



Wright-Hennepin
Cooperative Electric Association

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Wright-Hennepin Cooperative Electric Association's

Hotline Update

January 2015

WH's Annual Meeting to be held March 26

Wright-Hennepin (WH) will be celebrating its 2015 Annual Meeting on Thursday, March 26. The event is free to members and will be at WH's headquarters in Rockford, Minn. – located at 6800 Electric Drive. Registration begins at 4 p.m. A complimentary pork chop dinner will be served from 4:30 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. A short business meeting will follow at 7 p.m. Free parking will be available.



Wright-Hennepin will again feature a complimentary pork chop dinner at the 2015 Annual Meeting.

Director Elections and Bylaw Amendments

WH has elections for directors in Districts 1, 3 and 9. The 2015 Annual Report will be mailed to members in March and will include detailed information about each director candidate. Director ballots will be sent to members in Districts 1, 3 and 9 before the meeting. There will also be a vote for all members, to approve 2015 Bylaw amendments. The main change is the addition of the option of electronic voting. This will be an additional voting option to the mail and in-person voting choices that are currently available. There are also a few language updates. Details will follow in your 2015 Annual Report. Members who have not voted by mail can also cast votes at the meeting until the time the ballots are called for during the business meeting. At the end of the meeting, WH will announce the results of the director elections in Districts 1, 3 and 9 and the results of the Bylaw vote.

Business Meeting

The theme for the 2015 Annual Meeting is, "A New Era for Energy." A senior executive of CoBank, a Denver-based lender to WH, will be our featured guest speaker at the business meeting. A grand prize drawing of a retired vehicle from WH's fleet will immediately follow the meeting. In addition, many booth prizes will be drawn on the day after the meeting. At the end of the business meeting all members will receive a free pound of butter as an attendance gift.

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Check out page 3 for information about a new \$0-down LED bulb program

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Members may now file as director candidates

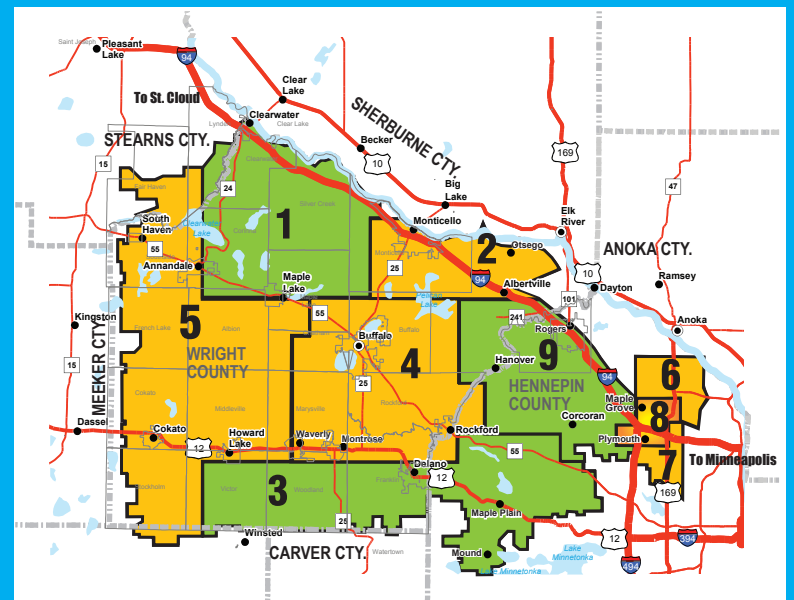
Wright-Hennepin (WH) members can now submit nominations to vie for a seat on the cooperative's board of directors in Districts 1, 3 and 9. Members elected to these positions will begin their terms immediately following the 2015 Annual Meeting on March 26, 2015.

If you are unsure which district you live in, please refer to your mailing label on this month's newsletter. The district number is shown on the first line of the label, just above your name. The "BD" stands for board district.

Incumbent directors up for re-election in 2015 are: Timothy Young (District 1), Burton Horsch (District 3) and Erick Heinz (District 9). All have declared their intent to seek re-election.

Members in these districts who would like to compete in the election need to file a director nominee application form. To apply, print out, complete and

sign the form found on WH's website by visiting www.whe.org and clicking on "Members may file as director candidates" under Featured Programs. Mail in the form along with a resume to: Wright-Hennepin Cooperative Electric Association, Attn: Dale Jans, Secretary/Treasurer, P.O. Box 330, Rockford, MN 55373. The application deadline is Feb. 4, 2015. 





CEO's Memo

MARK VOGT WH President & CEO

A trend that is altering WH's mission

For five years I have been alerting you to a trend that is progressively altering the mission of your cooperative. It is the trend of declining energy use by consumers.

Consider these facts asserting themselves on your cooperative right now:

- Since 2008, 3,900 new homes or other structures have been built on the WH system, but the total amount of energy sold by your cooperative has remained flat.
- A home built on WH's lines today uses 26 percent less electricity than the average of all WH homes.
- Electric usage among small commercial members has dropped 7 percent since 2008.

At first, we thought this declining use trend was temporary, the result of the Great Recession, as well as from a string of unseasonable-weather years that occurred during this time. The Great Recession stalled new construction, the real estate market, and caused many small businesses to shutter their doors — all of which had unfavorable effects on annual energy sales. In addition, those economic conditions caused consumers to watch their expenses — especially the purchase and use of energy — much more closely. By 2010, many key economic indicators across the country had begun to improve, but energy usage remained stalled. It was a big enough event that I mentioned it in my 2010 Annual Meeting speech to WH members:

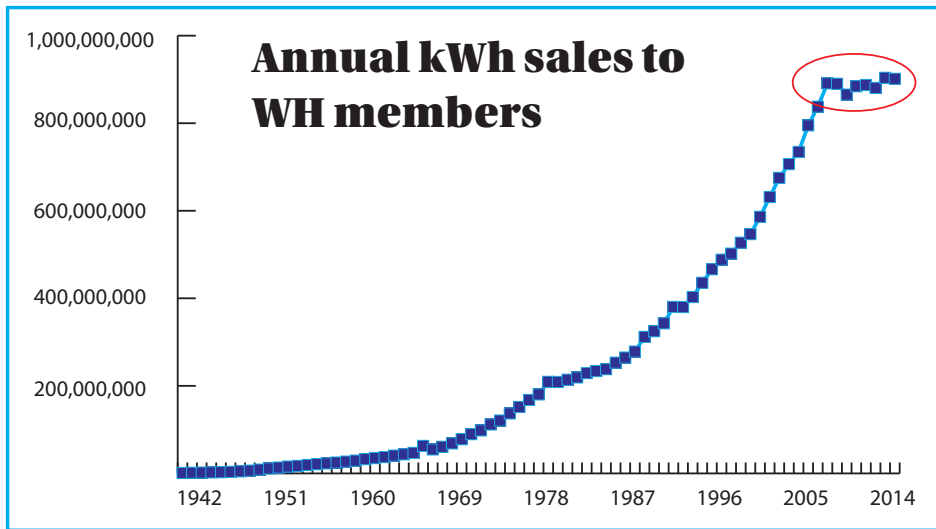
"With this chart (above right), you can see that over time, your cooperative has enjoyed good, steady, annual growth in kilowatt-hour sales ... until 2008 (when growth suddenly stalled) ... and then again in 2009 ... and that trend is continuing so far in 2010. This is a multi-year pattern that we have not seen (since the cooperative began in 1937.)"

In that speech, I also shared why this trend mattered to WH members:

"This is important to you because sales growth (and the resulting new revenue) has been one of the ways we've been able to offset the growing cost of wholesale power, taxes and other general inflationary pressures."

Since 2010, I've come to realize that the more accurate reason for this declining use trend is the stunning increase in energy efficiency in recent years, particularly among new household appliances, LED lights and new manufacturing equipment.

Consider that in 2005, the average refrigerator consumed 840 kilowatt-hours (kWh) of electricity a year. By 2010, a typical replacement needed only 453 kWh's a year. That's a 46 percent increase in energy efficiency in just five years! Another good example is that it costs \$1.36 to power an iPad over the course of one year, compared with \$28.21 for the desktop computer it may have replaced. Examples like this, large and small, go on and on. And the list is getting longer.



Our analysis of this declining use trend also shows that it is occurring, in part, from energy conservation becoming automated via smartphones, and thus very easy to accomplish for large numbers of members. With the tap of a button on a smartphone app, consumers are now able to ensure that lights in the home have been turned off, that they can turn back their thermostats, and that they can control any number of other electrical appliances.

In combination with this breakthrough in energy conservation, utilities have recently been ordered by the state to provide more money and programs for energy conservation. In WH's case, we are required to provide \$550,000 a year on energy conservation rebates, grants and other incentives. Using State of Minnesota calculation standards, your Board of Directors learned during their December meeting that WH's energy conservation efforts have eliminated the annual average usage of about 3,200 homes since 2008. That's the equivalent of about 6 percent of WH's total dwellings.

The growing popularity of solar power will

further contribute to the flattening of future energy sales.

This abrupt slowdown in energy sales is not unique to WH. It is occurring across the entire electric industry. According to the Energy Information Administration (EIA), "from 1950 to 2007, overall U.S. electricity demand rose in all but three years. But between 2008 and 2012, only (one of those years) saw a year-on-year upturn in electricity use."

The Wall Street Journal has commented frequently on the declining use trend occurring in the electric industry. "The confluence of (the above) trends," the Journal recently opined, "presents utilities with an almost unprecedented challenge: How to cope with rising costs when sales of their main product have stopped growing."

In his insightful book ("Smart Power") about new tipping points occurring in the electric industry, author Peter Fox-Penner wrote, "The industry's current business model and its regulatory structure must undergo a radical redesign to pursue a new economic mission: to sell least-cost energy services, not larger amounts of kilowatt-hours ... (Utilities) need to stop relying so much on those spinning meters and (instead) start selling energy management services, energy efficiency services and renewable energy services that are now going to go hand in hand with traditional electricity service."

That's exactly what we intend to do, and we have already made some progress. It's why:

- You have recently seen your cooperative enter the solar power business. If WH members want solar power instead of central station power, we should be ready, willing and able to provide that to you, just as we provide electricity generated by many other fuels or sources of energy. In 2014, your Board of Directors refreshed the cooperative's mission along these lines. And already, our newly formed subsidiary, WH Solar LLC, has helped hundreds of WH members experience the excitement and satisfaction of producing their own power from the sun.

Board Report

December Board Meeting Highlights:

The monthly meeting of the board of directors was held Dec. 9, 2014. A quorum of directors was present. Board action taken:

- Approved refinancing Farmer Mac Loan at a better interest rate.
- Authorized Management to begin site selection and taking member subscriptions for Community Solar Unit 4.

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WH's Board of Directors

Chris Lantto, board chair	District 5
Erick Heinz, vice chair	District 9
Dale Jans, secretary-treasurer	.....	District 4
Timothy Young	.....	District 1
Butch Lindenfesler	.....	District 2
Burton Horsch	.....	District 3
Thomas Mach	.....	District 6
Kenneth Hiebel	.....	District 7
Donald Lucas	.....	District 8

The Board of Directors meets monthly at the cooperative's office in Rockford. Regular meetings are generally scheduled the second Tuesday of each month for 2015. Members with items of interest are encouraged to contact the president and CEO to confirm meeting date and time.

WH & WH Holding Management Team

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Why energy use may go up in the winter


The cold winter months are characterized by dropping temperatures and rising electric use, but by understanding why your bill increases in the winter, you can take steps to save money.

Even if you don't use electric heat, you may notice that your electric bills are higher during the winter months. There are a number of reasons this happens:

- You may be using supplemental electric space heaters in garages, basements, or other unheated spaces.
- Shorter days and longer nights mean lights stay on longer both inside and out, adding to energy use.
- You may be using electric blankets and heating pads to keep warm.
- Most heating systems use electricity for some functions, such as fans, and many run almost continuously when it's very cold.
- Winter brings the holidays, which often means additional house guests, entertaining, cooking, baking, and decorating with holiday lights.

While heat, lighting and other forms of electric use are necessary to keep you comfortable, there are many simple steps you can take to lower your use each month, including:

- Only use space heaters in rooms where you desire additional heat the most.
- Install a programmable thermostat, reducing the temperature in your home while you're away and asleep.
- Switch to LED bulbs for lighting (see story below).

Additionally, Wright-Hennepin carries a variety of electric space heating options, which can be put on money-saving Off-Peak programs. Contact a representative to learn more at (763) 477-3000. 


LED lighting for your home

You can save on energy costs by installing LED bulbs in your home for no cost up-front.

LEDs are an excellent choice for lighting your home. Besides being very energy efficient, they also have a long life, meaning you do not need to replace them very often.

To help with the up-front cost, WH is now offering \$0-down LED light bulbs. This allows you to pay for the bulbs over 36 months from the savings on your electric bill. You can also choose to buy the bulbs up-front if you prefer. In both cases, the charges will appear on your electric bill. Based on the frequency of your use, your overall monthly electric bill costs should go down even though you are paying for the bulbs.



To learn more, or to calculate your costs or savings, visit WH's website at www.whe.org and click on "Save with LED light bulbs" under Featured Programs. Or, call customer service at (763) 477-3000. 



Following simple tips can help decrease your energy bill in the winter.

2015 Energy efficiency rebates now available

To help promote energy efficiency, rebates are now available on a first come, first serve basis. Members can receive one rebate per piece of equipment that is purchased and installed between January 1 and December 31, 2015. In addition, members must send a copy of their receipt and purchase form within 90 days of purchase. Other qualifications may apply.

Below are additional details about 2015 rebates:

REBATES

▶ Ground Source Heat Pumps:

- \$150 per ton

▶ Air Conditioners & Air Source Heat Pumps:

Air Conditioners:

- \$50 for 13/14 SEER; \$100 for 14.5 SEER; \$150 for 15 SEER; and \$200 for 16 SEER

Air Source Heat Pumps:

- \$330 for 13/14 SEER; \$480 for 14.5 SEER ASHP; \$580 for 15 SEER; and \$630 for 16 SEER or higher

▶ Electronically Commutated Motor (ECM):


- \$25 for qualifying ECM motors (installed in new furnaces or as replacements in existing furnaces)

▶ Heat Pump Water Heaters (HPWH):

- \$200 for residential members replacing a non-controlled electric water heater with HPWH
- \$100 for residential members in new construction installing a HPWH

▶ Ductless Mini-Split Air Source Heat Pump Program:

- \$100 for residential members installing a new or replacement Energy Star rated unit

To find rebate forms, or with questions, please visit <http://goo.gl/e2PfXT>. Or, call (763) 477-3000 to speak with a representative. 

Industry News

For Utilities, it's all about managing uncertainty

It looks like just a small thing — an accounting change that led to a boost of \$15.1 million in depreciation and amortization expense for Great River Energy last year. Yet there was nothing trivial about it. Depreciation is up mostly because Great River decided changes in carbon emissions rules may make its biggest coal-fired power plants in North Dakota worth nothing by 2028. The biggest one had been expected to last until 2042.

"We are the first utility in the nation to do that," said David Saggau, Great River's CEO. "I am not aware of any others." The evolution of carbon rules over the next 15 years is, really, anybody's guess. But responding now certainly seems like good thinking. It also illustrates just how long-term the thinking has to be for power companies, and why the past few years have been challenging for them. Shortening a depreciation schedule to 2028 may not look like much of a decision in industries with almost daily technological change. On the other hand, most folks don't have to make decisions today on an asset that's meant to be used 45 years after they retire.

About 1.7 million people in our region depend on Great River making good choices for their electric power, too. Based in Maple Grove, Great River is one of those unusual companies that's both really big — about \$1 billion in annual revenue — and low profile. It has no retail customers, generating and distributing electricity for 28 member electric cooperatives from northeastern Minnesota to the Iowa border.

Saggau said any conversation in December 2009 "would have filled the newspaper" with the challenges companies like his faced. The Great Recession derailed the plans of nearly everyone, of course, but for power companies it takes years to plan and build a big power line or generating plant. It's almost impossible to start too early on a project if new capacity may be needed. Before the recession, the worry was about capacity for growth. Saggau said Great River was forecasting an eventual need for 600 more megawatts of what's called "base load" generating capacity, meaning the minimum power that's needed every day.

Traditional thinking would have meant seeking permission, and the capital, to build a really big power generating station, maybe 800 megawatts. Instead, Great River decided on smaller ones. Great River broke ground on the first, Spiritwood Station, in North Dakota in 2007 — just as the economy was about to tumble into the Great Recession. By the time construction on this 99-megawatt plant was all but finished, its capacity just wasn't needed. There was some grumbling among member customers about mothballing a new plant, but it certainly looks smarter than mothballing one eight times larger. Spiritwood wasn't just a power generating station, either. It was designed as a combined heat and power facility. The idea was to use as much heat out of the coal being burned as possible, by piping steam to adjacent users. Financing for an ethanol plant next door was derailed by the financial crisis. Great River Energy then decided it had to build it to make the whole operation more efficient. The power station went on the grid officially in November, and the ethanol plant will be operating next year.

Source: *Star Tribune*

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Scholarship and Youth Tour deadlines are approaching

Wright-Hennepin (WH) is awarding 20 scholarships this spring to help local students continue their education, and also choosing one student to attend the cooperative's Youth Tour. The upcoming deadlines and an overview of each are as follows:

Scholarships:

- The WH local schools scholarships are awarded to one student of each public school in WH's service territory. Funding is through unclaimed capital credits and WH Holding – a wholly-owned subsidiary of WH. Please check with your guidance counselor, as each school has a different deadline. These applications should be submitted to your school.
- The "At-Large" scholarship is for students who attend private schools, home schools or schools that neighbor WH's electric service territory. Funding is through unclaimed capital credits and WH Holding – a wholly-owned subsidiary of WH. The deadline is March 31, 2015. These applications should be submitted to WH.
- The Edward R. Slebiska memorial line worker scholarship is for students wishing to pursue a career as a line worker. Funding is through WH. The deadline is April 25, 2015. These applications should be submitted to WH.


- The Elwyn and Hazel Knickerbocker memorial scholarship is for students wishing to pursue a career as a line worker. Funding is through the Knickerbocker family. The deadline is April 25, 2015. These applications should be submitted to WH.
- The Basin Electric Power Cooperative scholarship is for students who are dependents of WH members. Funding is through Basin Electric. The deadline is February 14, 2015. These applications should be submitted to WH.

For additional scholarship details and to download an application, please visit <http://goo.gl/xr8d8>. Or, call (763) 477-3000 to have one mailed to you.

Youth Tour

Each year, WH sponsors one high school junior from its electric service territory to attend the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour program, which is held in Washington, D.C. More than 1,500 students from 43 states participate in the tour.

The youth tour gives high school students a glimpse into how our nation's capital operates and a flavor for our nation's history. Students selected to participate in the program have the opportunity to travel to Capitol Hill to meet some of Minnesota's senators and representatives. Additionally, a full itinerary is planned for the students, which typically includes trips to the Jefferson and Lincoln Memorials, Arlington National Cemetery, Marine Sunset Parade, Smithsonian Museum and much more.

High school juniors are encouraged to submit an application for a chance to be selected to attend this all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C. from June 13-18, 2015. Applications need to be postmarked by March 6, 2015. To receive an application, visit <http://goo.gl/Y84WEU>. More information can be received by visiting www.youthtour.coop. 



Twenty scholarships will be awarded this spring. Check with your guidance counselor, because these scholarships have varying deadlines.




WH Interns gain hands-on training

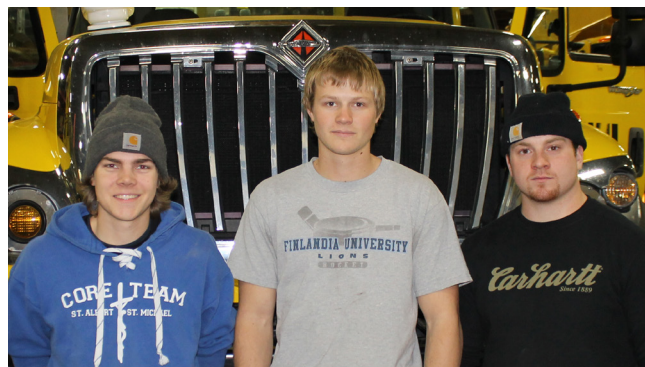
A group of three line worker students recently completed a two-week internship with Wright-Hennepin (WH). Students Matt Zipp, Jordan Irvan and Reed Nelson applied their classroom knowledge directly in the line worker field.

"The internship was an invaluable learning experience. I received great hands-on experience" said Nelson.

The interns learned and practiced electrical safety as a part of their training. In addition, they helped with a number of projects under the supervision of experienced WH linemen. Some of these projects included maintaining and repairing power lines and equipment, switching out power poles and hooking up new electric services. "The internships we provide allow for practical experience, which complements the student's classroom learning. It gives each student a glimpse of what they get to look forward to in the future," said WH Lead Line Crew Foreman Rich Horman.

mechanical skills will be in high demand for many years to come. Internships such as those offered by WH will help students gain valuable training.

Along with an internship program, WH also offers scholarships for line worker training. Please see the story above for more information about the scholarships available. 



WH line worker interns left to right: Matt Zipp (St. Michael), Jordan Irvan (Cokato), and Reed Nelson (Cokato). All three interns attend Minnesota State University in Wadena and are in the Electrical Lineworker Technology program.

Protect yourself against unexpected appliance repair bills!



Special!
First two months free with 1-year agreement

Compare us to the competition

WH Appliance Repair

No deductible or trip charge. Most labor and parts covered.

- ✓ Clothes dryer
- ✓ Heating system
- ✓ Range
- ✓ Water heater
- ✓ Refrigerator

\$17.99 / month

Additional appliance coverage available

Local Competitor:

No deductible or trip charge. Most labor and parts covered.

- ✓ Clothes dryer
- ✓ Heating system
- ✓ Range
- ✓ Water heater

\$18.50 / month

Additional appliance coverage available

WH Appliance Repair



Sign up today!

Visit whe.org, or call (763) 477-3000


Electric vehicle owners share experiences

On December 11, Wright-Hennepin (WH) hosted an informational meeting for those members who were interested in learning more about Electric Vehicles (EVs). Steve Nisbet, Vice President of Renewable and Alternative Energy at WH presented about WH's EV rate options. Special guest David Ranallo, Senior Marketing Specialist at Great River Energy and Jukka Kukkonen, owner of PlugInConnect, LLC, presented information about EV facts. There was also a panel of members who own electric vehicles who were available to discuss their experiences with the vehicles.

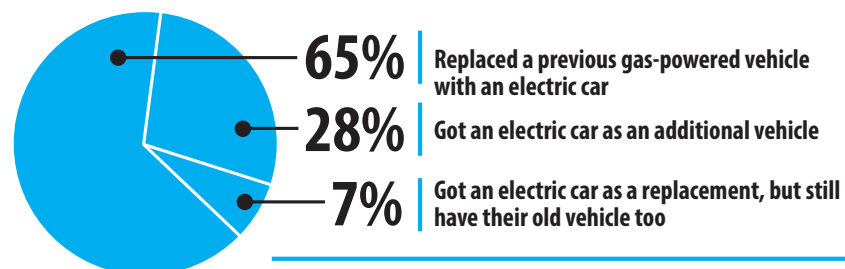
Interesting information from a local EV owner panel:

- All EV owners very much enjoy their EVs, saying they are fun to drive, with quick takeoff.
- There are some models that cost about as much as a traditional car – around \$30,000 new. There are also some luxury models that are more expensive.
- EVs communicate with the owner via the computer in the car. You can check on your vehicle via a smartphone app, or a personal computer, to see the charging status. Most EVs also tell you where local charging stations are.
- While EVs are not the perfect car for most road trips, they are great for commuting and driving within about 50 miles of home. EV owners shared that they do not feel the “range anxiety” that some worry about, as the vehicle can go plenty of miles between charges.
- Each year more and more EV charging stations are being built. In the right places you can charge your car while you shop, go out to dinner, and more.
- There are almost 200 public electric charging stations in Minnesota. To search for them, visit <http://goo.gl/gDFHQf>.
- WH has plans to build two publicly accessible charging stations in the local electric service area in 2015.
- There is less maintenance associated with an EV compared to a gas-powered vehicle. For example, there are no oil changes needed.



Electric vehicles are gaining in popularity and are being seen more and more often on the roads. They offer many advantages over traditional vehicles. “Electric vehicles are becoming more mainstream and are available in several price ranges. They are lower cost to operate when compared to gas vehicles, and offer many conveniences” said Steve Nisbet. To set up your electric vehicle on a charging program or to learn more about your options, please contact Steve Nisbet at snisbet@whe.org, or via phone at (763) 477-3000. 

Among households with Nissan Leaf EVs...



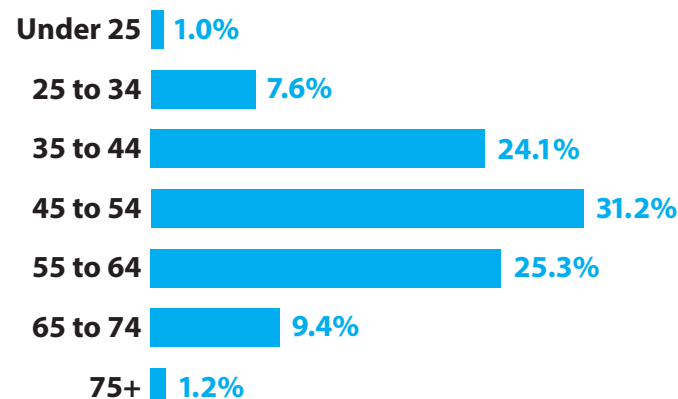
18% Of the vehicles replaced by the Nissan Leaf, the percentage that were vans, SUVs, or pickups

Source: University of California, Davis, analysis of data from various sources, 2011

Who's Driving?

Demographics of participants in a Department of Energy supported EV Project who are owners of Leafs and Volts.

AGE



Average age of all new-car buyers (2011):
51

Sources: EV Project; Polk/IHS and Edmunds.com (age data for new-car buyers)
More information about the EV project can be found at www.theevproject.com

FUEL

You won't need to spend time at the pump filling your tank, or spend money on gas. To calculate your potential gas savings, visit <http://goo.gl/hurss4>.



WH has two pricing options for members to take advantage of when charging their vehicles at home:

Option 1: Discounted interruptible rate

- Electric use for the EV is metered separately – this meter is turned on for eight hours per day - generally from 11:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.
- The energy rate during this time is 4.9 cents per kWh, and is not subject to power cost adjustment (PCA)
- A separate meter socket and receiver are required

Option 2: Time-of-use rate

- Electric use for the EV is metered separately – this meter is on 24/7
- The energy rate from 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. is 16.6 cents per kWh, plus the Power Cost Adjustment (PCA). (PCA averages 3.6 cents per kWh)
- The energy rate from 9:00 p.m. to 11:00 a.m. is 4.4 cents per kWh, plus the power cost adjustment
- A separate meter socket is required

Enjoy comfortable under floor radiant heat from HeatMyFloors.com

Under floor heat is a very comfortable, efficient and versatile way to heat your home. HeatMyFloors.com, a subsidiary of WH, offers under floor radiant heating systems that instantly add a luxurious feel to your home.

With under floor heat, warmth radiates from the floor to heat the surrounding space. This is the most comfortable heat available, because you are close to the heat source.

If you've been considering replacing your existing flooring or adding an addition to your home, now is the perfect time to consider installing STEP Warmfloor. STEP Warmfloor is the best under floor heating system available because of its versatility, reliability and low energy use. STEP Warmfloor offers easy installation and can be fastened right to your sub-floor with thinset, nails or staples without ruining the integrity or performance of the product. It can also be installed in concrete similar to a hydronic tubing system.

STEP Warmfloor may be used with almost any floor covering: natural stone, ceramic and porcelain tiles as well as hardwood, laminates and carpet. Once installed, this specially designed electric heating mat provides a comfortable, even warmth and is the only low-voltage self-regulating system available on the market. In addition, STEP Warmfloor comes with a 20-year warranty.

To learn more you can visit www.heatmyfloors.com, or contact a representative at (800) 785-8738, or visit us at upcoming Twin Cities shows. For a \$2 off coupon for the Minneapolis Lake Home and Cabin Show, visit WH's office during business hours (8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.), or call (763) 477-3000 to have one mailed. 

Upcoming shows:

HeatMyFloors.com will be exhibiting at several upcoming home improvement shows in 2015. All shows listed will be held at the Minneapolis Convention Center, except for WH's Annual Meeting, which will be held at its headquarters in Rockford.

- Minneapolis Lake Home and Cabin Show – Feb 6-8
- Minneapolis Home and Garden Show – Feb 25 – March 1
- WH's Annual Meeting – March 26
- Minneapolis Remodeling Expo – April 10 - 12



Save money and energy by installing a smart thermostat

Many of us can probably remember thermostats that required turning a dial or sliding a bar to change the temperature in our homes. But, who would have thought that thermostats would one day become "cool"?

Besides offering touchscreen technology in the home, today's smart thermostats allow homeowners remote access through the use of smart phone apps and internet connections.

By using a cell phone app to check and change the temperature in your

home, you can save on energy while still having the convenience of warming/cooling your home before returning, while not having to use unnecessary energy

heating and cooling unoccupied spaces while you are away.

For the same reasons you wouldn't leave your car running while you are at work because it wastes fuel, it doesn't make sense to leave your heat or air conditioning running more than necessary when you're away from home.

Today's thermostats allow setting automated schedules. WH Security offers Alarm.com interactive thermostat control, which provides heating and cooling schedules that compares energy use and learns your activity patterns in order to make suggestions based on your needs.

The biggest advantage is the significant cost savings on both your heating and cooling costs. Setting your air conditioner just five

degrees higher while you're away from home will save you up to 20



percent on your cooling costs. In the winter, you can expect similar results by lowering your in-home temperature when you're not there. For those of us who are maintaining busy schedules, being able to remotely control our thermostats is a valuable tool to help stay connected to our homes.

WH Security offers interactive services that will give you remote thermostat control as well as the ability to remotely control many other aspects of your home, including lights, locks, electric outlets and your security system remotely. For more information about these services, contact a representative today at (763) 477-3664 or check out the WH Security website at www.wh-security.com. 



Cold bathroom floor?

Check out in-floor heat from HeatMyFloors.com

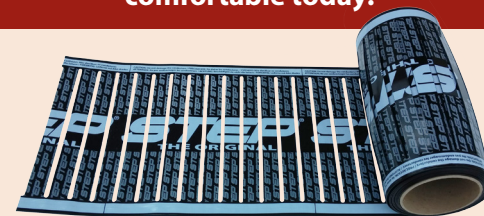
HeatMyFloors.com products can be installed under almost any flooring type:

- ✓ Tile
- ✓ Wood
- ✓ Carpet
- ✓ Laminate



Comfortable, Even Heat

Make your bathroom more comfortable today!



Visit our website, or contact us today

(763) 477-3665, or
info@HeatMyFloors.com

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Communications Specialist

JERRY KRANZ jkrantz@whe.org
Production Manager

Office Hours:
8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday - Friday

Customer Call Center Hours:
7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday - Friday
Call: (763) 477-3000 or (800) 943-2667

Report an Outage:
Electric dispatchers are available 24/7
Call: (763) 477-3100 or (888) 399-1845

WH Security Monitoring:
Security dispatchers are available 24/7
Call: (763) 477-4275 or (800) 858-7811




Protecting against carbon monoxide poisoning in the winter

The risk of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning increases dramatically as people turn on their furnaces. With the onset of cold weather, this is an important time to take precautions, and protect your home from CO.

CO is an odorless, invisible gas produced from the combustion of fossil fuels, which is how heat is produced in furnaces and ovens that are fueled by LP or natural gas. CO produced from these types of sources can cause harm to people and animals if it's not properly vented.

There are ways to protect your home from this harmful gas. If you install CO detectors, they'll make a loud noise if CO levels in your home rise above a certain point. These sensors will alert your home's occupants of a problem.

However, if you'd like to be alerted of a CO leak while you're away from home, you can have a CO sensor installed as a part of your security system. By doing this, your CO sensor will be monitored 24/7, like the other sensors in your home.

For more information about protecting your home from CO, call a representative at (763) 477-3664, or visit us on the web at <http://goo.gl/duAG2d>. 



CO sensors also watch your pets.

CEO's memo

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- You have also seen another of our diversified businesses, WH Security LLC, significantly increase its offering of remotely controlled energy-conservation devices. They allow you to manage and schedule your home's energy use from anywhere in the world. With interactive websites and mobile phone apps, thousands of WH Security customers can already remotely control their home's lights, electric outlets, thermostats and other individual electric appliances.
- You have seen WH Response, LLC recently begin to offer an innovative financing package and product bundle to WH members, which enables a rapid, easy change-out from the expensive incandescent light bulbs in your home or business, to super efficient LED bulbs. WH's board has authorized \$0-down financing to any member in good standing with the cooperative. The financing package is such that, if you are presently lighting your home with incandescent bulbs, your monthly savings with LEDs will be more than your payback for the financing. Lighting represents about 20 percent of the average home's energy use. If you want to lower your electric bills immediately, this is how to do it.
- WH announced in December a free electric water heater and installation to any member who replaces an old, inefficient water heater, and puts the new one on our Off-Peak Energy program. The Off-Peak program allows WH to use our physical and natural resources much more efficiently, and helps delay or eliminate the construction of future power plants.
- You will see WH take a leadership role in 2015 in building charging stations in the service territory to encourage the transition to electric vehicles.

In these ways and others to come, WH is committed to keeping its mission up-to-date and relevant for its members. From all of us here at WH, we wish you a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year. 

Mark Vogt


WH's Annual Meeting to be held March 26

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Free events and activities

- Numerous fun activities will be held, including coloring and crafts for children ages 2-10, from 4:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.
- Attending members will have the opportunity to win prizes by playing bingo from 4:30 p.m. to 6:45 p.m.
- Booths with information about WH's programs and services, and things that are new at the co-op, will be open beginning at 4 p.m.

Additional information is available at www.whe.org. More annual meeting information will be published in your March annual report. 

Board Report

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- Reviewed request for proposal for the upcoming Cost of Service and Rate Study.
- Heard report on WH's Conservation Improvement Program.
- Heard report on the State of Residential Fuel Cell Technology.
- Heard reports from directors on recent industry meetings
- Reviewed and filed the monthly CEO, Legal, financial, and operations reports.
- Guests included:
 - WH and Operation Round Up (ORU) Boards met and heard the annual ORU report of 2014 activities.
 - Heartland Security Services General Manager Guy Adams presented WH Holding with a dividend check.
 - Web Strategy Consultant with Plaudit Design, Matt Dittbenner, shared insights into website design.

Industry News

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40% renewable energy integration no trouble for Midwest

A new study conducted by the Minnesota Department of Commerce in coordination with the Midwest regional independent grid operator Mid-continent Independent System Operator (MISO) has found that the state of Minnesota could obtain 40 percent or more of its electricity from wind and solar energy without suffering any grid reliability issues.

The report, which builds on real-world situations like the states of Iowa and South Dakota generating more than 25 percent of their energy from wind during 2013, is another splash of cold water in the faces of those who attempt to dismiss renewable energy as being somehow impractical.

Minnesota currently derives 16 percent of its electricity from wind and solar energy, which means an increase to 40 percent would not only be a boost to the renewable energy industry, but would push the state towards 70 percent of its emissions reductions required from existing power plants under the EPA's Clean Power Plan.

The primary finding from the report is that "the addition of wind and solar (variable renewable) generation to supply 40 percent of Minnesota's annual electric retail sales can be reliably accommodated by the electric power system."

The integration of variable renewable energies into an existing grid has proven a sticking point as the industry attempts to grow. The assumption has been that an energy that is reliant upon specific conditions (e.g., windy days, sunny days, etc) will only wreak havoc with systems that are built around consistent energy generation techniques (most fossil fuel technologies).

Source: *Cleantechnica*

New Year's energy efficiency resolutions to help you save

Many of us make New Year's resolutions at the start of each year. These resolutions typically include things like saving money or getting into shape. But if you are looking to save money this year, there are a variety of energy efficiency resolutions you can make by simply changing your behavior around your home. Here are some suggested New Year's energy efficiency resolutions to help you save:

- **Change your furnace filter regularly.** Check your filter every month and if it is dirty change it. A dirty filter will slow down air flow and make your furnace work that much harder, which wastes energy. Regularly changing your filter also helps extend the life of your furnace.
- **Use ceiling fans to save energy.** Ceiling fans help circulate the air in a room and can help you stay warmer or cooler for pennies on the dollar compared with running your air conditioner or furnace. In the winter, run circulating fans clockwise to force air up. This moves warm air at the ceiling down the walls and back to the floor where it can help keep you warm.
- **Turn off your computer and monitor when they are not in use.** Personal computers (PCs), especially desktops, can use a lot of electricity if they are left on when not in use. Get in the habit of turning your computer and monitor off whenever you are not using it. In case you forget, make sure to set your PC's energy-saving mode to one that puts the monitor to sleep after five minutes of inactivity and puts the computer to sleep after 15 minutes of inactivity.
- **Upgrade to energy-efficient lighting.** When your incandescent bulbs burn out, replace them with energy-efficient lighting such as LEDs. To help you with this, Wright-Hennepin (WH) offers \$0-down LED light bulbs. Visit WH's LED light bulb page at <http://goo.gl/Qdh94V> for more information.

To read more energy-saving tips, check out WH's website at www.whe.org. 



Energy saving tip

Unplug battery chargers when they are not in use.

For more tips, visit <http://goo.gl/Q3fXEv>



tenKsolar Winner

Dan Westrum of Waverly wins a credit for 67 kWh, December's output from WH's tenKsolar panel array.



Solar Winner

Megan Hilsgen of Maple Lake wins a credit for 96 kWh, December's output from WH's solar panels.



Wind Winner

John Searle of Buffalo wins a credit for 652 kWh, December's output from WH's wind generator.

Average monthly energy output over 12 months:

Wind generator: 833 kWh

Solar panels: 224 kWh

tenKsolar system: 186 kWh

To enter the monthly contest to win the output from WH's wind generator or solar panels, go to: <http://goo.gl/QjyTM>.

Cut down your winter heating costs!

Sign up for Dual Fuel and save!

Participants in this program receive a special reduced electric rate on the electricity used to heat their homes. The Dual Fuel program is for members that use electricity to heat their homes, while still having a non-electric, automatic backup heating source.



Contact a representative today:
(763) 477-3000 or info@whe.org

