

Questions on load control?

Check it out on the Internet. Visit Minnkota's Web site: www.minnkota.com.

Member Service
NSTAR

Area Code
07

Last Transmission
12/28/05 09:44:37

		Double Order												
		09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
LOAD	1.01	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON
	1.02	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON
	2.01	OFF	OFF	OFF	OFF	OFF	OFF	OFF	OFF	OFF	OFF	OFF	OFF	OFF
	2.02	ON	ON	ON	OFF	OFF	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	OFF	OFF	ON
	2.03	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON
GROUP	2.04	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON
	3.01	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON
	3.06	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON
	3.07	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON
	3.09	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON
UP	6.01	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON	ON

Click on the "Load Management" button and then the "North Star" button. This Web page contains load control plans, the current state of the load management system, the last 30 hours of control and the last switching cycle. Your specific load group information is on the lower left hand corner of your electric bill. Please remember this is Minnkota's current estimate for controlling load. Control plans can and do change several times each hour.

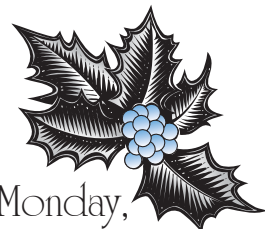
Load groups starting with one (short-term heat control, water heaters and grain dryers) are for up to four hours. Load groups starting with two (storage heat) are for medium-term control up to 16 hours. Load groups starting with three (dual heat) are for long-term control.

Illustrated above is what Minnkota's Web site looks like for the current state of the load management system. All of load group 2.01 is controlled and double order 12, 13, 19 and 20 of load group 2.02 are also controlled.

Falls Hunger Coalition Donation



Bruce Polkinghorne, board member from District 7, presents a check to Pastor Heather Wigdahl, and daughter, Eleanor, for the Falls Hunger Coalition.



North Star offices will be closed Monday, Dec. 25, and Tuesday, Dec. 26, for Christmas and Monday, Jan. 1, for New Year's

DECEMBER 2006

The Enlightener, Vol. 51, No. 12 is published monthly by North Star Electric Cooperative, Inc., 441 St. Hwy 172 N.W., Baudette, MN 56623-0719. Subscription 50¢/year for members \$1/year for non-members. Application to Mail at Periodicals Postage Rates is pending at Baudette, MN 56623. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Enlightener, North Star Electric Cooperative, Inc., P.O. Box 719, Baudette, MN 56623-0719.

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Littlefork 218-278-6658 or 888-258-2008

Electrical after-hours emergencies

1-888-6OUTAGE (1-888-668-8243)
or 634-2603

e-mail us at nsec@wiktel.com

Visit our Web site at

www.northstarelectric.coop

North Star Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Mission Statement

To improve the lives of our member-owners and community by responsibly providing electric energy and other beneficial services while maintaining the very highest standards of performance.

**Gopher State
One Call**



It's the LAW
CALL BEFORE YOU DIG
Minnesota Statewide One Call
Notification Center
1-800-252-1166

Highlights from the BOARDROOM

These are the highlights from the board of directors meeting held November 1, 2006. All directors were present. They acted upon usual, routine business.

In addition, they voted to approve the transfer of the 401k plan, to approve the new district boundaries to show the reduction from nine districts to eight as approved by the membership at the October annual meeting, and to select the 2007 delegates.

Guest speaker Bill Miller provided an informative presentation about the neutrino capturing facility he manages at Soudan. A similar facility could be built on the Ash River Trail, which would be on the North Star Electric Cooperative system.

Reports and discussion included information on the financials, the loan documents, the AMR progress, the budget, the researching of infrared guns to be used for heat loss detection, Operation Round Up, the new style newsletter, the annual meeting, load management, off-peak installations, the

popularity of the ETS (electric thermal storage) systems, the projected shortage of skilled workers in the electric industry in the next decade, the service territory boundary issues, the board certification training, redistricting, the work plan construction projects planned for 2007, the successful completion of the apprenticeship program for employees Dan Dobson and Todd Higgins, line maintenance, safety topics, the direct deposit of paychecks, member issues, and the NRECA International Foundation, which provides assistance to electrify Third World countries.

Detailed minutes are available at the Cooperative for member review. Regular board meetings are generally held the first Wednesday of every month. If you wish to speak with the board or have an item that you would like to have placed on the agenda, please contact Manager Dan Hoskins at least one week in advance to be included on the agenda.

CURRENT ELECTRICAL INSPECTORS

State law requires that every new electrical installation in any construction, remodeling, replacement or repair shall file a certificate for inspection with the State Board of Electricity and be inspected by a Minnesota electrical inspector.

• St. Louis and

Koochiching counties:

Bob Orgon

10111 Roosevelt Rd. S.E.

Bemidji, MN 56601

Phone: (218) 556-3829

Fax: (218) 751-3535

7:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. (Mon. thru Fri.)

• Roseau and Lake of the Woods counties:

Scott Stenvik

16409 State Hwy 1 N.W.

Thief River Falls, MN 56701

Phone: (218) 689-5406

7:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. (Mon. thru Fri.)

We need your meter reading

If the box where you have always written in your meter reading(s) is still open, you must continue to read your meter as near to the 25th as possible. We must receive it by the 5th to avoid an estimated bill. If a bill consecutively estimates twice, the crew will read the meter and a \$15 fee will be added to the account.

For the meters that are communicating with the office through the AMR (automated meter reading) system, that box where you entered your meter reading before, is now filled in with the words, "Co-op Reads." In this instance, you do not have to read your meter. We hope to have most of the meters communicating by the end of 2006.



This right-of-way goal and the projects of replacing some of our old underground cable will, in the long run, save all of us money and will assist us in maintaining our low-cost energy service to you with added dependability and reliability.

Dan Hoskins, General Manager

Future projects

Well, folks, I hope all of you had a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday and a chance to celebrate and give thanks with family and friends. You know, as we near the end of another year, I just can't figure out where the time is going. It seems like time is moving faster and faster. Anyway, we have another year coming ahead of us, and we have been planning a few projects at your Cooperative for the upcoming year, so I would just like a couple minutes of your time to update you on these projects.

The first thing is our right-of-way clearing. Right of way is the area located over, under and on both sides, usually 20 – 30 feet on either side, of our power lines; this area needs to be clear of all trees and/or anything else that can, or could, get into our power lines. There are a number of reasons for North Star Electric Cooperative to trim those trees out of the power lines. Safety for #1, energy loss, outages, blinking lights, and now that we have AMR, if anything like a tree touches the line, the AMR meters on the end of that line will not call in until the tree is cleared. So, your Cooperative is planning to clear, cut, mow, spray and trim our way back to a clean right of way.

Now, don't get excited on me; we are not going to just come out there and start cutting down your trees, but if they are in or around our lines, we do need to talk with you and plan some kind of fix for that situation. For instance, those four big old trees have been there forever and have just about outlived their lifespan, and, well, North Star has spent thousands of dollars over the last 15 years trimming those trees. One easy solution is to let us take those trees out of there, and we will replace them with a nice shrub or tree that is not under any power line or cannot reach the power line. This way, we

save money over the next 15 years, and you still have some nice greenery in your yard. Something to think about!

Next, we are planning on replacing some of our old underground cable this summer, because that old 1970s vintage stuff is giving us fits and costing you and me money. Plus, some of these pieces of underground power line that we are going to replace will give us better reliability to serve you.

We are planning to install some new 3-phase cable in the City of Big Falls; this is to replace some old failing cable that has been there since Moses was a boy. Another piece of our system, that is older than dirt, is the underground power line over by Swift, along Hwy #2, south from Hwy #11 approximately three miles; that particular piece of line is in need of replacement. Although both of these areas of concern have old and failing cable, that existing cable has served us well over the years, but now is causing power quality and reliability problems for us; the completion of these projects will give the members in those respected areas much better service.

Another piece of underground that has given us problems, and is a major factor in our system, is the old underground line that runs from Roosevelt along Hwy #11 to Williams, approximately five miles. That piece of our system plays a major role in our distribution service, so the future plans of North Star Electric for that section of underground line will be to replace that this year, also.

These are just a few of the major areas of concern that we will be concentrating on this coming year that will be just an addition to our regular summer business. So you see, this right-of-way goal and the projects of replacing some of our old underground cable will, in the long run, save all of us money and will assist us in maintaining our low-cost energy service to you with added dependability and reliability.

In closing, I would like to wish each and every one of you a very Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year.

God Bless you and our Troops,
Dan

Reliable backup systems a must!

Because increased load control hours are predicted in the future, electric off-peak heating installations must be capable of 600 hours or more of interruption each winter season.

"In order to realize the full benefits of the load management program, it is very important that our members work with a qualified heating contractor to ensure that they have an automatic, adequate and well-maintained backup heating system," said Wayne Haukaas, manager of compliance and member services.

The electric off-peak heating program continues to provide great value to members today, just as it did when it was first utilized in the late 1970s. The winter heating season is here, and North Star Electric stands ready to assist our members with their electric home heating options.



Be prepared for ice storms and winter power outages

Winter brings with it many different kinds of hazardous weather: The extreme winter winds, unpredictable amounts of snow and rain, and fluctuating temperatures can result in severe freezing rain, sleet and ice storms.

In the event of an outage, be sure to:

- ☀ Stay inside and dress in warm, layered clothing.
- ☀ Close off unneeded rooms.
- ☀ When using an alternative heat source, follow operating instructions, use fire safeguards and be sure to properly ventilate.
- ☀ Stuff towels and rags underneath doors to keep the heat in.
- ☀ Cover windows at night.
- ☀ Eat. Food provides the body with energy for creating its own energy.
- ☀ Drink plenty of fluids to stay hydrated.
- ☀ Move around to keep warm, but not enough to perspire. Perspiring causes the body to lose fluids, which could potentially lead to dehydration.

A heavy build-up of ice on power lines can cause wires to snap and utility poles to topple. Falling trees and tree limbs covered in ice can bring down power lines, cause outages and threaten property, even life. Safe Electricity stresses the importance of being prepared for these potentially dangerous storms and the power outages that they may cause.

“Having the right supplies and knowing how to stay warm safely are keys to weathering a winter storm emergency,” stresses Molly Hall, Safe Electricity Director.

“Severe damage to power lines and transmission systems may take days to repair,” says Hall. “In a winter storm emergency, restoring power and heat to consumers is the highest priority, and electric utility crews work around the clock to restore service.”

Sometimes winter storms arrive with plenty of warning and people are able to stay away from roads and hazardous situations, but severe winter weather can impact people in their homes.

Safe Electricity stresses that everyone, particularly families with special needs, must be prepared and know what to do in case of a winter emergency and long-term power outage:

- Always keep a battery-powered radio or TV, flash-

lights, and a supply of fresh batteries in case of an emergency.

- Know where to find extra blankets.
- Fill spare containers with water for washing, and keep a supply of bottled drinking water on hand.
- Keep a supply of non perishable food items, along with a hand opener for canned food.
- During an outage, switch off lights and appliances to prevent overloading circuits and damaging appliances when power is restored. Leave one lamp or switch on as a signal for when your power returns.
- To prevent water pipes from freezing, keep faucets turned on slightly so that water drips from the tap.

“Never use a charcoal grill to cook or heat with inside the home,” Hall emphasizes. “Charcoal grills give off deadly carbon monoxide gas. Grills should be used only outdoors.”

It’s a good idea to assemble a disaster supply kit that includes needed items ahead of time. Don’t forget to include a first aid kit, any prescription medications, and any special items needed for infant, elderly or disabled family members.

Maintaining warmth is a priority during a winter emergency. Loss of body heat or hypothermia can be life-threatening. (664-12-002-03 Lawrence/Patricia Petersen) If you use a standby generator, make sure it has a transfer safety switch or double throw disconnect switch before you operate it. This prevents electricity from traveling back through the power lines, or what is also known as “back feed.” Back feed creates danger for anyone near power lines, particularly crews working to restore power.

When outside, treat all downed and hanging lines as if they are active electric lines: Stay away, warn others to stay away and immediately contact your utility company.

For more detailed information and electrical safety tips, visit the **SafeElectricity.org** Web site. Safe Electricity is an electrical safety public awareness program created and supported by a coalition of several dozen organizations, including electric utilities and cooperatives, educators and other entities committed to promoting electrical safety.

Simple winterizing steps control heating costs and keep you warm

Frigid temperatures mean higher heating bills, but don't forget simple steps to make your home more energy and cost-effective this winter.

Energy dollars can pour out of your living space through drafty doors and windows as well as unused portions of the home. North Star Electric encourages people to make a small investment of time for big dividends in keeping your home or apartment warm and cost efficient this winter.

"Most winterizing steps can pay for themselves relatively quickly with heating bill savings," says Wayne Haukaas, manager of member services. "And don't overlook simple energy-saving steps such as closing vents and doors to rooms you don't use. These are effective energy-saving tips that cost you nothing."

Costs associated with heating and cooling account for the majority, about 44 percent of utility bills. Lowering the thermostat is the easiest way to save energy. Energy use is reduced for every degree dialed down. With an eight-hour setback

of 10 degrees, the savings is 5 to 15 percent. If two eight-hour setbacks of 10 degrees lower are used while sleeping and during time away from home, a 15 to 25 percent savings can result. Turn it down when you are away from home or sleeping, and keep it to the lowest comfortable level when you're at home. Consider installing a programmable thermostat to automatically adjust the temperature day and night.

"Most people will be pleasantly surprised to realize double digit percentage savings on their heating bills by using these simple measures," says Haukaas. "And don't forget, saving energy is the cheapest and cleanest way to add to our energy supply."

Use these tips to help cut costs and improve heating efficiency and safety:

- Replace your furnace filter every month to save energy and improve heat circulation. And if you haven't already, it's not too late to have a professional check and service your furnace system to ensure peak efficiency and safety.
- Use sunlight's natural heat to your best advantage. Open curtains and blinds on sunny days to let the sunlight warm your home, and close them on gloomy days and at night to keep the heat inside.
- Close your fireplace damper when you're not using the fireplace to prevent heat from escaping and cold from entering through your chimney.
- Using a microwave to cook meals uses about half the energy of a conventional oven.
- If you have older or leaky windows, consider temporary fixes, such as plastic film kits that create the effect of an interior storm window.
- Weatherstripping is relatively easy to install and available at your local home improvement store. Stop drafts from coming in, and heat from leaking out of your home through drafty doors and windows. You could save up to 10 percent of your heating costs by eliminating those leaks.
- Use caulk to seal gaps in the walls of your home or apartment. Wherever different building materials meet, or wiring comes out of a wall, there are gaps that may contribute to the loss of heat in your home.
- Use electronic timers for lamps and appliances. Timers can be used to automatically turn appliances on and off. This is especially useful for those times of the day that you are out of the home.
- Replace incandescent light bulbs with more efficient, compact, fluorescent ones. Besides saving energy, you will also save money in the long run, since the life span of a fluorescent bulb is substantially longer.
- Invest in a water heater insulation blanket. If the top of the electric water heater is warm to the touch, you are wasting energy; this means that the heater has to work even harder to heat the water in your home and therefore, uses more energy.



East End News

Allan Baumgartner
Littlefork District
Operations Supervisor



We are in the process of finishing up the last of the new service requests that came in this fall. Like many of you, our line workers enjoyed taking some vacation time in November for hunting season. I didn't hear of any record-size bucks bagged this season among our crew, but there were plenty of deer brought in, and everyone enjoyed the nice weather we had this year during hunting season.

ETS room units, heat storage boilers and furnaces are becoming very popular among our members. (362-20-026-01 Willard Johnson) In most cases, it does require North Star to install a larger transformer and a 400 amp main service (or two separate 200 amp systems) for the heat load and for the regular household usage.

Our crews have finished installing the last of the AMR meters in the Littlefork area. Some work at our substation still needs to be done by Minnkota Power, with help from the North Star crews, to get the system up and running. All the rest of our system has been finished. Please continue to read your meter until your bill instructs you that you no longer need to do so.

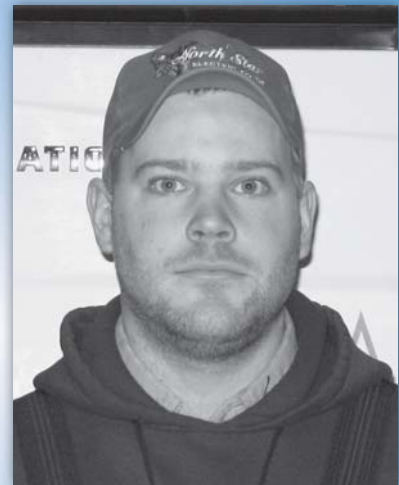
Our yearly Work Plan consists of upgrading main power lines and replacing old underground lines throughout our system from Warroad to Ash Lake. Each year, we replace the underground lines during the summer in our most problem areas.

We will be concentrating on right-of-way work this winter as the conditions are perfect right now for brush mowing. We will be removing danger trees along our services into transformer and meter poles this year, as well. Trees are always the number one cause of our outages.

Dobson and Higgins achieve journeyman status



Dan Dobson



Todd Higgins

North Star Electric congratulates Dan Dobson and Todd Higgins on becoming journeymen linemen. They were hired as summer help to assist the Baudette line crew in May 2003 after they had completed a 9-month lineman training at Wadena AVTI. In November 2003, they were hired as full-time apprenticeship linemen and enrolled in the lineman apprenticeship program. The apprenticeship program consists of training in several areas, including: safety, equipment operations, security lights, overhead and underground lines, meters, tree trimming and customer service. Besides the years of training, tests are taken in each category. They both passed the apprenticeship program in November 2006, and are now journeymen linemen.

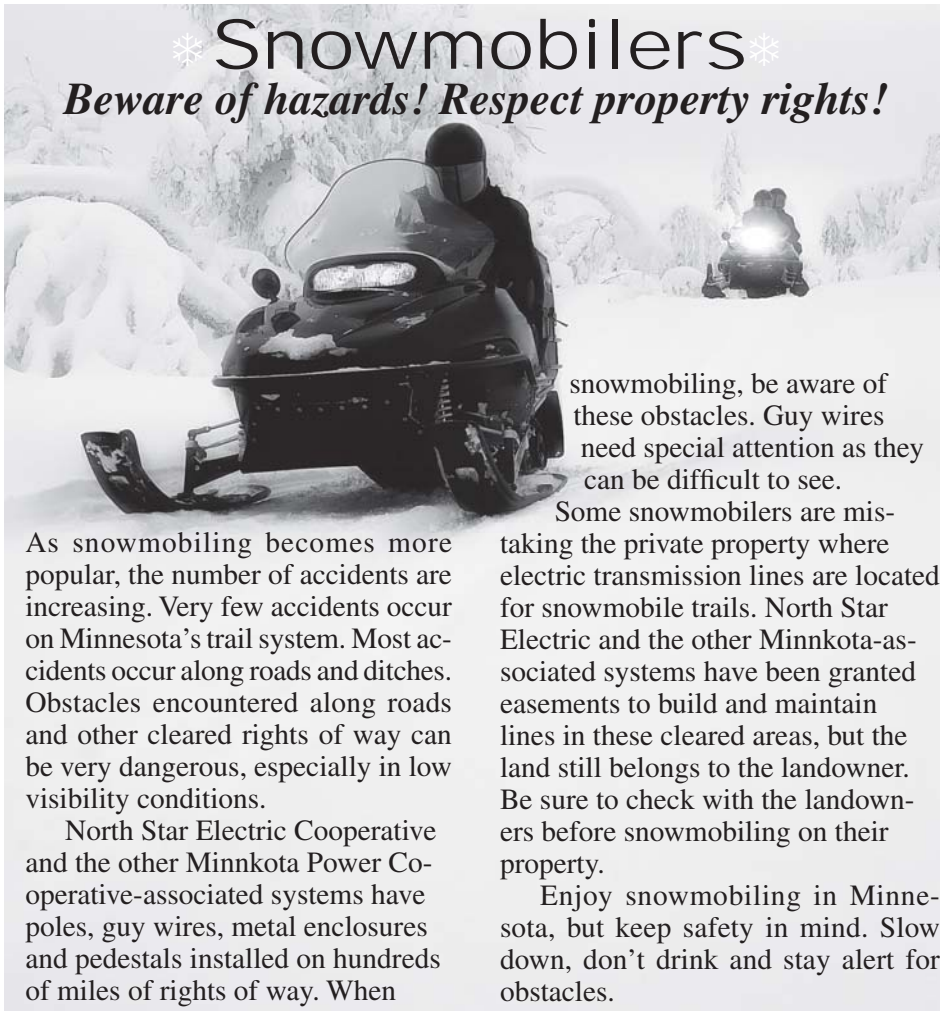
Lake of the Woods Food Shelf Donation



Wayne Haukaas, member service manager, presents a check to Lake of the Woods Food Shelf. This donation will help defray the cost of the turkeys that were given out on November 16 to food shelf recipients.

❄️ Snowmobilers ❄️

Beware of hazards! Respect property rights!



As snowmobiling becomes more popular, the number of accidents are increasing. Very few accidents occur on Minnesota's trail system. Most accidents occur along roads and ditches. Obstacles encountered along roads and other cleared rights of way can be very dangerous, especially in low visibility conditions.

North Star Electric Cooperative and the other Minnkota Power Cooperative-associated systems have poles, guy wires, metal enclosures and pedestals installed on hundreds of miles of rights of way. When snowmobiling, be aware of these obstacles. Guy wires need special attention as they can be difficult to see.

Some snowmobilers are mistaking the private property where electric transmission lines are located for snowmobile trails. North Star Electric and the other Minnkota-associated systems have been granted easements to build and maintain lines in these cleared areas, but the land still belongs to the landowner. Be sure to check with the landowners before snowmobiling on their property.

Enjoy snowmobiling in Minnesota, but keep safety in mind. Slow down, don't drink and stay alert for obstacles.

Extremely cold temperatures will affect the operation of your rented security light



If you notice a problem with your security light this winter, such as intermittent failure or it remains dimmer than normal, you're not alone. (448-29-001-01 Paul Reese) Severe cold weather, specifically -10 degrees or colder, may seriously affect the operation of security lights.

The problem involves the formation of a gas in the bulb, which can be hampered by the cold. Usually, when the weather warms up, the lights will return to normal operation and will not have to be replaced.

If your security light is owned by North Star, we would appreciate it if you could bear with us during the coldest spells. If the light does not return to normal operation when the weather warms up, please notify our office and we will repair it for you (Baudette 634-2202, Littlefork 278-6658).



Problems paying your electric bill?

Energy assistance may be available!

If you are receiving a low income or suffering from a temporary financial shortfall, the following agencies may be able to assist you with your electric bill. We urge you to contact them immediately to avoid disconnection if you feel you are eligible for aid.

Lake of the Woods County Community Services

P.O. Box G-0200
Baudette, MN 56623
634-2642

Northwest Community Action Council

P.O. Box 67
Badger, MN 56714-0067
800-568-5329

Koochiching County Community Services

1000 5th St.
International Falls, MN 56649
283-7000

Kootasca Community Action, Inc.

2232 2nd Ave. E.
P.O. Box 44
International Falls, MN 56649
283-9491 or 800-559-9491

Kootasca Community Action, Inc.

1213 SE 2nd Ave.
Grand Rapids, MN 55744-3984
800-422-0312

Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency

702 3rd Ave. S.
Virginia, MN 55792-2797
800-662-5711

Happy HOLIDAYS

from all of us
at North Star

Board Members

Steve Arnesen, President (District 1)
Bruce Polkinghorne, Vice President (District 7)
Mike Hanson, Secretary/Treasurer (District 5)
Julian Brzoznowski (District 8)
Mike Trueman (District 2)
L.J. Anderson (District 4)
Allan Nygaard (District 6)
Randy Bergan (District 3)

General Manager

Dan Hoskins General Manager 7-23-02

Office Personnel

Ann Ellis	Manager of Finance and Administration (B)	10-17-77
Betty Jo Berg	Bookkeeper/Asst. Office Manager (B)	4-3-78
Patsy Olson	Billing Coordinator (B)	1-1-87
Lynette Dostall	Receptionist/Cashier (B)	2-1-87
Kathy Hull	Work Order Clerk (B)	3-1-89
Susan Williams	Supervisor District Office (L)	4-4-90
Norma Anderson	Capital Credits & Billing Clerk (B)	1-1-03
Carolyn Mastin	Part-time Receptionist (L)	

Compliance & Member Services

Wayne Haukaas	Manager of Compliance & Member Services (B)	11-14-88
Steve Polkinghorne	Member Service Advisor (L)	7-1-82
Kevin Holen	Member Service Electrician (B)	5-6-96
Jim Kuehl	Part-time Groundskeeper/Handyman (B)	

Line Crew

Allan Baumgartner	Operations Supervisor (L)	7-1-76
Steve Ellis	Operations Supervisor (B)	6-25-79
Bruce Petersen	Line Foreman (L)	6-27-78
Ron Lee	Line Sub-Foreman (L)	7-1-82
Gary Hull	Line Sub-Foreman (B)	7-1-82
Marty Mollberg	Line Foreman (B)	8-16-88
Todd Thydean	Lead Lineman (L)	9-12-88
Tim Pelach	Lead Lineman (B)	5-6-91
Rich Grotberg	Lineman (L)	7-1-96
Glen Marcotte	Lineman (L)	7-15-02
Dan Dobson	Lineman (B)	11-5-03
Todd Higgins	Lineman (B)	11-5-03
Matt Brown	Apprentice Lineman (L)	12-16-04
Brad Dolinski	Purchasing Agent/CAD Draftsman (B)	4-11-05

(B) signifies Baudette and (L) signifies Littlefork


North Star
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year!