

MINNESOTA VALLEY CO-OP NEWS

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MANAGER'S MESSAGE • PAT CARRUTH



General Manager

Board Approves 2018 Work Plan & Budget

At the November meeting, the Board approved the Work Plan and Budget for the coming year. The plan calls for approximately \$2.7 million in system improvements or new construction projects in 2018. In addition to this, the budget includes the annual maintenance activities that we need to do to keep your system operating at a high level of reliability. One of the bigger maintenance projects is tree cutting, trimming and spraying to keep our lines clear when the load of the ice and wind comes. The right-of-way clearing budget alone for 2018 is \$955,000. We will also inspect and maintain the 652 oil/vacuum enclosures spread throughout our 3,270 miles of line and 16 substations. The enclosures are basically big circuit breakers that trip and reset when things such as lightning or an incidental line contact drop out the line. We will inspect and maintain the supervisory controls for our transmission line switches, which allow us to switch line from the office when we have problems or need to work on different sections of line. We also maintain the 150 voltage regulators spread throughout the system, which

are constantly adjusting to keep the proper voltage to your place. We plan to test and treat approximately 3,000 poles this next year to get more life out of them and change out the 90 or so poles the treating crews will reject. These projects and many other maintenance activities, must be performed on our system each year to make sure we provide you good voltage while keeping your lights on.

Ending 2017 in Good Financial & Operational Shape

As of this writing, we have closed the financials through October. We have a total margin year-to-date of \$14,423 compared to last year's at this time of \$1,145,016. However, we expect a strong November and December finish in crop drying and electric heat energy sales. We expect a large patronage allocation to book from our Basin Electric to round out the year in good overall financial shape.

Operationally, we are closing in on finishing all of the maintenance projects planned for the year to keep your

(Manager's Message continued on page 2)

*Merry
Christmas
from all
of us...*



Directors

- Darryl Bursack
- Don Fernholz
- Gary Groothuis
- Steve Norman
- Wayne Peltier
- Mark Peterson
- Tim Velde
- Steve Torvik, Attorney

Employees

Pat Carruth, General Manager

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Brandon Bjelland | Scott Monson |
| Stacey Boike | Duane O'Malley |
| Loyd Canatsey | Jerrad Perkins |
| Mitch Christensen | Tracie Peterson |
| Dustin Cole | Jill Rothschadl |
| Dave Dieter | Jill Sand |
| Trevor Diggins | Joe Schultz |
| James Hughes | Kent Smith |
| Andy Johnson | Don Snell |
| Mark Johnson | Jill Strand |
| Bob Kratz | Mark Sweno |
| Scott Kubesh | Bob Walsh |
| Eric Landmark | Lacey Wintz |
| Blake Lymburner | Eric Wollschlager |



Minnesota Valley Cooperative will be closed Monday, December 25th and Tuesday, December 26th for Christmas and Monday, January 1st for New Years.



Manager's Message (continued from page 1)

system operating properly. We are starting on construction projects scheduled for 2018 as we are working to stay ahead of our construction work plan. We are making good progress on catching up on our right-of-way clearing for our power lines. We plan to finish out the southeast quadrant of our system by year end and our Minnesota Valley Tree Service will move to the northeast quadrant.

Anyway, we feel like we are in pretty good shapes operationally and financially at this point for 2017.

From All of Us to You

The Board and employees of Minnesota Valley want you to know that we appreciate your business this past year. Thank you! We also want you to know that we appreciate working for you and for your cooperative. We look forward to working hard for you this next year at being good stewards of your system to ensure you continue to get the reliable electric service you have rightfully come to expect from your cooperative.

We wish you a Blessed and Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year!

Caucus Meetings

When: Thursday, February 8th, 2018

District 1:

- Don Fernholz • 10:30 AM • Madison VFW

District 3:

- Mark Peterson • 1:30 PM • Dawson City Hall

ENGINEERING & OPERATIONS • BOB KRATZ



Manager of Operations

It is that time of year when the ground freezes and the underground plow gets year end maintenance, washed and put away for the winter (barring any underground problems).

Also, with the changing of the seasons, we start our annual line patrol inspections. If you see our trucks in your yard or going slow on roads, they are just looking at the condition of wires, poles and the clearances of the wires to trees and buildings. Some of the problems they find are fixed right away, which probably would prevent your lights from blinking or even going out.

This time of year also brings year end inventory at our facilities to square up year end numbers and also get a head start on what we may need for materials for next year's projects. It gives us a good idea of what we have on hand if an ice storm or some other problem were to happen to our system.

On November 6th, **Dustin Cole** was hired as a lineman for Minnesota Valley. Dustin comes from Prescho, SD. He graduated from lineman school in Mitchell, SD. He had been working for Marshall Municipal Utilities.



Enjoy your holiday season with family and friends. Have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Comparative Report

	Jan-Oct 2017	Jan-Oct 2016	Jan-Oct 1997
Kwh Purchased	167,121,530	168,489,037	117,231,066
Kwh Sold	158,126,537	159,673,760	108,458,191
Cost Of Purchased Power	\$8,813,855	\$8,358,193	\$3,698,275
Patronage Capital Margins	\$14,423	\$1,145,016	\$(109,017)
Reserve For Taxes	\$229,167	\$229,167	\$315,000
Cost Per Kwh Purchased (mills)	52.74	49.61	34.00
	October '17	October '16	October '97
Total Plant	\$70,814,202	\$68,812,678	\$29,825,042
Number of Active Services	5,277	5,269	5,186
Average Residential Bill	\$273.39	\$293.32	\$146.94
Average Residential Kwh Consumption	2,338	2,736	2,065
Average Kwh Usage All Consumers	3,391	3,800	2,515
Peak Kw Demand (Peak Load)	47,820	42,365	33,175

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.





2018 Minnesota Valley/Basin Electric Scholarship

Minnesota Valley R.E.C. has again joined Basin Electric Power Cooperative in sponsoring a scholarship in 2018. A total of \$2,000 in educational scholarships will be awarded to area students. All dependent children of Minnesota Valley Cooperative members meeting the qualifications are eligible to apply. The scholarship program is designed to recognize and encourage the achievements, abilities and school/community involvement of students in Minnesota Valley's service territory. The cooperatives have developed the scholarships to help meet the college funding needs of students in rural areas.

To qualify for the scholarship, an applicant must be the dependent child of a Minnesota Valley member and a U.S. citizen. Applicants must be students enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time undergraduate or graduate course of study at an accredited two-year or four-year college, university or technical college in the 2018-2019 school year. Students in any year of post high school education are eligible. Previous scholarship winners are not eligible.

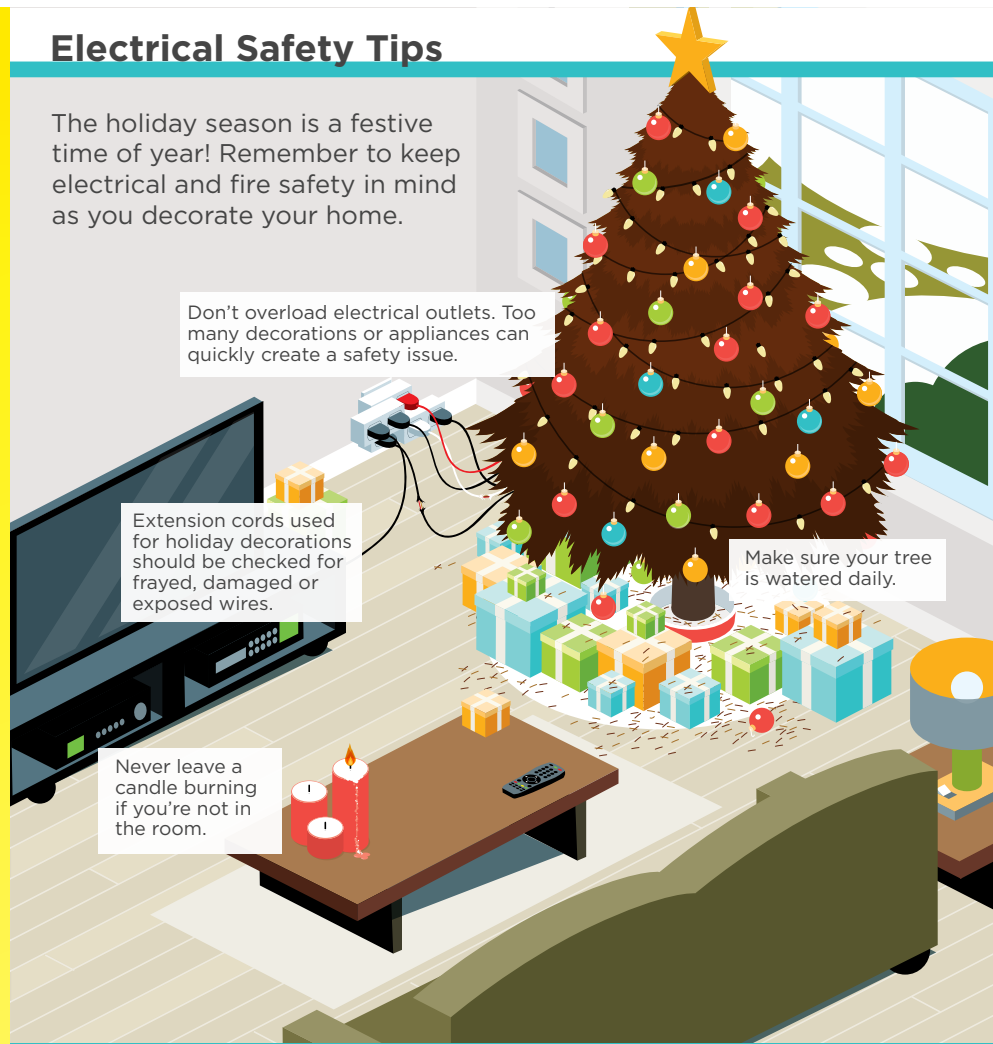
Recipients will be chosen based on a combination of overall grades, achievements, participation in school and community activities, a personal statement of career goals, applicant appraisal form and an essay. A neutral group of Minnesota Valley members will review all applications and make a selection on a recipient(s). A two twenty six zero four All post high school areas of study will be equally considered for the scholarship.

To get an application, you can either stop in the office, call 320.269.2163 or 800.247.5051, get an application off our website or email a request to mnvalley@mnvalleyrec.com.

Apply now! Scholarship applications for the 2018-2019 school year will be accepted until February 5th, 2018.

Electrical Safety Tips

The holiday season is a festive time of year! Remember to keep electrical and fire safety in mind as you decorate your home.



Don't overload electrical outlets. Too many decorations or appliances can quickly create a safety issue.

Extension cords used for holiday decorations should be checked for frayed, damaged or exposed wires.

Make sure your tree is watered daily.

Never leave a candle burning if you're not in the room.

Non-Discrimination Statement

Minnesota Valley Cooperative Light & Power Association is the recipient of Federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). In accordance with Federal civil rights law and USDA civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (*not all bases apply to all programs*). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- 1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- 2) Fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- 3) Email: program.intake@usda.gov

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Member Services Manager

Do-It-Yourself Home Energy Audits

Energy conservation can be achieved in many ways, but sometimes the best way to save energy is taking the least expensive approach.

You can easily conduct a building envelope home energy audit yourself. All we are looking for in this audit is **air leakage**. With a simple but diligent walk-through, you can spot many problems in any type of house. When auditing your home, keep a checklist of areas you have inspected and problems you found. This list will help you prioritize your building envelope repairs and upgrades.

LOCATING LEAKS

First, make a list of obvious air leaks (*drafts*). The potential energy savings from reducing drafts in a home may range from 5% to 30% per year, and the home is generally much more comfortable afterward. Check for indoor air leaks, such as gaps along the baseboard or edge of the flooring and at junctures of the walls and ceiling. Check to see if air can flow through these places:

- Electrical outlets
- Switch plates
- Window frames
- Baseboards
- Weather stripping around doors
- Fireplace dampers
- Attic hatches
- Wall or window-mounted air conditioners

Also look for gaps around pipes and wires, electrical outlets, foundation seals and appliance vents. Check to see if the caulking and weather stripping are applied properly—leaving no gaps or cracks—and are in good condition.

Inspect windows and doors for air leaks. See if you can rattle them, since movement means possible air leaks. If you can see daylight around a door or window frame, then the door or window leaks. You can usually seal these leaks by caulking or adding weather stripping to them. Check the storm windows to see if they fit and are not broken. You may also wish to consider replacing your old windows and doors with newer, high-performance ones. If new factory-made doors or windows are too costly, you can install low-cost plastic sheets over the windows.

PRESSURIZATION TEST

If you are having difficulty locating leaks, you may want to conduct a basic building pressurization test:

- 1) First, close all exterior doors, windows and fireplace flues.
- 2) Turn off all combustion appliances such as gas burning furnaces and water heaters.
- 3) Then turn on all exhaust fans (generally located in the kitchen and bathrooms) or use a large window fan to suck the air out of the rooms.

This test increases infiltration through cracks and leaks, making them easier to detect. You can use smoke pens (incense also works) or your damp hand to locate these leaks. If you use smoke pens, moving air will cause the smoke to waver and if you use your damp hand, any drafts will feel cool to your hand.

EXTERIOR INSPECTION

On the outside of your house, inspect all areas where two different building materials meet, including:

- All exterior corners
- Where siding and chimneys meet
- Areas where the foundation and the bottom of exterior brick or siding meet

You should plug and caulk holes or penetrations for faucets, pipes, electric outlets and wiring. Look for cracks and holes in the mortar, foundation and siding. Then seal them with the appropriate material. Check the exterior caulking around doors and windows, and see whether exterior storm doors and primary doors seal tightly.

BACKDRAFTS

When sealing any home, you must always be aware of the danger of indoor air pollution and combustion appliance “backdrafts.” Backdrafting is when the various combustion appliances and exhaust fans in the home compete for air. I two twenty seven zero four An exhaust fan may pull the combustion gases back into the living space. This can obviously create a very dangerous and unhealthy situation in the home.

In homes where a fuel is burned (i.e., natural gas, fuel oil, propane or wood) for heating, be certain the appliance has an adequate air supply. Generally, one square inch of vent opening is required for each 1,000 Btu of appliance input heat.

Do yourself a favor and see how tight your home is. Many weatherization and sealing projects can be done in a short time at very little cost and others may get a little more complex. When in doubt contact Minnesota Valley, an air quality expert or your local HVAC contractor.

Merry Christmas to you all!

Office Hours

8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Monday through Friday

24-Hour Telephone Answering

320.269.2163

800.247.5051

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