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## Mark Your Calendar

Nov 10..... Closed for  
Veteran's Day

Nov 15..... Electric bills due

Nov 23 & 24..... Closed for  
Thanksgiving

Nov 28 ..... 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 December 1st and you will get a **\$10 bill credit**.

# TEC OPEN HOUSE

Members enjoyed a tour of the new office and warehouse during the open house held October 5.



General Manager, Jeremy Huhnstock, led a group of members through the office.



Thank you to all of our members who came and took part in our open house. We enjoyed visiting with you and hope you enjoyed seeing the new facility.



Pictured, Lon TeKrony, Joe Gahlon, Connor Bartz, and Rick Davis grilled hot dogs and burgers all afternoon.



# Serving up Savings

By Anne Prince

**JEREMY HUHNSTOCK**  
General Manager

The holiday season is just around the corner and soon, festive music will flood the airwaves, sparkling lights and decorations will adorn homes and businesses, and good tidings will abound.

The holidays (including deer season!) also bring a frenzy of decorating, cooking and family gatherings, and amid the hectic hustle and bustle, you may receive higher-than-usual energy bills.

Keeping this in mind, I thought this month would be a good time to remind Traverse Electric members of a few programs and efficiency tips to help lower your monthly energy use.

## Programs designed to help you save.

Winter months typically bring some of the highest energy bills of the year. Making minor, low-cost improvements, like weatherstripping exterior doors and caulking around old, drafty windows can make a positive impact on energy bills.

Starting in 2024, TEC will be offering a Time-of-Use electric rate for our General Service (residential members). This rate can help you achieve greater savings by controlling when you use the most energy at home. TEC also offers a generator program to ensure you have electricity, even when you're without power, electric heating rates, and for large power members, a load control option.

Our team at TEC is available to help, so I encourage you to give us a call if you'd like to learn about specific programs and services that

can lower your bills.

## Be festive without breaking the bank.

My wife, Sara, insists that I bring the Christmas decorations down from the attic faster than we can finish the Thanksgiving turkey; or some years before Halloween... With holiday lights adorning our home for well over a month, we decided to make the switch to LEDs to save energy.

LED holiday lights use 88% less energy than incandescent holiday lights. To put that into perspective, the Department of Energy estimates that with standard holiday decorations, LED lights typically increase energy bills by about \$5 to \$7. But with incandescent lights, energy bills will typically increase by \$33 or more. For homes that go above and beyond with incandescent holiday lighting (think Clark Griswold), energy bills could increase by as much as \$350. Beyond energy savings, LEDs provide additional benefits, such as being shock-resistant, shatterproof and cool to the touch, making them safer for the home.

You can also lower energy use by conveniently managing holiday lighting. Smart light timers can help you save energy by connecting to a smart phone app or voice assistant to program lights to turn on and off at set times. If you don't use smart home technology, you can still save energy by using traditional timers.

Additional easy ways to save during the holiday season include

turning off overhead lights and using your Christmas tree to illuminate your home. If you have a fireplace, remember to close the flue when you're not burning a fire to ensure heat doesn't escape through the chimney.

## Cook up energy savings in the kitchen.

If you plan to have family and friends over this holiday season, you can cook up energy savings by using small countertop appliances like microwaves, air fryers and slow cookers when possible, as they use much less energy than the stovetop or oven.

When using the oven, bake multiple dishes at once for maximum efficiency. After all, it takes as much energy to cook one dish as it does to cook several. Turn the oven off a few minutes before the recipe's end time and allow the residual heat to finish baking the dish. Once the food is done, leave the stove door ajar to allow the residual heat to warm the room. When using the stove top, match the pan size to the burner to maximize the stove top's efficiency.


I hope a few of these tips will be helpful as we approach the holiday season. Remember, we're here to answer any questions you have about managing energy use or your monthly bills. With a little planning upfront, you can find efficient ways to save on everything from holiday décor to your favorite soup recipes.

From your friends at Traverse Electric, we hope you have a wonderful holiday season. ▶





## Co-ops in Classrooms

Jen Gross, Education and Outreach Coordinator from East River Electric Power Cooperative, Madison, SD, presented “Co-ops in the Classroom” to educate local elementary school students on how electricity works and the importance of safety through hands-on demonstrations. She visited the Wheaton Area Schools and the Herman-Norcross schools on October 6. Students used a Pedal Power Bicycle generator to provide energy to turn a light bulb on, and used a Van de Graaff generator to demonstrate the movement of electrons to create static electricity. 

#19916



## Power Pole Clutter

Flyers, satellite dishes, posters, basketball hoops, decorative lights, even hunting stands. You name it, someone has tried to staple, nail or tie it to a power pole. Here's a quick look at the dangers and pitfalls associated with unauthorized pole attachments.

### Illegal

Many state and local laws and the National Electrical Safety Code prohibit any unauthorized items on poles. Utilities can face fines if these attachments aren't removed.



### Pole Damage

Even small holes can allow moisture and insects past the pole sealant, which can shorten the life of the pole or weaken it and cause it to fall in a storm.



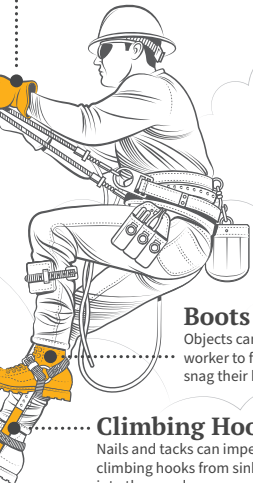
### Hinders Repairs

Posters and flyers can hide identifying markers on poles and slow repair work.



### Gloves

Staples, tacks and nails can puncture a lineworker's insulated rubber gloves and expose them to electric shock.



### Boots

Objects can cause a worker to fall if they snag their boots.

### Climbing Hooks

Nails and tacks can impede climbing hooks from sinking into the wood.



### Dangerous

A person who gets too close to energized lines while attaching an object can be electrocuted.



### Distraction

Some materials posted on poles, like mirrors or holiday decorations, can be a distraction to drivers.

# September 2023 Traverse Electric Board Meeting Highlights

The September regular board meeting was held on Tuesday, September 26, 2023 at 8 AM. Absent: None.

Staff members present were General Manager, Jeremy Huhnstock, Dale Schwagel, and Karen Lupkes. Also attending was Jared Hamling. President Diekmann called the meeting to order.

The agenda was approved.

The minutes of the August regular board meeting were approved.

The August check register was approved. Appointed Jared Hamling to complete the District 7 term.

Reviewed the 15 Year Long Range Plan and the 2024-2027 Construction Work Plan.

Reviewed the updated Class Cost of Service Study.

Discussed the Basin Electric video report. Gaulrapp & Marks reported on East River Annual Meeting.

Diekmann gave an East River Board Report.

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:

- August 31, 2023 accounts receivable balances were reviewed.
- A list of new members was reviewed.
- Update on Electrical Dept. and Generator Program.

- East River power bill and Basin's financial reports reviewed.
- Office hours return to 8 AM-4:30 PM on Oct. 2.

Reviewed and approved the August 2023 Financial Report.

Schwagel presented the Operations Report per written report. Items discussed included:

- Provided a crew update.
- Reviewed upcoming and completed projects.
- Carr's Tree Service is wrapping up for the year.
- The urd cabinet inspections reports are being reviewed.
- Reviewed equipment ordered.
- RESAP inspection went well on Sept. 21.
- There are several tile pump services to put in after crops are out.
- Reviewed our Safety Program.
- Outages were reviewed.

Received an update on the new facility.

Received an update on the old properties for sale.

Approved non-union employee salary increases.

Approved revisions to Policy 509.

Reviewed the EV Safety Training held on Sept. 20.

Discussed our Open House scheduled for Oct 5.

Executive Session.

Reviewed upcoming meetings and attendees.

Meeting adjourned. ▶

## TEC September Financials

	Sep 2022	Sep 2023	YTD 2023
Total Revenue . . . . .	\$906,092.82 . . .	\$926,775.75 . .	\$9170,392.87
Cost of Power . . . . .	\$613,532.21 . . .	\$620,062.86 . .	\$5,485,351.14
Total Cost of Service . . . . .	\$969,772.86 . . .	\$1,086,694.88 .	\$8,751,429.99
Operating Margins . . . . .	\$(63,680.04) . . .	\$(159,919.13) .	\$418,962.88
Total Margins . . . . .	\$(36,125.89) . . .	\$(141,950.08) .	\$661,015.45
Kilowatt-Hours (kWh) Purchased . . . . .	9,325,836 . . . . .	9,433,037 . . . .	95,134,766
Kilowatt-Hours (kWh) Sales . . . . .	8,896,421 . . . . .	8,979,107 . . . .	90,662,673
Line Loss . . . . .	5% . . . . .	5% . . . . .	4%

## 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 Przyms – Accountant  
Stacie Johannsen – Billing Clerk

## OPERATIONS PERSONNEL

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

Dan Urban 605-222-0143  
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, 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

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

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