



MANAGER'S MESSAGE • PAT CARRUTH



General Manager

Work Plan and Budget to Board

Later this month, we will be presenting our Work Plan and Budget for 2017 to the Board for their consideration. They received the draft form at their October meeting. There is a lot of work that goes into a Work Plan and Budget. Most of the heavy

lifting is done by the department heads. Fortunately, they all have plenty of experience in making budgets so we always have pretty high expectations on ending the year pretty close to where we plan.

Of course, the volatile variable in budget making for us is the weather. Weather can either make things happen or make things miserable operationally and financially. We also expect to end 2016 in good shape operationally and financially, barring anything unforeseen.

Operation Round Up®

In 1989, the CEO of Palmetto Electric Co-op had a great idea. Tom Upshaw, with the support of his Board, had members' bills rounded up to the next dollar. This money was then used to help out good community projects in his South Carolina service area. He termed his idea "Operation Round Up" and, as they say, the rest is history.

Today, most of the 800 electric cooperatives across the country administer Operation Round Up programs to assist with projects or needs in their area communities. Nationwide, these cooperatives have raised millions of dollars to put back into their communities.

Minnesota Valley began its program in January of 1995. We decided to go a different route than most cooperatives at that time. We decided to go with a positive check-off versus the negative check-off. This meant that you, as a member, would need to let us know

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The Operation Round Up Board



Staying Safe Until Power is Restored



How long it takes to get your power restored depends on:

- the extent of the storm's destruction
- the number of outages **#?**
- when it becomes safe for utility personnel to get to the damaged areas

There are many steps in the assessment and restoration process—clearing downed power lines; ensuring public health and safety facilities are operational; checking power stations and transformers; repairing transmission lines, substations, and distribution lines; and getting power restored to consumers within the various damaged areas.



Stay safe until we can restore power to you. We and our partner, Safe Electricity, recommend the following safety precautions:

Storm Safety Kit

- Drinking water & food
- Blankets, pillows & clothing
- Basic first-aid supplies
- Prescriptions
- Basic toiletries
- Flashlights
- Battery-operated radio
- Battery-operated clock
- Extra supply of batteries
- Phone
- Cash and credit cards
- Emergency numbers
- Important documents (in a waterproof container)
- Toys, books & games
- Baby supplies
- Pet supplies

- Stay far away and keep others away from downed power lines. Just because they are damaged **does not mean they are dead!**
- Never enter a flooded room if electrical outlets are submerged. **The water could be energized.**
- **Do not** turn power off if you must stand in water to do so.
- Before entering storm-damaged buildings, **make sure electricity and gas are turned off.**
- If you clean-up outdoors after a storm, **do not use electric equipment** when it is wet out.
- If you are driving and come upon a downed power line, **stay away and keep others away.** Contact emergency personnel or your utility company to address the downed power line.
- If your vehicle comes in contact with a downed power line, **do not leave the car!** Wait for utility professionals to make sure the power line is de-energized before exiting the car.

Be sure to tune into your local radio station for updates during major outages.



Manager's Message *(continued from page 1)*

if you wished to participate versus us assuming you would. We knew by going this route it would be hard work getting high numbers of members contributing to the program.

Today, we have 1,229 of 5,259 members contributing. We also have all employees rounding down their paychecks and Board members rounding per diems as well as rounding up their power bills. The Board members who govern this program are volunteers appointed by Minnesota Valley's elected Board. Quarterly, the Trust Board meets to review all applications for assistance and decide which will receive donations.

Some of the typical donations over the years went to:

- ❖ Emergency service organizations such as rescue squads and fire departments
- ❖ Summer camps and recreation for disadvantaged youth
- ❖ Energy assistance to community action agencies who will help with heating or energy bills
- ❖ Individuals or families who need financial help because of an accident or unplanned health situation
- ❖ Benefit dinners and other activities for community assistance to individuals or groups

Since January of 1995, members who had their bill rounded up to the next dollar have raised a total of \$168,995.60 and have contributed \$159,726 to 482 various groups, organizations, families and individuals. It has all been put right to use in Minnesota Valley's service area. We feel very good about what we are doing on your behalf in our communities. If you are one of those participating, we hope you do too. Thank you! If you want to become a participant, just drop a note indicating that with your bill this month. The average donation per participant is \$6 per year.

We have had many dedicated past and present Operation Round Up Trust Board members over the 21 years of our program. They have put a lot of volunteer time and effort into forming this program into one that makes a difference. They are as follows: *Arnold Nokelby, Arlene Miller, Paula Sachariason, Paul Wilson, Gerald Aamodt, Paul Frank, Robin Kleven, Cindy Jerve, Merrie Bertrand, Roger Fjerkenstad, Eunice Bue, Richard Phinney, Angie Wyffels, Marlys Londgren and Ken Jerve.*

The current Operation Round Up Board includes: *Jon Kleven, Wendy VanRavenswaay, Norman Viken, Sheree Williamson, Yvonne Sorenson, Richard Phinney and Janet Bossuyt.*

On behalf of Minnesota Valley, we hope you enjoy the rest of the fall season and we wish you all a Happy Thanksgiving!

Are you a member of Operation Round Up?



Sign up now!

Call the office at 320.269.2163 or 800.247.5051 to get signed up!

Find Your Location for a \$10 or \$20 Bill Credit!

There are two hidden account numbers in this newsletter. If you find your number, you will receive a \$10 energy credit or \$20 if you are an **Operation Round Up** participant.

As of this writing, no one has identified their hidden number in last month's issue of the Minnesota Valley Co-op News. Keep looking each month—next time it could be your number! If you find your number in the newsletter, call the office at 320.269.2163 or 800.247.5051.



Save the Date!

The Minnesota Valley REC Annual Meeting will be Saturday, March 25th, 2017 at the Lakeview School in Cottonwood.



Comparative Report

	Jan-Sept 2016	Jan-Sept 2015	Jan-Sept 1996
Kwh Purchased	147,194,527	150,135,645	104,615,638
Kwh Sold	139,650,857	142,443,508	95,322,719
Cost Of Purchased Power	\$7,029,738	\$6,806,069	\$3,283,260
Patronage Capital Margins	\$976,689	\$1,292,866	\$(91,779)
Reserve For Taxes	\$206,250	\$225,008	\$258,000
Cost Per Kwh Purchased (mills)	47.76	45.33	33.06
	September '16	September '15	September '96
Total Plant	\$68,640,748	\$65,879,250	\$28,842,689
# Of Members Receiving Service	5,265	5,266	5,161
Avg. Residential Bill	\$165.45	\$172.21	\$88.01
Avg. Residential Kwh Consumption	1,362	1,456	1,194
Avg. Kwh Usage All Consumers	2,462	2,506	1,710
Peak Kw Demand (Peak Load)	25,746	28,699	21,104





Manager of Engineering & Operations

This past month has went smoothly for getting things done and in fields changing poles after fall harvest. By the time you read this, our underground projects will have wrapped up, so let us know of any plans you may have so we are ready for your upcoming projects next spring.

Minnesota Valley Tree Service is working mainly in the Wood Lake and Echo areas now. Crews are moving northward on our system, along with doing job orders in other areas that need immediate attention L three thirty five zero four.

Enjoy your Thanksgiving dinner with your families/friends. Look back on the year and give thanks for the food on the table, a warm place to call home and also thank a Veteran for the safe country we live in.

Minnesota Valley will be closed Thursday, November 24th in observance of Thanksgiving Day.

Happy Thanksgiving!



Linemen doing a pole changeout.



Unwrap Winter Energy Savings!

The holidays are upon us! It's that special time of year when we spend a great deal of time with friends and family, either in the kitchen or out and about shopping for the perfect gift. As you find yourself wrapped up in the holiday excitement, Minnesota Valley reminds you of a few ways to be energy efficient during this busy time of year.

While being energy efficient is usually not top priority when celebrating the holidays, most of us don't realize the lack of efficiency until the next bill comes in. This year, prevent your post-holiday shock by thinking creatively and remembering these simple tips!

Cooking Efficiently

- ✓ Be kind to your oven. Every time you open the oven door to check on that dish, the temperature inside is reduced by as much as 25 degrees. This forces the oven to use more energy in order to get back to the proper cooking temperature. Try keeping the door closed as much as possible. If you're using a ceramic or glass dish, you can typically set your oven 25 degrees lower than stated, since these items hold more heat than metal pans.
- ✓ Give your burners some relief. The metal reflectors under your stovetop burners should always be clean. If not, this will prevent your stove from working as effectively as it should.
- ✓ Utilize small appliances. During the holidays, the main appliances used are the oven and stovetop. Try using your slow cooker, microwave, toaster oven or warming plate more often. This can result in substantial energy savings.

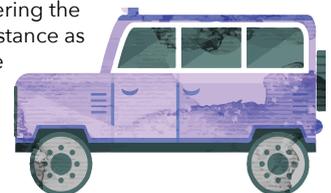
Home Efficiency

- ✓ Take advantage of heat from the sun. Open your curtains during the day to allow sunlight to naturally heat your home and close them at night to reduce the chill from cold windows.
- ✓ Find and seal all air leaks. Check areas near pipes, gaps around chimneys, cracks near doors and windows and any unfinished places.
- ✓ Maintain your heating system. Schedule services for your heating system before it gets too cold to find out what maintenance you may need to keep your system operating efficiently.
- ✓ Eliminate "vampire energy" waste. When you are not using an appliance or an electronic, unplug it to save energy. Power strips are definitely a good investment for your home.



Efficient Shopping

- ✓ Purchase LED holiday lights. A string of traditional lights uses 36 watts of power and a string of LED lights only uses 5 watts. They can even last up to 10 times longer!
- ✓ Ask for Energy Star-rated TVs and appliances. This will save you a lot of power use because the standby-mode is lower and the device will use less energy overall.
- ✓ Combine errands to reduce the number of small trips. To-do lists seem to pile up around this time of the year. Believe it or not, several short trips in the winter can use twice as much fuel as one longer trip covering the same distance as all of the shorter ones.



MEMBER SERVICES • BOB WALSH

Member Services Manager



Please Don't Miss Out!

For years the federal government had tax credits for a variety of home energy efficiency practices. Those tax credits have all but gone except one huge credit you can still take advantage of. The catch is your time is very limited. If you installed a geothermal heating system in your home in 2016 or plan to install a new heating system yet this year, there is still a 30% tax credit available for the installation of a geothermal heat pump. This tax credit can be used to your advantage until December 31, 2016. That is why we say your time is running out. There was hope that the tax credit would be extended, but nothing has happened as of yet. To take

advantage of this huge tax break you will have to have a new geothermal heating system operational by the end of this year.

If you are thinking about a new home heating system this year, the geothermal heat pump may be for you. Federal tax credits coupled with low interest loans, low electric heat rates and ultra high efficiencies can make a geothermal heating system very attractive. P two zero eight zero three If you would like more information on this type of heating system, please contact your local geothermal heating contractor or the Member Services Department at Minnesota Valley Cooperative.

YOU MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR A TAX CREDIT OF THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS



Have It Inspected

With cold weather setting in, sometimes we undertake small remodeling jobs to help make the winter pass faster. With these small projects come revisions or additions to your home wiring system. Please remember, by state law, any wiring that is performed in any building by anyone needs to be inspected. Even if you do wiring on your own equipment in your own home, this wiring needs to be inspected by a Minnesota State Electrical Inspector. For your own safety and to avoid issues in the future, have all new wiring inspected. You will find their names, phone numbers and areas covered to the right.

Minnesota State Electrical Inspectors

Chippewa/Swift Counties

Bruce Haugen: (320) 212-9678

Lincoln/Lac qui Parle/Yellow Medicine Counties

Mark Senkyr: (507) 829-2993

Renville/Redwood Counties

Jeffery Bute: (320) 583-5371

Lyon County

Randall Maha: (507) 274-5261

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24-Hour Telephone Answering

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