

FEBRUARY 2024

VOLTS & VIEWS

 Roseau Electric Cooperative, Inc.

NORTHSTREAM
FIBER
Powered by Roseau Electric Cooperative

CONGRATULATIONS
ON YOUR RETIREMENT!

Roseau Electric Cooperative would like to recognize **Steve Severson** for 25 years of service. Thank you for many great years of service and enjoy your well-deserved retirement!



VOLTS & VIEWS

FEBRUARY 2024 – Vol. 69, No. 2

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF

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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, Kermit Jensen,
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 and go to the electrical page.

Gopher State One Call
1-800-252-1166 or 811
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.



From the manager

Tracey Stoll, General Manager

Wrapping up 2023

Record low December 2023 energy sales led to your cooperative selling less than 145 million kilowatt-hours, on an annual basis, for just the second time in the last 20+ years. The good news is that your cooperative ended the year with just over \$1 million in operating margins for the second year in a row. This number, shown in the operating statistics later in this newsletter, will be presented to the board in our February meeting to be approved for allocation to the membership based on your 2023 patronage. At our current payback schedule, in 15 years you will see these dollars returned to you as bill credits or in check form.

As I'm writing this, we're fast approaching our director-petition deadline of Feb. 6. You may look forward to the results of that process in next month's newsletter with biographies of those running, and what the next steps are in the election process as we move toward our April 6 annual meeting.

As of Feb. 1, our members receiving our NorthStream fiber-to-the-home service offerings are benefiting from our strong partnership with Wikstrom Telephone — seeing a doubling of speed for the same monthly cost. For questions as to what speeds at what cost, or to see if you are in our NorthStream footprint, please access our website at north-streamfiber.com.

Congratulations to the Warroad-area community for all the hard work put into hosting Hockey Day Minnesota 2024 this past month!

And last, but not least, as the front-page picture shows, Mr. Severson has "gone fish'n." Steve and I go way back to my high school days, when he was the supervisor of my first employment opportunity at Milo's Hartz in Warroad. It has been a pleasure working with you for many years, Mr. Severson. May your retirement give you the opportunity to hone your Grandpa skills as you teach the next generation where the fish are biting!

Notice of Annual Meeting of the Roseau Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Saturday, April 6, 2024

Roseau High School Theater
Starting at 9:00 a.m. — Business Meeting 10:00 a.m.

Notice is hereby given that the annual meeting of members of Roseau Electric Cooperative, Inc. will be held in the Roseau High School Theater in the city of Roseau, Roseau County, Minnesota, on Saturday, April 6, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.

Mike Wahl, Secretary-Treasurer

THE PROS AND CONS OF COAL

Coal has been an essential resource on our nation's electric grid for decades. But like all power supply options, it comes with its own set of strengths and challenges.

The following coal pros and cons illustrate why Minnkota Power Cooperative (our power supplier) maintains a diverse portfolio of coal, wind and hydropower – and why coal's strengths outweigh its challenges.

STRENGTHS

24/7 RELIABILITY

Coal-fired power plants provide a stable and continuous source of electricity, which is important for maintaining a consistent baseload power supply. Minnkota's Milton R. Young Station can produce coal-based power every minute of every day, as electricity needs to be used the moment it is generated.

RESILIENT OPERATIONS

Coal-based power plants have consistently proven they can operate in extreme conditions - from 100-degree summer days to 30-below-zero winter nights. While resources like wind and solar are dependent on ideal weather conditions, coal-based power plants can operate through the harshest of conditions.

ECONOMIC STRENGTH

Dependable power generation leads to stable costs. North Dakota's coal-based power plants provide competitively priced electricity that people across the Upper Midwest depend on. In North Dakota alone, the coal industry creates thousands of jobs in mining and power plant operations, and still more in those industries that support coal generation.

CONCENTRATED LAND FOOTPRINT

A 2020 report from the Brookings Institution found that electric generation from wind and solar requires at least 10 times as much land per unit of power produced than coal-based power plants. The concentrated nature of a coal power plant also means fewer transmission lines need to be constructed to bring electricity from generation point to substation.

CHALLENGES

EMISSIONS MANAGEMENT

Coal-based power plants must manage emissions levels to ensure environmental stewardship. Approximately \$425 million in state-of-the-art technology has been invested at the Milton R. Young Station to capture emissions of sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, mercury, particulate matter and more. Plus, Minnkota is pursuing Project Tundra, a carbon capture and storage system that would significantly reduce CO₂ emissions.

BYPRODUCT MANAGEMENT

Generating electricity from coal requires the management of byproducts, like coal combustion residuals (CCR). Much of the bottom ash from the power plant is responsibly recycled into materials, including shingle grit and sandblasting material. CCRs that cannot be recycled are safely stored in approved storage cells. Plus, some CCRs can be reused safely to strengthen concrete, wallboard, bricks and more.

TEMPORARY LAND DISRUPTION

While coal mining does require the use of land, Minnkota and its partners at BNI Coal have developed an award-winning land reclamation program that returns these areas to their natural state (or better) once mining is complete.

SAVE MONEY AND ENERGY IN 2024 WITH ENERGY EFFICIENCY REBATES!

Energy efficiency rebates for members remain in effect for 2024. Please see the chart for a sample of incentives.

SAMPLE 2024 ELECTRIC REBATES FOR MEMBERS

EQUIPMENT	SPECIFICATIONS	REBATES
LED recessed downlight	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
Air-source heat pump or mini-split ductless heat pump	< 17 SEER ≥17 SEER	\$500/ton \$700/ton
Ground-source heat pump	Closed or open loop	\$500-\$700/ton
Supplemental heating source for ASHP	Must modulate to allow Energy Star-rated ASHP to operate down to 5°F and be on off-peak program	\$500/unit
Electric water heater	Must be on off-peak program: 55 gallon or less 56-99 gallon 100 gallon or larger	\$375/unit \$600/unit \$900/unit
Off-peak electric heat (plenum, baseboard, hanging heater, etc.)	Must be resistance electric on off-peak program	\$50/kW
Electric boiler, brick storage, slab storage	Must be on off-peak program	\$90/kW
Programmable thermostat		50% of the purchase price Up to \$25
Smart thermostat	Must be Energy Star approved and have Wi-Fi connectivity	50% of the purchase price Up to \$50
Appliances (refrigerator, freezer, clothes washer, electric clothes dryer)	Must be Energy Star approved	\$25/unit
Recycling of old refrigerator or freezer	Recycling receipt form required	\$50/unit
Electric vehicle (EV) charger	240V-rated Level 2 or Level 3 charger on off-peak program	\$100/kW

These rebate amounts include rebates from Power Savers, Minnkota Power Cooperative and Roseau Electric Cooperative. Total rebate not to exceed 50% of the project cost.

All rebate applications, criteria and guidelines for residential and business members can be found at roseauelectric.coop or by calling 218-463-1543.

The rebate applications must have complete information and be submitted with invoices itemizing the new equipment purchased.



Winter impacts on generation resources

Winter has a way of slowing us down. We have to set aside time to shovel the driveway, drive slowly on icy roads and bundle up the kids with extra warm layers. It's no different for electric generation resources. They all have an Achilles heel in the winter – some more detrimental than others. Minnkota Power Cooperative (Roseau Electric Cooperative's power supplier) uses a diverse mix of several resources to ensure a reliable power supply during the coldest, darkest months.



Coal*

Winter impacts:

- In extreme cases, blizzard-like conditions may halt coal extraction and delivery to the power plant.

The good news:

- Many northern coal-fired power plants like Minnkota's Milton R. Young Station are mine-mouth, which means transportation to the plant is minimal (and a couple of weeks of coal is stored directly onsite in case of interruption). These plants are also fully winterized and prepared for subzero temperatures.



Natural Gas

Winter impacts:

- Gas supplies may be diverted to home and business heating during extended cold snaps.
- Natural gas generators, wellheads and pipelines face operating challenges during extreme cold.

The good news:

- Natural gas is often stored in underground reservoirs, which are less susceptible to extreme cold.



Hydro*

Winter impacts:

- Rivers and reservoirs can quickly ice up, and that ice buildup can slow water intake and affect turbine performance.
- In rare occasions, extreme cold may lead to reduced water flow due to frozen or reduced precipitation.

The good news:

- Hydropower is generally less affected by extreme cold compared to other forms of energy generation, as long as water flow is maintained.



Solar

Winter impacts:

- Shorter winter days mean fewer hours of sun hitting the solar panels.
- Snow and ice can accumulate on the solar panels, reducing overall generation.

The good news:

- Solar panels can still generate some power in freezing temperatures, but efficiency decreases significantly.



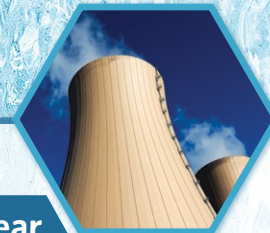
Wind*

Winter impacts:

- Wind turbines can go into shutdown mode when temps drop below -20 degrees.
- Blade icing can decrease a turbine's ability to catch wind efficiently.

The good news:

- Cold weather packages can be added to wind turbines, but they add cost and lower efficiency.



Nuclear

Winter impacts:

- Nuclear plants often use rivers or lakes for cooling purposes, and those water intake and discharge systems may freeze up if not weatherized.

The good news:

- Cold weather can enhance the efficiency of nuclear cooling systems by providing a cooler environment for heat exchange during fission.

*Found in Minnkota's power supply portfolio

Over the past five years, your electricity prices have remained stable while the average U.S. egg prices have increased by **48%**.

ELECTRICITY – DELIVERING A POWERFUL VALUE EACH AND EVERY DAY.



**Grant Application Deadline
Feb. 28, 2024**

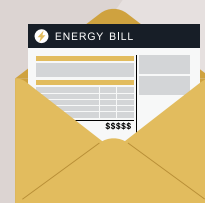
To be considered at the March 2024 meeting, grant applications must be received by **Feb. 28, 2024**.

Grant applications are available at the REC office or by visiting our website at roseauelectric.com.

**NEED HELP 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

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/>

Lifeline & Telephone Assistance Plan

You may be eligible for assistance on your telephone or internet bill if you receive benefits from certain low-income assistance programs. There are two programs:

Minnesota's Telephone Assistance Plan (TAP)

Offers a monthly credit of \$10 on your landline telephone service plan. You may receive the TAP credit on one landline per household.

The Federal Lifeline Program

Offers a monthly discount of \$5.25 on some landline and wireless telephone service plans. Lifeline also offers discounts of \$9.25 on some broadband internet service plans. You may receive the Lifeline discount on one service per household. The definition of a "household" is anyone living at an address including children, relatives, people not related to you, etc. who share income(s) and household expenses.

Fill out the applications found at northstreamfiber.com/lifeline-telephone-assistance-plan.

If applying for the TAP or Federal Lifeline Program discount, mail the application to the address below:

Roseau Electric Cooperative, Inc. | P.O. Box 100 | Roseau, MN 56751-0100

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 2024 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 their 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.

OPERATING STATISTICS

	Monthly		Year to Date	
	December 2022	December 2023	December 2022	December 2023
Members	6,663	6,696	6,663	6,696
kWh purchased	17,816,642	14,336,869	160,401,939	152,115,986
% change		-19.53%		-5.17%
Revenue	2,003,040	1,743,901	19,550,713	19,167,711
Cost of power	1,209,921	1,027,646	11,763,898	11,439,741
Other expenses	573,984	710,323	6,695,608	6,640,185
Operating margins	219,135	5,932	1,091,207	1,087,785
Non-operating margins	(63,630)	982	30,773	202,086
Patronage dividends	486,900	317,585	685,913	370,944
Total margins	642,405	324,499	1,807,893	1,660,815

member connection

ENERGY TIP

Area rugs are an easy, cost-effective solution to cold floors. Adding area rugs to hard-surface flooring can add warmth to any room and keep your feet cozy on cold winter days. Choose rugs made from wool or other natural fibers and plush or high-pile textures for the most insulation. Place rugs in areas where you need additional warmth, like the foot of a bed or under a coffee table. Area rugs can enhance the aesthetic of your home and keep you cozier.



DATES TO REMEMBER

February 14
Valentine's Day

February 21
Electric bill due

April 6
2024 Annual Meeting;
Districts 1, 6, & 9 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
roseauelectric.coop



LIKE US ON FACEBOOK
TO STAY UP TO DATE!

@RoseauElectricCooperativeInc

FIND PEAK VALUE WITH OFF-PEAK WATER HEATERS

Our region isn't known for its vast mountain ranges with high, towering peaks. The peaks we see are of the ENERGY variety – but Roseau Electric Cooperative has a program that beats those energy peaks and saves our members some serious bucks on their electricity bills. It's called the off-peak program, and an easy way to participate is by installing an electric water heating system on your cooperative's program.

An average household spends up to 20% of its monthly electric bill on water heating, and an electric water heater is often more efficient than gas or propane models. So, make sure you are maximizing all the peaks "off-peak" has to offer when it comes to water heaters.

1 A MOUNTAIN OF SAVINGS

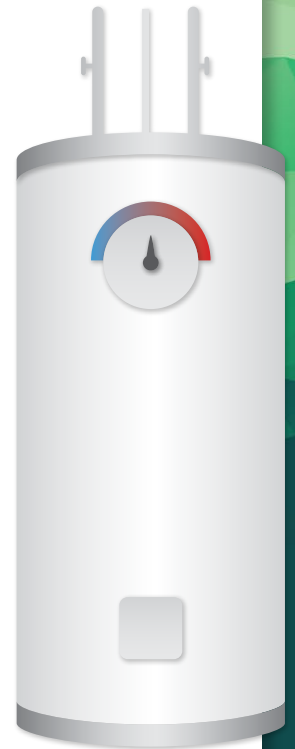
The peak in saving starts with installation. Not only will your water heater qualify for a reduced rate when set up on off-peak – up to half the standard rate – but there are also co-op rebates available up to \$900!

2 A SPIKE OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY

On the off-peak program, your electric water heater will warm your water during lower-demand times of the day. The water tanks are specially insulated so there is little to no heat loss over 24 hours.

3 HEIGHTEN RELIABILITY

During peak energy times of the day, our electrical grid can experience some serious strain. When your electric water heat is on the off-peak program, your water is heated during periods of lower demand which helps keep the reliability of our grid strong!



With large-capacity electric water heater tanks ranging from 80-100 gallons (or larger), you never have to worry about having enough hot water for your entire family! Visit ValueofElectricity.com to learn more about electric water heaters and how you can get peak savings when joining Roseau Electric Cooperative's off-peak program!