

# VOLTS & VIEWS



## GAME PLAN TO AVOID UTILITY SCAMS

Picture it: You're just sitting down to enjoy the big game and a load of hot wings with your crew. A text alert comes across your phone telling you your electricity will be shut off in the next 30 minutes if you don't send money immediately. What do you do? You can't risk losing power before kickoff!

A message like that is likely from a scammer trying to get your money, and you need to be prepared to let them "take a hike." Luckily, Roseau Electric Cooperative has constructed a solid game plan to help you block and tackle any swindler who is trying to cross the line.

### WHAT THE OFFENSE WILL DO

If there are winter-related power outages in the area, a phone fraudster may pose as a utility representative asking for your bank account information to deliver a "reimbursement" for your loss of power. The same kind of scammer may call you when your power has been working reliably, telling you that you've missed a payment and must transfer money to avoid having your power cut off.

A scam attempt may come in the form of a fake email, asking

you to reenter your personal information (social security number, automatic payment information, etc.) for your utility's records.

Some con artists are sophisticated enough to send a text link to your phone and request that you "click immediately" for important service information from your utility.

Although less likely in the cold northern winter, some scammers will actually knock on your door in person posing as utility worker asking face-to-face for private personal information.

### HOW YOU'LL PLAY DEFENSE

If you receive a phone call from your co-op that seems suspicious, hang up and call the office directly (number below). Do not use the call-back number on your phone – it could be fake.

If you receive a text or email from the co-op that asks for a response of any kind, do not respond and delete the message. Call the office directly to confirm it was a scam.

It's difficult not to be Midwest Nice, but if someone approaches your door saying they are from the utility company, do not let them in and do not give them personal information. Call your co-op immediately to confirm the person on the front step is a utility representative.

Do not wire money, pay with a gift card, or use cryptocurrency if requested. Your co-op will never ask for payment in those forms.

### ALERT THE OFFICIALS

First, call Roseau Electric Cooperative directly to report any suspicious phone calls or messages. You may not be the only member to be targeted by

the scam. Talk to your friends and neighbors, too!

After talking with your utility, report the scam to the Federal Trade Commission at [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](http://ReportFraud.ftc.gov).

IF YOU BELIEVE SOMEONE IS TRYING TO SCAM YOU BY POSING AS A CO-OP EMPLOYEE, PLEASE CALL OUR OFFICE DIRECTLY AT **218-463-1543**.

# VOLTS & VIEWS

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## OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Chairman . . . . . Mark Sax  
Vice Chairman . . . . . Jim Hallan  
Secretary-Treasurer . . . . . Mike Wahl  
Directors . . Jim Christianson, Brian Grafstrom,  
Shawn Gust, Dale Moser,  
Joe Tesarek, Ed Walsh  
Tracey Stoll . . . . . General Manager  
Ryan Severson . . . . . Assistant Manager  
Mike Millner . . . . . Line Superintendent  
Jeremy Lindemann . . . . . Member Services  
Alex McMillin . . . . . Office Manager

Regular Business Hours: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Phone (218) 463-1543

**OUTAGE CALLS:**

Toll-Free 1-888-847-8840

## MINNESOTA STATE ELECTRICAL INSPECTORS

7 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. (Mon. thru Fri.)

Northwest Angle, Kittson, Marshall,  
Pennington and Roseau counties  
and parts of Beltrami County:

**Ronald Ditsch - 651-368-2195**

Lake of the Woods County:

**Curt Collier - 218-966-5070**

Inspector list is subject to change at any time.

The State of Minnesota has high wiring standards, which are in the best interest of you and your family or business. Improper wiring can damage your home, your property and equipment, and injure or kill the people you love. Currently, the state does allow homeowners to do their own residential wiring; however, it is critical that the current electrical code is followed. 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. For more information visit [dli.mn.gov](http://dli.mn.gov) and go to the electrical page.

**Gopher State One Call**  
1-800-252-1166 or 811  
[www.gopherstateonecall.org](http://www.gopherstateonecall.org)



Anyone who plans to dig is required by law to notify the state of their intentions at least 48 hours in advance. All digging requires the 48-hour notification so that buried telephone line, television cable, pipelines, utility electrical lines, municipal water and sewer lines can be located to ensure that none will be severed or damaged.

## OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Roseau Electric Cooperative is committed to providing its member-owners low-cost, high-quality, safe and reliable electricity with friendly, efficient and knowledgeable service.

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*



## KNOWLEDGE SCHOLARSHIP

Roseau Electric Cooperative will award five scholarships of **\$500 each** - one to each of the school districts in our service area. Just for taking the test and scoring more than 50%, you'll be entered into a \$50 cash award drawing. Most test answers will be included in the Cooperative Knowledge study material that Roseau Electric will provide for you.

### In order to qualify:

- The parent or guardian must be a member of Roseau Electric Cooperative
- Student must be a 2023 graduate
- Student must plan to enroll in postsecondary school and the recipient must verify
- Candidates must take a short test about the cooperative that provides electricity to your home
- Scholarship will be awarded to the highest-scoring candidate of those students scoring 75% or better

**Sign-up will take place through your local high school's guidance counselor or scholarship administrator.**



## Grant Application Deadline Feb. 28, 2023

To be considered at the March 2023 meeting, grant applications must be received by **Feb. 28, 2023**.

Grant applications are available at the REC office or by visiting our website at [www.roseauelectric.com](http://www.roseauelectric.com).

## PROBLEMS PAYING YOUR ELECTRIC BILL?

### Energy assistance may be available!

If you are receiving a low income or suffering from a temporary financial shortfall, the following agencies may be able to assist you with your electric bill. We urge you to contact them immediately to avoid disconnection if you feel you are eligible for aid.

#### Northwest Community Action

PO Box 67  
Badger, MN 56714-0067  
(218) 528-3258 or 800-568-5329  
[nwcaa.org](http://nwcaa.org)

#### Bi-County Cap, Inc.

6603 Bemidji Ave. N  
Bemidji, MN 56601-8669  
(218) 751-4631



You can also apply online:  
<https://energy-assistance.web.commerce.state.mn.us/>

# From the line

Mike Millner, Line Superintendent



I can't believe February is already here! We sure shouldn't complain about last month. I think it was about the mildest January that I can remember. We did have some issues with the beautiful frost that built up on the power lines. It might look pretty, but it caused us – and you – lots of outages. The frost can fall off the bottom wire or the neutral first, causing the neutral to slap the top wire or primary and then blowing a fuse.

We have one crew mowing right-of-way clearing now and hopefully we can keep that going a few more weeks; snow depth will determine this. I have the rest of our crews taking down our Oil Circuit Reclosers (OCR). They bring them into our shop, change oil, clean carbon build up, repair any broken components and run them through several tests before returning them back on the line. The difference between an OCR and a fuse is that the fuse will heat up and blow because of excessive current flow due to an overload or something (or someone) touching the line. An OCR will sense the overcurrent flow, then open up and close in again up to four times, hopefully burning or blowing the tree or whatever is causing the fault off the line. On a blown fuse, a lineworker has to be sent out every time to restore power and on an OCR the fault can clear itself before the four operations and not go to lock-out. Just a reminder, do not ever assume a power line on the ground is dead until it has been grounded by one of my lineworkers! Over the years we have seen many power lines that were hot on the ground. I would really hate to see one of you as the fault that the OCR is trying to clear.

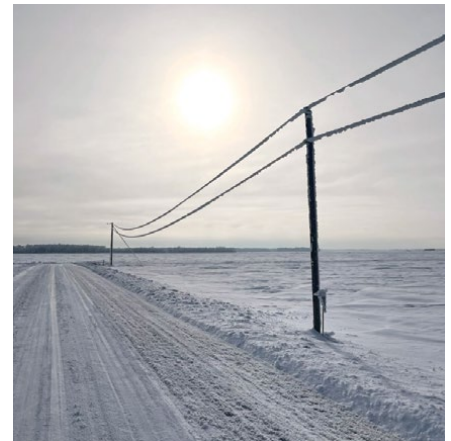
I know it's winter and it is hard to think and plan for next summer, but we are going to be extremely busy with high water repairs at the Northwest Angle. With that being said, let me know ahead of time if you need a new service or revamp, so that I can get you on our list.

Before I leave you, I would like to share some quotes with you. It was Martin Luther King Jr. who said, "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a

nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character," and also, "The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in the moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy." In my experience, the right road is always the hardest road to travel. I will leave you with that! Until we meet again...Mike



Cliff Dahl inspecting an OCR



Heavy frost-covered lines



Jedd VonEnde removing an OCR for service

# ALL-OF-THE-ABOVE STRATEGY ENSURES THE BEST ENERGY VALUE

“Don’t put all your eggs in one basket.”

It’s a familiar saying, and believe it or not, that age-old piece of wisdom is used by electric cooperatives to make sure you receive a reliable, affordable and environmentally responsible supply of electricity. Each of the primary generation resource options across the country has both advantages and disadvantages. This is why an all-of-the-above energy strategy is so crucial. If a utility ties itself to one resource,

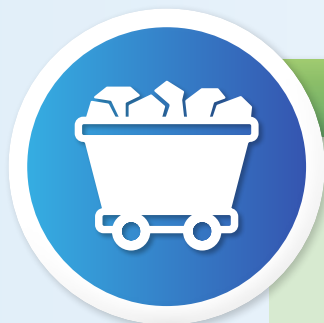
it is exposed to all the risks associated with that resource. By diversifying, utilities are able to take advantage of the pros and limit their exposure to the cons.

Roseau Electric Cooperative receives a diverse mix of coal, wind and water from its wholesale power supplier, Minnkota Power Cooperative, to meet your 24/7 electricity needs. Future power supply decisions take into account numerous factors, including permitting; capital, operating and maintenance costs; existing

generation mix; reliability and resiliency; and projected member demand for electricity.

Decisions to build or purchase from new generation resources are carefully considered. Building any new generation resource at grid scale can cost hundreds of millions of dollars and require decades of investment and commitment. That makes it uneconomic to switch back and forth between power supply options over short periods of time.

## What is considered when power supply decisions are made?



### LIGNITE COAL

#### Advantages

- Abundant, domestic fuel source
- Stable pricing
- Can reliably run 24 hours per day
- Technology has been developed to address emissions (exploration of Project Tundra)

#### Disadvantages

- Extraordinarily difficult to permit
- Cannot economically rail lignite coal due to high moisture content
- Can be difficult to ramp up and down to accommodate renewable production
- Releases CO<sub>2</sub>. Anticipate CO<sub>2</sub> regulations, although CO<sub>2</sub> capture technology is rapidly advancing



### NATURAL GAS

#### Advantages

- Lower CO<sub>2</sub> emission levels than coal
- Can be run 24/7 or used during peak events
- Can respond rapidly to dispatch

#### Disadvantages

- Fuel costs can be volatile and impacted by events outside of the U.S.
- Pipeline infrastructure not adequate for projected demand
- Still releases CO<sub>2</sub> emissions



## NUCLEAR

### Advantages

- No air emissions
- Can reliably run 24 hours per day
- Smaller, modular reactors are in development

### Disadvantages

- High capital cost and increasingly expensive fuel
- Radioactive waste that must be properly disposed of and monitored
- Extraordinarily difficult to permit and build
- Cannot ramp up and down to accommodate renewable production



## HYDRO

### Advantages

- No fuel cost
- Low-cost energy to consumer
- No air emissions
- Can respond rapidly to dispatch

### Disadvantages

- Nearly impossible to permit
- Affects fish and wildlife habitat
- Alters the natural flow of rivers
- Virtually no resources left to develop (some dams being removed)



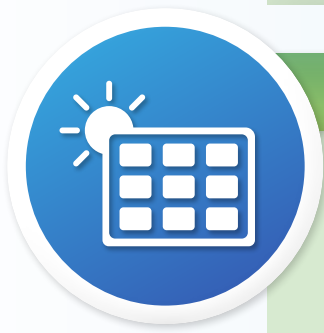
## WIND

### Advantages

- No fuel cost
- No air emissions
- Cost-competitive with other resources

### Disadvantages

- Has intermittent production (produces about 45% of its potential on an annual basis)
- Requires investment in backup generation resources
- Grid-scale battery backup technology is still in its infancy
- Turbines take a larger footprint to produce the same energy as other resources and can impact bird and wildlife populations
- Cannot operate in extreme cold and ice conditions



## SOLAR

### Advantages

- No fuel cost
- No air emissions
- Costs are slightly higher than other resources, but are trending downward

### Disadvantages

- Has intermittent production (produces about 15-19% of its potential on an annual basis)
- Requires investment in backup generation resources
- Grid-scale battery backup technology is still in its infancy
- Solar panels take a larger footprint to produce the same energy as other resources
- Production affected by clouds, snow and extreme cold temperatures
- Panel production degrades over time

# ENERGY EFFICIENCY INCENTIVES

## Sample 2023 PowerSavers/Value of Electricity/REC Residential Electric Incentives for Members

(Incentive shall not exceed 50% of project costs)

Equipment	Specifications	Incentive
LED Screw-in Bulb*	40-60W equivalent incandescent. ENERGY STAR® recommended.	50% of the purchase price up to \$2/bulb
LED Screw-in Bulb*	65W or greater equivalent incandescent. ENERGY STAR® recommended.	50% of the purchase price up to \$4/bulb
* Rebates for LED Screw-in bulbs are not valid after August 1, 2023.		
LED Fixture	Complete fixture or replacement kit. ENERGY STAR® recommended.	50% of the purchase price up to \$4/fixture
LED Outdoor Fixture	Dusk to dawn operation required. DesignLights™ Consortium or ENERGY STAR® recommended.	50% of the purchase price up to \$10/fixture
Clothes Washer	Must be ENERGY STAR® approved.	\$25/unit
Clothes Dryer	Must be ENERGY STAR® approved.	\$25/unit
Refrigerator or Freezer	Must be ENERGY STAR® approved.	\$25/unit
Recycle Old Refrigerator or Freezer	Recycling receipt required.	\$50/unit
Electric Water Heater <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 55 gallon or less</li> <li>• 56-99 gallon</li> <li>• 100 gallon or greater</li> <li>• Conversion from gas to electric</li> </ul>	Must be on demand response program.	\$125/\$125/\$125/unit \$200/\$200/\$200/unit \$300/\$300/\$300/unit \$250/unit
Programmable Thermostat		50% of the purchase price up to \$25
ENERGY STAR® Smart Thermostat	Wi-Fi connectivity required.	50% of the purchase price up to \$50
Tune-up for Central AC	Not valid on window AC units. Checklist on form must be completed with application.	\$25/unit
Tune-up for Air-Source Heat Pump or Mini-Split Ductless ASHP	Checklist on form must be completed with application.	\$25/unit
Supplemental Heating Source Air-Source Heat Pump	Must modulate to allow ENERGY STAR®-rated air-source heat pump to operate down to 5° F and be on demand response.	\$500/unit
Air-Source Heat Pump or Mini-Split/Ductless ASHP	Less than 17 SEER Equal to or greater than 17 SEER	\$300/\$150/\$50/ton \$500/\$150/\$50/ton
Ground-Source Heat Pump Open Loop less than 135,000 BTUH @ 59° F	16.2 EER/3.6 COP Maximum incentive \$2,500/home.	\$200/\$250/\$50/ton
Ground-Source Heat Pump Closed Loop less than 135,000 BTUH @ 77° F	14.1 EER/3.3 COP Maximum incentive \$5,000/home.	\$400/\$250/\$50/ton

*Insulation and air-sealing incentives for existing homes are available. See Roseau Electric for details.*

**All incentives, criteria and guidelines for residential and business members can be found at [www.roseauelectric.com](http://www.roseauelectric.com) or by calling 888-847-8840.**

The average home in our area can be powered for about **\$45 per week** – the price of a bouquet of flowers for that special someone.



**VALUING EVERYTHING THAT POWERS YOUR WEEK.**

**THAT'S THE VALUE OF ELECTRICITY.**



## OPERATING STATISTICS

	Monthly		Year to Date	
	December 2021	December 2022	December 2021	December 2022
Members	6,650	6,663	6,650	6,663
kWh purchased	16,928,402	17,816,642	148,559,311	160,401,939
% change		5.25%		7.97%
Revenue	1,838,271	2,003,040	18,219,271	19,550,713
Cost of power	1,147,955	1,209,921	11,164,858	11,763,898
Other expenses	707,804	573,984	6,809,249	6,695,608
Operating margins	(17,488)	219,135	245,164	1,091,207
Nonoperating margins	(11,042)	(63,630)	180,426	30,773
Patronage dividends	285,860	486,900	464,914	685,913
Total margins	257,330	642,405	890,504	1,807,893

## member connection

### ENERGY TIP

Blocked air vents force your heating system to work harder than necessary and increase pressure in the ductwork, which can cause cracks and leaks to form. Make sure all air vents are unobstructed from furniture, drapes or other items to ensure sufficient circulation throughout your home. If necessary, purchase a vent extender, which can be placed over a vent to redirect air flow from underneath furniture.

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)

### DATES TO REMEMBER

**February 14**  
Valentine's Day

**February 21**  
Electric bill is due

**April 1**  
2023 Annual Meeting;  
Districts 2, 3, 4, & 7  
are up for director elections

### OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Friday  
8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
Phone 218-463-1543

### AFTER HOURS/OUTAGE NUMBER

Toll-free 1-888-847-8840  
(main outage call center)

### CALL BEFORE YOU DIG

1-800-252-1166 or 811

### PAY BY PHONE

1-877-999-3412

### SMARTHUB

<https://roseauelectric.smarthub.coop/>

### WEBSITE

[www.roseauelectric.com](http://www.roseauelectric.com)



LIKE US ON FACEBOOK  
TO STAY UP TO DATE!

@RoseauElectricCooperativeInc

# Don't let electrical safety get buried in the snow

Winters in Minnesota present challenges to members and Roseau Electric Cooperative's lineworkers. A daily or even hourly question: Where do we put all this snow?

Keep safety in mind when clearing snow from your driveway and other areas around your home or business. Electric cooperative members need to be mindful of the location of power equipment and make sure it is clear and accessible for Roseau Electric Cooperative's crews. Please take note of the locations of pad-mounted transformers, meters, regulators, cabinets, poles and overhead wires before moving snow.

Snow piled on electrical equipment not only impacts your safety, but also has the potential to affect electric service to hundreds of homes and businesses in your neighborhood. The National Electric Code states to allow at least 10 feet in front of power equipment and 3 feet on the sides and back for lineworkers to be able to access the area in the event of an emergency.

In addition to paying attention to ground-level equipment, be sure to look up and be aware of overhead power lines – especially when removing snow from your roof. Also, make plans to pile snow away from power lines where children might play.

In the event of an outage, clearing snow around utility equipment will make it easier for lineworkers to get power restored. Roseau Electric Cooperative recommends using a shovel to prevent damage. This allows members to be aware of the utility infrastructure below. If members notice damaged equipment, please contact Roseau Electric Cooperative at 218-463-1543 or 888-847-8840 so it can be inspected.

