

## News Release

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### **WRIGHT-HENNEPIN'S POWER LINE MAINTENANCE PRACTICES RECEIVE OUTSTANDING RATING FROM U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

**Rockford, Minn. (August 8, 2012)** — Wright-Hennepin Cooperative Electric Association (WH) recently received an outstanding rating for its power line operations and maintenance practices from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Utility Service (RUS).

Unlike most utilities, electric cooperatives across the country are required by the RUS to undergo third-party oversight and inspection of their power line operations and maintenance practices every three years. The audit is a rigorous examination of a cooperative's overhead and underground distribution lines maintenance practices of substations, distribution equipment, and work-order procedures. Additionally, the audit reviews the engineering and planning practices along with several areas of power quality and reliability. This year, WH received a near perfect score of 149 out of 150 possible points.

In addition to the cooperative's high numerical score, the auditor complimented WH for its "excellent maintenance programs," and stated she was "impressed by (WH's) overall operation."

"The review from RUS is a reflection of the dedication and pride our employees at WH have for the work they do in providing reliable and safe electricity to our members," said WH's Vice President of Energy Distribution Lance Hovland. "To be complimented by our federal government with this high score is an honor that all employees at WH can take pride in."

Hovland also said this unique level of oversight is a reason why WH's outage and outage response record is among the best of all utilities in the nation.

The RUS is an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and was originally established to help bring electricity, telephone service, water and waste disposal to rural communities. Today, the RUS carries on this tradition by helping rural utilities expand and keep their technology and equipment at a high level of readiness, and recently began working to establish new and vital services such as distance learning and telemedicine.

WH is a member-owned non-profit electric utility that provides electric power to Wright County and the western part of Hennepin County. The cooperative has been a corporate citizen in this area since 1937 and currently serves more than 46,000 electric accounts. The utility started its security division in 1989 that provides local home security solutions as well as monitors alarm systems for more than 50,000 customers in 32 states and three Canadian provinces.

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