



NewsFlashes

SEPTEMBER 2026

Members watch a safety demonstration during our Member Appreciation Day in Maplewood State Park.



CEO COLUMN

As we come to the end of one season and enter another, this month's column highlights one of our final events of the summer and serves as a reminder for an upcoming call to action.

I would first like to thank the 700+ attendees who joined us at this year's **Member Appreciation Day** in Maplewood State Park for some perfect weather and an afternoon of food, fun, and conversation. On top of being a good time, events like this allow us the chance to connect with those we serve in person. I hope to see all of our members next year.

Also on the list of those who deserve recognition:

- All the LREC employees from across the organization for their hard work in helping to create a memorable event
- Members of our board of directors for their attendance and participation
- Friends of Maplewood State Park for providing music, park tours, and activities for the kids
- Andrew Johnson of Pelican Paddle Company for the chance to get on the water with kayaks and paddleboards
- Our friends at RESCO for another year of helping with grilling duties

Congratulations as well to our pre-event RSVP and Operation Round Up (ORU) registration prize winners. Thank you to those who took the time to sign up for ORU during the event; your contribution provides support for our local communities and we're grateful for your continued engagement.

Finally, keep an eye out for our **Member Satisfaction Survey** that will be distributed in early October. It's your chance to weigh in on our level of service over the past year and an important opportunity to share your concerns and thoughts on how we can improve. Stay tuned for more information in the coming weeks.

The feedback you provide through the survey will play a critical role in identifying our priorities and shaping the way we deliver electric service – we look forward to hearing from you! In the meantime, please do not hesitate to reach out if there's anything you'd like to discuss.

Cooperatively yours,

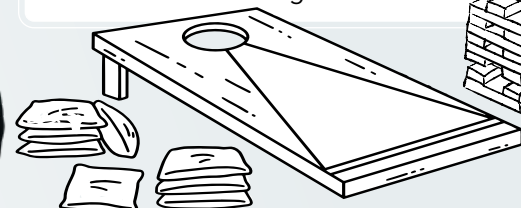
Joel Janorschke, CEO



Congratulations to Our Prize Winners!

RSVP Registration Door Prize
Dennis Behnke: *Bean Bag Boards*

Operation Round Up Registration Prize
Dan Bucholz: *Stacking Yard Game*



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

Operation Round Up Recipients

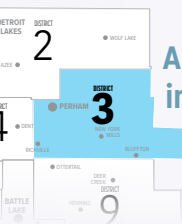
Funds were granted to 10 local organizations throughout Lake Region Electric Cooperative's service area from the Operation Round Up Program. A total of \$14,750 was awarded by the Operation Round Up Board of Trustees at the July 8th, 2026 meeting. Organizations receiving funds were:



- ◆ **\$500** to *Henning Fire Department* for National Night Out event
- ◆ **\$500** to *Someplace Safe Pelican Rapids Advocacy Office* for emergency food and transportation for victims and survivors of domestic violence
- ◆ **\$750** to *Dent Diamondhawks* for equipment to support amateur baseball team
- ◆ **\$1,000** to *Friends of Maplewood State Park* to update educational materials for maple syrup demonstrations
- ◆ **\$1,500** to *Wild Rice Peacemakers* for Cowboy Mounted Shooting 2026 MN State Shoot
- ◆ **\$2,000** to *Art of the Lakes Association, Inc.* for a new concrete patio and louvered pergola as part of a City of Battle Lake Art Advisory Committee Beautification Project
- ◆ **\$2,000** to *Boots on the Ground* for activities and events to support local veterans
- ◆ **\$2,000** to *Boys & Girls Club of the Perham Area* for an inclusive outdoor sandbox area for youth
- ◆ **\$2,000** to *Never Alone Inc.* for youth racing and life skills experiences
- ◆ **\$2,500** to *Friends of Tamarac NWR* to purchase and install cabinetry and counters for Environmental Education program

The total amount awarded since 2007 is **\$1,037,790**.

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**.



Are you a resident of **District 3** and interested in becoming an Operation Round Up trustee? Please contact Candace Roesch for details at croesch@lrec.coop.

By the Numbers

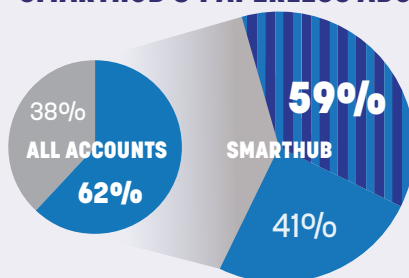
AVERAGE MONTHLY USAGE & BILL*

1,076 kWh Up 88 kWh since 2024

\$150.71 Up \$21.63 since 2024

*Residential service only (Jan.-Jun. 2026)

SMARTHUB & PAPERLESS ADOPTION



Of all billed accounts, **62%** use SmartHub. In SmartHub, **59%** of accounts are paperless. Each paper bill costs approximately \$0.75 to produce and mail, so going paperless adds up to significant savings.

Energy Issues Summit Recap

CEO Joel Janorschke and members of the LREC Board of Directors joined over 200 cooperative leaders, directors, and industry experts to discuss the challenges and opportunities shaping the future of electricity in Minnesota during August's Energy Issues Summit.

Hosted by the Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA), topics ranged from grid reliability, data center growth, and affordability and trends in the industry.



While electric rates have historically increased more slowly than inflation, new infrastructure often costs several times more than the assets it replaces. With demand expected to grow after nearly two decades of relatively flat growth, utilities now face unprecedented cost pressures associated with the need to replace aging infrastructures and build new generation resources.

"We are overbuilding the generation capacity just to meet legislative policy, such as achieving carbon-free goals," said Tricia Elite, Manager, Government Affairs for MREA. "According to the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO), as we build more and more generation in the region, the actual capacity continues to decline because of the type of generation being built. Intermittent resources are not providing the capacity we need."

Another presentation explored how large-scale data centers, while adding to electricity demand, also present opportunities if growth is managed appropriately – and emphasized the need to pay their fair share of system costs while helping spread fixed costs across more consumers.

Speakers also addressed federal policy changes, nuclear energy, cooperative governance, and utility regulation.

"Our member cooperatives are focused on planning for the future while keeping electricity reliable and affordable," said MREA CEO Darrick Moe. "The conversations at this year's EIS underscored the importance of thoughtful energy policy, long-term planning, and continued investment in the electric system that powers Minnesota communities."

Interested in learning more? Scan the QR code for info on MISO's role in managing wholesale electricity across our region or visit www.mrea.org.



Farm & Harvest Safety

Part of providing electric service to a rural area is doing what we can to communicate different ways to keep you, your family, and seasonal help safe that are unique to our local landscape.

With fall just around the corner and activity in and around nearby fields likely to increase, we felt it was a good time to share the following tips and information on reducing the risk of accident or injury – whether operating machinery or staying mindful of potential hazards around the farm:

- ➔ Know the clearance distance of your farm equipment, set extensions to the lowest setting when moving a load, and maintain a safe distance of at least 10 feet from overhead power lines.
- ➔ Never attempt to raise or move a power line out of the way for clearance. If a power line is sagging or low, call LREC right away.
- ➔ Utilize a spotter and deploy flags to maintain safe distances from power lines and other equipment when working in the field.
- ➔ Hay, tree limbs, irrigation pipes, and bulk materials should be considered extensions of your vehicle and can conduct electricity – be sure to keep them away from electrical equipment.
- ➔ Make sure all electrical outlets in work areas are ground-fault circuit interrupters, which protect people from shock hazard, and weatherize your electrical equipment with watertight covers to prevent damage and injury.

STRENGTHENING OUR GRID

In keeping with this month's *Summer Safety Series* column, LREC worked proactively to prevent potential damage from farm equipment by replacing low-clearance overhead line running across a field in our service territory. Our crew plowed around the southern perimeter of the field and converted the line to underground before removing the retired poles. Completing this project will help avoid possible interruption and injury, as well as improve service reliability for our members in that area.

2027 Touchstone Energy Cooperative Heroes Award

Is there someone in your community who consistently goes above and beyond to make a difference? Someone who has assisted those in need or spearheaded a community project that has made life better for everyone?

For the second consecutive year, Lake Region Electric Cooperative is partnering with Minnesota's Touchstone Energy cooperatives for the Cooperative Heroes Award – an opportunity for anyone served by an electric cooperative to nominate an individual who has made a meaningful, positive impact.



Winners receive funding to support a local nonprofit or cause of their choice: *First place \$1,000; second and third place: \$500 each.* Nominations are open from Oct. 1 through Nov. 15. Scan the QR code to view the application process and help shine a light on our community heroes!

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 or by scanning the QR code. You only need to fill out the form once and it is in effect until you notify us otherwise.



Employee Spotlight



Anne Hovland
Consumer Accounting
Supervisor

Family? I am married with 2 teenage boys.

How long have you worked at LREC? I have been with LREC for 10 ½ years.

What are some of your primary responsibilities? My team and I are responsible for processing billing for both LREC & LRES. We process service orders coming in from the field to verify changes and update service locations and accounts for accurate billing. I also work closely with our meter data management team to make sure our members' usage data is accurate as well. In addition to that, I provide software and iPad training and support, work with all departments on process improvements, and maintain our internal and external electronic forms.

How have things changed over the years? Technology has transformed the way we work at LREC. When I first started, paper was used for almost everything. Now most

of our processes are electronic, which allows information to move from the field to the office in real time. These changes have improved accuracy, efficiency, and safety for both the employees and our members.

What is a hobby or interest you enjoy outside of work? I enjoy cheering on my boys, nieces, and nephew at their school and sporting events. I also enjoy spending time with family and friends, walking, reading, and traveling whenever I have the chance.

What are some of your favorite memories? One of my favorite LREC traditions is the Halloween costume contest. The costumes the departments come up with ranging from the complete cast of the Wizard of Oz to a flock of ostriches, seem to get more creative every year. It is always great to see so many coworkers get involved and have so much fun with it.

Board Meeting Highlights

Lake Region Electric Cooperative's Board of Directors conducted its regular monthly meeting Thursday, June 25th, 2026. Nine Board members, CEO Joel Janorschke, department leaders, Attorney Chad Felstul, and other LREC staff members were in attendance.

The following reports were given:

CEO Joel Janorschke and department leaders reported on shared services planning and future LRES projects, including updates on natural gas expansion opportunities and customer interest as well as feedback on summer work hours, productivity tracking, and member service impacts.

Arborist Abe Nebgen presented findings from vegetation management and wildfire mitigation planning efforts. Discussion focused on system reliability, outage trends, tree trimming cycles, cost impacts, and long-term budgeting considerations.

Great River Energy Director Mike Brasel provided updates from GRE, including board elections results.

Attorney Chad Felstul reported on recent legal developments involving utility easements, wildfire mitigation legislation, and regulatory matters affecting electric cooperatives.

The following actions were taken:

- ▶ Approved May 2026 LREC & LRES financial statements and Q2 Write-Offs
- ▶ Approved Policy 308 – Record Retention
- ▶ Approved Policy 702 – Time off Paid
- ▶ Approved Policy 703 – Personal Appearance, Uniforms, Protective Clothing and Equipment
- ▶ Approved Policy 712 – Tools and Equipment

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.

Board of Directors

DISTRICT 1

Kurt Krueger
Vice Chair

kkrueger@lrec.coop

DISTRICT 2

Cecil "Bud" Hensel
Secretary/Treasurer
chensel@lrec.coop

DISTRICT 3

Mike Brasel
GRE Board of Directors Rep.
mbrasel@lrec.coop

DISTRICT 4

Jeff Hildebrandt
jhildebrandt@lrec.coop

DISTRICT 5

Patrick Meyers
pmeyers@lrec.coop

DISTRICT 6

Charlie Blixt
cblixt@lrec.coop

DISTRICT 7

Tom Jennen
Chair
tjennen@lrec.coop

DISTRICT 8

Jim Gronbeck
jgronbeck@lrec.coop

DISTRICT 9

Gary Olson
garyolson@lrec.coop

Look for Our Member Satisfaction Online Survey

We are conducting our annual **Member Satisfaction Survey** in October. Please take this opportunity to let us know what you think! The survey is sent via email or text message and will come from one of the following:

Email: lrec@lrec.coop **or**

Text: (218) 853-5732



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