



NewsFlashes

APRIL 2024



Lake Region Electric Cooperative's CEO **Tim Thompson** recently testified in support of local control for cooperatives. Locally elected co-op board members know their neighbors and are in the best position to serve their needs.

Tim Thompson CEO Column

Legislative Priorities

I write this column fresh off attending the *Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA)* Annual Meeting in St. Paul on March 19th and 20th. I left the Annual Meeting feeling positive in many ways, and although there are challenges facing our industry, my faith in the cooperative spirit makes me optimistic because I know we have the people in place who can overcome such challenges.

The MREA Annual Meeting focused on many legislative priorities for electric cooperatives. Our future relies heavily upon reliable and affordable electricity. I have never encountered a person who is against clean energy so long as it does not compromise the reliability and affordability of the electricity we so heavily rely upon for our homes, businesses, and communities. As co-ops, we must remain positive, remain innovative, and we must be afforded the tools necessary to accomplish the goals set by the 2040 Carbon Free Standard. These tools include cooperatives being able to utilize an "all tech on deck" approach to achieving our carbon reduction goals, including but not limited to lifting, or modifying, Minnesota's current nuclear moratorium restricting our ability to add new carbon-free nuclear to our energy portfolio.

Another tool we need to enable progress during this energy transition is permitting reform. The current process is challenging and greatly hinders our ability to deploy new renewable energy sources. It is a priority for co-ops to support legislation to reform the permitting process, and we can do so without compromising public input, community involvement, and the Public Utility Commission's ability to make informed decisions.

I am so appreciative of the efforts of MREA and its government affairs team that works relentlessly with legislators across the state to keep and pass legislation that supports electric cooperatives.

Building and Strengthening Relationships

In order to meet the 2040 Carbon Free Standard, we must continue to build and strengthen relationships with our members, and everyone else involved in decisions affecting co-ops. One of my favorite parts of the MREA Annual Meeting is the opportunity to have conversations with our local legislators. I want to express my gratitude to Senator *Jordan Rasmusson*, Senator *Rob Kupec*, Representative *Tom Murphy*, and Repre-



Tim Thompson's CEO Column continued on page 2 →

Annual Meeting April 18th

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| ANNUAL MEETING SCHEDULE | 5:00 p.m. Dinner will begin at Life Church in Fergus Falls |
| | 5:30 p.m. Dinner will begin at the satellite locations |
| | 5:30 p.m. Join the livestream www.lrec.coop/annualmeeting |
| | 5:30 p.m. Live music by Tim Eggebraaten |
| | 6:30 p.m. Annual meeting begins |

You are invited to join us for our Annual Meeting on **April 18th, 2024** starting at 5:00 p.m. in Fergus Falls, and 5:30 p.m. at our satellite locations. *Tim Eggebraaten* will again be providing live music. All three locations will have a meal. The two satellite locations will view a livestream of the primary location and, based on member feedback, will feature an upgraded viewing experience with larger screens and improved sound quality.



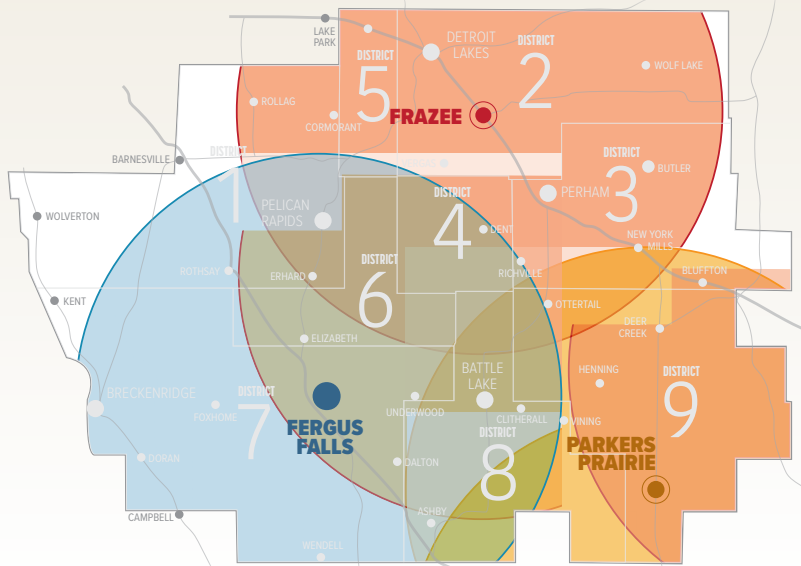
Primary Location

Fergus Falls at Life Church

Satellite Locations

Frazeo at Frazeo Community Center

Parkers Prairie at Prairie Event Center



OFFICIAL NOTICE

2024 ANNUAL MEETING OFFICIAL NOTICE

Lake Region Electric Cooperative's 87th Annual Meeting
Thursday, April 18th • 6:30 p.m.

Notice is hereby given that the annual member meeting of Lake Region Electric Cooperative will be held at 6:30 p.m. on **Thursday, April 18th, 2024** at Life Church (901 County Highway 116, Fergus Falls, MN) to take the following action: approval of prior meeting minutes; election of directors; CEO Tim Thompson's address; and all other business which may properly come before the meeting or any adjournment thereof. Registration and dinner begin at 5:00 p.m. in Fergus Falls and at 5:30 p.m. in Frazeo and Parkers Prairie.

Cecil "Bud" Hensel, Secretary/Treasurer

CEO Column *Continued from front page.*

sentative *Jeff Backer* for all taking time to meet with three LREC directors and me during the event. All four legislators provided us their time, and best of all, afforded us the opportunity to sit and have a conversation with them about the foundation of co-ops: reliable and affordable electricity, member ownership, and member elected directors who make decisions locally for the co-ops they represent. Many of us have different opinions on what is in the best interests for our future, but it is critical, more now than ever, to build and establish strong and long-lasting relationships to serve as the foundation for the trust needed to continue to strengthen our electric cooperatives.



Left to Right:
MREA CEO Darrick Moe, LREC CEO Tim Thompson, TWEC Director Kristine Spadgenske, and Connexus CEO (now retired) Greg Ridderbusch.

Our relationships with our members, legislators, and partners such as MREA and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) are so critical as we effect change to-

gether in ways that are positive and lead to decisions that are in the best interests of our cooperative.

Annual Meeting

I invite you all to attend your LREC Annual Meeting on April 18th. We once again will have three in-person locations—Fergus Falls, Frazee, and Parkers Prairie. For those who cannot attend in-person, please join us virtually. The Annual Meeting is such a great example of grassroots governance, being together, and sharing our time so LREC continues to be the cooperative you all deserve.



Tim Thompson

ENERGY FORUM

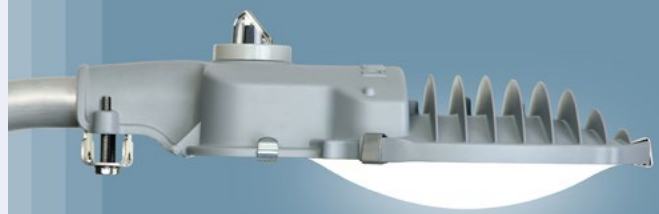
A Cooperative Conversation

MAY 30TH
8:30AM-1:30PM Thumper Pond in **Ottertail**

Save the date for our upcoming annual Energy Forum! There will be a diverse panel of presenters from the *Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA)*, *Great River Energy (GRE)*, *National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA)*, and more. Attendees will have the opportunity to learn, engage, and interact. A light lunch will be included. Please RSVP at www.lrec.coop/energyforum.



If you are interested in attending this *free* event, please RSVP at www.lrec.coop/energyforum



Light Pollution: Balancing Safety & Sustainability

A growing concern impacting rural areas in Minnesota is *light pollution*, which is an excessive or misdirected use of artificial light. For many in Lake Region's service territory, proper lighting is essential for safety and protection when darkness prevails at night. However, strategic lighting and mindfulness can enhance safety without contributing to light pollution.

Keeping this in mind, LREC has made deliberate moves since 2014 to reduce overall light pollution by being early adopters of advanced lighting technology. Today, 99.6% of security lights on LREC's system are LED, which is an energy-efficient solution. For any new security light installations provided by Lake Region, members only have LED options to select from. Furthermore, upon request, members can have a light shield installed on their security light to better control the beam.*

When looking at Lake Region's own use of light, we are taking an active approach in identifying

where we can cut back. We are assessing where lighting can be motion activated or on a set timer. While making these evaluations, we are keeping safety at the forefront to ensure our employees and the public remain safe around our buildings and equipment. For Lake Region, we will take cautious and considerate steps forward to do our part in reducing light pollution; however, we cannot make these changes alone.

Together, a cooperative effort among rural communities, municipalities, and utility providers can promote responsible lighting practices. We encourage our members and the community to understand the importance of minimizing light pollution and adopting night-friendly lighting strategies to create a sustainable approach to safety. By striking a balance between safety and environmental stewardship, we can illuminate appropriate pathways while preserving our night skies.

*FOR LIGHT SHIELD PRICING, PLEASE CONNECT WITH LREC'S CUSTOMER SERVICE TEAM.

Planning to Dig? **811**

FIRST, MAKE THE CALL—IT'S THE LAW!

Remember: 811 Does Not Locate Private Underground Facilities

When a call is placed to *Gopher State One Call (GSOC)*, they coordinate with utilities like Lake Region Electric Cooperative to locate their underground facilities.

Homeowners should be aware that private facilities such as electric power running to an outbuilding or shed, gas lines from a propane tank, an invisible pet fence, or sprinkler systems **WILL NOT** be marked. In these instances, it is the homeowner's responsibility to make sure any privately-owned underground wires on the customer side of the meter are located prior to digging.

These lines should be located by an electrician or through a private facility locator listed in the industry directory available on Gopher State One Call's website at gopherstateonecall.org. The property owner or tenant is responsible for contacting a private locator and paying the fee for locating private underground facilities.

Member Appreciation Event • August 8th • 3PM-7PM • Maplewood State Park

Free admittance, dinner, and more!

Put it on your calendar!

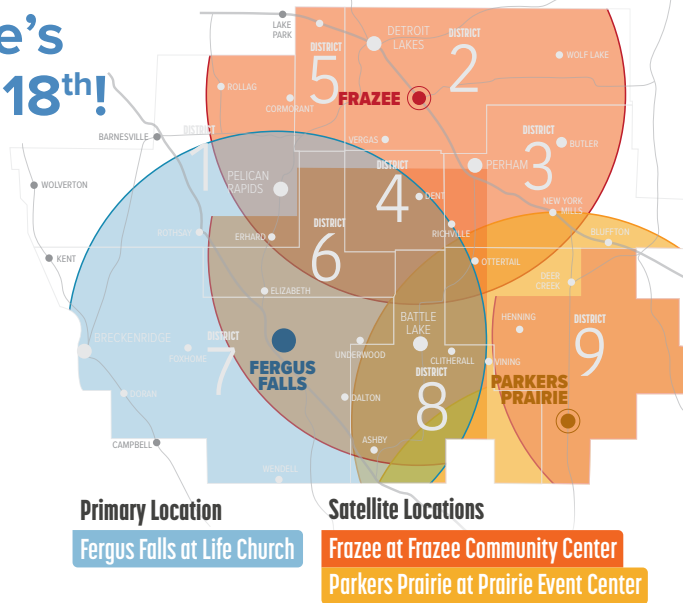


Lake Region Electric Cooperative's 87th Annual Meeting is on April 18th!

We are excited to offer multiple Annual Meeting locations once again. Our satellite locations in **Fraze** and **Parkers Prairie** will be viewing the livestream of our primary meeting location in **Fergus Falls**. Each location will host a meal, and LREC representatives will be available. We look forward to seeing you at one of our locations *or* online via our livestream!

Join us in one of the following ways:

- ◆ In-person at the primary location of the annual meeting at Life Church in Fergus Falls
- ◆ In-person at a satellite location at the Prairie Event Center in Parkers Prairie featuring a live video feed of the annual meeting
- ◆ In-person at a satellite location at the Fraze Community Center in Fraze featuring a live video feed of the annual meeting
- ◆ Virtually from your home, office, or wherever you are located at www.lrec.coop/annualmeeting



ENERGY FORUM

A Cooperative Conversation



Please join us for our annual Energy Forum on May 30th! There will be a diverse panel of presenters from the *Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA)*, *Great River Energy (GRE)*, *National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA)*, and more.

New this year, we will have breakout sessions featuring Briggs & Stratton discussing battery storage and generators, EV owners and experts, and LREC's energy services team highlighting the products and services LREC offers. Attendees will have the opportunity to **learn, engage, and interact**. The event is hosted at Thumper Pond in Ottertail, MN from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. A light lunch will be included.

**MAY
30TH**

Thumper Pond in Ottertail

8:30AM-1:30PM



If you are interested in attending this free event, please RSVP at www.lrec.coop/energyforum