



MANAGER'S MESSAGE • PAT CARRUTH



General Manager

Thanks for Coming!

We had a great crowd of members and friends at the Prairies Edge Casino and Resort for our Annual Meeting. The casino did a great job of accommodating a nice crowd of people. We began by serving a breakfast buffet at 8:30 a.m. The business meeting began at 10:30 a.m. and concluded before noon. This format seemed to work well again. We gave bucket rides to any adults and kids who wanted one before, during and after the meeting, which they all seemed to enjoy. Our giveaway to each member was a cutting board. We had many door prizes and Basin Tour trips to give away. We had almost \$1.6 million in capital credit checks on hand for those who wanted to pick theirs up. All in all, we think it was an enjoyable morning.

For those of you who came to spend time with us...thank you! If you've never been to one, hopefully you will plan on it next year. Next year's Annual Meeting will be at the Casino again on April 4th. We will do our best to make it enjoyable for you.

**Minnesota Valley Cooperative
will be closed Friday, April 19th
in observance of Easter.**



Free Wood Chips | Call Jarrod from Minnesota Valley Tree Service at 320.226.7306 if you would like some wood chips.

April is Safe Digging Month

Spring showers bring May flowers, but digging on your own this spring could spell big trouble. Even if you think you could get lucky or that digging one small hole (or two) won't matter, don't take for granted what lines might lurk beneath the soil in your yard or easement.

Before you use that post hole digger or other unearthing tools, *STOP* and call 8-1-1 to request that buried electric, gas, cable and other live lines in or near your yard be marked. The service is free but digging in an unmarked yard may not be.

You might think you don't have time for that and ask yourself, *what's the worst that could happen?*

YOU COULD DIE OR BECOME SERIOUSLY INJURED.

It doesn't make that yard project seem quite as pressing anymore, does it?

Other consequences of blindly digging and taking a chance? You could cause a power outage. You could hit a gas line and get burned or cause an evacuation in your neighborhood. You could be fined. If you hit a telephone line or fiber optic line, you might lose your telephone, cable TV or internet service. Worse yet, it could interfere with your neighborhood's emergency assistance technology.



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

Although it all seems like "your" yard, utilities have the right-of-way to the live lines lurking under the ground in places where you might dig. In fact, an underground utility line is damaged once every nine minutes across the nation because someone decided to dig without getting their yard properly marked, according to data collected by Common Ground Alliance. You may think one or two "small holes" won't matter, but that's what the person thought who hit a line nine minutes ago.

Take a deep breath, look over your landscaping or fence plans and call 8-1-1 before you dig.

BUSINESS OFFICE • JILL ROTHSCHADL



Office Manager

Now is the time to sign up for Budget Billing! If you like to know each month what your electrical bill will be, Budget Billing may be for you. This could help alleviate the stress of high bills during the winter months. We will take your 12 month average and that will be your amount due starting July 2019 and ending June 2020. You must be at a zero balance by June 25th, 2019 in order to start Budget Billing. June is clean up month, so any amount due will be payable by June 25th, 2020. If you have a credit at the end of June, that will go towards your next budget amount calculation. You will still get a monthly statement that will show your current charges and your budget amount due, so that you are able to keep track of your electrical use. To sign up or if you have questions, please call our office at 320.269.2163.

Don't Rely on the Mail for your Electric Bill!

Sign up for e-statements/auto pay and you will not be late again! We had many members calling and stating they didn't receive their statements during the snow storms. We received several payments postmarked more than a week prior to when they were delivered to us, potentially arriving after the due date.

Visit www.mnvalleyrec.com for more information or call the office at 320.269.2163.

ENGINEERING & OPERATIONS • BOB KRATZ



Manager of Operations

The crews finished up with the 3-phase service to the Clara City Fertilizer Plant after installing a new regulator structure upstream of the plant. This will help keep the voltage constant for the plant and the other consumers on that line. The crews have been replacing poles that they rejected during line patrol. They were digging through 2½ feet of frost by the pole to be replaced just to get out of the ground. Of course, all of the snow we have had also hampered the process.

This winter has also made it very difficult to stake line for some of our Work Plan projects. As soon as we can, one project is a two-mile stretch of single phase line that needs to be replaced and upgraded for load just south-east of Montevideo. Q four zero two zero three A Another project we will start this spring is ½ mile east of Bellingham, which is five miles of single phase line that also needs to be upgraded because of load. With all of the snow and then the rain in mid-March, it looks like underground installations will be later than normal. We usually like to get some in before crops are planted, so we minimize crop damage.

Remember...Jarrod from *Minnesota Valley Tree Service* would like to give away wood chips to anybody interested, please call him at 320.226.7306.

Enjoy the much awaited warmer weather!

Find Your Location Number for a Bill Credit!

This year we changed the way we do our *Find Your Location* bill credit. We hide two account numbers in the newsletter. If you find your number, you receive a \$10 bill credit (*Operation Round Up participants get a \$10 bonus*). If neither number is claimed before the 25th of the month, **the unclaimed amount rolls over into the next month!**

The bill credit will continue to roll over and accumulate until it is claimed. If both location numbers are claimed in a month, the recipients will split the credit. Once claimed, it will start again at \$10. The current running amount is noted in each issue. If you find your number, call 320.269.2163 or 800.247.5051.

No one claimed the bill credits the last two months, so they've been rolled into this month's credit!

Comparative Report

| | Jan-Feb 2019 | Jan-Feb 2018 | Jan-Feb 1999 |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Kwh Purchased | 46,530,696 | 46,057,442 | 26,635,743 |
| Kwh Sold | 43,872,777 | 43,667,347 | 25,574,805 |
| Cost Of Purchased Power | \$2,109,772 | \$2,024,284 | \$778,128 |
| Patronage Capital Margins | \$274,824 | \$356,656 | \$211,295 |
| Reserve For Taxes | \$42,666 | \$45,833 | \$54,000 |
| Cost Per Kwh Purchased (mills) | 45.34 | 43.95 | 29.21 |
| | February '19 | February '18 | February '99 |
| Total Plant | \$73,702,547 | \$71,786,006 | \$31,871,463 |
| Number of Active Services | 5,266 | 5,268 | 5,179 |
| Average Residential Bill | \$273.43 | \$253.70 | \$126.37 |
| Average Residential Kwh Consumption | 3,095 | 2,805 | 1,900 |
| Average Kwh Usage All Consumers | 4,049 | 3,931 | 2,300 |
| Peak Kw Demand (Peak Load) | 42,075 | 42,170 | 24,275 |

CLAIM BEFORE APRIL 25TH FOR: **\$30**





2019 Scholarships

The selection committee for the Minnesota Valley/Basin Scholarship met on Thursday, February 21st and made their selections for the scholarships. Since the committee felt there were many exceptionally strong candidates again this year, they elected to split the scholarship and award \$500 to four students. The students selected are Colton Husby, Garrett Arends, Samantha Anderson and John VanRavenswaay.



Colton Husby will graduate from the Dawson Boyd High School in 2019. Colton is the son of Chad and Kristi Husby. Colton will be attending Augustana University in Sioux Falls, SD, studying Biology with a minor in Business Administration and Economics.



Garrett Arends will graduate from the Montevideo High School this spring. Garrett is the son of Chad and Carol Arends of Montevideo. Garrett will be attending SDSU, studying Agronomy.



Samantha Anderson is the daughter of Mike and Jean Anderson and will graduate from Yellow Medicine East in 2019. Samantha will be attending SDSU, studying Agricultural Business and Agricultural Communication.



John VanRavenswaay is the son of Wendy and Carl VanRavenswaay of Montevideo. John will graduate from the Montevideo High School this spring. John will be attending Augustana University in Sioux Falls, SD, studying Accounting and Business Administration.

Meet Your Employees



Name Jill Sand

Hometown Granite Falls, MN

Family Tim and I have two children. Our daughter, Amber, is married to Nathan Fromm and they live in Granite Falls. They have three children – Owen (5), Brock (3) and Harlow (1). Our son, Tyler, is a Journeyman Lineman for Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative.

When did you start at Minnesota Valley and what do you do? I started at Minnesota Valley on August 14th, 1989. I started as Staff Secretary and am now the Executive Assistant.

What do you like best about working here? The people here are great to work with, which makes coming to work fun!

What do you like to do in your free time? Spending time with family and friends and weekends at the family "farm".





Member Services Manager

Times They are a Changing

It is that time of year again where we go from snow covered fields to a green landscape. During these times of change, we can experience major changes in the weather. Powerful storms can come up and make our lives miserable. Storms can happen all year long and it is a good idea to be prepared for them when they come. Having the proper emergency items on hand and knowing what to do before and after a storm hits, can make your recovery so much easier. Have a safe spring!

Storm Safety Before and After

Before a storm:

- ✓ Assemble an emergency kit with flashlights and battery-powered communication devices, along with food, water and the medical needs of your family so you are prepared for prolonged power outages.



- ✓ Stay tuned to severe storm information from the National Weather Service and be aware that lightning presents a danger 10 miles ahead of a storm front.



After a storm:

- ✓ Storm debris can hide dangers, such as downed or sagging power lines. Use caution in any cleanup effort. Any downed wires should be considered energized and potentially dangerous. Stay away, warn others to stay away and call the utility.
- ✓ If power lines come down on or around your vehicle, call for help and remain in the vehicle. Do not attempt to get out until a utility lineman can assure you the power has been turned off.
- ✓ Do not use electric yard tools to clean up after a storm if it is raining or the ground is wet.
- ✓ Never step into a flooded basement if water could be covering electrical outlets or appliances that are plugged in.
- ✓ Do not attempt to shut power off at the breaker box if you must stand in water to do so. E three twenty seven zero four Stay out of flooded rooms and basements until you are assured the power has been cut off.
- ✓ Electric motors can be damaged when wet and should not be used after a storm until checked by a professional. Have damaged appliances repaired or replaced.
- ✓ Only use generators outdoors. Connect lights and appliances to the generator using extension cords. Do not connect directly to the home circuitry unless there is a transfer safety switch to isolate the power. Without that safety feature, electricity could “back feed” into the utility system, creating danger for anyone near lines, particularly utility crews working to restore power.



Office Hours

8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Monday through Friday

24-Hour Telephone Answering

320.269.2163

800.247.5051

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Website

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Address

501 South 1st Street

P.O. Box 248

Montevideo, MN 56265

