

MINNESOTA VALLEY Co-op NEWS

Volume 77 No. 2 • February 2015



ENTER NOW

ENERGY MAKEOVER CONTEST

YOUR CHANCE TO WIN

What Have You Done to Use Your Electrical Energy More Wisely?

We would like you to tell us what things you did in 2014 to improve your energy efficiency. Please fill out the bill stuffer included with this mailing with anything you did to help in reducing your electricity consumption in the past year. This information will be used for conservation reporting and to help Minnesota Valley better understand what our members have done to conserve.

All entries and winners will remain confidential if you so choose, but we would like to share with our other members what you did to save energy. Future newsletter articles will feature some of the best or most unique approaches our members have taken at saving electrical energy. This is your chance to help out your cooperative and possibly win some energy saving prizes. It doesn't have to be much. You may win with just a small electrical energy savings project. Contest entry forms can also be filled out online at www.mnvalleyrec.com.

Winning categories will be:

- ❖ Best small consumer savings project
- ❖ Best large consumer savings project
- ❖ Five general winners just for entering

General winners will win their choice of one of the following items and **Best of Class winners** will win their choice of any combination of three on these items:

- Energy audit
- Programmable thermostat
- Infrared camera scanning
- LED lighting package
- Heating & Cooling system inspection
- CFL lighting package

MANAGER'S MESSAGE • PAT CARRUTH



General Manager

Please Join Us at Your Annual Meeting

Saturday, March 21st at the Lac qui Parle Valley High School is where we will be holding your Annual Owners' Meeting. We will open the doors for breakfast at 8:30 a.m. and get the meeting underway by 10:30. The business meeting and drawings for the Basin Tour and door prizes should be done by noon. The Annual Meeting is where the owners can come and visit with the board and employees about their business. It is a good place to get more information about how your business is doing and where it is going in the future. Good communication between the owners of the cooperative and those charged with operating and overseeing it are very important. The Annual Meeting is a great venue for this communication to take place. We look forward to seeing you there!

Get Your Share of \$1,398,656 at the Annual Meeting

We will have checks available for you as you come into the Annual Meeting if you were an active member in 2001 and 2002. We are retiring the remaining balance of 2001 capital credit of \$503,562 and 75% of 2002, which is \$895,094. We continue to retire capital credits on a first in-first out (FIFO method), as we have always done. Your board continues to strongly support aggressively retiring patronage capital. For electric cooperatives in the state, there are only four that have retired a higher percentage of their total patronage capital than Minnesota Valley. Nationwide we are number 50 of 808 electric distribution cooperatives with the highest percentage of capital credits retired.

Operation Round Up Making a Difference for 20 Years

Our first donation was made in July of 1995. It was \$240 to a family struggling with severe medical problems and the financial stress that comes along. Since that time, our Operation Round Up program has given \$142,926 to 443 different parties. Each donation given is well thought out by a board of volunteer members. They give modest donations to many different individuals and groups who request assistance such as the Special Olympics, March of Dimes, Reach Out for Warmth, youth clubs and caregiver programs, just to name a few. Each donation is given with the intent of doing the most good it can for our area community.

(Manager's Message is continued on page 2)



Limited to one entry per member.

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

Thank you to all members who have been or are currently signed up for our Operation Round Up program. We are especially appreciative of our volunteer Operation Round Up Board made up of Jon Kleven, Norman Viken, Marlys Londgren, Richard Phinney, Janet Bossuyt, Wendy VanRavenswaay and Sheree Williamson. Thank you for giving of your valuable time!

You can help make a difference by having your light bill rounded up each month. There are currently 1,229 members signed up and donating. That means there are 4,043 more accounts that could be signed up for Operation Round Up. Again, if you sign up your bill is rounded to the next dollar. Those cents added to your bill each month go into a separate fund. The average donation is \$6 per year. You can call the office to sign up or simply put a note in with your next bill that indicates you would like to participate. You can cancel at any time. Please take a moment to sign up if you can.

Notice of Annual Member Meeting of Minnesota Valley Cooperative Light & Power Association

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Meeting of the members of Minnesota Valley Cooperative Light and Power Association will be held at Lac qui Parle Valley High School on Saturday, March 21st, 2015. Registration and breakfast buffet opens at 8:30 a.m. The meeting begins at 10:30 a.m. at which time the following business will be transacted:

- 1) To hear, examine and approve the reports of the officers, directors and committees.
- 2) To elect two directors for said Cooperative for the ensuing term.
- 3) For the transaction of other businesses as may lawfully be brought before the membership of the Cooperative and as may be deemed to be in the best interest of the Cooperative.

Dated: January 28th, 2015 Tim Velde, Secretary

Win a Trip to the 2015 Electric Co-op Youth Tour in Washington, D.C.

Minnesota Valley will again be sponsoring a youth trip in 2015. The program is open to all high school sophomores and juniors in Minnesota Valley's service area, whether or not their parents are members of the cooperative. To qualify you will need to submit an essay and application form which are available by calling Minnesota Valley. **All applications/essays must be completed and in our office by March 13th, 2015.** If you place first in the competition, you will be awarded an all-expense-paid trip to our nation's capital along with about 40 other students from Minnesota cooperatives.

The Electric Cooperative Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. is scheduled for June 13th-18th, 2015. The students will join over 1,000 young people from across rural America given the opportunity to see American government in action, tour our nation's capital, visit historic places of interest and meet many new friends.

All winners are guaranteed a good time! If you are a high school sophomore or junior living in Minnesota Valley's service territory and would like to go on this all-expense-paid trip, call 320.269.2163 or 800.247.5051 and we will send or email you the complete application or go online at www.mnvalleyrec.com and download the application.

2015 Annual Meeting

Saturday, March 21st, 2015

Lac qui Parle Valley High School

Breakfast Buffet begins at 8:30 a.m.

Meeting at 10:30 a.m.

Comparative Report

	Jan-Dec 2014	Jan-Dec 2013	Jan-Dec 1994
Kwh Purchased	222,191,056	222,186,046	140,061,654
Kwh Sold	210,100,344	210,501,463	130,857,073
Cost Of Purchased Power	\$10,567,466	\$10,781,465	\$4,557,441
Patronage Capital Margins	\$2,475,569	\$2,231,172	\$749,701
Reserve For Taxes	\$297,244	\$328,002	\$286,836
Cost Per Kwh Purchased (mills)	47.62	48.52	32.54
	December '14	December '13	December '94
Total Plant	\$63,829,957	\$62,075,561	\$24,645,771
# Of Members Receiving Service	5,270	5,253	5,163
Average Residential Bill	\$250.65	\$285.62	\$150.29
Average Residential Kwh Consumption	2,793	3,208	2,315
Average Kwh Usage All Consumers	3,930	4,412	2,315
Peak Kw Demand (Peak Load)	41,579	42,706	24,967

Get a \$10 or \$20 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. Call the office to claim your credit.

There were no winners from last month's issue. Keep looking!



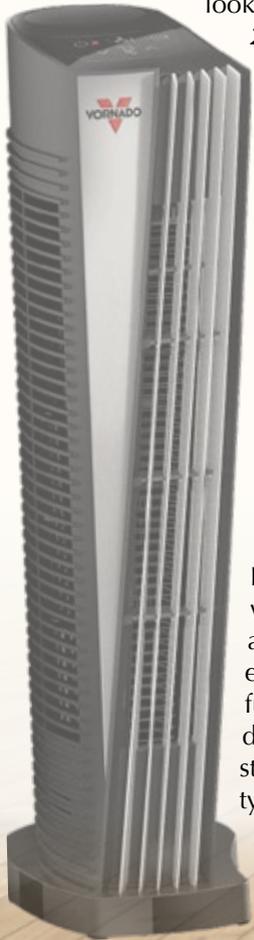
Space Heaters Can Dramatically Increase Your Electric Bill Costs

Space heaters are small and versatile but how much do they cost to operate? Here is a formula ($wattage/1,000 \times hours\ of\ use \times cost\ per\ kWh = cost\ per\ day$) that can help you determine your daily cost to operate a space heater.

For example: a 1,500 watt space heater would look like this — $1,500\ watts/1,000 \times 24\ hours \times 10\ cents\ (average\ rate) = \$3.60\ per\ day$. That adds up to \$108 per month. The bottom line is that space heaters are convenient, but costs add up if used every day for many hours at a time.

Electricity does make a great heat source and Minnesota Valley's heat rates can multiply the savings. There are many options depending on whether you're considering just making a room warmer or adding an entirely new heat source for your home.

Heating options range from ground water source heat pumps, air to air heat pumps, baseboard heaters, cove heaters, plenum heaters, furnaces and boilers. Contact us for details or to have a representative stop out to help you decide what type of electric heat will best suit your situation and explain available options.



ENGINEERING & OPERATIONS • JOHN WILLIAMSON



Manager of Engineering & Operations

Crews are working on building (replacing) some single-phase power lines south of Echo. Other crews are working on our annual line patrol. We are also in the process of comparing consumer electric demand with current transformer size and increasing or decreasing the transformer on a per site basis where needed.

As a result of the very cold weather, power usage has been up. Thankfully, we haven't had any issues with delivery except when Mother Nature gave us a little shot of what she can do during the week of the 16th of December.

Plans are in place for construction projects for the coming spring. D three zero seven zero three If you have any that we are not yet aware of, please come into the office so we can visit and get them on the schedule.

I hope the new year has been treating you well so far!

Energy Saving Tip

Today's refrigerators sporting an **Energy Star** label use 40% less energy than 2001 conventional models. But it's important to note that your home energy usages will actually increase if you replace your kitchen refrigerator **and** put the old one in the garage to keep your refreshments cool.



See this month's insert to learn about our Energy Makeover Contest! →



Cogeneration and Small Power Production Compliance Notification

In compliance with MN Adopted Rules Relating to Cogeneration and Small Power Production Chapter 7835, Minnesota Valley Cooperative Light and Power Association is required to interconnect with and purchase electricity from cogenerators and small power producers which satisfy the conditions of a Qualifying Facility. The Cooperative will provide information relating to rates and interconnection requirements to all interested members free of charge upon request. An application of interconnection is required for a Qualifying Facility to interconnect and operate in parallel with the Cooperative's distribution system and is subject to approval by the Cooperative. Any disputes between the Cooperative and its members over interconnections, sales and purchases are subject to resolution by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission.

Members interested in obtaining further information should contact Patrick C. Carruth, General Manager, Minnesota Valley Cooperative Light and Power Association, at: 320.269.2163/800.247.5051





Conservation Improvement Program

For many years now, power companies have been required to dedicate resources towards helping our consumers conserve energy.

This program is called the Conservation Improvement Program (CIP). The program originally was set up that Minnesota electric utilities were required to spend at least 1½% of their gross revenue on energy conservation practices. Over the years, this spending requirement was expanded to also include that each utility verify that their consumers saved what amounted to 1½% of the total energy sold by the utility.

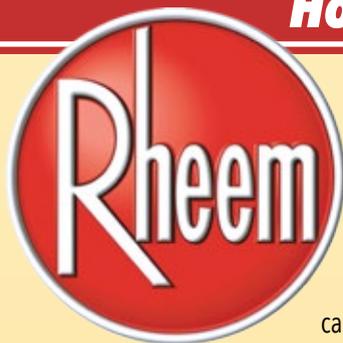
Each utility can set up the mode of delivery for energy conservation practices that it sees most fitting for its consumers. At Minnesota Valley, we receive questions from our members about what rebates and programs are available to help them conserve energy. As stated before, we have taken an energy conservation approach that we feel is most fitting to the greatest number of consumers. That philosophy is more of a “help people help themselves” approach. We have implemented some rebate programs, but not to a large extent. Our efforts have been more targeted towards education and assistance with your energy projects.

The Department of Energy Resources (DER) has set up guidelines for the CIP that dictates certain spending limits and requirements. One such requirement is that Minnesota Valley is expected to reach a minimum spending

threshold for low income and rental consumers. A majority of the time our low income and rental members are not in a position to be able to afford upgrading to energy efficient equipment even if we were to give them a rebate. It seems that those in the position of being able to update to energy saving equipment are very much more likely to be able to afford the cost of that equipment initially. One of the contributing factors of higher energy costs can be attributed to any rebate program offered where costs need to be recovered through the revenue stream from energy sales. The recovery of the additional rebate burden is then put upon the same people who are already having a difficult time paying their energy bills and most likely are not able to afford the energy efficient equipment in the first place. Therefore, we have chosen to not be quite as aggressive with giving rebates and instead dedicate that money towards keeping your energy purchases affordable.

The fact that we use an education based energy conservation program can make quantifying our consumers’ energy savings very difficult. Therefore, we are having an “Energy Makeover Contest” where you have the opportunity to tell us what you have done to conserve electricity at your home or business. Please fill out the insert included with your billing and be entered into drawings to reward you for your efforts. Your efforts will be greatly appreciated and help us to better understand our members’ energy conservation practices.

Hot Water for Life!



The *Rheem Marathon* non-metallic electric water heaters are durable and lightweight and require no anode rod. With a seamless blow-molded polybutene inner tank, it is impervious to rust and corrosion. The tough molded polyethylene outer shell resists dents, scratches and corrosion. G three twenty five zero two A No anode rod means no smelly water normally caused by chemical reactions with sulfates.

Its lifetime warranty means the tank is built to last for as long as you own your home. Marathon saves homeowners money with its lightweight design, high efficiency and warranty – a hands down favorite of homeowners who are looking for a lifetime of savings and reliability.

For more information or to replace your water heater with a Marathon, contact Member Services at 320.269.2163 or 800.247.5051.



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