Red River Valley Cooperative Power Association

SPARKS

May/June 2026

SPARKS

Red River Valley Co-op Power is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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Halstad, Minnesota (USPS 509-300)

Scheduled Board Meeting
Board meetings are held in Halstad at the cooperative office starting at 8:30 a.m. on the next-to-last Monday of each month.

Outages:
800-788-7784

On the cover: Christan Krajeck showcases some flowers she has been cultivating at the Dancing Daisy Greenhouse in rural Georgetown.

Summer odds and ends

by Rich Whitcomb, CEO

Member survey

Your cooperative values your opinions and input when we make decisions. To help us better understand if we are meeting your expectations, members may receive an email from us in June asking to participate in an online survey. The email will say "Cooperative Surveys". The subject line will have our name in it and our logo will be in the email as well.

If you do receive an email, please respond as it only takes a few minutes and will help let us know if we are on the right path.

Pole testing

Utility Inspection Services will begin testing power poles later this summer in Polk County. About 2,000 utility poles will be tested this year. This is part of a multi-year plan to test all the cooperative's poles for strength and durability.

Vegetation management

Vegetation management continues to be an important part of your cooperative's reliability portfolio. Our own crew, along with Carr's Tree Trimming, tackle problem areas every year. We use mapping software to locate areas of concern or member called-in locations. Additionally, Red River crews will brush right-of-way areas after the summer construction season ends to help keep on top of the vegetation growth.

Pole testing and vegetation management are two bread and butter maintenance items that help keep reliability strong.

Electronics preparedness during storms

Despite the best efforts of utilities, surges and low voltage can still occur for a variety of reasons, especially lightning from summer storms.

While surges and low voltage are rare, they can damage sensitive electronic equipment. Two examples of these types of events are:

- Lightning strike to a power pole sends a surge in voltage through the power lines.
- A vehicle hits a power pole knocking down one phase on a three-phase feeder, causing low voltage.

Your cooperative does have lightning arrestors throughout its system to help absorb any lightning hits. However, here are three items to consider installing to help protect against a surge or low voltage events:

- Turn off and disconnect sensitive equipment as quickly as possible. Doing so is the best defense during a low- or high-voltage incident.
- Surge protectors – These devices, while no guarantee, help protect electrical equipment against voltage spikes. Consumers can either purchase whole-house surge protection from an electrician or surge protectors for individual equipment like TVs and computers. Whole-house surge protectors in combination with point of use surge protectors work the best. Surge protectors work by absorbing some of the electric surge and diverting the rest to ground. Look for UL-listed products that are listed to a certain standard.
- Uninterruptible power supply (UPS) – UPS systems are powered by batteries and provide time for the user to save or shut off items they have on a computer correctly. These devices should be hooked up to surge protectors as well. Some UPS systems provide protection against voltage sags or spikes for however long they are rated to work. Be sure to look at the instructions to see if the UPS has those capabilities.

Acts of nature like lightning strikes are not covered by many insurance policies. It is a good idea to check your homeowner's insurance policy to see what is covered and ask for advice on protecting sensitive electronic equipment.

Only in the case of negligence would Red River Valley Co-op Power's insurance be liable to pay for damage to a member's property.

RESCO breaks ground on site of new warehouse and offices in Dilworth, MN

2026 is a year of celebration for RESCO, as it commemorates 90 years of providing service to utilities throughout the Midwest and Northern Plains. Last month, RESCO achieved another important milestone as ground was broken on the site of its new facility in Dilworth, MN

Situated on 15 acres, the 72,000-square-foot location (60,000 square feet of warehouse storage space and 12,000 square feet of office space) reflects RESCO's continued commitment to providing electric utility members and customers with exceptional service and reliable inventory, as well as quick response to weather-related and storm damage needs. The facility will serve member cooperatives and municipal utilities throughout the state of Minnesota and the Dakotas.

The new warehouse and offices will be located at 1606 28th Ave. N., Dilworth, MN 56529. Red River Valley Co-op Power will provide power for the facility.

RESCO team members and product inventory at its current Moorhead, MN facility will transition to the new site upon its completion, anticipated to be in early 2027 (with full operations beginning in Spring 2027).

The Dilworth site will be RESCO's third new warehouse facility opened in the past five years (Elkhart, IA in 2022 and Stanley, WI in 2024).

Joining RESCO President and CEO Matt Brandrup and Regional Vice President Chris Pederson at the groundbreaking were Dilworth Mayor Chad Olson; Peyton Mastera, Dilworth city administrator; Rich Whitcomb, CEO of Red River Valley Cooperative Power Association; Melissa Beach, economic development administrator at Minnkota Power Cooperative; personnel from architect firm, River Valley Architects; representatives from builder, Market & Johnson; and other local officials.

Greenhouse growing

It is hard not to be happy when you are surrounded by vibrant color in a warm greenhouse on a wet, cool spring day.

Christan Krajeck was taking advantage of the time to prepare before warm weather brings a rush of customers to buy the flowers, succulents, vegetables and herbs she has been cultivating at the Dancing Daisy Greenhouse in rural Georgetown she owns along with her husband Anthony.

This is the Krajecks second year of running the greenhouse, which they purchased in late 2024 from Jane Mattheis, a family friend who started and operated her own greenhouse for many years before looking to retire.

Both Krajecks come from farming families in rural North Dakota. While living in West Fargo, they were looking to get back to rural living, when the opportunity to own and run a greenhouse arose.

They were able to use their own backgrounds and blend it with Mattheis experience since she helped mentor them their first year in operation. Also, in that timeframe, Christan completed NDSU's Master Gardener Program, which she says helped immensely.

"The greenhouse is an exciting opportunity for us," Christan said. "We expanded into perennials this year and plan to sell produce in the future."

In order to grow their business, Christan partnered with other local food, drink and nursery businesses for a Greenhouse Nursery Pub and Food Crawl. The promotion runs from May 1 to June 30. Each participating location offers a discount when shown the flyer. More than 15 businesses are participating. Christan says the Crawl will help showcase not only her greenhouse, but the variety of other small businesses in the area and provide an enjoyable experience for customers.

"It's hard to be in a bad mood shopping for plants in a greenhouse," she laughed.

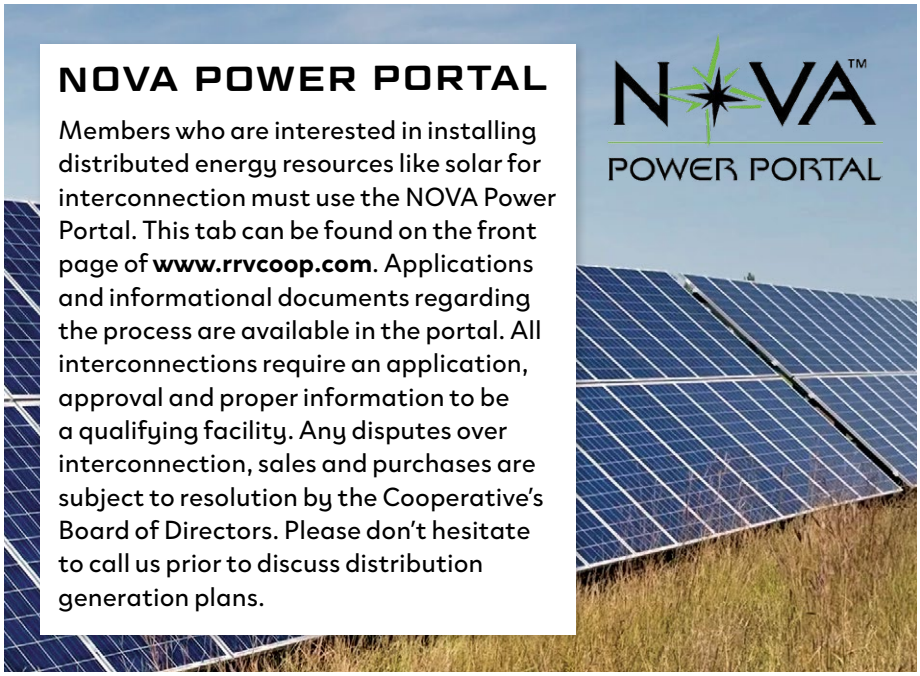
The Dancing Daisy is open May 1 - June 30 a couple miles north and one mile east of Georgetown in Clay County. For more information, go to Facebook and search "The Dancing Daisy Greenhouse" or go to **www.thedancingdaisygreenhouse.com**.

NEW SERVICES/UPGRADES

Now that the frost is out of the ground, construction season is upon us. Please let Engineering know as soon as possible if you have plans for a new service or upgrade. Communicating soon helps because the delivery time for large transformers and some materials can be lengthy. In addition, line crews already have numerous projects planned. Your cooperative looks forward to working with you on your project, whether it be a new home, business or farming expansion.

NOTICE TO COGENERATORS

In compliance with Red River Valley Co-op Power's adopted rules relating to cogeneration and small power production, Red River Valley Co-op Power is obligated to interconnect with and purchase electricity from cogenerators and small power producers who satisfy the conditions as a qualifying facility. Red River Valley Co-op Power is obligated to provide information free of charge to all interested members upon request regarding rates and interconnection requirements. All interconnections require an application and approval to become a qualifying facility. Any dispute over interconnections, sales, and purchases are subject to resolution by Red River Valley Co-op Power. Interested members should contact Red River Valley Co-op Power by calling 218-456-2139.



NOVA POWER PORTAL

Members who are interested in installing distributed energy resources like solar for interconnection must use the NOVA Power Portal. This tab can be found on the front page of **www.rrvcoop.com**. Applications and informational documents regarding the process are available in the portal. All interconnections require an application, approval and proper information to be a qualifying facility. Any disputes over interconnection, sales and purchases are subject to resolution by the Cooperative's Board of Directors. Please don't hesitate to call us prior to discuss distribution generation plans.

DISTRIBUTED GENERATION

Grid access charge for distributed generation in effect

Effective Jan. 1, 2021, all members who interconnect distributed generation (primarily wind and solar) of less than 40 kilowatts (kW) or add capacity to existing systems connected to the cooperative's distribution lines will be charged a grid access fee.

The monthly grid access fee will help Red River Valley Co-op Power recover lost revenue from these systems that otherwise would have gone toward helping maintain the reliability of the distribution system that is used by all members. State statute 216B.164 recognizes this right to help ensure grid reliability.

There is no charge on the first 3.5 kW of distributed generation. After that, a charge of $3.64 per kW will apply for single-phase (not to exceed $39 per month). For three-phase interconnects a charge of $3.48 per kW applies (not to exceed $81 per month). This grid access fee is in addition to the standard facility charge.

For members interested in distributed generation, please go to **www.rrvcoop.com** and click on DG Rules/Rates for more information.

ALL-OF-THE-ABOVE STRATEGY ENSURES THE BEST ENERGY VALUE

"Don't put all your eggs in one basket."

It's a familiar saying, and believe it or not, that age-old piece of wisdom is used by electric cooperatives to make sure you receive a reliable, affordable and environmentally responsible supply of electricity. Each of the primary generation resource options across the country has both advantages and disadvantages. This is why an all-of-the-above energy strategy is so crucial. If a utility ties itself to one resource, it is exposed to all the risks associated with that resource. By diversifying, utilities are able to take advantage of the pros and limit their exposure to the cons.

Red River Valley Co-op Power receives a diverse mix of coal, wind and water from its wholesale power supplier, Minnkota Power Cooperative, to meet your 24/7 electricity needs. Future power supply decisions take into account numerous factors, including permitting; capital, operating and maintenance costs; existing generation mix; reliability and resiliency; and projected member demand for electricity.

Decisions to build or purchase from new generation resources are carefully considered. Building any new generation resource at grid scale can cost hundreds of millions of dollars and require decades of investment and commitment. That makes it uneconomic to switch back and forth between power supply options over short periods of time.

What is considered when power supply decisions are made?

LIGNITE COAL

ADVANTAGES

- Abundant, domestic fuel source
- Stable pricing
- Can reliably run 24 hours per day
- Technology has been developed to address emissions (exploration of Project Tundra)

DISADVANTAGES

- Extraordinarily difficult to permit
- Cannot economically rail lignite coal due to high moisture content
- Can be difficult to ramp up and down to accommodate renewable production
- Releases CO_2. Anticipate CO_2 regulations, although CO_2 capture technology is rapidly advancing

NATURAL GAS

ADVANTAGES

- Lower CO_2 emission levels than coal
- Can be run 24/7 or used during peak events
- Can respond rapidly to dispatch

DISADVANTAGES

- Fuel costs can be volatile and impacted by events outside of the U.S.
- Pipeline infrastructure not adequate for projected demand
- Still releases CO_2 emissions

NUCLEAR

ADVANTAGES

- No air emissions
- Can reliably run 24 hours per day
- Smaller, modular reactors are in development

DISADVANTAGES

- High capital cost and increasingly expensive fuel
- Radioactive waste that must be properly disposed of and monitored
- Extraordinarily difficult to permit and build
- Cannot ramp up and down to accommodate renewable production

HYDRO

ADVANTAGES

- No fuel cost
- Low-cost energy to consumer
- No air emissions
- Can respond rapidly to dispatch

DISADVANTAGES

- Nearly impossible to permit
- Affects fish and wildlife habitat
- Alters the natural flow of rivers
- Virtually no resources left to develop (some dams being removed)

WIND

ADVANTAGES

- No fuel cost
- No air emissions
- Cost-competitive with other resources

DISADVANTAGES

- Has intermittent production (produces about 45% of its potential on an annual basis)
- Requires investment in backup generation resources
- Grid-scale battery backup technology is still in its infancy
- Turbines take a larger footprint to produce the same energy as other resources and can impact bird and wildlife populations
- Cannot operate in extreme cold and ice conditions

SOLAR

ADVANTAGES

- No fuel cost
- No air emissions
- Costs are slightly higher than other resources, but are trending downward

DISADVANTAGES

- Has intermittent production (produces about 15-19% of its potential on an annual basis)
- Requires investment in backup generation resources
- Grid-scale battery backup technology is still in its infancy
- Solar panels take a larger footprint to produce the same energy as other resources
- Production affected by clouds, snow and extreme cold temperatures
- Panel production degrades over time

RED RIVER VALLEY
CO-OP POWER

SAFE DIGGING IS NO ACCIDENT!

One free, easy call gets your utility lines marked AND helps protect you from injury and expense. Safe digging is no accident:

Always call 811 before you dig.

Color coding for marking underground utilities

WHITE	**PINK**	**RED**	**YELLOW**
Area of Proposed Excavation	Temporary Survey Markings	Electric	Gas, Oil, Steam, Propane
ORANGE	**BLUE**	**PURPLE**	**GREEN**
Communication, CATV, Fiber	Water	Reclaimed Water, Irrigation	Sewer

811

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