Minnesota Valley Co-op News
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Manager's Message // Pat Carruth

General Manager



Our Commitment to Safety

Working with electricity is dangerous. Minnesota Valley spends a lot of time, energy and money on safety training for our employees. We devote an average of 40 hours per employee per year to safety training. Linemen, of course, receive the bulk of the training.

We treat our investment in safety as a top priority for not only our employees, but the public. We make it a priority to educate children about electrical safety. Each year, we ask elementary schools in our area if we may come in and provide safety demonstrations to their third and fourth graders. We gear towards that age group because our industry feels that it is the age at which we have the best chance of getting our message across. As well as schools, we give demonstrations to 4-H clubs, fire departments, scout groups and any other organization interested in learning more about electrical safety. We spend quite a bit of time and money on general electrical safety messages with the entire public in our service area, as well. We not only feel public education about electrical safety is important; we feel it is our duty.

The foundation of our employee safety initiative is a continuing education program for our line department personnel. These "safety meetings" are coordinated and taught by loss control instructors from our statewide. Typically, the line department has 10 half-day safety meetings per year with the instructor. We also send our line crews to at least one trade meeting each year that includes safety courses. Special employee certification training is also provided each year in First Aid and CPR. We have a formal Safety Committee that reviews and updates our Job Procedure Manual. This 70-page document covers general and detailed safety rules aimed at keeping our people safe. The committee is responsible for communicating the document to all employees at least once a year.

Every three years, Minnesota Valley goes through a process called the Rural Electric Safety Accreditation or RESAP. This is a program through our National Association. This program culminates in a panel of safety professionals going through our building, trucks, equipment and documentation. The documentation alone is very extensive. It must prove that we have been complying with the regulations and reporting

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Minnesota Valley will be closed the following dates:

- Wednesday, November 11th for **Veterans Day**
- Thursday, November 26th for **Thanksgiving**

Manager's Message (continued from page 1)

requirements of OSHA, MN DOT, US DOT, EPA and MPCA rules. They also watch our people work out in the field on the jobsite. At the end of the day, they determine if our overall commitment to safety passes their standards.

We invest not only in the human side of the safety equation, but also in the equipment necessary for our employees to conduct their work in a safe manner. Maintaining equipment in prime working condition is critical. Each day our linemen go through a visual check of their equipment. They depend on non-conductive (dielectric) tools such as protective rubber gloves and sleeves, and fiberglass hot sticks, to insulate them from the lethal force of electricity. Our vehicle fleet is also subject to ongoing scrutiny. The fleet is highly maintained and inspected annually by a MN DOT certified inspector. The bucket trucks and diggers are also subject to annual dielectric testing.

Working with electricity is one of the most dangerous occupations one can take up. Not just for the fact that electricity is dangerous by nature, but most of the time when linemen are working with electricity the weather is "just plain old nasty." This compounds the danger. Throughout your cooperative, you have a dedicated group of people here. They know their job is to provide you, the member-owners, with the best possible electric service they can. To help them to that end, you, the members of Minnesota Valley, provide them with very good trucks, equipment and educational opportunities. More importantly, you provide them with your commitment to their safety.

Finish Your Harvest Out Safely

As you close your harvest season out, please continue your commitment to safety. Also, if you burn off ditches or field roads, please be aware of the power lines in your intended burn area. Each year we end up replacing poles that have been degraded by burning ditches, so please be careful.

We wish you all plenty to be thankful for as you break to be with family and friends this Thanksgiving. **Happy Thanksgiving!**

SAVE THE DATE



2027 Caucus Meetings

Thursday, February 4th, 2027

District 1: Don Fernholz
10:30 AM • Madison VFW

District 3: Mark Peterson
1:30 PM • Dawson City Hall

2027 Annual Meeting

Saturday, April 3rd, 2027

Lac qui Parle Valley High School

Find Your Location for a $10 or More Bill Credit!



If you find your location number in this newsletter, you will receive a bill credit that starts at $10 *(Operation Round Up participants get an additional $10 bonus)*. If no number is claimed before the 25th of the month, the unclaimed amount ***rolls over into the next month***. If both location numbers are claimed in a month, the recipients will split the credit. Once claimed, we will start again at $10. If you find your number, call 320.269.2163 or 800.247.5051.



Comparative Report

	Jan-Sept 2026	Jan-Sept 2025	Jan-Sept 2006
Kwh Purchased	181,090,817	171,842,562	136,449,116
Kwh Sold	171,188,213	162,502,918	128,362,721
Cost Of Purchased Power	$11,752,089	$9,828,290	$3,662,857
Patronage Capital Margins	$2,253,404	$1,262,881	$524,336
Reserve For Taxes	$322,500	$254,997	$131,800
Cost Per Kwh Purchased (mills)	64.90	57.19	26.90
	September '26	**September '25**	**September '06**
Total Plant	$117,170,349	$111,175,125	$42,296,461
Number of Active Services	5,342	5,332	5,265
Avg. Residential Bill	$263.16	$232.40	$94.05
Avg. Residential Kwh Consumption	1,419	1,436	1,160
Avg. Kwh Usage All Consumers	3,108	2,933	2,313
Peak Kw Demand (Peak Load)	35,807	31,609	23,558

Congratulations to **Cousins Pork** who found their number last month and received $10. If you find your number, claim by the **25th of November** for:



Engineering & Operations // Todd Bolkema



Engineering & Operations Manager

Our goal in operations is to provide the most reliable service possible given the constraints of distance and cost. A simple way to improve the average reliability of service to our members is to have fewer members get interrupted when something impacts the lines. Across our system, the main feeder lines come out of the substations and travel quite a distance before the next interrupting device. Many feeders have sections that go off into individual farmplaces. When a feeder line trips out, it may be along the road or back into the trees off the road. The linemen need to patrol all these lines to determine the cause and restore power.





We are starting a new initiative to install fuse switches for these sections that are fed by the main feeder line protected by the substation breakers. This should reduce feeder outages by turning them into single member outages. If you're behind the fuse, we will get there faster because our meters will indicate the exact location and if you're on the rest of the feeder you saw a couple of blinks and your power stayed on. We will be working on this project over the next few months.

Construction Updates

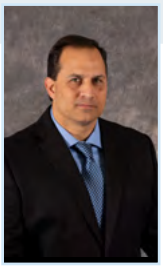
In September, we played musical chairs with our substation transformers to provide the capacity needed for ongoing load growth. On September 22nd and September 24th, Asbury and Garfield transformers moved to their new locations. On Tuesday, September 22nd a new 7,500 three phase transformer was installed at the Asbury Substation and Thursday, September 24th the Garfield Substation upgraded to the three phase 3,750 transformer removed from Asbury. This three phase transformer replaced three smaller single phase ones. We did preparations and switching between those times. Now that this is complete, we have 10 single phase transformers that we are selling. This is likely the first time in its history that this cooperative does not have single phase substation transformers on the grid. As you can see, it takes a couple of very big cranes to lift these transformers into their new homes where I expect they will be for decades to come.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

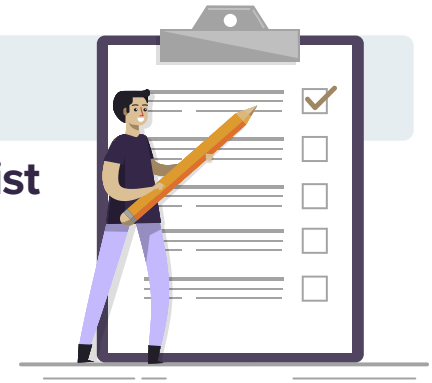
Adjust your water heater settings to save energy. As cooler weather arrives, your water heater may be working harder to keep up with longer, hotter showers. H four twenty-seven zero four A Check its temperature setting and consider lowering it to 120°F, which the U.S. Department of Energy recommends for most households. Lowering the temperature can reduce energy use while also helping prevent scalding. Always check the owner's manual before making adjustments.

Source: ***U.S. Dept. of Energy***

Member Services // Scott Kubesh



Member Services Manager



Your Fall Home Maintenance Checklist

As the temperatures begin to cool and another Minnesota winter approaches, now is the perfect time to take a few simple steps to prepare your home. A little preventative maintenance today can help improve comfort, reduce energy costs and avoid unexpected repairs when you need your heating system the most.

1. Schedule Your Furnace Inspection

Your heating system has likely been idle for several months and may need some attention before the cold weather arrives. A professional furnace inspection can help identify potential issues before they become costly repairs and ensure your system is operating safely and efficiently.

Minnesota Valley offers a furnace inspection program designed to help members prepare for the heating season. Give our Member Services Department a call today to schedule your inspection and enjoy peace of mind all winter long.

2. Check Your Electric Heat Submeter

If your home is equipped with an electric heat submeter, now is the time to make sure it is powered on and operating properly.

Your submeter records the electricity used specifically for heating and allows you to receive the discounted electric heat rate. If the breaker supplying power to the meter is turned off, the meter cannot record usage and heating costs may be billed at the standard electric rate instead.

A properly functioning digital meter should display information and cycle through a series of screens. If the display is blank, the meter may not have power. Taking a few minutes to check your meter today can help ensure you continue receiving the savings available through your electric heat program.

3. Give Your Geothermal System a Helping Hand

This year's hot, dry summer may have affected the performance of geothermal systems heading into winter.

Geothermal heat pumps rely on underground loop fields to transfer heat between the soil and your home. When the soil becomes unusually dry, that heat transfer process becomes less efficient.

If your geothermal system includes a soaker line, consider using it this fall to add moisture around the loop field before the ground freezes. Increasing soil moisture can improve heat transfer and help your system operate more efficiently throughout the heating season.

4. Reduce the Risk of a Dryer Fire

Dryer safety is an often-overlooked part of home maintenance. Each year, lint buildup in dryers and exhaust vents contributes to thousands of residential fires.

Protect your home by:

- Cleaning the lint screen after every load.
- Watching for longer-than-normal drying times.
- Inspecting the outside vent for proper airflow.
- Having the entire venting system cleaned at least once a year.

A clean dryer vent improves safety, reduces drying times and can even lower energy use.

5. Seal Air Leaks and Save Energy

One of the easiest and most cost-effective ways to improve your home's comfort and efficiency is to seal air leaks.

Small gaps around windows, doors and other openings allow heated air to escape while cold air enters. These leaks can increase heating costs, create uncomfortable drafts and contribute to moisture issues.

Two simple solutions include:

- Caulking around stationary areas such as window and door frames.
- Weatherstripping around doors and operable windows.

In addition to lowering energy costs, air sealing helps maintain more consistent indoor temperatures, improves comfort and can contribute to better indoor air quality.

A Few Hours of Maintenance Today Can Pay Off All Winter

Taking care of these simple tasks now can help ensure your home stays warm, safe and energy-efficient throughout the winter months. D three thirty-one zero two If you have questions about furnace inspections, electric heat submeters or other energy-saving opportunities, Minnesota Valley's Member Services team is here to help.

A little preparation this fall can help you enjoy a more comfortable and worry-free winter.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.