



Connections



Update your life-support member listing with us

For family members or friends with a medical condition electricity is a lifeline for their medical equipment.

Your local electric co-op likes to know about any members who are on life-support equipment, such as:

- oxygen concentrators
- respirators
- home dialysis or
- other human life-threatening medical conditions.

Your electric cooperative maintains this list for two reasons. First, in case of a planned outage where crews will work on the lines, the co-op tries to inform these members before the outage. Secondly, during an unplanned outage, priority is given to restore power to these members with such medical equipment.

If you haven't notified your local electric co-op, please complete this coupon and return it to us with your next bill payment. Otherwise, e-mail, fax or mail the information right away. In addition, if the person with the medical condition moves off the co-op's system, no longer needs life support or has passed away, please inform the co-op so our list is current.

**___ Yes, I'm on life support equipment
or
___ Please remove ___
from the co-op's life support list**

Name _____

Address _____

City/state/zip _____

Phone number _____

Your location number (as found on your electric bill) _____

Type of life support equipment or medical condition: _____

Battery backup? ___ Yes ___ No

If yes, how long will the batteries last? _____

Is there a generator onsite for backup electricity?
___ Yes ___ No

Return this coupon to your local electric co-op with your next bill payment. Otherwise, e-mail, fax or mail it right away. Thanks! (10/2011)



Connecting our co-ops & members to a progressive future



Inside this issue:

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The Center for Energy and Environment expands energy-financing options



The Center for Energy and Environment (CEE), a Minnesota non-profit organization, has recently added several new financing offerings to their existing array of financial products.

These offerings are available to Minnesota residents, businesses and nonprofit organizations to complete energy-efficiency improvements in their properties. Tailored to make improvements affordable, the programs include grants for non-profit organizations, zero-interest loans for non-profits and residential customers, and low-interest loans for commercial customers.

Residential energy loan

- 0 percent fixed rate (loan term up to 3 years, 4.99 percent for longer terms)
- Maximum loan of \$20,000
- No maximum income limit

Energy grant for nonprofits

- For 501c(3) nonprofit organizations and their landlords statewide
- Grants up to 25 percent of the net project cost for qualifying improvements
- Maximum grant amount of \$5,000
- Yearly gross revenues must be less than \$5M

Energy Savings Fund for nonprofits

- For 501c(3) nonprofit organizations and their landlords statewide
- Interest rate of 0 percent fixed
- Maximum loan of \$25,000



- No maximum loan amount
- Loan term 6-120 months
- No prepayment penalty

CEE has been creating, funding and administering successful financing programs for Minnesota home and business owners for more than 30 years. They have served more than 20,000 customers with \$160 million in investment.

For more information on these programs offered through the Center for Energy and Environment, visit www.mncee.org or contact Jim Hasnik jhasnik@mncee.org or 612-335-5885 or 1-855-296-5626. 📞

Commercial Financing Program

- 3.9 percent fixed interest loans for Minnesota businesses

Attic insulation helps attack high energy bills



One of the easiest ways to make your home more energy efficient is to add insulation in the attic. To see if you need insulation, look across the uncovered attic floor. If the insulation is level with or below the floor joists, you probably need to add more. It is important that the insulation be evenly distributed with no low spots; sometimes there is enough insulation in the middle of the attic and very little along the eaves. Insulation levels are specified by R-Value, which is a measure of insulation's ability to resist heat flow. The higher the R-Value, the better the thermal performance of the insulation. The recommended level for most attics is to insulate to R-38 or about 10 to 14 inches, depending on insulation type. When adding more insulation, you do not have to use the same type of insulation that currently exists in your attic. You can add loose fill on top of fiberglass batts or blankets, and vice-versa. If you use fiberglass over loose fill, make sure the fiberglass batt has no paper or foil backing; it needs to be "unfaced." If you choose to add loose fill, it may be wise to hire a professional, as the application requires the use of a blowing machine, although some home improvement stores offer rentals of this machine. 📞

— Information courtesy www.Energystar.gov

Light jacket offers big warmth



Do you dislike bundling up on cold days and feeling like you are wrapped in a sleeping bag? It can be especially tricky for those working outdoors who need their arms to move freely. The Milwaukee M12 Heated Jacket may provide a solution.

The M12 delivers warming comfort with a battery similar to what is used in power tools. It is actually compatible with Milwaukee's tool line). Hidden in a back pocket, the battery delivers hours of continuous heat on a single battery charge.

The M12 jacket is great for cold-weather job site conditions faced by contractors, electricians and plumbers, as well as outdoor sports activities such as hunting, fishing, skiing or tailgating at the big game.



The M12 jacket is like wearing an electric blanket! It carries its own power supply to keep you warm on cold days.

The M12 is currently \$150 on Amazon.com. 🛒

Key features and specifications:

- Cold weather technology — multi-layered fabric (wind and waterproof) warms the body and stimulates blood circulation.
- Three heat zones — jacket distributes heat to core body areas via three sewn-in carbon fiber heating zones.
- Superior run-time — up to six hours of heat on a single charge.
- Easy-to-operate heat controller features three heat settings: high, medium and low, plus a warm-up feature.
- M12 battery holder — sleek pocket design for minimal interference during job site work or outdoor activity.
- Three pockets — includes two hand pockets, plus a chest pocket.
- Remove battery and handwash jacket.

Don't just look out during harvest; look up!



Harvest brings long hours in the field, which can make workers weary and prone to forget the safety precautions that can prevent electrical injuries. Every year, an average of 62 farm workers are electrocuted in the United States and many more are injured, according to Labor Department statistics.

Your electric cooperative urges all farm workers to visit www.SafeElectricity.org and watch the video story of farmer Jim Flach, who was fatally injured as he climbed down from his equipment that was in contact with overhead power lines.

The increasing size of farm equipment, particularly grain tanks on combines that have become higher with extensions, allow operators to come perilously close to overhead power lines over entrances to fields. It is vital to keep equipment safely away from them — a minimum 10-foot



safety radius around the electric line.

The most common equipment involved in power line accidents are portable grain augers, oversized wagons, large combines and other tall equipment that come into contact with the overhead lines.

Farm operators, family members, and farm employees are urged to take these measures:

- Use a spotter when moving tall loads near lines.
- Inspect farm equipment for transport height, and determine clearance with any power lines under which the equipment must pass.
- Make sure everyone knows what

to do if accidental contact is made with power lines. These accidents are survivable if the right actions are taken.

• If you hit an electric line with machinery, it's almost always best to stay in the cab, call for help and wait until the electric utility arrives to make sure power to the line is cut off. If the power line is energized and you step outside, your body becomes the path and electrocution is the result. Even if a power line is on the ground, the surrounding area may still be energized. Stay inside the vehicle unless there's fire or imminent risk of fire.

In this scenario the proper action is to jump — not step — with both feet hitting the ground at the same time. Jump clear — without touching the vehicle and ground at the same time. Continue to shuffle or hop to safety keeping both feet together as you leave the area. 🛒

— Information courtesy of safeelectricity.org

Federated Focus



Vote for Annual Meeting candidates

The Nominating Committee presented the following slate of candidates for the Annual Meeting elections November 19.

- At-Large director: James Hill, Welcome; and Jon Saxen, Sherburn.
- District 5 Nominating Committee: Douglas Landsteiner, Fairmont; and Steve Landsteiner, Fairmont.
- District 6 Nominating Committee: Bruce Brockmann, Granada; and Tim Wegener, Fairmont.

The candidates listed above will be voted upon at the Annual Meeting. Other nominations may be made by petition or from the floor.

Nominations were also made for the Operation Round Up director:

- At-Large: Shelly Abitz, Fairmont.

Less work for snowbirds now...

In previous years snowbirds needed to call Federated and make arrangements for meter readings and advance payment of the electric bill. Now with the new automated meter readings, that extra work is history! Your bill is calculated just as if you were here.

Members can still call the office if they want a new mailing address for their snowbird location; this saves Federated mail forwarding charges. Better yet, sign up for paperless bills on our website (www.federatedrea.coop) and it will be e-mailed to you, which is much faster than the postal mail and forwarding it.

Sign up for Auto Pay or use our website Easy2Pay for easy payments too. Call the Billing Department at 847-3520, 728-8366 or 1-800-321-3520 with any questions. 🗳

Federated's 76th Annual Meeting

Saturday, November 19

at the Five Lakes

Elementary School

714 Victoria St., Fairmont, MN

Registration: 7:30 a.m.-9:30 a.m.

- Registration
- Recycle 4 fluorescent bulbs for free
- Free customer pancake breakfast served by the Jackson Lions Club
- Visit booths for Federated and Heartland Security

Operation Round Up Slide Show 8:45 a.m.

Martin County West Choir performs 9 a.m.

Meeting starts at 9:45 a.m.

- Meeting called to order
- Business meeting/reports
- Election of Director and Nominators
- Drawing for door prizes (I-Pod Touch, Charbroil electric grill, Nook, electric bill credits, gift certificates and more!)



Hammer time! Receive this 16 oz. claw hammer with a neon fiberglass handle for extra strength. This gift is yours just for attending the annual meeting!

Dirt work underway for clean water project



Storm water runoff from Federated's Jackson warehouse, office and parking lot were causing erosion. The 15-inch tile was buried underneath this area to carry the water to the storm water control structure behind Federated's pole yard and brown CTV shed.

"Water" we going to do with the drain-off storm water?

Federated began working with the Jackson County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) to answer this question in 2010. A rain garden was ruled out due to the gravel/sandy nature of the co-op's pole yard. A storm water control structure was the answer.

Federated's project was designed and built with the capacity to store



Stevens Construction, Lakefield, builds the storm water control structure. The tile drains into this area so the sediment can settle before the water discharges into the Des Moines River valley further down the hill. Work began the last week of September. Watch for more photos once the project is completed.

4.3" of rain over 24 hours to remove suspended solids and slowly discharge that storm water over time. The outcome will be a significant decrease in sediment and energy in the discharge water, eliminating active gully erosion that is occurring in two areas. This will provide storm water storage and decrease storm water discharge to the Des Moines River. It will also serve as a pilot project for others in demonstrating the effectiveness of urban storm water control in a rural setting.

The local SWCD worked with Cottonwood SWCD and Murray County on a joint grant application using funding from the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment (3/8ths of 1

percent sales tax passed in November 2008). Federated was awarded \$25,662.85. Federated provides 25 percent in matching funds or in-kind labor.

"This project truly shows the benefit of cooperation," stated Richard Burud, Federated's general manager. "We appreciate the expertise and guidance from Brian Nyborg and the SWCD, along with the joint application."

"I appreciate Federated's forward thinking on this project," Nyborg said. "They saw a problem and have been proactive in resolving a water-quality issue. The project will serve as a great example for others; we all have a stake in clean water." 🍄



Students all charged up at Worthington Career Fair

Students were energized when they visited Federated's booth at the Career Fair September 28. Jackson County Central sophomores experimented with the static ball. The goal was to have the static electricity jump from the person closest to the static ball (Logan Ward) to the person on the far left (Derek Steen) with Ryan Brighton being a conductor in the center. The static electricity charge is similar to what you feel when walking across carpet in the winter and then touching a person or metal object. Twelve high schools participated in this Career Fair, including Southwest Star Concept and Round Lake Brewster. 🍄

Cold weather rule outlines process to avoid winter disconnection and loss of electricity

Co-op members do not need to worry about cold homes from winter disconnection. Follow the five main points of the cold weather rule to avoid winter disconnection.

Residential customer notice

An electric cooperative must not disconnect and must reconnect the utility service of a home between October 15 and April 15 if the disconnection affects the primary heat source for the residential unit **and all of the following conditions are met:**

1. The household income of the customer is at or below 50 percent of the state median household income. The electric cooperative may verify income on forms it provides or obtain verification of income from the local energy assistance provider. A customer meets the income requirements of this clause if the customer receives any public assistance, including energy assistance that uses an income eligibility threshold set at or below 50 percent of the state median household income;

2. A customer enters into and makes reasonably timely payments under a payment agreement that considers the financial resources of the household; and

3. A customer receives referrals to energy assistance, weatherization, conservation or other programs likely to reduce the customer's energy bills. In addition, an electric cooperative must, between August 15 and October 15 of each year, notify all residential customers of these provisions.

Customers facing disconnection

Before disconnecting service to a residential customer between October 15 and April 15, an electric cooperative must provide:

1. A notice of the proposed disconnection;
2. A statement with the customer's rights and responsibilities;
3. A list of local energy assistance providers;
4. Forms on which to declare an inability to pay; and
5. A statement explaining available time-payment plans and other options to secure continued utility service.

Restrictions for disconnection

1. If a customer must be involuntarily disconnected between October 15 and April 15 for failure to comply with residential disconnection provisions, it must not occur on a Friday, unless the customer declines to enter into a pay-

Emergency energy assistance phone numbers

Brown County Family Services.....	1-800-450-8246 or 354-8246
Brown County Energy Assistance.....	507-359-6504
Cottonwood County Family Services.....	831-1891
Jackson County Human Services.....	847-4000
Jackson County Sheriff's Department	847-4420
Martin County Human Services	238-4757
Martin County Sheriff's Department.....	238-4481
MN Dept. of Energy Services (Ask for fuel assistance).....	1-800-657-3805
Minnesota Valley Action Council.....	1-800-767-7139
Martin County	238-1663
Nicollet County.....	934-5224
Sibley County	237-2981
Watowan County	375-5748
Murray County Human Services	836-6144
Nobles County Family Services Agency.....	372-2157
Redwood County Human Services.....	637-4050
Renville County Family Services	320-523-5522
Renville Sheriff's Department	320-523-1161
Salvation Army's Heat Share (Jackson & Martin Co.)	238-9797
Sibley County Human Services	237-4000
SW MN Opportunity Council, Inc. (Nobles Co.).....	376-4195
Watowan County Human Services	375-3294
Western Community Action (Jackson & Cottonwood Co.)	1-800-658-2448
Redwood County	1-800-658-2480

If you live in an area that is not listed, call the co-op for details.



ment agreement offered that day in person or via personal contact by telephone by the electric cooperative;

2. The disconnection must not occur on a weekend, holiday or the day before a holiday, when utility offices are closed, or after the close of business on a day when disconnection is permitted, unless a field representative from the electric cooperative who is authorized to enter into a payment agreement, accept payment and continue service offers a payment agreement to the customer; and

3. If a customer does not respond to a disconnection notice, the customer must not be disconnected until the utility investigates whether the home is occupied. If the unit is occupied, the utility must immediately inform the occupant of the provisions of this section. If the unit is unoccupied, the utility must give seven days written notice of the proposed disconnection to the local energy assistance provider before disconnecting. If, prior to disconnection, a customer appeals a notice of involuntary disconnection, as provided by the utility's established appeal procedure, the utility must not disconnect until the appeal is resolved. ❄️





Richard 'Rick' Burud

Manager's Message

Members experience high bills & power cost adjustment

Last month many member-owners have called our offices with questions about their July bills. This is understandable. We see two main causes for the higher than normal bills. First, July was a hot month causing the member usage to be greater. Last year our rural residential accounts used 6,304,399 kilowatt-hours (kWh) in July compared to 6,786,019 this year. That is a 7.64 percent increase in usage from 2010. Of course, some bills may be higher or lower than the average.

Now on to the power cost adjustment (PCA). The PCA is passed on to the members when your cooperative has to purchase more wholesale power at higher costs. Last year our residential rate with PCA was 9.1 cents. This July it was 9.9 cents. This increase from 2010 was nearly one cent per kWh.

Couple these two factors together and this leads to higher July bills.

You may ask, are costs going down? Yes, the power cost adjustment usually goes down in non-summer months, but probably will return next summer. Energy usage is dependent on member habits and extreme temperatures.

No one likes high bills, but if it is any consolation, Federated's average cost is still below the state average and lower than many cooperatives in the state. Our pledge is to work hard at controlling costs, as much as we can, because our only purpose is to serve you, our member-owners. 🗣️



Rural Electric

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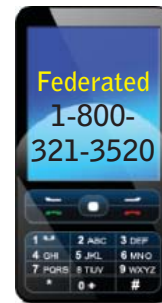
Lyle Fisher — 847-4757

Jon Saxen — 764-3771

Darvin Voss — 662-6679

The Board of Directors generally meets the last business day of the month at 9 a.m. at the Jackson office. Regular board meetings are open to the membership. Members interested in discussing business items should contact the general manager or president three days before the meeting.

Dropped your land line phone? Changed cell phone numbers?



Call us & update your contact information between 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday or e-mail: billing@federatedrea.coop



Tune in to the KDOM radio auction 94.3 FM, 1580 AM or streaming online at www.kdomradio.com October 11 and 12, beginning at 5 p.m. Bid on this Sussex electric fireplace that retails for \$889 with auction pricing starting at \$444.50 — half price!

It is a lobby display model at Federated's office in Jackson. This oak-finish fireplace comes with remote control and "Purifire" air treatment system. It filters mold spores, pollen, dander and dust from indoor air. It also uses a standard, high efficiency, washable filter and filters the air of a 12'x14' room four times per hour.

Enjoy the electric fireplace as a 1,500-watt space heater with the flame or use the flame-only feature for ambiance. Plugs into a standard 110-outlet. Adjust the flame speed and lighting levels. Size: 54 7/8" wide x 48 1/16" tall x 18 1/16" deep. 🗣️

