

# CURRENT ACTIVITIES



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative   
Website at [www.clearwater-polk.com](http://www.clearwater-polk.com)

## SAYING THANKS! *Celebrating our Electrical Workers*

April 14th was National Electric Lineman's Appreciation Day and at Clearwater-Polk we put our own spin on the day and celebrate all of our electrical workers.

Linework is physically and mentally taxing. Work needs to get done no matter the weather conditions or the time day or night. Restoring power is no easy task, especially while looking out for your safety and your crew members. Linemen work long hours with minimal days off and it takes dedication and hard work. We talk about essential workers often these days and we can't overlook the workers who keep us connected and respond when no one else wants to.

Clearwater-Polk linemen and electrical workers deserve our thanks and recognition for the hard work they do every day. Thank You!



Picture left to right: Mike Girtz, Ian Willborg, Josh Hendricks, Travis Huot, Tim Mullan, Lanny Bjerke, Adam Sweno, Todd Waggoner and Matt Rendahl. Not Pictured Travis Trefz.

— OFFICE HOURS: 7:00 AM-4:30 PM ... MONDAY-FRIDAY —

MAY JUNE 2025

Phone 218-694-6241 – or – Toll Free (888) 694-3833



## Holiday Closings

Closed Monday, May 26  
for Memorial Day

Closed Friday, July 4  
for Independence Day

**SIGN UP FOR  
AUTO-PAY AND YOU  
WILL BE ELIGIBLE  
TO WIN  
\$25.00**

EACH MONTH WE DRAW  
TWO MEMBER'S NAMES THAT HAVE  
CHOSEN TO PAY BY AUTO-PAY. THEY  
WILL RECEIVE A \$25.00 CREDIT  
TOWARDS THEIR ELECTRIC BILL.

**CURRENT WINNERS**  
CHRISTOPHER G. PROKOSCH  
DON ABARR  
WAYNE HELGESON  
WAYNE F. BERGH



## CHEF'S CORNER

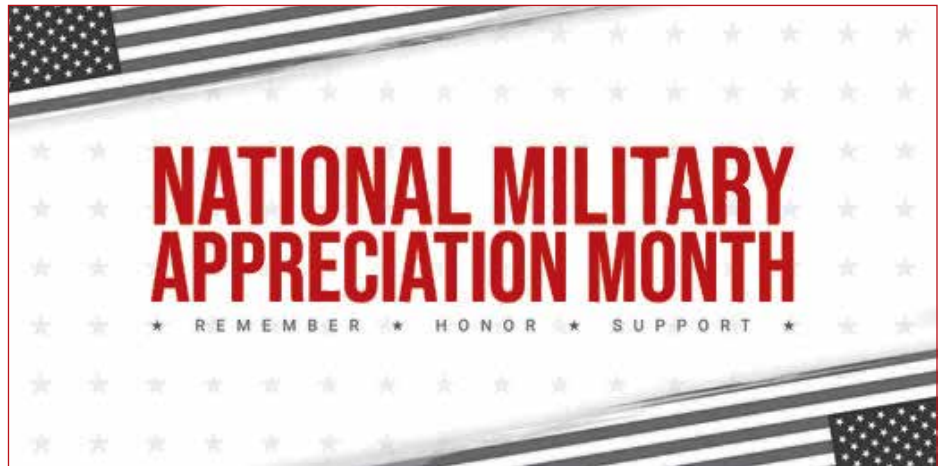
### Layered Rhubarb Dessert Grace Borud, Bagley

#### Ingredients:

8 cups rhubarb, finely cut  
¾ cup sugar  
1 (6 oz) pkg strawberry gelatin  
1 box yellow cake mix  
½ cup melted butter  
1 cup (or less) flaked coconut  
1 cup (or less) chopped nuts

#### Directions:

Grease a 9x13 pan. Place rhubarb on bottom of pan. Sprinkle sugar over rhubarb. Sprinkle gelatin next and then the cake mix. Drizzle the melted butter over the cake mix layer. Spread coconut and nuts on top. Bake at 350 for 50-55 minutes. Cool completely. Serve with whipped topping or ice cream.



## TROUBLE CALLS

### DURING OFFICE HOURS

7:00 am - 4:30 pm,  
Mon. - Fri.

CALL 694-6241 or  
1-888-694-3833



### AFTER HOURS OUTAGES CALL

1-877-881-7673

## OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

Greg Renner, *President*..... Shevlin  
Cheryl Grover, *Vice President* ..... Bagley  
Kim Solberg, *Secretary/Treasurer* .. Gonvick  
Harlan Highberg..... Bagley  
Doug Lindgren..... Bagley  
Dennis Engebretson ..... Clearbrook  
Betty Surdez ..... Bagley  
Deanna Lefebvre, *General Manager*

## SWAP SHOP

**RULES:** Ads for Clearwater-Polk Electric members only. Current Events newsletter will only be published every other month. Ads must be received by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the print month. Limit your ads to two items. No commercial ads, please.

### REMINDER -

"Free-For Sale-Give Away- or Wanted ads can be posted in our newsletters for our members."

## ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROVIDERS:

### Polk County Social Services

240 SW Cleveland Ave  
McIntosh, MN 56556 • 218-435-1585

### White Earth Energy Assistance

PO Box 418  
White Earth, MN 56591 • 218-473-2711

### Inter-County Community Council

207 Main St  
Oklee, MN 56742 • 888-778-4008

### Red Lake CAP Program

15533 Main Ave  
Red Lake, MN 56671 • (218)-679-1880

### MAHUBE-OTWA (For Hubbard Co.)

120 North Central  
Park Rapids, MN 56470-0229 • 218-732-7204

### Bi-County Cap

6603 Bemidji Ave N.  
Bemidji, MN 56601 • 800-332-7161

## YOU COULD WIN



**\$25**

To reward our faithful readers, one member's name will be drawn at random each month and placed somewhere in the newsletter. If you should find your name, let us know before the 15<sup>th</sup> and win \$25 off your next bill.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### May

05-15-2025: Farm Safety Day - Clearwater-Polk Electric safety demonstration - (date changes each year) - Location Bagley Hockey arena

### June

06-16-2025 and 06-17-2025: 2 day Power Plant Tour - Takes place every two years - two day trip with tours of Minnkota Power, Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center and a tour of Fort Mandan, the Milton R Young Station (Dustin Erickson) and BNI Coal Mines along with a few stops in between.

### July

07-31-2025 Clearwater County Fair -Visit Clearwater-Polk Electric's fair booth --Register for prizes! -Location Bagley Hockey arena

### August

08-01-2025: Clearwater County Fair - Visit Clearwater-Polk Electric's fair booth --Register for prizes! -Location Bagley Hockey arena

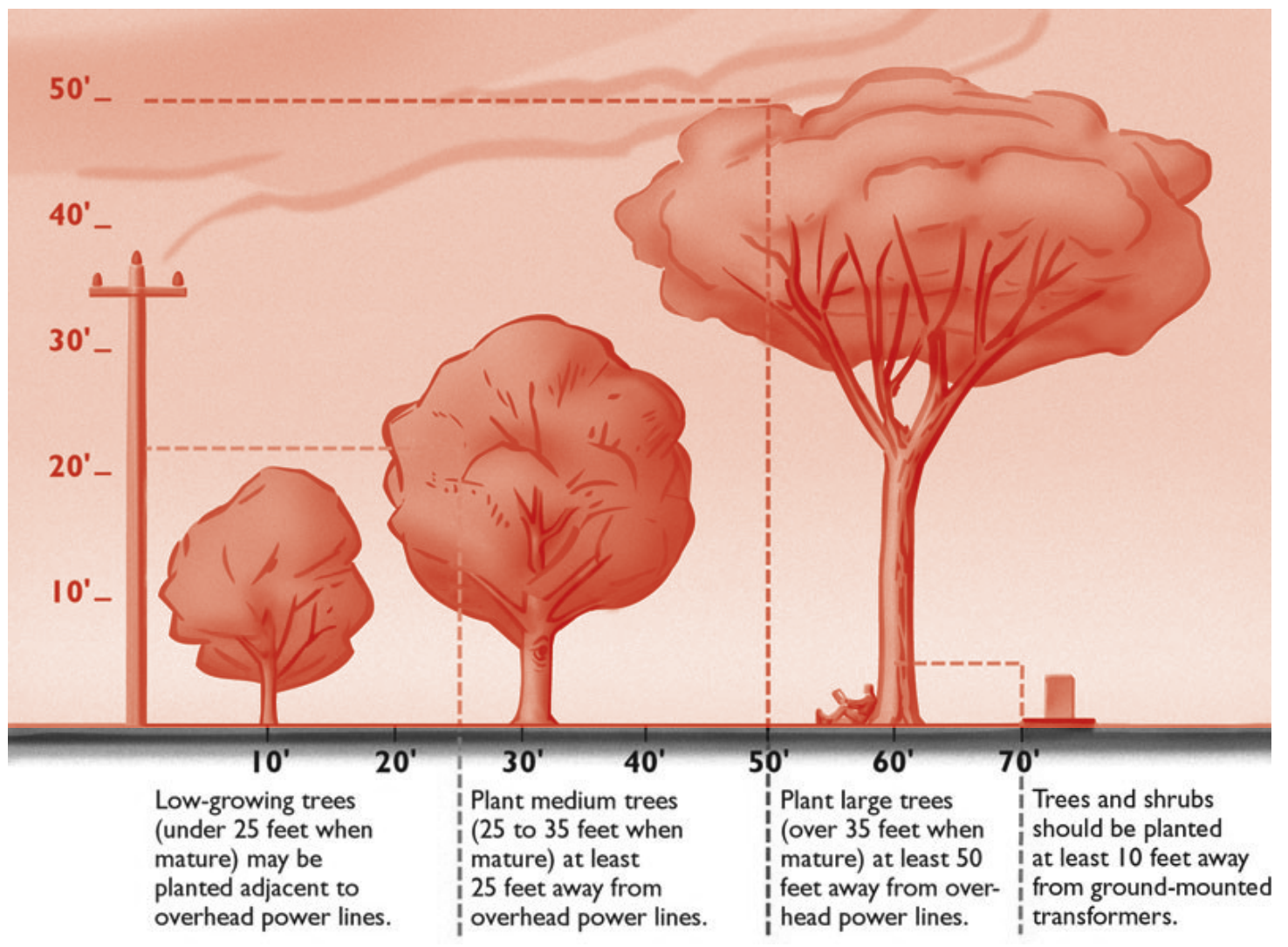
08-02-2025: Clearwater County Fair - Visit Clearwater-Polk Electric's fair booth --Register for prizes! -Location Bagley Hockey arena

### September

Pumpkin Days in Gonvick

### October

10-20-2025 & 10-21-2025: National Co-op Month - October is National Co-op Month and Clearwater-Polk wants to extend an invitation to our Co-op Members and the community members to help us celebrate. Stop in at the Co-op's office located at 315 Main Ave N in Bagley. Register for prizes!



# MAY IS NATIONAL ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH

## *Protect yourself with these easy tips*

You're likely not shocked that a few simple tips can help keep your home and family safe from electricity hazards. But since it's National Electrical Safety Month, it's a prime opportunity to review (Thomas J Johnson) some of those tried-and-true tips for protecting what you value most.

### AVOID OVERLOADING ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

An easy way to keep your home safe is to avoid plugging too many things into an outlet. Use a surge protector to keep appliances safe and remember to unplug any appliances when not in use.



### KEEP ELECTRONICS AWAY FROM WATER

Electronics and water **DO NOT MIX!** Keep electronics like phones, hand-held devices and small appliances away from water sources in your home.



### GET RID OF BROKEN OR DAMAGED ELECTRONICS

Plugging in damaged or broken electronics can harm outlets and further damage the electrical work in your home. Discard all damaged electronics, frayed charging cords and broken appliances **BEFORE** they spark or smoke.



### CALL A PROFESSIONAL ELECTRICIAN

Many projects around your home are perfect for a DIYer. When it comes to electrical work, call a trusted electrician – **DO NOT** attempt it yourself. Incorrect electrical work can cause power surges, outlet damage and house fires.



### IF YOU COME IN CONTACT WITH A DOWNED POWER LINE...

1. Stay inside your vehicle.
2. Call 9-1-1 and report the downed line.
3. In case of an emergency (like a fire) in which you need to exit the vehicle, jump clear of the vehicle with your feet together and your arms crossed. Keeping your feet together, bunny-hop far away from the downed lines.





# MANAGERS MESSAGE



**Deanna Lefebvre**  
General Manager

## Our Power is in Our People.

That was the central message shared at Clearwater-Polk Electric Cooperative's 78th Annual Meeting—a reminder that our greatest strength doesn't come from wires and substations, but from the people who make our cooperative thrive. From the commitment of our employees and the leadership of our board of directors to the involvement and support of our member-owners, everything we accomplish is powered by people working together. Whether it's providing reliable electric service or advocating at the state and national level for policies that protect and strengthen rural communities, we know that when we stand united, our voice is stronger—and our cooperative is too.

As we reflect on 2024 and look to the future, Clearwater-Polk remains focused on the values that matter most to the people we serve: safety in every aspect of our operations, reliability in delivering power day in and day out, and affordability to ensure electricity remains accessible for all our members. These priorities continue to guide every decision we make and every investment we pursue on behalf of our cooperative community.

## SAFETY

When it comes to electricity, there are no second chances. At Clearwater-Polk, safety is a continuous priority, supported by ongoing training, realistic simulations, and the leadership of a proactive safety committee. Our unwavering goal is zero

accidents—because nothing matters more than ensuring every employee returns home safely at the end of the day. We are proud to report that in 2024, we had zero recordable accidents. Most importantly, every member of our team went home safely each night. As we move forward, we remain committed to growing, adapting, and strengthening our safety culture.

## RELIABILITY & SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS

Over the past few years, Clearwater-Polk's service territory has been fortunate to avoid major storms. Even so, weather remained the leading cause of outages in 2024. While the total number of outages rose slightly from 2023, reaching 389, the cooperative still achieved an impressive system reliability rate of 99.98%. As in previous years, animals and trees were among the top contributors to outages.

In response to the continued shift from overhead to underground construction, Clearwater-Polk restructured its line crews in 2023. As part of this restructuring, the cooperative hired a full-time brusher in August 2024 to focus exclusively on right-of-way maintenance. Lanny Bjerke joined our team in this new role and has been doing an outstanding job keeping power lines clear and safe. Proactive vegetation management remains a cornerstone of improving long-term reliability.

In addition to internal efforts, Clearwater-Polk once again contracted with EXO, Inc. in 2024 to conduct pole inspections. Our service territory is divided into ten sections, with one section inspected each year, putting the system on a consistent 10-year rotation. This year marked the third round of inspections for one of those sections. Out of 2,476 poles inspected, 42 were rejected and marked for replacement, resulting in a failure rate of 1.7%, slightly higher than our historical average of 1.5% but still within a healthy range.

Planning ahead is just as important as day-to-day maintenance. Every four years, Clearwater-Polk develops a comprehensive Construction Work Plan that outlines key infrastructure investments, including conductor replacements, transformer upgrades, pole replacements, and new service installations. These projects are carefully reviewed to ensure responsible use of cooperative resources.

In 2024, line crews completed three major

system improvement projects, installed 43 new electric services, and completed 20 rebuilds, all contributing to a stronger, more resilient system. These efforts amounted to a total investment of \$1,030,682, coming in \$45,000 under budget—a testament to our team's commitment to efficiency and fiscal responsibility.

As 2024 concludes the final year of the current 4-year plan, Clearwater-Polk is now working with Star Energy Services to prepare the next construction work plan. As always, maintaining and improving system reliability remains a top priority for your electric cooperative.

## AFFORDABILITY & FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Across the country, rising inflation, ongoing supply chain disruptions, and increasing regulatory pressures have raised serious concerns about affordability—and Clearwater-Polk has not been immune to these challenges. Your cooperative has worked diligently to absorb many of the rising costs of doing business while continuing to provide reliable, safe service.

In 2020, Clearwater-Polk completed a Cost of Service Study (COSS) that recommended a minimum monthly access charge of \$50. Despite this, the board held the charge well below that level in the years that followed. However, with escalating costs and no immediate relief in sight, it became clear that some adjustment would be necessary in 2024.

Due to high demand among electric cooperatives nationwide, Clearwater-Polk was placed on an 18-month waiting list for its next cost of service study. In the meantime, to help stabilize finances while waiting for updated data, the board of directors approved a modest increase to the access charge—from \$37 to \$43, effective January 1, 2024. This new charge remains \$7 below the minimum recommended in the 2020 study, but is expected to help offset increasing operational expenses until the updated study is completed in 2025.

We understand that any increase is felt by our members, and the challenge of affordability is real for everyone. That's why your cooperative continues to operate with discipline, balancing cost control with our enduring commitment to safety, reliability,

**...MANAGER'S ARTICLE**  
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and long-term sustainability. While a rate adjustment will likely be necessary in 2025, Clearwater-Polk remains focused on making responsible decisions that protect the financial health of the cooperative while delivering value to our member-owners.

In spite of the challenges that we have faced this past year, Clearwater-Polk remains financially sound. Currently, Clearwater-Polk Electric has 1,539 miles of line that serves approximately 4,600 electric services. It is governed by 7 cooperative members serving as directors and employs 15 full-time employees. A total utility plant of over \$32 million, total equities of \$12.8 million, and year-end operating margins of \$199,870 after a \$200,000 revenue deferral.

### LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

As we look toward the future, our cooperative faces two significant challenges: the need for new facilities to support our operations and the financial realities that come with the rising cost of providing electricity, which was mentioned above.

Our current facility was purchased in 1963, and while it has served us well, it has been outgrown. Over the years, we've added onto it, but space is now tight. Our shop and warehouse are very full with not much room to move around, and not all of our equipment fits inside, limiting our efficiency and response during outages.

The existing pole yard, located about a mile out of town, is not only too small—it also presents safety concerns for employees and the public when entering or exiting the highway.

The goal of this project is to bring all cooperative operations under one roof in a modern, efficient facility that will serve our needs for decades to come. The planning study will be completed and presented to the board on April 30, and any future steps will be carefully considered with long-term member benefit in mind.

Together, the directors and employees embody the cooperative spirit—working side by side to ensure safe, reliable, and affordable service that you all deserve. Clearwater-Polk will continue to move forward building on the strong foundation that began over 78 years ago.

As always, stay safe, happy & healthy!

Deanna



## Our Power is in Our People

*Clearwater-Polk Electric's Advocacy Group*

### What is your Advocacy Group?

- ✓ Volunteers made up of our own membership since 2013.
- ✓ Members are educated on current cooperative events and legislative updates.
- ✓ We provide the group members the ability to be engaged in making a meaningful difference for Clearwater-Polk Electric Cooperative.
- ✓ Each quarterly meeting is comprised of selected information.
- ✓ The information is devised for educating the group on internal and external issues that do or could impact the strength and future of your electric cooperative.
- ✓ It is the intended responsibility of the Advocacy Group to relay these discussions with friends, family and as many members of the cooperative they can.

### How can you advocate to support your cooperative?

- ✓ Join the Clearwater-Polk Electric Advocacy Group.
- ✓ Join the political action committee (PAC) founded in 1966. PAC advocates for candidates at the federal level that protect the interests of electric co-ops.
- ✓ Educate yourself on the legislative issues.
- ✓ Attend your electric cooperative's Annual Meeting in April.

### How Clearwater-Polk Electric supports our cooperative?

- ✓ Employees of Clearwater-Polk contribute to PAC – Open to the membership
- ✓ Employees of Clearwater-Polk contribute to REPAC (Rural Electric Political Action Committee)
- ✓ Engage quarterly with your Advocacy Group
- ✓ The cooperative stays informed on current legislative events pertaining to our electric grid.



**We would like to thank all our past and present Advocacy Group members.**

**Current Advocacy Group Members are:**

Todd Johnson-James Sundquist-Ben Machlitt  
Dan Larson-Aricka Marsh-Sue Ekre-Lynn Riggs  
Erick Nelson-Marilyn Lanners

Contact Member Services Department for more information or questions, (218) 694-8205.