



DECEMBER 2020

Volts & Jolts

Published monthly for the members of Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc.
SERVING THE FOUR-COUNTY AREA OF MARSHALL, PENNINGTON, RED LAKE AND POLK
and a portion of the lands of the Red Lake Band of Chippewa

May the magic
of Christmas
fill your life with
joy and peace.

*Merry
Christmas*
(and Happy New Year!)

FROM YOUR EMPLOYEES AND DIRECTORS
AT RED LAKE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

– EMPLOYEES –

Kelli Brateng	Darcy Cardinal
Steve Conely	Aaron Derosier
Javen Eidsmoe	Jordon Gervais
Stephanie Johnson	Jenny Kelley
Christie Klipping	Brett Knott
Chris Knott	Melanie LaCrosse
Laurie Malwitz	Warren Malwitz
Branden Narlock	Sam Olson
Cindy Pahlen	Sam Pahlen
Mike Raymond	Troy Schmitz
Casey Thronson	

– DIRECTORS –

Cecil Anderson	Colette Kujava
Stacy Blawat	Steve Linder
Bonnie Christians	Peter Mosbeck
Aaron Chervestad	Randy Versdahl
Mark Hanson	

Holiday Office Hours

Red Lake Electric Cooperative's headquarters
will be closed Dec. 25 and Jan. 1.

In case of an electric outage or emergency, please call
the after-hours phone number at 218-253-2200.

RLEC DIRECTORS RECEIVE SERVICE AWARDS



Mark Hanson
15 Years



Randy Versdahl
10 Years



Colette Kujava
10 Years



Aaron Chervestad
5 Years

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OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

President Randy Versdahl
Vice President Stacy Blawat
Secretary-Treasurer Mark Hanson
Directors Cecil Anderson,
Aaron Chervestad, Bonnie Christians,
Colette Kujava, Steve Linder, Peter Mosbeck

Stephanie Johnson General Manager

Steve Conely Manager of Electric
System Operations

Kelli Brateng Manager of Member Services

OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday

8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Phone: (218) 253-2168

Toll-Free: 1-800-245-6068

Fax: (218) 253-2630

**AFTER HOURS/OUTAGE CALLS****218-253-2200**Website: www.redlakeelectric.comEmail: info@redlakeelectric.com**CALL BEFORE YOU DIG****1-800-252-1166 or 811****MINNESOTA STATE
ELECTRICAL INSPECTORS**

Pennington and Marshall Counties:

Ronald Ditsch – 218-779-6758

Polk and Red Lake Counties:

George Stage – 701-306-3511

Any time you or an electrician does wiring or other electrical work at your home or farm, Minnesota state law requires a state wiring inspector to conduct a proper inspection of the work. A rough-in inspection must be made before any wiring is covered. A final inspection is also required. Please visit www.dli.mn.gov for more information. The inspectors can be reached week-day mornings between 7 a.m. and 8:30 a.m.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of Red Lake Electric Cooperative to enhance the quality of life for people of our service area by safely and consistently providing quality electric service and other valued services while holding our employees, our community and our environment in high regard.



Giving back is the co-op way

by Stephanie Johnson

As some of you might know, cooperatives across the globe adhere to the same seven cooperative principles that guide all our decisions – from how we run the co-op, to how we engage with our local communities. Concern for community is the seventh principle, and it is one that all employees of Red Lake Electric Cooperative, Inc., value year-round. But during the holiday season, concern for community seems especially important.

Electric cooperatives have a proud history of giving back. Red Lake Electric Cooperative members help us give back, too. Through the Operation Round Up program, members can round up their energy bills to the next dollar amount, and the extra change goes toward helping those in need, right here in our community.

So many families go without on a daily basis and struggle to make ends meet. This struggle can be especially

hard during the holiday season.

There are many ways you can give back to the community that go beyond dollar donations. Take some time to go through your closets and find clothes that no longer fit or have lost their use. Bag those items up and take them to your local Salvation Army, Goodwill or church clothing drive. Volunteer for a local food or toy drive, (Loretta Pittman 21486) deliver meals to the sick and the elderly or simply make a meal for a neighbor in need.

No matter how great or small the act, every time we give back, we strengthen our community. So take the time to give back this holiday season. You'll be glad you did.

As we prepare for the next year, we look forward to the opportunity to serve you and the greater community. On behalf of the Red Lake Electric Cooperative, we hope your holidays are indeed merry and bright!

FEDERAL/STATE ENERGY ASSISTANCE

If you need help paying your electric utility bill, you may qualify for state or federal fuel assistance. For complete qualification and application information, contact your local county welfare or community/citizen's action council listed below. These organizations may also provide budget counseling.

Inter-County Community Council

Oklee, MN

*Serves East Polk, Pennington
and Red Lake Counties*

218-796-5144

Toll-free: 1-888-778-4008

Fax: 218-796-5175

Northwest Community Action

Badger, MN

Serves East Marshall County

218-528-3258

Toll-free: 1-800-568-5329

Fax: 218-528-3259

Tri-Valley Opportunity Council

Crookston, MN

*Serves West Polk,
West Marshall County*

218-281-9080

Toll-free: 1-866-264-3729

Fax: 218-281-0705

Red Lake Community Action Agency

Red Lake, MN

Serves Beltrami County

218-679-1880

Five ways to stay cozy this winter

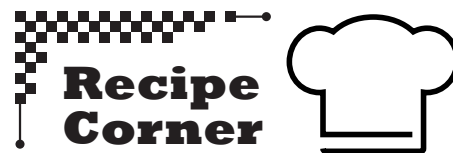
Baby, it's cold outside! When you're feeling chilly at home, there are several budget-friendly ways you can keep comfortable without turning up the thermostat.

Here are five easy ways to stay cozy this winter.



1. Whether you're experiencing extremely cold winter temps or you simply "run cold," an electric blanket can deliver quick warmth like a regular throw or blanket cannot. Electric blankets can include a variety of features, like timers and dual temperature settings (if your cuddle buddy prefers less heat). This winter, consider an electric blanket instead of turning up the heat and your energy bill will thank you.
2. One of the easiest ways to stay cozy at home is to keep your feet warm. Our feet play a critical role in regulating body temperature, so when your feet are warm, your body automatically feels warmer. Try a pair of comfortable wool socks or house slippers to stay toasty.
3. On winter days when the sun is shining, take advantage and harness natural warmth from sunlight. Open all curtains, drapes and blinds in your home to let the sunshine in – you'll be able to feel the difference.
4. Another way to make your home cozier is to use a humidifier. Cold air doesn't hold water vapor like warm air, so by adding humidity inside your home, you can feel a little warmer. A favorable level of humidity inside your home can also help clear sinuses, soften skin and improve sleep.
5. Beyond adding visual appeal to your home, area rugs can also provide extra insulation and a warm surface for your feet on cold winter days. Use large area rugs in rooms (Valerie Gagnon 25282) where you spend the most time. You'll enjoy the new colors and textures of the rug, and the additional warmth will help keep your home comfortable.

These are just a few ways you can stay cozy this winter without turning up the thermostat. Don't forget the hot chocolate!



Submit your recipes to be published in *Volts & Jolts*. Email to info@redlakeelectric.com or mail to: Red Lake Electric Cooperative, PO Box 430, Red Lake Falls, MN 56750.

Blueberry Cream Cheese French Toast Casserole

French toast:

12 slices bread, any kind or loaf of French bread
2 pkgs. cream cheese, room temperature, 8 oz. each
1 c. blueberries, fresh or frozen
12 large eggs
1 c. milk, add a little at a time until milk is absorbed by bread
1/3 c. maple syrup or honey

Blueberry sauce:

1 c. sugar
2 Tbsp. corn starch
1 c. water
1 c. blueberries, fresh or frozen
1 Tbsp. butter

French toast: Spray 9x13-inch dish with cooking spray. Cut or tear bread into cubes and arrange in the bottom of dish.

Cut up cream cheese into 1-inch cubes. Drop the cream cheese cubes over the top of the bread. Sprinkle 1 cup blueberries over the top.

In mixing bowl, combine 12 eggs, 1 cup milk, 1/3 cup maple syrup. Pour this mixture, a little at a time until the bread soaks up the milk but is not soggy. You don't want it to be soggy before you bake it. If it's soggy before you bake it, it will be soggy after you bake it. Cover with foil and refrigerate overnight.

Blueberry sauce: You can make this ahead of time and refrigerate, then warm up before serving. Stir together 1 cup sugar and 2 Tbsp. corn starch in a medium saucepan. Add 1 cup water and stir until smooth so corn starch won't be clumpy. Heat to boiling and stir 2-3 minutes until thickened.

Add 1 cup blueberries. Simmer for 8-10 minutes, stirring occasionally until blueberries start (Bert Foster 28865) to burst. Don't let them all burst. I like some of the blueberries whole.

Turn heat off the blueberry sauce and stir in 1 Tbsp butter. Store in plastic or glass container and refrigerate until ready to use.

The next morning preheat oven to 350 degrees. Take the casserole out of the refrigerator. Place covered casserole in the preheated oven and bake for 30 minutes.

In North Dakota and Minnesota, we don't slow down when it's 30 below.

Our electricity has to be tough and dependable. Like us.

That's why we combine the diverse strengths of our region's renewable resources with our steadfast supply of lignite coal – to ensure reliable power even when the wind isn't blowing and the sun isn't shining.

No, we don't slow down when things freeze up.

Because we're all in on all-of-the-above energy.

ALL IN

ALL-OF-THE-ABOVE ENERGY

Power through the pandemic

Enhance your at-home experience with off-peak heating



When the coronavirus first sent many of us home to work and learn remotely, our region was just entering the warmer days of spring. Now, many months later, COVID still has us living the stay-at-home life as we transition back into the coldest winter months.

Prepare now for the uncertainty ahead by investing in the reliable, affordable and convenient comfort of off-peak electric heating and cooling.

Your cooperative's off-peak program allows you to save more as

you spend more time at home. When electric demand is high, off-peak technologies – such as **air-source heat pumps**, **electric plenum heaters** and **thermal storage room units** – automatically (Arthur Erickson 24489) switch from electricity to a supplemental heating source like fuel oil.

There is no interruption to your cozy comfort. In exchange for helping your cooperative distribute its energy more efficiently in times of high need, you enjoy a super-low

off-peak electricity rate – around half of the regular rate. The savings add up fast!

The year 2020 was a time to rethink how we collaborate with co-workers, educate our children and socialize with friends. We know more will be done using technology in our homes, so now's the time to shift how you use your electricity as well.

Contact the energy experts at Red Lake Electric today to learn how you can start saving more with off-peak electricity.

Heating Heroes Unmasked



Rebates Available!

Air-source heat pump



- Sized to meet the needs of any home
- Efficiently moves heat instead of generating it
- Also cools home in the summer
- Easy installation and minimal maintenance

Plenum heater



- Easiest, most cost-effective route to off-peak
- Converts existing oil or gas system to dual-fuel
- Safer and cleaner than 100% fossil-fuel heat
- Extends the life of your furnace

Thermal storage room unit



- Best choice for homes without ductwork
- Efficiently stores off-peak heat in bricks
- Evenly delivers heat to any size room
- Does not need a backup fuel source

Energy Efficiency Incentives

Make your home more comfortable and energy efficient with help from Red Lake Electric Cooperative. Great rebates and incentives are available to help you upgrade your heating and cooling system, water heater and chargers for electric vehicles. Not sure where to start? Check out our rebate list below for heating and cooling options. Contact Red Lake Electric Cooperative for expert advice on improving your home's energy performance.

Electric Heating Rebates

Must be on off-peak

Electric plenum heaters

Easily converts your existing fossil fuel furnace into a dual-fuel heating system. You are able to use the most efficient, cost-effective heating source – fossil fuel or electricity – at any time.

Rebate of \$50 per kilowatt (kW)

Electric thermal storage heaters

Draws electricity during off-peak hours when it is cheaper. Heat is stored in specially designed bricks to provide comfort 24 hours a day.

Rebate of \$60 per kW

Air-source heat pumps (including mini-split ductless option)

Works just like a central air conditioner in the summer. In the fall and winter, they provide super-efficient supplemental heat.

Up to 16 SEER: Rebate of \$300 per ton
17 SEER or greater: Rebate of \$500 per ton



Geothermal heat pumps

Provides the highest efficiency for space heating and cooling available today. The system transfers heat to and from the earth using only small amounts of electricity.

Closed loop: Rebate of \$400 per ton
Open loop: Rebate of \$200 per ton



Electric underfloor boiler

A popular off-peak option because the system transfers heat evenly across the floor to reach people and objects, providing both comfort and efficiency. Applications include electric boiler with hydronic tubing.

Rebate of \$50 per kW

Other electric heating systems

Options include electric baseboards, cove heaters, electric floor cable, mats and more.

Rebate of \$25 per kW

Electric Water Heater Rebates

Must be on off-peak



100 gallon or greater

\$350 rebate

56-99 gallon

\$300 rebate

55 gallon or less

\$150 rebate

Bonus rebates:

Add \$250

if converting from natural gas or propane.

Add \$100 for new building construction.

Electric Vehicle Charger Rebates

240V Level 2 Charger

Must be on off-peak



Electric vehicle or hybrid

\$50 per kW

Residential
Charger

Commercial
Charger

Commercial – Forklifts, Zambonis, etc.

\$50 per kW

All equipment must be new and installed on Red Lake Electric Cooperative's system.

Equipment must be installed on RLEC's off-peak program.

Contact Member Services for more details!

218-253-2168

Electrical contractor continuing education classes to be held **online-only** in January

**** ONLINE ONLY ****

2021

ELECTRICAL CONTINUING EDUCATION CLASSES

\$50

Minnkota Power Cooperative and Red Lake Electric Cooperative will again provide an opportunity for area electricians to obtain credits for license renewal by attending one of seven continuing education classes.

As a precaution against the spread of COVID-19, the classes will be offered online-only this year. Attendees will be required to have a computer or tablet with a strong internet (28004 Trenten Boucher) connection and a web camera that must stay on during the course.

The registration fee is \$50 for eight code credits. Taking the class on multiple days will not qualify for 16 code credits. Registration can be done online at www.minnkota.com. Registration must be completed at least seven days prior to the seminar.

Eight-hour classes will be offered on Jan. 5, Jan. 6, Jan. 12, Jan. 13, Jan. 19, Jan. 20 and Jan. 26. Virtual registration (Betty Carlson 20295) will start at 7:15 a.m., and each course will begin at 8 a.m.

This marks the 33rd year of the successful program, which is aimed at providing area trade allies with the latest information on electrical code and practices. For more information about the program, call (701) 795-4292 or email questions to contractortraining@minnkota.com.

Class Dates

Tuesday, Jan. 5
Wednesday, Jan. 6
Tuesday, Jan. 12
Wednesday, Jan. 13
Tuesday, Jan. 19
Wednesday, Jan. 20
Tuesday, Jan. 26

Technology Requirements

- Computer or tablet with strong internet connection
- Download of GoTo Meeting software (free)
- Web camera is on at all times

Registration

- Online registration and payment at Minnkota.com
- Link to the course and materials will be provided via email following registration

Class Schedule

7:15 - 8 a.m. – Virtual sign-in
8 a.m. - noon – Workshop

Noon - 1 p.m. – Lunch break
1 - 5 p.m. – Workshop

NOTICE OF NAMES

Hidden within the text of the articles of this issue of the *Volts & Jolts* are the names and account numbers of some Red Lake Electric Cooperative members. They will appear within the articles in parentheses as such (9999999.99 Willie Ray Member). If you find your name and account number, clip it out and send it with your next payment. You will be credited with \$5 on your electric bill.



Like us on Facebook at
www.facebook.com/redlakeelectric

ELECTRIC HEAT EXEMPTION

This is to certify that the primary source of heat for my residence is electricity and I am eligible for the electric heating sales tax exemption as provided by Minnesota State Law. The primary source is the source that supplies more heat than any other source for the largest period of time during the heating season.

Date _____ Account Number _____

Social Security Number _____

Signature _____

Cards of Thanks

Red Lake Electric reserves the right to edit thank you notes when being published.



Thank you for the RLEC scholarship. I really appreciate it! I am happy to say that I am pursuing an education in nursing. After I graduate from Northland with a two-year RN degree, I plan to go on and get my bachelor's degree in nursing.

*Tessa Anderson
Marshall County Central
Class of 2020*

I want to reach out and thank you for sponsoring our Dairy Top Production and the Champion Breeding Ewe Lamb for our virtual county fair we held in July. Our event went quite well and it was so fun to allow the (Larry L. Weber 20109) opportunity for youth to showcase their project learning and to compete at the county level. Although this year has been filled with twists and turns, we truly appreciate your support despite it all.

*Ashley Nerhus
Extension Educator
4-H Youth Development
Pennington County*

Thank you for sponsoring the Top Dairy Production award at the 2020 Pennington County 4-H show. I hope we can have an in-person show in 2021.

Curtis G.

RLE Trust,

On behalf of the Red Lake Falls Fire Department, I would like to thank you for your recent donation through the Operation Round Up grant. The funds will go toward the purchase of communication equipment. Operation Round Up is a great program that benefits many organizations.

Karl Kleven, Chief

Sincere thanks for generously supporting our local Living at Home program. Gifts (Kenneth Halvorson 21920) received are well-used, providing services to our senior neighbors.

Tri-Community LAH/BNP

Electrical safety and conservation websites

The following is a list of websites that can provide information and education in reference to electrical safety and energy conservation. These websites are listed as links (20708 Gary F. Barrett) on Red Lake Electric's website at www.redlakeelectric.com.

- Electrical Safety Foundation International: www.esfi.org
- Alliance to Save Energy: www.ase.org
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: www.epa.gov/greenhomes
- Energy Star: www.energystar.gov
- Minnesota Safety Council: www.minnesotasafetycouncil.org
- Safe Electricity: www.safeelectricity.org
- Lighting Controls Association: www.aboutlightingcontrols.org
- U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission: www.cpsc.gov



Take control of your account with SmartHub!



Now you can see your daily and monthly usage, pay/view your bill online and access a whole host of other useful services with SmartHub. SmartHub is a free and secure online energy portal at www.redlakeelectric.com that allows members to do the following things:

- View daily and monthly energy use.
- View and pay your bills online.
- Go paperless and receive an email notice when your bill is ready to view.
- Compare energy use to changes in temperature.



Scan the QR code
for online access to
SmartHub

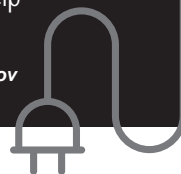
If you have questions regarding SmartHub, call us at 218-253-2168 or send an email to info@redlakeelectric.com.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Energy bills can increase during winter for a variety of reasons, like houseguests, more time spent at home, and shorter days and longer nights. Small actions, like turning down your thermostat, replacing old bulbs with LEDs (Ryan Braunschweig 23907) and washing clothes in cold water can help you save.

Source: energystar.gov





As the nights grow longer, our lives are brightened and our hearts warmed by the lights of Christmas.

The celebration of Christmas is surrounded by lights – colored lights twinkling on the tree, lights shining throughout the countryside and children's faces lit with a joy that is reflected in their parents' eyes.

Electricity helps make your holidays merry and bright by providing you with the gift of light – a powerful value, each and every day.

Employee Spotlight



Sam Olson
Apprentice Lineworker



Sam Olson was hired full-time as an apprentice lineworker on Nov. 23, 2020, after working for RLEC as a seasonal lineworker for the past two summers. Olson graduated from Mahnomen High School and attended lineworker school at Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Baudette. He has spent most of his time at RLEC working between the two construction crews. Sam isn't the only lineman in his family – his father, Scott, is a lineman (Evelyn K. Hraby 21836) at Wild Rice Electric in Mahnomen.

In his spare time, Sam enjoys hunting, fishing and golf. A couple fun facts about him are: His favorite movie is Step Brothers, his favorite food is pizza, his favorite restaurant is Buffalo Wild Wings and his favorite sport is golf.

Welcome to Red Lake Electric, Sam!