



## MANAGER'S MESSAGE // PAT CARRUTH



*General Manager*

### Our Commitment to Safety

Working with electricity is dangerous... period. That's why Minnesota Valley spends a lot of time, energy and money on safety training for our employees.

We devote an average of 40 hours per employee per year to safety training. Linemen receive much more than the average.

We treat our investment in safety as a top priority for not only our employees, but the public. We make it a priority to educate children about electrical safety in particular. Each year we ask elementary schools in our area if we may come in and provide safety demonstrations to their third and fourth graders. We gear towards that age group because our industry feels that is the age in which we have the best chance of getting our message across. As well as schools, we give demonstrations to 4-H clubs, fire departments, scout groups and any other organization interested in learning more about electrical safety. We spend quite a bit of time and money on general electrical safety messages with the entire public in our service area as well. We not only feel public education about electrical safety is important; we feel it is our duty.

The foundation of our employee safety initiative is a continuing education program for our line department personnel. These "safety meetings" are coordinated and taught by loss control instructors from our statewide association and our cooperative owned insurance company, Federated. Typically, the line department has 8-10 half-day safety meetings per year with the instructor. We also send our line crews to at least one trade meeting each year that includes safety courses. Special employee certification training is also provided each year in First Aid and CPR. We have a formal Safety Committee that reviews and updates our Job Procedure Manual. This seventy-page document covers general and detailed safety rules aimed at keeping our people safe. The committee is responsible for communicating the document to all employees at least once a year.

*(Manager's Message continued on page 2)*

# THE CO-OP DIFFERENCE



### Local & Community-Driven

Electric cooperatives are built by and belong to the communities they serve. They are led by members from the community and are uniquely suited to meet local needs.

### Every Member Counts

Members elect their peers to represent them on a board that governs co-op operations and guides the co-op's impact in the community.



### Serving People Over Profits

Unlike other utilities, cooperatives are led by the members they serve and return excess revenue back to members instead of outside investors or shareholders.

### Member Satisfaction

Cooperatives believe the greatest measure of organizational success is member satisfaction. Electric cooperatives, on average, score higher than all other electric companies, according to the American Consumer Satisfaction Index.



### Innovation & Quality of Life

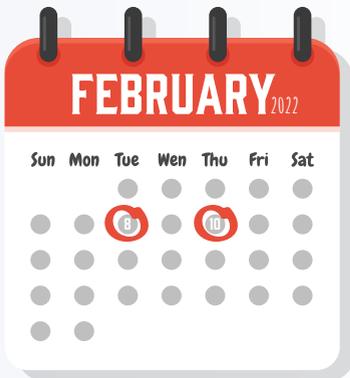
Electric cooperative members receive more than just energy services. Co-ops were formed to fill a community need. Co-ops continue to create programs and services that support economic development in the community.

Every three years, Minnesota Valley goes through a process called the Rural Electric Safety Accreditation Program or RESAP. This is a program through our National Association. This program culminates in a panel of safety professionals going through our building, trucks, equipment and documentation. The documentation alone is very extensive. It must prove that we have been complying with the regulations and reporting requirements of OSHA, MNDOT, USDOT, EPA and MPCA rules. They also watch our people work out in the field on the jobsite. At the end of the day, they determine if our overall commitment to safety passes their standards. Along with the candid assessment, they let us know about areas that we could improve on to help strengthen our safety program.

We not only invest in the human side of the safety equation, but also in the equipment necessary for our employees to conduct their work in a safe manner. Maintaining equipment in prime working condition is critical. Each day our linemen go through a visual check of their equipment. They depend on non-conductive (dielectric) tools such

as protective rubber gloves and sleeves and fiberglass hot-sticks, to insulate them from the lethal force of electricity. Our vehicle fleet is also subject to on-going scrutiny. The fleet is highly maintained and inspected annually by a MNDOT certified inspector. The bucket trucks and diggers are also subject to annual dielectric testing.

Working with electricity is one of the most dangerous occupations one can take up. Not just for the fact that electricity is dangerous by nature, but most of the time linemen are working with electricity when the weather is "just plain old nasty". This compounds the danger. Throughout your cooperative, you have a dedicated group of people here. They know their job is to provide you, the member-owners, with the best possible electric service they can. To help them to that end, you, the members of Minnesota Valley, provide them with very good trucks, equipment and educational opportunities. More importantly, you provide them with your commitment to their safety.



## 2022 Caucus Meetings

**Tuesday, February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

**District 2: Gary Groothuis**  
- 10:30 AM at REC Headquarters

**District 4: Steve Norman**  
- 1:30 PM at REC Headquarters

**Thursday, February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

**District 6: Tim Velde**  
- 10 AM at Wood Lake  
Community Center

## Comparative Report

	Jan-Aug 2021	Jan-Aug 2020	Jan-Aug 2001
Kwh Purchased	135,807,595	136,126,854	94,770,478
Kwh Sold	127,185,477	127,784,162	87,677,524
Cost Of Purchased Power	\$6,459,517	\$6,377,907	\$2,273,598
Patronage Capital Margins	\$1,509,004	\$695,697	\$242,575
Reserve For Taxes	\$176,667	\$200,796	\$210,018
Cost Per Kwh Purchased (mills)	47.56	46.85	31.14

	August '21	August '20	August '01
Total Plant	\$83,258,868	\$79,714,348	\$33,610,499
Number of Active Services	5,340	5,283	5,214
Avg. Residential Bill	\$213.81	\$209.14	\$113.22
Avg. Residential Kwh Consumption	1,628	1,671	1,557
Avg. Kwh Usage All Consumers	2,780	2,788	2,095
Peak Kw Demand (Peak Load)	30,435	30,045	26,114

## Find Your Location Number for a Bill Credit!

There are two account numbers hidden in this newsletter. If you find your number, call 320.269.2163 or 800.247.5051 to receive a bill credit. The bill credit starts at \$10, but if neither number is claimed before the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month, *the unclaimed amount rolls over to the next month!*

If both numbers are claimed, the recipients split the credit, then it starts again at \$10.



2

Congratulations to **Tony Paulson of Granite Falls** who identified his location and received a **credit of \$70** off of his electric bill!

FIND YOUR NUMBER AND CLAIM BY THE 25<sup>TH</sup> OF OCTOBER TO RECEIVE:

**\$10**



Manager of Operations



Now is the time of year when the weather can change your plans on a moment's notice. Therefore, Minnesota Valley crews have been busy getting as much done as possible before it does. K one zero two

zero four Pole change outs on our system will continue throughout the coming months along with underground services, but with the underground services coming to a halt once freeze up is upon us.

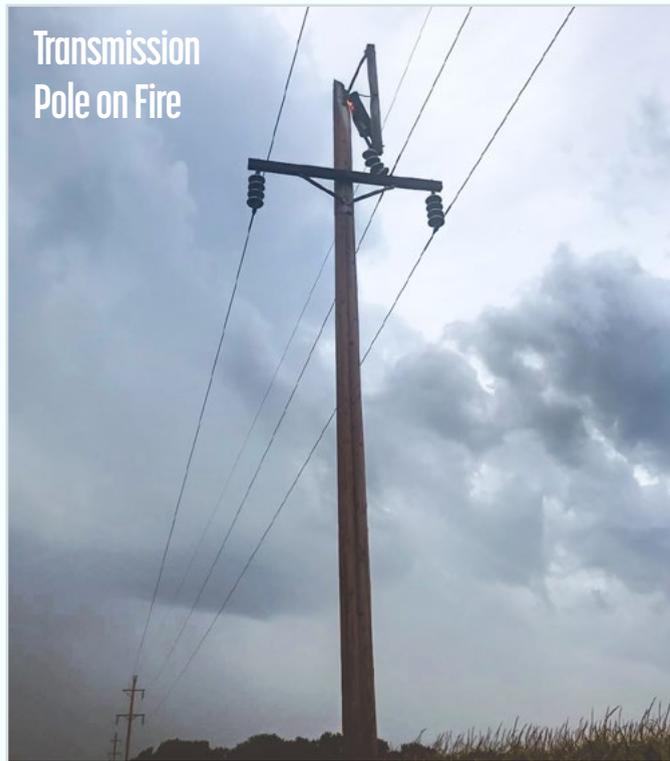
Most of the 2021 Work Plan projects are complete and we will be concentrating on the URD project going east out of the Minneota Substation. Otherwise Minnesota Valley crews will be starting on projects projected for the 2022 Work Plan.

On the morning of August 24<sup>th</sup>, during a heavy rain-storm, one of Minnesota Valley's transmission poles

caught fire due to a bad insulator north of the Vallers Substation. The rain caused it to track to the ground wire and proceeded to burn the top cross arm off (*fire is still visible in the picture below on left*). This in turn, caused an outage to the Lisbon, Vallers, Wood Lake and Echo Substations. Service was restored to Lisbon, Wood Lake and Echo Substations soon after the problem was found, but Vallers remained out a bit longer so the crews could temporary the wires to the pole. The following day, Vallers Substation was back fed and the transmission pole was replaced.

I'm sure there are a lot of crops to come out yet, so just another reminder to be safe around utility poles and overhead wires.

November 11<sup>th</sup> is Veterans Day. Thanks to all of the Veterans for what you have done and continue to do.



## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Old, uninsulated and improperly installed exterior doors can waste energy and money. Shut the door on wasted energy by weather stripping and sealing all exterior doors. If you have an old exterior door, consider replacing it with a newer, energy efficient model.

Source: [energy.gov](https://www.energy.gov)





*Member Services Manager*

## Seven Cooperative Principles

Minnesota Valley Cooperative Light and Power is different from many other businesses. We are owned by you, our members, and use the money you pay each month on your bill to operate the co-op.

We are not-for-profit, so we are motivated to serve the interests of our members, not those outside investors. As a co-op, these seven principles lead us to do business in a better way every single day.

### 1 Open and Voluntary Membership

Membership in a cooperative is open to all persons who can reasonably use its services and stand willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, regardless of race, religion, gender or economic circumstances.

### 2 Democratic Member Control

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. Elected representatives (directors) are elected from among the membership and are accountable to the membership. In primary co-operatives, members have equal voting rights; cooperatives at other levels are organized in a democratic manner.

### 3 Members' Economic Participation

Members contribute equitably to and democratically control the capital of their cooperative. At least part of that capital remains the common property of the cooperative. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing the cooperative; setting up reserves; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the cooperative and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

### 4 Autonomy and Independence

Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. AA one twenty eight zero four A If they enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control as well as their unique identity.

### 5 Education, Training and Information

Education and training for members, elected representatives (directors), CEOs and employees help them effectively contribute to the development of their cooperatives. Communications about the nature and benefits of cooperatives, particularly with the general public and opinion leaders, helps boost cooperative understanding.

### 6 Cooperation Among Cooperatives

By working together through local, national, regional and international structures, cooperatives improve services, bolster local economies and deal more effectively with social and community needs.

### 7 Concern for Community

Cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies supported by the membership.

## Co-op Month Fun Facts

- ◆ Minnesota was the first state to declare an official Co-op Month proclamation in 1948.
- ◆ Co-op Month has been a nationally recognized celebration since 1964, when U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Orville Freeman, a former Minnesota governor, proclaimed October Co-op Month.
- ◆ The first national theme in 1964 was "Cooperatives: USDA Helps Build a Better America."
- ◆ The U.S. Government sponsored Co-op Month from 1964-70.
- ◆ Beginning in 1971, cooperatives, statewide associations and the National Cooperative Business Association fueled their own events and promotions.

#### Office Hours

8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Monday through Friday

#### 24-Hour Telephone Answering

320.269.2163  
800.247.5051

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