

# CURRENT

## ACTIVITIES



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

### Phase I deployment of new meter system to begin mid-October



Clearwater-Polk Electric crews will begin changing out meters that are energized through the Rice Lake substation in mid-October. Services located in this area include all or part of the following townships: Jones, Moose Creek, La Prairie, Minerva, Bear Creek, Lake Hattie, Itasca, Rice, Long Lost Lake, and Lake Alice.

There will be a strong push to get these meters changed before Thanksgiving. Please be prepared to allow access to all electric meters on your property. This includes access to heat meters that are located inside your home or building to avoid paying a higher rate for your heat usage.

### October is 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 to enjoy homemade pie and cookies, coffee and juice on Thursday, October 17th and Friday, October 18th. Co-op members can also sign up to win an energy certificate to be applied to their account. Mark your calendar and make plans to attend. We hope to see you on the 17th or 18th!

### Cooperative Month Coloring Contest

Winners will receive a new bike.  
Drawing is for 1 winner in  
Each age group 5-8 and 9-12.

Pick up Entries at our office:  
Clearwater-Polk Electric Cooperative  
315 Main Ave. Bagley, MN 56621  
Entry Deadline: Must be in our office by OCTOBER 11, 2024

**Must be 12 or younger to enter**

### Harlan Highberg Receives Red Lantern Award



Harlan Highberg, Clearwater-Polk Electric Cooperative director, was presented with the Red Lantern Award by Minnkota Power Cooperative, recognizing his 10 years of service as a cooperative board member. Thank you Harlan for your time and devotion to Clearwater-Polk and for your great representation of all the cooperative's members.

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



# 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*

## SCHEDULED BOARD MEETING

Held at the  
 Clearwater-Polk Electric  
 board room at 8:00 a.m.  
 on the last Wednesday  
 of each month.



# CHEF'S CORNER

## Pumpkin Bars

Maria Tollefson - Leonard, MN

### Ingredients:

- |                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1 cup oil           | ½ tsp nutmeg        |
| 4 eggs              | <b>Frosting:</b>    |
| 1 can pumpkin       | 1 (6 oz.) pkg cream |
| 2 cups sugar        | cheese              |
| 2 tsp baking powder | 1 /4 stick butter   |
| 1 tsp baking soda   | 1 T. milk           |
| ½ tsp salt          | 1 tsp. vanilla      |
| 2 tsp cinnamon      | 4 cups powdered     |
| ½ tsp ginger        | sugar               |
| ½ tsp cloves        |                     |

### Directions:

Mix oil, eggs, pumpkin and sugar until smooth. Add flour, baking powder, soda, salt, cinnamon, ginger, cloves and nutmeg. Pour into greased and floured 10 x 15 bar pan. Bake at 350° 30-40 minutes or until toothpick comes out clean. Combine frosting ingredients and mix on medium high until fluffy. May need to add extra milk or extra powdered sugar until a spreadable consistency is achieved. Frost on cooled bars.

**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

MARVIN C. MARTY  
 TREVOR SHERECK  
 AMIE L. WILLBORG  
 JAMES HOLTER

## YOU COULD WIN



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.

## SWAP SHOP

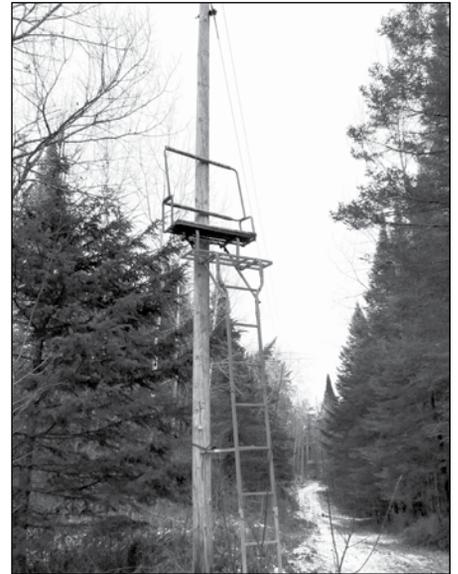
**RULES:** Ads for Clearwater-Polk Electric members only. Current Events newsletter will only be (Kenneth L. Lathrop) published every other month. Ads must be received by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the print month. Limit your ads to two items. No commercial ads, please.

### REMINDER -

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

**Bulls for sale.** Call 218-785-2385 evenings.

**For Sale:** 2014 Ford Taurus, gray w/ black interior, new tires, 97,000 miles, well cared for car. I can send pictures if interested. Armor backpack, black/orange, like new, good condition. CD/Radio/Tape player, light purple, like new. Uniform pant and top, brown, new, size medium, \$10 each. Adidas duffle bag, black/plum, like new, \$20. Call or text 218-280-2849.



**DO NOT** place deer stands on utility poles or climb poles. Energized lines and equipment on the poles can conduct electricity to anyone who comes in contact with them, causing shock or electrocution.

## 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**

## 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



# Minnesota's Cold Weather Rule goes into effect October 1

It's time to remind all Clearwater-Polk members about Minnesota's Cold Weather Rule, which is designed to keep families warm during winter, especially those who may have challenges paying their monthly bill.

Per the Cold Weather Rule, CPE must not disconnect and must reconnect, the utility service of a residential customer during the period of October 1 to April 30 if the disconnection affects the primary heat source for the residence and all of the following conditions are met:

- The member enters into, and makes reasonably timely payments, under a payment agreement that considers the financial resources of the household.
- The member receives referrals to energy assistance, weatherization, conservation or other programs likely to reduce the member's energy bills.
- The household income of the member is at or below 50 percent of the state median household income. The utility may verify income on forms it provides or obtain verification of income from the local energy assistance provider. A member is deemed to meet the income requirements of this clause if the member receives any form of public assistance that uses an income eligibility threshold set at or below 50 percent of the state median household income.

**MEDIAN INCOME**

Household Size	Annual Income	Gross Income per month
1	\$35,799	\$2,983
2	\$46,814	\$3,901
3	\$57,829	\$4,819
4	\$68,845	\$5,737
5	\$79,860	\$6,655
6	\$90,875	\$7,572

Unpaid bills must be absorbed by members who faithfully pay their bill each month. CPE does not want to interrupt service of any member, but all members suffer when a bill remains unpaid.

If you cannot pay your electric bill, are having financial difficulties or do not meet state guidelines for cold weather protection, please contact Clearwater-Polk at 218-694-6241 to set up an acceptable payment agreement in order to avoid having your electricity disconnected.

# 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 Clearwater-Polk Electric or by the local energy assistance provider.
- You enter into and make reasonably 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 Clearwater-Polk Electric.

Minnesota's Cold Weather Rule does not completely stop winter disconnects.

Before disconnecting electric service to residential members between Oct. 1 and April 30, Clearwater-Polk Electric 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.

**Energy Assistance Program**

The Energy Assistance Program (EAP) is a federally funded program through the U.S. Department of Health and 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 (\$68,845 for a family of four) 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:

**Polk County Social Services**  
218-435-1585

**White Earth Energy Assistance**  
218-473-1585

**Inter-County Community Council**  
888-778-4008

**Red Lake CAP Program**  
218-679-1880

**Mahube-Otwa (For Hubbard Co.)**  
218-732-7204

**Bi-County Cap**  
800-332-7161

Clearwater-Polk Electric exists because of you, and we are 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 Clearwater-Polk Electric at 218-694-6241 to set a payment plan.

## Military Cold Weather Rule

According to Minnesota law, a utility may not disconnect the service of a residential customer if a member of the household has been issued orders into active duty, for deployment, or for a permanent change in duty station during the period of active duty, deployment, or change in duty station.

A military household can qualify for exemption:

- If the household income is below the state median household income or the customer is receiving energy assistance, AND the customer has entered into a satisfactory payment agreement with the cooperative and remains reasonably current

with payments under that agreement.

- If the household income is above the state median household income AND the customer has entered into an agreement with the cooperative establishing a reasonable payment schedule that considers the financial resources of the household and (Marvell D. Heide) the residential customer remains reasonably current with payments under the agreement.

If you have any questions regarding payment policies and procedures please contact Clearwater-Polk Electric at 218-694-6241 or stop by our office located at 315 Main Ave N, Bagley, MN.

## STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION

Clearwater-Polk Electric Cooperative, Inc., has filed with the Federal Government a Compliance Assurance in which it assures the Rural Utilities Service that it will comply fully with all requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, all requirements of section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, all requirements of the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, and all requirements of the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture to the end that no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color or national origin, or solely by reason of such person's handicap, or on the basis of age, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination in the conduct of its program or the operation of its facilities. Under this Assurance, this organization is committed not to discriminate against any person on the ground of race, color or national origin, solely by reason of such person's handicap, or on the basis of age, in its policies and practices relating to applications for service or any other policies and practices relating to treatment of beneficiaries and participants including employment, rates condition and extension of service, admission or access to or use of any of its facilities, attendance (Alison Tisdell) at and participation in any meetings of beneficiaries and participants or the exercise of any rights of such beneficiaries and participants in the conduct of the operations of this organization. The person in this organization responsible for coordinating the nondiscrimination compliance efforts of this organization is Deanna Lefebvre, the General Manager.

Any individual, or any specific class of individuals, who feels subjected by this organization to discrimination prohibited by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, by section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, by the Age Discrimination Act or by the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture may be personally or through a representative, file with the Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250; the Office of the Administrator, Rural Utilities Service, Washington, D.C. 20250; the Office of Advocacy and Enterprise, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington D.C. 20250; or this organization, or all, a written complaint. Such complaint must be filed no later than 180 days after all alleged discrimination, or by such later date to which the Secretary of Agriculture or the Administrator of the Rural Utilities Service extends the time for filing. Identity of complaints will be kept confidential except to the extent necessary to carry out the purposes of the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

## August 2024 Clearwater County Fair!

Clearwater-Polk Electric would like to thank everyone who stopped by to visit at our 2024 fair booth. Congratulations to the lucky winners!



**Toy Replica Digger Truck Winner**  
Breven

### **Meter Seal Guessing Game Winner**

**Total meter seals was 128**

**Lauren Lindbergy**

*Received a Clearwater-Polk insulated shopping bag filled with:*

- Clearwater-Polk bamboo cutting board
- Clearwater-Polk small pocket multi-tool & flashlight combo
- Clearwater-Polk mini extendable flashlight
- Clearwater-Polk large travel multi-tool with large flashlight kit combo
- Electric skillet

### **Energy Credit Winners!**

\$50 Gerald

Katzenmeyer

\$50 Mayce Rikhus

\$50 Barbara Brooks

\$50 Tammy Loiland

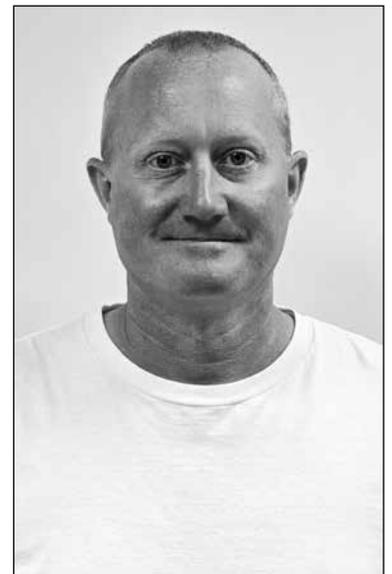
## Clearwater-Polk Electric welcomes Lanny Bjerke

The restructuring of the co-op's line crews in 2023 led to a great opportunity to hire a full-time brushman as part of Clearwater-Polk's right-of-way maintenance program.

On August 1st Clearwater-Polk welcomed Lanny Bjerke to our Cooperative family. Lanny is responsible for overseeing and managing the cooperative's right-of-way maintenance program. This includes performing routine maintenance tasks, such as clearing and removing trees, brush, and other vegetation that may interfere with or pose a threat to co-op maintained power lines and rights-of-way.

"After working 20+ years for Cooperative Development of Bemidji I'm honored in being your new Brushman," said Lanny.

Lanny enjoys being outside with his family - wife Tisha and daughter Viera. He enjoys fall time and hunting, and has lived in the Leonard area his whole life, attending school in Shevlin and Bagley.



# MANAGERS MESSAGE



**Deanna Lefebvre**  
General Manager

## October is Co-op Month

When it's time to write this article, there is never a lack of things going on at your cooperative or within the industry to update members on. I try to focus on a couple areas to avoid taking the article in so many different directions. These last couple of days I have been working on record retention and just before putting a pause on that to write this article, I came across my prayer that I prepared for the cooperative's annual meeting invocation this past April. As I read through it again, I decided that this would be something to focus on...perhaps it was a sign???

Over 25 years ago I stumbled into the electric cooperative world and I have stayed in because of the cooperative business model, and the seven cooperative principles. Subconsciously, the heart of the cooperative model came out in the words of the invocation. I want to share it with you here...

*Heavenly Father,*

*We humbly seek Your guidance and wisdom. Bless each member of our electric cooperative, uniting us in our shared commitment to serve our community with integrity and dedication. Grant us the strength to make wise decisions, the compassion to understand each other's perspectives, and the vision to foresee and effectively respond to our community's needs.*

*May our discussions be fruitful and our resolutions beneficial for all. Let us remember that, through our cooperative, we do not just provide a service, but also build and strengthen the bonds of our community. Help us to work together harmoniously, respecting one another's views, and striving always for the greater good.*

*We ask for Your blessings on our endeavors, that they may not only bring light to our homes but also warmth to our hearts. May our efforts today echo positively in the lives of those we serve, and may we continue to be guided by Your love and grace. In Your holy name, we pray. Amen.*

I am a faithful person. I don't hide it, nor do I apologize for it. With the complexity and fast-paced changes that our industry is experiencing, and the decisions that your cooperative faces, it makes me appreciate my faith even more.

There is so much pride to work and be part of a cooperative. The Cooperative Business Model is something to be celebrated. Once again this year I want to invite all our co-op and community members to join us in celebrating Co-op Month. Every year since I started at Clearwater-Polk, with the exception during COVID, I have made homemade pies, and we have served cookies or donuts, coffee and juice. I am proud that it has become a community favorite and I hope that you are able to stop by on either Thursday or Friday, October 17th or 18th. The pie and coffee are served fresh each day and I look forward to visiting with all those who make time to come in and help us celebrate Co-op Month!

## New Meter System

As previously reported, in 2022 Clearwater-Polk was informed of the discontinuation of our existing metering system. The 2024 budget approved by the cooperative's board of directors included phase one of the deployment of the new metering system. Late October crews will begin working on replacing meters for services that are energized through the Rice Lake substation located in the south end of Clearwater-Polk's service territory. The old meter system and the new meter system cannot run parallel to each other, so the crews are challenged with getting all the meters changed within one billing month for meter reading downloads. Meters served from the Rice Lake substation will need to be changed by Thanksgiving. Please be prepared to allow access to all the cooperative's meters on your property, including heat meters located inside your home or building. Thank you in advance for your cooperation with this project.

## Strategic Plan Initiative – Cooperative Facilities

In May, your cooperative's employees and directors met for 1-1/2 days to discuss the strategic goals of the cooperative to work to achieve over the next 3 years. To address the

size and safety concerns of the existing pole yard, and the age, condition, and size of the shop and headquarters building, one of the strategic goals identified is to research and analyze the cooperative's facilities. There is a significant need for a new pole yard. The plan is to design the new pole yard to meet the needs of today, as well as far into the future. A site plan will be designed with the consideration of adding a new shop and headquarters as well. There is a lot of footwork ahead before any decisions can be made and we will keep our membership informed along the way.

## New Brushman Hired

On December 31, 2022 our long-time lead lineman retired. Rather than filling the vacancy immediately, we took this opportunity to consider restructuring our line crews. We used 2023 as our trial run. If it worked out, we would hire a brusher. If it didn't, we would hire another lineman and go back to the original crew structure.

The new structure proved to be a win, win. The crews were happy with the change, time and workload management is more efficient, and the co-op has saved a considerable amount of our members money.

With that, it was time to hire a brushman for our right-of-way maintenance program. I am excited to welcome Lanny Bjerke who accepted this position and started on August 1st. At our employee family picnic on August 8th I had the pleasure to meet Lanny's wife Tisha and his daughter Viera. It was a great opportunity to visit and get to know them. It is without a doubt that they are a great addition to our cooperative family.

Whether it's big decisions like hiring a new employee, deploying a new meter system, investing in new facilities, or the everyday decisions and communication that we have with, and on behalf of, our members, may we always be granted the strength to make wise decisions, the compassion to understand each other's perspectives, and the vision to foresee and effectively respond to the needs of our members and community. We do not just provide a service, but also build and strengthen the bonds of our community. We strive to work harmoniously, respecting one another's views, and always strive for the greater good. And may our efforts today echo positively in the lives of those we serve.

As always...stay safe, happy and healthy!  
Deanna

## Cooperative directors earn credentials from NRECA

NRECA's Director Certificate Programs are specifically designed to help electric cooperative directors, at every stage of their service, understand their roles and responsibilities, stay up-to-date on the key issues and trends in the industry and prepare them to meet the challenges facing electric cooperatives now and in the future.

Clearwater-Polk Electric Cooperative directors Greg Renner, Dennis Engebretson, Betty Surdez and Cheryl Grover earned their Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) certificate, the first certificate in a three-part certificate program. The CCD certificate is achieved by attending a set of five courses that focus on basic governance knowledge and the essentials required for cooperative directors. They include: Director Duties and Liabilities, Understanding the Electric Business, Board Operations and Process, Strategic Planning, and Financial Decision Making. The CCD prepares directors to fulfill their fiduciary duty as elected officials serving on behalf of their membership.

Congratulations to all of you and thank you for your commitment to Clearwater-Polk Electric!



Front: Betty Surdez, Cheryl Grover. Back: Greg Renner, Dennis Engebretson.

## Operation Round-Up awards over \$15,000

### Next deadline for applications is October 25, 2024

The Clearwater-Polk Electric Trust awarded over \$15,000 in the latest chapter of Operation Round-Up on June 26, 2024. Organizations receiving funds included: All school reunion parade, Bagley after prom, Bagley Area Arts Collaborative, Inc., Bagley Baseball Association, Bagley Elementary School kindergarten, first grade, third grade swimming, fourth grade swimming, intervention programs, reading/math family night, special education, STEM.

Bagley School PTO, Bagley High School prom, Bagley-Fosston Brawler wrestling club, City of Shevlin community picnic, Clearbrook-Gonvick after prom. Clear Waters Life Center youth connection programming, bungee fitness and update bathrooms. Clearwater County 4-H cash awards, dog project and shooting sports. Clearwater County food shelf, Clearwater County Nursing Service (bicycle helmets), Clearwater Lutheran Church youth group, Clearbrook-Gonvick School - IXL.com. FHL

Academy pre-k-k, 3-4 grade, high school language arts, kitchen. Friends of Itasca, Headwaters Quilt Guild, ISD Community Ed, Lake Itasca Region Pioneer Farmers, Lutheran Social Services, Rhythm & Ride.

The next meeting of the cooperative's trust board will be in November. Please share this opportunity for grant funds with any area organizations that you feel could benefit from the Operation Round-Up® program.



Front row: Ashley Nordlund w/ son Barrett, Marie Gunderson, Marilyn McCollum, Bridget Moore, Tracie Dunaway, Wendy Nelson, Oliver Larson. Middle row: Charis Nordlund, Gladys Luecken, Janet Brademan, Olivia Nelson, Kylie Aufforth, Shelley Sutton, Laura Dahl, Sarah Larson, Jinnan Johnson. Back row: Ashley Shongo, Khelin, Tim Mullan, Courtney Syverson, Debbie Retzlaff, Darien Northup, Terri Nelson, Roberta Anderson, Megan Teige, JaNelle Melbo, Lexi Lofgren, Amanda Nybo.