

CURRENT

ACTIVITIES



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 
Website at www.clearwater-polk.com

CLEARWATER-POLK ELECTRIC TRUST FUNDING AND DONATIONS

The Clearwater-Polk Electric Trust Fund committee is scheduled to meet in June for the grant-funding meeting. Request for funds will be accepted until May 28, 2021. Application blanks can be found on our website www.clearwater-polk.com, or from one of the committee members, Cindy Benson, Lois Rydeen or Laurie Pemberton. You may also contact our office to have a form mailed to you.

Donations from the Trust will generally be made to organizations which benefit the service area community of Clearwater-Polk Electric Cooperative. Non-profit Organizations which have been granted IRS Code 501© (3) status and serve a large number of people will be given priority.

Donations from the Trust will generally not be made for:

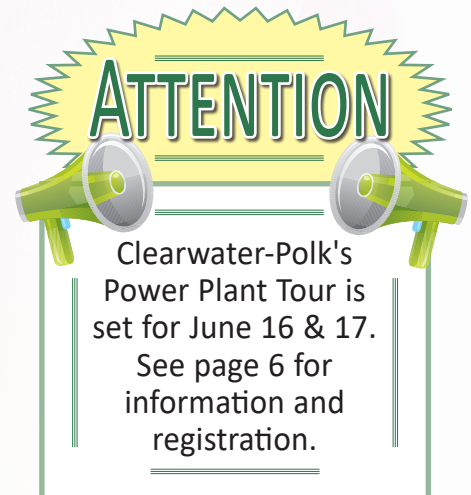
- A. Lobbying, political and religious organizations
- B. Fraternal, and labor organizations
- C. Fund-raising dinners, raffles and other events
- D. Individuals
- E. National fund drives
- F. Advertising
- G. Economic development projects.

The following factors will be considered in the evaluation of all funding requests.

- A. Potential benefit to area residents and the entire community;
- B. Level of community support for the program or project or organization requesting the funds;
- C. Fiscal and administrative capability of the organization to deliver a quality service or program; and
- D. Results that are predictable can be evaluated.

All donations to organizations will be published in area newspapers and the Current Activities Newsletter.

All applications will be kept on hand for one year.

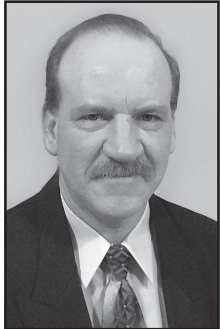
A yellow starburst sign with the word "ATTENTION" in large, bold, green letters. Below the sign are two green megaphones. The entire graphic is enclosed in a green rectangular border.

Clearwater-Polk's Power Plant Tour is set for June 16 & 17. See page 6 for information and registration.

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



74th Annual Membership Meeting News!



GREG RENNER

**74th Clearwater-Polk
Annual Membership Meeting
Election Results**

**CONGRATULATIONS
TO OUR RE-ELECTED BOARD
MEMBERS**



BILL LANNERS

Congratulations!

74th Annual Membership Meeting Draw Prize Winners

Winners include the following:

Dennis Sundbom
\$100 Energy Certificate
Byron Marsh
\$50.00 Energy Certificate
Harlan Strandlien
\$25.00 Energy Certificate

Joel Hood
\$25.00 Energy Certificate
Linda Tronnes
\$25.00 Energy Certificate
Bryce Torgerson
\$25.00 Energy Certificate

Thank you to everyone who registered at Clearwater-Polk Electric's 74th Annual Membership meeting and congratulations once again to all the draw prize winners.



CHEF'S CORNER

Easy Crockpot Pulled Pork

Ingredients:

3-1/2 Lb. pork shoulder cut into two inch cubes
Rub: 3 T. brown sugar
 3 T. chili powder
 2 tsp. salt
 1/2 tsp. pepper

Preparation: Mix rub ingredients and mix with cubed pork shoulder. Place in crockpot with 3/4 c. chicken stock and 1/4 c. apple cider vinegar. Cook on high for 4-5 hours or on low 8 hours until it falls apart. May add 1/2 c. barbecue sauce or allow guests to add as desired. Serve on buns topped with coleslaw.

Coleslaw: 4 c. bagged chopped cabbage or coleslaw
 2 T. honey
 1/4 tsp. salt
 1/4 c. mayo
 3 tsp. cider vinegar

Preparation: Mix all together and refrigerate until ready to use.

THANK A LINEMAN!

**We celebrated
National Lineman's Appreciation Day
on April 12th, 2021!**

National studies consistently rank powerline workers and repairers among the most dangerous jobs in the country. Working directly with high voltage creates the perfect storm of a dangerous and unforgiving profession. Our crews are committed to safety and the challenge of keeping the lights on, day and night, regardless of holidays, vacations, or important family events. They are continually training and learning how to stay safe in hazardous situations, ensuring that at the end of the day they get to go home to their families. We appreciate all that our linemen sacrifice to keep the lights on 365 days a year! So in honor of all their hard work and dedication, thank a lineman!



From L to R: Mike Girtz, Adam Sweno, Tim Mullan, Ben Eastley, Ian Willborg, Josh Hendricks, Travis Huot. Not pictured: Travis Trefz.

NATIONAL ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH

4 COMMON CULPRITS OF ELECTRICAL FIRES

Outdated wiring and overloaded circuits are the most common causes of electrical fires. Check the following areas of your home to ensure your home's electrical safety is up to par.



1. Electrical outlets: Faulty electrical outlets are a leading cause of home fires. As outlets age, so do the wires behind them that you can't see. Any loose, damaged or warm-to-the-touch outlets should be repaired or replaced.



2. Electrical wiring: Outdated wiring is another common cause of electrical fires. Frequently tripped breakers, flickering lights and burning smells are clear warning signs. If your home is more than 20 years old, it may not be able to handle today's increased power load. If you suspect your home's wiring is outdated, leave this one to the pros and contact a qualified electrician.



3. Overloaded cords and outlets: Extension cords are not permanent solutions. If your big-screen TV, home theater system and other electronics are plugged into one extension cord, it's time to call an electrician and install additional outlets.



4. Old appliances: Older appliances are more likely to have loose or damaged wiring, which means they're more likely to catch fire. Check older appliances for damage and determine if it's time to upgrade or replace. Also check to ensure you're using appliance-grade outlets. A qualified electrician can help with installation.

GENERAL SAFETY ELECTRIC GUIDELINES

- Check for power lines before doing any work
- Avoid downed power lines
- Call 911 immediately if you see a downed power line
- Maintain a distance of at least 10 feet
- Never touch someone who has come into contact with a power line
- Call the utility company before digging
- Keep all equipment away from power lines
- Familiarize yourself with local and state laws
- Refrain from attaching anything to energized power lines or electrical equipment
- Never climb power poles or other electrical equipment
- Don't attempt to remove objects tangled in power lines
- Avoid working in stormy, icy or rainy weather

5 STEPS FOR SAFE DIGGING

Working on an outdoor project? Careless digging poses a threat to people, pipelines and underground facilities. Always call 8-1-1 first. Here are five easy steps for safe digging:



1. NOTIFY

Call 8-1-1 or make a request online two to three days before your work begins. The operator will notify the utilities affected by your project.

2. WAIT

Wait two to three days for affected utilities to respond to your request. They will send a locator to mark any underground utility lines.



3. CONFIRM

Confirm that all affected utilities have responded to your request by comparing the marks to the list of utilities the 8-1-1 call center notified.



4. RESPECT

Respect the markers provided by the affected utilities. The markers are your guide for the duration of your project.



5. DIG CAREFULLY

If you can't avoid digging near the markers (within 18-24 inches on all sides, depending on state laws), consider moving your project location.



SAFE USE OF GENERATORS

During a power outage, you may find yourself in the dark and unable to use your appliances for a period of time. A generator can provide temporary electricity that, depending on type, can power a few appliances or an entire building. While convenient during an outage, generators used improperly can also create safety hazards.

Before investing in a generator, think first about your electrical needs and usage. Know the difference between standby and portable generators.

Standby Generators which are permanently installed must have an approved transfer safety switch to avoid feeding electricity back into the electrical system outdoors, creating what's known as "back-feed". Back-feed is dangerous for lineworkers as well as anyone who may be near downed power lines.

Portable Generators do not permanently attach to the home and can power only the appliances that are plugged into the generator, so consider essential electrical needs when choosing.

To avoid back-feed into the utility electrical system, the portable generator should **NEVER** be plugged directly into the home. Before using a portable generator read all manufacturer instructions.

Place generator in an open, well ventilated area away from the home or garage. Using your generator in a space that does not have adequate ventilation increases the risk of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning from fumes. As an extra precaution, install CO detectors around the

home and test them regularly. CO is odorless and colorless and can be deadly. Symptoms of CO poisoning include dizziness, nausea and headaches. If you suspect a problem, seek fresh air immediately.

Before turning the generator on, make sure nothing is plugged in. Keep children and pets a safe distance from generators. After starting it only plug appliances or those connected to heavy-duty extension cords directly into the generator. Never plug the generator into a wall outlet to avoid the risk of back-feed.

Generators pose electrical risks, especially when operated in wet conditions. Use a generator only when necessary during moist conditions. When possible, protect the generator by operating it under an open, canopy-like structure and on a dry surface where water cannot form puddles or drain under it.

It is recommended that a generator be operated once a month for 10 minutes to ensure it is running properly. Store a standby generator in an easily accessible, weatherproof area. Have enough fuel for at least 24 hours in case of a power outage.

When turning off your generator, take the time to do so safely. Unplug all appliances before turning off the power of the generator. In order to keep your generator in working order, you'll need to perform regular maintenance.



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 15th and win \$25 off your next bill.

SWAP SHOP

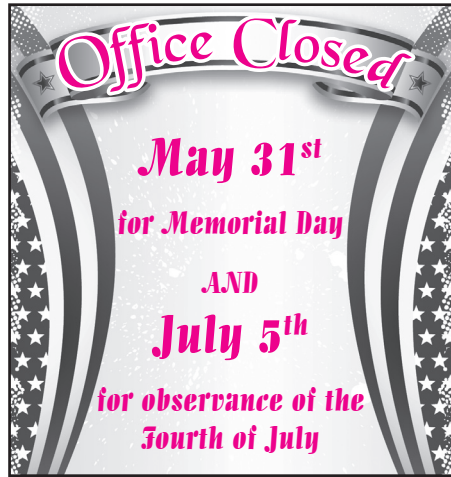
RULES: Ads for Clearwater-Polk Electric members only. Current Events newsletter will only be published every (Zachary L Walton) other month. Ads must be received by the 10th of the print month.

Limit your ads to two items.
No commercial ads, please.

WANTED: Metal fence T-Posts, chicken wire, 4 – wheeler, square back canoe. 218-766-8176.

OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

Greg Spaulding, *President* Bagley
 Greg Renner, *Vice President*..... Shevlin
 Harlan Highberg, *Treasurer*..... Bagley
 Kim Solberg, *Secretary* Gonvick
 Robert Johnson Bagley
 Bill Lanners Shevlin
 Dennis Engebretson Clearbrook
 Deanna Lefebvre..... *General Manager*



**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
 BRAD LEBEDA,
 WESLEY SIMENSON, KATHY D.
 VITCAK, GARY MERSCHMAN

SCHEDULED BOARD MEETING

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

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE TO HELP WITH UTILITY BILLS

We know that COVID-19 has created additional financial hardships, placing an even larger burden on families already struggling to pay their bills or bring their accounts current. If you are experiencing difficulty paying your electric bill, the Energy Assistance Program (EAP) helps pay for home heating costs and furnace repairs for income-qualified homeowners and renters.

EAP primary heat grants range from \$200 to \$1,600 depending on family size, income and energy costs. In addition to primary heat grants, crisis-benefit grants are also available. For the second year in a row, the Minnesota Department of Commerce has increased the maximum annual crisis-benefit grants for qualifying households from \$600 to \$1,200.

Despite the large infusion of dollars into the EAP program, applications for primary heat benefits are down by about 10%, and applications for crisis benefits are down by about 30%. The EAP application deadline

is May 31, 2021, but may be extended until September 1, 2021.

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.

Minnesota's Cold Weather Rule also helps to protect and reconnect residential heat from Oct. 15 through April 15.

| Household Size | 3 Month Max. Guidelines |
|----------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | \$7,066 |
| 2 | \$9,240 |
| 3 | \$11,415 |
| 4 | \$13,589 |
| 5 | \$15,763 |
| 6 | \$17,937 |

ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROVIDERS:

Clearwater County Social Services
 216 Park Ave NW
 Bagley, MN 56621
 218-694-6164

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

2020 ANNUAL REPORT TO MEMBERS

It is without a doubt that when anyone is reporting on the 2020 year, the impacts of COVID-19 cannot go without mentioning. When thinking about how much this has changed all our lives, it is almost surreal. Due to COVID-19 it was decided to conduct your cooperative's 74th Annual Meeting in the same format as last year with the hope that next year's 75th will be back to normal and reporting to the membership can be done in an in-person format once again.

In 2020 we sold 71,404,842 kWhs, which was down by 4.1% from 2019. We received total revenues of \$9,700,653, and at year-end we had operating margins of \$254,191 to allocate to our members for 2020. We are also happy to report that in 2020 your cooperative returned over \$202,000 in capital credits.

Electric rates are a critical component of the cooperative business. Rate design entails a balancing act between meeting revenue needs while minimizing the overall financial impact to our members. As a not-for-profit organization, we must recover our costs of doing business as well as maintain sufficient margins to reinvest in our electric distribution system. To identify the total revenue requirements for the cooperative, a cost-of-service study was performed this year by the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC). Through the cost-of-service study, costs are allocated appropriately to each member classification based on the service, equipment and infrastructure required to serve. This cost-of-service study resulted in a new structure to the rate schedule that went into effect January 1, 2021. The wholesale power cost adjustment charge was realigned so the overall amount charged to members should be revenue-neutral based on member classification and consumption. The 2-tier energy rate was changed to 1-tier and a demand charge was implemented on the residential classification. Overall, the new rate schedule is estimated to be an average increase of 2.5%.

As we compare our electric bill with other services and expenses that are paid each month, the value and convenience that electricity brings to us each and every day is realized. Thankfully our system was not hit by any major storms in 2020, and our reliability rate was at 99.96%. Weather and equipment failure are the primary reasons and trees are consistently the number one cause of outages on our system. They not only cause blinks and outages, but most importantly, are safety concerns. Late fall and this past winter were prime working conditions to maintain right-

of-way. Clearwater-Polk took advantage of these conditions spending just over \$381,000 in 2020 to improve safety and reliability. If you see any tree hazards, please contact us.

Our total utility plant grew by \$738,177 in 2020 adding 52 new services. Of those services, 15 were for new homes, 9 were for cabins or camp sites and the rest of the communication towers, shops, wells, internet services, grain bins and drain tile. We rebuilt 17 services to

increase capacity, and we retired 30. It is the cooperatives policy to remove services that have been idle for over two years or at the request of the landowner. At year end, 4,931 services were connected to a network of 1,510 miles of distribution line. Spring of 2020 we started to rebuild seven miles of three-phase line starting one mile north of the Rice Lake Substation and ending at county road 26. This job was completed this past September. The 2021 workplan includes extending a three-phase line, converting some single-phase to three-phase, and replacing three miles of three-phase underground lines. If you have any projects that require a new electric service or upgrades to your existing service, please call us in advance so arrangements can be made.

Along with providing a reliable power supply that you expect and deserve as a valued member of your cooperative, safety is our number one goal. The directors you have elected and the employees we have on staff take great pride in delivering you safe-reliable electricity that powers your lives. The Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program (RESAP), is a service of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) that strives to promote the highest standards of safety among electric cooperatives. The premise for this program is based on two fundamental guiding principles that are essential to achieving safety excellence: 1) Safety must be embraced as a core value where the actions and decisions of the cooperative reflect a fundamental and unwavering commitment to safety at all levels of the cooperative. 2) Cooperative leaders and employees take ownership of the systems and processes that create a safe working environment. Safety systems are a shared responsibility and should focus on enhancing safe behaviors and reducing unsafe acts and risks to injury. Participating in this program



Greg Spaulding
Board President



Deanna Lefebvre
General Manager

requires an annual safety improvement plan and performance measures of key OSHA data be submitted annually. And every three years along with safety health checks, leadership commitment and verification documents that are submitted, there is an onsite observation. After the onsite observation was completed in July, we are proud to report that your cooperative received many excellent ratings for safety and received the Certificate of Safety Achievement award.

Last year General Manager, Bruce Bjerke, recognized the retirements of two long time employees and two long time Directors of Clearwater-Polk. Now, it is his turn to retire and our turn to recognize and thank Bruce for his 22 years of service and dedication to the membership and to the employees of Clearwater-Polk. We wish him a long happy and healthy retirement.

Hiring new employees is a challenging task and comes with a significant amount of worry over finding the right person for the job. Clearwater-Polk Electric has been blessed with a great group of employees and we are very excited to welcome our newest employee, Angie Schneider. Angie has been hired as the new Office and Finance Manager for Clearwater-Polk. She started her new role just last week and is already proving to be a great asset to the Co-op.

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, Clearwater-Polk Electric is blessed with a great group of employees and we would like to recognize and thank each of them for their hard work. We would also like to thank our Board of Directors for their service and leadership representing the members, as well as the Advocacy Group and the Operation Roundup Trust Board for their involvement and interest in the cooperative.

Thank you for your support and the opportunity to serve you this past year. Please feel free to stop in for a visit anytime!

Schneider Joins Clearwater-Polk Electric



Clearwater-Polk is proud to welcome Angie Schneider as the new Office/Finance Manager.

Before accepting her new position at Clearwater-Polk, Angie was the Accounting Representative at Beltrami Electric Cooperative in Bemidji for 6 years. With her experience at BEC, and Bachelor's Degree in Accounting, she is already proving to be a great asset to Clearwater-Polk.

Angie was raised on the family farm in Pinewood and is proud to own her own piece of the home property along with her husband Brian, three dogs and a cat. Her favorite time of year is calving season because she loves all the babies. What Angie says she enjoys most, though, is living so close to family because she loves spending time with them.

Join Us For Clearwater-Polk's Electric Power Plant Tour



Make plans today to travel through scenic North Dakota for the two-day power plant tour offered by Clearwater-Polk Electric. The tour is scheduled for June 16th and June 17th, 2021.

The first day of the trip will include a stop at Minnkota Power Cooperatives headquarters in Grand Forks, the replica of Lewis & Clarks Fort Mandan and a visit at the Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center. The evening will be spent at the Comfort Inn & Suites, which will include a banquet and presentation sponsored by Minnkota Power.

The second day includes a tour of the Milton R/ Young generation station near Center, ND.

Weather permitting, a tour through the BNI coal mine operation is scheduled as well. You are guaranteed to have a better understanding of the process involved with generating the electricity that serves you.

The cost to participate is \$80 per person for a double occupancy and \$100 for single occupancy. This includes transportation, meals and lodging. The tour is open to all Clearwater-Polk Electric members and/or spouses. Accommodations are limited due to COVID, masks are required in close quarters. Please reserve your spot (Laverne E. Teilken) now by returning the completed Power Plant Tour Registration form.

Any questions, please call Tara at Clearwater-Polk Electric at 218-694-624 or 1-888-694-3833 EXT:115



Power Plant Tour Registration Form

| | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Names of Participants | Address |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| Telephone Number _____ | Account Number _____ |
| Number Attending _____ | Amount Enclosed \$ _____ |

MAIL TO: Clearwater-Polk Electric Cooperative, PO Box 0, Bagley, MN 56621
-You will be mailed a letter of confirmation with more tour information.-

Thank You

To all the men and women who have served & to their families for their sacrifices

Avoid placing items like lamps and televisions near your thermostat.

The thermostat senses heat from these appliances, which can cause your air conditioner to run longer than necessary.

Source: www.energy.gov

Energy Tip of the Month

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