



Wright-Hennepin
Cooperative Electric Association

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Wright-Hennepin Cooperative Electric Association's

Hotline Update

June 2013

Wright-Hennepin awards over \$27,700 in scholarships to local students

Twenty local students received scholarships from Wright-Hennepin Cooperative Electric Association (WH) this year, totaling \$27,700. This 2013 contribution raised the amount the cooperative has awarded to area youth to \$573,700 since the scholarship program began in 1988.

WH awarded the scholarships during a banquet ceremony at its headquarters in Rockford, Minn. on May 23. The scholarships are funded through donations from WH's diversified non-electric businesses – WH Security,

WH Services, HeatMyFloors.com, WH Generation and WH International Response Center – under the umbrella of the WH Holding Company. By using this funding method, WH's education program is not financed through members' electric rates.

"The value of a good education in today's competitive world cannot be understated," said Mark Vogt, WH president and CEO. "We're pleased to help get these young men and women off to a solid start toward their future."

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This year's scholarship recipients posed for a photo with WH's board directors. Board directors who attended the scholarship banquet include (back row, left to right) Tim Young, Burton Horsch, Dale Jans, Chris Lantto, Ken Hiebel, Butch Lindenfelser, Erick Heinz, Thomas Mach, and Donald Lucas. Scholarship recipients included (middle row, left to right) Mark Sandquist, Luke Gasperlin, Zachary Meierhofer, Rebecca Cohn, Hannah Haegele, Jacob Efmann, Gale Ehresmann, (front row, left to right) Gavin Rufer, Jacquelyn Welcome, Laura Tormanen, Camille Koch, Shelby Larson, Raechell Bayerl, Aaron Haataja and Samantha Wanner. (front row, far right) Linemen-Knickerbocker scholarship contributor, Doris Horswell.

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Member saves money while staying comfortable


Leroy Lauer of Otsego, Minn. began saving money with Wright-Hennepin's (WH) Cool Cash program in August 2006 and is happy to be a part of the program.

"I have been participating in the Cool Cash program for nearly seven years and I enjoy having the opportunity to help out. Over the course of that time, I have never had any concerns. To be honest, I usually forget that I'm on the program because the cycling increments only occur on the hottest days of summer and they are for such brief periods of time. I never notice a change in the temperature of my home. It usually stays pretty consistent," explained Lauer.

Lauer recommends that all members join WH's Cool Cash program to help conserve energy and save on their electric bills.

"Participation is easy and effortless. My lifestyle is not affected. The only thing I do on my end is keep my shades and curtains closed to prevent heating on the hottest days of summer, while the cycling takes care of itself. Then each month I receive a credit on my electric bill ranging from \$10 to \$15 each month. Over the past seven years that has added up to a savings of hundreds of dollars. It is pretty wonderful," Lauer added.

With Cool Cash, members save 15 percent on their total electric use in June, July and August in return for allowing WH to cycle their air conditioners "on" and "off" for 15-minute intervals during times of high energy demand, generally the hottest times of the summer.

For more information about WH's Cool Cash air conditioning program, contact a representative at (763) 477-3000 or sign up at www.whe.org. 



Leroy Lauer of Otsego, Minn. has saved hundreds of dollars by participating in WH's Cool Cash program and allowing his air conditioner to be cycled.



CEO's Memo

MARK VOGT WH President & CEO

READ MORE!

from CEO Mark Vogt on his blog:
<http://goo.gl/awkmm>

Board Report

April Board Meeting Highlights:

The monthly meeting of the Board of Directors was conducted April 8, 2013. A quorum of directors was present. Items discussed or Board action taken:

- Critiqued the 2013 annual meeting and approved the date of Thursday, March 20, 2014 for next year's annual meeting.
- Conducted a review and update of the corporate Hostile Takeover Plan.
- Heard report on potential harsh impacts for WH's member resulting from the Omnibus Energy Bills making their ways through the legislature.
- Reviewed Request for Proposals for General Counsel.
- Directors shared highlights of meetings attended on behalf of the cooperative.

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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
Kenneth Hiebel	District 7
Donald Lucas	District 8
Erick Heinz	District 9

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 2013. Members with items of interest are encouraged to contact the president and CEO to confirm meeting date and time.

WH & WH Holding LLC's Management Team

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The Law of Unintended Consequences

Daily newspapers across the state are hailing the freshly legislated solar mandate that came out of St. Paul last month.

The Saint Cloud Times reported May 31 that the new law will "result in a 30-fold increase in solar production by the end of the decade."

The Star Tribune predicted May 27 that "large solar arrays are (now) likely to sprout in Minnesota." The newspaper continued, "the law adds fresh incentives for homeowners and businesses to install rooftop solar panels." The new law requires 10 percent of the new solar generation to come from solar panels installed on homes or at businesses, according to the newspaper.

Good news, right?

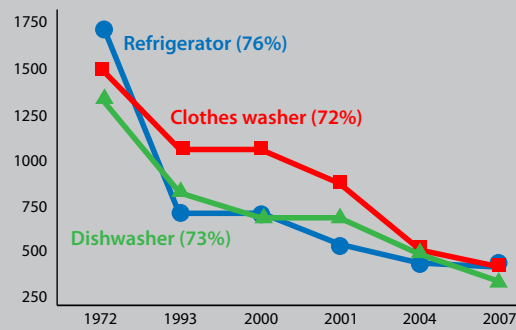
Maybe. Here's the rest of the story:

While we shouldn't be afraid of embracing new energy technology to power our future, force feeding a solar mandate right now will surely result in some unintended consequences. As I see it, there will likely be at least three things that will hit electric consumers in the pocketbook from this well-intentioned but not well-thought out energy mandate.

First, I'm not aware of a utility in the state that needs more generating resources right now. The Great Recession, combined with the state's energy conservation mandates, and the increasing efficiency of lighting and appliances, has all but put a halt to the growth in energy sales for most Minnesota utilities. Consider the fact that the power used by a refrigerator has been reduced

Appliances are getting more efficient

Annual Average kwh usage



by 76 percent since 1972! (See chart) That's amazing! It's one of the reasons why your cooperative has not experienced kilowatt hour growth since 2007 – an unprecedented event in the cooperative's 76 year history. It's a major factor why Great River Energy, your cooperative's largest power supplier, says they don't need a new power plant for at least ten years.

Forcing power suppliers to add generating capacity they don't need is like requiring you

to build an addition onto your home that won't be used: it's money that doesn't need to be spent. The Star Tribune quoted one Minnesota utility that has already estimated the price tag of the mandate. Otter Tail Power Company says it will "trigger a rate increase of three to five percent for its customers." The Minnesota Rural Electric Association has reported that a similar wind generation mandate that went into effect three years ago has cost electric cooperative members \$70 million for generation resources it doesn't need.

Can Minnesotans really stand more energy price increases? The Star Tribune reported June 2 that business groups were already concerned about "rising electricity costs, fearing the state is losing its competitive edge." The paper reported that Minnesota has dropped from being the 15th best state for industrial power rates in 1990 to 25th in 2011. A solar mandate at a time when power producers don't need more generating resources can only exasperate the state's competitive position for businesses and homeowners alike.

The second likely unintended consequence with the new solar mandate is related to my first point, but deserves a standalone comment. When consumers install a solar panel and permanently take away kilowatt hour sales from the incumbent utility, the remaining costs of that utility are spread over the remaining customers. The method that policy makers suggest utilities deal with this is to "decouple" the rate. That's political-speak for "increase the monthly basic charge," so that regardless of how much energy a customer purchases, everybody will pay more so that the utility can continue to meet the long term financial commitments it made in your behalf.

On your WH statement, a homeowner receives a monthly basic charge of \$8.25 if you buy 0 kilowatt hours a month or 10,000 kilowatt hours a month. This \$8.25 helps pay for the operation and maintenance of the grid and the infrastructure investment associated with being able to deliver power to your home. Your Board of Directors has not changed the basic charge since 1983. But it is already very clear that if the new solar

mandate begins to take away kilowatt hour sales, Minnesota's utilities will be forced to go the way of California. That state has a much more aggressive solar policy than Minnesota and utilities are already feeling the pinch. I recently heard a discussion by executives of The Sacramento Municipal Utility District. They either already have or soon will move their monthly basic charge to \$30 a month to deal with lost sales to solar panels. Ironically, the last rate review a professional consultant did for your Board of Directors found that

WH's monthly basic charge should also properly be set at \$29. For decades your board has resisted making that kind of abrupt change to the basic charge. But the new solar mandate is a game changer and most Minnesota utilities will likely have to adopt rate decoupling in the not distant future. It is interesting to note that many metro area utilities have already begun increasing their basic charges.

The third unintended consequence will result from the provision in the bill that forces some utilities to provide rebates so that the price of solar generation can appear to be on a par with central station electricity. This opens the age old discussion about the propriety of subsidies. Some feel that these are necessary to jump start the renewable energy industry and to help gain energy independence. Others feel that a solar subsidy only forces those who can't afford solar to subsidize those who can, because the rebates ultimately come through everybody's electric rate. This is a debate that will surely heat up

"With \$0 down financing and batteries hooked up to solar panels, WH's members will be able to uniquely participate in the solar revolution while eliminating many of the unintended consequences."

as solar generation is pushed more and more into our lives.

From the above statements you might conclude that I am not a supporter of solar. Actually just the opposite is true, but I think we could have gone about it in a much better fashion than the way provided in this flawed bill. We advocated three things:

First, the legislature should have authorized "standby" fees to deal with solar customers who only want to use grid power when the sun isn't shining. This would be very similar to the de-coupling pricing methodology mentioned above, but only directed at solar customers who still want to use the grid. That way, not everyone is penalized with a higher charge. Instead, for the most part, the legislature outlawed standby fees.

Second, instead of forcing all central station electric consumers to pay for somebody else's rebates through their electric rates, utilities should have been encouraged to provide easy financing terms for its customers who want to get into solar. Even though the legislature didn't consider this, WH is still going to move forward with that idea.

By this fall we hope to announce a unique financing package that will allow members in good standing with the cooperative to buy and install solar panels for \$0 down and

CEO's Memo Continued on Page 7

WH's Legal Counsel of 46 years, Hap LeVander, retires

Harold P. LeVander Jr, known respectfully as Hap, has retired after 46 years working as Wright-Hennepin's (WH) legal counsel. Hap's father, Harold LeVander Sr, was also a lawyer who represented WH and several electric cooperatives during his practice. In 1967, Hap Jr. followed in his father's footsteps and began lawyering for WH.

"When I first started in 1967, WH was a lot smaller than they are now. They probably had five or six thousand customers. Things were pretty simple because WH was in the business of selling electricity and that was all they sold," said Hap.

Throughout Hap's career and 46 years of providing legal advice, he has observed the change and growth that WH has undergone. Hap reflects on the expansions that occurred during his time with WH, including diversification into new products and services such as security systems, monitoring systems and heated flooring.

"WH has great staff and always has, so the sophistication and technology improvements have dramatically expanded the footprint of the business from when I started. And accordingly, all the legal questions come up as a result of how WH is not just selling electricity, but they are doing a lot of other things for the customer," explained Hap.

While Hap has embraced the change and growth of WH over the years, one thing remains the same, and that is his passion for law. When asked about the most rewarding aspects of his career, Hap explained how the practice of law is intellectually challenging and very service directed.

"I like helping people with their problems. The other part I like is that if you are in a lawsuit, you either win or you lose. If you


lose, it is tough on your ego, but if you win it is tremendously satisfying and I like that idea. Frankly, I am competitive and I like to win. I have been able to match all the attributes I love about law with the co-op and my work," added Hap.

As for the future of electric cooperatives, Hap explained that the industry is changing as technology advances. The public understands the benefits of conserving energy and they are becoming good at it.

"Customers are far more able to manage their energy needs than they ever used to be. They can turn the power off on their smart phone if they want to. They can regulate their energy much more effectively, which has allowed for major changes in the industry. Also, co-ops are close to their customers. WH is really good at maintaining that customer contact. They know what their customers want and are willing to provide it to them," Hap concluded.

Hap's retirement plans include spending more time with his wife and family at his lake place near Pequot Lakes, Minnesota and volunteering for the American Red Cross. In addition, he has considered volunteering to start and coach a debate team at a high school in his area.

"While Hap didn't office out of WH headquarters, I considered him an integral part of the team and he played a key role in the successes WH has enjoyed over the years," said Mark Vogt, WH president and CEO.

WH thanks Hap for his years of hard work and wishes him a fond farewell, as well as a happy and relaxing retirement. 



Legal Counsel, Hap LeVander, retires after 46 years representing WH.

Wright-Hennepin awards \$12,702 to Camps of Courage and Friendship to aid its conservation efforts

Wright-Hennepin (WH) recently presented Camps of Courage and Friendship – a WH commercial member – with a \$12,702 grant to help with the installation of energy-efficient innovations at its facility near Maple Lake, Minn.

Energy grants are awarded to businesses that install energy-efficient equipment, reducing electricity consumption. As a non-profit organization, Camps of Courage and Friendship qualified for these funds to assist with conservation.

Camps of Courage and Friendship used the funds to help cover the cost of a high-efficiency lighting retrofit at their facilities near Maple Lake, Minn. The project replaced outdated lights with high-efficiency fluorescents and LED lighting. The new lights are estimated to reduce electric usage by more than 15,000 kilowatt hours annually.

"This generous gift impacts the lives of 4,000 children and adults with disabilities. We are blessed to have partners like WH helping us provide engaging and therapeutic experiences through our camp, respite and travel programs," said Camps of Courage and Friendship Senior Business Development Director Kevin Dietrich.

Each year, WH invests more than \$500,000 on residential and commercial conservation programs per requirements of the Minnesota Dept. of Commerce, including about \$100,000 in energy efficient grants to commercial customers.

"This was an excellent opportunity to implement improved energy efficiencies while benefiting a great charitable organization like Camps of Courage and Friendship," said WH Key Account Executive Lane Wilson. 



Camps of Courage and Friendship receives a check from WH for a recently completed lighting retrofit. From left to right: WH Key Account Executive Lane Wilson and Camps of Courage and Friendship Senior Business Development Director Kevin Dietrich.

Industry News

Minnesota Senate passes one percent solar mandate

Major power companies in Minnesota are being prodded by the state Legislature to generate more electricity from the sun. The question is how much.

The Senate passed a bill Friday mandating that investor-owned utilities use solar power for one percent of their customers' needs by the end of 2025.

It's a less-ambitious goal than the percent solar requirement in a House bill that passed Tuesday over the objections of utilities and Republican critics. Now, the measures go to a conference committee for an attempt at compromise.

"This bill started out more aggressively than this," said DFL Sen. John Marty, chief sponsor of the bill that passed 37-26 in the Senate. It's a compromise here."

Supporters say the mandate and other incentives in the measure will promote clean energy, boost employment in the state's solar industry and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Republicans unsuccessfully sought to weaken the bill with amendments, including one to more broadly exempt businesses from higher rates that utilities say are inevitable.

While much of the criticism on the Senate floor focused on costs to businesses and residential customers, Assistant Minority Leader Bill Ingebrigtsen, R-Alexandria, questioned whether Minnesotans should even try to address climate change.

"I have never, quite frankly, fallen for this global warming thing and this huge, terrible amount of scare that has been going on in this country about how much pollution and how much acid rain and so on and so forth," Ingebrigtsen said.

Source: StarTribune

Xcel's requested rate hike still too high, state Commerce Department says

Xcel Energy may have reduced its proposed \$285 million rate increase for this year, but it is still way too rich for the Minnesota Department of Commerce's tastes, the agency said Friday, April 12. Minneapolis-based Xcel last November originally proposed a \$285 million rate hike for 2013, an increase of nearly 11 percent. After the Commerce Department proposed slashing that increase to \$94 million on March 1, the utility on March 25 trimmed its request to \$220 million, or an eight percent increase.

The Commerce Department was not impressed. On Friday, it reiterated that it believes Xcel is both overestimating some of its costs and underestimating the revenue it will collect this year.

Source: Pioneer Press

WH donates 15,000 tree seedlings to local organizations


As part of its ongoing commitment to help the local environment, Wright-Hennepin (WH) donated 15,000 tree seedlings again this year to the local area through the cooperative's Plant-A-Tree program. In total, WH has donated more than 200,000 trees since the program began.

In 1997, WH's electric service territory was struck by a severe storm that damaged and destroyed many mature trees. WH has since worked on giving back to the environment to offset the loss by donating trees to youth, schools and civic organizations throughout its service territory in Wright and western Hennepin counties.

Local educators often use the program as an opportunity to teach students about the important environmental benefits of trees, including preventing soil erosion, providing habitats for wildlife, replenishing oxygen supplies and filtering groundwater. Students who receive seedlings enjoy learning how to plant and care for the trees, and are excited to watch the trees grow throughout their lifetimes.

Trees were also donated to Lake Maria State Park as a part of a clean-up effort that took place on May 4. WH rounded up more than 60 volunteers to assist with planting the new trees, raking leaves and helping with other park maintenance.

While not every tree donated by WH will reach maturity, each tree has the ability to absorb 729 pounds of carbon dioxide annually, while releasing oxygen into the air. That means if even one-quarter of the trees that WH has donated reach maturity, WH and its members will have potentially given nature the ability to take away approximately 36.5 million pounds of carbon dioxide each year. This is just one more way that WH is working to improve the environment.

A variety of trees were distributed, including river birch, red maple, bur oak, red pine and black hills spruce. This is the 16th year WH has donated trees through the program. 



Delano Elementary's kindergarten class holds up the new trees that they received as part of the Plant-A-Tree program.




Simple ways to save energy this summer

June 21 marks the first day of summer and for many of us that means trips to the cabin, beach, fairs and outdoor concerts. While we all look forward to the busy, warm summer months, it can be easy to forget about reducing our energy consumption. Here are easy energy-saving tips that can help save on your electric bill this summer:

1. Keep your home's thermostat set at 78 degrees or higher when you are away during the day. The higher your thermostat, the less energy you will use.
2. Consider investing in a programmable thermostat. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, they can help you save an average of \$180 a year in cooling costs. In addition, consider using an interactive thermostat through WH Security, which allows you to control your air conditioning through a user-friendly website or mobile phone. For more information, visit <http://goo.gl/qiay>.
3. Operate ceiling fans to circulate cool air. They make higher temperature settings feel more comfortable.
4. Avoid heat build-up indoors by keeping curtains and blinds drawn during the day. At night, open windows to catch a cooling breeze.
5. If possible, avoid using your oven or stove and consider using alternative cooking methods such as grilling outside or using your microwave. This reduces the load on your air conditioner, as an oven or stove can quickly heat up a kitchen.
6. Turn lights off when not in use. Not only do they use energy for lighting, but they heat up rooms and make your air conditioner work harder.
7. Save cleaning chores for the cooler early morning or night-time hours. Activities such as mopping or washing dishes can create added humidity and make your home uncomfortable.
8. Take five minute showers instead of baths, heating less hot water.
9. Have your air conditioning unit serviced regularly and change your air filters monthly.
10. Join WH's Cool Cash air conditioning program and save 15 percent on your summer electric bills. For more information, contact a representative at (763) 477-3000. You can also sign up at www.whe.org.



For more ways to save energy, visit WH's Energy Saving Ideas blog at <http://goo.gl/CZTMW> or view WH's energy management videos by visiting <http://goo.gl/xwXGE>. 



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New osprey nest built in Annandale

Wright-Hennepin (WH) recently set up a new osprey nest located at Osborn Avenue and 77th Street in Annandale, Minn. Osprey are medium-to-large sized birds that have the tendency to use poles as nesting areas. This is because ospreys prefer nesting sites that have clear visibility. The new nest is on a platform and is attached to a pole that sits 40 feet above the ground. In total, WH has six osprey nests located throughout its service territory.

WH assisted in synthetically constructing the new nest as a replacement for a different nest that was made by the osprey in an unsafe location. The osprey's old nest was located a quarter mile north of the current location and built on a transformer pole, posing a threat to the birds because live power lines are dangerous and the birds themselves can be electrocuted if their bodies touch a live wire and a grounded part of a support structure. In addition, if nesting material comes in contact with power lines, it can cause fires and power outages.

Beginning in 1998, Wright-Hennepin began building the platforms to give osprey a safe place to nest. In addition to giving osprey a safe place to build their nests, WH also participates in an osprey tracking project led by Three Rivers Park District. This project tracks ospreys in the Twin Cities area. WH crews are also planning to install a new camera at one of the osprey nest sites this summer, allowing members to watch the osprey live through a web camera online once they find their nests. Information on osprey tracking and the new camera will be posted online as developments occur. For the latest updates throughout summer, visit: <http://goo.gl/FlzuE>. 

Wright-Hennepin (WH) assisted in constructing a new osprey nest in Annandale, Minn.



WH Solar Community ground breaking to begin in June

This is an historic time for Wright-Hennepin (WH) and its members as the ground breaking and construction of the first member-owned solar community project in Minnesota begins this month.

The WH Solar Community is the first community solar project in the nation to incorporate solar energy with battery storage, which allows WH to store the power produced by the solar array during the day, using it in the evening when energy demand is higher.

The WH solar community is an easy and affordable way for members to own solar energy for their home or small business. Members can purchase one or more panels up to the amount needed to serve their annual energy needs and will then receive a kilowatt-hour (kWh) credit on their energy bill each month. The credit is based on the number of panels the member has purchased, as well as the amount of the energy produced by the solar array each month.

On April 19, construction workers began analyzing the soil at the building site and checking the bearing capacity to make sure that the solar structure is placed on a solid foundation. Construction of the foundation is tentatively planned to begin the second week of June. During this time, a total of 80 steel columns will be driven into the ground.



View of the TenKsolar panel system which consists of solar panels and reflectors. This is the system that will be used in the WH Solar Community array.

One week later, assembly of the solar panels is expected to begin and three weeks later, the first WH solar community project will be energized.

"WH Community Solar is a great way for WH members to own local generation and participate in the excitement of solar in bite size pieces," said WH CEO Mark Vogt. "Our community solar model makes it easy for members to own solar without installing equipment on their property or worrying about maintaining their system."

If you're interested in participating in this program, please visit: <http://goo.gl/hMua9> or contact a representative at (800) 646-0323. 



Front view of the Silent Power battery storage system. These batteries will be used to store the excess solar energy during the day.

How to prepare and respond to summer storms

With the summer storm season upon us, Wright-Hennepin (WH) would like to remind members about the importance of preparing for storms, electrical outages and other emergency situations. Taking simple steps now to prepare for storms can go a long way toward protecting your family, home and possessions if, and when, an emergency situation occurs. These steps include:

Storm preparation:

- Keep a three-day supply of water and non-perishable food items that require no refrigeration or cooking.
- Create an emergency kit that includes: fire extinguisher, weather radio, flashlight and batteries, first aid kit, matches, candles and blankets.
- Keep your cell phone and other electronic devices charged.
- Be sure that your sump pump is working properly and that you have a battery backup sump pump or generator in place in the event that your electricity goes out.
- School is out and that means that many children are home alone for the summer. During this time, it is important to teach children how to react if they experience a storm, including listening for warnings and locating safe places to take shelter.


Post-storm safety tips:

- If a power outage occurs, it is the highest priority for utilities and their customers to practice safety first. Please stay away from downed power lines or fallen trees and standing water, which could conceal live wires.
- If you are experiencing a power outage in hot weather, close the drapes and blinds on the sunny side of your house and drink plenty of fluids.
- Be careful when attempting to walk in flooded areas, and remember that submerged outlets or electrical cords can energize water.
- Do not use electrical appliances that have been in contact with water. Water can damage the motors in electrical appliances such as furnaces, freezers, refrigerators, washing machines and dryers. Electrical parts can pose a shock hazard and can overheat, causing a fire.

How to report an outage:

- If your home loses power, make sure that you did not simply blow a fuse or trip a breaker in your home. Then check with your neighbors to see if they have power. If you determine that you have lost power, contact WH's electric dispatch center at (763) 477-3100 or via a mobile device using WH's website at whe.org.

Receive free outage updates


WH is now offering free outage notifications to members via text and/or email. To sign up for outage notifications, visit: <http://goo.gl/csdRH>. Once signed up, you will receive a message with the estimated time of restoration when there is an outage at your property. Additionally, outage information is available for all members to see on WH's website at www.whe.org. By clicking the "Power Outage" tab on the homepage, you are able to view a map of WH's service territory showing all current outages, including the number of members affected and details on the outage. You can also follow us on our outage page on Twitter at: http://twitter.com/Wright_Hennepin or check out our Facebook page for hourly updates at: www.facebook.com/WrightHennepin. 

WH offers electric safety education

In an effort to keep children informed about electrical safety and energy conservation, Wright-Hennepin (WH) presents educational hotline demonstrations to thousands of children annually. Hotline demonstrations are given at several schools in WH's service territory and help children think about electricity beyond the idea of walking into a room and turning on a light. They include information regarding the importance of safe behavior around electricity, how electricity is produced through the use of wind, coal and solar and the value of power.

The demonstrations consist of hands-on activities, including an experiment with a Van de Graaf generator, also known as the "static ball." The static ball demonstrates how electricity travels outside of conductors, while giving the children a "hair-raising" experience and a few good laughs. In addition to the hands-on activities, children are made aware of safety practices around electricity, such as avoiding flying kites near power lines and never mixing water with electricity.

At the end of the presentation, students have the opportunity to ask their teacher questions about the presentation. In addition, they receive take-home information that lists steps

about home-safety walk throughs, including checking to make sure electrical cords are in good condition (free of cracks and frays) and that all outlets have wall plates over them. The students are also given a list of tips to help their families save energy, including using power strips, not leaving the refrigerator door open for long and shutting down the computer when it's not in use. 



Sixth grade students at Rockford Middle School listen to a safety demonstration.

A student at Rockford Middle School volunteers to use the Van de Graaf generator, or "static ball," which demonstrates how electricity travels outside of conductors, while giving children a "hair-raising" experience and a few good laughs.



WH thanks members for helping lower costs with Beat the Peak

Wright-Hennepin (WH) would like to take the opportunity to extend a special thank you to our members who have voluntarily joined our new Beat the Peak program so far this year. The participation has been outstanding, surpassing our expectation with more than 1,500 members signed up for the program. WH is pleased that our members are working cooperatively to lower power costs.


together to lower wholesale power costs. In fact, we estimate that if every member were to shift two kilowatt hours of electric use from peak times to other times,



Beat the Peak is free to join, completely voluntary and is a way we can work

 WH thanks members who have voluntarily joined their new Beat the Peak program so far this year.

WH members would save up to \$400,000 in wholesale power costs per month! Members on the program will receive Beat the Peak notifications via text and/or email and are asked to delay using electric appliances between the hours of 5 and 10 p.m.

To join, visit www.whe.org and click on "For My Home." Then click on "Energy Conservation" and "Help Save Energy on Beat the Peak days." WH appreciates everyone's efforts to keep energy costs as low as possible. 

Sign up for helpful notifications

WH offers free email or text message notifications for:

Outage alerts: Stay up-to-date with outage information and estimated restoration times. To sign up, visit: <http://goo.gl/csdRH>

Load Management alerts: No matter which Off-Peak program you participate in, it can be helpful to know when WH will manage your energy load. To sign up, visit: <http://goo.gl/1a2mP> and click on, "Sign me up to receive messages alerting me of Off-Peak load management."



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- ✓ Clothes dryer
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- ✓ Range
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*With 1-year agreement

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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

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Remember summer safety tips while working near electricity


Summer is a season filled with outdoor projects and activities. While it is easy to become wrapped up in a busy schedule, it is important to review electric safety basics. The following electric safety tips can help ensure a happy, healthy summer for you and your family:

- Be aware of power lines and always assume that wires are "live and dangerous."
- Practice caution when working near power lines attached to your home. Keep yourself and equipment at least ten feet away from lines.
- Never climb a utility pole or enter an electric substation. Electric substations contain high-voltage equipment that is dangerous.
- Be mindful of children playing near power lines. Children should never climb trees near power lines.
- Keep all electrical toys and appliances away from water. This includes wet ground, pools, bathtubs, sprinkler systems and sinks. Electricity travels very quickly through water.
- Avoid planting tall-growing trees such as large oaks, pines and maples under power lines
- When using a pressure washer or wet-dry vacuum cleaner, be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions to avoid electric shock.
- Make sure extension cords and tools are marked for outdoor use.



If you are planning a project that includes digging this summer **call 811 before you dig.**



Finally, you should never assume the depth or location of underground utility lines. If you are planning a project that includes digging, such as building a deck or planting a tree, call 811 before you dig. This service is free, prevents the inconvenience of having utilities interrupted, and can help prevent serious injury. For more information about local services, visit: www.call811.com. 

WH awards Scholarships

Continued from cover

WH Local Schools Scholarship

WH awards one scholarship per school district in its service area to outstanding students pursuing higher education. The following recipients were chosen to receive a Local School Scholarship:

- Holly Maile**, Annandale HS
- Samantha Wanner**, Buffalo HS
- Aaron Haataja**, Dassel-Cokato HS
- Laura Tormanen**, Delano HS
- Raechell Bayerl**, Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted HS
- Rebecca Cohn**, Maple Grove HS
- Hannah Haegele**, Maple Lake HS
- Zachary Meierhofer**, Monticello HS
- Ryan Greiberr**, Orono HS
- Victoria Johnson**, Osseo HS
- Carissa Aarsvold**, Rockford HS
- Jacquelyn Welcome**, Rogers HS
- Shelby Larson**, St. Michael-Albertville Sr. HS
- Mark Sandquist**, Watertown-Mayer HS
- Amy Xiong**, Wayzata HS
- Luke Gasperlin**, Totino-Grace HS - At Large recipient

Edward R. Slebiska Memorial Line Worker Scholarship


Line workers make up a large percentage of WH's work force and require a critical skill that is in short supply in the electric utility industry. Studies indicate that 20 percent of current line workers in the electric cooperative industry will retire in the next five years. That is why WH offers two scholarships for this trade. This scholarship is awarded in memory of Ed R. Slebiska who co-founded WH in 1937 and became its first CEO, holding that position until his retirement in 1977. During that time,

Slebiska helped lead the cooperative in bringing reliable and accessible affordable electricity to rural Wright County and western Hennepin County. This year's recipients of the Edward R. Slebiska Memorial Lineworker Scholarship were: **Jacob Elfmann, Annandale, Minn.,** and **Gavin Rufer, Cokato, Minn.**

Elwyn and Hazel Knickerbocker Memorial Line Worker Scholarship

Long-time WH members Doris and Ron Horswell of Annandale, Minn., created this scholarship in 2005 to honor the memory of Doris' parents, Elwyn and Hazel Knickerbocker, who played crucial roles in bringing electricity to rural homes and farms in Wright and Hennepin counties. Elwyn served on WH's board of directors, representing District 1 – near Annandale, Clearwater and Maple Lake – for 53 years. At that time, he was the longest serving electric cooperative director in the nation. Hazel was a tireless champion of rural electrification, offering a clear voice of support during efforts to organize and expand the cooperative. **Cale Ehresmann, Greenfield, Minn.** received the Elwyn and Hazel Knickerbocker Memorial Line Worker Scholarship. WH has gone on to hire a number of the Slebiska and Knickerbocker scholarship winners after the recipients have completed line-worker training.

Basin Electric Scholarships

Basin Electric Power Cooperative (Basin) – one of WH's wholesale power suppliers – headquartered in Bismarck, N.D., annually awards a scholarship to its distribution cooperative members and to an employee's descendent. **Camille Koch, Plymouth, Minn.,** received a scholarship from WH, courtesy of Basin. 

CEO's Memo Continued from Page 2

easy monthly payments spread out over something like seven to ten years. We have some homework to do yet, but I am getting close to making a final recommendation to your Board of Directors on this initiative.

Third, the legislature should have directed incentives and mandates towards battery backups to store solar power rather than to the solar panels themselves. The price of solar panels have come down in the last few years 60-80% percent annually according to many sources. With the dramatic price drop, why the need for further economic

stimulus? Rebates directed at battery storage and solar power would have solved an age old problem: The fact that solar energy is produced mostly at times it's not needed.

Battery backups, then, became the "secret sauce" to making solar a viable and reliable option for both the customer and the utility. The legislature didn't go so far as to order rebates on batteries, but they did direct the PUC to perform a study on this to take up at another time.

I want to thank the legislators in WH's service territory for supporting our views on these matters.

Going forward, in the months ahead we intend to offer a program of easy financing and battery packages tied to solar panels. By doing this, your cooperative will continue to be a leader in bringing solar energy into the mainstream for its members while eliminating many of the unintended consequences.

Mark Vogt

Board Report

Continued from Page 2

- Reviewed and filed the monthly CEO, legal, financial and operations reports.
- Held Enterprise Risk Management workshop with facilitator Scott Luecal.

Guests included:

- Will Kaul, Great River Energy's (GRE's) VP of Transmission, who provided an update on the state's massive transmission line construction project (CAPX2020).
- Tony Mayer, CEO of Zenergy, along with staff assistant Pam Mahling, shared information about the demand for solar power in northwestern Minnesota.

May Board Meeting Highlights:

The monthly meeting of the Board of Directors was conducted May 16, 2013. A quorum of directors was present. Items discussed or Board action taken:

- Approved annual line worker scholarship winners.
- Approved annual dues for National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.
- Approved three fleet vehicles for bid – 1993 pole trailer, 1995 flatbed trailer and 2001 International cab and chassis.
- Directors shared industry meeting highlights.
- Reviewed and filed CEO, financial and other reports.

Guests speakers included:

- Minnesota Rural Electric Association's (MREA's) Manager Mark Glaess, who gave a legislative recap to employees and the board.
- Attorney Scott Kelly provided an update on the stray voltage lawsuit appeal.
- Chief Strategy Officer Mei Shibata and Associate Director Amanda Lurie with ThinkEco presented information about the Control My Appliance program, as well as information about their home energy management devices.

NOTICE OF CHANGE IN OFFICE HOURS



WH'S NEW OFFICE HOURS [Memorial Day to Labor Day]

**7:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
Monday-Friday**


Security tips to help enjoy a fun and safe summer

The summer months tend to conjure thoughts of vacations and fun in the sun, but they can also carry risks that put your family and home in jeopardy. Here are simple security tips to keep your home and loved ones safe during the summer months:

Home Security: While enjoying the warm, fresh air, family members may be unaware of doors, locks and windows that have been left open. It is important to remember that thieves are often opportunists and will leap on the chance of entering an open window or unlocked door. For this reason, it is important to keep your home as secure as possible by closing and locking all doors and windows when you are going to be away for any period of time. This is especially important if you are going on a summer vacation.

In addition, a home alarm system is a great investment and deterrent to thieves, as the systems ensure that should someone break into your property, they won't be able to go about their business without disruption. WH Security has a variety of custom home security system packages to help you and your family stay safe. For more information, visit: <http://goo.gl/IXKHT> or call a representative at (763) 477-3664.

Supervision: Many accidents involving children occur in or around swimming pools or bodies of water during the summer months. Always supervise children while outside or near a pool. If you own a pool, having a security camera can add another layer of protection by allowing someone to keep an eye out for trouble in the pool or yard area from a remote location.

You will also be aware of any intruders and unwanted visitors at all times during the day. WH Security specializes in security cameras designed to capture activity to help keep you informed about what's happening on your property. For more information, visit: <http://goo.gl/H9ag7> or call a representative at (763) 477-3664. 



Always supervise children while outside or near a pool this summer.

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tenKsolar Winner

DEAN POULIOT of Maple Grove wins a credit for 233 kWh, April's output from WH's tenKsolar panel array.
LEESA BEQUETTE of Maple Grove wins a credit for 198 kWh, May's output from WH's tenKsolar panel array.



Solar Winner

JOHN KIEFER of Buffalo wins a credit for 247 kWh, April's output from WH's solar panels.
JONATHAN FENTON of Buffalo wins a credit for 211 kWh, May's output from WH's solar panels.



Wind Winner

WILLIAM LEE of Annandale wins a credit for 1,277 kWh, April's output from WH's wind generator.
DENNIS SCHEIBE of Maple Grove wins a credit for 936 kWh, May's output from WH's wind generator.

Average monthly output over 12 months:

Wind generator: 664 kWh
Solar panels: 214 kWh
tenKsolar system: 185 kWh.

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

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*Certain restrictions apply. 15% discount is based on the general service rate after the power cost adjustment for your energy use during June, July and August and does not include other monthly charges.

