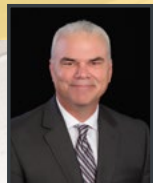




MANAGER'S MESSAGE • PAT CARRUTH



General Manager

New Office Manager

Jill Rothschadl started her first day as the Office Manager at Minnesota Valley on July 25th.

Jill is originally from Sabin,

Minnesota. She has a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting from MSU Moorhead. Jill is a Certified Public Accountant and has several years of finance, accounting and human resource experience for companies in the Fargo/Moorhead area. Recently, Jill has been with O'Neal Printing of Phoenix, Arizona. Jill and her family are excited to be back in this part of the country. Welcome, Jill!

Fall Harvest Underway Soon

Please stress safety in all aspects of your harvest activities again this year. Be mindful of power lines when moving big pieces of equipment around. Contact with power lines is our main safety concern. If you do happen to hit poles or guy wires with farm equipment, please let us know so we can fix those problems right away—that is what we are here for. We wish you all a safe and enjoyable harvest.

2017 Basin Tour

We all flip a light switch, get a glass of cold milk from the refrigerator, watch TV and do countless other things without considering the electricity that makes it all possible. It's something we have come to take for granted. The 2017 Basin Tour trip gave co-op members a unique opportunity to look at these everyday occurrences in a new way.

This trip included a tour of the Garrison Dam, a visit to the Antelope Valley Station and a trip into the world of coal mining at the Coteau Freedom Coal Mine. Along with all the fun, traveling and food, tour members learned "the story behind the switch". It is remarkable to learn what is actually involved in the process of bringing electricity into our lives.

Make plans to attend next year's tour. Anyone who has ever been there will tell you it's an "enlightening" experience and a great way to spend three days!

Harvest Workers Urged to Take Time to Reap Safe Harvest

It can be an exciting and exhausting time, the culmination of a season of hard work. However, the rush to harvest can also yield tragic outcomes if care isn't taken to ensure safety throughout the process. Each year, dozens of farm workers are killed and hundreds are injured in accidents involving power lines and electrical equipment.

"Things people see every day can fade from view and in the busyness of harvest time, it's easy for farm workers to forget about the power lines overhead," says Richard McCracken of the Safe Electricity Advisory Board. "But failure to notice them can be a deadly oversight."

Review the farm activities that take place around power lines with all workers. Inspect the height of farm equipment to determine clearance. Keep equipment at least 10 feet away from power lines—above, below and to the side—following the 360-degree rule.

"Always lower grain augers before moving them, even if it's only a few feet," says Bob Aherin, PhD, CSP & University of Illinois Professor and Agricultural Safety & Health Program Leader. "Variables like wind, uneven ground, shifting weight or other conditions can combine to create an unexpected result. Also use extreme caution when raising the bed of a grain truck."

Farm workers should take these steps to ensure a safer harvest season:

- Use care when raising augers or the bed of grain trucks around power lines.
- Use a spotter when operating large machinery near power lines. Do not let the spotter touch the machinery while it is being moved anywhere near power lines.
- As with any outdoor work, be careful not to raise any equipment such as ladders, poles or rods into power lines. Remember, non-metallic materials such as lumber, tree limbs, ropes and hay will conduct electricity depending on dampness, dust and dirt contamination.
- Never attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path!
- Don't use metal poles to break up bridged grain inside bins. Know where and how to shut off the power in an emergency.
- Use qualified electricians for work on drying equipment and other farm electrical systems.

(Harvest Safety continued on page 2)



Operators of farm equipment or vehicles must also know what to do if the vehicle comes in contact with a power line: Stay on the equipment, warn others to stay away and call 911. L four thirty one zero three Do not get off the equipment until the utility crew says it is safe to do so.

“If the power line is energized and you step outside, touching the vehicle and ground, your body becomes the path and electrocution is the result,” Aherin said. “Even if a power line has landed on the ground, the potential for the area nearby to be energized still exists. Stay inside the vehicle unless there’s fire or imminent risk of fire.”

If this is the case, jump off the equipment with your feet together, without touching the ground and vehicle at the same time. Then, while keeping your feet together, hop to safety as you leave the area.

Once you get away from the equipment, never attempt to get back on or even touch the equipment. Some electrocutions have occurred after the operator dismounts and, realizing nothing has happened, tries to get back on the equipment.

It is very important that all farm workers and seasonal employees are informed of electrical hazards and trained in proper procedures to avoid injury.

Minnesota Valley wishes everyone a safe harvest!

If you can drive safely away from the power source without bringing down the utility pole and lines, travel at least 40 ft. before exiting.

If you are unable to drive the machinery due to injury, obstacles or it is inoperable, do NOT exit. Call for help and warn anyone nearby NOT to approach.

If the vehicle is on fire, or you must exit for other safety reasons, follow these steps:

- 1) Jump clear of the vehicle. Do not let any part of your body or clothes touch the ground and the machinery at the same time.
- 2) Land with feet together and hop away in small steps to minimize the path of electric current and avoid electric shock.
- 3) Keep going until you are at least 40 ft. away.
- 4) Call for help. Make sure no one gets within 40 ft. of the downed line.
- 5) Do not re-enter the area or vehicle until emergency responders and your electric co-op crews determine it is safe.



If you are inside farm machinery that makes contact with a downed power line, know what to do!

Co-op Principle Seven: Concern for Community

*This year we decided to feature the seven different cooperative principles. Minnesota Valley Cooperative Light & Power Association adheres to these seven principles when making decisions that impact your cooperative. This month we are featuring co-op principle number seven – **Concern for Community**.*

While focusing on members' needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies and programs accepted by the members. A few of the ways Minnesota Valley invests in the local community include: free electrical safety demonstrations, annual scholarships for area students, participation in the annual Electric Cooperative Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. and various volunteer opportunities.

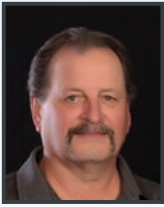
Another significant way the cooperative demonstrates its support for the community is through the Operation Round Up program. Operation Round Up is a trust fund set up separately from all other Minnesota Valley business. It is used solely for the purpose of helping organizations, service groups, projects and families in the co-op's service territory. Members who wish to participate have their electric bills rounded up to the next highest dollar amount each month. All Minnesota Valley employees contribute to the fund by having their payroll checks rounded down once a month. By everyone giving a little, a big difference is made in our community.

Since the program's inception in 1995, Operation Round Up has awarded over \$164,000 to approximately 500 local organizations, groups and families. Funds have been used to support the purchase of firefighting equipment for volunteer fire departments; lifesaving and communication equipment for ambulance crews, rescue squads or first responders; hospice programs; respite care, transportation needs and other necessary support for families who have a member with a disability; education scholarships; educational seminars; youth programs; Toys for Tots and similar programs; emergency energy assistance; recovery after natural disasters; clothing, shelter and medical services for families or individuals following an accident, storm, medical situation or other emergency.

If you know of someone or an organization that would benefit from Operation Round Up funds, go to our website at www.mnvalleyrec.com or contact our office. Be sure that you are an Operation Round Up member by visiting our Operation Round Up booth at the Annual Meeting, calling our office at 320.269.2163 or 1.800.247.5051 or send us a note with your next energy payment telling us you want to be a part of Operation Round Up.



ENGINEERING & OPERATIONS • BOB KRATZ



Manager of Operations

The summer pole treating crew has wrapped up for the year while inspecting/treating 3,088 poles. This program helps to extend the life of power poles on our distribution/transmission system. That signals that we are nearing the end

of summer and fall harvest will be in full swing soon. With that being said, stay safe and alert during your long days in the fields. We still have power poles we will be changing out in some fields once the crops are harvested from rejection or retirement of line from overhead to URD conversions.

This time of year gets very busy working to complete line up-grades for services or load expectations. Our linemen still need to refresh their safety procedures and practices. One of those is *pole top rescue* and *bucket rescue* in case of an emergency. MREA field reps come out and have classroom sessions and hands-on rescue in our pole yard.

There is a pole set in the back of the pole yard that they use to practice safely lowering a victim to the ground. In the picture on the left, lineman James Hughes works on releasing the “dummy” victim from his pole strap. In the picture on the right, lineman Trevor Diggins is lowering the dummy safely to the ground.



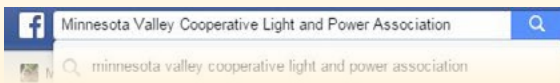
Comparative Report

	Jan-Jul 2017	Jan-Jul 2016	Jan-Jul 1997
Kwh Purchased	119,152,096	117,436,769	81,783,342
Kwh Sold	112,999,156	111,545,017	76,653,826
Cost Of Purchased Power	\$5,824,689	\$5,331,500	\$2,501,255
Patronage Capital Margins	\$248,049	\$995,904	\$(23,045)
Reserve For Taxes	\$160,417	\$160,417	\$210,000
Cost Per Kwh Purchased (mills)	48.88	45.40	33.62
	July '17	July '16	July '97
Total Plant	\$70,413,326	\$67,994,557	\$29,342,152
Number of Active Services	5,275	5,259	5,171
Average Residential Bill	\$199.31	\$194.93	\$98.18
Average Residential Kwh Consumption	1,743	1,695	1,408
Average Kwh Usage All Consumers	2,988	2,884	1,919
Peak Kw Demand (Peak Load)	32,173	31,202	23,123

Find Your Location for a \$10 or \$20 Bill Credit!

There are two hidden account numbers in this newsletter. If one of them is your number, you will receive a \$10 energy credit or \$20 if you are an Operation Round Up participant. Keep looking each month—it could be your number! If you find your number in the newsletter, call the office at 320.269.2163 or 800.247.5051.

Congratulations to Ronald Thull of Granite Falls who identified his location and received a \$20 credit off his energy bill for being an Operation Round Up participant!



Mark Home

Find us on



MEMBER SERVICES • BOB WALSH

Member Services Manager




Easy Steps to Greater Efficiency

Do you want to save money and electricity but have limited time, money and patience? According to the Department of Energy, a “typical American family” spends nearly \$2,000 per year on their home energy bills. Much of that money, however, is wasted through leaky windows or ducts, old appliances or inefficient heating and cooling systems.

Luckily, there are several relatively easy ways to save energy without a substantial commitment of time and money. These efforts will help you save whether you own or rent an older or newly constructed home. You won't have to hire a specialist or call in a favor from someone who is handy with tools to help you.

Where to Start

According to *Money Magazine*, “improving the envelope” of your home is a good place to start. Sunlight, seasonal temperature changes and wind vibrations can loosen up even a tight home, increasing air leakage. Doors and windows may not close tightly and duct work can spring leaks, wasting cooled and heated air. By placing weather stripping and caulk around windows and doors, you can keep cool air inside during warm months and prevent chilly air from penetrating the indoors during colder months. Sealing gaps around piping, dryer vents, fans and outlets also helps to seal the envelope and creates greater efficiency. Apply weather stripping around overlooked spaces like your attic hatch or pull-down stairs.



Replacing incandescent bulbs with LED bulbs can make a big difference in home efficiency and is one of the fastest ways to cut your energy bill. Known for their longevity and efficiency, LED bulbs have an estimated operational life span of typically 10,000 to 20,000 hours—compared to 1,000 hours of a typical incandescent. According to the Dept. of Energy, by replacing your home's five most frequently used light fixtures or bulbs with models that have earned the ENERGY STAR rating, you can save \$75 each year.

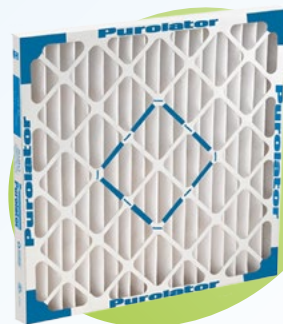
Wrapping up Savings

Installing a blanket around your water heater could reduce standby heat losses by 25 to 45 percent and save you about 7 to 16 percent in water heating costs, according to the Dept. of Energy. For a small investment of about \$30, you can purchase pre-cut jackets or blankets and install them in about one hour. On a safety note, the Department of Energy recommends that you not set the thermostat above 130 degrees Fahrenheit on an electric water heater

with an insulating jacket or blanket; the higher temperature setting could cause the wiring to overheat.

Given that a large portion of your monthly energy bill goes toward heating and cooling your home, it makes sense to ensure your home's heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system is performing at an optimal level. Checking, changing or cleaning your filter extends the life of your HVAC system and saves you money.

Air filters prevent dust and allergens from clogging your HVAC system. Otherwise, dust and dirt trapped in a system's air filter leads to several problems, including: reduced air flow in the home and up to 15 percent higher operating costs; lowered system efficiency and costly duct cleaning or replacement. Many HVAC professionals recommend cleaning the system filters monthly. A simple task like changing the filters on your HVAC system makes your unit run more efficiently, keeping your house cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter.



Take Control of Your Energy Savings

Take a look at your programmable thermostat. When was the last time you checked to make sure it was programmed for the current season and family schedule? This is one of the best energy-saving tools at your fingertips. It enables you to fine tune the temperature during particular hours of the day. Many models allow you to differentiate between weekday and weekend schedules and internet-connected thermostats can learn your schedule and make adjustments automatically. F three thirty two zero two Most models come with an override option so you can make manual adjustments without losing overall programming. You can only achieve these efficiencies and savings if it is programmed properly and adjusted periodically to keep pace with changes in household routines.



Remember, there are easy steps you can take now to improve the energy efficiency of your home. To learn about additional ways to save, or possibly schedule a home visit, contact Minnesota Valley's Member Services Department at 320.269.2163 or 800.247.5051 during regular business hours.

StraightTalk - NRECA

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Office Hours

8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Monday through Friday

24-Hour Telephone Answering

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