

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

DL EC
RLEC

SEPTEMBER 2026



My trip to D.C.!

My name is Riley Poppitz, and I had the privilege of being chosen as the 2026 delegate for Red Lake Electric on the NRECA Youth Tour.

We flew out from Minneapolis on Saturday, and once we got to D.C. we were allowed to shop in the market square outside our hotel. We stayed at the Gaylord National Resort. The hotel was huge; it had stores in the atrium and was next to the Capital Wheel.

We went on a lot of different tours, like the National Mall, twice. One was a guided walking tour; the other was a Segway tour. We also visited Arlington National Cemetery. I saw my great-great-uncle's grave. We saw the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. We also got to tour Mount

Vernon and see George Washington's tomb. There were a lot of different things we got to go see and do. I would say my favorite part was getting to tour the Capitol building.

I'm really grateful that I got the opportunity to go. When I get into college, I plan on pursuing my bachelor's in political science and my doctorate in law, so getting to tour our capital and talk with Minnesota senators was really exciting, being able to learn more about how I can pursue what I want to do.

I want to say thank you to NRECA for putting this on and thank you to Red Lake Electric for giving me this opportunity.

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Red Lake and Polk Counties:
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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.



New facility progress & rate adjustments

by Rich Whitcomb, CEO

Work on your cooperative's new office/shop building in Red Lake Falls continues to progress nicely. All indications are the project will be finished in late fall with a potential move-in date around the first of the year.

The need for a new building was studied extensively and deemed necessary due to increasingly larger equipment, aged facilities and the ability to have employees serve our members from a safe, efficient and pleasant environment (28183 Tracy Hoglo) for years to come. The all-in cost for the whole project is estimated to be \$12.5 million.

The new headquarters will impact your cooperative's expenses; primarily in the interest we owe on loans used for construction. For that reason, regardless of any wholesale power cost increase, electric rates will need to be adjusted for 2027.

We will learn more as we head later into the fall and budgeting begins in earnest. However, I wanted to communicate this news to you sooner than later. Additionally, please know that we do what we can to keep costs low internally without sacrificing reliability. Your cooperative's track record of reliability is strong with SAIDI scores (a leading reliability indicator used by all utilities) that are among the top 25 percent nationally among all electric cooperatives.

What our wholesale power costs will be in 2027 remains yet to be determined. Keep in mind (32571 Stephanie Carr) your electric rates have been lower than state and national averages for some time, and I expect they will remain competitive. Bringing you the most value for your energy dollar remains our mission.

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 (9999999.99 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.

NOTICE OF NAMES

WATCH THE WIRES THIS HARVEST SEASON

Harvest season is often ripe with distractions. Even when you're trying to beat the rain or finish just one more acre, you must remember to stay alert to the power lines around you. One wrong move can be dangerous – even deadly. Share this **safety checklist** with your team before heading to the field.

SAFETY CHECKLIST

- ▶ **Know where power lines are located** before moving equipment and **plan your route** to avoid low power lines and narrow road crossings.
- ▶ **Lower equipment and fold augers, booms and other extensions** before moving to another site.
- ▶ **Maintain a safe distance** of at least 10 feet from all overhead power lines.
- ▶ **Look up** before raising equipment.
- ▶ **Use a spotter** (23218 Candace Olson) when moving oversized or tall equipment.
- ▶ **Stay alert when visibility is reduced** by dust, low light, rain or fog, when power lines can be hard to see.
- ▶ **Inspect equipment height** before moving combines, grain carts, sprayers or other tall machinery.
- ▶ **Avoid parking or storing equipment** directly beneath power lines.

ACCIDENTS HAPPEN.

If equipment contacts a power line or pole, follow these steps:

1 Stay inside the cab

2 Call 9-1-1

3 Wait for responders

IF THERE IS SMOKE/FIRE:



Cross your arms across your chest



Jump out with your feet together (don't touch the ground and vehicle at the same time)



Shuffle or bunny hop far away (feet always together)

SAFETY KIT

Take time to train all farm workers on power line hazards before harvest begins. If you would like a free Watch the Wires safety kit for your team, visit watchthewires.com for details.



WATCHTHEWIRES.COM

UNDERSTANDING YOUR ELECTRIC BILL AFTER A HOT SUMMER

July certainly reminded us that summer in northwest Minnesota can bring some heat! Temperatures in the area reached 80 degrees or higher on approximately 25 days, with five of those days reaching 90 degrees or higher. With temperatures like that, air conditioners across our communities were working overtime to keep homes and businesses comfortable. For many members, that extra cooling likely showed up as an increase on their electric bill.

We believe understanding your electric bill is an important part of being an informed member of Red Lake Electric Cooperative. While the total amount due may seem like a single number, your bill reflects different costs associated with providing safe, reliable electricity for your home or business.

The biggest factor is often how much electricity you use. Electricity is measured in kilowatt-hours (kWh), and the more energy you use, the higher your bill will be. During the summer months, air conditioning is typically one of the biggest drivers of increased energy use. When temperatures climb into the 90s, cooling systems have to run longer and more frequently to maintain a comfortable indoor temperature, which can result in noticeably higher energy consumption.

Although the traditional summer months are now behind us, I'd also like to remind our members with off-peak heat pumps (26978 Louis Vettleson) about how the rate works during the summer. During June, July and August, electricity used for off-peak is billed at the general service rate of \$0.129 per kWh. This has been our practice for more than a decade. We understand this may be new information for some members, especially if you purchased or moved into a home where an off-peak system was already installed.

As we move into fall, we are entering the time of year when your heat pump can really shine. From September through May, qualifying off-peak heat pump usage receives the off-peak rate. Whether you are still using your heat pump for cooling on warmer fall days or transitioning to heating as temperatures drop, your off-peak rate is available during this period.

Another part of your electric bill is the monthly facility charge. Red Lake Electric maintains the local electric distribution system that delivers power to our members, including utility poles, power lines, transformers, substations and other essential equipment. The facility charge helps cover the ongoing costs of maintaining this infrastructure and having the equipment, employees and resources available to serve our members.

This is a fixed monthly charge paid by all members, regardless of how much electricity they use. Whether your home uses a little electricity or a lot, the cooperative still needs to maintain the system (25701 Steve Sogla) and be prepared to deliver safe, reliable power 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. In northwest Minnesota, that means being prepared for everything from summer heat and thunderstorms to our long, cold winters.

Our goal is to provide safe, reliable and affordable electricity while being transparent about the factors that impact your energy costs. We know every dollar matters, and we remain committed to making responsible investments in our system, maintaining reliable service and supporting the communities we are proud to serve.

Ways to Manage Your Electric Bill

While we can't control the weather, there are some simple things you can do to help manage your energy use and keep your electric bill in check:

Watch your thermostat. Raising your thermostat a few degrees when you're away or sleeping during the summer can help reduce cooling costs.

Keep filters clean. A dirty furnace or heat-pump filter can make your system work harder and use more electricity.

Use your off-peak system wisely. If you have an off-peak heat pump, take advantage of the off-peak rate available from September through May.

Consider energy-efficient upgrades. When replacing heating, cooling or water-heating equipment, look for energy-efficient options and check with RLEC to see if a rebate may be available.

Pay attention to your usage. If your bill is higher than expected, compare your kWh usage to previous months. A change in usage can often explain a change in the bill.

Give us a call. If you have questions about your electric bill, rates or ways to reduce your energy use, our Member Services team is always happy to help.

POWER THAT SHOWS UP

Minnkota Power Cooperative is elevating electricity in North Dakota and Minnesota. Through innovation and exploration, we're taking a smarter, more reliable energy grid from paper to possible.

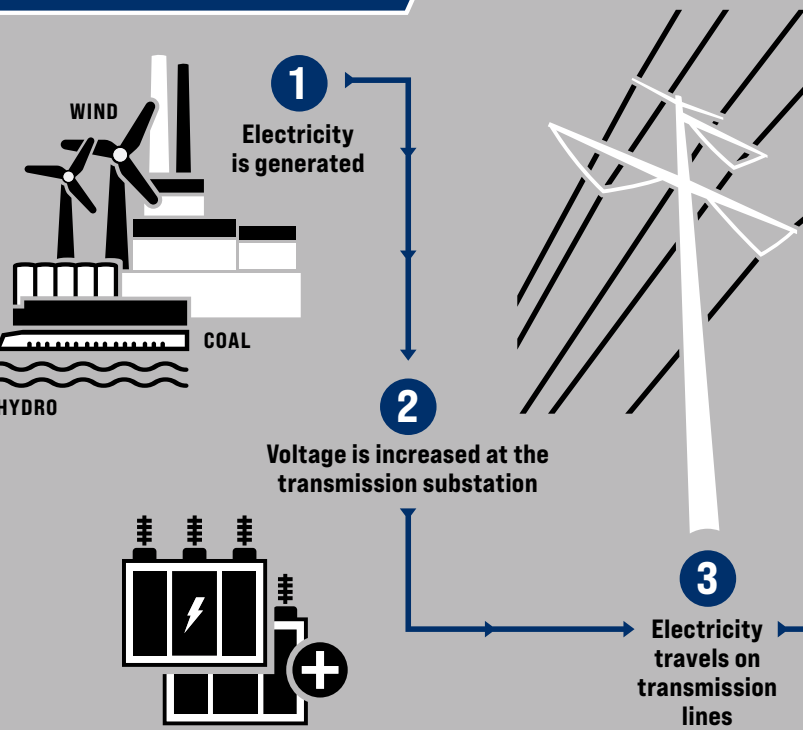
Never heard of us? It's about time we introduce ourselves.

Check out our new video on YouTube.

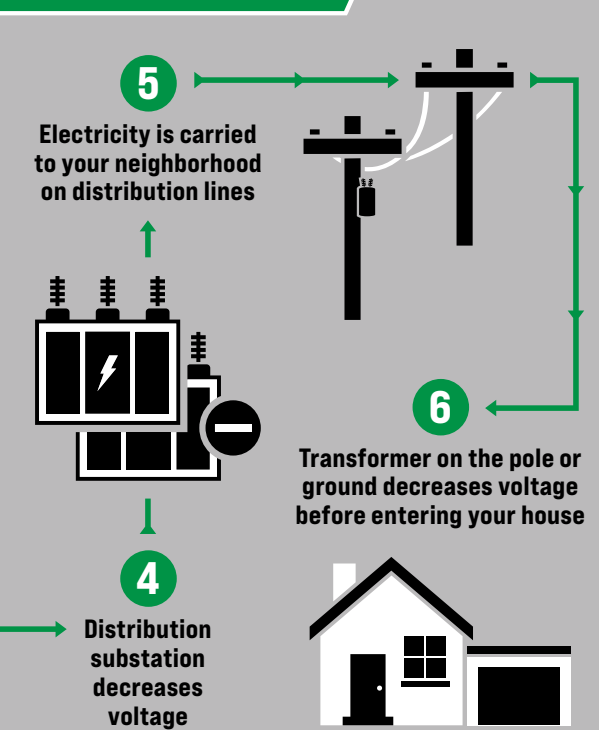


THE JOURNEY OF ELECTRICITY

MINNKOTA POWER'S JOB



YOUR CO-OP'S JOB



Need help to pay your electric bill?

Help is only a phone call away!

Red Lake Electric is prepared to work with members who are in need of assistance paying their electric bills. For more information (32271 Scott M Tersteeg) about the Cold Weather Rule, call Red Lake Electric Cooperative, visit our website www.redlakeelectric.com, or see MN Statutes, Chapter 216B, which governs disconnection policies of residential heating sources from Oct. 1 through April 30. Here are some common questions:

Can my heat be shut off in the winter?

YES, unless you take steps under the Cold Weather Rule (CWR) to protect yourself. You must contact Red Lake Electric Cooperative to apply for protection from having your heat shut off. This is true for all residential customers, including senior citizens and families with young children.

Will you disconnect me without my knowledge?

NO. RLEC will give you a "Disconnection Notice" on your electric bill. This will state the amount you need to pay as well as the date by which you must contact RLEC to avoid disconnection. If you do not contact us by the disconnection date, we will make a courtesy phone call reminding you to make your payment.

How can I keep my heat on or get reconnected if I am already shut off?

You must make and keep a payment plan with Red Lake Electric Cooperative. The payments don't have to be the same amount each month. RLEC will work with you to make suitable arrangements to help you keep your electricity. Once arrangements are made, you must contact Red Lake Electric Cooperative if you are unable to make a payment or your service may be shut off.

When I contact RLEC to apply for the CWR, what happens?

- You will make a CWR payment plan, which you must keep to be protected.
- If you and the utility cannot agree on a payment plan, you have 10 days to appeal to the Public Utilities Commission.
- The Commission will help you set up a payment plan.
- Your service will stay on during the appeal process.

What happens if I can't make my payments as planned?

If you can't make your payments, call RLEC **immediately** to make a new CWR payment plan. If you do not make your payments, your service may be shut off.

What if I need help reading or understanding notices from my utility?

- The CWR has a "Third-Party Notice" option.
- If you would like help applying for the CWR, you may arrange for another person to get a copy of any disconnection notices or other important information

at the same time you receive it. This may be a friend, family member or anyone who is willing to help you understand the notices or set up a CWR payment plan. This person is not responsible for paying your bill. They are only agreeing to help you understand notices from Red Lake Electric Cooperative.

How do I sign up for Third-Party Notices?

Call Red Lake Electric for a sign-up form. The form must be filled out and signed by both you and the person you want to be notified and mailed back to the utility.

Are military personnel subject to a shutoff?

Minnesota law protects a residential customer if a member of the household (31953 Wade Joppru) has been issued orders into active duty, for deployment or a change in duty station if they are unable to pay their electric bill. You must call Red Lake Electric to set up a payment plan. For more information see MN Statutes, Chapter 325E.028 (Utility Payment Arrangements for Military Personnel).

Federal/state energy assistance

If you need help paying your electric utility bill, you may qualify for state or federal fuel assistance. For complete qualification and application information, contact your local county welfare or community/citizen's action council listed below. These organizations may also provide budget counseling.

Inter-County Community Council

Oklee, MN
Serves East Polk, Pennington and Red Lake counties
218-796-5144
Toll-free: 1-888-778-4008
Fax: 833-792-1046

Northwest Community Action

Badger, MN
Serves East Marshall County
218-528-3258
Toll-free: 1-800-568-5329
Fax: 218-528-3259

Tri-Valley Opportunity Council

Crookston, MN
Serves West Polk County and West Marshall County
218-281-9080
Toll-free: 1-866-264-3729
Fax: 800-475-3102

Red Lake Community Action Program

Red Lake, MN
Serves Beltrami County
218-679-3350 ext 2681
Fax: 218-679-4291



YOU HAVE THE POWER TO...

- Go paperless and receive an email notice when your bill is ready to view.
- Compare energy use to changes in temperature.
- View and pay your bills online.
- View daily and monthly energy use.

For assistance, call us during regular business hours at 218-253-2168 or send an email to info@redlakeelectric.com.

SIGN UP FOR SMARTHUB:
REDLAKEELECTRIC.COM



For **1 cent**, your stand mixer can help get your favorite pie crust to the correct consistency.



For **20 cents** more, you can bake the pie to perfection.

THAT'S THE  VALUE OF ELECTRICITY

*Based on average household energy usage



Operation Round Up®
grant applications due

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

Organizations involved in community projects and charities are encouraged to apply for funds from Operation Round Up at this time. Completed grant applications are due in the Red Lake Electric Cooperative (RLEC) office by **Friday, Sept. 25**.



RECIPE CORNER

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.

APPLE DAPPLE CAKE

INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 ½ cups vegetable oil
- 1 ½ cups granulated sugar
- ½ cup brown sugar, packed
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 3 large eggs
- 4 cups apples, peeled and chopped into ½-inch chunks

Frosting

- ½ cup butter
- ½ cup brown sugar, packed
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- ½ cup heavy cream
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 325F. Grease a 9×13-inch baking pan with non-stick cooking spray; set aside.
2. In a medium mixing bowl, sift together the flour (32134 Catherine C Erickson), baking soda, cinnamon, nutmeg and salt; set aside.
3. In a large mixing bowl, beat together the vegetable oil, granulated sugar and brown sugar with an electric mixer on medium speed. Beat in the vanilla and the eggs one at a time.
4. Add the dry mixture a little at a time, mixing well between each addition. Note: the batter will be very thick.
5. Using a sturdy wooden spoon, fold the apples into the batter.
6. Spread into the prepared 9×13-inch pan and bake at 325F for 50-60 minutes until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.
7. While the cake is baking, make the frosting. Add all the ingredients for the frosting to a medium saucepan. Heat over medium heat, stirring often, until the mixture (25504 Ross Hegge) begins to simmer. Remove from the heat and cool for 5 minutes.
8. Pour the frosting over the cake while it's still warm.
9. Slice the cake and serve.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY INCENTIVES FOR 2026

Make your home more comfortable and energy efficient with help from Red Lake Electric Cooperative. Great rebates and incentives are available to help you upgrade your heating and cooling system, water heater and chargers for electric vehicles. Not sure where to start? Check out our rebate list below for heating and cooling options. Contact Red Lake Electric Cooperative for expert advice on improving your home's energy performance.

ELECTRIC WATER HEATER REBATES *Must be on off-peak*

100 gallon or greater

\$500/unit

56-99 gallon

\$400/unit

55 gallon or less

\$150/unit

New construction (50 gallon)

FREE unit (primary residence only)

BONUS REBATES:

Add \$250 if converting from natural gas or propane.

Add \$100 for new building construction (shops, cabins, etc.).



ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGER REBATES 240V LEVEL 2 CHARGER *Must be on off-peak*

Electric vehicle or hybrid

100% rebate

Commercial – Forklifts, Zambonis, etc.

\$50 per kW (\$750 max)



Residential Charger



Commercial Charger

All equipment must be new and installed on Red Lake Electric Cooperative's system.

EQUIPMENT MUST BE INSTALLED ON RLEC'S OFF-PEAK PROGRAM.

Contact Member Services at 218-253-2168 for more details!

ELECTRIC HEATING REBATES *Must be on off-peak*

Electric plenum heaters

Easily converts your existing fossil fuel furnace into a dual-fuel heating system. You are able to use the most efficient, cost-effective heating source – fossil fuel or electricity – at any time.

Rebate of \$50 per kilowatt (kW)

Electric thermal storage heaters

Draws electricity during off-peak hours when it is cheaper. Heat is stored in specially designed bricks to provide comfort 24 hours a day.

Rebate of \$75 per kW

Air-source heat pumps

(INCLUDING MINI-SPLIT DUCTLESS OPTION)

Works just like a central air conditioner in the summer. In the fall and winter, they provide super-efficient supplemental heat.

Up to 16 SEER: Rebate of \$300 per ton

17 SEER or greater: Rebate of \$600 per ton



Geothermal heat pumps

Provides the highest efficiency for space heating and cooling available today. The system transfers heat to and from the earth using only small amounts of electricity.

Closed loop: Rebate of \$600 per ton

Open loop: Rebate of \$300 per ton



Electric underfloor boiler

A popular off-peak option because the system transfers heat consistently across the floor to reach people and objects, providing both comfort and efficiency. Applications include electric boiler with hydronic tubing.

Rebate of \$75 per kW

Other electric heating systems

Options include electric baseboards, cove heaters, electric floor cable, mats and more.

Rebate of \$25 per kW