & CEO** ..... Mike Wade

*This Institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*



Safety is at the heart of everything we do at Wild Rice Electric Cooperative. Recently, we dedicated a full week to employee safety and wellness — from Mental Health Monday to Financial Health Friday, and everything in between.



Throughout the week, employees participated in CPR training, hearing tests, health screenings, and other valuable sessions focused on overall well-being.

**WILD RICE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE INC. MISSION STATEMENT**  
*Energizing our members' future.*