



**MANAGER'S MESSAGE • PAT CARRUTH**



*General Manager*

**Rain, Rain and More Rain**

It has been a trying year for our farmers and everyone else who needs periods of rain free weather to get their crop out and projects done. We too have been working hard to stay on schedule with our construction and maintenance projects. In many cases, that has involved shifting scheduled projects around to where we are able to work—especially service upgrades from members. Many requests came in last minute and our crews have been working hard to meet those requests. We are still hopeful for more productive weather to get all of our construction and maintenance projects done before we roll right into next year.

**2019 Work Plan and Budget to Board This Month**

This next year, we will begin work on the projects in year 2 of our 4-year \$10,750,000 Construction Work Plan. The 2019 plan calls for \$5.5 million in construction and system improvements. Of this \$2.8 million is for our share of the rebuild of our Blair Delivery Point Substation near Gary, South Dakota. We own that 50/50 with East River Electric Cooperative out of Madison, South Dakota. In addition to the construction projects, we will continue to work hard on our maintenance projects such as pole testing and treating. We are also catching up on our right-of-way clearing. We have had

three right-of-way crews working full-time on our system this past year and expect that to continue next year. They will finish the western part of the northeast quadrant of the system, hopefully by year end. Next year, we hope to finish the northwest quadrant of our project.

Department heads will present the 2019 Work Plan and Budget to the board at the regular meeting this month. Everyone working here understands that we work for you, the member-owners. We understand that it is your money we are spending on your electric power cooperative—from mine mouth to the meter in your yard. We work hard to be good and effective stewards of both your money and your power grid. You, of course, elect your board to provide oversight and to make sure that we are being good stewards.

**Prepare for Winter**

Whether gas, oil or electric, now is the time to get your heating system tuned up. Give us a call to get on the schedule. A properly tuned heating system can not only save you money, it will also give you a better chance of making it through the winter without a problem.

Have a blessed Thanksgiving!



**Water Heater Program**

Minnesota Valley has been selling and installing electric water heaters for many years. Recently, we decided to start carrying another line of lifetime tank warranty electric water heaters. We now are selling and installing Westinghouse tanks. We are still carrying the Marathon water heaters that many of our members have installed. This will give our members more options when they are shopping for a new water heater.

Electric water heaters are an efficient and safe way to heat water. A lifetime tank warranty provides peace of mind for our members. We offer competitive prices and have increased rebates that will help our members receive the benefits of having an electric water heater installed in their home or business. Make sure to call our Member Services Department with questions or for more information.

**Westinghouse**

The Westinghouse water heater combines high quality stainless steel construction and energy efficient operation, providing long draws of hot water without consuming large amounts of energy. Durable components, low standby heat losses, high recovery rates and a lifetime tank warranty make the Westinghouse a great choice for your water heating needs.



**Marathon**

We have been carrying Marathon water heaters for more than 20 years. These tanks are a seamless blow-molded plastic design that provide extreme strength and toughness. Marathon also offers 2.5 inches of foam insulation that minimizes standby loss and boosts efficiency. This lightweight and energy efficient design, paired with a lifetime tank warranty, makes the Marathon a great choice for your water heating needs.



**NEW REBATE AVAILABLE**

Rebates are now available for both **Westinghouse** and **Marathon** water heaters.

💧 **SIZES:** 50-105 Gallon      💧 **REBATES:** \$100-\$300



**HAPPY**  
*Thanksgiving!*

**Minnesota Valley Cooperative will be closed Thursday, November 22<sup>nd</sup> for Thanksgiving.**

**CareTaker Sentry Medical Alert**

In order to help provide peace of mind and encourage independent living, Minnesota Valley installs and services a medical alert system. Help is just a push of a button away with CareTaker Sentry Medical Alert. To learn more about our Medical Alert System, please contact the Member Services Department at 320.269.2163 or 800.247.5051. Remember, you do not need to be a member to take advantage of this program.



**Comparative Report**

	Jan+Sept 2018	Jan+Sept 2017	Jan+Sept 1998
Kwh Purchased	161,668,510	147,775,456	100,406,434
Kwh Sold	152,317,342	140,231,556	93,624,699
Cost Of Purchased Power	\$7,935,843	\$7,454,017	\$3,210,519
Patronage Capital Margins	\$1,269,412	\$109,481	\$76,016
Reserve For Taxes	\$206,250	\$206,250	\$113,000
Cost Per Kwh Purchased (mills)	49.09	50.44	31.97
	September '18	September '17	September '98
Total Plant	\$73,445,454	\$70,679,096	\$31,338,360
Number of Active Services	5,295	5,278	5,196
Average Residential Bill	\$190.58	\$179.90	\$115.98
Average Residential Kwh Consumption	1,454	1,396	1,522
Average Kwh Usage All Consumers	2,520	2,510	1,963
Peak Kw Demand (Peak Load)	29,644	28,751	24,130

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

There are two hidden account numbers in this newsletter. If one of them is yours, you will receive a \$10 energy credit or \$20 if you participate in Operation Round Up. Call the office at 320.269.2163 or 800.247.5051 if you find your number.



## Give Your Extension Cord Some Respect

Next time you reach into the deep abyss of your junk drawer for an extension cord, what should you be thinking? (Besides the fleeting thought that it's time to clean out that junk drawer?) You should be giving your extension cord some love by inspecting it before you use it. Make sure it doesn't have any signs of wear like cracks or fraying. If you can't remember when you purchased it, it's probably time to replace it.



### Things to do:

- ✓ The plug prongs and the slots of the extension cord should match (two pronged versus three) – never try to plug a three-pronged cord into a two-slotted outlet. If you have grounded outlets (with three slots), it's time to upgrade to a three-pronged cord.
- ✓ The plug should be fully inserted into the extension cord and unplugged when not in use.
- ✓ Extension cords should be used temporarily. N two zero nine zero four Have permanent wiring installed by an electrician if use is long-term.
- ✓ The extension cord should be certified by an independent testing laboratory.
- ✓ Cords used outdoors should always be plugged into a GFCI outlet.
- ✓ Extension cords should be stored indoors when not in use.

### Things to not do:

- ✗ Never plug major appliances, such as a window air conditioner or refrigerator, into an extension cord ill-equipped for the job. Commonplace household extension cords (those that appear thin and flat and are often inexpensive) and power strips cannot handle surges in power.
- ✗ Never cut the bottom lone prong off to fit in a two-prong receptacle. This could create a shock hazard.
- ✗ Don't stretch an extension cord.
- ✗ Don't drape cords in walkways where people could trip over them.
- ✗ Don't use an indoor-rated extension cord outdoors.
- ✗ Don't use them near water sources (pools, sprinklers, puddles).
- ✗ Don't "string" or lengthen cords by plugging one extension cord into another.
- ✗ Don't overheat or overload an extension cord, place under rugs or carpets in high-traffic areas, or (when using one outside) drive over one.

## ENGINEERING & OPERATIONS • BOB KRATZ

*Manager of Operations*



It looks like we are still going to try to get a few projects done before the ground freezes. The wet weather in early and mid-October set the schedule back a bit.

Besides getting last minute service upgrades and larger transformers for added load, the line crews are also doing pole changeouts. When inclement weather does arrive, they will be doing the annual line patrol in the Lisbon, Riverside, Gluek, Asbury and Chapman Substation areas. This is done on a three-year rotation for each substation. You may see a Minnesota Valley truck in your yard this winter season or going slow along a road while checking; don't be alarmed and think there is a problem. We are just doing our annual inspections.

One of the things that the crews find when doing these inspections are burned poles from someone burning the road ditches. Please be careful when burning the ditches to avoid this costly problem. Also, if you have a planned project or are considering a change next year to your electrical facilities, this winter would be a great time to discuss them with us in our office.

I would like to wish you all a wonderful Thanksgiving!





Member Services Manager

**Are You Ready for Winter?**

Minnesota Valley offers a furnace inspection program to allow you to rest a bit easier when it comes to the operation of your heating equipment. Please contact our office to get scheduled for an inspection. While scheduling a furnace inspection is a smart move in the fall, it isn't the only thing that needs attention. There are many things that we sometimes overlook before entering the heating season. Perhaps you could use some weatherization, new windows, new heating equipment, insulation or any one of many other things in your home. The Member Services Department is here for your energy needs. Please contact our office at 320.269.2163 or 800.247.5051 to see how we can help you prepare for the colder days ahead.

**Caution Urged When Using Back-Up Generators**

This past month, we had an unusually higher number of consumer contacts in regards to installing standby or emergency generators. Please remember that the installation of this electrical generation equipment needs to be done in a safe and workman like manner. Improperly connected units can cause major electrical component damage and jeopardize the lives of homeowners and the general public. We encourage members to contact our office with any questions you may have regarding the installation of any generation equipment. We will also assist you in the proper sizing of generation equipment for the application you desire. Here is a short listing of generator safety tips.



- ◆ Make sure you **know how to operate the generator safely**. Unsafe operation can threaten you, your family, neighbors and even the linemen working to restore power. Unsafe installation or operation may also result in a lawsuit and your insurance may not cover your liability.
- ◆ Temporary-use **generators should not be connected to the circuit breaker or fuse box** and should not be plugged into a household outlet. Portable generators should only be used with extension cords to power lights and small appliances.
- ◆ Permanently installed generators should be wired into your home **by a qualified electrician**, using a transfer switch that prevents potentially deadly back-feed.
- ◆ Generators should only be **operated outside a home** to prevent toxic and potentially deadly exhaust from entering a home. Keep them away from children and pets.
- ◆ When starting a generator, **disconnect all appliances** that might be connected to it. L one twenty one zero three That will not only protect them but also prevent a fuse from being blown on the generator.
- ◆ Connect appliances to your portable generator **after it has been started**. Use only three-prong plugs that allow connections to be grounded.
- ◆ When refueling generators, **allow the engine to cool** in order to prevent a fire should the gas tank overflow.
- ◆ Be sure to **use a heavy-duty extension cord** rated for the wattage of the load being connected.
- ◆ When the generator is no longer needed, allow it to **cool down before storing it**.



# Furnace Inspection Program

- Preventive Maintenance
- Thorough Inspection and Maintenance
- Fossil Fuel or Electric Heating Systems

Contact Member Services Department at 320.269.2163 or 800.247.5051 to schedule your inspection.



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

**24-Hour Telephone Answering**  
320.269.2163  
800.247.5051

**Minnesota Valley Co-op News**  
Published monthly by:  
Minnesota Valley Cooperative  
Light and Power Association

**Website**  
www.mnvalleyrec.com

**Address**  
501 South 1st Street  
P.O. Box 248  
Montevideo, MN 56265