

September 2021

Newsline

Photo credit: @polecart

BOARD MEETINGS September 28 ■ October 26

Lake Country Power

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Energy that Powers Our Lives

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Protecting against cyberattacks

The security of critical infrastructure is garnering increased attention following several recent notable cyberattacks. The company that delivers nearly half the fuel used on America's east coast needed to shut down the flow of oil May 7 after its systems were compromised by a cyberattack. Hackers also gained access to SolarWinds, New York City's Law Department and California's water supply.

"We're seeing an increase in sophisticated hacking operations," said Marc Child, the information security program manager at LCP's wholesale power provider Great River Energy. "In our partnership with the Department of Homeland Security, we're hearing hackers likened to terrorists. It's gaining national and international attention especially among what we consider as essential infrastructure: electricity, banking, public works."

Lake Country Power and Great River Energy work diligently to keep the grid secure.

With an increase in threats from destructive attackers, cybersecurity has become a top priority for many industries, including the electric industry.

"We have partnerships with other utilities and affiliations with the Department of Homeland Security, and we continue to invest in both tools and training to keep our

networks and your data protected," said David Kooda, Lake Country Power IT manager. "Together, we're working around the clock to ensure your data is safe and the grid is secure from a cyberattack."

Critical infrastructure companies, including our cooperative, are among the few that have mandatory minimum standards for cybersecurity.

Their cybersecurity practices and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure they're effective against a cyberattack.

"At Great River Energy, we're required by the North American Electric Reliability Corporation to ensure our cyber assets are secured," Child said. "This means that we're required to take necessary steps to ensure the grid and our member data is safe and secure. Cybersecurity is critical to what Great River Energy does as it maintains and operates the grid."

Great River Energy has emerged as a cybersecurity industry leader,



▶ Electric cooperatives work in partnership with several affiliations to ensure your energy is reliable and our grid is secure.

giving cooperatives a voice at the Department of Energy and sharing lessons learned with its member-owner cooperatives.

Great River Energy facilitates collaboration on topics related to cybersecurity among its member-owners through an information-sharing team as well. Together, co-op representatives discuss their successes and opportunities in security practices. This allows all cooperatives to learn from each other and to enhance security practices.

By working together and as part of a national effort, cooperatives keep the grid secure. ■

Advocating for cooperative members

Collaboration at the statewide level is one of the benefits of being part of an electric cooperative in a statewide network. During the 2021 legislative session, Lake Country Power, along with Minnesota's other rural electric cooperatives, joined forces to leverage their collective influence and advocate for energy policy that benefits members.

The work incorporated the perspectives and priorities of co-op members, the Minnesota Department of Commerce, utilities of all sizes and types, a broad group of nonprofit advocates and associations that represent local electrical contractors. Legislative success was made possible through this significant and diverse stakeholder support, and the electric cooperative's powerful grassroots network.

Through a coordinated and

unified approach, a variety of impactful energy efficiency and broadband policies were signed into law during this session. From a board perspective, we are proud that the overall leadership and collaboration created beneficial outcomes for co-op members, energy providers and all sectors of Minnesota.

ECO Act modernizes Minnesota's efficiency standards

After years in the making, the Energy Conservation and Optimization (ECO) Act was signed into law by Gov. Walz at the end of May. The passage is



By Robert BRUCKBAUER
District 5 Director

great news for members because it provides better tools for reducing total energy bills and carbon emissions.

This is the most significant and beneficial reform to the state's outdated Conservation Improvement Program (CIP) energy efficiency standards – a cornerstone of the state's energy policy – since they were implemented.

As part of the reforms, efficient fuel switching improvements will allow cooperatives to offer programs that substitute electricity for a member's current fuel when those programs achieve a trifecta of (1) reducing the overall amount of energy; (2) reducing greenhouse gas emissions; and (3) reducing consumer costs. It also ends the CIP spending

mandate, which unlocks the potential of recent technological advancements to benefit energy consumers.

As part of the next steps, co-ops will work closely with the Minnesota Rural Electric Association and other stakeholders to make low-income energy spending more effective.

LCP is proud to have worked alongside a diverse network of cooperatives and community leaders to lead the way on policy achievements during the 2021 legislative session. Co-ops will continue to be actively engaged in shaping Minnesota's energy priorities and advocate for members. ■

Robert Bruckbauer was elected by members in Lake Country Power District 5. He can be reached at 218-566-2436 or rbruckbauer@lcp.coop.

Come explore your electric vehicle options

September 30 from 5 – 7 p.m. in Duluth

Several types of electric vehicles (EVs) will be available to the public for viewing during a special event sponsored by Lake Country Power and other neighboring electric cooperatives on Thursday, September 30, in Duluth.

The goal of this event is to connect those interested in EVs to those who already own an EV. The event is being held in conjunction with National Drive Electric Week.

A discussion panel of experts will kick off the event with an interactive presentation from 5:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. in the North Shore Room of Canal Park Lodge in Duluth. After that, the event will transition into the adjacent EV parking lot for "show & tell" until 7:00 p.m.

Models of EVs present will include: Ford Mach E, Hyundai Kona, Chevy Bolts, Tesla models, Chrysler Pacifica Hybrid, Kia Niro PHEV, among others.

Representatives from Arrowhead Electric Cooperative, Cooperative Light & Power, East Central Energy,

Lake Country Power, Great River Energy, Minnesota Power, Shift2Electric, Minnesota Clean Cities, and several EV owners, will be on hand.

Space is limited at the Canal Park Lodge. **Please RSVP for the event online at <https://driveelectricweek.org/event.php?eventid=2790>.**

Considering an Electric Vehicle?

Join us in Duluth! A panel of EV experts and enthusiasts will be available to answer questions. Take a look at the wide variety of EVs on the market.

SEPTEMBER 30, 2021

5–6 p.m. Panel discussion

6–7 p.m. EV parking lot

**CANAL PARK LODGE
AND EV PARKING LOT**

Light refreshments will be provided
FREE Love Creamery Ice Cream

brought to you by  and these participating cooperatives    

People Powering You

This is a regular series of employee spotlights where you'll get to know the people behind your power.

Years served: Employed 11 years

Brief overview of my job: My primary responsibility is working with co-op members to promote Lake Country Power's Energy Wise® load management programs, like dual fuel and off-peak heating.

Why I enjoy working at LCP: I enjoy serving our members. I like promoting our load management programs because I believe in the value these programs bring to members' lives – both from an energy-efficiency perspective and from an economical advantage. I also enjoy the family atmosphere at work.

Family: Married to my wife, Tonia for nine years. We have three children: Dara (19), Chad (14) and Ruby (7).

Community Involvement: I'm a member at the Moose Lake Golf Club and play men's league. I also volunteer through the junior golf program to teach ages 6 – 17 how to play golf.

Hobbies: I enjoy spending time with my family boating, fishing and golfing.

One random fact of interest about yourself: Back in the late 1990's, I won an award through the American Red Cross for extraordinary action in a nature rescue.

Before I worked for the co-op? Prior to working for LCP, I worked for AT&T and also Cellular One to sell features like data and text plans. This was prior to when everyone had unlimited texts and data. Now this is included in almost all cellular phone plans.

Education/training/background: I've had extensive training in customer service and sales throughout my tenure working for LCP and AT&T/Cellular One.



Matt Beal

*Member Service Representative
(Kettle River)*

Electric vehicle charging 101

The ability to charge an electric vehicle (EV) at home is one of the major benefits to making the switch from traditional cars fueled by gasoline.

Every EV comes with a Level 1 charging cord that plugs into a regular household outlet. If you drive less than 30 miles per day on average, Level 1 charging will meet your needs. If you exceed 30 miles per day, or prefer a faster charge, you will want to invest in a Level 2 charging station.

To alleviate the up-front cost associated with this equipment, Lake Country Power currently offers members a substantial rebate on EV chargers, which can be purchased easily through the co-op's online store, www.energywisemnstore.com. After buying your EV and deciding to invest in a Level 2 charger, you'll need to pick which model of charger is right for you. To help with this decision, we have vetted and chosen three Minnesota-made ZEF Energy chargers.

Follow these steps to purchase an EV charger:

- Visit energywisemnstore.com
- Create an account if you are new to the store. If not, simply sign in.
- Click on "Shop," then Electric Vehicles
- Peruse the three available options:
 - **ZEFNET 40:** Charges your EV five times faster than the cordset that came with it. This is a hardwired car charger that works indoors and outdoors with all EVs.
 - **ZEFNET 50:** Charges your EV up to seven times faster than the cordset that came with it. This charger is also hardwired and works indoors and outdoors with all models of EVs
 - **ZEFNET 60:** The fastest EV charging station is high-quality and packed with features. It's built and tested to automaker standards to ensure a reliable charge every time. Its NEMA 4 outdoor-rated enclosure means it can be installed anywhere.
- Add your choice of EV charger to your cart. Please note the installation cost is not included.
You will be required to provide additional information and a cooperative representative will contact you to answer any questions you may have, as well as ensure you meet the eligibility requirements for the rebate. The charger will arrive at your home within four- to-six weeks of purchase.

Researching EVs Online

The following websites provide helpful information about electric vehicles and charging.

www.energywisemn.com/electric-vehicles

www.energywisemn.com/plugintomn

www.mncharging.org

www.lakecountrypower.coop/electric-vehicles

www.shift2electric.com/evinfolist

www.mnevbuyer.com/

www.plugshare.com (trip planner)

Rebates for EV Chargers

Receive a \$500 rebate from Lake Country Power for installing a qualified Level 2 charger for your electric vehicle when metered on the off-peak program. Charger must be installed by a Great River Energy certified HVAR contractor. More information at www.lakecountrypower.coop or contact a member service representative at 800-421-9959 (press 5).



Cast your vote in the co-op calendar contest

Lake Country Power's 2022 co-op calendar contest is officially open on Facebook for voting. The field of hundreds of photo entries has been narrowed. Help determine the 12 winning photos at www.facebook.com/lakecountrypower.

How to Vote

- Simply cast your vote with a 'like' for the photo(s) you'd like to see in the calendar. There are four photo albums – one for spring, summer, fall and winter – so be sure to look through each album when casting your 'likes.'
- The deadline to vote is 9:30 a.m. CST on Monday, October 4. Any 'likes' after this time and date will not count toward final photo selections.
- Any variations from the contest guidelines and/or ties will be determined by a contest judging committee. Winners will be notified in October if their photo was selected as one of the winning entries. The printed 2022 calendars will be available in late November or early December. Good luck, and let the voting begin! ■

Cold weather rule effective October 1

The Cold Weather Rule, Section 216B.097 of the Minnesota State Statutes, provides that from October 1 through April 30 an electric cooperative cannot disconnect a residential customer for nonpayment of service, if the disconnect affects the primary heat source **and all of the following conditions are met:**

1. The customer declares an inability to pay and completes the Inability to Pay form; and
2. Household income of the customer is at or below 50 percent of the state median income. Income may be verified on forms provided by LCP or by the local energy assistance provider with whom the customer has applied for energy assistance; and
3. The customer enters into and makes reasonably and timely payments under a mutually agreeable payment plan, that considers the financial resources of the household; and

4. A customer receives from LCP referrals to energy assistance, weatherization, conservation, or other programs likely to reduce the customer's energy bills.

The law does allow for LCP to disconnect when it is necessary from October 1 to April 30, so please act promptly. LCP works with members during the Cold Weather Rule period, just as we do throughout the year. We don't want to interrupt service to any member, but in a cooperative, all members suffer when any bill remains unpaid. If bills remain unpaid, this amount must be absorbed by members who faithfully pay their bill each month. LCP would rather work with members to establish and maintain adequate payment schedules of their past due bill. A statement explaining the payment plan to secure continued service, a Payment Arrangement letter, will be provided.

Before disconnecting service to a residential customer from October 1 to April 30, the cooperative must provide the following information:

- notice of proposed disconnection (disconnection notice); and
- statement explaining customer's rights and responsibilities (Inability to Pay form); and
- list of energy assistance providers (Inability to Pay form); and
- forms available for customer to request cold weather disconnect protection (Inability to Pay form).

If you receive a disconnection notice this winter, you must act promptly. If you do not meet all the conditions of the Cold Weather Rule, mutually acceptable payment arrangements

can be set up to prevent interruption of an electric service. Please contact Lake Country Power at 800-421-9959 if you have any questions about the Cold Weather Rule.

Energy Assistance Providers

- AEOA: 800-662-5711
- AEOA Virginia: 218-735-6839
- AEOA Duluth: 218-623-3011
- Aitkin County Social Services: 800-328-3744
- Bi County CAP: 800-332-7161
- Bois Forte Tribal: 800-221-8129
- Carlton County Social Services: 800-642-9082
- Cass County Social Services: 218-547-1340
- Fond Du Lac Tribal: 800-365-1613
- Itasca County Social Services: 800-422-0312
- Kootasca: 877-687-1163
- Lake County Social Services: 218-834-8400
- Lakes & Pines: 800-832-6082
- Leech Lake Tribal: 866-864-8668
- Mille Lacs Band Tribal: 320-532-7880
- Pine County Social Services: 800-450-7263
- Salvation Army Office (Heat Share Programs): 800-842-7279
- St. Louis County Social Services: 800-450-9777

RECIPE CORNER APPLE WHEAT MUFFINS

From the Kitchen of:
Arlene Wheaton,
Grand Rapids



- 1 c. buttermilk
- 2 c. whole wheat flake cereal
- 1 c. whole wheat flour
- 1 c. finely chopped or grated apple
- ¼ c. orange juice
- ¼ c. honey
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp baking soda
- ¼ tsp salt
- ½ tsp cinnamon

Heat oven to 400 degrees. Spray 12 medium muffin cups with cooking spray. Pour buttermilk over cereal in medium bowl. Let stand until cereal is soft, about 5 min. Add egg, honey and apple and stir. In separate bowl, mix flour, baking soda, salt and cinnamon. Stir flour mixture into wet ingredients just until flour is moistened. Fill muffin cups ¾ full. Bake for 20 min.

Submit your favorite recipe to Lake Country Power, Attn. Editor, 26039 Bear Ridge Drive, Cohasset MN 55721, or e-mail tzam@lcp.coop. If your entry is printed in Newsline, you'll receive a \$5 credit on your electric bill. Entries must include name, address and phone number on account.



Q: Need to update your mailing address or phone number?

A: It's easy and quick to do using your SmartHub account. Simply log-in, go to "My Profile" and then "Update my Billing Address & Contact Information."

Operating a generator safely

A generator can be a valuable piece of equipment to keep appliances working during a power outage. Generators can be either temporary or permanently installed.

A permanent generator is wired into a house by a qualified electrician using a transfer switch that prevents a generator from feeding electricity back into overhead lines, which can be deadly for linemen.

A temporary generator is powered by gasoline and should not be attached to a circuit breaker, fuse, or outlet. Before ever purchasing a generator you need to know the wattage required to run the appliances you will attach to the generator. You also need to know the surge power, which is the power it takes to turn an appliance on.

Once you have purchased the proper generator, follow these tips from Safe Electricity to properly operate your generator:



- Read and follow all manufacturer operating instructions to properly ground the generator. Be sure you understand them before hooking up the generator.
- Never operate a generator in a confined area, such as a garage. Generators can produce numerous gases, including toxic and deadly carbon monoxide. They require proper ventilation.
- Generators pose electrical risks especially when operated in wet conditions. Use a generator only when necessary when the weather creates wet or moist conditions. Protect the generator by operating it under an open, canopy-like structure on a dry surface where water cannot form puddles or drain under it. Always ensure that your hands are dry before touching the generator.
- When you refuel the generator, make sure the engine is cool to prevent a fire, should the tank overflow.
- There should be nothing plugged into the generator when you turn it on. This prevents a surge from damaging your generator and appliances.
- Be sure to keep children and pets away from the generator, which could burn them.
- Shut down the generator properly. Before shutting down a generator, turn off and unplug all appliances and equipment being powered by the generator.
- Remember maintenance between uses. It is also a good idea to inspect the fuel and oil filters, spark plug, oil level and fuel quality and to start the generator on a regular basis before an emergency situation occurs. ■

For more information on electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.



June 29, 2021 • Regular Monthly Meeting

THE FOLLOWING REPORTS WERE GIVEN:

President Olson presented Director Jason Long a certificate for completing the required education classes to become a Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) through course work offered by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

Directors Bruckbauer and Olson represent LCP on the Great River Energy board. They reported about the June board meeting including GRE's financials, power cost adjustment and Coal Creek Station.

LCP Holdings Board President Kingsley gave an update on the Holding Company combined operations of Lake States Tree Service and Lake States Construction. He commented about the revenue, cost of operations, gross operating profit, net income, dividends, OSHA recordables, etc.

General Manager Bakk commented about GRE's power cost adjustment charges, demand side management rates, Northland Connect, etc. Bakk was happy to report that LCP's paycheck protection program loan was forgiven by the SBA.

Chief Financial Officer Peterson reviewed the 10-year financial forecast. The purpose of the forecast

is to provide guidelines and directions concerning LCP's operations, debt and debt service, policies, goals, etc. The forecast helps the board and management maintain a sound financial position and provide security of the financial resources of the co-op.

THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS WERE TAKEN:

Approved to appoint Debora Zauhar to serve on the Operation Round Up® trust board to represent district nine.

Approved a \$100,000 Revolving Loan funded through the United States Department of Agriculture to Jasper Company in Ely to foster economic development and expansion of a third vacation rental home. ■

Editor's Note: These board minutes have been condensed. A full copy of the board minutes can be read at www.lakecountrypower.coop under "My Cooperative." You'll need to sign up for access if you haven't already. Or call 800-421-9959 for a printed copy.



► This picture earned a spot in the co-op calendar for Sandy Brooks of Forest Lake. She photographed these beautiful wildflowers in Itasca County.

Co-op Contacts

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Directors are members of the cooperative and are elected to act in the best interests of the co-op with the same care that an ordinarily prudent person in a like position would exercise under similar circumstances.

Directors set policy, approve strategy and are charged with fiduciary responsibility of the cooperative. Directors do not oversee day-to-day LCP operations. Administration of maintenance, electric service and operations are the responsibility of employees and staff.

Members with questions or concerns about service, billing, outages or other service-related matters should call 1-800-421-9959.

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ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Energy used for cooling and heating your home makes up the largest portion of your monthly energy bills. By combining regular equipment maintenance and upgrades with recommended insulation, air sealing and thermostat settings, you can save about 30% on your energy bills while helping our environment. Source: energy.gov

Comparative Operating Statement

Year-To-Date — June 2021

	2021	2020
Electric Operating Revenue	\$ 47,414,613	\$ 46,125,528
Cost of Purchased Power	25,755,550	22,662,721
Distribution Expense - Operations & Maintenance	5,598,253	6,618,452
Consumer Accounts Expense & Informational	1,366,994	1,972,612
Administrative and General Expense	2,991,349	3,336,264
Depreciation, Interest Expense and Other Deductions	8,755,562	8,483,894
TOTAL ELECTRIC OPERATING EXPENSES	44,467,708	43,073,943
Net Electric Operating Margins	2,946,905	3,051,586
Non-Operating Margins	778,116	536,458
Total Margins before Subsidiaries	3,725,021	3,588,044
Net Income (Loss) from Subsidiaries	1,300,863	177,782
TOTAL MARGINS	\$ 5,025,885	\$ 3,765,826
TOTAL KWH SOLD (YEAR-TO-DATE)	320,244,465	313,291,639

Editor's Note: These financials are condensed. A complete set of financials can be viewed at www.lakecountrypower.coop under "My Cooperative." You'll need to sign up for access if you haven't already. Or call 800-421-9959 for a copy.