

Red River Valley Cooperative Power Association

SPARKS

January 2020

Your Touchstone Energy Cooperative 

Winter
Playland



SPARKS

Red River Valley Co-op Power is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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January 2020
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Halstad, Minnesota (USPS 509-300)

OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

Roger Krostue Fisher
Chairman
Marvis Thompson Perley
Vice Chairman
Trevor Sorby Glyndon
Secretary-Treasurer
Bob Kinkade Ada
Sarah Tommerdahl Hendrum
Neil Wieser Moorhead

Rich Whitcomb
Chief Executive Officer

Scheduled Board Meeting

Board meetings are held in Halstad at the cooperative office starting at 8:30 a.m. on the next-to-last Monday of each month.

Outages: 800-788-7784

On the Cover: Freshly fallen snow provides a great excuse to get out and enjoy the rural countryside. Cross country skiing is one popular activity, whether it's on a groomed trail or out in your shelterbelt.



LIKE US ON
FACEBOOK
TO STAY UP-TO-DATE!

Like your cooperative at
www.facebook.com/rrvcpa
for outage updates and other
useful information.



Rich Whitcomb
CEO

THE CEO'S REPORT

No rate increase planned for 2020

Happy New Year!
At its December board meeting, your directors approved the 2020 budget. The budget calls for no planned rate increase this year (barring anything unforeseen or significant kWh sales fluctuations) and continued investment into your co-op's power distribution system.

Included in that plan is converting 11 miles of overhead line to underground line, as well as tree trimming maintenance and continued pole replacements. Work will continue this year on efforts to upgrade mapping and add an outage management system to your co-op's service by spring 2021. The bulk of the meter conversion should be complete by fall of this year with the exception of inside off-peak meters.

Shulstad retires after 43 years; Emmil hired as engineering manager

Staff Engineer Gary Shulstad retired Jan. 3 after more than four decades of service to Red River Valley Co-op Power. Shulstad was hired as the cooperative's Information Officer back in 1976 and transitioned to Staff Engineer in 1986. In that position, he helped members for the remainder of his distinguished career.

On behalf of everyone at the Red

River Valley Co-op Power, we thank Gary for his efforts and wish him well in retirement.

With Gary's retirement, Leon Emmil has been hired as engineering manager. Emmil is an electrical engineer who has worked on behalf of cooperatives (including Red River) in consulting roles for 15 years. He is familiar with the co-op's operations and with industry-accepted procedures and governmental regulations regarding electric cooperatives. His first day at Red River Valley Co-op Power was Jan. 9.

Programs and services issue

You'll notice this issue is filled with information designed to make your interactions with your electric co-op efficient and helpful. Please see page 5 for information on services your cooperative provides. Our mission remains to provide you with the most value for your energy dollar.

Annual meeting coming up

Your cooperative's 83rd annual meeting is almost here. Fellowship and the business meeting will be held March 19, 2020, at the Legion Recreation Center in Halstad. We hope to see you there!

You are invited to celebrate Red River Valley Co-op Power's

83rd Annual Meeting March 19, 2020

Halstad Legion Recreation Center – Halstad, Minn.

Registration, refreshments and cookies start at 4:30 p.m.

Supper from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. – Business meeting begins at 6:30 p.m.

Delicious meal – Free attendance gift – Plus, vendor prizes and prize drawings!

We look forward to seeing you there!

2020 Director Elections

2020 director elections

Red River Valley Co-op Power members in District 2 and 3 can now submit nominations to compete for a seat on the board of directors.

As a cooperative, Red River Valley Co-op Power is owned by its members. Members elect a board of directors to represent them at the cooperative. Two directors will be elected at the 2020 annual meeting March 19 at the Halstad Legion Recreation Center. Directors whose terms expire in 2020 are:

District 2 (three-year term): Sarah Tommerdahl

District 3 (three-year term): Trevor Sorby

How to run

To run for a director position, interested members in the above-mentioned districts (see map) must pick up a petition form and director packet at the office in Halstad or request to have the material mailed to them. Per the Bylaws, any 15 or more members who reside in Districts 2 or 3 may nominate an eligible member for a director position in that specific district.

No member may be elected to a director position unless nominated in this manner. No write-in ballots will be accepted. The cooperative must receive the completed petitions and forms from the packet no later than 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 18, 2020. Please see below for the section of the bylaws pertaining to nominations and qualifications.

Director Districts

District 1 Townships

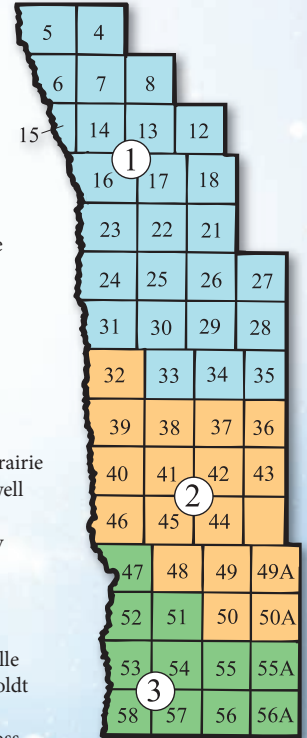
- 4 - Nesbit
- 5 - Huntsville
- 6 - Bygland
- 7 - Fisher
- 8 - Lowell
- 12 - Fairfax
- 13 - Andover
- 14 - Roome
- 15 - Tynsid
- 16 - Vineland
- 17 - Hammond
- 18 - Russia
- 21 - Reis
- 22 - Scandia
- 23 - Hubbard & Rhinehart
- 24 - Shelly
- 25 - Good Hope
- 26 - Lockhart
- 27 - Spring Creek
- 28 - Green Meadow
- 29 - Pleasant view
- 30 - Anthony
- 31 - Halstad
- 33 - Hegne
- 34 - McDonaldsville
- 35 - Lake Ida

District 2 Townships

- 32 - Hendrum
- 36 - Rockwell
- 37 - Winchester
- 38 - Mary
- 39 - Lee
- 40 - Georgetown
- 41 - Viding
- 42 - Felton
- 43 - Hagen
- 44 - Flowing
- 45 - Morken
- 46 - Kragnes
- 48 - Moland
- 49 - Spring Prairie
- 49A - Cromwell
- 50 - Riverton
- 50A - Hawley

District 3 Townships

- 47 - Oakport
- 51 - Glyndon
- 52 - Moorhead
- 53 - Kurtz
- 54 - Elmwood
- 55 - Elkton
- 55A - Skree
- 56 - Barnesville
- 56A - Humboldt
- 57 - Alliance
- 58 - Holy Cross



Petition for Nomination

The following members wish to nominate [insert name] _____, for the three-year [insert "District 2"] or for the three-year [insert "District 3"] _____ director position, and to place such name on the ballot for the March 19, 2020, election at the annual meeting of the Cooperative, in accordance with Article III, Section 4, of the bylaws.

	NAME	ADDRESS	ACCOUNT NO.
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			
11.			
12.			
13.			
14.			
15.			
16.			
17.			
18.			
19.			
20.			

The Cooperative must receive the completed petition no later than 4:30 p.m., February 18, 2020. At the annual meeting scheduled for March 19, 2020, elections will be held for a three-year term each for one director in District 2 and one director in District 3.

The directors whose terms expire in 2020 are as follows:

DISTRICT 2	DISTRICT 3
3-year term	3-year term
Sarah Tommerdahl	Trevor Sorby

Any 15 or more members who reside in District 2 or 3 may nominate an eligible member for a director position in that district. No member may be elected to a director position unless nominated in this manner. In the event of joint membership, only the signature of one joint member shall be acceptable.

Red River Valley Cooperative Power Association Bylaws

ARTICLE III - DIRECTORS

Section 4. Nominations.

- (a) Any fifteen (15) or more members who reside in any one district may nominate an eligible member for a director position in that district. Such nomination shall be in writing and signed by said fifteen (15) members, or more, and delivered to the Secretary at least thirty (30) days before the members' meeting.
- (b) No member may be elected to a director position unless nominated in the manner provided by this section. No write-in ballots shall be accepted.
- (c) The members may, at any meeting at which a director or directors shall be removed, as heretofore provided, elect a successor or successors thereto without compliance with the provisions herein with respect to nominations.

continued on page 4

- (d) If a member is absent from any meeting, the member may vote by mail for the election of directors as provided in these Bylaws, or as may be permitted by law.

Failure to comply with any of the provisions of this section shall not affect in any manner whatsoever validity of any election of directors.

Section 2. Qualifications.

Persons eligible to become or remain a director of the Cooperative shall:

- (a) be a member in good standing receiving electric service;
- (b) have voting rights within the district from which the director is to be elected;
- (c) not be employed by, materially affiliated with, or have a material financial interest in, any individual or entity which either is:
 - (1) directly or substantially competing with the Cooperative; or
 - (2) selling goods and services in substantial quantity to the Cooperative; or
 - (3) possessing a substantial conflict of interest with the Cooperative;

For purposes of this section, the terms “material” or “substantially” shall be interpreted as constituting a minimum of 5% of a member’s total hours of employment, sales or income on an annual basis;

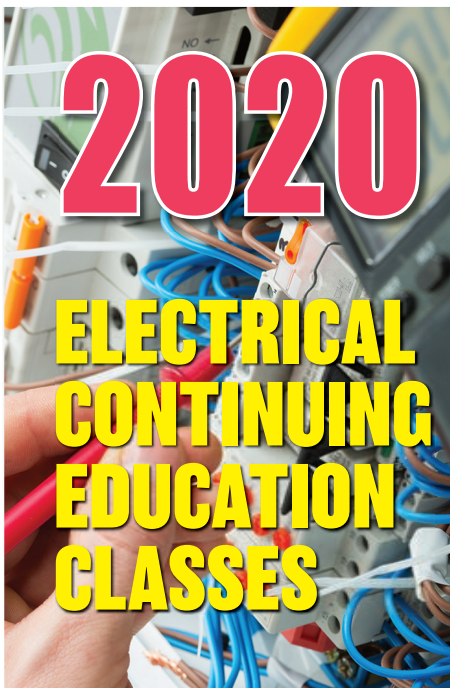
- (d) not be an employee or not have been an employee of the Cooperative within the last three (3) years;
- (e) not be a close relative of an employee, or of a director, unless the close relative is a candidate for the director’s seat, where as found in these Bylaws “close relative” means any individ-

ual who is, either by blood, law, or marriage, including half, step, foster, and adoptive relations, a spouse, child, grandchild, parent, grandparent, or sibling, or principally resides in the same residence;

- (f) be only one (1), and not more than one (1), member of a joint membership, provided, however, that none shall be eligible to become or remain a director or to hold a position of trust in the Cooperative unless all shall meet the qualifications herein set forth;
- (g) if a member of the Cooperative is not a natural person, i.e. a corporation, partnership, limited liability company, or similar, then the member may appoint or elect one (1) duly authorized natural person, residing within the external boundaries of the district from which (s)he is nominated, to be eligible for election as a director to the Board of Directors;
- (h) never have been convicted of a felony;
- (i) agree, upon election, to regularly attend all Board, regular and special members’ meetings; and
- (j) not become physically or mentally unable with reasonable accommodation to perform substantially all of the duties of Director, and the condition that creates such inability is reasonably expected to last six (6) months or more.

Exception. In regard to the restrictive provisions of this section that are based upon close relative relationships, no incumbent director shall lose eligibility to remain a director or to be re-elected a director if, during a director’s incumbency, a director becomes a first kindred relative of another incumbent director or of a Cooperative employee because of a marriage or an adoption to which the director was not a part.

Nothing contained in this section shall, or be construed to, affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any action taken at any meeting of the Board of Directors.



Minnkota Power Cooperative and Red River Valley Co-op Power will again provide an opportunity for area electricians to obtain credits for license renewal by attending one of the continuing education classes being offered throughout the region.

This marks the 32nd year of the successful program, which is aimed at providing area trade allies with the latest information on electrical code and practices.

Electrical workshops will be held Feb. 4 and Feb. 5 at Minnkota Power Cooperative’s headquarters in Grand Forks.

The registration fee is \$75 for eight code credits. Taking the class on multiple days will not qualify for 16 code credits. Register online at www.minnkota.com. Registration must be completed at least

seven days prior to the seminar.

For residential building contractor continuing education workshops, contact your local home builders association.

For more information about the program, call (701) 795-4292 or email questions to contractortraining@minnkota.com.

Dates and Locations

Grand Forks - Tuesday, Feb. 4

Minnkota Power Cooperative, 701.795.4292
5301 32nd Ave South
Grand Forks, ND 58201

Grand Forks - Wednesday, Feb. 5

Minnkota Power Cooperative, 701.795.4292
5301 32nd Ave South
Grand Forks, ND 58201

Convenient and helpful Services FOR you



SmartHub

Manage your account like never before with the new, improved SmartHub. Daily energy usage details are right upfront, allowing you to monitor your account quickly and easily. The same great SmartHub features – view and pay your bill, and more – are available at the tap of a button with the new SmartHub. To sign up for SmartHub, either go to www.rrvcoop.com or download the app on your phone or device. You will need to know your account number to sign on.



Off-peak

You can save about 45% off the basic price of electricity if you have an approved off-peak electric heating system with an automatic backup source or approved storage backup. Go to www.rrvcoop.com or call 218-456-2139 to learn more.

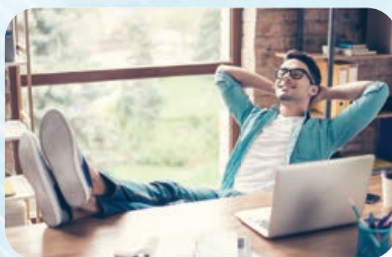
Rebates

Want to save energy and money? Then check out our rebates on page 8 or go to www.rrvcoop.com. You'll find rebates for super-efficient options such as heat pumps and floor heat – the ultimate in comfort. Your co-op also sells efficient and money-saving large capacity water heaters. Give member services a call at 218-456-2139 to discuss what may be right for you.



Autopay

Set it and forget it with autopay. The easy way to pay. Stop the hassle of writing a check when you sign up for autopay. Just go to www.rrvcoop.com and print off the form to send in with a voided check. You can also set up payments via SmartHub.



Budget billing

Know exactly what your bill will be each month when you sign up for budget billing. This program is excellent for members who have larger or smaller bills based on the season. The plan works best when started in the spring in order to build a large enough reserve to carry through the winter. Go to www.rrvcoop.com to print the form.



Payment options

Want easy ways to pay? You can pay by check, SmartHub, autopay or go to www.rrvcoop.com and click on the One-Time Payment tab on the upper left. You can also pay securely via this number: 1-888-395-5290.

Check us out online to learn more about our member programs!

www.rrvcoop.com



You're a gearhead building a new garage – choose **electric slab heat.**



The Midwest summer heat is perfect for cruising with the top down, but working on your ride outside in the dead of winter is so cold it's uncool.

If you've decided to build a new garage, install slab heat. It's the most efficient way to turn a chilly outbuilding into a warm workspace for car detailing, woodworking or deer cleaning.

The full-floor heating system is installed as you pour your concrete, creating no-maintenance, uniform heat throughout the entire space. It's safe, silent and perfectly sized for your square-footage.

Electric slab technology is much more efficient than forced air because there is nowhere for the heat to

escape. Heat energy is stored within the concrete floor, allowing you to stay warm longer and keep working on that big project throughout the night.

On top of comfort and convenience, you can now receive a bigger-than-ever rebate from your cooperative for installing slab heat. Combine that with a reduced electric rate on the off-peak electricity program, and you've found your perfect power pick.

Contact the energy experts at Red River Valley Co-op Power to find the perfect power pick for your space.

218-456-2139 or 1-800-788-7784
www.rrvcoop.com

Up to
\$45/kW
in rebates!

Top 5 ways

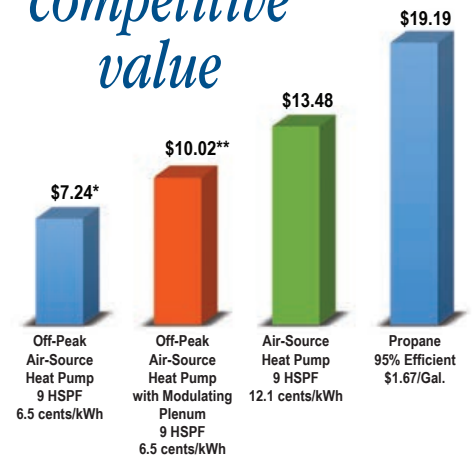
to save energy and money this winter

- Air seal and insulate your home** – You can prevent heat from escaping or cold from entering your home and lower your heating bills by insulating and air sealing your home. Sealing some areas of your home may be easy, like weather stripping around windows and doors. However, if you need attic insulation, for example, it would be best to consult a professional.
- Use LED lights** – Light-emitting diodes, or LEDs, are mature technology that are at least 75% more efficient than traditional incandescent lights.
- Unplug electronics** – When you are away, unplug those kitchen appliances, DVDs, TVs and computers to save energy and money. When plugged in, these electronics use energy even when they are turned off.
- Use a power strip** – If the idea of running around the home to unplug everything is a bit too much, use power strips to plug in multiple appliances, and then turn it all off with the flip of the power strip switch.
- Adjust the blinds and curtains** – Last but not least, another useful way to conserve energy while on vacation is to lower the blinds and curtains. Close your curtains and shades at night to protect against cold drafts; open them during the day to let in warming sunlight.

Source: U.S. Dept of Energy

OFF-PEAK ELECTRIC HEAT

*A great
competitive
value*



* Outside temperatures fluctuate, affecting the heat pump's efficiency. Efficiency and price per million Btus is estimated at 47 degrees F. Needs additional heat like plenum heater in winter.
** Heat pump with modulating plenum assumes a coefficient of performance of 1.9 at 10 degrees F using information provided and reviewed by Electro Industries, Monticello, Minn.

Four winter safety tips

The National Fire Protection Association estimates that 47,700 home fires occur each year in the U.S. due to electrical failure or malfunction. This winter, safeguard your loved ones and your home with these electrical safety tips from the Electrical Safety Foundation International.

- Don't overload outlets.** Overloaded outlets are a major cause of residential fires. Avoid using extension cords or multioutlet converters for appliance connections – they should be plugged directly into a wall outlet. If you're relying heavily on extension cords in general, you may need additional outlets to address your needs. Contact a qualified electrician to inspect your home and add new outlets.
- Never leave space heaters unattended.** If you're using a space heater, turn it off before leaving the room. Make sure heaters are placed at least 3 feet away from flammable items.
- Inspect heating pads and electric blankets.** Electric blankets that are more than 10 years old create additional risks for a fire hazard. Inspect your electric blankets and heating pads – look for dark, charred or frayed spots, and make sure the electrical cord is not damaged. Do not place any items on top of a heating pad or electric blanket, and never fold them when in use.
- Use portable generators safely.** Unfortunately, winter storms can sometimes cause prolonged power outages, which means some consumers will use portable generators to power their homes. Never connect a standby generator into your home's electrical system. For portable generators, plug appliances directly into the outlet provided on the generator. Start the generator first, before you plug in appliances. Run it in a well-ventilated area outside your home. The carbon monoxide it generates is deadly, so keep it away from your garage, doors, windows and vents.



**RED RIVER VALLEY
CO-OP POWER**

Save money and energy in 2020 with energy efficiency rebates!



**Energy-efficient rebates
for members remain in effect
for 2020 although some
changes have been made.**

**Please see the chart
for a *sample* of
incentives.**

All incentives, criteria and
guidelines for resident and business
members can be found at

www.rrvcoop.com

or by calling

800-788-7784

**All criteria are listed
on the rebate form.**

Sample 2020 Electric Rebates for Members

Equipment	Specifications	Rebate
Air-source heat pump	≥16 SEER	\$500/ton*
Ground-source heat pump	Energy Star-rated	\$500/ton*
Electric water heater	Min. 80-gallon capacity. Must be on load management program.	\$300-\$650 per unit
Off-peak electric heat (plenum, baseboard, hanging heater, etc.)	Must be resistance electric on off-peak program.	\$25/kW*
Electric boiler, brick storage, slab storage	Must be on off-peak program.	\$45/kW*
EV electric battery storage	240V-rated Level 2 Charger on load control.	\$50/kW/limit \$500 per account
LED business lighting (retrofit only)	<40 watts (high-bay and wall pack applications)	\$4 per fixture
LED business lighting (retrofit only)	≥40 watts (high-bay and wall pack applications)	\$6 per fixture
LED tube lighting (retrofit only)	4-ft. linear lengths	\$2 per tube

Every install must be new equipment and provide proof of purchase unless site verification is approved.

*These amounts include a rebate from Minnkota Power Cooperative, which has a capped rebate, so call for details.