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## Mark Your Calendar

Sep 2 . . . Closed for Labor Day

Sep 15 . . . . . Electric Bills Due

Sep 24 . . . . . Board Meeting



## Find Your Account Number & Win!

TEC has hidden an account number in this newsletter. If you find your account number, notify us by April 1st and you will get a **\$10 bill credit**.



# Electricity Provides Powerful Value

JEREMY HUHNSTOCK  
General Manager

As we all look for ways to save money in this age of increasing inflation, I began to think about costs of other products compared to the cost of electricity. A morning latte costs about \$6, a foot-long combo, chips and a drink set you back \$18, and a Netflix subscription is about \$16 each month. And what was the real value—short-term satisfaction and a larger waistline? This got me thinking—is this the best value for my money?

The average daily cost of electricity is about \$5.83, and the average residential monthly electric bill for members of Traverse Electric Cooperative is around \$175 (based on 1,000/kwh). You could power your entire home every day for the price of a medium latte.

Electricity provides benefits that we often take for granted. It goes well beyond short-term satisfaction by allowing us to charge devices and have cold food and hot water, all in a comfortable indoor climate. Besides the privilege it affords, electricity has also remained relatively cost-stable even amidst rising inflation.

As a member-owned cooperative, Traverse Electric

Cooperative does everything in our power to ensure your costs stay reasonable and that electricity remains a great value for our members. It's not always easy, as there are several factors beyond inflation that impact the price of electricity—some within our control but most beyond it.

The cost of electricity can fluctuate due to supply and demand, infrastructure investment, maintenance and operational expenses. Weather patterns also contribute, affecting both demand and generation capabilities, with extreme conditions leading to heightened energy use or disruptions. Government policies, such as subsidies for renewable energy or taxes and regulations on emissions, shape electricity costs as well. Your electric co-op considers all these aspects when adjusting rates, and because we're a cooperative, we consider the impact of those costs on our members as well.

As our community continues to rely on electricity for nearly everything in our homes, schools, farms and businesses, we need it to be reliable and affordable. You can be assured; Traverse Electric Cooperative always puts you top of mind and works each day to ensure electricity remains the best value for your money. ▀



## Family Fun Night

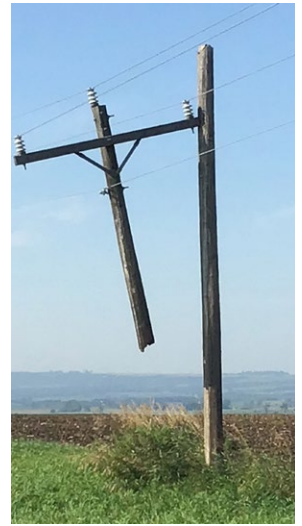
Traverse Electric's Isaac Callens and Tayden George displayed a line truck and educated area youth on electrical safety and electricity at Traverse County's Family Fun Night held at the Traverse County Fairgrounds on July 29. Kids tried on some of the safety gear linemen use on the job, and got to use a hot stick to close in a line fuse on a pole to light up a lightbulb. Isaac and Tayden also handed out cool treats and sunglasses that were perfect for the warm July evening. Thank you to everyone who visited them and took part in their demonstration. It was a fun event!

*Tayden George (left) and Isaac Callens (right) educated area youth on electrical safety.*



## Storms Bring Wind, Rain, Hail, & Power Outages to the Area

Mother nature was at it again with more rain, wind, lightning, and hail to our area. On July 31, a storm passed through areas of our service territory, causing many outages. We had a few poles struck by lightning that needed to be replaced and many blown line and transformer fuses. One area affected by the storm that day, had high winds that resulted in twelve broken poles, 11 of which were on a three phase line west of Claire City, SD. Most of the services affected were able to be fed from another line and were restored later that afternoon. The next day, our linemen spent the whole day replacing these poles.



### ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Now is the time to schedule annual maintenance for your home's heating system. During fall months, HVAC technicians are typically less busy, making this an excellent time for maintenance and any necessary repairs before the winter months.

A qualified technician can clean filters, check for leaks and ensure all system components are working efficiently to keep you home cozy and warm when the temperatures begin to drop.



# MN COLD WEATHER RULE & ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM NOTICE

In accordance with Minnesota's Cold Weather Rule, electric service cannot be disconnected for nonpayment between Oct. 1 and April 30 if electricity is the primary heat source and ALL of the following statements apply:

- Your household income is at or below 50% of the state median household income. Income may be verified on forms provided by Traverse Electric Cooperative or by the local energy assistance provider.
- You enter into and make reasonable timely payments under a payment agreement that considers the financial resources of the household.
- You receive referrals to energy assistance, weatherization, conservation, or other programs likely to reduce your energy bills from Traverse Electric Cooperative.

## MINNESOTA'S COLD WEATHER RULE DOES NOT COMPLETELY STOP WINTER DISCONNECTS.

Before disconnecting electric service to residential members between Oct. 1 and April 30, Traverse Electric Cooperative must provide:

- A 30-day notice of disconnection;
- A statement of members' rights and responsibilities;
- A list of local energy assistance providers;
- Forms on which to request Cold Weather Rule protection; and
- A statement explaining available payment plans and other options to continue service.


#2086

## ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Energy Assistance Program (EAP) is a federally funded program through the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, which helps low-income renters and homeowners pay for home heating costs and furnace repairs. Household income must be at or below 50% of the state median income to qualify for benefits. Applications must be received or postmarked by May 31, 2025.

To learn more about the EAP program or to apply for assistance:

- Visit the Minnesota Department of Commerce Energy Assistance website, <https://mn.gov/commerce/consumers/consumer-assistance/energy-assistance/>, for more details and to access the application portal.
- Contact your county EAP service provider for additional information and assistance.
- For Wilkin, Traverse, Grant, Stevens Counties: West Central MN Communities Actions, Elbow Lake, MN. Email: [eap@wcmca.org](mailto:eap@wcmca.org), 800-492-4805, <https://wcmca.org/program-area/energy-assistance/>
- For Big Stone County: Prairie Five Community Action, Montevideo, MN. Email: [eap@prairiefive.org](mailto:eap@prairiefive.org), 800-292-5437 or 320-839-211 (Ortonville Office), <https://prairiefive.org/programs/energy-assistance/>

Traverse Electric Cooperative is dedicated to the people and communities we serve. If you are having difficulty paying your electric bill and do not qualify for either of these programs, please contact Traverse Electric Cooperative at 800-927-5443 to set up a payment plan. Please visit [www.traverseelectric.com](http://www.traverseelectric.com) for more info on the MN Cold Weather Rule. 

## Your Electric Cooperative needs **YOUR HELP**

Your electric cooperative works hard to provide safe, reliable and convenient electric power for you and your family. We also provide programs to help you use energy efficiently.

To help us plan for the future and determine what programs will benefit you most, your cooperative needs your help.

This fall, we will be conducting a survey of our residential consumers. If you receive a survey, please help us by taking a few minutes to complete it. Your answers are very important, so please respond as best as possible and return it promptly. A postage-paid return envelope is included for your convenience. The survey will also be available to complete online.



# July 2024 Traverse Electric Board Meeting Highlights

The July regular board meeting was held on Tuesday, July 30, 2024 at 8 AM. Absent: None.

Staff members present were General Manager, Jeremy Huhnstock, Dale Schwagel, and Karen Lupkes.

President Diekmann called the meeting to order.

The agenda was approved.

The 2023 and 3/31/24 Independent Audit Report was presented and approved.

The minutes of the June regular board meeting were approved.

The June check register was approved.

Discussed the East River and Basin Electric video reports, and the NRECA training video: Keeping Bad Behavior Out of the Boardroom.

Diekmann gave an East River Board Report.

Marks & Gaulrapp gave the MREA District meeting report.

Marks attended an East River Resolutions Committee meeting.

Huhnstock presented the General Manager's Report, which included:

- ▶ Provided a Basin Electric update.
- ▶ Provided an East River update.
- ▶ REED Fund review.
- ▶ NRECA update.
- ▶ MREA and MN legislative update.
- ▶ SDREA and SD legislative update.

Lupkes gave the Office Manager's Report, which included:

- ▶ June 30, 2024 accounts receivable balances were reviewed.
- ▶ A list of new members was reviewed.
- ▶ Update on Electrical Dept. and Generator Program.

- ▶ SD Generation Tax discussed.
- ▶ East River power bill and Basin's financial reports reviewed.

Reviewed and approved the June 2024 Financial Report.

The Operations Report was presented per written report. Items included:

- ▶ Provided a crew update.
- ▶ Reviewed upcoming and completed projects.
- ▶ Digester service update.
- ▶ 1,885 poles were tested with about a 10% reject rate.
- ▶ Urd cabinet inspections are complete.
- ▶ Two linemen recently met the hours worked requirements to obtain their journeyman certification.
- ▶ Reviewed our Safety Program.
- ▶ Outages were reviewed.

Received an update on the new facility.

Received an update on the old properties for sale.

Approved a donation to the Cooperative Family Fund.

Approved donating MN unclaimed property to area MN volunteer fire departments.

Approved donating SD unclaimed property to area SD volunteer fire departments.

Our new RUS loan application was submitted

Selected NRECA Regional Meeting voting delegates.

Selected Basin Annual Meeting voting delegates.

Reviewed upcoming meetings and attendees.

Meeting adjourned. ▶

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Doug Diekmann, Beardsley, MN  
 Vice-President: Tom Frisch, Dumont, MN  
 Secretary: Matthew Glynn, Sisseton, SD  
 Treasurer: Michael Marks, Norcross, MN  
 Stacy Ehlers, Wheaton, MN  
 Michael Gaulrapp, Breckenridge, MN  
 Jared Hamling, Rosholt, SD  
 Terry Monson, Veblen, SD  
 Bradley Rudolph, Dumont, MN

## OFFICE PERSONNEL

Jeremy Huhnstock – General Manager  
 Karen Lupkes – Office Manager  
 Dale Schwagel – Operations Manager  
 Melissa Przymus – Accountant  
 Stacie Johannsen – Billing Clerk

## OPERATIONS PERSONNEL

Richard Davis – Foreman  
 Lonnie Tekrony – Journeyman Lineworker  
 Joe Gahlon – Journeyman Lineworker  
 Austin Reinke – Journeyman Lineworker  
 Justin Lundblad – Journeyman Lineworker  
 Isaac Callens – Journeyman Lineworker  
 Tayden George – Apprentice Lineworker  
 Chris Falk – Facility/Staking Technician  
 Robert Groebner – Facility Technician

## GENERAL MANAGER'S CONTACT INFORMATION

Jeremy Huhnstock  
 Cell: 320-349-9901 | Direct: 320-563-1055  
 jhuhnstock@traverseelectric.com

## MEMBER SERVICE REP/ MASTER ELECTRICIAN

Steve Powers 320-808-9104  
 Connor Bartz  
 – Journeyman Electrician 320-287-0009

## ELECTRICAL INSPECTORS

### MINNESOTA

Brandon Lennox 320-808-5309  
 Big Stone County Grant County  
 Stevens County Traverse County  
 Rodney Schaffer 701-235-2840  
 Wilkin County

### NORTH DAKOTA

Mark Moderow 701-226-3779  
 Richland County

### SOUTH DAKOTA

Seth Warner 605-500-9020  
 Marshall County Roberts County

**In case of a power outage, call  
 (800) 927-5443**

6590 State Highway 27  
 P.O. Box 66

Wheaton, MN 56296 USA

Toll-free phone: (800) 927-5443

Local phone: (320) 563-8616

### Hours of Operation

Monday through Friday, 7 a.m.–3:30 p.m.  
 May 1-Sept 30

Web site: [www.traverseelectric.com](http://www.traverseelectric.com)

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*

**Our Mission:** To provide dependable service at the lowest possible rates, consistent with sound business principles.

## TEC July 2024 Financials

	Jul 2023	Jul 2024	YTD 2024
Total Revenue . . . . .	\$1,025,525.40	\$1,080,968.06	\$7,576,367.52
Cost of Power . . . . .	\$659,505.60	\$685,024.42	\$4,682,820.49
Total Cost of Service . . . . .	\$1,006,329.03	\$1,097,352.97	\$7,757,633.33
Operating Margins . . . . .	\$19,196.37	\$(16,384.91)	\$(181,265.81)
Total Margins . . . . .	\$73,007.47	\$1,088.29	\$(19,226.44)
Kilowatt-Hours (kWh) Purchased. 10,030,660 . . . . .	10,030,660	10,631,811	78,169,955
Kilowatt-Hours (kWh) Sales . . . . .	9,516,905	10,088,131	74,600,417
Line Loss . . . . .	.5%	.5%	4%