



**MANAGER'S MESSAGE // PAT CARRUTH**

*General Manager*



**The 7 Core Principles**

There are 7 cooperative principles that we operate under: voluntary and open membership, democratic member control, member economic participation, autonomy and independence, education, training and information, cooperation among cooperatives and concern for community. October is cooperative month. It is a chance for us all to look back and reflect on Minnesota Valley Cooperative Light and Power Association's purpose and success over the last 86 years. More importantly, making sure we are taking the right steps to ensure the next 86 years of meeting the defined needs of our member-owners. Again, we can only do that with engaged member-owners and we thank you for that.

**Our Cooperative's Future Depends on Engaged Owners**

Minnesota Valley came about just like every other cooperative. Minnesota Valley was formed to meet the defined needs of the member-owners who put up the money and put it together on a firm foundation of cooperative principles. The defined need was, and continues to be, providing reliable and affordable electric power to our member-owners. Minnesota Valley has successfully met those member-owner defined needs since being formed only because of direct member-owner involvement.

**Member Communications**

One of the important aspects of cooperatives is the value they put on communicating with their member-owners. We work hard at trying to let you know the how and why we are doing things the way we are at Minnesota Valley. We have the monthly newsletter, bill stuffers, annual reports, district meetings, annual meetings and a website where you can access your account information. We are a phone call away if you have any questions about how or why we do things—from setting rates to charges for service upgrades.

Communications is a two-way street. Our employees in the field and in the office try to be good listeners when they are working with you. Our board members try to be good listeners when they are visiting with you about your electric cooperative's business. Let us know about questions or concerns you have so we can work through them. Take some time to give us feedback, good or bad.

**Local Control**

Successful cooperatives start with local control and make sure they hold on to it. Local control ensures local accountability and good governance. Minnesota Valley has always been fortunate to have a good board. As member-owners, you can only expect this to continue if you stay involved in the process of choosing your director. One way this can happen for you is to take time to attend your local Caucus Meetings that are held in your district every three years. District Caucus Meetings are where you choose who will represent your electric power interests from the coal mine to the meter in your yard. They are where you get a chance to ask about and discuss any issues that are important to you as a member-owner. They are held in your district every three years, usually in February. You will get plenty of notice, so please plan to attend and take part in your cooperative's governance.

**Working with our Kind**

Cooperating with cooperatives has always been the way things have been done at Minnesota Valley. We formed a power supply cooperative to provide additional power, Basin Electric. We put together a poles and wire supply cooperative for material, Rural Electric Supply Cooperative. We formed a financial cooperative for additional capital to finance our plant growth, Cooperative Finance Corporation. We formed an after-hours dispatch center, Cooperative Response Center. We formed a cooperative to lower our workers comp rates, Minnesota Rural Electric Trust. These are just some of the cooperatives we do business with and own part of.

(Manager's Message continued on page 2)

**Minnesota Valley will be closed Monday,  
November 11<sup>th</sup> in honor of Veterans Day.**



## Manager's Message (continued from page 1)

When storms hit, all of the cooperatives in this region and across the country will work together if need be. It is almost a yearly occurrence when we send crews to help other cooperatives restore power or we have crews from other cooperatives in here helping us restore power. We work with cooperatives first because we know at their core they operate under the same cooperative principles as we do. This means there is a high probability that there will always be a high level of mutual integrity in working together.

### Autonomous and Independent

Working with other cooperatives to help us better serve the defined needs of our member-owners has always been a way of doing business at Minnesota Valley. Being autonomous and setting our own rules based on the needs of our members has, and always will, keep us focused on our member-owners. Other ways of doing things at other cooperatives may work fine for them, but not necessarily for our member-owners.

### The Nation's First Electric Cooperative was Born Here in 1914

The first electric cooperative in the United States was formed in Stony Run Township near Granite Falls in 1914. Farmers in that area, after years of persuasion, could not get any investor-owned utility to run power lines to their farms—let alone sell them power. Then the idea was born. Let's organize our own power company, build our own lines and get power from the municipal power plant in Granite Falls. A committee was formed to visit the Granite Falls municipal utility board. The municipal board listened and agreed to furnish the electricity.

The idea went over well with the Stony Run farmers. They organized a cooperative under which they built line and they did get electric light and power to their farms. For decades to follow, this simple idea of forming an electric cooperative proved hard to duplicate in the area, as well as across the country, for a multitude of reasons. It wasn't until the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 made federal loans available that electric cooperatives started to spring up around the country.

By 1936, our area farmers had already worked many long and hard hours to finally form our cooperative. It would be December of 1938 before the first group of members of Minnesota Valley Cooperative Light and Power Association would have electric lights. It is hard to imagine that Stony Run Light and Power had been operating for 25 years prior. It was in January of 1952, after 38 years of operation, that Stony Run Light and Power joined Minnesota Valley Cooperative Light and Power. Minnesota Valley had almost 2,700 miles of line and 5,000 members and had only been in operation for just 16 years at that time.

## 2025 Caucus Meetings

**Tuesday, February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

**District 2: Gary Groothuis**

10:30 AM • REC Headquarters

**District 4: Steve Norman**

1:30 PM • REC Headquarters

**Thursday, February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

**District 6: Tim Velde**

10 AM • Wood Lake Community Center

**SAVE THE DATE**



### Furnace Inspection Program

It is that time of the year again! With the heating season upon us, it is time to take a serious look at your heating system. Many of us just turn up the thermostat and expect the furnace to work. However, if your furnace hasn't been properly serviced for quite some time, the lack of preventative maintenance could be *costing you money*. There are many things that could be robbing you of the full potential of every heating dollar.

Contact the *Minnesota Valley Cooperative Member Services Department* and arrange for a qualified technician to schedule a furnace inspection. Annual tune-ups are as important for furnaces as they are for cars. We would be happy to schedule your service work.

**Contact our Member Services Department at 320.269.2163 or 800.247.5051 to schedule an inspection.**

Welcome Todd,  
Minnesota Valley's  
Engineering and  
Operations Manager!



## ENGINEERING & OPERATIONS // TODD BOLKEMA

Engineering & Operations Manager



I am pleased to be joining your cooperative as the Engineering and Operations Manager. I am a graduate of Dordt University in Sioux Center, IA with a degree in mechanical engineering. My experience includes 23 years working for Florida Power and Light in Sarasota, FL. I grew up in South Dakota and Iowa. My grandparents farmed near Adrian, MN and Edgerton, MN, so this is a return to my rural roots.

Prior to the harvest season, the line crews inspected and replaced malfunctioning voltage regulators. J three twenty-two zero four These voltage regulators maintain good voltage to your equipment at our system peak loading during crop drying.

Those of you living along County Highway 13 may have seen our crews

replacing the line west of the Gluek Substation. There will be continuing work at that substation as we update the 69 kV lines and get ready for a new 69 kV line to the future Torvik Substation northeast of Gluek.

The new Tantalus meters use a communication system that works in a mesh network. Much like the threads in a spiderweb, the network can take various paths between meters back to the collectors. These send the information back to our database via the cellular network. We have worked through the summer installing collectors and repeaters to make this mesh network robust enough to communicate reliably even when trees are full of leaves and fields are full of corn. If you see a small box with an antenna mounted to the pole, it is likely one of the collectors or repeaters.

MINNEOTA – INSTALLING METER COLLECTORS OR REPEATERS



## 2025 Annual Meeting

Saturday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Prairie's Edge Casino

## Comparative Report

	Jan-Aug 2024	Jan-Aug 2023	Jan-Aug 2004
Kwh Purchased	149,636,768	150,325,528	96,566,839
Kwh Sold	142,194,498	142,325,803	89,609,260
Cost Of Purchased Power	\$7,710,984	\$7,598,488	\$2,576,699
Patronage Capital Margins	\$1,080,248	\$1,416,819	\$164,459
Reserve For Taxes	\$176,000	\$192,000	\$121,868
Cost Per Kwh Purchased (mills)	51.69	51.59	26.68
	August '24	August '23	August '04
Total Plant	\$101,603,158	\$96,530,265	\$37,418,138
Number of Active Services	5,309	5,313	5,244
Avg. Residential Bill	\$226.26	\$241.57	\$102.76
Avg. Residential Kwh Consumption	1,611	1,738	1,313
Avg. Kwh Usage All Consumers	3,179	3,218	1,893
Peak Kw Demand (Peak Load)	33,412	35,390	22,478

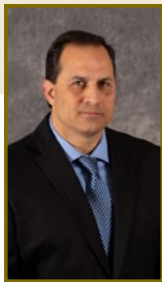
Congratulations to **Connie Streed** who found her number and received \$10!  
If you find your number, claim by the **25<sup>th</sup> of October** to be eligible for:



## Find Your Location Number

If you find your location number in this newsletter, you will receive a \$10 bill credit (*Operation Round Up participants get a \$10 bonus*). If no number is claimed before the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month, the unclaimed amount rolls over into the next month. If both location numbers are claimed in a month, the recipients will split the credit. Once claimed, we will start again at \$10. If you find your number, call 320.269.2163 or 800.247.5051.





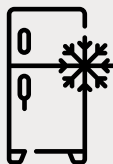
## MEMBER SERVICES // SCOTT KUBESH

Member Services Manager

### Generac Generator Program

Minnesota Valley's Generac Generator Program has been a huge success, with many units installed over the last four years. The use of a standby generator has become commonplace. Standby generators provide electrical power when the supply from the electric utility is interrupted. Unlike portable units, a standby generator starts and runs without operator intervention in the event of a power emergency. They work with an automatic transfer switch which selects between utility power and generator power.

As our reliance on electrical power grows, our lives are increasingly impacted by a loss of power, whatever the reason. Interruptions range from events that affect only one home, to entire regions, and causes include violent weather events, automobile accidents and human error. Many areas of our everyday lives are impacted by an extended power outage.



**REFRIGERATION:** It only takes a few hours for the temperature inside a refrigerator or freezer to begin rising, even if the door is kept closed. Once the temperature of a refrigerator reaches 40 degrees, the rate at which food becomes unsafe to eat increases dramatically. And each time the door is opened, the temperature rises again.

Food begins to thaw at 32 degrees and it may take as little as 12 hours for some freezers to reach the thaw point. A standby generator can keep food from thawing and spoiling even during extended outages that last days or more.



**HEATING AND COOLING:** The systems that cool and heat homes do more than provide comfort and safety for people. Heat prevents pipes from freezing.

Frozen pipes often burst and when they do, the resulting flood is devastating. The water pipes that lead into a home can supply hundreds of gallons of water per hour. If you're not home to shut it off, the ensuing flood can cause thousands of dollars in damage.

Summer heat and humidity can take its toll quickly on people and keeping the air conditioner operational during a power outage may mean the difference between camping out in a hotel or staying home and sleeping in comfort.



**MEDICAL EQUIPMENT:** The use of home medical equipment has increased dramatically in the past two decades. Oxygen concentrators, wheelchair lifts, ventilators and CPAP machines and even home dialysis equipment all rely on electrical

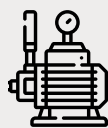
power. Many of these devices run off an uninterruptible power supply, but those require batteries that only last a short time.

Standby generators that supply utility-grade power can keep home medical equipment operating. Those using the equipment are able to stay home instead of packing up their equipment and seeking shelter elsewhere.



**SAFETY SYSTEMS:** Home alarm systems provide security and safety that many homeowners rely on to protect their families and property. When the power goes out, the battery that powers a security system may last less than a day, leaving the home vulnerable.

This is especially true after a widespread disaster such as a tornado or other weather event when the power may be out for days or more.



**FLOODING CONTROL:** Sump pumps keep basements dry by removing water. Power outages frequently occur during storms when the pump is needed the most. In some areas, flooding can begin just minutes after the power goes out. Even a battery-backup pump will only last a few hours during a heavy storm. With a standby generator operating automatically, even when you are not home the pump keeps running and the basement stays dry.



**COMFORT:** The last thing anyone needs is a power outage. Without electricity, none of the day-to-day conveniences of everyday life are available. Cooking becomes more difficult, the computer and TV don't work and kids can't play their games. When night arrives the candles come out.

A generator can keep the power on while utility crews work on restoring the flow of electricity to homes and neighborhoods. When utility power is restored, the transfer switch automatically reconnects the home to the utility supply and the generator shuts down, whether you're home, at work or on vacation. There are models to meet most needs, from units for small homes to larger businesses.

The Member Services Department is here to help you with any of the questions you may have. Please call us at 800.247.5051 or 320.269.2163 for more information or to get a quote.

