



NewsFlashes

SEPTEMBER 2025



Member Engagement Opportunities

Suddenly, we find that summer has come to a close; it always seems to happen a little sooner every year. And, while we may hang onto warm weather for a few more weeks, LREC staff and our Board of Directors have already begun shifting gears to focus on the challenges that lie in the months ahead and providing reliability and financial stability through the end of this year.

That said, I'd like to take a minute to share the ways in which we were able to interact with our member-owners over the last month — events we feel represent our commitment to improving the lives we serve and connecting on a more personal level. It's connections like these that will further open lines of communication as we continue to partner together to build the best possible outcomes for our cooperative.



Memorable August activities worth mentioning include the following:

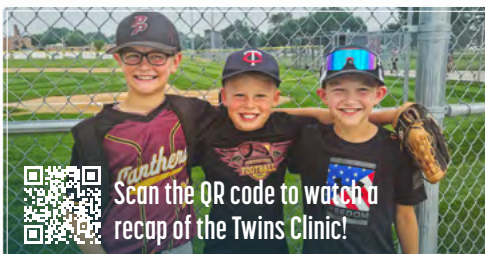
MN Twins Baseball Clinic: Held this year on August 1st in Parkers Prairie, this free annual event provides youth from communities in our service area the opportunity to receive in-person skills training on the fundamentals of the sport and affirmation of the importance of practice, perseverance, and teamwork. Led by Twins staff — with a big assist from local athlete and parent volunteers — approximately 75 boys and girls attended the two-hour session of fielding, hitting, and conditioning drills and finished the day with a take-home bag. Thank you to everyone who made it out and especially the MN Twins, Great River Energy, and Parkers Prairie High School for sponsoring and helping to host this incredible event!

LREC Member Appreciation Event: New venue, new ways to say 'thank you.' This year's event, held August 7th at Phelps Mill Park, featured a different backdrop for the day. In addition to the free park entry, meal, and safety demonstrations from LREC linemen our attendees look forward to every year, new activities included lawn games and tours of this historic local landmark. As the early summer heat and humidity gave way to near-perfect conditions, the park grounds provided ample room for the larger-than-expected turnout to spread out, relax, and visit with neighbors and LREC staff.

We'd like to share our thanks to Phelps Mill Park and the Friends of Phelps Mill for their support in coordinating this

event and venue information, and to RESCO for their help with grilling duties. And, of course, to all our members who took the time to join us. We truly enjoyed this opportunity to meet you in person and share our appreciation for your partnership. We look forward to seeing even more of you next year!

August 29th Blood Drive: As an active reflection of the *Concern for Community* cooperative principle, LREC hosted a blood drive at the Pelican Rapids office for the second time this year. Responding to the call for donations posted in newsletters and online, members of the surrounding area and LREC staff took the time to offer the gift of life, truly stepping up to be a hero by giving blood.



Each of these events strengthens our relationship with communities we serve and, through your engagement, demonstrates what makes our cooperative different from other utilities. As your new CEO, I'm grateful for the chance to shake your hand and further introduce myself. I look forward to working together as we prepare to enter this change of seasons.

Cooperatively yours, **Joel Janorschke, CEO**



Contact the CEO

✉ Email: jjanorschke@lrec.coop

☎ Cell: (320) 292-4036

Want to Give Back to Your Community?

Operation Round Up Board of Trustees Replacements Needed



With the recent retirement of Board Trustees from **Districts 2 and 9**, Operation Round Up (ORU) is looking for members from those areas to fill these important roles.



The ORU Board of Trustees is comprised of member-representatives from each of the nine districts in our service area. They serve three-year terms and meet four times per year to review ORU funding submissions and determine the award recipients each quarter.

LREC members residing in these districts who want to learn more about this opportunity and/or would like to be considered for this position are encouraged to contact their respective Board Director:

Cecil 'Bud' Hensel, **District 2**

Email: chensel@lrec.coop

Phone: (701) 371-2863

Gary Olson, **District 9**

Email: garyolson@lrec.coop

Phone: (218) 849-7496

LREC would like to thank outgoing ORU Trustees **Polly Reitan (District 2)** and **Ruth Vetter (District 9)** for their service. Your willingness to support our surrounding communities is greatly appreciated.

Need to apply for funding? If you have a community project that needs funding, complete the Operation Round Up funding application form at www.lrec.coop/oru before **September 15th** for consideration.

Upgrade Your Home, Cut Energy Costs — Get Up to \$3,000 Back

LREC is taking the hassle out of home upgrades by partnering with Zero Homes to introduce *Amped to Save*, a new program that helps members lower energy bills by switching to clean, efficient, all-electric home systems — with up to \$3,000 in incentives available on the following items:

- ▶ Heat pumps, including dual fuel systems (for heating + cooling in one)
- ▶ Heat pump water heaters
- ▶ Induction stoves, and more!

Start with a Free Home Energy Audit

The Zero Homes platform offers a free, quick, and easy remote process to start your audit that gives you personalized insights into how your home uses energy. By downloading their smartphone app you'll receive a custom energy profile and recommendations designed to help you lower your electric bills, increase comfort, and make informed decisions.



Once you're ready to upgrade, Zero Homes can also help connect you with a vetted local installer and instantly apply eligible rebates.

Members who install a heat pump dual fuel system qualify for LREC's load control program, which offers electricity at just 6.1¢/kWh (compared to the standard 11¢/kWh summer rate and 9.6¢/kWh rate the other months). That's up to a 44% cost savings!

No guesswork. No scheduling headaches. Just a straightforward way to upgrade your home and start saving. Visit the Zero Homes website at www.zerohomes.io/minnesota to learn more!



Cooperative Heroes Award

Know someone making a difference in your community? Nominate him/her for the **Cooperative Heroes Award!**

Any co-op member, employee, or director can submit a nomination, and nominees don't need to be co-op members.

Winners will direct \$1,000 (1st place) or \$500 (for two runners-up) to a local charity of their choice. Applications open in October at mrea.org/programs/touchstone-energy.



Board of Directors

Our goal is to make it easy for you to connect with your district board director, and we've provided their contact information below for your convenience.

DISTRICT 1

Kurt Krueger, *Vice Chair*

(701) 640-4758 • kkrueger@lrec.coop

DISTRICT 2

Cecil "Bud" Hensel, *Secretary/Treasurer*

(701) 371-2863 • chensel@lrec.coop

DISTRICT 3

Mike Brasel, *GRE Board of Directors Rep.*

(507) 218-7274 • mbrasel@lrec.coop

DISTRICT 4

Lee Mindemann

(218) 457-4620 • lmindemann@lrec.coop

DISTRICT 5

Patrick Meyers

(701) 261-2822 • pmeyers@lrec.coop

DISTRICT 6

Charlie Blixt

(218) 770-1304 • cblixt@lrec.coop

DISTRICT 7

Tom Jennen, *Chair*

(218) 205-7546 • tjennen@lrec.coop

DISTRICT 8

Jim Gronbeck

(701) 388-2805 • jgronbeck@lrec.coop

DISTRICT 9

Gary Olson

(218) 849-7496 • garyolson@lrec.coop

Savings for Home Energy Upgrades Ending Soon

If you're planning energy-efficient upgrades, now is the time to see if they qualify for federal tax credits before they expire. Whether it's new windows, an electric vehicle, or a home energy audit, here's a rundown of what's available and when credits end.

Before starting any project, contact Lake Region Electric Cooperative to ensure you maximize your savings through rebates, off-peak rates, and other incentives, then work with a contractor of your choice to ensure installation is completed by the deadline.

Category	Eligible Purchases	Incentive	Deadline
Electric Vehicle	Purchase of a new or used EV	New up to \$7,500 Used up to \$4,000	Sept. 30, 2025
Energy Efficient Home Upgrades	Energy efficient appliances or insulation/air sealing. Check out our Zero Homes initiative (page 2) for help identifying eligible rebates	Up to \$2,000 for heat pumps & heat pump water heaters; \$1,200 for insulation/air sealing; \$600 for windows	Dec. 31, 2025
Clean Energy Systems	Renewable energy for your home — our Go West Solar Arrays qualify!	30% of qualifying costs for solar, battery storage, and geothermal heating installation	Dec. 31, 2025

Unclaimed Capital Credits

LREC is looking for members with unclaimed capital credit checks. If your name is on the list, email lrec@lrec.coop or call (800) 552-7658 to update your records. After seven years, unclaimed credits from Minnesota residents fund Operation Round Up, while those from out-of-state members are returned to their last known state of residence. Scan the QR code or visit www.lrec.coop/unclaimed-capital-credits to view the list.



Energy Assistance

The *Energy Assistance Program* is designed to assist income eligible households with the cost of energy/heating their homes. To receive assistance, household income for the last three months must be below certain income guidelines. Request an application from *Mahube-Otwa* by calling the following numbers.



Detroit Lakes:
(218) 847-1385

Mahnomen:
(218) 935-5022

Wadena:
(218) 632-3600

Fergus Falls:
(218) 739-3011

Park Rapids:
(218) 732-7204

Toll-free:
(888) 458-1385

Electric Heating Sales Tax Exemption

Electricity sold for residential space heating, when used as the primary source of heat, is exempt from Minnesota sales tax for the usage months of November through April. Separately metered off-peak systems are also eligible for the sales tax exemption.

To qualify, members must complete the *Sales Tax Exemption Certificate for Residential* form located at www.lrec.coop/taxexempt. You only need to fill out the form once and it is in effect until you notify us otherwise.

Note: Businesses, Organizations, and Nonprofits

Any business, organization, or nonprofit that has not recently updated its exemption status should visit www.lrec.coop/taxexemptorg and submit an updated *Sales Tax Exemption Certificate for Businesses, Organizations, and Nonprofits*.

Cold Weather Rule

The Minnesota Cold Weather Rule (MN Statute, Ch. 235, Sec. 216B.097) protects residential utility customers during the cold winter months. Under this rule, your electric service will not be disconnected from October 1st through April 30th because of non-payment provided you meet ALL of the following conditions:

- You declare an inability to pay.
- Your total household, not individual, income is less than 50% of the state median income. You must provide the necessary documentation to support this condition.
- You enter into and make reasonable, timely payments under a payment agreement that considers the financial resources of the household.
- You receive referrals to energy assistance, weatherization, conservation, or other programs likely to reduce your energy bills.

If you do not meet all of the above conditions, then you do not qualify for the winter shut-off protection. However, you still can continue to receive electric service if you call us to make a mutually acceptable payment arrangement.

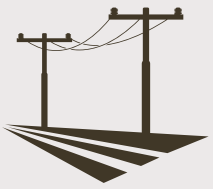
Residential customers who cannot qualify for winter shut-off protection and who cannot pay their full bill may make special payments over an extended period of time. To arrange for scheduled payments, call (218) 863-9842.

Cold Weather Rule FAQs

Can my power be disconnected for non-payment in the winter? Yes, it can.

How do I sign up for the CWR protection? Contact the LREC Accounts Receivable Team by calling (218) 863-9842 or visit www.lrec.coop/cwr and fill out the form.

What if I can't make my scheduled payments? Contact the LREC Accounts Receivable Team by calling (218) 863-9842 to discuss a different payment plan. If you do not make payments your service can be disconnected.



STRENGTHENING THE GRID

Significant progress on the Parkers Prairie Feeders 1 and 3 portion of our 4-Year Construction Work Plan has been made with completion expected by August 29th. Finishing these projects will improve overall reliability of these circuits, including increased loading capabilities, voltage performance, and contingency operation.

Need Help? Send Us a Text!

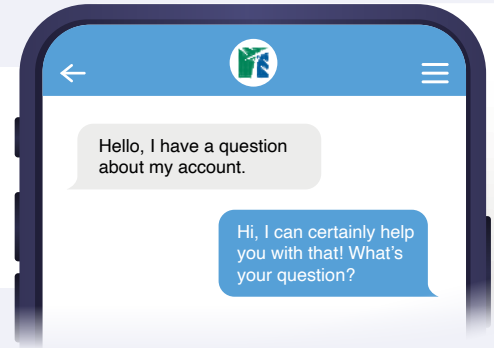
Members can text the co-op at any time to chat with customer service. The numbers are as follows:



LREC (Electric):
(218) 853-5732



LRES (Natural Gas):
(218) 853-5737



Take a Safety Minute: Power Line Checklist

Each year, our crews respond to accidents where equipment hits poles or snags overhead lines. These situations can cause outages—and they can be deadly. Downed lines may still be energized, and repairs often happen under tough conditions.

The best prevention is taking a moment before you start work to mentally walk through a quick checklist. Ask yourself these questions and check them off:



Look around your work area:

- ☐ Do you see where the overhead lines enter, exit, and surround the area?
- ☐ How close are you to poles when using equipment in the field?
- ☐ Will you be moving irrigation systems this fall that could contact overhead lines?
- ☐ Do you have helpers during harvest? Have you discussed line safety and assigned a spotter?
- ☐ Have you planned the safest routes in and out of your fields to avoid overhead lines?
- ☐ Has shifting soil changed clearances in key spots from last year?
- ☐ Are any power lines sagging? If so, have you reported it?

Look at your equipment:

- ☐ Are there antennas or attachments that could strike a pole or power line when turning?
- ☐ With newer or larger equipment, will it clear overhead lines? (*Remember: stay at least 20 feet away on all sides.*)
- ☐ Do you use equipment that folds up or down? Before deploying it, are you certain it will clear lines and poles?

Taking a minute to run through this checklist can prevent accidents, outages, and injuries. Stay alert, stay safe.

