

HOTLINE UPDATE

WH grows from one meter to 60,000 in 75 years

With electricity being universally used in the U.S. today, it's hard to imagine what life was like before lights, washing machines and extension cords existed.

On March 29, 2012, Wright-Hennepin (WH) will celebrate its 75th anniversary at its Annual Meeting (see story on page 5 for Annual Meeting details). Today the cooperative serves almost 40,000 members and has nearly 4,000 miles of line. It's hard to imagine that this all started with one member – the first to receive electricity.

C.O. Anderson of Cokato, Minn. had the honor of being the first WH member to receive electricity. WH's first CEO, Ed Slebiska, and WH's first engineer, George Zech, installed the meter at Anderson's home in Cokato, Minn. late in August of 1937.

Anderson was thrilled when electricity was brought to his home.



The site of WH's first meter, Anderson farm, is still standing and is currently owned by Duane Dahlman.

"C.O. Anderson was a jovial fellow," said Zech. "When we plugged in the meter and the lights came on, he ran around from building to building, laughing like a kid at Christmas time. I wish we could have taken a movie of it."

The original home on Anderson's farm is still standing, and is currently owned by Duane Dahlman.

The beginning of Wright-Hennepin Cooperative Electric Association

Did you know that Wright-Hennepin Cooperative Electric Association was originally going to be two separate cooperatives? In the mid-1930s, plans were in the works to create a cooperative for each county: Rural Hennepin

WH celebrates cont. on Pg. 6

**Mark your calendar:
WH's 75th
Annual Meeting is
March 29!**

WH member saves with Dual Fuel program

Chris Elfmann of Annandale, Minn. began participating in Wright-Hennepin's (WH) Dual Fuel program three years ago and has enjoyed significant savings ever since.

"We've been on Dual Fuel for the past three winters," said Elfmann. "Because of the program, we've saved about \$1,000 each year on our heating costs."

Elfmann heard about Dual Fuel through his plumbing business and chose to install

a plenum heater so he could enroll in it, giving him another fuel-source option for heating in addition to propane.

The Dual Fuel program is for members that use electricity to heat their homes, while still having a non-electric backup heating source. Participants receive a special reduced electric rate of 4.9 cents per kWh for their heating system, versus the general service rate of 8.1 cents per kWh.

In return for that reduced rate, members' electric heating systems are shut-off and backup heating systems are used during times of peak energy demand.

Elfmann is pleased with the simplicity of the system, as it is easy to switch from one fuel source to another. As an added benefit, Elfmann also said that he rarely notices when WH is controlling loads.

"I think the program is great," said Elfmann. "I don't notice when (WH) is controlling, and I have an alternate heating source to use when propane prices rise."

Elfmann even said that the quality of the heat from his plenum heater is better than his propane furnace.

"It seems like it's a more comfortable form of heat," said Elfmann. "The electric

heat also seems to work in faster cycles than my propane furnace."

Because of the many benefits of the Dual Fuel program, Elfmann said he'd definitely recommend the program to others.

"The initial cost to install an electric heat system is low, and it's a good alternate, low-cost form of heat," said Elfmann. 



Chris Elfmann, Annandale, Minn. has saved thousands of dollars since enrolling in WH's Dual Fuel program three years ago.

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Find us on:



Mark Vogt
WH President and CEO



Three things you should know about WH to start the new year

1) Farewell, and thank you Sarah!

We offered a reluctant, but fond farewell to District 7 Director Sarah Evenson at the December board meeting. She resigned after a recent career change that also resulted in a change of residence, putting Sarah outside of WH's service territory. Sarah joined the WH board, representing the Plymouth area, in 2008 and won re-election last year. In her campaign material, she noted in both elections that she would "work to emphasize customer satisfaction and service quality." As a board member, she championed strategies and investments that helped WH achieve those things in strong measure. According to the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI), WH is one of the highest scoring utilities in customer satisfaction in the nation. In these and other matters, Sarah served you well and will be missed.

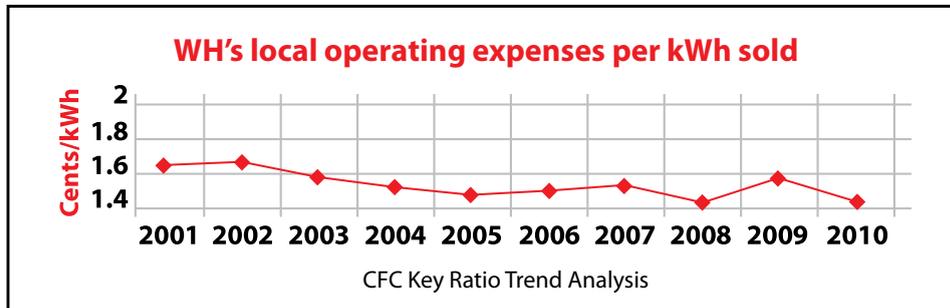
The vacancy in District 7 means there will be four board seats up for election this March instead of three. Please see the article on page 3 for information on how you can become a candidate.

2) Power plant closure's effect on WH

News articles at the end of the year about the closing of Great River Energy's brand new Spiritwood Station prompted calls here about how it will affect WH. (Great River Energy is WH's primary wholesale power supplier.)

On November 28, the Star Tribune reported: "Minnesota's second largest electric company has spent \$437 million on a recently completed coal-burning power plant 85 miles west of Fargo. Built with encouragement of North Dakota's political leaders, the plant burns lignite mined in the state. It has the best-available pollution controls and draws city wastewater instead of fresh water. At full power, the new plant could supply about 63,000 homes. Instead, owner Great River Energy is shutting it down. While investing hundreds of millions of dollars in power plants always carries risks, the tale of Spiritwood Station is an extreme case. The head of an industry trade group couldn't remember another new U.S. coal plant built to supply power all that time that was immediately mothballed."

The article stated that a combination of factors caused the plant's closure.



"Slower than expected growth in electricity demand, lower prices on power sales to the grid, and the loss of a key industrial customer for some of the plant's steam" were among problems reported about the closing.

WH's retail electric rates in 2012 should again be a competitive leader among utilities in this area.

How will this affect your electric bill? Your board of directors opted out of financial participation in Spiritwood Station in 2006 when WH negotiated a new wholesale power contract with Basin Electric Power Cooperative. Because of this decision, the financial ramifications of GRE's stranded power plant investment will not be reflected in WH's cost of wholesale power in the future. In fact, the new wholesale power contract has saved WH members \$18 million since it went into effect.

3) Retail rates in 2012

That being said, however, the overall price of wholesale power continues to increase as a result of expensive new regulations from the Environmental Protection Agency, state renewable energy and energy conservation mandates, the largest build out of new transmission lines in the last 30 years, and the construction of new generating resources to serve your needs. We anticipate this will increase the average WH residential electric bill by about \$7 per month, or 24 cents a day in 2012. This will be reflected on the power cost adjustment line item on your monthly electric statement.

We continue to aggressively manage our local operating costs to help

offset wholesale power increases. WH's local operating costs per kWh sold have been flat or declining for 10 years (see chart). Local operating costs are made up of labor, benefits, billing, accounting, power line maintenance, tree trimming, transportation, marketing, advertising, communications – anything having to do with operating the local grid from our headquarters in Rockford, Minn. As a result, even though you will see a change on the power cost adjustment line item (which is a straight pass through from our wholesale providers), your board has no plans to change WH's base rates for 2012. Nor do they plan to change the monthly basic service charge that also appears on your bill. WH's general service rates and the monthly basic service charge have been unchanged since 1983.

CEO Memo cont. on Pg. 3

Read more from CEO Mark Vogt on his new blog

View recent posts on WH's website at <http://bit.ly/qWXFrp>.

December 30: A prediction for 2012

November 22: Ben Franklin's experiment with electricity and a turkey

Also, read recent blogs from your board directors

January 6: A typical board meeting by Dale Jans, Buffalo, Minn.

December 1: What makes cooperatives different? by Erick Heinz, Corcoran, Minn.

November 18: Seven questions the board asks during the budgeting process by Thomas Mach, Maple Grove, Minn.

December board meeting highlights:

The monthly meeting of the board of directors was held December 13, 2011. A quorum of directors was present. Board action taken:

- Auditor David Holt of Brady Martz conducted the standard required communication with the board prior to performing the annual audit.
- Guests included a technology developer who provided a high level overview of smart receptacles – emerging technology that can be used to control loads for residential consumers.
- A delegate and alternate were selected for WH representation at 2012 Minnesota Rural Electric Association's meetings.
- The monthly CEO, legal, financial and operations reports were reviewed and filed.
- The legal counsel's 2012 retainer was approved.

WH's board of directors

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

The board of directors meets monthly at the cooperative's office in Rockford, Minn. Regular meetings are generally scheduled the second Tuesday of each month for 2012. Members with items of interest are encouraged to contact the president and CEO to confirm meeting date and time.

WH and WH Holding LLC's Management Team

Mark Vogt
President and CEO
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Angie Pribyl
Vice President, Finance and CFO
(763) 477-3104 apribyl@whe.org

Lance Hovland
Vice President, Energy Distribution
(763) 477-3105 lhovland@whe.org

Sonja Bogart
Vice President, Customer Service, Sales & Marketing
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Vice President, Technology Operations
(763) 477-3114 snisbet@whe.org

Wendy Makousky
Vice President, WH International Response Center
(763) 477-3144 wmakousky@whe.org

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, 9 and 7 (see map). Members elected to these positions will begin their terms

immediately following the 2012 Annual Meeting on Thursday, March 29, 2012.

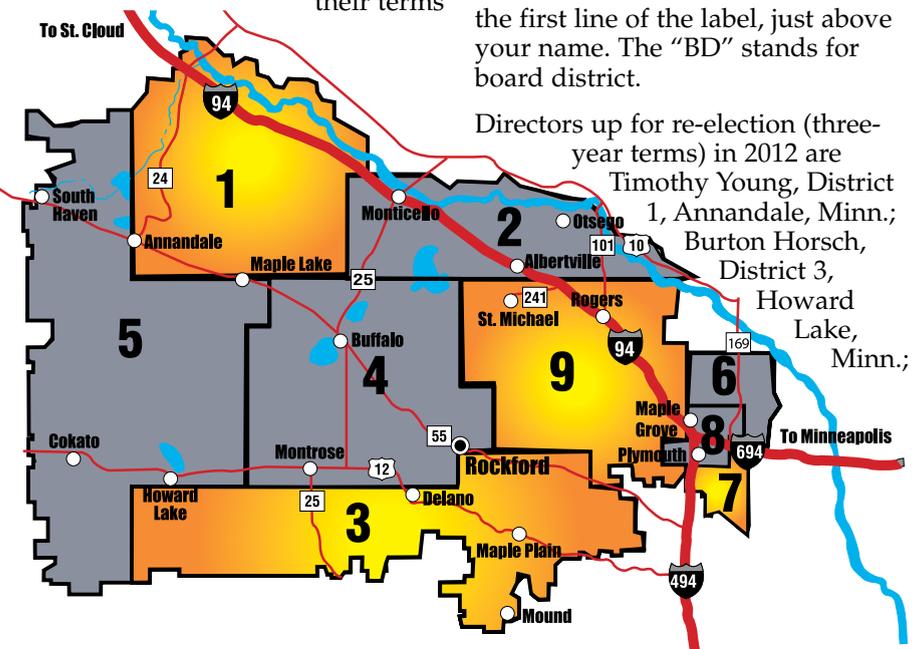
If you are unsure which district you live in, you can look at your mailing label on this month's newsletter. The district number is shown on the first line of the label, just above your name. The "BD" stands for board district.

Directors up for re-election (three-year terms) in 2012 are Timothy Young, District 1, Annandale, Minn.; Burton Horsch, District 3, Howard Lake, Minn.;

and Erick Heinz, District 9, Corcoran, Minn. All three have indicated they will seek re-election.

There's also a vacancy in District 7, as Sarah Evenson recently submitted her resignation. Pursuant to the cooperative's bylaws, this position will also be up for election for the remaining two years of Evenson's term.

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 (www.whe.org then click on the "Director Application" under the "Quick Links") or call (763) 477-3027 to request a form. Mail the form along with a resume to: Wright-Hennepin, Attn: Dale Jans, Secretary/Treasurer, P.O. Box 330, Rockford, MN 55373. Application deadline is Feb. 8, 2012. If you have any questions about this process, please contact Jen Podolske at (763) 477-3027. 



Sarah Evenson resigns as director of District 7

Sarah Evenson announced her resignation as director of District 7 on October 31.

Evenson has served on the Wright-Hennepin Cooperative Electric Association Board of Directors since March of 2008. Following a career change, she recently relocated to a

residence outside of WH's service territory, making her ineligible to serve on the board.

"Thank you for allowing me the great opportunity to serve my community through my position on the Wright-Hennepin Cooperative Electric Association board," said

Evenson. "I've enjoyed every minute of it."

For more information about Evenson's resignation and her time spent on the board, visit <http://goo.gl/VDhZR> to see her latest "Director Files" blog post. 

Three things you should know about WH

CEO Memo cont. from Pg. 2

Our ability to keep local operating costs flat is the result of multiple decisions implemented by your cooperative. Technological investments have made a significant contribution in operating more efficiently. We've addressed legacy costs in such a way as to provide material savings for the cooperative while protecting our employees. We have aggressively managed our interest costs so that WH has among

the lowest lender rates of any electric cooperative in America. In addition, our diversified businesses (WH Security, WH International Response Center, WH Services, WH Generation and HeatMyFloors.com) have been contributing about \$1.5 million annually in recent years to help offset capital costs at WH, which would otherwise be collected in your electric rates.

The result: WH's retail electric rates in 2012 should again be a

competitive leader among utilities in this area.

As you and your family continue to navigate through these difficult economic times, we want you to know we are committed to keeping your electric rates affordable and competitive.

From all of us here at WH, happy new year!

Mark Vogt

Winter is a great time to trim trees!



When sensitive oak, elm, fruit and nut trees are trimmed in the summer, it leaves them susceptible to disease. That's why cooler months are a good time for trimming.

WH SERVICES

Call today to schedule a free estimate: (763) 477-3000

Industry NEWS

CapX2020 line: Monticello to St. Cloud phase is energized

The CapX2020 Monticello-St. Cloud 345 kilovolt transmission line was energized on Dec. 21. The 28-mile segment between the new Quarry Substation near St. Cloud and the existing Monticello Substation is the first portion of the CapX2020 project to be completed and placed in service.

"The project ensures service reliability and provides capacity for new power generation outlets, when needed, and brings lasting benefits to the Upper Midwest," said Will Kaul, vice president of transmission at Great River Energy. "The CapX2020 projects will further expand and enhance the regional grid, giving utilities access to the most affordable electricity in the footprint of the Midwest Independent Transmission System Operator."

Source: Xcel Energy press release

Minnesota seeks dismissal of N.D.'s claims in coal dispute

Minnesota's attorney general wants North Dakota's attorney general kicked out of an interstate legal battle over coal. Minnesota Attorney General Lori Swanson filed a motion contending that her counterpart in North Dakota has no jurisdiction in the case and lacks a basis for making a legal claim.

The motion would turn the case into a legal fight between Minnesota public officials – represented by the attorney general – and private coal interests, including coal companies, a trade association and electric cooperatives. The two-page motion did not state Minnesota's legal reasoning, which isn't due until February. U.S. District Judge Susan Richard Nelson of St. Paul, Minn. is scheduled to hear oral arguments on Minnesota's motion in March.

Source: Star Tribune

Coal-fired power plants being eliminated by new rules

An unusual confluence of environmental, political and economic events are colliding to take down the coal-fired power plant. These rules may, in fact, give many power companies the cover to launch costly new projects with huge returns. No doubt, however, some companies stand to lose.

It's a given that EPA rules are accelerating shutdowns of many older coal-fired power plants. M.J. Bradley & Associates – a firm representing many power plants in favor of the rules – keeps a list that currently includes 228 power plants set to retire in the next several years. What that means for reliability in the electric grid is not as simple. EPA, the Energy Department and supporters of the rules, which include some large utilities, say that demand will be met and allowances can be made to make sure that margins stay wide to meet power demands without a danger of blackouts on peak days. However, if something happens to a "base" unit – in a storm or because of malfunctioning equipment – there needs to be enough power that can be immediately generated to meet electricity needs. That's the "reliability margin" that many operators are concerned about meeting.

Source: Politico



A day in the life



Wright-Hennepin Cooperative Electric Association Board of Directors

Editor's note: About the "A day in the life" series

At Wright-Hennepin, we combine the skills of about 140 employees to provide members with the best possible service. We've created the "A day in the life" series for the Hotline Update to give you, our members, insight into the jobs – and the people – behind the company. This article will conclude the series, giving you insights into your member-elected board of directors, who provide financial and strategic oversight at WH.

The Wright-Hennepin Cooperative Electric Association (WH) Board of Directors is invested in making the cooperative as successful as possible.

"Not only are we WH members, but so are our neighbors and friends," said District 1 Director Tim Young, Annandale, Minn. "We're very conscientious about the fact that our decisions directly affect these people."

WH's board of directors provides financial and strategic oversight, establishes policies and rates, and represents the members' voices regarding the cooperative's operations.

"Our members are our primary focus in all of our decision making," said Board Chair Chris Lantto, French Lake, Minn.

Lantto also commented that members in all areas of the service territory are equally represented at the board table. WH's service territory is divided into nine districts with approximately the same number of members in each district. Each district is represented by a director from that area, giving each director a local perspective regarding WH operations.

"Each director has a unique background, which makes Wright-Hennepin's board very diverse," said District 2 Director Duane "Butch" Lindenfelser, Monticello, Minn. "Everyone brings different ideas and opinions to the table."

However, even with all of these differing perspectives, the board members are able to achieve consensus and come up with effective solutions in a timely matter.

"We're able to come together on big issues," said District 9 Director Erick



Starting in the center foreground and going clockwise around the table, the board directors pictured are Burton Horsch, Sarah Evenson, Don Lucas, Vice Chair Tom Mach, WH President and CEO Mark Vogt, Board Chair Chris Lantto, Secretary/Treasurer Dale Jans, Tim Young, Erick Heinz, Duane "Butch" Lindenfelser.

Heinz, Corcoran, Minn. "We're always able to come up with a solution that's in the overall best interest of the cooperative and its members."

The board also watches out for members' interests by analyzing changes in the industry, planning ahead to ensure members' rates remain competitive and by regularly re-evaluating the services the cooperative provides.

"Wright-Hennepin is not your typical electric cooperative," said District 8 Director Don Lucas, Maple Grove, Minn. "We've taken some dramatic steps – including adding subsidiary businesses – to help keep members' rates competitive."

District 3 Director Burton Horsch, Howard Lake, Minn. said that the board's long-range strategic planning is key to the success of the cooperative.

"Our board is really great about looking ahead," said Horsch. "We watch the industry for future challenges and make plans early to counter those challenges."

However, when making long-range plans, it's also important to continually check those plans to make sure the cooperative's operations are on track.

"We make a point to periodically review Wright-Hennepin's work plan, rates and reliability," said Secretary/Treasurer Dale Jans, Buffalo, Minn.

Providing industry insights and fiscal direction takes a significant amount of work.

"Being a board member requires a significant time commitment," said Lantto. "There's a lot of research involved with staying informed about the electric industry."

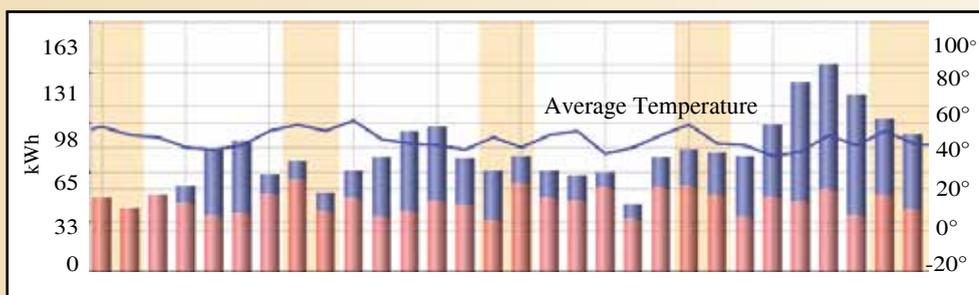
The amount of change in the electric utility industry in recent years has made serving on the board a challenging experience.

"All of the energy policy changes in the state and nation have definitely made our jobs more challenging," said Vice Chair Tom Mach, Maple Grove, Minn. "We're constantly adapting to keep rates as low as possible for our membership."

Even though it may be a demanding job, WH's board is up to the task of keeping the cooperative in strong fiscal and operational shape into the future.

"This is one of the best boards I've served on," said District 7 Director Sarah Evenson, Plymouth, Minn. "We have strong decision-making processes, take action when needed and constantly work to evolve our work plan." 

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- » Compare your energy use to the average for your neighborhood
- » Take an "energy challenge" by setting an energy-saving goal
- » Access energy saving tips

This is a free service to help you understand how you are using energy.



Student linemen interns get a preview of their future careers



WH line worker interns (left to right) Joe Chap, Cokato, Minn., Garret Ernhart, Buffalo, Minn., and Josh Jerde, Buffalo, Minn., had the opportunity to try out the line worker profession for two weeks in December.

Garret Ernhart, Buffalo, Minn., Josh Jerde, Buffalo, Minn., and Joe Chap, Cokato, Minn., received some hands-on experience in the line worker profession through Wright-Hennepin's (WH) internship program.

Over the past seven years, WH has taken on more than 20 line worker interns to give students the opportunity to get a close up view of the line worker field.

"This is a great opportunity to see what we'll be working with when we get out of school," said Ernhart.

Future line workers are in high demand due to the fact that about half of the nation's utility workers will be eligible to retire in the next five to 10 years. Opportunities like WH's line worker internship program are crucial to helping replenish this expertise.

"Providing hands-on training and experience for young line workers is extremely important," said WH's Lead Line Crew Foreman Rich Horman.

"It helps them develop into safe and detailed line workers."

All three interns were excited to get out in the field and try out what they've learned in the classroom.

"It's great to be able to try out the profession before we're out of school," said Jerde.

The interns were also excited to learn more about the profession through the internship.

"Since we're new to the trade, it will be great to get all of the experience we can through this opportunity," said Chap.

Ernhart and Jerde are both currently attending school at Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Wadena. Chap attends Minnesota West Community and Technical College, Jackson.

Ernhart, Jerde and Chap all received scholarships from WH last spring to pursue the line worker profession. 

Celebrating 75 Years – WH's Annual Meeting to be held March 29

Wright-Hennepin (WH) will be observing a very special milestone at its 2012 Annual Meeting on March 29. That is the very day the cooperative was started 75 years ago, and the Annual Meeting will be used to highlight and celebrate that achievement. The event will be at WH's headquarters in Rockford, Minn. – located at 6800 Electric Drive.

WH will be displaying historical information and artifacts, showing an exhibit of what life was like before electricity, giving dinner theater presentations about rural electrification – starring a Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) impersonator – and distributing a commemorative video documentary on the history of the cooperative to every member in attendance. FDR started the Rural Electrification Administration at the height of the Great Depression.

Member registration begins at 4 p.m. Wright County 4-H will serve a pork chop dinner from 4:30 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. A short business meeting will follow at

7 p.m. Free parking is available at WH, Our Father's Lutheran Church and the Rockford Mall with a free shuttle that runs continuously.

Director elections

The 2011 Annual Report will be mailed to members in early March and will include detailed information about each director candidate. Ballots will be sent to members in Districts 1, 3, 7 and 9 before the meeting with instructions for voting by mail. Ballots received on or before March 22 will be entered in the "early bird" prize drawing for an iPad. Members in those districts can also cast votes at the meeting up until the time the ballots are called for during the business meeting.

At the end of the business meeting, WH will announce the results of the director elections in Districts 1, 3, 7 and 9.

Business meeting

WH Board Chair Chris Lantto will update you on how your cooperative

has succeeded in keeping your electric rates competitive at a critical time in the energy industry, highlighting operating and service achievements in 2011, and on changes coming as a result of new regulatory and government mandates in 2012 and beyond.

WH President and CEO Mark Vogt will break from his tradition of commenting on business, legislative and strategic matters, and comment instead on the cooperative's 75 years of history. "This year's Annual Meeting will give members a unique opportunity to not only learn about current matters at the cooperative, but also learn about its history," said Lantto.

A grand prize drawing of a retired automobile from WH's fleet will immediately follow the meeting. Attending members will be entered in the grand prize drawing as they check-in. At the end of the business meeting, all participating members will be given a free compact fluorescent light bulb (CFL) and a commemorative video, highlighting WH's history.

Free events and activities

- A local Girl Scout troop will have numerous fun activities 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.



A local Girl Scout troop will have numerous fun activities and crafts for children ages 2-10 from 4:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

- Enjoy learning about the Rural Electrification Association (REA) and how power came to the rural U.S. through a dinner theater presentation. Shows will be at 4:30, 5:30 and 6:30 p.m.

Informational booths

Stop by these booths to learn about new technology, products, services and ways to save money and energy at home.

Hallways of history: See how electricity has changed lives by viewing models of homes from the 1930s and today. Members will also be able to see how the cooperative has grown over the past 75 years and see historical photos that were taken during the cooperative's early years.

Pay as you go: Learn about this new service offered through WH. WH is creating a system that allows you to pre-pay for your electricity, giving you the ability to only put as much money in your account as you want to spend.



WH will be serving its well-known pork chop dinner again at this year's annual meeting.

Annual Meeting cont. on Pg. 7

Tips to help you stay safe this winter

With the wide-spread use of space heaters, frequent travelling on icy roads and continuing chilly temperatures, winters in Minnesota can be a little treacherous if the proper precautions aren't taken.

Check out the below safety tips, and stay safe throughout this winter.

1. Keep portable space heaters at least three feet from bedding, furniture,

clothing and anything else that could be a potential fire hazard.

2. If you have a fireplace, have the chimney and flue inspected each year and cleaned if needed.
3. Have a safe, non-electric back-up heating source prepared in case a winter storm disrupts your power.
4. Keep the following emergency items in your vehicle: flashlight, jumper

cables, sand or kitty litter (for tire traction), ice scraper, small shovel, blankets and flares.

5. Install at least one smoke alarm on each level of your home as well as inside or near sleeping areas.
6. Keep young children away from wood stoves and space heaters.
7. Never use a portable electric generator indoors or in a confined area. Carefully follow usage directions for your generator.
8. Keep rock salt on hand at your home to help remove ice on sidewalks, driveways and exterior stairs.
9. If a severe storm hits, minimize travel. Have canned and other non-perishable foods on hand so you don't have to drive in dangerous weather conditions.
10. Install carbon monoxide alarms on each floor of your home and near bedrooms.

Be mindful of carbon monoxide

The risk and frequency of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning increases dramatically as people turn on their furnaces. With the continuing cold

weather, this is an important time of year 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. The CO produced from these types of sources, if not properly ventilated, can cause harm to people and animals.

There are ways to protect your home from this harmful gas. CO detectors are available that will make a loud noise if CO levels in your home rise above a certain point. These sensors will alert whoever's in the home of a problem.

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

For more information about protecting your home from CO, check out WH Security's blog at <http://bit.ly/rU1U5X> or call a representative at (763) 477-3000. 



Be mindful of road conditions when traveling this winter, and keep an emergency kit in your car.

WH grows from one meter to 60,000 in 75 years

WH celebrates cont. from Pg. 1

Electric Cooperative Association and Wright Cooperative Light and Power Association.

The creation of the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) in 1935 gave rural residents hope that they would soon be able to simplify their daily tasks by bringing electricity into their homes.

Excited by this prospect, Farm Bureau agents from both Wright and Hennepin counties began gauging interest throughout their individual territories to see if bringing power to the area was a viable option.

By the fall of 1936, each potential co-op found they had significant interest, and they began drawing up bylaws to begin their separate organizations.

However, their plans hit an unexpected bump in the road when the REA advised the co-ops to combine.

Both co-ops rejected the offer, but the REA again pressed both co-ops to combine in order to bring electricity to the area within a shorter time period.

Both cooperatives met in Cokato, Minn. on March 26, 1937 to re-open the issue. Although both sides were

passionate about remaining separate, they ultimately decided to combine to expedite the electrification process.

It was decided at that meeting that the Rural Hennepin Electric Cooperative Association and the Wright Cooperative Light and Power Association would merge to form Wright-Hennepin Cooperative Electric Association. 

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Offer expires 2/10/12

Protect against:

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- ✓ Environmental damage
- ✓ Smoke and fire
- ✓ Carbon monoxide



A wholly owned subsidiary of Wright-Hennepin Cooperative Electric Association

(763) 477-3000
www.wh-security.com



* Valid on a new home security system installation with a three-year monitoring agreement. Certain restrictions apply.

Celebrating 75 Years – WH's Annual Meeting March 29

Annual Meeting cont. from Pg. 5

WH Appliance Repair



Eliminate concerns about unexpected bills by knowing repairs will be taken care of with WH Appliance Repair.



For just \$17.99 per month, parts, labor and most repairs on the following appliances are covered:

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



Call for more information.
(763) 477-3000
www.whe.org

Contact INFORMATION

Hotline Update Staff

Lindsay Scherer – lscherer@whe.org
Communications Specialist

Andrea Unger – aunger@whe.org
Marketing Coordinator

Jerry Kranz – jkranz@whe.org
Production Manager

Office Hours:

8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays,
Thursdays and Fridays
8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Wednesdays.

Customer Call Center Hours:

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

To 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



Printed on partially recycled paper.

This allows you to adjust the amount of energy you use to meet your budget.

MyMeter and money-saving ideas: View a demonstration of an online tool that can help you understand and reduce your home's energy use, helping you to save money.

Customer service: Meet and have a milk shake with the same customer service representatives you speak to over the phone and via email. They can offer suggestions on how to make paying your electric bill easier, as well as answer any questions you may have regarding your account.

Co-op Connections: Learn about the many great savings you can get from local and national businesses with your exclusive Co-op Connections card.

Community involvement: Programs are available for you and your family. Learn about how your high school student can qualify for a scholarship or trip to Washington, D.C. Additionally, learn how your donations help fund organizations in the community.

Director booth: Meet your board of directors and learn how they help your cooperative be financially sound and provide reliable electricity and competitive electric rates.

Power supply: Great River Energy and Basin Electric Power Cooperative – WH's wholesale power suppliers

– will provide information about work taking place at the generation and transmission sector of the industry in order to ensure a dependable future power supply.

Power quality and reliability: See how WH's cutting-edge technology initiatives help track, shorten and prevent outages.

Off-Peak programs: Receive information on electric home heating, cooling and money-saving Off-Peak solutions.

Electric safety: Learn about important home-safety precautions and the "story behind the switch."

WH Security: Security systems can do more than protect you from burglaries. They can also detect temperature changes, smoke, water damage and much more. See the latest in home security products at this booth.

HeatMyFloors.com: Feel the comfort of under-floor radiant electric heating systems, and learn how they can be used in your home.

Tree trimming services: Receive information on tree-trimming services



More than 2,400 members attended WH's Annual Meeting last year.

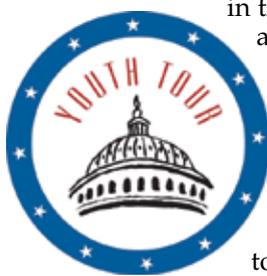
that can beautify your landscape year round!

Silent Power: Learn about the latest in renewable energy technology. Silent Power is a Minnesota company that manufactures electric energy storage devices that work with renewable energy systems and utilities.

tenKsolar: Are you interested in solar power? tenKsolar has developed an innovative "grid design" that increases energy production, while also lowering costs. Stop in to learn how you can participate in WH's solar community project. Members can own a "slice of this project" and obtain solar energy without the hassle of installing equipment on their property.

Accepting applications for youth tour

Each year, Wright-Hennepin (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 youth tour, and attendees are chosen by individual electric cooperatives across the nation.



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 Cemetery, Marine Sunset Parade, Smithsonian Museum and much more.

"I would recommend applying for this trip to anyone," said Hannah Buffie,

who was selected to participate in last year's youth tour. "It's an experience unlike any other. It was awesome."

High school juniors are encouraged to submit an application for a chance to be selected to attend an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C. from June 15-22, 2012. Applications need to be postmarked by March 15, 2012. To receive an application, please visit whe.org and click on "Community Involvement," then "Youth Tour." More information about the program can be received by visiting youthtour.coop.

Win this month's wind or solar generation!

Each month, two lucky members will have their names drawn. One will win the current month's output of Wright-Hennepin's wind generator and the other will win the output of the solar panel.

To enter the monthly contest, or find more information and data, go to: <http://www.whe.org/for-my-home/resources/wind-solar.html>

Last month's winners:

Arvin Borgmann of Rogers wins a credit for 781 kWh, November's output from WH's wind generator.

Thomas Gindele of St. Michael wins a credit for 175 kWh, November's output from WH's solar panels.

Average monthly energy output year-to-date:

WH's wind generator = 625 kWh

WH's solar panels = 192 kWh

Average monthly energy use per household = 1,100 kWh

WH will offer 20 scholarships for local students in 2012

With college already on the minds of many high school seniors, Wright-Hennepin (WH) will again award 20 scholarships this spring to help local students continue their education.

WH Local Schools Scholarship

The cooperative is awarding one scholarship to students at each of the following public schools in WH's service territory: Annandale, Buffalo, Dassel-Cokato, Delano, Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted, Maple Grove, Maple Lake, Monticello, Orono, Osseo, Rockford, Rogers, St. Michael-Albertville, Watertown-Mayer and

Wayzata. WH also offers one "at-large" scholarship to students from private schools within or schools that neighbor WH's service territory. Each school listed has its own application deadline. The "at-large" application deadline is March 31.

Elwyn and Hazel Knickerbocker Memorial Scholarship

Elwyn and Hazel Knickerbocker played a crucial role in bringing electricity to Wright and Hennepin counties. To honor their efforts, their family began a scholarship in 2005. This \$1,500 scholarship is awarded to a local man or woman who plans

to pursue an electrical line worker career. The application deadline for this scholarship is April 25.

Edward R. Slebiska Memorial Line Worker Scholarship

Ed Slebiska played a leading role in bringing electricity to rural homes in Wright and Hennepin counties in 1937. He went on to become WH's first CEO, holding the post until his retirement 40 years later in 1977. Two scholarships are awarded annually to students looking to pursue the line worker profession, each in the amount of \$3,000. The application deadline for this scholarship is April 25.

Basin Electric Power Cooperative scholarship

Basin Electric Power Cooperative (BEPC) of Bismarck, N.D., one of WH's power suppliers, is offering a \$1,000 scholarship to dependents of WH members. The application deadline for this scholarship is February 15.

Where and how to apply

For additional scholarship details and application forms, please visit <http://bit.ly/x2ARtY>. If you have any questions regarding the application process, call (763) 477-3000. 

Easy ways to save money on your winter electric bills

The abundance of cold and lack of light that winter brings can cause your utility bills to spike. However, there are ways to cut down your energy use throughout the winter months, helping to keep your bills in check.

1. Install a programmable thermostat.

Programming this device to reduce the temperature in your home while you're away and while you're sleeping is an easy way to reduce your energy use. For each degree (F) you lower your thermostat, you can reduce your energy use by 3 percent.

2. Open south-facing window coverings during the day and close them at night.

Letting the sun in during the day will help heat your home, and using your window coverings at night will help prevent heat from escaping.

3. Get your furnace inspected and tuned up by a professional yearly, and change your furnace filters on a monthly basis.

A well-functioning furnace is an efficient furnace. Properly maintaining yours will help you reduce your energy use.

4. Replace your incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs).

These bulbs do cost more to purchase initially, but you'll save about \$40 over the seven-year life of the bulb. CFLs will especially make a difference during darker winter months when there's less natural light available and your lighting is in use more often.

5. If you have a fireplace, close the damper.

Closing the damper prevents cold air from coming down the chimney and into the house.

6. Seal up the leaks in your home.

By caulking cracks around your windows and doors, you'll make it easier for your furnace to maintain the temperature in your home.

7. Turn down the temperature on your water heater.

Set your water heater to the "normal" setting or 120° to save 7-11 percent on your water heating costs.

8. Use your appliances efficiently.

Only run your washing machine, dryer and dishwasher when you have full loads to wash.

9. Shut off lights and electronics when not in use.

You may be surprised by how much you can save by being extra vigilant about your lighting, computer and other electronic use.

10. Watch for ENERGY STAR labels when buying new appliances and electronics.

This label ensures that you're buying one of the most energy-efficient models available.

For more ways to save energy, check out WH's Energy Saving Ideas blog at <http://bit.ly/rDwNgc> or visit www.TogetherWeSave.com. 



A simple way to save on your electric bills this winter is to use CFLs.

Change to the Hotline Update

Wright-Hennepin's (WH) Hotline Update, which was previously a monthly publication, will now be distributed bi-monthly.

WH will continue to keep its members informed through a variety of media, including blogs found on its website at <http://bit.ly/rDwNgc>. These blogs contain information from WH's President and CEO Mark Vogt, and the board of directors. Helpful content is also available on the blogs regarding saving energy and industry news.

Additionally, news about the co-op is also readily available through WH's website, found at www.whe.org; its Facebook page www.facebook.com/WrightHennepin; and main Twitter page <http://twitter.com/#!/WrightHennepin>.

Cut down your winter heating costs!

Sign up for the Dual Fuel Off-Peak program and save!

The Dual Fuel program is for members that use electricity to heat their homes, while still having a non-electric, automatic backup heating source.

Participants in this program receive a special reduced electric rate on the electricity used to heat their homes.

Contact a representative today: (763) 477-3000 or (800) 943-2667

www.whe.org or info@whe.org



For more energy-saving ideas, check out WH's **Green Tweet** Twitter profile. Follow us to find ways to save!



Follow us at <http://twitter.com/#!/WHGreenTweet>

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