

NORTHERN

L I G H T S

February 2023

Beltrami Electric



Mitten Tree a success!



Beltrami Electric Cooperative Inc.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Becky Theis helps to deliver donated items to Laporte Head Start.

Beltrami Electric Cooperative (BEC) delivered donated mittens, gloves, hats, scarves and socks to children at eight area Head Start and Early Child Family Education (EFCE) programs, as well as St. Mary's Mission School and Heartland Christian Academy, as part of its annual Mitten Tree campaign.

BEC received more than 1,400 donated items, including

120 mittens, 1,000 hats, 95 scarves, 150 sets (hats/mittens), 13 headbands and 50 pairs of socks. "The support from our members and communities has been overwhelming," said Angela Lyseng, communications specialist at Beltrami Electric Cooperative. "Donating items to our Mitten Tree warms a heart twice – both the person giving and the child receiving."



Students from the Paul Bunyan Early Child Family Education program.



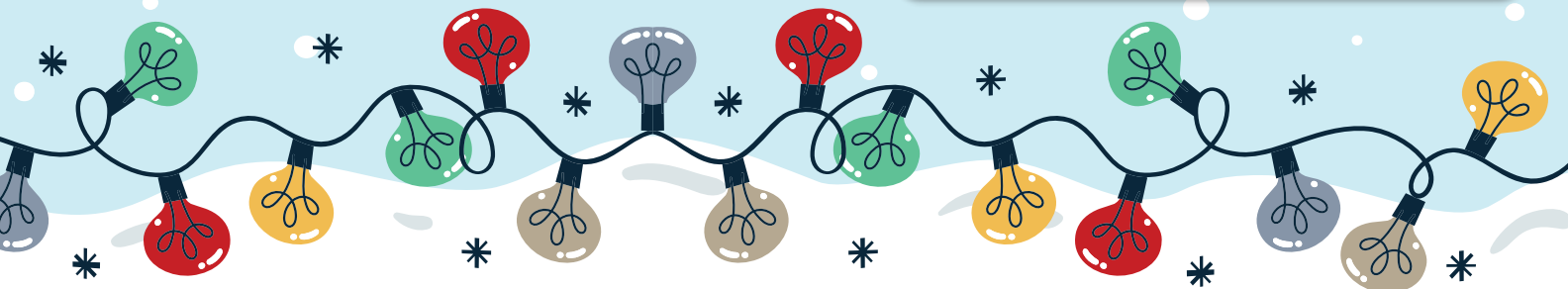
Kathy Dreher helps to deliver donated items to Blackduck BICAP Head Start.

Commitment to Community is one of our values as a cooperative. No matter how great or small the act, every time we give back, we strengthen our communities.

We would like to thank everyone who contributed to our Mitten Tree this year. We had donations dropped off, shipped to us and some members mailed in a cash donation to purchase items. We had individuals and many local churches donate items, and it was so fun to see the items that were selected or made with love for our area children. The excitement in their faces upon delivery was priceless. A special thank you to Esther Homister-Kingbird, who knitted and donated over 500 colorful hats.



Students at Bemidji BICAP model their new hats on the playground.



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Anyone who plans to dig is required by law to notify the state of their intentions at least 48 hours in advance.

All digging requires the 48-hour notification so that buried telephone lines, television cables, pipelines, utility electrical lines, and municipal water and sewer lines can be located to ensure that none will be severed or damaged.

Mission of Beltrami Electric Co-op

To provide excellent value to our members through the safe delivery of reliable electric service, excellent member service and innovative energy solutions at fair and reasonable prices.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Ensuring reliability as power supply tightens

by Jared Echternach, president and CEO

You expect reliable and affordable electricity from your electric cooperative, so how does your co-op deliver on that promise?

A complex network of electricity generators and tens of thousands of miles of electrical lines work together to ensure that enough electricity is available on the coldest winter morning and during the hottest summer days.

What happens when the demand for power overwhelms the ability to provide it? That's a particularly vexing question given the transition taking place in how electricity is produced, transmitted and distributed across this great network.

The key to meeting the energy needs so essential to your quality of life is balancing electricity supply with demand. While that may sound simple, there is a complex web of facilities and organizations that work together to make it happen each day, including more than 900 electric cooperatives like Beltrami Electric.

Regional transmission organizations coordinate, control and monitor the electric grid across several states in a region. Think of them as energy traffic managers on an interstate highway system, regulating the number of cars – in this case, electricity – and their destination. In our region that entity is the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO). Its mission: to work collaboratively and transparently with stakeholders to enable



the reliable delivery of low-cost energy through efficient, innovative operations and planning.

MISO is an independent, not-for-profit, member-based organization focused on three critical tasks:

- Managing the flow of high-voltage electricity across 15 U.S. states and

the Canadian province of Manitoba

- Facilitating one of the world's largest energy markets with more than \$40 billion in annual transactions

- Planning the grid of the future

Around 45 million people depend on MISO to generate and transmit the correct amount of electricity every minute of every day – reliably, dependably and cost-effectively.

Even so, on some days there is an imbalance in that system that leads to "max-gen" events. In those cases, supply simply can't keep up, which ultimately could lead to controlled outages.

Simply, that's because power plants that generate electricity are being closed faster than new producers come online. In many cases, traditional baseload power plants are being closed and replaced by alternatives on a much smaller scale and supplied by intermittent resources.



As more states pursue zero- or low-carbon initiatives, this challenge will become more complex. So, what's the answer?

Electric cooperatives and others in the energy sector will continue to develop renewable options and pursue new technologies. But absent new large-scale alternatives and advances in energy storage, the stalwarts of today's baseload energy fleet—coal, nuclear and natural gas energy facilities—must continue to operate in many regions. In some regions, they remain the most cost-effective options for producing electricity. In short, baseload generation is needed to keep the lights on.

It is simply a fact.

Minnesota's 100% carbon-free energy proposal doesn't make sense for **Beltrami Electric Cooperative** members

Policymakers in Minnesota are pursuing a potentially dangerous proposal that would mandate all electricity sold in the state be produced by carbon-free resources by 2040.

Beltrami Electric Cooperative has a long history of environmental stewardship and supports efforts to lower carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions. However, a mandate that requires radical transformation of our electricity system has the strong likelihood of creating power reliability challenges and rate affordability issues.

The complexity and difficulty in achieving a carbon-free electric grid cannot be understated. No single technology, power source or approach will be sufficient on its own. It will take an all-of-the-above strategy and many technological breakthroughs occurring rapidly in the coming years.

Here are five things to consider about Minnesota's 100% carbon-free energy proposal.

1 You – our members – are better positioned to make decisions for Beltrami Electric Cooperative than legislators in St. Paul.

As a member-owner, you have a voice in how your cooperative operates and the decisions that are made through the board of directors you elect. This board is made up of local people who are friends and neighbors in your community – not Twin Cities legislators. Local decision-making is vitally important to ensure you receive reliable, affordable and sustainable electricity. What might work in Minneapolis may not be right for our region.

2 Beltrami Electric Cooperative's power supply mix already includes significant renewable resources and work is being done to further decarbonize.

Approximately 42% of the power generation capacity provided to our members is generated by carbon-free resources, including wind (34%) and hydro (8%). Minnkota Power Cooperative, **Beltrami Electric Cooperative's** wholesale power provider, is also evaluating Project Tundra, which would equip a North Dakota power plant with one of the largest carbon capture systems in the world. If the project moves forward (a decision is anticipated within the next year) Minnkota would be one of the fastest decarbonizing utilities in the U.S.

3 Electric grid reliability is at risk.

Rolling blackouts have taken place in other parts of the country, including Texas and California. Minnesota is not immune to these challenges and the lack of reliable resources could exacerbate an already strained grid. Grid regulators, including the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC), anticipate significant electricity shortfalls over the next 10 years as coal, nuclear and natural gas generation retire faster than replacement resources are connected. This has the potential to create grid reliability issues and more frequent outage events.

4 Wind, solar and batteries are currently incapable of meeting the 24/7 demand for electricity.

While wind and solar resources provide zero-emissions energy, they are also limited by the fact that they cannot operate on a

frequent enough basis to stabilize the electric grid by themselves. Backup resources are still needed for when the wind doesn't blow and the sun doesn't shine. While many are optimistic about the future of battery storage technology, it is still in its infancy at grid scale. Large battery banks can currently only dispatch energy into the grid for a few hours at a time, when multiple days of backup power can be needed.

5 Extreme cold weather in our region creates challenges.

Minnesota's electricity resources need to be prepared for both 110-degree summer days and 40-below-zero winter nights. Extreme cold temperatures create specific challenges due to the dramatic increase in electricity usage and the lack of production from wind and solar facilities, which are prone to shutdown in 20-below-zero conditions. Resilient resources, like coal and nuclear, are still required to meet electricity demand during these volatile weather events.

What can I do?

Contact your state representatives and senators (visit gis.lcc.mn.gov/iMaps/districts/ to find out who represents you) and encourage them to prioritize electric reliability and affordability when considering energy-related proposals. The 100% carbon-free energy by 2040 proposal is virtually impossible to meet with existing technology. If mistakes are made as the energy transition continues forward, they will be extraordinarily difficult to reverse. Instead of implementing burdensome mandates, the state should develop ways to help utilities access new clean energy funding available in the federal Inflation Reduction Act.

Uncashed capital credit checks

Capital credit checks issued to these former members in December 2022 were returned to BEC. If you know anyone on this list, let them know they can contact our office by calling **218-444-2540** or **1-800-955-6083** or via email at info@beltramelectric.com to update their contact information and claim their capital credits. A complete list of unclaimed capital credits can be found at beltramelectric.com/capital-credits.

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 JOHNSON, FRANCES M.; BECIDJI, MINN.
 JOHNSON, GALE L.; WILLMAR, MINN.
 JOHNSON, HOLLY B.; REDLAKE, MINN.
 JOHNSON, JEFF; BECIDJI, MINN.
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 JORGENSEN, MAGALIE J.; BECIDJI, MINN.
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 JUVE, AMANDA; BECIDJI, MINN.
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 KAMPFER, DANIEL; STILLWATER, MINN.
 KAZLE, SCOTT & DEB; RAMSEY, MINN.
 KEEFE, JANET; MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.
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 KIMBER, BRAD; BECIDJI, MINN.
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 LUSSIER, ROBERT; REDLAKE, MINN.
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 LYKINS, CASSANDRA; CLEARBROOK, MINN.
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2018 Jayco Greyhawk Prestige motorhome, 32' w/2 slides, like new, 7,000 miles, double fridge, 3 TVs and many extras, below book at \$97,000. 970-901-2605.

Coffee table, heavy plate glass top with beveled edges, 38" square, wrought iron base. 22 inches high. \$75 cash. If interested, please call 218-243-2472 and leave message if we're not answering w/name & phone #.

Motor removed from 1969 Chris Craft boat, 406 hrs. on meter. V6 225 Buick motor, poured gas in carb and fired right up. All manifolds included. Asking \$500. Call Don 507-319-1287.

Homemade quilts: 4-5-6 Block, Crazy, Star. Twin: \$40, full: \$45, Queen: \$65, King: \$70. 3 drawer dresser (restored): 44" L x 19 1/2" D. 1 drawer 4" D, 2 drawers are 39" L x 8" D. \$75. Sewing machines, \$15 each. 218-243-2702.

2002 Cadillac Deville: new tires, new shocks, runs and drives great, very clean, 145K miles, \$4,500. 2009 Mercury Grand Marquis: new tires, new brakes and rotors, very clean, runs great, 148K miles, car sells as-is. \$4,500. Both sold as-is. 218-647-8196 or 218-210-3371.

Orchard Grass square bales, bales dry no rain, \$5 each. 218-766-2853

Panasonic small cassette recorder with 2 tapes, Sony mini cassette recorder with 16 tapes, Panasonic handheld radio, Sony earphones. All items listed for \$25. 218-444-2280, ask for Steve.

Wanted:

Will buy old ammunition boxes, empty or full. Pay fair price. 218-444-4140.

Tire chains for 1/2-3/4- ton pickup. 218-556-8077.

Retired reading teacher will tutor your child at my home. 218-759-9339.

Duck eggs for fresh eating. Call or text Angela at 218-556-0805.

Pet sitting, retired teacher, will care and love your pet while you are gone. Your house or mine, Blackduck/Bemidji area, 218-766-6510. Stihl chainsaw 039 for parts. Text 218-209-1863.

Electric 30" or 36" stove/oven in working condition. 218-760-1095.

White rabbits with red eyes. 218-766-2853. Old, colored Mason jars. 218-556-2743.

BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Beltrami's board conducted its regular monthly meeting Monday, Dec. 19, 2022. A quorum of directors was in attendance.

The following reports were given:

- President and CEO Echternach and the board discussed recent safety successes and observations.
- President and CEO Echternach made his monthly report, including 2023 membership to ACRE and REPAC, employee updates, regulatory issues, outages and storm assistance to a neighboring cooperative.
- Arlene Hogquist reviewed Beltrami Electric Cooperative's loan portfolio.
- President and CEO Echternach presented the 2023-2025 Strategic Plan.
- President and CEO Echternach and the Management team presented the 2023 Budget and Work Plan.
- Mike Birkeland presented the 2023 Marketing and Communications Plan.
- President and CEO Echternach presented the Non-Union Compensation and Benefits Plan.
- Directors and President and CEO Echternach discussed upcoming meetings and events.

The following actions were taken:

- Approved the consent agenda.
- Approved the 2023-2025 Strategic Plan.
- Approved the 2023 Budget and Work Plan.
- Approved the 2023 Marketing and Communications Plan.
- Approved the Non-Union Compensation and Benefits Plan.
- Appointed Sue Kringen as the Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA) voting delegate, Bob Wallner as the first alternate and John Lund as the second alternate.
- Appointed John Lund as the NISC Annual Meeting voting delegate and Jared Echternach as the alternate.
- Appointed Mike Monsrud as the NRTC Annual Meeting voting delegate and Jared Echternach as the alternate.
- Approved director and President and CEO expenses.

The next board meeting will be held Tuesday, Feb. 28, 2023.



Need help paying your electric bill?

The Energy Assistance Program (EAP) helps pay for home heating costs and furnace repairs for income-qualified households. We urge you to contact them immediately to avoid disconnection if you feel you are eligible for aid. (Eligibility is based on energy costs, household size and the three most recent months of income.)

Are you a senior living on a fixed income or suffering from a temporary financial shortfall? Then the following agencies may be able to assist you with your electric bill.

Bi-CAP in Bemidji

6603 Bemidji Ave N, Bemidji, MN 56601
218-751-4631

Bi-CAP in Walker

8245 Industrial Park Rd NW, Walker, MN 56484
218-547-3438

KOOTASCA

201 4th St. NW, Suite 130,
Grand Rapids, MN 55744
218-999-0824

Leech Lake

115 6th St. NW, Cass Lake, MN 56633
218-335-3783

MAHUBE-OTWA

120 North Central Ave, Park Rapids, MN 56470
218-732-7204

Red Lake

15809 High School Dr, Red Lake, MN 56671
218-679-3350

EAP services may include: payment of energy bills, help with utility disconnections or fuel deliveries, repair or replacement of homeowner's broken heating systems, energy efficiency and more.

2022-23 Maximum EAP Income Guidelines

Program year is Oct. 1, 2022 through Sept. 30, 2023

Household Size	3-month Maximum	Household Size	3-month Maximum
1	\$7,643	5	\$17,050
2	\$9,994	6	\$19,401
3	\$12,346	7	\$19,842
4	\$14,698	8	\$20,283

Visit <https://mn.gov/commerce/consumers/consumer-assistance/energy-assistance/> for more EAP income guidelines and program information.

We are looking for you!



Beltrami Electric Cooperative is looking for **Buffy Barrett (Red Lake, Minn.)**, and **Sherilyn Strong (Redby, Minn.)**. Please call **218-444-2540** if you have any information.

EMPLOYEE YEARS OF SERVICE RECOGNITION

The following employees were recognized for their years of service in 2022 (125 years).

Front row:

- CAMMIE VOGEL** – 20 years
- MICHELLE ANDERSON** – 20 years
- JEFF NOREN** – 10 years

Back row:

- RON KOMULAINEN** – 25 years
- LEE PEMBERTON** – 30 years
- NICK ZIMMEL** – 20 years



PEMBERTON PROMOTED TO OPERATIONS MANAGER



Line Superintendent Lee Pemberton was recently named BEC's new operation's manager. Pemberton began his duties Dec. 31, 2022. Lee began his career at BEC in June 1992, as

an apprentice lineworker, after graduating from the electrical lineworker program in Wadena. He later achieved journeyman status and was promoted to line foreman in 2012. Lee was named line superintendent in January 2018. He and his wife, Brandy, live in Bemidji and have two daughters, Jody and Jordan.

KOMULAINEN PROMOTED TO LINE SUPERINTENDENT



Line Foreman Ron Komulainen was recently named BEC's new line superintendent and began his duties Dec. 31, 2022. Ron started his career at BEC as an apprentice lineworker in June 1997,

and later achieved journeyman status. Ron was promoted to line foreman in February 2018. Ron is a Bemidji High School graduate and attended Jackson Technical College where he graduated from the electrical lineworker program. Ron and his wife, Karen, live in the Laporte area and have a daughter, Tori.

DREHER PROMOTED TO SHOP FOREMAN



Mechanic Ed Dreher was recently named BEC's new shop foreman and began his duties Dec. 31,

2022. Ed started his career at BEC as a mechanic in February 2019. Ed graduated from Northome High School and attended Hibbing Vo-Tech for heavy equipment repair. Ed and his wife, Kathy, live in Bemidji and have a daughter, Vanessa.

Through every **season**.
 Through every **snowdrift**.
 Through every **field**.
 Through every **pasture**.
 Through every **community**.
 Through every **venture**.
 Through every **challenge**.
 Through every **opportunity**.

ALL IN



ALL-OF-THE-ABOVE ENERGY



SEE VIDEO

THROUGH EVERYTHING





Beltrami Electric Cooperative Inc.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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Bemidji, MN 56619-0488
218-444-2540 • 800-955-6083
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What does it cost? IT ALL ADDS UP!



Investing in a reliable electric system

The electric co-op industry is capital intensive. We will be featuring this new series to help put into perspective some of the costs that go into providing reliable electric service for our members.

On average, how much do overhead transformers* cost?

a. \$180

b. \$750

c. \$430

d. \$975



Answer: B

* BEC has 3,119 overhead transformers on its system. It's a device that's used to raise or lower voltage along electric distribution lines to safely provide electric service to homes and businesses.

ASK THE EXPERT!



HOW LONG CAN MY OFF-PEAK HEATING EQUIPMENT BE CONTROLLED?

Let's Ask Bob!



Bob Gregg
Business Development
Manager

That varies depending on the equipment you have connected to the off-peak service. There are three control categories.

Category 1: (Water heaters and dryers) These can be controlled for four hours at a time, up to eight hours per day.

Category 2: (Slab storage and thermal storage heat) These are controlled daily (Nov. through Apr) from 7 a.m. to noon and 5 p.m. to 11 p.m.

Category 3: (Dual-fuel heating systems, such as fossil fuel furnaces with a plenum heater) These can be controlled for extended periods, with NO set limit. It is very important that your backup heating system is able to meet your heating needs during these times. During periods of extreme cold weather, it is crucial to check your propane tank level and ensure that it isn't low and that your outdoor regulator is not frozen or covered in snow.

Several factors affect the amount and time load management is needed, including weather, market conditions, generation capacity, transmission constraints, and more. If consumer demand is higher than available energy, and market prices are too expensive, load management will be a critical tool to relieve pressure on the grid.