



NewsFlashes

AUGUST 2026

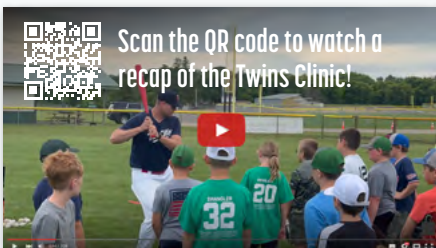
Crews worked on grounded overhead line while replacing old underground cable.



CEO COLUMN

As we approach the end of summer and head toward Labor Day, I want to thank those members who attended our MN Twins Baseball Clinic and extend an invitation to a couple of events taking place in August.

Hosted by Frazee Public Schools in late June, the Baseball Clinic gave boys and girls from LREC's service territory and surrounding communities the chance to meet coaches and staff from a professional sports organization. Approximately 125 area youth took part in batting, throwing, and fielding drills, spending the afternoon on fundamentals of the game and learning the importance of teamwork. Our thanks go out to co-sponsors MN Twins and our wholesale power provider Great River Energy; the positive impact of events like these cannot be measured and we look forward to another big turnout next year.



I'm also hoping to see many of you at our annual Member Appreciation Day on August 13th at Maplewood State Park. Park entry, food, and lawn games

will be provided — along with electric vehicle test drives and safety demonstrations. This year members who RSVP in advance will be entered into a drawing for a special giveaway. It's our way of recognizing the important role our members play in shaping the performance, priorities, and future of our cooperative through your feedback, participation in district elections, and other ways you help guide the cooperative. Scan the QR code for full details and registration, and keep an eye out for more information on social media.



Lastly, LREC will be holding our final blood drive of the year at the Pelican Rapids office on August 28th. Supporting the Red Cross with these events is a meaningful way LREC can contribute to a larger effort; if possible, we'd appreciate your consideration on donating. Additional information on the drive can be found in this month's newsletter.

As always, if there is a topic you'd like to see addressed in future *NewsFlashes* or a question you have, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Cooperatively yours,

Joel Janorschke, CEO



Member Appreciation Day

When // Thursday, August 13th

Where // Maplewood State Park

Time // 3 – 7 p.m.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 🌲 Free Park Entry | 🌲 Safety Demos |
| 🌲 Free Meal | 🌲 Lawn Games |
| 🌲 Electric Vehicle Test Drives | 🌲 Children's Goodie Bags |

Join us for our annual **Member Appreciation Day** on Aug. 13 at Maplewood State Park! This free, family-friendly event is our way of saying thank you to our members and will feature food, games, and time together. Plus, members who sign up for *Operation Round Up* at the event will be entered to win a special door prize. *We hope to see you there!*

Visit www.lrec.coop/maplewood to RSVP and register for a door prize!

Stuff the Bus

LREC is hosting Stuff the Bus to help ensure local students start the school year with the supplies they need to learn, grow, and succeed. Learn more or find donation information at www.lrec.coop/stuffthebus.



Contact the CEO Email: jjanorschke@lrec.coop Cell: (320) 292-4036

At the Capitol: 2026 Legislative Recap

Source: MREA

The 2026 Minnesota legislative session has wrapped as one largely shaped by a divided government. Even so, Minnesota's electric cooperatives made important progress on the issues that matter most to member-owners.

A Step Forward on Nuclear Energy

After three decades of standing still, Minnesota took its first real step forward on nuclear energy since a moratorium was put in place in 1994. Lawmakers approved a state nuclear energy study that will examine the costs, benefits, and tradeoffs of nuclear energy in Minnesota, including its potential role in supporting affordability, reliability, and emissions reductions. Findings will give lawmakers a stronger foundation for deciding whether to lift the moratorium next year.

Minnesota's electric cooperatives, working through the Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA), helped lead this effort as a founding member of the Minnesota Nuclear Energy Alliance. The Alliance brings together more than 60 organizations spanning utilities, labor, agriculture, business, and environmental groups, and its broad reach helped move nuclear into the mainstream of Minnesota's energy conversation.

Looking Ahead to 2027

The political landscape next session could look very different. What won't change is the focus of Minnesota's electric cooperatives: advocating for affordable, reliable electricity and protecting the local, democratic governance that makes cooperatives unique.

While nuclear energy will likely return as a central conversation in 2027, net metering reform will also remain near the top of the cooperative agenda. Modernizing Minnesota's net metering rules is essential to ensuring all member-owners pay their fair share for the electric grid they rely on.



Voices for Cooperative Power (VCP)

is a network of over 1 million advocates providing a platform that ensures the needs of co-op members and their families are front and center. Sign up is free and easy and allows members access to policy information, important updates, and the opportunity to let your voice be heard.

Scan the QR code to join VCP and learn how you can have a say in decisions that affect you.



BEAT the PEAK this Summer!

High demand times got you feeling the heat? These tips can help you build new habits and avoid using electricity during peak demand, when energy costs are highest.



Grab the charcoal & fire up the grill!

Skip the oven a few times a week and cook outdoors to reduce indoor heat, use fewer appliances, and lessen the need for air conditioning.



Wake, water – and get going.

Water your lawn or garden with shorter sprinkler cycles early in the morning to reduce evaporation and the energy needed for water delivery.



Power down and soak up summer.

Use an automatic timer or smart outlet to turn off appliances and lights during peak hours, and let the outdoors do the entertaining.



Tips for summertime – and any time:

- Add a smart thermostat to pre-cool your home before after-work demand peaks.
- Spread appliance use across different days to avoid high demand from "stacking."
- Charge your electric vehicle (EV) overnight to save money with a lower time-of-use (TOU) rate.

Contact our Energy Services team at (800) 552-7658 for more ways to save!

SUMMER SAFETY SERIES

Water & Electrical Safety

For many members, nothing says Labor Day in Minnesota like a weekend at the lake. That being said, some awareness regarding water and electricity can help ensure a safe close to the season for you and your family.

One little-known but very real hazard of note is **electric shock drowning**, or ESD. Though uncommon, electrical current caused by faulty wiring can sometimes leak into the water, paralyzing swimmers' muscles and causing them to drown. In general, swimmers should avoid docks or boats that are connected to power from the shore; at the very least, be sure to stay at least 50 feet away.

Remember: a current can't be seen, so if you feel a tingling or stinging sensation, swim out of the area and leave the water as safely as possible. Scan the QR code to hear one family's story and learn more about these preventable accidents.



Boat owners can do their part by regularly inspecting their electrical wiring, and no one should ever jump in during an electrical emergency. Turn off the power if possible, call for help, and use a flotation device or non-conductive rescue equipment to assist from a safe distance.



Our series continues in September with information on farm equipment safety – keep an eye out!

Employee Spotlight

Geoff Kuchera
Communications
Specialist



How long have you been with the organization, and what attracted you to this position?

Almost 2 years – I was hired in August of 2024. I had lived in the Twin Cities for 30+ years and was ready to make the move somewhere smaller, and my family has a cabin on Otter Tail Lake so I was familiar with how beautiful the area was. But really it was the opportunity to grow my skills in so many areas – website, presentations, writing, and design.

What do you enjoy most about working in communications? Variety, collaboration, and the chance to learn about different areas of our co-op. On any given day I can meet with staff from IT, Operations, Finance — you name it — to gather information we'll use to create content for our newsletter or social media. Another day I could be in the field taking pictures of our crew working on a line revision. Their help in understanding how their work improves service to our members and how to best communicate that information plays a big role.

What advice or skills do you believe are most important for success in communications?

Be open to new ideas/trends. Don't take edits or changes personally. Take advantage of a second set of eyes (or more) when proofing. Be ready to multi-task. When communicating on a difficult topic, be empathetic — but cut to the chase. It's more important that your message is straight-forward, easy to understand — and, when needed, makes clear the steps you're taking to find a solution.

If you could learn any new skill instantly, what would it be? Part of me wants to say something athletic or practical, like auto mechanics — but we'll go with mastering a musical instrument, preferably guitar or piano.

Hobbies or interests outside of work? I love playing tennis, enjoy biking. It's getting less and less, but still like to go for a run every now and then. Trivia, karaoke, concerts, time with family and friends.

What goals or projects are you excited about in the coming year? Lots of exciting stuff. Becoming more proficient in video production and incorporating that content into different platforms — emails, social media, etc. A refresh to both our LREC and LRES (natural gas) websites. The possibility of hosting on-site podcasts and building out our presence on both TikTok and Instagram. Looking at new layout/design options for our monthly *NewsFlashes*.

By the Numbers Mid-Year Snapshot

The following compares **January-June** of 2026 to **the same period** of 2025.

IMPROVED RELIABILITY

159
33%

Fewer Outages Than Last Year (+20%)
620 in the first half of 2026 vs. 779 in 2025
Shorter Average Outages
0.53 hrs vs. 0.79 hrs (excludes planned outages)

SYSTEM GROWTH

5,904 Total Miles of Line
1,959 Underground | 3,945 Overhead

UNDERGROUND +34 MILES

OVERHEAD -22 MILES

NET GROWTH +12 MILES

MEMBER AND ENERGY ACTIVITY

Energy Sold	New Services	Services in Place
237.9 million kWh	79	30,478
+120,289 kWh	Up from 76	+186

Learn More About Load Management



Our latest Energy Services video takes a closer look at LREC's load management programs and the savings they can provide. Visit www.lrec.coop/energyservices to watch.

TikTok

LREC is now on TikTok!

Follow us at www.tiktok.com/@lrec.coop for behind-the-scenes moments, energy tips, community highlights, and more.

Board Meeting Highlights

Lake Region Electric Cooperative's Board of Directors conducted its regular monthly meeting Thursday, May 28th, 2026.

Nine Board members, CEO Joel Janorschke, Department VPs, Attorney Chad Felstul, and two other LREC staff members were in attendance.

The following reports were given:

CEO Joel Janorschke provided a strategic update focused on employee and member engagement, including a recap of the Annual Meeting and member feedback. Discussion highlighted positive responses to the meeting format, presentation content, and member communications efforts.

CFO Amanda Fuller presented April 2026 financial results for both LREC and LRES. The Board also reviewed information related to the 2025 capital credit allocation and Great River Energy (GRE) margin allocations.

IT Shared Services Manager Dave Hotchkiss presented on planning for expanding shared services.

Attorney Chad Felstul provided the annual Board education presentation on director fiduciary responsibilities.

The following actions were taken:

- ▶ Approved April 2026 LREC & LRES financial statements.
- ▶ Approved the 2025 capital credit allocation for LREC and GRE margins.
- ▶ Approved four Great River Energy resolutions related to power purchase and renewable energy projects.
- ▶ Conducted the annual organizational meeting and elected Board officers:
 - Tom Jennen, *Board Chair*
 - Kurt Krueger, *Vice Chair*
 - Cecil "Bud" Hensel, *Secretary/Treasurer*
- ▶ Accepted the director election results for Districts 2, 5, and 8 following the 2026 Annual Meeting.

Irrigation Load Control: Creating a Proactive Approach



By Paul Imhof, LREC Electrical Technician

Similar to residential and commercial load control programs, LREC irrigation service conducts load control to ensure our members are reducing their usage when demand is at its peak. Until this year, the cooperative was monitoring these control periods using a reactive approach, discovering load controller failures only after the control period had begun. This resulted in the need for additional troubleshooting, service visits, and lost controllable load.

This past spring, LREC data analyst consultant Dave Froslic of Lake Data Insights and I began work on creating the proactive process of using reporting data to identify failures before the first irrigation control events of the season.

A daily status check is now performed on all irrigation load controllers to verify communication and confirm whether the load controller is functioning correctly. If a load controller fails the status check, meter data is reviewed through the reporting system. If the meter indicates the irrigator is actively consuming energy, a service order is generated for field investigation and repair. These daily checks help eliminate false positives and allow resources to be focused on devices that are actively impacting controllable load.

With the addition of Data Analyst Matthew Niblock our team worked together further to develop an automated, centralized dashboard that combines the status check results, meter consumption data, and service and account information that can be reviewed quickly to identify potential issues and create service orders when needed.

Implemented in mid-May, the process has proven to be a significant benefit in monitoring the health of the irrigation load control system. As of July 1st, the report has produced measurable operational and financial benefits, including:

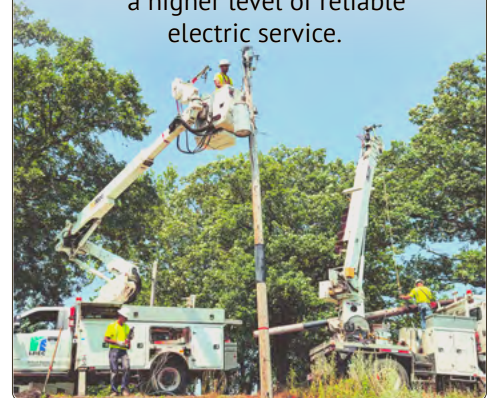
- 53 service orders
- Approx. 2,200 kW of controllable irrigation load identified and restored
- Approx. \$57,000 in potential savings for the cooperative*

By leveraging data, reporting, and cross-department collaboration, LREC is now able to identify equipment failures earlier, improve control event performance, and protect valuable controllable load. The success of this initiative demonstrates how effective use of data analytics can deliver meaningful operational improvements and measurable financial benefits.

**Based on an estimated value of \$26/kW*

STRENGTHENING OUR GRID

In mid-July, crews completed pole removal work and connected underground service for members on a nearby lake – the final phase of an overhead to underground line revision that began with the burying of the cable earlier this spring. Upgrades like these, planned throughout the year, strengthen our infrastructure by improving the durability of our lines, provide capacity for higher load, and a higher level of reliable electric service.



Notice to All Load Control Participants

The Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO), which manages the regional electric grid and energy markets, now requires utilities to provide additional information for certain demand response and energy management programs. To comply with these requirements, LREC will provide account, meter, and service address information to Great River Energy for secure submission to MISO for verification purposes only; this information will not be shared with or sold to any other entities.

————— Note: Lake Region Electric Cooperative offices will be closed on September 7th for Labor Day. —————



OUR MISSION

Provide our members with **safe, reliable, and affordable energy**, and lead by offering **innovative services** to grow the cooperative.

OUR VISION

Leading, empowering, and guiding members to use energy wisely to secure a better future for **our families, our communities, and our world.**

OUR VALUES

- ◆ Safety
- ◆ Integrity
- ◆ Innovation
- ◆ Accountability
- ◆ Open, honest communications
- ◆ Commitment to members, community, and employees