

Regulations will change how electricity is made

Great River Energy relies on a diverse portfolio of resources to supply reliable and affordable wholesale electricity to Dakota Electric Association and 27 other distribution cooperatives.

In Minnesota, our power plants are fueled primarily by natural gas, and operate during periods of heightened electricity use. More than 10 percent of the electricity we supply comes from wind turbines located throughout the Midwest. We also receive power from hydroelectric plants, solar arrays and even a plant that makes electricity from household trash. We are on track to meet Minnesota's renewable energy standard, which requires 25 percent renewable energy by 2025.

For decades, however, the bulk of our power supply has come from coal-based power plants in North Dakota. Those facilities comply with all environmental rules and rank among the most efficient plants in North Dakota.

In August, the Environmental Protection Agency released its Clean Power Plan, which would require a 32 percent reduction in carbon dioxide emissions

from the power sector by 2030. The Supreme Court has since issued a stay of the rule, which will require legal challenges to be settled before it could go into effect.

Despite the delay of this recent rule, the EPA is obligated to regulate carbon dioxide emissions. Great River Energy has long recognized that impending carbon regulation is a serious business issue. For that reason we have taken steps to prepare for regulations and have actively engaged in discussions with state and federal agencies.

In recent years, Great River Energy exited a contract for half the output of a Wisconsin coal-based power plant, commissioned a coal plant compliant with the Clean Power Plan's proposed emission limits, and accelerated the depreciation of our remaining coal assets. We also completed 20 solar installations across Minnesota, including one in Farmington.

As regulators consider ways to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, we are asking them to consider these three principles:



David Saggau, CEO
Great River Energy

- Minimize the financial burden on ratepayers.
- Ensure the transition does not disrupt reliability.
- Establish a robust multi-state trading system of emission allowances.

Our record of successfully reducing emissions, improving efficiency and diversifying our resources will allow us to continue providing the greatest value to our members in any regulatory environment.

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Upcoming events

Lakeville Landscape & Home Expo	March 12
10th Annual Crops Day	March 16
Board Meeting	March 31, 8:30 a.m.

March 2016

Knowing what to do saved their lives

When teenagers Lee Whittaker and Ashley Taylor saw a power line safety demonstration at their high school, they never dreamed what they had learned that day would be put to the test. Only days later, Whittaker and Taylor, along with two classmates, were in a car that crashed into a utility pole, bringing live power lines to the ground.

"When people are involved in a car accident, electricity is usually the last thing on their minds," explains Molly Hall, executive director of the Energy Education Council's Safe Electricity program. "We're usually more concerned about whether anyone was injured or how badly the vehicle is damaged. We can forget that by exiting the vehicle, we're

risking exposure to thousands of volts of electricity from downed power lines."

If you are in an accident with a utility pole, your vehicle may be charged with electricity. If this is the case and you step out of the car, you will become the electricity's path to the ground and could be electrocuted. Loose wires and other equipment may be in contact with your car or near it — creating risk for electrocution if you leave the vehicle.

While downed power lines can sometimes reveal they are live by arcing and sparking with electricity, this is not always the case. Power lines do not always show signs that they are live, but they are just as lethal.

Whittaker, Taylor and their friends survived the accident because they had learned what to do. While they waited for line crews to arrive and deactivate the power line, Whittaker and Taylor made sure nobody left the car and warned those who came upon the accident to stay far away.

"Knowledge was crucial in keeping everyone involved in the accident safe," Hall says. "We want to make sure that everyone knows what to do if they're in accidents with power poles."

For more information and to see Lee and Ashley's story, visit www.SafeElectricity.org.

Great River Energy sponsors the 'Electric Room' at Twin Cities Auto Show

Great River Energy, Dakota Electric's wholesale power provider, is title sponsor of the Electric Room at the 43rd annual Twin Cities Auto Show (TCAS) that will be held March 12-20 at the Minneapolis Convention Center.

Formerly known as the Green Room, the all-new Electric Room will feature the latest technology in electric and hybrid vehicles.

"The Twin Cities Auto Show strives to showcase the green technology available from franchised dealers. Our Electric Room meets that demand," said Scott Lambert, executive vice president of the Greater Metropolitan Auto Dealers Association of Minnesota, producer of the TCAS. "Electric vehicles (EVs) are not only exciting to drive but they provide lower overall impact on the environment. We are thrilled that Great River Energy will be onsite to help edu-

cate and answer questions about this emerging technology."

Featured prominently at the event will be Revolt, a first-of-its-kind program that allows Dakota Electric members to upgrade the electricity used to fuel their vehicles to wind energy at no additional cost.

"Through Revolt, we are dedicating wind energy to completely cover the electricity that a consumer uses to fuel an EV for the vehicle's lifetime, which allows consumers to further support the use of renewable energy," said David Ranallo, Great River Energy Revolt program manager. "We hope to engage with Twin Cities Auto Show attendees through our exhibit and build awareness with consum-



Event attendees who visit the Electric Room can expect to find up to 20 EVs on display, as well as Drive Electric Minnesota representatives answering questions about charging stations throughout the Midwest and EV owners who will speak about their experiences.

ers around plug-in EVs."

For more information about this year's Twin Cities Auto Show — including ticket prices, hours, exhibit details and more — visit twincitiesautoshow.com.

For more information about Great River Energy's Revolt program visit mnrevolt.com.

What to do if your car hits a utility pole

Stay in the car. After an accident, stay in the car, and tell others to do the same. If you come upon an accident involving power lines, do not approach the accident scene. If you see someone approaching, warn them to stay away.

Call 911 to notify emergency personnel and utility services. Do not leave your vehicle until a utility professional has told you it is safe to do so.

If you must exit the vehicle, jump clear of it with your feet together and without touching the vehicle and ground at the same time. Continue to "bunny hop" with your feet together to safety. Doing this will ensure that you are at only one point of contact and will not have different strengths of electric current running from one foot to another, which can be deadly.

Dakota Electric provides electrical safety classes and training programs to students, community organizations, emergency response personnel and construction contractors. To learn more, visit dakotaelectric.com/safety-education/classes_and_presentations.



How to clean refrigerator coils

...and why it matters



Your refrigerator is one of the largest, most-used appliances in your home. It requires only minimal maintenance — just simple cleaning of the condenser coils, which disperse heat. If the coils are covered with dust, gunk or pet hair, they cannot diffuse the heat properly and will not run efficiently. A bigger problem can result if the compressor burns out from having to run constantly because of the grimy coating. This can be an expensive problem. The bottom line? A minor investment in time once a year can save you cold cash down the line.

1

Locate the refrigerator's coil, a grid-like structure, or fan that will likely have a covering or grate protecting it. The coil is usually concealed behind the front toe kick or in the back. Some newer models have internal coils, so if you don't find them in the front or back, this may be the case with your fridge.

2

If the coil is in the back, slide the refrigerator away from the wall, removing the plug from the electrical outlet when possible. You may also need to disconnect the line to the water dispenser or ice maker to allow enough room to work.

3

Gently vacuum and clean the coil. Using the brush or crevice attachment, carefully vacuum the dust and dirt wherever you see it. If you have pulled the fridge out, vacuum and wipe down the sides and back of the fridge and the floor.

4

Once the floor is dry, plug in the refrigerator and rearrange the power cord and supply lines so they don't get a kink or stuck under the weight of the refrigerator. Slide the refrigerator back into place. Be sure to replace the toe kick panel if this was removed.



Off-peak electric water heating: The smart energy choice

If you are considering installing an electric water heater, contact the Energy Experts at Dakota Electric for helpful advice, rebates and information on an Energy Wise® off-peak program that is right for you!

"As a trusted energy advisor, we want to provide our member-owners with the facts they need to make the best purchasing decision," said Mike Plutowski, energy services representative at Dakota Electric.

Benefits of electric water heaters

- High-efficiency electric water heaters, including heat pump water heaters, are readily available.
- No venting required.
- They can run on power generated from a range of energy sources including solar, wind, hydro and other renewables.
- Qualifies for off-peak electric rates.
- Easy to install.

Rebates for electric water heaters

- \$500 for ENERGY STAR® rated heat pump water heater.
- \$400 for new construction installation that is controlled on Dakota Electric's Energy Wise® off-peak storage program.
- \$400 for replacement of non-controlled water heater with an electric water heater controlled on Energy Wise off-peak storage program.
- \$100 for electric water heater installed on Energy Wise interruptible program.

Before purchasing a new water heater for your home, talk to the Energy Experts® at Dakota Electric at 651-463-6243 or visit dakotaelectric.com.



Nominating committee selects 2016 director candidates

In accordance with Section 3, Article III, of the Bylaws of this Association, we the undersigned Nominating Committee, in a meeting assembled on January 26, 2016, in the office of Dakota Electric Association, have selected the following nominees for directorship of said Association to be on the ballot for the annual meeting to be held on April 28, 2016.

The Nominating Committee is made up of the following: Bruce Adams, Robert Erickson, David Frame, Michael Kaess, Ken Koch, Amir Nadav, Mark Pflaum and Loren Solfest.

Watch for more information about the 2016 annual meeting and director election in the April issue of *Circuits*.

District 1

David Jones (incumbent)

District 2

Jim Sheldon (incumbent)

District 3

Bill Holton (incumbent)

Douglas Bonar

District 4

Paul Trapp (incumbent)







Jerry Brown

Greg Oxley

Your payment choices

Make paying your bill convenient for you

Dakota Electric makes it easy for members to choose the payment option that is most convenient for them and their family. With six different payment choices, members can set payments to be made automatically, pay online, choose to visit the office or pay by phone from the comfort of home, in addition to other options.

CHOOSE THE OPTION THAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU!	 AUTO PAY	 QUIK PAY	 ONLINE PAYMENT	 DEA OFFICE	 MAIL	 PHONE
TO PAY (BY CHECKING OR SAVINGS) WITHOUT AN ADDITIONAL FEE, I CAN PAY BY:	✓	✓		✓	✓	
IF I GET A PAPER BILL, I CAN PAY BY:	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
IF I GET AN ELECTRONIC BILL, I CAN PAY BY:	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
IF I WANT CONFIRMATION OF MY BILL PAYMENT TODAY, I CAN PAY BY:		✓	✓	✓		✓
IF I WANT TO USE A CREDIT OR DEBIT CARD (WITH AN ADDITIONAL FEE), I CAN PAY BY:		✓	✓			✓
IF I WANT TO USE MY CHECKING ACCOUNT, I CAN PAY BY:	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
IF I WANT TO USE CASH, I CAN PAY BY:				✓		
IF I WANT TO MAKE A PAYMENT ANYTIME, I CAN PAY BY:		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Heat pumps 101:

Air-source, ground-source heat pumps

Managing the temperature in a home or business has the biggest impact on energy costs. Heating and cooling accounts for more than 50 percent of all home energy expenses.

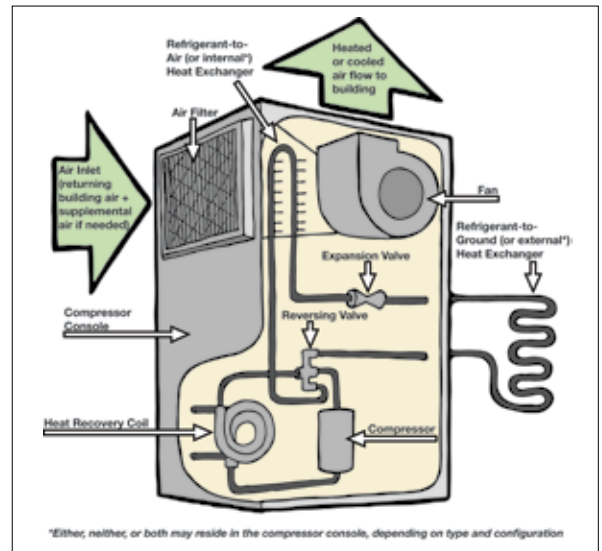
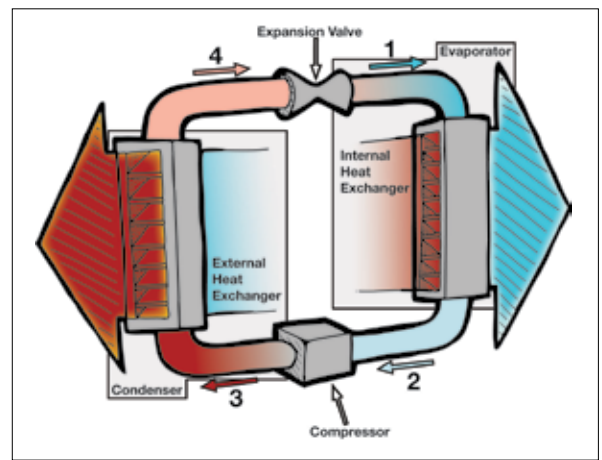
Heat pumps are highly efficient devices that can provide both heating and cooling comfort. As the name implies, heat pumps simply move heat from one place to another. During winter months, they collect and consolidate heat from outside sources and move it inside; during summer months, they reverse the flow and send warm, indoor air out.

The most common type is an air-source heat pump that resembles an air-conditioning unit and uses the air around it to transfer heat. Geothermal heat pumps, also known as ground-source heat pumps, use the earth itself or groundwater as a means of transferring heat.

Rebates and tax credits available

Dakota Electric offers up to \$630 in rebates for air-source heat pumps and \$400/ton for ground-source heat pumps. You can save even more by taking advantage of federal tax credits. Consult your tax advisor to learn more.

If you are interested in learning more about heat pump technology, contact the Energy Experts® at 651-463-6243.



*Either, neither, or both may reside in the compressor console, depending on type and configuration



A COMFORTABLE HOME. FROM THE GROUND UP.

A ground source heat pump is a stand-alone system that uses the earth's temperature to efficiently heat and cool your home with just one technology. With energy savings of up to 50%, it can pay for itself within a few years. That's what we call a green-green situation.

Contact Dakota Electric for more info
651.463.6243 or dakotaelectric.com



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Home & Garden Shows

Stop by Dakota Electric's booth at one of the upcoming Home and Garden shows. Representatives will be available to answer questions about energy efficiency, rebates, programs and more.

Lakeville Landscape & Home Expo

Saturday, March 12 | 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Lakeville North High School, 19600 Ipava Ave.

Apple Valley Home & Garden Show

Saturday, April 2 | 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Dakota County Western Service Center, 14955 Galaxie Ave.



We appreciate your feedback!

Dakota Electric has hired NRECA Market Research Services to conduct a residential member satisfaction survey on our behalf. Should you receive a call asking for your opinions about Dakota Electric's service, we would sincerely appreciate your feedback.

We know your time is valuable, so rest assured, we will use the results to make decisions on matters important to the future of your co-op.

Thank you in advance
for your time!



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Burnsville, Minnesota



Circuits Quick Clips

Tenth Annual Crops Day at Dakota Electric

Wednesday, March 16 | 9 a.m. — 2 p.m.
4300 220th St. W, Farmington, MN 55024

For the tenth year, Crops Day will bring University and agency specialists to Dakota County to share local research results and crop management strategies with producers and other agricultural professionals.

9 a.m.	Know your farm business	Pauline Van Nurden , extension educator, ag business management, U of M Extension
9:30 a.m.	Update on Minnesota Nitrogen Fertilizer Management Plan	MN Dept. of Agriculture
10 a.m.	Extension's NEW Nitrogen Smart program and NEW regional Ag Water Quality educators	Neith Little, Anne Struffert, Gregory Klinger , U of M Extension
10:20 a.m.	Break	
10:30 a.m.	Technology for monitoring soil moisture	Joshua Stamper , irrigation specialist, U of M
11 a.m.	Weed control update for corn and soybeans	Dave Nicolai , regional extension crops educator, U of M Extension
11:20 a.m.	SWCD, NRCS and FSA updates	Ashley Gallagher , SWCD; Michelle Wohlers , NRCS; and Scott Newberg , FSA
11:40 a.m.	Dakota County Groundwater Study: Pesticide Trends	Jill Trescott , groundwater protection supervisor, Dakota County
12 p.m.	Energy conservation programs	Mike Plutowski , Dakota Electric Association
12:20 p.m.	Lunch and trade show	

Lunch will be provided. This event is free and open to the public, but pre-registration is requested. For more information or to RSVP, contact Neith Little at 651-480-7723 or ngliddle@umn.edu.

The Southeast Irrigators Association Annual Meeting will be held in the same space immediately after the Crops Day meeting.

Lignite Energy Council Teacher Education Seminar: Energy, Economics and Environment

The Lignite Energy Council of Bismarck, N.D. is sponsoring this FREE teacher seminar at Bismarck State College June 16-19, 2014.

The seminar is designed to provide teachers with a broader understanding of the lignite coal industry and the important role it plays in providing electricity to homes, farms and businesses in North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Minnesota and Iowa. The seminar includes discussions on how lignite coal is mined and converted into energy, and the economic impact of the industry on the region.

Teachers who attend the four-day seminar are eligible to receive two graduate credits in economics from the University of North Dakota, Minot State University or North Dakota State University.

Great River Energy, Dakota Electric's wholesale power supplier, is helping sponsor the seminar and will pay the registration fee and transportation costs for teachers admitted to the program. Teachers from all grade levels in Dakota Electric's service territory are encouraged to apply.

For more information and to apply, visit www.lignite.com/teachers.

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Save the Date

Solar & Electric Vehicle Vendor Show

Tuesday, May 3 | 6-8 p.m.

Eagan Community Center

This year's show will feature solar vendors and expanded information on electric vehicle ownership. Vendors and details are still being finalized. Watch for more information coming soon!



Contact Us

Member service & drive-up window

7 a.m. – 7 p.m. Monday - Friday

651-463-6212 or 1-800-874-3409

Minnesota Relay Service 711

Lobby 7 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Monday - Friday

4300 220th Street West, Farmington, MN 55024

24-hour outage & emergency service

651-463-6201 or 1-800-430-9722

Underground cable locations

Gopher State One Call 811 or 651-454-0002 or
1-800-252-1166

Tree trimming & street lights 651-463-6287

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Program information and offers in this newsletter
are subject to change without notice.