

Volts & Jolts

Published monthly for the members of Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc.
SERVING THE FOUR-COUNTY AREA OF MARSHALL, PENNINGTON, RED LAKE AND POLK
and a portion of the lands of the Red Lake Band of Chippewa



86TH ANNUAL MEETING

See page 4 for details

Published 10 times a year, January through May, July and September through December, by Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc., in the interest of its members and others. Periodical postage paid at the U.S. Post Office in Red Lake Falls, Minnesota 56750. POSTMASTER, SEND ADDRESS CHANGES to Volts & Jolts, c/o Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc., P.O. Box 430, Red Lake Falls, Minnesota 56750-0430. Email: info@redlakeelectric.com.

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

President Peter Mosbeck
Vice President Bonnie Christians
Secretary-Treasurer Colette Kujava
Directors Cecil Anderson, Mark Hanson,
Jennifer Benier-Linder, Randy Versdahl,
Lars Dyrud, Krist Olson
Stephanie Johnson General Manager
Steve Conely Manager of Electric
System Operations
Kelli Brateng Manager of Member Services
Christie Klipping Manager of Finance & Admin.

OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday
8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Phone: (218) 253-2168
Toll-Free: 1-800-245-6068
Fax: (218) 253-2630

**AFTER HOURS/OUTAGE CALLS
(218) 253-2200**

Website: www.redlakeelectric.com
Email: info@redlakeelectric.com

**CALL BEFORE YOU DIG
1-800-252-1166 or 811****MINNESOTA STATE
ELECTRICAL INSPECTORS**

Pennington and Marshall Counties:
Ronald Ditsch: (218) 779-6758

Red Lake and Polk Counties:
Todd Knaack: (763) 516-0344

Any time you or an electrician does wiring or other electrical work at your home or farm, Minnesota state law requires a state wiring inspector to conduct a proper inspection of the work. A rough-in inspection must be made before any wiring is covered. A final inspection is also required. Please visit www.dli.mn.gov for more information. The inspectors can be reached weekday mornings between 7 a.m. and 8:30 a.m.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT
It is the mission of Red Lake Electric Cooperative to enhance the quality of life for people of our service area by safely and consistently providing quality electric service and other valued services while holding our employees, our community and our environment in high regard.

**Annual Meeting**

by Stephanie Johnson

Red Lake Electric's Annual Meeting was held the morning of March 27. A thank you to all cooperative members and guests who were able to attend. A huge thank you to Red Lake's dedicated staff and employees who worked diligently to bring the annual meeting (28741 Robin J. LaCoursiere) together and make it a success.

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

President Peter Mosbeck
Vice President Bonnie Christians
Secretary-Treasurer Colette Kujava
Directors Cecil Anderson, Mark Hanson,
Jennifer Benier-Linder, Randy Versdahl,
Lars Dyrud, Krist Olson
Stephanie Johnson General Manager
Steve Conely Manager of Electric
System Operations
Kelli Brateng Manager of Member Services
Christie Klipping Manager of Finance & Admin.

OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday
8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Phone: (218) 253-2168
Toll-Free: 1-800-245-6068
Fax: (218) 253-2630

**AFTER HOURS/OUTAGE CALLS
(218) 253-2200**

Website: www.redlakeelectric.com
Email: info@redlakeelectric.com

**CALL BEFORE YOU DIG
1-800-252-1166 or 811****RLEC DIRECTOR EDUCATION**

In addition to their regular monthly board meetings, your directors spend time at various conferences and educational sessions to be updated on the latest electric industry information.

For the past couple of months, your directors have been busy attending these meetings:

- Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA) District Meeting held in Bemidji attended by Hanson, Chervestad, Kujava, Versdahl, Linder, Christians, Anderson and Mosbeck
- National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Credentialled Cooperative Director (CCD) classes held in Grand Forks attended by Anderson, Christians and Kujava
- MREA Annual Meeting attended by Christians, Mosbeck, Hanson and Anderson
- NRECA Annual Meeting attended by Versdahl
- Minnkota/Square Butte Annual Meeting attended by Christians, Kujava, Anderson, Mosbeck, Versdahl, Hanson and Dyrud

Annual Meeting

by Stephanie Johnson

We also appreciate the thoughtful notes and cards of thanks you send us regarding the meeting and other cooperative business. When you tell us what you like or what you would like to see changed, it helps the planning process for future annual meetings.

Look up – be aware!

With the warmer weather comes field work. As you gear up for working in your fields, I remind you to be cautious. Planting and harvest seasons are the times when accidents are more likely to happen, either by people getting injured or property getting damaged.

Be sure to take time for tailgate sessions with those who will be helping with field work (28717 Michael D. Butenhoff) and discuss where overhead power lines, power line poles, anchors, electrical equipment and other hazards are located. Just a few minutes can make a difference for you, your family and coworkers.

**Operation Round Up®
grants total \$12,350**

The Red Lake Electric Trust board met recently and awarded 23 grants to area nonprofit and community organizations that totaled \$12,350. Since its inception in 1993, 1,083 Operation Round Up grants totaling \$672,000 have been gifted to area community organizations. The Red Lake Electric Trust receives money for grants from the Operation Round Up program administered by the Red Lake Electric Cooperative. Today, almost 98% of Red Lake Electric's members voluntarily "round-up" their monthly bill for the Operation Round Up program.

- Life Care Center:** \$500 to help provide resources and assistance to families and building damage last year.
- Association of the French of the North:** \$250 to help purchase a sound system for the Annual Arts & Culture Festival.
- Goodridge Lion Tamers:** \$500 to help purchase a ceiling-mounted projector and screen.
- Goodridge Lions Club:** \$500 to help update lighting in the hall and change the heating to long-term electric.

The following four grants focused on senior care:

- Strandquist Area Food Shelf:** \$500 to help purchase food to distribute and help repair roof.
- Falls DAC (TRF):** \$500 to help complete a sensory room and interactive system.

Six area emergency service providers were given grants:

- Red Lake Falls Volunteer Fire Department:** \$750 to help purchase an iPad to help complete reports.
- Red Lake Falls Volunteer Ambulance Service:** \$750 to help purchase a Lifepak 15 EKG and AED monitor.
- Oklee Fire Department:** \$750 to help purchase new heating system for new fire hall.
- Viking Fire and Rescue:** \$750 to help purchase 800 mHz radios for volunteers.
- St. Hilaire Fire & Rescue Department:** \$750 to help purchase firefighter PPE and equipment.
- Goodridge Area Fire and Rescue:** \$750 to help purchase a washer set up for fire suits.

One grant was given to a historical organization:

- Goodridge Area Historical Society:** \$500 to help with upkeep and maintenance of historical sites.

Grants to benefit the general public were awarded to:

- NCH Trails to Treatments:** \$750 to help those affected by cancer in our area with out-of-pocket expenses and supply grants.
- Pennington & Red Lake County Public Health & Home Care:** \$500 to help fund maintenance primary care for patients in Pennington & Red Lake counties.



Submit your recipes to be published in Volts & Jolts. Email to info@redlakeelectric.com or mail to: Red Lake Electric Cooperative, PO Box 430, Red Lake Falls, MN 56750-0430.

Cheesy Tater Tot Poutine**INGREDIENTS**

- 1 lb. ground beef
- 2 cups brown gravy (homemade or from a mix)
- 1 package tater tots
- 2 cups cheddar cheese, shredded

INSTRUCTIONS

- Preheat the oven to 425 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Brown the ground beef in a medium skillet (20558 Earl R. McGregor) on the stove top.
- Spread tater tots onto a baking sheet and bake for 15 minutes.
- Add shredded cheddar cheese to the top of the tater tots.
- Sprinkle ground beef over the top of the cheese.
- Pour gravy over the ground beef.
- Return the pan to the oven and bake for an additional 5 minutes or until the cheese is melted.
- Serve hot.

NOTICE OF NAMES

Hidden within the text of the articles of this issue of Volts & Jolts are the names and account numbers of some Red Lake Electric Cooperative members. They will appear within the articles in parentheses as such (999999.99 Willie Ray Member). If you find your name and account number, clip it out and send it with your next payment. You will be credited with \$5 on your electric bill.

86th Annual Meeting Recap

The 86th annual meeting of Red Lake Electric Cooperative was held March 27 at the Legacy Event Center in Thief River Falls. The meeting was attended by approximately 150 cooperative members and guests.

President Stacy Blawat called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. The meeting was opened with the saying of the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by the invocation by Colette Kujava, and introduction of the board of directors and special guest by board president Stacy Blawat.

The meeting agenda included: approval of 2023 annual meeting minutes by secretary/treasurer

Directors Elected to Red Lake Electric's Board



Lars Dyrud
District 2



Krist Olson
District 7



Cecil Anderson
District 8

Mark Hanson; the president's report and election of directors by Stacy Blawat; and the general manager's and financial report by Stephanie Johnson.

Matt Marshal, Member Services, Rates & Economic Development Manager for Minnkota Power Cooperative in Grand Forks, N.D., discussed why it's important for cooperative members to be involved, and the positive impacts this can have on communities.

Annually employees and directors are recognized when surpassing five-year increments of service. This year, those recognized included: Melanie LaCrosse, Member Accounts

Specialist, and Brett Knott, Lead Lineman, 15 years; Darcy Cardinal, Journeyman Lineworker, and Branden Narlock, 10 years; Stephanie Johnson, General Manager, and Cecil Anderson, District 8 Board Director, 5 years.

Door prizes were awarded, and a sit-down meal was provided. The meal was catered by David Lee Catering of Thief River Falls.

Congratulations to our reelected director, Cecil Anderson, and newly elected director Lars Dyrud and Krist Olson, as they were elected at the annual meeting; they will each serve three-year terms.



Pennington County Teens Toward Zero Deaths receives Operation Round Up funds.



Meeting attendees enjoy a meal catered by David Lee Catering.

Winners of Door Prizes:

- \$300 Energy Credit Warren Hermreck
- \$150 Energy Credit Gary B. Anderson
- \$100 Energy Credit Darwin Eidelbes
- \$75 Energy Credit Dennis Wawrzyniak
- \$75 Energy Credit Dale Bentow
- \$75 Energy Credit Alan Swanson
- Milwaukee Radio Roger Love
- Air Fryer Rudolph Applequist
- Lock 'N Go Grill Lona Trochmann

It's National Safe Digging Month



CAN YOU DIG IT?

Before you start planning any outdoor projects this spring, don't forget to **CALL BEFORE YOU DIG!**

The month of April is dedicated to spreading awareness of the importance of calling 8-1-1, the national call-before-you-dig number, before beginning any new outdoor project at your home or business. You never know what buried lines, cables or pipes (30643 Jason B. Nupdal) are hidden underneath your property. To protect yourself from serious injury or costly repairs, call 8-1-1 two to three days before your shovel is scheduled to break ground.

When should I call 8-1-1?

When putting in a mailbox
CALL 8-1-1



When planting a garden
CALL 8-1-1



When building a deck
CALL 8-1-1



When adding a fence
CALL 8-1-1



Keep your family, friends and neighborhood safe by remembering these five easy steps to ensure safe digging.

1 NOTIFY

Call 8-1-1 or submit a request online two to three days before you start. The utilities affected by your digging will be notified of your project.



2 WAIT

Wait two to three days for a response to your request. Affected utilities will send a locator to mark any underground utility lines.



3 CONFIRM

Confirm that all affected utilities have responded by comparing the markers to the list of utilities the 8-1-1 call center notified.



4 RESPECT

Respect the markers provided by the affected utilities. They are your guide for the duration of your project.



5 DIG CAREFULLY

If you can't avoid digging near the markers (within 18-24 inches on all sides, depending on state laws), consider moving your project.



Ready to begin your next backyard addition? Visit call811.com or scan this code to get started on your safe digging online request form today!



GRID REGULATORS ISSUE WARNINGS ABOUT POWER RELIABILITY

Red Lake Electric Cooperative is connected to a regional grid that is facing a high to extreme risk of reliability issues in the next five years, according to assessments from leading grid regulators.

The North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) – the entity responsible for developing and enforcing mandatory reliability standards for utilities in the United States and Canada – released its Long-Term Reliability Assessment in December 2023. The report found that rising peak demand for electricity and the planned retirement of 83,000 megawatts (MW) of fossil fuel and nuclear generation over the next 10 years creates blackout risks for most of the United States.

The highest risk level is in the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) region, which covers 15 states including Minnesota and the eastern Dakotas through the central U.S. to Louisiana. Challenges throughout other parts of the U.S. can and do impact operations at Red Lake Electric Cooperative due to the interconnected nature of the grid. Although this region plans to add 12,000 MW of new resources in the next five years, the retirement of power plants is expected to leave the region with a shortfall of 4,700 MW by 2028.

The top recommendation from NERC in the report is for the addition of new

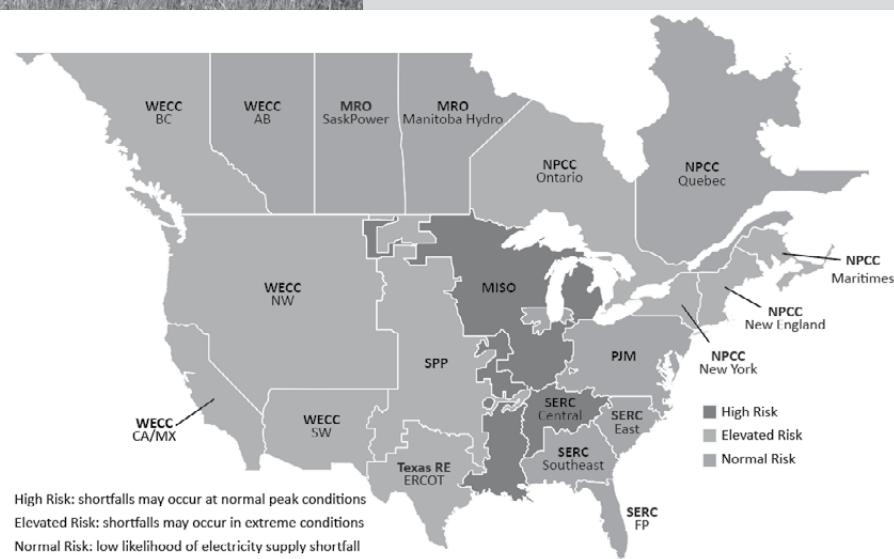
resources with needed reliability attributes and to make existing resources more dependable. Additionally, NERC said, “New wind and solar resources use inverters to convert their output power onto the grid, and the vast majority of resource inverters are susceptible to tripping or power disruption during normal grid fault conditions; this makes the future grid less reliable when more resources are inverter-based.”

Other important recommendations include the expansion of power transmission infrastructure, updates to wholesale energy market designs and strengthened relationships among reliability stakeholders and policymakers. The Midwest Reliability Organization (MRO) came to a similar conclusion about the dire state of grid reliability when it released its 2024 Regional Risk Assessment in February. For the first time in its history, MRO identified an extreme risk – uncertain energy availability.

The report identified that “conventional, baseload generation that is available on demand is being retired and replaced with resources with limited energy availability due to uncertain fuel supplies that are increasingly weather dependent.” Additionally, the report found that “new generation resources are largely inverter-based and perform much differently than conventional resources, reducing essential reliability services to the grid and requiring new modeling assumptions.”

MRO is one of six regional entities operating underneath NERC to ensure the reliability of the bulk electric system through the enforcement of reliability standards.

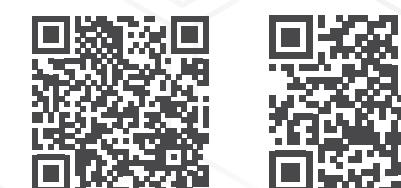
“Reliability needs to stay at the forefront of people’s minds as the policy framework is being defined,” said Mac McLennan, Minnkota president and CEO. “It’s unacceptable for the people of our region to wake up in the morning and not know if they’re going to have dependable electric service. Our country is accelerating down a path where this could become our reality. We need to approach this transformation of America’s electric grid with caution and common sense. There’s simply too much at stake.”



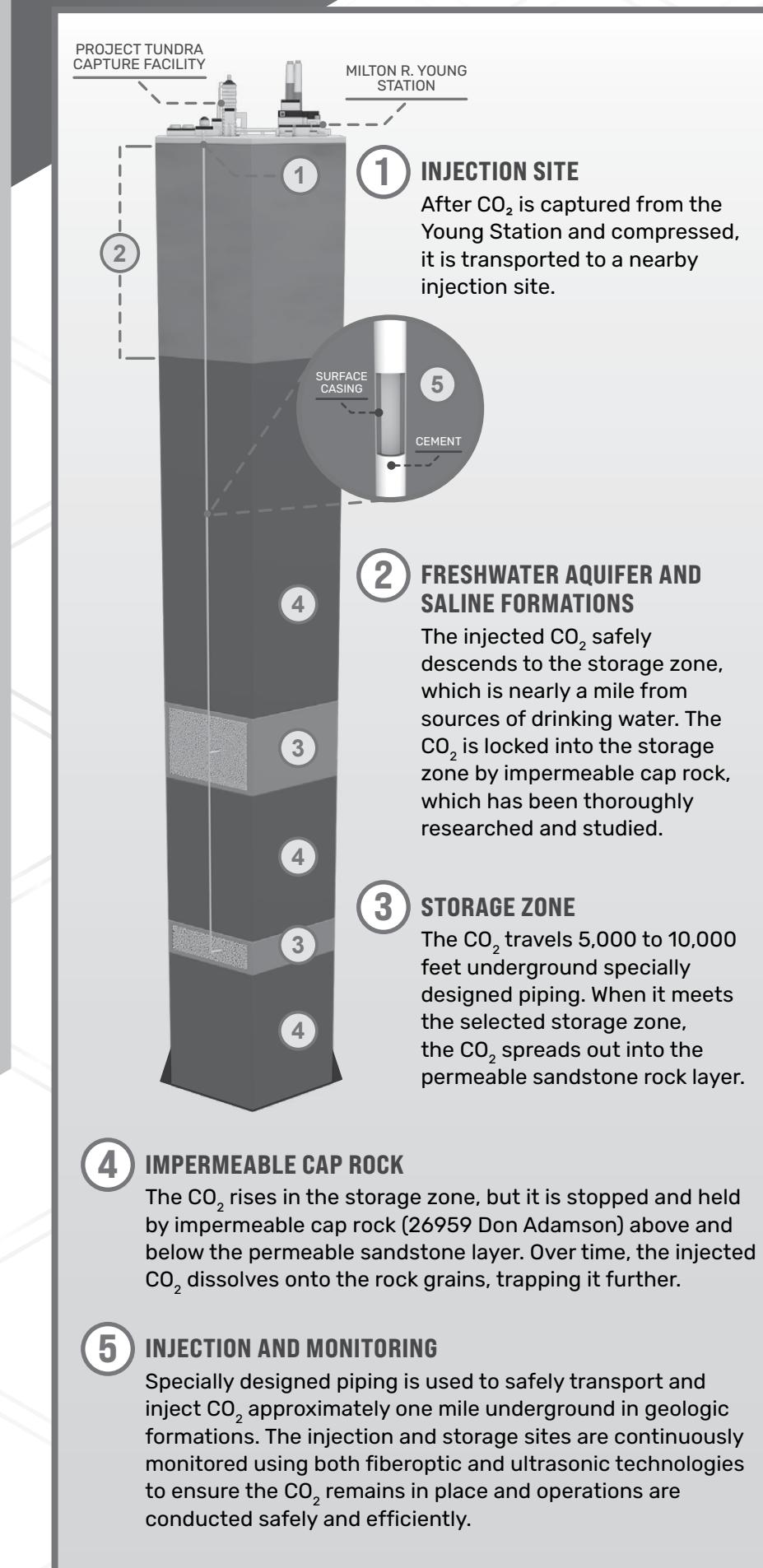
HOW DOES CARBON STORAGE WORK?

You’ve likely heard about Project Tundra, a carbon capture and storage initiative being pursued by our wholesale power supplier, Minnkota Power Cooperative, and its partners. If successful, this technology would capture approximately 4 million tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂) every year and store it safely and permanently underground – creating a more sustainable power mix for Red Lake Electric Cooperative.

So how does the “storage” portion of this process work? It’s quite simple...



WATCH THE STORAGE PROCESS **LEARN MORE ABOUT PROJECT TUNDRA**



CELEBRATING ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP THIS EARTH DAY

Rural electric cooperatives love Earth Day. That's because, on April 22, we get to celebrate a few of the amazing resources and programs we offer to help preserve our region and our planet. With environmental stewardship at the heart of our values, Red Lake Electric Cooperative and our power provider, Minnkota Power Cooperative, want to share a few of the many ways we work to keep the air, water and land of the region exceptional.

Responsible generation

Minnkota's generation portfolio leverages an all-of-the-above energy strategy – they rely on a diverse mix of energy resources to meet the demands of our region. Currently, 41% of your power comes from carbon-free resources like wind and hydro. Additionally, Minnkota and its partners are pursuing a carbon capture initiative called Project Tundra at the coal-based Young Station near Center, N.D. If the project moves forward, roughly 4 million tons of carbon dioxide will be safely captured and stored every year.

1

Infinity Renewable Energy Program

Many of Red Lake Electric Cooperative's members are interested in being powered by renewable generation resources. The Infinity Renewable Energy program allows homes (30406 Richard Battles) and businesses to enroll and choose the kilowatt-hours or percentage of their electricity they would like to come from renewable resources. Call today and learn more about how you can get signed up!

**2****3**

Electrification efforts & incentives

Members who are "going electric" are not only saving more on their energy bill but also limiting use of gas, propane and fuel oil. Red Lake Electric Cooperative offers rebates and incentives on electric technologies like water heaters, electric vehicle chargers and heat pumps that are not only energy efficient, but also environmentally conscious. Check out ValueofElectricity.com to learn more!

**4**

Wildlife & vegetation protection

Living in this region offers the privilege of enjoying its diverse wildlife and vegetation. When it's time to plan new power projects, your cooperative takes into consideration how it may impact the current environment.

We prioritize considerations for environmentally delicate zones (27712 Brian D. Hoiseth) and bird migratory routes when planning new power line routes. Additionally, we deploy innovative technologies to keep birds from perching on power poles and preventing other creatures from climbing them.