

October 2024

Newsline

BOARD MEETINGS October 29 ■ November 26 (9:30 am at Cohasset Service Center. Members welcome)

Lake Country Power

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Energy that Powers Our Lives

IN THIS ISSUE

Co-ops power communities
Explaining load control
Cybersecurity tips
Community award nominations

Safety trailer brings the noise, and lessons to students

With hands over their ears, the fifth and sixth graders at Rock Ridge's North Star Elementary waited for the impending boom of a blown fuse that — if this weren't a presentation — would signal a catastrophic electrical accident.

"Oohs and aahs" and the excited chatter of the students drowned out the fuse's echo, while Bill Bussey, director of safety and risk management at Lake Country Power, finished the hypothetical scenario that produced the attention-getting sound.

The safety demonstration trailer in action that spring day in Eveleth is now a key

part of the cooperative's electrical safety education efforts. Bussey and a group of lineworkers have traveled to various schools, fire departments and other entities over the last few years to put on the program.

"It's been a game changer for us," Bussey said. "The kids absolutely love it."

Lake Country Power purchased the safety demonstration trailer

in 2021 after contracting out the Connexus Energy trailer for use three times a year. It also replaced a table-top unit that would buzz and light up to highlight potential real-life electrical mishaps, but the co-op employees found it would lose the attention of older students at a quicker rate.

The addition of the in-house trailer brought those same dangers to a live-action format and allowed the co-op's safety director and lineworkers to customize the program to 11 scenarios — four of which trigger a blown fuse — to most relate and keep the audience wrapt.

Other scenarios show students the importance of having GFCI outlets installed in bathrooms at home, to placing a hot dog inside a lineworker's glove — and nearly cooking it on the live electrical wire — to demonstrate how a pin-prick-



sized hole in the glove can cause serious burns.

"They're learning from actual scenarios of how dangerous electricity can be, to how beneficial it is, and knowing that this stuff can hurt you and potentially kill you," Bussey said. "You can hear a pin drop while the kids are mesmerized when the linemen are drawing arcs."

Safety is one of the core values of Lake Country Power, and Bussey said the value of having an engaging way to educate students and others about the dangers of electricity is critical in helping LCP follow the cooperative principles of safety, training and information, and concern for community.

"There's a lot of people involved from management to linemen and communications to member services," he said. "It's just been a great project for all our employees. The guys who do it love doing it."

If your school or organization is interested in a safety trailer demonstration, contact Tami Zaur at tzaur@lcp.coop to schedule. ■

LCP members gather for summer appreciation picnics



► More than 900 members attended Member Appreciation Days at the Cohasset, Mountain Iron and Kettle River Service Centers in August. The casual gathering brought the co-op community together with food, bucket truck rides, a bounce house, safety lessons and booths with information on LCP programs. Can't wait to see everyone next year!

Cybersecurity Tips for a Safer Digital World

Did you know the average household with internet access owns about 17 connected devices? That figure covers a wide range of electronics, including smart phones, computers, streaming devices, smart speakers, home assistants and more. Given our increasing reliance on internet-connected technologies, the likelihood of new cyber threats is ever-present.

Lake Country Power is deeply committed to ensuring our local system is safe and secure. We routinely monitor and manage cyber risks, and we work together with other co-ops to share the latest advancements in cybersecurity measures that make us stronger. But you can help, too.

When we all work together to stay safe online, we lower the risk of cyber threats to our systems, online accounts and sensitive data.

October is National Cybersecurity Month, and while good cyber hygiene should be practiced year-round, we'd like to share a few cybersecurity tips to help you bolster your online safety.

- Learn how to spot and report phishing attempts. Phishing occurs when criminals use phony emails, direct messages or other types of digital communications that lure you to click a bad link or download a malicious attachment. If you receive a suspicious email or message that includes urgent language, offers that seem too good to be true, generic greetings, poor grammar or an unusual sender address, it could be a phishing attempt. If you spot one, report it as soon as possible—and don't forget to block the

sender. (If you receive a suspicious work email, report it to the appropriate IT contact. Suspicious messages that are delivered to your personal email or social media accounts can also be reported.)

- Create strong, unique passwords. When it comes to passwords, remember that length trumps complexity. Strong passwords contain at least 12 characters and include a mix of letters, numbers and symbols. Create unique passwords for each online account you manage and use phrases you can easily remember.
- Enable multi-factor authentication when available. Multi-factor authentication (also known as 2-factor authentication) adds an extra layer of security to your online accounts. These extra security steps can include facial recognition, fingerprint access, or one-time codes sent to your email or phone.
- Update software regularly. Software and internet-connected devices, including personal computers, smartphones and tablets, should always be current on updates to reduce the risk of infection from ransomware and malware. When possible, configure devices to automatically update or notify you when an update is available.

Let's all do our part to stay cyber smart and create a safer digital world for all. Visit staysafeonline.org to learn about additional cybersecurity tips.

What's the deal with load control?

You may have heard the familiar words, "load control," throughout many of the communications that come from Lake Country Power. But what does it mean or why is it important to our cooperative family?

Members who enroll in voluntary energy savings programs like dual fuel, cycled air conditioning (AC) or off-peak water and space heating help by managing the price of energy at times of high demand. It helps the membership save money by controlling how much energy is purchased at higher than normal prices.

In exchange for allowing our supplier, Great River Energy (GRE), to exercise load control at these times, members receive a discounted energy rate.

When is it needed?

What some might not understand is that these times of needed load control usually happen during the coldest days in winter, and the warmest days of summer. Why? Because that's when energy demand is highest and prices increase for wholesale power.

Lake Country Power also pays a demand charge for our wholesale power at what

is referred to as the monthly billing peak. This is the hour during a month that GRE's member cooperatives hit the highest aggregate demand. Because of this, LCP will conduct load control during these potential billing peak hours each month to lower costs.

It's also important to note another reason why load control might be exercised by GRE. Sometimes the need is dictated by other parts of the state and even by the MISO grid – which extends centrally from Manitoba to Louisiana – wherever the demand for energy is high. For example, this is the reason why AC loads might be controlled when it's 65 degrees in northern Minnesota but it's hot and humid south of here.

How often does it happen?

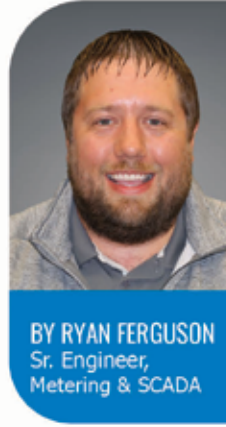
Quite simply, the load is controlled as often

as needed to make sure the monthly billing peak is managed. Some who participate in these programs have expressed the opinion that load control is happening more often than in years past or is now happening in the evening and the following morning. It's not always convenient but often a critical decision to be sure the peak demand period is not missed.

Regardless of this perception, LCP continues to control load less often than the contract allows. For example, in exchange for the reduced energy rate, participants agree to the following maximum hours of control each day or season to help manage the billing demand.

- Dual Fuel: 12 hours per day and up to 400 hours per heating season
- Interruptible Water Heating: Up to 8 hours per day; no maximum
- Cycled Air Conditioning (AC): Up to 6 hours per day and 200 hours per cooling season

The existence of these load control programs is a great deal for everyone when it comes to cost savings. They are invaluable to the cooperative's bottom line and a tremendous value to those who contribute. ■



BY RYAN FERGUSON
Sr. Engineer,
Metering & SCADA



An updated list on LCP's website, www.lakecountrypower.coop, provides the names of members who have not cashed their capital credit check, or we no longer have a forwarding address. If you have any information, please call LCP at 800-421-9959 (press 5). Any money not claimed will be contributed to a tax-exempt purpose such as LCP's scholarship or education improvement programs.

Military personnel disconnection law

The 2007 Minnesota Legislature passed a law called the Military Personnel Disconnection Law. The law recognizes the value of military service and limits utility disconnections if a member of the household has been issued orders such as active duty, deployment, or for a permanent change in duty station during that period. To be eligible for disconnection protection, the member must contact the cooperative to request a "Military Personnel Disconnect Protection Form," meet income eligibility guidelines and set up a mutually acceptable payment schedule.

Before disconnecting service to military personnel in situations as listed above, the cooperative must provide the following information: Notice of proposed disconnection; statement explaining customers' rights and responsibilities; list of energy assistance providers; disconnect protection form and a statement explaining the payment plan to secure continued service.

Please contact Lake Country Power, if you have any questions about the "Military Personnel Disconnection Law" or energy assistance programs.

Study: Northland Reliability Project to boost state economy by \$2 billion

A significant economic boost is expected from the Northland Reliability Project with positive impacts on jobs and wages and about \$2 billion in total impacts to Minnesota's economy, according to a study by the Bureau of Business and Economic Research at the University of Minnesota Duluth's Labovitz School of Business and Economics.

Minnesota Power and Great River Energy are planning to build the Northland Reliability Project, a 180-mile, double-circuit 345-kV transmission line that will support continued reliable electric service in the state and the Upper Midwest. Subject to regulatory approvals, construction on Segment 2 is expected in late 2025, on Segment 1 in 2027 and be operational in 2030.

The study estimated the following economic impacts:

- Statewide, the eight-year project is predicted to add \$705.3 million in employee wages and benefits (labor income), more than \$1 billion in value-added spending, and nearly \$2 billion in output to the state's economy. These effects reflect the sum of direct, indirect, and induced effects and are not to be summed themselves.

- On average, 246 jobs will be directly supported by the Northland Reliability Project each year from 2023 to 2030.

- The employment multiplier for the project — estimated at 3.35 — suggests that for every one job directly supported by the Northland Reliability Project, another 2.35 jobs may be added in other supporting industries.

- In total, over the eight-year period, it is estimated that the Northland Reliability Project will contribute nearly \$29 million in local and county taxes, over \$65 million in state taxes, and almost \$135 million in federal taxes.

- The six-county region in which the

Northland Reliability Project: Its \$2B impact, at a glance

\$705
million
in employee wages/benefits

246
jobs supported each year from 2023-2030

\$29
million
in local and county taxes

2.35
jobs added for every direct NRP job

\$366
million
in employee wages/benefits for 6-county region along the line

\$477
million
in value-added spending for 6-county region along the line

\$1.18
billion
estimated investment by Minnesota Power and Great River Energy over the 8-year project before inflation impacts.

According to the Bureau of Business and Economic Research at the University of Minnesota Duluth's Labovitz School of Business and Economics.

project is taking place will also see a significant boost in employment, wages, and spending during the eight-year project. In total, that region will see \$366.3 million in increased employee wages and benefits, about \$477.3 million in value-added spending, and over \$1 billion in output.

The full report can be found at northlandreliabilityproject.com. ■

EQUIPMENT QUIZ

Q What is the range in cost for a typical substation?



- A) \$200,000 C) \$2.4 million
B) \$3.2 million D) \$580,000

*LCP owns and operates 46 substations, to meet the needs of a safe and reliable electric system. LCP will invest over \$17.6 million in its current work plan for 2024 in the distribution system. g ANSWER

RECIPE CORNER WILD RICE STIR FRY



From the Kitchen of:
Robin Dudzik
Wellsboro, PA



- 1 sweet potato
- 1/2 cup wild rice
- 1 1/2 cups water
- 2 T butter
- 1/2 tsp cumin
- 1 T dry cilantro
- 1 T fresh parsley

Easy method: Microwave one sweet potato until it's done and let sit in the microwave to cool the skin. Remove skin and cube the potato.

Combine water and wild rice, cook for 35 minutes until grains pop. Add dry cilantro and cumin. Drain off excess water. Melt butter in a skillet and toss in sweet potato and rice. Top with fresh parsley.

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

Co-ops power communities with purpose

Communities come in all shapes and sizes. Some are based on geographical proximity, some are based on shared interests or hobbies, and some communities can even be found in virtual spaces like social media groups. Regardless of where or how they are formed, communities can bring people together and create a sense of belonging.

Lake Country Power is deeply committed to its consumer-members, and as a part of the LCP board, I'm glad you are part of the electric cooperative community.



By Larry
ANDERSON
District 9 Director

I grew up in Floodwood and was part of the cooperative movement at an early age, working at the co-op store and gas station while going to high school.

This October, more than 30,000 cooperatives across the U.S. are celebrating National Cooperative Month. It's a time to reflect on all the aspects that set cooperatives apart from other types of businesses, but more importantly, it's a time to celebrate the power of co-op membership.

Electric cooperatives are not-for-profit utilities that are built by the communities they serve. For Lake Country Power, the mission has always been to provide you with reliable power. The co-op cares about your quality of life, and

because it's locally operated and uniquely suited to meet members' evolving energy needs.

Beyond the business of electricity, LCP employees and directors are equally invested in the local community. Why? Because we live here, too. That's why the co-op works hard to support local economic development projects, youth programs and scholarships, charitable giving initiatives and additional programs that make our community a better place to call home.

All co-ops, including Lake Country Power, are guided by seven cooperative principles that embody the values and spirit of the cooperative movement. These seven principles are a framework to help all co-ops navigate challenges and opportunities while remaining true to its purpose:

1. Open and Voluntary Membership
2. Democratic Member Control
3. Members' Economic Participation
4. Autonomy and Independence
5. Education, Training and Information
6. Cooperation Among Cooperatives
7. Concern for Community

This October, as Lake Country Power celebrates National Co-op Month and the power of membership, the co-op hopes you will recognize the many aspects that set electric cooperatives apart. The mission is reliable power. The purpose is people — the local communities LCP employees and directors are proud to serve. ■

Seeking applications for Community Award

Do you know someone special or an ambitious non-profit organization that has contributed to your local community through an effort of volunteers and unique efforts?

Through an application process, Lake Country Power will recognize the true spirit of community and award a deserving recipient the 2024 Touchstone Energy® Community Award.

Community members may cast their nominations by completing an application form, available online at



Touchstone Energy®

The power of human connections

www.lakecountrypower.coop. The application requires a description of the project, program or event and the positive impact it brought to the community. Any organization that meets these qualifications is eligible for a \$500 cash award and recognition.

Applications are due by 4:30 p.m. on Friday, November 1 to Tami Zaun at Lake Country Power. Mail to Lake Country Power, Attn: Tami Zaun, 26039 Bear Ridge Drive, Cohasset, MN 55721, or e-mail tzaun@lcp.coop.

June 25, 2024 • Regular Monthly Meeting

THE FOLLOWING REPORTS WERE GIVEN:

President Olson reported that Director Bruckbauer was re-elected as chair of the Great River Energy (GRE) board. He also reported on receiving members' calls about right-of-way matters

General Manager Bakk reported on his attendance at the June GRE board meeting and Member Manager Group meeting. He discussed a new Environmental Protection Agency power plant rule and legal action by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association and others.

THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS WERE TAKEN:

Approved adjustment to the director expense report to reflect a \$50 per diem and no mileage reimbursement for the June 21 virtual GRE briefing.

Approved elections of REPAC representatives during the upcoming Minnesota Rural Electric Association district meeting.

Denied a written member request for a total capital credit payout for personal financial reasons, citing Capital Credits Policy No. 404.



▶ Bonnie Nygaard of Aurora took this photo while driving near the Whiteface Reservoir. The weather was perfect, and the fall colors were stunning!

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.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

If you recently made or plan to make energy efficiency improvements to your home, you may be eligible for federal tax credits. The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) of 2022 empowers homeowners to save money on energy efficiency improvements and upgrades. Homeowners can save up to \$3,000 annually to lower the cost of efficiency upgrades by up to 30%. A few upgrades covered through the IRA include new exterior doors, windows, insulation, heating/cooling equipment and other major appliances. If you completed an upgrade this year or you are considering one, visit www.energystar.gov/federal-tax-credits to learn if you qualify for a tax credit. Source: energy.gov

Co-op Contacts

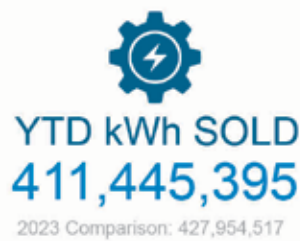
Mark Bakk, General Manager	800-421-9959 mbakk@lcp.coop
Jason Long, District 1	218-240-9611 jlong@lcp.coop
Michael Forsman, District 2	218-365-5789 mforsman@lcp.coop
Steve Raukar, District 3	218-966-0298 sraukar@lcp.coop
Jeff Sheldon, District 4	218-398-6104 jsheldon1@lcp.coop
Robert Bruckbauer, District 5	218-290-8729 rbruckbauer@lcp.coop
Daniel Kingsley, District 6	218-259-7366 dkingsley@lcp.coop
Craig Olson, District 7	218-393-2276 colson@lcp.coop
Brian Napstad, District 8	218-485-1528 bnapstad@lcp.coop
Larry Anderson, District 9	218-428-2722 landerson@lcp.coop

BY THE NUMBERS | JULY 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	\$34,136,567	\$32,699,371
Other Operating Expenses	\$27,899,918	\$27,267,527
Total Cost of Electric Service	\$62,036,485	\$59,966,898



	2024	2023
Operating Margins	\$7,080,263	\$6,485,227
Non-Operating Margins	\$1,013,608	\$753,179



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

Published monthly by Lake Country Power
8535 Park Ridge Drive, Mountain Iron, MN 55768
Editor: Jerry Burnes • jburnes@lcp.coop
Lake Country Power Service Centers:
Cohasset • Kettle River • Mountain Iron
800-421-9959 • www.lakecountrypower.coop
This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

