

MINNESOTA RURAL ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

Energy elitism

Mark Glaess, Manager, *Minnesota Rural Electric Association*

During the bleak days of the Great Depression, efforts at rural electrification slowed because of worries that the government would seize the farmers' lands to pay for the loans necessary if the much-talked-about electric cooperative failed. Those fears stalled rural electrification as the co-op incorporators had to assure one farmer at a time that there was no possibility the government would take their farms.

Today, loss of property isn't an issue, but losing money to government mandates is.

Early in 2000, a number of electric cooperatives told their members that if they wanted more wind energy, the co-op would install the turbines to do so. The extra cost for wind energy was a scant 40 cents more for each 100 kWh block (the "average" family uses 800-1,000 kWh/month). Less than 1 percent of all co-op members chose that option. Undeterred, the Minnesota Legislature in 2007 imposed a mandate requiring 25 percent of all energy produced in the

state to be renewable. In the past year alone, that mandate has cost electric cooperatives across the state more than \$70 million (783-33-083-01, Brian King). That's about an average of \$100 for the typical co-op member. Put another way, you paid \$100 for wind that blows when it is not needed and sold into the market at a considerable loss. Is this how you'd like to spend that \$100?

In 2013, some members of the Legislature and certainly Governor Dayton are enamored with solar. So much so, a proposal to require a 10 percent solar mandate is moving its way through the process. A 10 percent mandate would cost – no kidding – the citizens of the state more than \$26 billion just for the cost of the solar panels and installation. That comes out to around \$20,000 for a family of four. It also doesn't factor in the additional cost of incentives, rebates or higher prices for electricity.

The ultimate goal of most of the solar legislation being considered is to subsidize the installation of solar panels on residential rooftops. The sad truth is that much – if not most – of the incentives would go to subsidize the construction of solar on the homes of our state's most affluent citizens. At a time when the Governor is promoting a more progressive income tax, his energy policy penalizes most rural residents who cannot afford the

(continued on page 5)

New coal

Article courtesy of the Minnesota Rural Electric Association

The EPA's New Source Performance Standards, or NSPS, limits carbon emissions to 1,000 pounds/MWh. Most coal-based generation clocks in at 1,800 pounds. That pretty much is the end of coal-based generation (unless carbon capture and sequestration becomes economical) in the United States.

Worldwide, the embrace of coal appears to be far more welcoming. According to *Power Magazine*, 1,401 GW (or 1,400,100 MW) of coal-based generation is being proposed, with China again leading the way with plants totaling 558,000 MW, India with 519,396 MW and even Germany (which is proposing to shutter its nukes) with 12,060 MW. Some of that coal will be shipped from U.S. coal seams although the governors of Washington and Oregon hope to stop that. Doing so will invite fierce opposition from ports that are counting on the many jobs those exports would produce.



In this issue:

Board highlights/Always call before you dig (811)	2
Manager's Report/The value is electric	3
Safe Digging Month is a reminder to call 811	4
"E" stands for energy efficiency this Earth Day	5
EPA reopens consideration of haze decision	6-7
Staff Report/Photos of North Star staff with legislators	8
Problems paying your electric bill/Political leaders	9
Minnesota FoodShare Campaign/Member Appreciation Days	10

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www.northstarelectric.coop

Members' corner

We added a section called members' corner. What we would like is for members to send in questions about your electric cooperative, and we will answer them for you. Please give us your name and a phone number in case we need to clarify the question, and send them to North Star Electric, PO Box 719, Baudette, MN, 56623, Attn: Wayne.



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.

Highlights from the BOARDROOM

These are the highlights from the board of directors' March meeting. In addition to routine business, the board voted to reappoint President Arnesen and Director Bergan as North Star's representatives to the Minnkota Power and Square Butte Electric cooperative boards, and to support Director Hanson as a candidate for the CoBank board of directors.

Staff reports included the financial report, the impact of the colder weather on electric bills, attendance at a CERT (Clean Energy Resource Teams) conference, Operation Round Up, the *Enlightener*, line construction projects for 2013, GPS-ing the locations of all our poles and equipment, the upcoming MREA (Minnesota Rural Electric Association) Annual Meeting and Legislative Day, the casino construction planned for just within North Star's service territory near Warroad and the annual review of the cooperative's Identity Theft policy and procedures. Reports were also given on the Minnkota and MREA board meetings.

There was significant discussion about

the high costs to the members associated with proposed legislation that would mandate a specific amount of solar energy to be purchased, a new tax on electricity that would subsidize solar installations and a move away from limiting the size of a renewable energy installation, all of which will shift these new costs to those who can least afford them, while protecting only the solar investors with guaranteed premium rates for any energy they can produce, regardless of the instantaneous need for it on the grid. Reports were also given on the Minnkota and Square Butte board meetings. The board also participated in the weekly web conference call with MREA to hear the current state of this proposed legislation.

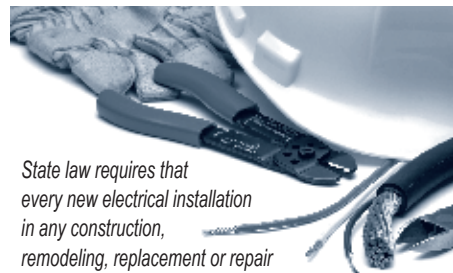
Detailed minutes are available at the cooperative for member review. Regular board meetings are generally held the first Wednesday of every month. If you wish to speak with the board, or have an item that you would like to have placed on the agenda, please contact Manager Dan Hoskins at least two weeks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

ALWAYS CALL BEFORE YOU DIG

One free, easy call gets your utility lines marked AND helps protect you from injury and expense. Safe digging is no accident: always call 811 before you dig. Visit **call811.com** for more information.



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:

Richard Jenko
P.O. Box 523, Buhl, MN 55713
Cell: (218) 258-8338
New hours: Tue., Wed. & Thurs. will take calls from 7 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. Inspection will be on Tue. and Thurs. only.

• 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 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. (Mon. thru Fri.)



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Dan Hoskins
General Manager

MANAGER'S REPORT

"All of these folks would love to hear from you and I would suggest that if you know them, be sure to contact them – maybe give them a call – to express your concerns and thank them for the job they are doing for you."

Ladies and gentlemen, it's been a couple of months since I have talked with you and there has been quite a bit going on, so I will try to catch you up on things. The first one is very obvious, and that is our winters are back! Cold temps and snow make for a long winter, and it does try your patience. And the wind, my, my, the wind blows the snow around and it ends up back in my driveway. So I blow it out and then a couple of days later the wind is out of the other direction, and blows the snow back in my driveway. And you guessed it, I fire up the trusty eight-horse, walk behind, 18-inch, snow eating machine and gobble it up again and spit it back over the edge in a pile. Whew! It gets to a point where you think you have moved the same snow so much, you start to recognize it.

With the cold comes the high power bills and then the concerned phone calls, which we do expect. If you remember, winter 2011 was kind of normal, but then in March 2011 the very large rate increase went into effect, and then winter 2012 was very mild. So mild that we were even golfing on March 17 last year in shorts! Anyway, it was very mild and the power bills did not reflect the true rate increase, but this year with the "normal" winter, that rate increase in March 2011 was very much noticeable. It is nothing that you folks did, or we did, or 99.9 percent of the time it's not equipment either, it's usage, which we tend to overlook when things are good.

I hope you all read the March *Enlightener*. It had a couple of great articles that outlined some of the issues that could arise in St. Paul (424-03-005-01, James R. Martin). You will

also see a couple of articles, one by Ann Ellis, which should give you some numbers and a more in-depth explanation.

We do have a number of legislators who are working hard for you on these issues. I have visited with all of these folks, and they understand that there cannot be any more costs out here. Things are tight, and there are a lot of folks on fixed budgets. These folks who are working for you are: Sen. Tom Bakk and Rep. David Dill serving Koochiching and St. Louis Counties; Sen. Rod Skoe and Rep. Roger Erickson of Lake of the Woods County; and Sen. LeRoy Stumpf and Rep. Dan Fabian of Roseau County.

There are also some other folks who I visited with while in St. Paul who understand what these issues would mean to our costs of energy. They are Sen. David Tomassoni, Sen. Bev Scalze (she grew up in Pitt, Minn.), Sen. Tom Saxhaug (has been a friend of the cooperatives for a number of years) and Rep. Mike Sundin (grew up in Ray, Minn., and is the son of a dear friend, Einar Sundin). All of these folks would love to hear from you; I would suggest that if you know them, be sure to contact them – maybe give them a call – to express your concerns and thank them for the job they are doing for you. Remember, read your *Enlightener*. Ann Ellis has also touched on the legislative news concerning the possibility of new bills that would affect your power bill, should they pass.

God bless you and our troops,
Dan

The value is electric!

One tank of gas for your car
20 gallons at \$3.69/gallon = **\$73.80**

22 days of electricity for your entire home = **\$73.80***

*Based on North Star Electric average residential usage of 875 kWh per month at the residential rate of \$.113/kWh + Minnkota surcharge of \$.003/kWh
(Does not include the \$36 basic service fee)



Safe Digging Month is...

a reminder to call

811



As sunshine and warm temperatures return to many areas of the country, many of us are turning our sights to outdoor projects. April is Safe Digging Month, and Safe Electricity encourages both

weekend warriors and professionals who work outdoors to be safe and to be sure to avoid underground electrical hazards. To help you stay safe, make use of the national underground utility locating service for free by calling 811.

Dialing 811 routes callers to a local utility locating service. From there, it takes a few business days for a professional to come mark your utilities with flags or spray-paint. If you are in a rush to complete a project, a few days might seem like a long wait. However, a small waiting period can spare you an injury that could take years of recovery.

Tom Dickey learned the dangers of underground electricity years ago when he was on the job as an underground contractor. Tom was asked to add a small task at the end of the workday — after his safety gear was already headed back to his shop in another truck. He made a decision that put time and efficiency above safety. He had one accidental slip and came in contact with lethal levels of electricity. Fortunately, he

survived, but even years later he lives with pain every day.

“You may get by with it a thousand times, but at some point it can happen to you. It can happen to anybody,” says Tom.

Electricity is not the only thing that lies underground. Gas, water, cable and telephone lines all are buried beneath the earth. Not only are these utilities dangerous to make contact with, but people and businesses rely on these services.

Even if you had utilities located last year, it is best to have them located again. Underground utilities can shift, and it is important to be certain of where they are before ever putting a shovel in the ground.

If you accidentally come in contact with an underground utility, do not bury the problem. Your first priority should be evacuating the area for safety, if necessary. If you nick an underground utility, notify your utility provider. Do not attempt to fix the problem yourself.

The Safe Electricity program urges you to start all outdoor digging projects the safe way — by calling 811 to have underground utilities marked. For more information on electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.



Attention: Parents of high school seniors

Are you aware of North Star Electric's Knowledge Scholarship? To qualify, the parent/guardian must be an active member of North Star Electric, and your child must take a test about your cooperative that provides electricity to your home. North Star Electric will award five scholarships, one \$1,000 and four \$400, plus a chance to win one of eight \$50 cash awards for scoring more than 50 percent on the test. Most of the answers will be in the study material that North Star provides. A couple hours of study time could pay off with a \$1,000 scholarship. Last year only 35 students took the test. The information meeting and the test will be given in mid-April. For more information about the scholarships, please call Wayne at North Star Electric or check with your school guidance counselor.

Operation Round Up application deadline is May 31

The deadline to submit Operation Round Up grant applications is May 31. Community organizations may apply for an Operation Round Up grant by completing and returning an application form, available at either North Star office or from a director of the North Star Electric Community Trust Board. The directors are Peter Granger, Gretchen Thompson, Margie Sporlein, Zelpha Crawford, Mary Ellen Lehman, Julie Lepisto and Larry Warrington.

Grants will be awarded to nonprofit or community-based organizations that demonstrate a commitment to enhancing the quality of life in our region (132-48-003-05, Steve G. Nelson).

We would like to say THANK YOU to all the North Star members who are participating in the Operation Round Up program. About 80 percent of the membership is contributing to this great cause to help our local communities.

Energy elitism (continued from page 1)

Mark Glaess, Manager, Minnesota Rural Electric Association

estimated \$50,000 to fit their home with solar. This is regressive energy economics falling on those struggling to pay their electric bill.

Keep in mind Minnesota is awash in energy. There are far too many kilowatt-hours chasing too few electric outlets.

Yet, the promotion of solar and wind by members of the Minnesota Legislature and the Governor will mean that electric cooperatives will have even more excess generation that they will dump on the market at a loss. That in turn will lead to higher rates.

The fear 75 years ago was the government taking property to pay for REA loans that might have failed (they never have). As it turns out, now the worry is elected officials

who think they know what is best for cooperative members. Consequently, you will pay, and pay dearly, for what they think is in your best energy interest.

There is, however, one thing you should know. Your legislator and Governor do listen to you. If you agree with this editorial, send a letter or email to your legislators and Governor Dayton.

"E" stands for energy efficiency this Earth Day



Earth Day is April 22, and this year, "E" stands for energy efficiency. It serves as an important reminder that you can care for Mother Earth and reduce your energy bills at the same time. The cleanest, greenest energy is the energy we do not use. So this Earth Day, the Energy Education Council encourages you to discover ways that you can become more energy efficient.

An easy, first step in learning more is to check out all of the helpful tips and resources on **EfficiencyResource.org**. The site has a variety of articles, videos, games and educational materials. Many people do not realize just how easy it is to cut their lighting energy bill by replacing their most used lights with compact fluorescent lamp (CFL) or light emitting diode (LED) bulbs. Even simpler, just unplugging electronics when they are not in use can save you money and help save the earth!

Here are some efficiency actions you can start incorporating into your energy habits this Earth Day:

- Apply rope caulk to very leaky window frames, where energy loss may occur from air infiltration.
- Seal up air leaks around plumbing penetrations, chimneys, recessed lights in insulated ceilings, and unfinished spaces behind cupboards and closets.
- Put a water heater blanket on your older water heater to help water in the tank stay hot.
- Install low-flow showerheads, faucet aerators and CFLs or LEDs from a hardware or home improvement store.
- Set your thermostat lower in the winter (higher in the summer) when you can accept cooler (warmer) conditions. This generally includes nighttime and whenever you leave your home for several hours. Many people find it easier to use an Energy Star® programmable thermostat that you can set to automatically adjust.

- Separate your electricity and heating oil/natural gas bills. Target the biggest bill for energy conservation remedies.
- Assess your heating and cooling systems, and determine if replacements are justified or whether you should retrofit them to make them work more efficiently and provide the same comfort (or better) for less energy.
- Find out what level of insulation is recommended for your area at **EnergySavers.Gov**. Then crawl into your attic and/or crawl space, and inspect the insulation in order to determine if there is enough. If not, add the appropriate amount.
- Insulate hot water pipes and ducts wherever they run through unheated areas.

Unearth the information you need this Earth Day. Visit **EfficiencyResource.org** and make your energy usage more efficient as part of your planned Earth Day activities.



EPA reopens consideration of haze decision

North Star, Minnkota believe EPA made correct decision on Young Station in 2012

Following several years of deliberation and more than a year after ruling in favor of the state of North Dakota and Minnkota Power Cooperative, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is reopening its consideration of a decision regarding regional haze.

The decision means Minnkota, our cooperative's power supplier, could face a significant increase in its costs to meet environmental requirements that may not even improve the environment.

The National Parks Conservation Association and the Sierra Club last year petitioned the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals for review of the EPA's regional haze determination for the state of North Dakota as well as requested the EPA to reconsider the ruling.

Then, on March 15 this year, the EPA published its notice in the Federal Register to reconsider approval of the state's Best Available Retrofit Technology emission limits for nitrogen oxides (NO_x) for Units 1 and 2 of Minnkota's Milton R. Young Station, a coal-fired plant located near Center, N.D., which provides the majority of the electricity for North Star Electric and Minnkota.

The reconsideration relates to the EPA's approval of the portion of North Dakota's State Implementation Plan (SIP) that allows for Over-Fire Air (OFA)+Selective Non-Catalytic Reduction (SNCR) technology to be used for NO_x reduction at the Young Station in complying with the Regional Haze Rule.

The reconsideration also pertains to Basin Electric Power Cooperative's Leland Olds Station Unit 2.

A December 2011 court ruling weighed heavily in the EPA's decision to approve the SIP. In that case, a U.S. District Court ruled in favor of the state of North Dakota in a dispute resolution process under the Consent Decree for what is Best Available Control Technology (BACT) at the Young Station.

Based on a voluminous five-year public record on the issue, we at North Star believe the EPA should stick with its original decision. It avoids the installation of \$500 million of equipment that has not been proven to work effectively at the Young Station and would not provide a perceptible environmental benefit. Installing Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR) technology would prompt a 20 to 30 percent rate increase for Minnkota cooperatives.

A public hearing on the reconsideration of North Dakota's regional haze plan likely will be held in May in Bismarck.

"We believe the EPA made a sound decision in March 2012 when it properly identified the right technology for the Young Station," said Mac McLennan, Minnkota president & CEO. "It was the right thing for North Dakota and the consumer."

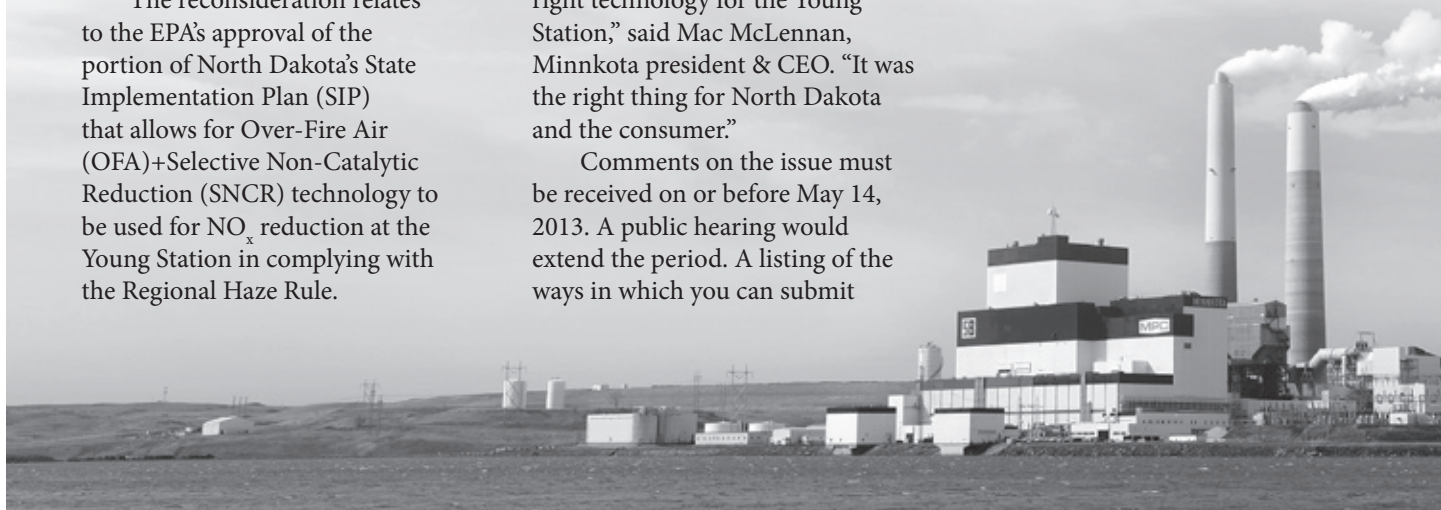
Comments on the issue must be received on or before May 14, 2013. A public hearing would extend the period. A listing of the ways in which you can submit

comments is included in this issue. Please consider taking a moment to call or write the EPA and let them know the SIP is the correct decision for North Star, Minnkota, the state of North Dakota and consumers in Minnesota and North Dakota.

The EPA and other agencies have been monitoring visibility in national parks and wilderness areas since 1988. In 1999, the EPA announced a major effort to improve air quality in those areas. The Regional Haze Rule calls for state and federal agencies to work together to improve visibility in 156 national parks and wilderness areas.

North Dakota Gov. Jack Dalrymple and the state's congressional delegation were pleased with the March 2012 ruling by the EPA. Rather than a costly federal plan (\$500 million for Minnkota alone), the agreement provides North Dakota with flexibility to implement sensible and cost-effective standards for improving visibility in selected areas of the state such as Theodore Roosevelt National Park.

We believe North Dakota's Congressional delegation remains committed to affirming the state of North Dakota's ability to manage its



own implementation plan, citing the state's longstanding commitment to meeting all Clean Air Act requirements, and significant progress the state has already made in reducing regional haze.

On the day of the March 2012 ruling, North Dakota U.S. Sen. John Hoeven said: "North Dakota is one of 12 states to meet all federal ambient air quality standards. Our state has long demonstrated that we can promote strong economic growth and job creation, while doing a good job of protecting the air, land and water. While there is still more work to do, today's decision by the EPA is a good step forward in recognizing our state's ability to best manage our own resources."

Since 2006, Minnkota has spent more than \$425 million on emission control equipment at the Young Station.

SEND COMMENTS TO KEEP REGIONAL HAZE SIP FOR THE YOUNG STATION

If you want to send a comment to the EPA, come to our North Star offices. We will deliver them to the EPA in person if there is a public hearing. If not, we will mail them to the EPA.

Or submit comments, identified by Docket ID No. EPA-R08-OAR-2010-0406, by one of the following methods:

- **Web:** <http://www.regulations.gov/>. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.
- **Email:** r8airrulemakings@epa.gov.
- **Fax:** (303) 312-6064.
- **Mail:** Director, Air Program, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Region 8, Mailcode 8P-AR, 1595 Wynkoop Street, Denver, Colorado 80202-1129.

The facts on Regional Haze for Minnkota

- The EPA should not reconsider its approval of the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) regional haze State Implementation Plan (SIP).
- The goal of the regional haze program is to improve visibility; it does not focus on health.
- North Dakota's SIP improves visibility.
 - It identifies the Best Available Retrofit Technology (BART) as Over-Fire Air (OFA) and SNCR (Selective Non-Catalytic Reduction) technology for North Dakota's cyclone lignite-fired boilers, including Minnkota's Milton R. Young units.
- The EPA should uphold its decision whereby it approved the SIP regarding nitrogen oxides (NO_x) emissions for Units 1 and 2 at the Young Station. In approving the SIP, the EPA explained that a 2011 federal court ruling weighed heavily in that decision, where a court found the use of SNCR – and not Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR) – was a reasonable determination by the NDDoH. In fact, the NDDoH evaluated this issue for approximately five years and generated thousands of pages that support the finding of SNCR+OFA as the appropriate technology for cyclone boilers using North Dakota lignite coal. Additionally, the NDDoH accepted significant input from the EPA and the public in developing its plan.
 - A state's authority and flexibility to regulate its own clean air programs is an essential part of the Clean Air Act. The Act is designed to prevent the federal government from substituting its one-size-fits-all judgment for a state's superior understanding of its local conditions and needs.
- Prior to approving the SIP, the EPA wanted to force North Dakota's cyclone lignite-fired boilers to install technology (namely, SCR) that is unreasonably expensive relative to the unnoticeable improvement in visibility and has not been demonstrated to work on cyclone lignite-fired boilers.
 - Western North Dakota facilities have spent more than \$700 million in recent years on the control of emissions. Under the EPA's plan, they will be required to spend another \$800 million.
 - Minnkota has already installed OFA+SNCR technology and updated sulfur dioxide (SO₂) scrubbers:
 - Improvement: NO_x controls reduce emissions by 55 to 56 percent, and SO₂ scrubbers remove 95 percent of the SO₂.
 - Cost: \$425 million.
 - If Minnkota were forced to use SCR, it could cost an additional \$500 million to install, over the \$40 million Minnkota already spent installing OFA+SNCR technology.
 - The EPA explains that "most people can detect a change in visibility of one deciview." But, the EPA acknowledges, when compared to SNCR+OFA, SCR technology will improve visibility only half a deciview – less than the human eye will notice!
 - The technology hasn't been proven to work! North Dakota's high-sodium lignite coal is unique – when SCR technology was tested on North Dakota boilers using lignite coal, the catalyst failed after two months.
- SCR technology provides no additional visibility improvement from OFA+SNCR technology identified by the state and comes at a much higher cost. OFA+SNCR technology has been proven to work on North Dakota facilities.
- North Dakota's air is among the country's cleanest.
 - In 2011, the American Lung Association gave Oliver County (home to the Young Station) and Mercer County (home to several coal-fired power plants), along with six other North Dakota counties, an "A" grade for lack of ozone.
 - North Dakota is one of only seven states that meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards; in fact, North Dakota air is cleaner than the standards require.
- The impact: The cost of the EPA's plan would force cooperatives and municipals in the Minnkota/Northern Municipal Power Agency Joint System to raise rates 20 to 30 percent in North Dakota and Minnesota.
- Contact your congressional delegation and ask them to keep fighting for the North Dakota state plan for regional haze in areas such as Theodore Roosevelt National Park and the Lostwood National Wildlife Refuge's wilderness area. See page 9 for contact information.

Staff Report *Help us to help you.*

You are making a difference, so keep it up ...

When the senators and representatives in St. Paul began their session this year, there was legislation introduced that had good intentions, but horrible rate consequences. As the saying goes, "If you are not at the table, you are on the menu," and the last thing we want is your cooperative to be chewed up.

You will notice several pictures in this *Enlightener* showing cooperative personnel meeting with our local legislators to explain the ramifications that Joel Johnson, our Minnesota Rural Electric Association government affairs representative, wrote about in our March 2013 *Enlightener* (find it on the News tab at www.nsec.coop). As of March 31, it appears that our message is beginning to resonate with our rural legislators. Every letter, email and phone call helps them understand, so don't let up.

This brings me to the importance of being engaged with our legislators. We have 134 members who have agreed to receive information from us when we have important legislative issues to respond to. From this group of engaged Grassroots Members, we plan to bring one or more of them with us to St. Paul, as the need arises (once or twice a year). If you are already one of our Grassroots Members, THANK YOU for all your help to get the cooperative's side heard. If you did not receive a special mailing from us in March, but you would like to be included, please email me (annnsec@wiktel.com) or send me a note.

So how do we define "local?" Any way we can. Of course, we have the legislators, whose districts include parts of our service territory, but at a hearing where Manager Dan Hoskins testified in March, we found ourselves seated behind a "local" who moved from Pitt years ago and represents people in the metro area. When Baudette was mentioned, it was like a magnetic force. This classmate of Carol Rivard-Birkeland,

and daughter of Mary Grund, now holds the distinguished title of State Senator Bev Scalze, and she is also a member of the Senate Environment and Energy Committee.

So, if you know Sen. Grund-Scalze, it would be nice if you would send her a note (contact information below) congratulating her on her success, and for supporting the rural electric cooperatives and the members back home.

And when you write to your own local legislators, know that they have been very responsive to our information, and thank them for their continued support. The Governor also needs to hear from you because his staff tells him that you want even more renewable energy, in spite of the reliability and cost issues. Maybe you agree, and maybe you don't, but the important thing is that your voice is heard.

This bill will be very expensive for members who do not install solar, because the only protection in the bill is for the solar investors, meaning all of the non-investors (almost all of us) must buy the investors' excess energy at a much higher rate, even if we can't use it. With only .02 percent of the energy in Minnesota currently being generated by the sun, the subsidization hasn't cost too much, but if a solar mandate is passed, you can expect an increase in your electric bill.

Help us help you. Sign up for our Grassroots Communications, and get involved. At your service we remain ... Ann

email to sen.bev.scalze@senate.mn
124 Capitol Building
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155-1206



Ann Ellis
Assistant General Manager



Sen. Rod Skoe testifies with Manager Dan Hoskins regarding DNR crossing permit application fees. In the background is MREA (Minnesota Rural Electric Association) Government Affairs Coordinator Joel Johnson.



Rep. Roger Erickson welcomes directors Julian Brzoznowski, Mike Trueman, Lorraine Nygaard and Manager Dan Hoskins to his office in St. Paul. Even as a freshman, Roger has been quick to support rural electric cooperative issues, including sponsoring legislation to place a sunset clause on a mandate that has become increasingly difficult to achieve.



Former Pitt, Minn., resident Bev Grund is now State Sen. Bev Scalze (left). She was elected to the House of Representatives in 2004 and graduated to the Senate this past year.



Sen. Tom Bakk (head of the table) and Rep. David Dill (standing at left) visit with cooperative representatives from North Star, Lake Country Power and North Itasca Electric cooperatives. Rep. Dill is also pushing legislation to help us with DNR crossing fee costs. Sen. Bakk is the Majority Leader in the Senate.



Rep. Dan Fabian meets with Director Julian Brzoznowski, Assistant General Manager Ann Ellis and Director Mike Hanson after telling us what the cooperative concerns are with the proposed energy legislation. These guys are really listening to you!



Before North Star's testimony on DNR crossing application fees, we listened to Rainy Lake Houseboats owner Bill Dougherty, Sen. Tom Bakk and Koochiching County Commissioner Wade Pavleck, explain the wastewater issue along the road to Sha Sha Resort, not knowing that the Senator in the foreground graduated from Baudette High School.



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 Social Services

206 8th Ave. SE, Suite 200
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

NORTH STAR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE POLITICAL LEADERS

Federal legislators

President Barack Obama

The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington D.C. 20500
www.whitehouse.gov
president@whitehouse.gov
202-456-1111

Senator Al Franken

320 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington D.C. 20510
www.alfranken.com
202-224-5641
Fax: 202-224-0044

Senator Amy Klobuchar

302 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
www.klobuchar.senate.gov
202-224-3244
1-888-224-9043 (Minnesota office)
Fax: 202-228-2186

Congressman Rick Nolan

2447 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
www.nolan.house.gov
202-225-6211
Facebook: US Rep Rick Nolan
Twitter: @USRepRickNolan

Congressman Collin Peterson

2109 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
www.collinpetersen.house.gov
202-225-2165
Fax: 202-225-1593

State of Minnesota legislators

Governor Mark Dayton

75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Capitol Building, Room 130
St. Paul, MN 55155-1606
800-657-3717
mark.dayton@state.mn.us

Senator Tom Bakk

75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Capitol Building, Room 226
St. Paul, MN 55155-1606
651-296-8881
sen.tom.bakk@senate.mn

Senator Rod Skoe

75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Capitol Building, Room 235
St. Paul, MN 55155-1606
651-296-4196
sen.rod.skoe@senate.mn

Senator LeRoy Stumpf

75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Capitol Building, Room 122
St. Paul, MN 55155-1606
651-296-8660
Email: Use mail form

Representative David Dill

571 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-2190
800-339-0466
rep.david.dill@house.mn

Representative Roger Erickson

527 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-4265
800-920-5867
rep.roger.erickson@house.mn

Representative Dan Fabian

307 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-9635
888-727-0979
rep.dan.fabian@house.mn

Minnesota FoodShare Campaign

The Lake of the Woods Food Shelf and the Falls Hunger Coalition each received a \$295 donation in March for the Minnesota FoodShare Campaign. This donation was made possible from the sale of Compact Fluorescent Lamps from both the Baudette and Littlefork offices.



Wayne Haukaas, member service manager, North Star Electric; Brittany Rognerud, assistant director, Falls Hunger Coalition; and Nancy Anderson, executive director, Falls Hunger Coalition



Diana McLain, director for the Lake of the Woods Food Shelf

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Keep energy efficiency in mind as the ground thaws and you plan spring landscaping. Properly selected and planted trees, shrubs and bushes can create a windbreak that lowers home heating bills in the winter and insulates your home year-round. Before you start, check on the right plants and techniques for your climate at EnergySavers.gov.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

Member Appreciation Days

On Thursday, May 9, please join us at the Littlefork office from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m., and on Friday, May 10, at the Baudette office from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. There will be refreshments with brats, chips and popcorn. Register for prizes, pick up balloons for the kids and watch an electrical safety demonstration.

HELP KEEP YOUR LIGHTS ON



Careless ditch burning can destroy utility poles and junction boxes, leading to unnecessary power outages. Pole damage ranges from surface charring to destruction, and may cost landowners \$2,000 on up, depending on the location of the pole and the severity of the damage.

Please use extreme caution when burning around our electrical equipment, and always tend to a fire once it is lit. Let's all do our part to keep the lights on and costs down.