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

DIRECTOR SPOTLIGHT

Jennifer Bernier-Linder

District 4 Director

- Elected 2023
- Serving townships of: Badger, Lessor, Hill River, Poplar River, Lambert, Chester, Garnes, Equality, Johnson and Hickory

Family members

Husband: Ted LinderChildren: Sophia Linder

What hobbies and interests do you have?

- Gardening and canning many different varieties of food
- Going to concerts
- Traveling (especially cruises)
- Taking pictures
- · Learning about family history

What are you most looking forward to serving on the RLEC board?

- Being able to serve my district and represent the cooperative members.
- To learn what goes into providing power to all the members and learning the industry.



Jennifer Bernier-Linder and her husband Ted Linder pose for a photo with their daughter Sophia.

Volunteer/member of organizations, church, etc.

 Member of Salem Lutheran Church (rural Oklee), active member of WELCA, past Salem Church council member, former Sunday school teacher, Church Board of Education, past WELCA secretary

Family tradition

 We host an annual corn feed at our house every summer when the corn is ready. We took over this tradition from Ted's parents Orrin & Phyllis Linder many years ago. We host family, neighbors and friends, ranging from 25-50 people each year.

MEMBER APPRECIATION LUNCH

Thursday, October 12, 2023

Pulled pork, beans, potato chips, dessert, and beverage.

Time: 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Location: RLEC warehouse (east doors)

RLEC Headquarters, 412 International Drive SW, Red Lake Falls

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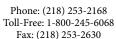
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OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

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



AFTER HOURS/OUTAGE CALLS (218) 253-2200

Website: www.redlakeelectric.com Email: 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

Red Lake and Polk Counties:

Todd Knaack: (763) 516-0344

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 weekday 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.



Power in Your Hands

by Stephanie Johnson

hat makes electric cooperatives different than other types of utilities? Because we're a cooperative, we operate a little differently than other utilities. Red Lake Electric's decisions are made locally, by directors who also live right here in our community. Everyone who pays to receive electricity from the cooperative is a member. When you pay your electric bill each month, your money stays here – to pay for the electricity used, or to make improvements to our local system to strengthen service reliability. The money you pay the cooperative doesn't line the pockets of shareholders five states away. We're a cooperative, and we exist to provide a service to you, our local members.

You may notice that throughout the year, we schedule opportunities for you to attend cooperative events, like our annual meeting, district meetings and Member Appreciation Day so we can hear from you. Our success lies in your satisfaction, which is why we offer these opportunities to engage and listen to what you have to say.

Because you are part of an electric cooperative, you can count on our team to maintain local jobs, at-cost electricity and first-class service, no matter what the economy and supply chain issues throw at us.

Red Lake Electric is striving to keep our costs as low as possible so we can keep more money in your pocket. We want to help you maximize the value you can get from our services and offerings.

Please know that you, the members of Red Lake Electric, are at the heart of

everything we do. Cooperatives adhere to seven guiding cooperative principles that reflect core values of honesty, transparency, equity, inclusiveness and service.

We exist to serve you and provide the quality, reliable, friendly service you expect and deserve. While we've grown over the years, we're still driven by the same guiding principles to serve our community. We hope to see or hear from you soon. This cooperative was created for you, the members. The power is in your hands.

Rate increases

During our August board meeting, your board of directors approved a rate increase to the Security Lighting Lease Rates and the Standby Service Rate. The Security Lighting Lease Rate was increased for each lighting category. This increase will provide revenue for the increased cost of security lighting and maintenance. The Standby Service Rate will increase from \$13 to \$22. This increase will provide revenue for cooperative equipment and potential line loss at each location with a standby service rate. (Please refer to page 5, Retail Rate Summary)

October is National Cooperative Month

In observance of National Cooperative Month, Thursday, Oct. 12, we will be hosting a community open house. Please help us celebrate at our headquarters in Red Lake Falls with lunch from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. We will be serving pulled pork sandwiches, chips, beans, dessert and a beverage. Hope to see you there!

RLEC Director Education

In addition to their regular monthly board meetings, your directors spend time at various conferences and educational sessions to be updated on the latest electric industry information.

- In July, Director Versdahl attended the monthly Minnkota Power Cooperative board meeting, along with Minnkota Director Kujava. Director Blawat and General Manager Johnson attended the MREA board of directors meeting held in Grand Forks.
- In August, the MREA Energy Issues Summit in Minneapolis was attended in person and virtually by directors Blawat, Hanson, Kujava, Versdahl, Christians, Anderson and Mosbeck. General Manager Johnson was part of a discussion panel on women in the electric industry.



program is top-notch.

5 things to know about off-peak heating

by Kelli Brateng

ou often hear Red Lake Electric mention the off-peak heating program. Very often. That's because we get really excited about programs that offer benefits to everyone involved. Integrating off-peak heating into your home or business benefits you (the member), the cooperative and the entire regional electric grid. Here's why we think the off-peak heating

1. There are many off-peak heating technology options to choose from

Air-source heat pumps, mini-split heat pumps, plenums, thermal storage heating, underfloor heating – you name it! We can suggest an off-peak-qualified heating system that will fit any size home or budget.

2. Off-peak heating allows the co-op to keep electricity affordable

The off-peak program allows us to lower demand when regional electric need gets higher than average. This flexibility means we can avoid expensive purchases from the energy market AND avoid building expensive new generation sources that would only be used for peak demand. That savings is passed to you in the form of stable rates.

3. Off-peak heating helps keep the regional grid reliable in the winter

In the coldest months like January and February, people are turning on their heat everywhere in the country. The national grid needs a lot of energy to meet that demand, and by temporarily reducing our co-op's energy use, we help keep the grid energized and reliable for everyone.

4. You receive a reduced electric rate when you enroll in off-peak heating

Off-peak volunteers are thanked for their flexibility with an electric heating rate that is nearly 50% lower than the standard electric rate. You could save hundreds on your electric bill over the course of a year!

5. You can receive hundreds of dollars in co-op rebates on new off-peak equipment

Talk to your co-op energy pros about the rebates that we offer when you (or your contractor) install offpeak heating. If your equipment is eligible, you could receive money to put back into your budget!



Learn more about the value of off-peak electricity at ValueofElectricity.com.

OFF-PEAK HEATING PROGRAM? WHAT'S THAT?

Members voluntarily sign up for the program, which allows the co-op to temporarily turn off electric heating during times of high electric demand. During these "control periods," most consumers are automatically switched to a backup heating system (like fuel oil or propane). The off-peak program can also be utilized in storage heat technologies, in which heat is collected and stored during lower-demand times of day and deployed when needed.

Recipe Corner

Submit your recipes to be published in *Volts & Jolts*. Email to <u>info@redlakeelectric.com</u> or mail to: Red Lake Electric Cooperative, PO Box 430, Red Lake Falls. MN 56750-0430.

LOADED BAKED POTATO SOUP

Ingredients

- 8 slices bacon, chopped
- 1/4 cup butter, unsalted
- 4 large Russet potatoes or Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- ¼ cup flour
- 2 ½ cups low sodium chicken
- broth or vegetable broth
- 2 ½ cups 2% milk1 cup shredded sharp cheddar
- 1 cup shredded white cheddar
- ½ cup sour cream
- ¼ cup chopped chives
- Salt and pepper to taste

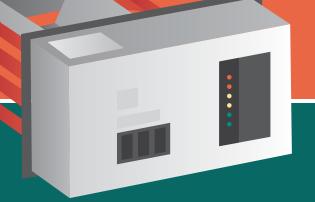
Instructions

- 1. In a Dutch oven or heavy stockpot over medium heat, brown the bacon. Using a slotted spoon, remove the bacon from the pan, reserving the grease. Add enough butter to make 2 tablespoons of fat. Melt the butter over medium heat. Add the potatoes and onions to the pan, cooking for 5 minutes or until the onions are soft. Add the garlic and the cayenne pepper; cook for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Using a slotted spoon, remove the potatoes, onions, and garlic to a bowl or plate, reserving any fat in the pan.
- 2. Melt enough butter to make 4 tablespoons of fat. Sprinkle in 1/4 cup flour and whisk to combine. Cook for 2-3 minutes, stirring constantly. Whisk in the chicken broth and milk in several intervals (22283 Todd Hannon) alternating between the two.
- Add the potatoes, onions and garlic back to the pot and simmer until the potatoes are tender.
- Whisk in both shredded cheeses until melted. Remove from the heat and stir in the bacon, sour cream, chives, and salt and pepper to taste.

Notes

- 1. The best potatoes for this soup are Russets.
- Don't add the bacon and sour cream until the end, as you want the bacon to stay crispy and the sour cream not to curdle.
- Store leftovers (if there are any) in an airtight container in the fridge. Reheat on the stovetop or in the microwave at reduced power.
- Top with chopped crispy bacon, sour cream, green onions, finely shredded sharp cheddar cheese and chopped chives.

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The power of the

PLENUM

If you've never heard of an electric plenum heater, you're not alone. Plenums are the unsung hero of electric technology, creating a dual-fuel heating solution that offers the benefits of Red Lake Electric's low-cost off-peak heating program. If you have a fuel oil or propane heating system, a plenum will help lower your heating bills and protect you from the volatility of fuel prices.

HOW DO THEY WORK?

A dual-fuel electric plenum heater is one of the most common off-peak electric heating systems available. Easily adapted to an existing fuel oil or gas/propane forced-air system, a plenum heater uses your existing furnace fan to move air across the plenum heater elements (28767 Adam Lee) to heat your home. Both your fossil fuel furnace and the electric plenum heater use the same thermostat and ductwork.

In most cases, a plenum heater can be installed in conjunction with a central air conditioning system or an air-source heat pump.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?



A plenum heater is one of the easiest ways to convert your propane or oil furnace into a dual-fuel heating system, especially during a remodel or new construction.



They're cost-effective

The plenum is a cost-effective way to integrate reduced-rate off-peak electricity into your heating system. The equipment itself is also low-cost, and it helps lengthen the lifespan of your gas furnace.



They're responsible

The plenum is a safe and clean heating alternative for any home or building, helping you to lower your dependence on propane (24526 Robby Farbo) or fuel oil.

HOW DO I SAVE MONEY?

- Receive a co-op rebate of \$50/kW when installed on the off-peak program.*
- Receive the reduced off-peak program rate, nearly 50% lower than the standard rate.*

*Check with your utility on program restrictions and additional rebates.

LEARN MORE



Electric heat can't be beat. To learn more about the right heating option for your home, visit ValueofElectricity.com.

RETAIL RATE SUMMARY

Effective January 1, 2024

Rate 1 – Single and multiphase service to customers with 75 kVA transformer capacity or less.

Facilities Charge	Jan-Dec	
1.5 to 10 kVA	\$40.00	
11 to 25 kVA	\$43.00	
26 to 75 kVA	\$48.00	
All kWh	\$0.11 ea	
Multiphase Surcharge	\$22.00 per month	

Rate 2 - Single and multiphase service to customers with over 75 kVA transformer capacity.

	Jan-Dec
Facilities Charge	\$64.00/month
All kWhs	\$0.068 ea
Demand Charge per kW	\$16.00 (Dec-Feb) \$11.00 (Mar-Nov)

Rate 3 - Seasonal service to customers with over 75 kVA transformer capacity. On-peak demand cannot exceed 25 kW from Dec. 1 to March 1 of each winter.

	Jan-Dec
Facilities Charge	\$0.70 per kVA/month
Energy Charge	\$0.11 per kWh
Multiphase Surcharge	\$22.00/month

Rate 4 - Interruptible service to customers with at least 25 kVA transformer capacity and standby generation capable of supplying total electrical requirements over control periods. (Off-peak electric heating is metered separately and is charged at the standard off-peak heating rate.)

	Jan-Dec
Facilities Charge	\$64.00/month
All kWh	\$0.068 ea
Multiphase Surcharge	\$22.00/month
,	

Security Lighting Lease Rates

100-watt HPS light	\$9.00/month
175-watt MV light	\$10.00 \$12.00/month
400-watt MV light	\$12.00/month
Metered LED light	\$7.00 \$8.00/month
Unmetered LED light	\$9.00/month

Controlled Water Heater Credit

\$7.00 per month per structure on Jan. through April bills.

Rate "S" - Short Term Interruptible Off-Peak Heating (load groups 1.01 and 1.02)				
Off-Peak Equipment Charge \$5.75/month				
All Energy	\$0.079 per kWh			

Rate "L" - Long and Medium Term Interruptible Off-Peak Heating (load groups 2.01, 3.01, 3.09)

Off-Peak Equipment Charge	\$5.75/month
All kWh	\$0.056 per kWh

Rate "H" - Long Term Interruptible service to air-to-air heat pumps. This rate applies to metered energy billed in Oct. through June, the normal heating season.

Off-Peak Equipment Charge	\$5.75/month - All kWh
	\$0.056 per kWh

Minimum Charges

On new services with over 100 kVA transformer capacity, a monthly or annual "minimum" charge may be set.

"Standby" Service

\$13.00

\$22.00 per month to retain a de-energized service.

Distributed Generation (DG) Monthly Charge (In addition to monthly facility charge)

Name Plate Rating	0 - 3.5 kW	\$0.00
Name Plate Rating	3.6 - 40 kW	See chart below; these rates are reviewed annually and are in addition to the monthly facility charge

Monthly GAC per kW	Rev Class 1 Residential (<10 kVA)	Rev Class 1 Residential (11-25 kVA)	Rev Class 1 Residential (26-75 kVA)	Residential Multiphase (<10 kVA)	Residential Multiphase (11-25 kVA)	Residential Multiphase (26-75 kVA)
First 3.5 kW	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge
kW in Excess of 3.5 kW	\$2.60	\$2.40	\$2.05	\$1.07	\$1.00	\$0.65
Not-to-Exceed	\$37.00	\$34.00	\$29.00	\$15.00	\$14.00	\$9.00

Off-Peak Electric Heating Systems: To qualify for any off-peak electric heating rate, the electric heat must be wired through a ripple control and turned off during load control periods. It is desirable to have all electric heat within a structure controlled, but electric heat in some rooms of a structure may be left uncontrolled and subject to regular rates if it is cost prohibitive to extend a backup heating system to the room. In no event may there be two or more in-room electric heaters in any room or open area that are not all controlled.

Multiple Load Categories: In the event a consumer has electric heat in multiple load categories wired through the same off-peak meter, the applicable rate will be the highest assigned to any of the load categories. The consumer could pay different rates for off-peak electric heating in the same or different structures (30819 Adam Johnson) if their electric heat is controlled in different load control categories and metered separately.

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Need help to pay your electric bill? Help is only a phone call away!

ed Lake Electric is prepared to work with members who are in need of assistance paying their electric bills. For more information about the Cold Weather Rule, call Red Lake Electric Cooperative, visit our website www.redlakeelectric.com, or see MN Statutes, Chapter 216B, which governs disconnection policies of residential heating sources from Oct.1 through April 30. Here are some common questions:

Can my heat be shut off in the winter?

YES, unless you take steps under the Cold Weather Rule (CWR) to protect yourself. You must contact Red Lake Electric Cooperative (27018 Gary Corbin) to apply for protection from having your heat shut off. This is true for all residential customers, including senior citizens and families with young children.

Will you disconnect me without my knowledge?

NO. RLEC will give you a "Disconnection Notice" on your electric bill. This will state the amount you need to pay as well as the date by which you must contact RLEC to avoid disconnection. If you do not contact us by the disconnection date, we will make a courtesy phone call reminding you to make your payment.

How can I keep my heat on or get reconnected if I am already shut off?

You must make and keep a payment plan with Red Lake Electric Cooperative. The payments don't have to be the same amount each month. RLEC will work with you to make suitable arrangements to help you keep your electricity. Once arrangements are made, you must contact Red Lake Electric Cooperative if you are

unable to make a payment or your service may be shut off.

When I contact RLEC to apply for the CWR, what happens?

- You will make a CWR payment plan, which you must keep to be protected.
- If you and the utility cannot agree on a payment plan, you have 10 days to appeal to the Public Utilities Commission.
- The Commission will help you set up a payment plan.
- Your service will stay on during the appeal process.

What happens if I can't make my payments as planned?

If you can't make your payments, call RLEC *immediately* to make a new CWR payment plan. If you do not make your payments, your service may be shut off.

What if I need help reading or understanding notices from my utility?

- The CWR has a "Third-Party Notice" option.
- If you would like help applying for the CWR, you may arrange for another person to get a

copy of any disconnection notices or other important information at the same time you receive it. This may be a friend, family member or anyone who is willing to help you understand the notices or set up a CWR payment plan. This person is not responsible for paying your bill. They are only agreeing to help you understand notices from Red Lake Electric Cooperative.

How do I sign up for Third-Party Notices?

Call Red Lake Electric for a sign-up form. The form must be filled out and signed by both you and the person you want to be notified and mailed back to the utility.

Are military personnel subject to a shutoff?

Minnesota law protects a residential customer if a member of the household has been issued orders into active duty, for deployment or a change in duty station if they are unable to pay their electric bill. You must call Red Lake Electric to set up a payment plan. For more information see MN Statutes, Chapter 325E.028 (Utility Payment Arrangements for Military Personnel).

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

Northwest Community Action

Badger, MN Serves East Marshall County 218-528-3258 Toll-free: 1-800-568-5329 Fax: 218-528-3259

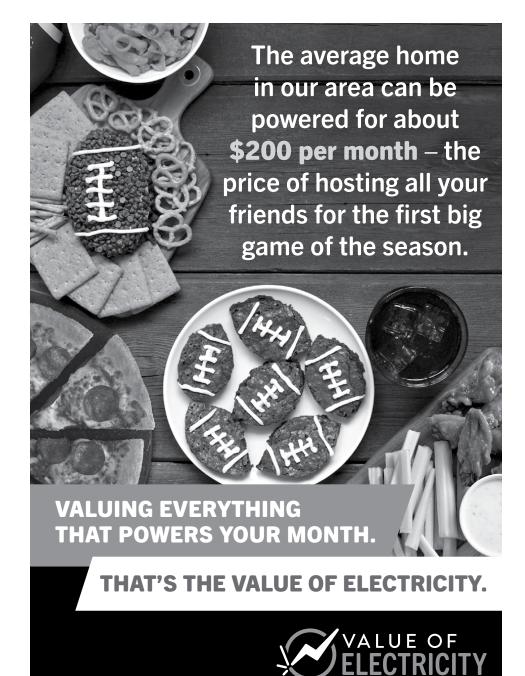
Fax: 833-792-1046

Tri-Valley Opportunity Council

Crookston, MN Serves West Polk County and 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 Fax: 218-679-4291





The power of **SmartHub**

Use SmartHub on a desktop or mobile app to:

- Pay your bill
- · View energy usage
- Compare usage
- Manage account settings

New to the SmartHub mobile app:

- Manage paperless billing settings
- Add additional service providers for multiple accounts



The SmartHub mobile app gives you even more control over your electric account right from your smartphone or tablet. Choosing paperless billing is now even easier, with the option to discontinue your printed bill through the app's settings menu.



Operation Round Up® grant applications due Wednesday, September 20

Organizations involved in community projects and charities are encouraged to apply for funds from Operation Round Up® at this time. Completed grant applications are due in the Red Lake Electric Cooperative (RLEC) office by **Wednesday, Sept. 20**.

NOTICE OF NAMES

Hidden within the text of the articles of this issue of *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.

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ENERGY EFFICIENCY INCENTIVES FOR 2023

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 (22368 Larry Efteland) 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 \$75 per kW

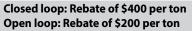
Air-source heat pumps (including mini-split ductless option)

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 \$600 per ton



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.



Electric underfloor boiler

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

Rebate of \$75 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

\$500/unit

56-99 gallon

\$400/unit

55 gallon or less

\$150/unit

Bonus rebates:

Add \$250

if converting from natural gas or propane.

Add \$100

for new building construction (shops, cabins, etc.).

New construction (50 gallon)

FREE unit (primary residence only)

Electric Vehicle Charger Rebates 240V Level 2 Charger Must be on off-peak

Musi be on ojj-ped

Electric vehicle or hybrid

100% rebate

Commercial – Forklifts, Zambonis, etc.

\$50 per kW



Residential



Charger

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