



February 2025

Newsline

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- MISO approves transmission lines
- 2026 calendar contest opens

BOARD MEETINGS February 25 ■ March 25 (9:30 am at Cohasset Service Center. Members welcome)

New Sand Lake substation now online

Lake Country Power completed construction and energized its new Sand Lake substation in October, a project that will provide safer and more reliable energy to the 1,277 members it serves.

Excavation started on the project in May and was completed in October about two weeks ahead of the typical substation construction timeline, at a cost of \$2.3 million.

Jake Chrzanowski, senior distribution engineer at LCP, said the new substation was a priority for the cooperative after the existing substation transformer was hit by lightning in July 2022. LCP was using its spare 69 KV substation transformer to power Sand Lake, itself a \$1 million investment, which now is available for use if any other existing substation transformers have problems.

The new substation has a pad mount design which reduces outage exposure. “It makes it less prone to lightning strikes and limits the danger of birds or other animals getting into it and disrupting power,” Chrzanowski said.



which limited space for crews to perform work safely.

“Because of the increased space, upgraded design and new equipment, the new substation is a lot safer for the crews to work in,” Chrzanowski added.

LCP plans to replace the Grand Lake substation in 2025, which will also be relocated from its current location to a larger parcel. The existing site is less than an acre surrounded by swamp with very limited room for equipment. Grand Lake services about 1,577 members and will follow the same pad mount, underground design.

“We’re increasing the substation clearances to meet the current codes and capacity to meet the growth that has occurred in that region,” Chrzanowski said. ■

The Sand Lake substation was also relocated by about a quarter mile. The old location was close to the road and near the entrance to neighborhoods in the area which made it difficult to maneuver equipment into and out of the substation. The old substation also had a small footprint



2025 Minnesota legislative session preview

Minnesota's legislature enters 2025 facing new challenges and opportunities. Historically narrow margins mark the end of two years of single-party control, making bipartisan cooperation essential.

Meanwhile, the state's latest budget forecast predicts a \$616 million surplus for the next two years but projects a \$5 billion deficit by 2027. These fiscal constraints highlight the importance of practical, cost-conscious policymaking. Electric cooperatives across Minnesota, led by the Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA), are focused on ensuring the electric grid remains reliable, affordable and sustainable.

To achieve this, MREA is advocating for the following priorities:

Keeping Energy Costs Fair: Net Metering Reform

As energy technology evolves, the rules governing it must also compensate members who generate their own electricity — such as with rooftop solar panels — for the power they send back to the grid, is one example. However, under the current system, some costs — such as maintaining power lines — are unfairly shifted onto cooperative members who don't generate their own power.

Exploring a Carbon-Free Future: Lifting The Nuclear Moratorium
Minnesota's 25-year-old moratorium on new nuclear power plants is under scrutiny as energy demands grow and



the need for reliable, carbon-free energy increases. Nuclear power could play a critical role in diversifying Minnesota's energy mix and stabilizing the grid for decades to come. MREA is urging lawmakers to lift the moratorium as part of a balanced and future-ready energy strategy. It's time Minnesota allowed this very important conversation to happen on the heels of recent innovations in nuclear technology, such as small modular reactors.

Supporting Rural Communities: Property Tax Relief

Electric cooperatives continue to face rising costs due to misguided property tax laws. In 2024, a bipartisan bill aimed at addressing this issue gained significant support but failed to pass in the final hours of the session. MREA is renewing its push for property tax reform in 2025, emphasizing the lower costs this would bring to cooperative members and rural communities across Minnesota. The bill

has nearly unanimous support but still needs to get across the finish line.

A Session Built on Teamwork

With a tied House and a narrowly divided Senate, cooperation is not just encouraged — it's required. MREA is committed to working with lawmakers from both parties to advocate for responsible energy policy and bipartisan solutions that prioritize affordability and reliability for Minnesota's electric cooperatives. As we head into the 2025 legislative session, MREA is dedicated to ensuring the energy policies passed will serve our members and communities for years to come. Together, we can build a brighter, more sustainable energy future.

Jenny Glumack is Director of Government Affairs at MREA. ■

MISO approves high-voltage electric transmission lines

Great River Energy will be involved in three of the 24 projects in the Tranche 2.1 portfolio, including two 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission lines in northern Minnesota and a new 765-kV transmission backbone that will start in South Dakota, traverse across southern Minnesota and into Wisconsin and Iowa.

MISO approved a new set of high-voltage transmission projects in December that will help energy companies in the Upper Midwest, like Lake Country Power's wholesale energy provider Great River Energy, continue to deliver reliable energy and expand a robust electrical grid that features more carbon-free renewable energy and expected higher energy use.

The newly approved second set of projects in MISO's Long-Range Transmission Plan, known as Tranche 2.1, will deliver energy resources to customers where and when they need it. These projects will provide significant benefits, including reliable electricity in the face of a changing energy system and increased access to new generation. They will also help meet long-term electric growth expected throughout the Midwest in the coming decades.

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transmission lines in northern Minnesota and a new 765-kV transmission backbone that will start in South Dakota, traverse across southern Minnesota and into Wisconsin and Iowa. All projects will be developed jointly with other utility partners.

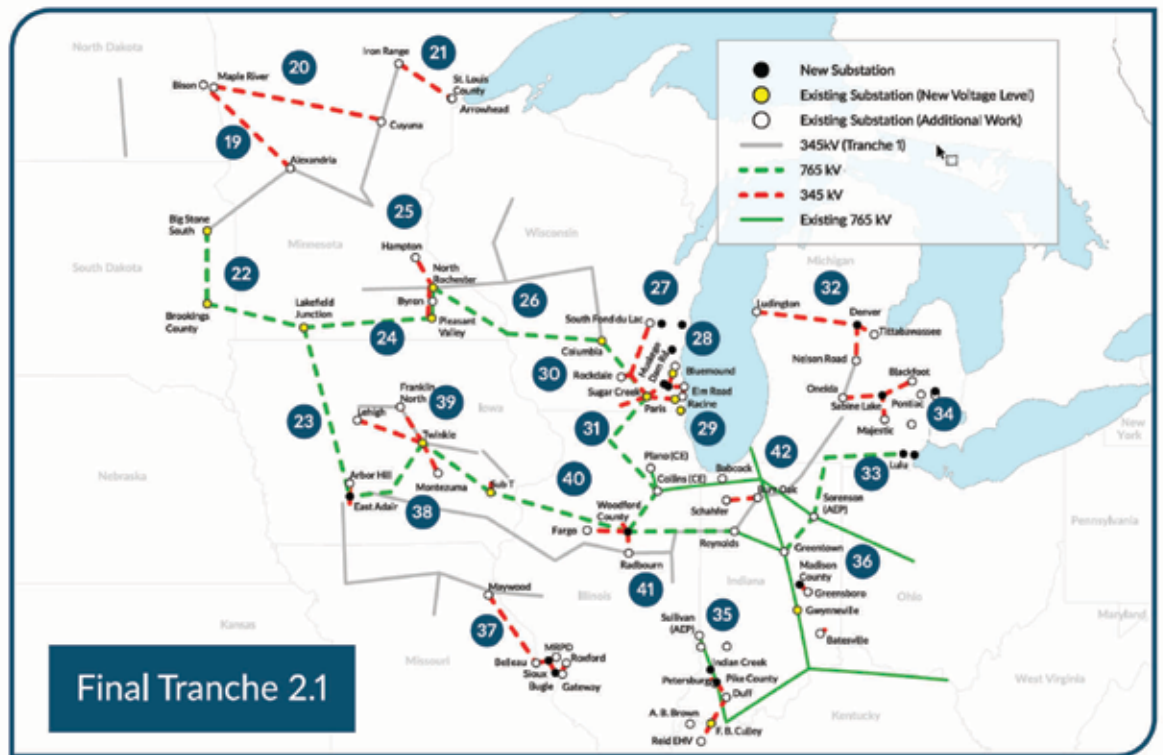
Great River Energy worked closely with MISO over the last several years to advocate for the projects that are in the best interest of its members.

"This portfolio of projects is monumental for Minnesota and our members," said Great River Energy Vice President and Chief Transmission Officer Priti

Patel. "Introducing a 765-kV electric transmission superhighway is an important step for Minnesota's energy landscape that sets us up for the future."

This new set of high-voltage transmission projects will support the region's growing economy and serve customers throughout the Midwest with reliable electricity in a changing energy environment.

All projects will require approval from state regulatory agencies. Project partners will engage landowners, local governments and other stakeholders as part of the project development process. ■



HOW TO

AVOID ENERGY SCAMS

Scammers will try anything to deceive utility customers, including a tactic that claims customers have overpaid their bill. If you receive a call, text or e-mail from someone claiming you overpaid a utility bill and need to provide your banking or credit card information to receive a credit, it's likely a scam. In most cases, your utility will apply a credit to your account to cover future charges or refund an overpayment with a mailed check.

Source: Utilities United Against Scams

A TrueSource Energy Cooperative

Co-op calendar contest opens

The 2026 co-op calendar contest is officially open for members to begin submitting their beautiful scenic entries. The deadline to submit is Friday, August 1.

The calendar will showcase the photography talents of LCP's membership. Your photography should be scenic, capturing the beauty of northern Minnesota's four seasons. The photos are not required to include power lines but may if you choose.

A panel of judges will select the winning photos in "round one" of the judging process. During "round two," members will select the finalists through a contest on LCP's Facebook page.

Winners will receive a \$25 credit on their electric bill and will be notified in October.



► Elaine Lake, the April image selected for the 2025 Co-op Calendar

Photo Contest Guidelines

1. Dimensions must be 3600 x 2400 = 12" x 8" high-res print photo, or 5400 x 3600 = 18" x 12" high-res photo. Adjust your camera settings to ensure these high-quality dimensions. Cell phone photos are often not acceptable quality for print. A quality digital camera is best for good photography.
2. Photos must be 300dpi (dots per inch). Photos under 1 MB will be labeled as KB, and are too small for print application and should not be entered.
3. Separate emails are required per entry. Attach the photo file to your email, include a photo description for the entry, and remember to include your name and the phone number on your account as well.
4. Horizontal/landscape photos only; no vertical shots for design reasons.
5. Only Lake Country Power members may enter the contest. (LCP employees and their immediate families and spouses are not eligible to enter the contest.)
6. Hard copy photos cannot be accepted; only electronic files please.
7. Photos should capture the beauty of northern Minnesota. You may submit photos taken in spring, summer, fall and/or winter. All photos must be taken by you, not someone else.
8. One membership (household) may submit up to 10 photos and will be limited to one winning entry per membership.
9. Please do not submit close-ups of people.
10. Winning photographers automatically give Lake Country Power permission to use winning photos in the calendar, in other publications, member presentations or electronically online.
11. Photos must be e-mailed to tzaun@lcp.coop. All entries must be received by August 1, 2025.

RECIPE CORNER BUTTERMILK PANCAKES



From the
Kitchen of:
**Rosalie Auel,
Gilbert, MN**



- 4 cups flour
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 tsp baking soda
- 1 1/2 tsp salt
- 4 eggs
- 4 1/2 cups buttermilk, sour cream or milk
- 1/2 cup melted shortening or oil

Mix together flour, sugar, baking soda and salt. Add eggs, buttermilk and shortening, the mix together. Makes about 24 six-inch pancakes.

Submit your favorite recipe to Lake Country Power, Attn: Editor, 8535 Park Ridge Drive, Mountain Iron, MN 55768, or e-mail journes@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.



DID YOU KNOW?

Lake Country Power is one of 832 electric cooperatives across the United States serving its members.

Source: Minnesota Rural Electric Association

Staying safe when the winter weather arrives

When temperatures drop and storms hit, it can be challenging to stay safe and warm. We all know that here in the Northland, the winters can be long and the conditions brutally cold, as we saw last month.



By Steve RAUKAR
District 3 Director

Heavy snow and ice can lead to downed power lines, leaving co-op members without power. During extremely low temperatures, this can be dangerous. During a power outage, Lake Country Power crews will continue to work as quickly and safely as possible to restore power, but there are a few things you can do to prepare yourself.

- **Stay warm** – Plan to use a safe
- **Stay fed** – Have several days of food supply available that does not need to be cooked handy. Crackers, cereal, canned goods and bread are good options. Five gallons of water per person should also be available in the event of an extended power outage.
- **Stay safe** – When an outage occurs,

alternate heating source, such as a fireplace or wood-burning stove during a power outage. These are great options to keep you and your loved ones warm, but exercise caution when using, and never leave the heating source unattended. If you are using gasoline-, propane- or natural gas-burning devices to stay warm, never use them indoors. Remember that fuel- and wood-burning sources of heat should always be properly ventilated. Always read the manufacturer's directions before using.

it usually means power lines are down. It is best not to travel during winter storms, but if you must, bring a survival kit along, and do not travel alone. If you encounter downed lines, always assume they are live. Stay as far away from the downed lines as possible, and report the situation to our dispatchers by calling 800-421-9959 if possible.

Winter weather can be unpredictable and dangerous, and planning ahead can often be the difference between life and death. Lake Country Power is ready for what Mother Nature has in store, and we want you to be ready, too. ■

Steve Raukar was elected by members in Lake Country Power District 3. He can be reached at 218-966-0298 or sraukar@lcp.coop.

Dual fuel offers benefits to members, co-op and the grid

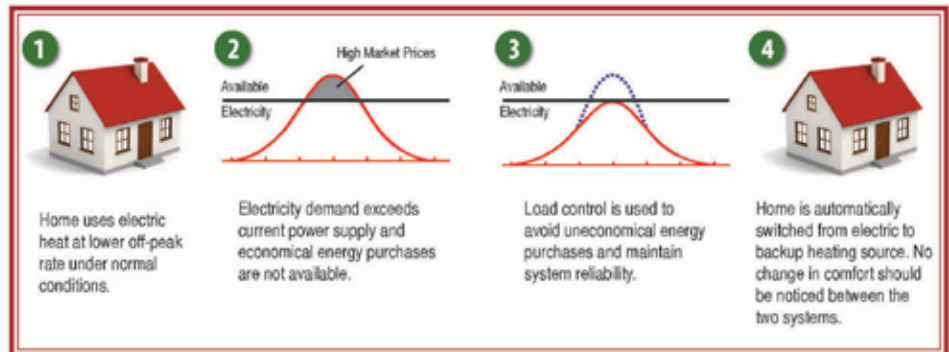
A program offered by Lake Country Power provides home heating at a remarkable value by pairing electric heat with a dependable backup.

If you are a member enrolled in the program, known as “dual fuel,” knowing the “why” behind the moments your dual fuel heating is temporarily switched is likely important to you — especially during the long, cold months of winter.

Great River Energy, our wholesale power provider, makes the decision of when to shift participating members to their backup heat source for a variety of reasons, but affordability and reliability are the ultimate drivers.

The program is a win-win-win for all involved. Enrolled members benefit from a reduced electric rate, Lake Country Power is able to manage local electricity demand and avoid expensive market purchases, and the entire regional grid benefits from reduced demand for electricity.

Responding to demand offers big benefits
Dual fuel heating is one example of a



“demand response” program, which is designed to reduce electricity demand to keep energy reliable and affordable.

The demand response system is launched by Great River Energy’s control center. Power system operators use computers to send tens of thousands of electronic signals through the power delivery system and into distribution power lines.

Receivers plugged into standard electrical current at member homes and businesses can read the signals and, when the appropriate message is sent, those receivers interrupt the electric power flowing to the

heating system. When control is no longer needed, a signal is sent to turn the system back on.

Based on metering and market conditions, Great River Energy’s system operators and energy marketers know when a peak load period is approaching. Depending on the amount by which Great River Energy needs to reduce the peak, operators choose various groups of controlled load and turn them off using the demand response system.

Call 800-421-9959 for more information on Lake Country Power’s program.

November 26, 2024 • Regular Monthly Meeting

THE FOLLOWING REPORTS WERE GIVEN:

President Olson fielded a member call about lot clearing at the Saginaw Outpost. Derek Howe, chief operating officer at LCP, confirmed all clearing was done within all restrictions and property boundary lines. Olson also reported on a member call about service reconnect. General Manager Bakk explained there can be a delay due to communications with energy assistance providers.

General Manager Bakk reported on LCP's 2025 budget and a planned rate increase due to wholesale power cost increases.

He also discussed upcoming legislative activities scheduled for February in conjunction with other cooperatives.

THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS WERE TAKEN:

Approved a request to Rural Utilities Service (RUS) to amend the current Revenue Deferral Plan which deferred \$5 million of 2023 revenue to 2024. The amendment changed the recognition year to 2025.

Approved LCP to accept funds from Great River Energy as a pass-through loan to Midstate Plastics Corporation.



▶ Debbie Racine of Silverdale captured these beautiful skies at their 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.

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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.

Newsline

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BY THE NUMBERS | NOVEMBER 2024

Lake Country Power is committed to responsibly managing resources to ensure financial stability of the cooperative. Below is a snapshot of the year-to-date unaudited financial report. A complete set of financial statements can be viewed at www.lakecountrypower.coop under "My Cooperative."



	2024	2023
Cost of Purchased Power	\$50,110,793	\$48,214,725
Other Operating Expenses	\$44,103,650	\$41,938,885
Total Cost of Electric Service	\$94,214,443	\$90,153,610



YTD kWh SOLD
610,416,095

2023 Comparison: 637,813,739

TOTAL MARGINS
\$12,449,939

2023 Comparison: \$11,728,563

	2024	2023
Operating Margins	\$10,281,503	\$10,818,016
Non-Operating Margins	\$2,168,436	\$910,547

51,510
ACTIVE SERVICES

2023 Comparison: 51,224

Utility Plant (Net)



\$313,787,894

2023 Comparison: \$298,583,902