



VOL. 25 NO. 2

PUBLISHED FOR THE MEMBERS OF NORTH ITASCA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

CEO Report

Good afternoon NIECI!

On this bright blustery day, we have wind chill warnings.

We have a couple of our lineman down at a MREA statewide training. Irby Tool and Safety is here at articles in the WATTS the cooperative testing all News. the tools the linemen use to stay safe while working passed the budget for 2022 on our system. Yearly in December. As always, we test all the sticks, now the work begins. The cover-up and trucks to budget is our road map ensure they are safe to for the following year. use. The gloves you see I have said it before, I our crews wearing get wish I had a better crystal sent in for testing every ball. We do not budget three months. I asked for major storms like we my office professionals often experience. to go check it out. They reason we do not budget laid plan for rate stability,

with the process and had a chance to visit with the crews, asking questions like how do you fix the lines when they go down? This sounds like a great opportunity for future

Our Board of Directors were quite impressed for this, the event may not



Brad Dolinski, CEO

happen. Yes, I agree, we see major storms every year it seems. Adding things like storms into the budget could force us to raise rates on a guess. We choose not to do that, rather we will plan for the known and deal with the unknown. This is the best

CEO to p.2>

GRE to add 400 MW of N.D. wind energy

Great River Energy has reached an agreement in principle with Apex Clean Energy to receive renewable energy from a 400-megawatt (MW) wind energy project in McLean County, North Dakota.

The Discovery Wind project, expected to reach commercial operations in 2025, will be the single largest wind project in North Dakota and will deliver renewable energy over the 436-mile high-voltage direct-current transmission (HVDC) system.

The project will fulfill a significant portion of the renewable energy needs for Great River Energy's power supply transition and deliver wind energy west of the Twin Cities. The electric cooperative announced in 2020 plans to phase out the remaining coal in its power supply portfolio and more than double its renewable energy.

"We are transforming the way we produce electricity and serve our member-owner cooperatives," Great River Energy President and Chief Executive Officer David Saggau. "Our members will enjoy stable wholesale electric rates for years while providing clean and reliable energy to Minnesota and parts of Wisconsin.'

Great River Energy is also converting the coal-based Spiritwood Station power plant located near Jamestown, North Dakota, to be fueled primarily with natural gas and developing a 1-MW, multi-day grid battery in Cambridge,

Great River Energy has long had operations in McLean County through its 1,100-MW Coal Creek Station power plant and the western terminus of the HVDC transmission system. Great GRE to p.2>

North Itasca Electric reviewing its energy costs

The headquarters of North Itasca Electric Co- 2020, North Itasca operative consists of two Electric additional additions after at its own energy its original construction consumption during the 1940s.

Though the latest long to see that much addition meets today's of our expense occurred standards, because construction original and are still rising today.

Since North Itasca Electric Cooperative is headquarters

by Jerry Loney energy efficiencies.

During December looked costs. It didn't take

heating of the original building does loads. Being an electric not. Because fossil fuels cooperative and receiving were in abundance and all its energy from our inexpensive during the close-by substation does construction, not mean North Itasca energy efficiency was not Electric is exempt from a high priority. Today, this paying electric bills to is not the case. Fossil fuel itself, nor does it mean we costs have risen since then are exempt from practicing energy conservation the same as we preach.

Since all our energy a leader in promoting consumption comes from efficient, clean, reliable electricity and is read from and affordable energy, one meter, finding the the co-op has taken a actual heating costs could step back to look at its only be estimated. But we building could get close by taking

the three lowest months of energy consumption when heating equipment was not running to establish an energy use baseline.

The meter usage chart shown was made by Great River Energy (GRE) using the baseline (shown in orange) for normal energy usage without heating loads. GRE also took those three lowest consumption months when heat loads did not apply and established an average monthly energy use of 13,200 kWh, (this also included the buildings

Building to p.3>

ASHPs are becoming a standard in home heating and cooling

Air Source Heat when Pumps, properly installed, provide members with several distinct advantages.

When sized appropriately, today's cold climate air source heat pumps (ccASHPs) can provide 100 percent of a home's heating needs

...the newest generation of ccASHPs can operate down to minus 13 degrees F.

> down to temperatures as low as zero degrees, which is a large portion of Minnesota's heating hours.

> The balance point your heat pump

the outdoor temperature where your home HVAC system switches over to its back-up

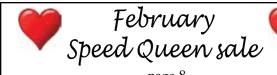
heating system, likely set by your installer. If your heat pump can keep your home warm down to 10° F, but your balance point is set higher, switching

ASHP to p.7 >

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 invide inside · inside · inside · inside · inside · inside •

2022 Rebates

page 16



Laundry Myths

page 6

Hours

Monday - Friday 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

CEO Report (continued)

>from p.1 raising rates.

As a Member-Owner Electric system. When there is a electric costs, we must go to you safety cooperative; they receive MREA. reports monthly at the board meetings to keep as our representative very involved with our a finger on the pulse at Great River Energy. of our investment and Bruce is facing the operations. Our trained directors face the difficult North Itasca Electric and decisions facing NIECI. Through their leadership we serve not only our River Energy, where we members, but cooperative buy our power. We are members across the state currently managing the of Minnesota.

Mr. Wes serves as the President Station. The weight of Minnesota of training,

Mr. Bruce Leino serves difficult decisions here at the fast changes in our industry down at Great sale of our coal asset in Waller North Dakota, Coal Creek

we are all very sensitive to of the Board of Directors this decision was immense Rural and understanding the Association. details was vital to help of your cooperative, you MREA is our statewide North Itasca Electric cast are the only source of organization that provides our vote to support the revenue to operate our several services for rural sale of the plant. Many cooperatives. more details of this need for capital to cover MREA helps us with decision will come in staff future articles of WATTS for these funds. This is the training, director training News, this decision will reason we have our friends and political action in give GRE the necessary and neighbors elected to Minnesota. If you haven't time to glide to a greening the Board of Directors to had a chance to meet portfolio. Bruce has been govern the cooperative. Wes, he brings a humble, active in the business Our directors oversee caring, common sense decisions at GRE that help governing policies of the voice to our meetings and to keep our rates stable at North Itasca Electric.

All our directors are communities and the governance of North Itasca Electric. Many hours are invested monthly reviewing content prior to meetings, trainings, and research. I tip my hat to the commitment our directors have for North Itasca Electric and our electric cooperative family.

We work together with the rest of the state and GRE to make the best decisions for you, Member-Owner. our Cooperation amongst Cooperatives is one of our seven principles that we govern and lead by at North Itasca Electric.

By your side! Miigwech Brad

GRE looks at adding wind energy

>from p.1

River Energy is in the process of selling the power plant and transmission system we intend to fulfill, culminating with to Rainbow Energy Center and Nexus Line, respectively. The transaction will be finalized upon approval from Great River Energy's member-owner cooperatives and progress toward transition has the cooperative on track successful implementation of the Discovery Wind project.

The agreement with Apex Clean Energy comes less than two weeks after Great River Energy announced it secured capacity on the HVDC transmission system for renewable energy development. Discovery Wind's location near an existing power plant provides a unique opportunity to interconnect a very large project to the constrained Midwest electric grid.

"This announcement shows our dedication to being partners in clean energy with Great River Energy, and it delivers on verbal promises we made when we first announced our intent to purchase Coal Creek Station," said Rainbow Energy Center and Nexus Line

President Stacy Tschider. "This is just one of many carbon neutral objectives the successful implementation of carbon capture and sequestration at Coal Creek

Great River Energy's power supply to reduce its carbon dioxide emissions by more than 80 percent by 2025, achieving Minnesota's emissions target decades ahead of schedule.

"Working with Great River Energy, Rainbow Energy Center and Nexus Line, not only will we deliver clean power to a major market, but we will be able to use capacity on an existing pathway to do so—a rare and valuable arrangement in the saturated MISO market," said Apex Clean Energy President and Chief Executive Officer Mark Goodwin. "This innovative solution enables the Discovery Wind project, thereby delivering a multitude of benefits to its North Dakota community, including both preserving and creating critical local jobs."

Electrical Inspections

Except for minor repair work, all electrical work you do at your home, cabin, or property is required to be inspected by a State Electrical Inspector.

A rough-in inspection must be made before any wiring is covered. A final inspection is also required. Please visit www.electricity.state. for more information.

The inspectors can be reached weekday mornings between 7:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m.

- Itasca County Steve Bartlett (218) 591-1616
- Koochiching County Curt Collier (218) 966-5070
- Beltrami, Clearwater counties Davis Smid (507) 227-2772

Keep us up-to-date

Please keep your contact information current with our office. Please notify North Itasca Electric of any changes in

property ownership, mailing addresses, phone numbers and email addresses.

Highway 46.

Squaw Lake Mon-Fri 4-6p

Happy Hour All day Sunday

Meat raffle every Sat at 6p

Full bar, on/off sale, pull tabs, e-tabs

218-659-2131 Open daily

Full menu including Broasted Chicken

Breakfast

Thurs-Sun 7-11a

Kitchen is open

Sun-Thurs until 9p Fri-Sat until 10p

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all calendar items, recipes advertisements and other correspondence for WATTS NEWS to the Editor at: P.O. Box 43, Spring Lake, MN 56680

NorthItascaElectric.com

- pay a bill, download a form
- find out about programs
- find worksheets to calculate the cost of running your appliances

North Itasca Electric Cooperative, Inc. **Board of Directors**

Chairman: Larry Salmela, District 3 Vice-Chair: Wes Waller, District 2 Secretary: Lloyd Kongsjord, District 5

Treasurer: Roy Bain, District 9

Rep. to GRE Board: Bruce Leino, District 7

James White, District 1 Mary Rahier, District 4 Todd Christensen, District 6 Jeff Kilian, District 8

Highlights from the Board Room

December 20, 2021

NORTH ITASCA ELECTRIC CO-OP., INC. MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Start time: 10:00 a.m. End time: 1:15 p.m.

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors was held at the office of the Cooperative and electronically through Zoom on December 20, 2021.

Directors Present: M. Rahier, B. Leino, J. White, W. Waller, J. Kilian, T. Christensen and L. Kongsjord

Also Present: CEO Brad Dolinski, Andy Shaw, Daryl Pederson, Jerry Loney and Kim Giesen.

- o Pledge of allegiance was recited.
- o A Motion was made to adopt agenda. Seconded, motion carried. A Motion was made to consent agenda. Seconded, motion carried.
- o B. Dolinski held the safety discussion. Be sure to check your tires and slow down for the conditions.
- o B. Dolinski reviewed the operating reports. Motion was made to accept the operating reports. Seconded. The motion was carried.
- o B. Dolinski in reviewing the 2022 Budget he recommended a \$.002 per kwh rate increase for off peak storage to coincide with Great River Energy's rate increase. A motion was made to approve the budget with a small increase in the rate for off peak storage. Seconded. The motion was carried.
- o Reviewed Board Policy 400.80
- o Reviewed Board Policy 400.90
- o Reviewed Board Policy 400.92.
- o D. Pederson gave the Line Department Report. Forklift training took place on 12/20/2021. Work is done on the Scenic Substation. The last of the broken poles have been replaced. There are 30 poles that were rejected at inspection that will be replaced this winter.
- o J. Loney gave the Member Service Report. Landis & Gyr have been contacted to assist in demand reduction projects. Discussed the need and the pay off for updating our office building to air source heat pump system.
- o B. Dolinski gave the office reports. Capitol Credit checks have all been mailed. Tina made note again to thank the office staff for their hard work during audit prep. Auditors will be on site March 28th.
- o B. Dolinski gave the CEO Report. Homestead Funds rep was here in early December.
- o W. Waller gave the MREA report.
- o B. Leino gave the GRE report.
- o Round Table discussion was held.
- o A Motion was made to adjourn. Seconded, motion carried at 1:15 p.m.

Regular board meetings are generally held the fourth Thursday of every month. If you wish to speak with the board or have an item that you would like to have placed on the agenda, please contact CEO Brad Dolinski at least two weeks in advance to be included on the agenda.

North Itasca Electric looks at building energy cost

>from p.1

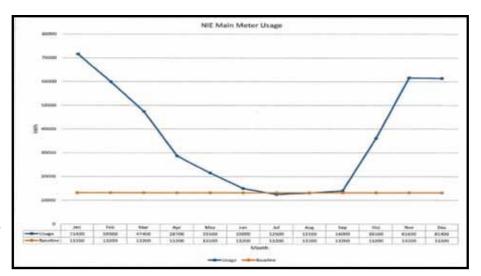
air conditioning loads). The blue line displays energy consumed by the heating system when active, totaling 284,400 kWh.

North Itasca Electric did its own calculations using a program called HVAC-Calc used to size Members' heating loads as a service to Members when purchasing heating equipment. Instead of calculating actual consumption as GRE did, this program gives the size of heating equipment

needed, and indicates how much heat is needed and how much is lost during a one-hour period based on projected weather conditions, building tightness and insulation.

This program also shows the amount of heat which needs to be replaced during a one-hour period. This is called infiltration. When estimating for a seven-month heating season, figures showed nearly 200,000 kWh per year was needed to heat the building making GRE's report reliable for good information on efficiencies. With our original old building structure being uninsulated block and brick, and having large amounts of exterior glass walls, high heat losses and infiltration rates can be expected.

The HVAC-Calc program North Itasca Electric uses is a good tool to give an indication of the energy savings that could be achieved by remodeling the building and/or installing new heating equipment. Three options have been looked at: installing Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs); removing glass windows in the older original offices and showroom floor replacing them conventional exterior wall construction, windows and



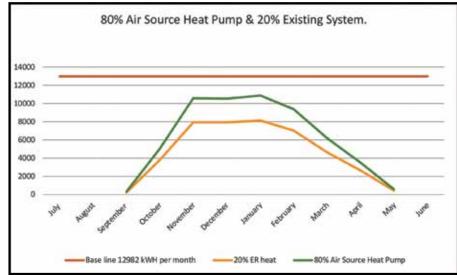
doors; or doing both heat pumps and new exterior walls.

The chart below shows results if only an Air Source Heat Pump system were installed in addition to the existing electric resistant (ER) heating system we are now using. The orange baseline used in the previous chart remains the same, showing 13,200 kWh used for normal operations. The green and yellow lines below the baseline replaces the blue line shown in the previous chart which is above the orange baseline. The green line represents using an ASHP 80 percent of the time and the yellow using our existing ER 20 percent of the time when temperatures are too cold for ASHPs to keep up.

When installing an ASHP

system only without remodeling the exterior walls, North Itasca Electric's headquarters would reduce energy costs from \$21,898.80 per year to \$10,357.26 saving \$11,541.54 per year with similar weather patterns. The calculations done by North Itasca Electric using its HVAC-Calc program shows that a remodel of exterior walls without installing air source heat pumps would reduce heating costs to \$10,383.45 per

It has been approved by the board of directors that initially North Itasca Electric Cooperative would start installing an Air Source Heat Pump system.







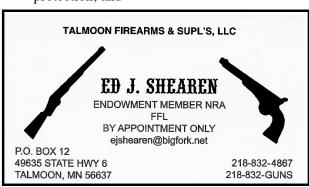
Cold weather rule & energy assistance program notice

In accordance with Minnesota's Cold Weather Rule, electric service cannot be disconnected for nonpayment between Oct. 1 and April 30 if electricity is the primary heat source and ALL of the following statements apply:

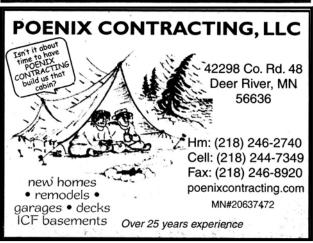
- Your household income is at or below 50 percent of the state median household income. Income may be verified on forms provided by North Itasca Electric Cooperative or by the local energy assistance provider.
- You enter into and make reasonably timely payments under a payment agreement that considers the financial resources of the household.
- You receive referrals to energy assistance, weatherization, conservation, or other programs likely to reduce your energy bills from North Itasca Electric Cooperative. Minnesota's Cold Weather Rule does not completely stop winter disconnects before disconnecting electric service to residential members between Oct. 1 and April

North Itasca Electric Cooperative must provide:

- A 30-day notice of disconnection;
- A statement of members' rights and responsibilities;
- A list of local energy assistance providers;
- Forms on which to request Cold Weather Rule protection; and







A statement explaining available payment plans and other options to continue service.

Energy Assistance Program

The Energy Assistance Program (EAP) is a federally funded program through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services which helps low-income renters and homeowners pay for home heating costs and furnace repairs. Household income must be at or below 60 percent of the state median income (\$67,764 for a family of four) to qualify for benefits. Applications must be received or postmarked by May 31, 2022. To learn more about the EAP program or to apply for

- Visit the Minnesota Department of Commerce Energy Assistance website, https://mn.gov/ commerce/consumers/consumer-assistance/ energy-assistance/, for more details and to access the application portal.
- Contact your county EAP service provider for additional information and assistance, Kootasca Community Action (218) 999-0800. North Itasca Electric Cooperative exists because of you, and we are dedicated to the people and communities we serve. If you are having difficulty paying your electric bill and do not qualify for either of these programs, please contact Sheila Hafeman at (218) 743-3131 to set up a payment plan.



800-252-1166 or 811 Call before you dig

Energy assistance

If you cannot pay your winter heating bills, contact one of these locations for energy assistance help.

KOOTASCA ENERGY ASS'T. 201 NW 4th St., Ste 130 Grand Rapids MN 55744 218-999-0800 877-687-1163

BI-COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION COUNCIL P.O. Box 579 Bemidji, MN 56601-0579 800-332-7161

ITASCA COUNTY SOCIAL SERV. Itasca County Courthouse 123 NE 4th St Grand Rapids, MN 55744 218-327-2941

KOOCHICHING COUNTY FAMILY SERVICES 615 4th St International Falls, MN 56649 218-283-8405

LEECH LAKE ENERGY ASST. 115 6th St, Ste E, Cass Lake, MN 56633 218-335-8292

Maintaining affordable electricity for Members

If you have gone grocery shopping know firsthand how the cost of goods fluctuate. As one example: The United States Department of Agriculture reported meat prices in 2021 increased an average of 8 percent.

Your electric co-op is committed to serving members like you with affordable, reliable electricity. Coops understand the challenges our members face, and we work to keep costs stable while improving the resiliency of the grid.

The U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) forecasted U.S. households' heating bills to increase 54 percent compared to last winter. The EIA expects the Midwest to see 49 percent increases for natural gas-heated homes and a 54 percent increase for propane. The good news? Homes heated with electric heat are expected to only be modestly impacted at 6 percent.

The electricity you use is generated or filled up at a gas station recently, you and transmitted regionally. It is monitored by an Independent System Operator (ISO) that looks at energy demand and what generating resources will be needed every day. This process helps us manage energy demands.

The structures in place that monitor, protect and supply electricity to your home are constantly reviewed by your co-op, energy supplier and the ISO. This level of analysis is one reason electric costs have not seen dramatic increases during the past three decades.

Locally owned operations along with constant review of systems for security and safety - through the cooperative business model — are just Play and search for North a few reasons electric costs remain Itasca Electric. stable for members like you.

Phone app available

Did you know that you can access your account with your smart phone?

Download the North Itasca Electric mobile app and get your account information on your phone including usage and payment history. You can also make a payment from your phone!

To download the app, follow these directions:

iPhone: Go to the App Store and search for North Itasca Electric.

Android: Go to Google

Get outage updates on Facebook! @NorthItascaElectricCoopInc

January short term energy outlook

Each month, the U.S. Energy Information Administration provides a short term energy outlook (STEO). January's edition includes some interesting items, including the fact that solar capacity is actually growing faster than wind.

Following is an excerpt from January's report, found at eia.gov/outlooks/steo/:

Total U.S. retail sales of electricity remain relatively unchanged in our forecast for 2022 after increasing by 2.2% in 2021. Forecast increases in sales to the commercial and industrial sectors in 2022 offset lower sales to the residential sector. We forecast total U.S. retail sales of electricity across all sectors will grow by 1.4% in 2023.

The share of U.S. electric power generation produced by natural gas averaged 37% in 2021, and we expect it will average 35% in 2022 and 34% in 2023. Our forecast for the natural gas share as a generation fuel declines primarily as a result of increased generation from new renewable energy generating capacity. Coal's average generation share rose to 23% in 2021 as a result of higher natural gas prices, but we expect it to decline slightly over the next two years, averaging near 22% in 2022 and 2023. We expect the nuclear share of generation will remain near 20% over the next two years.

We expect electricity-generating capacity from renewable energy sources to continue to grow in 2022 and 2023. Our forecast includes both wind and solar capacity growth, with solar capacity growing at a faster rate. The extreme drought conditions in the West may moderate somewhat in the next year, and we forecast that the share of U.S. generation from hydropower will rise from 6% in 2021 to 7% in 2022 and 2023.

The U.S. retail electricity price for the residential sector in our forecast averages 14.2 cents per kilowatthour in 2022, which is 4% higher than the average retail price in 2021. Forecast residential prices remain relatively the same in 2023.

5 Ways to save energy when working from home

by Abby Berry

Today, more Americans are working from home than ever before. More time spent at home means more energy used throughout the day. Here are five easy ways to save energy when working from home.

- 1. Use a smart power strip. Plugging in your mostused devices, like computers, monitors and routers, to a smart power strip ensures these devices aren't drawing power when they're not in use. Smart power strips also give you the option to select which devices should stay in "always on" mode.
- 2. Unplug your least-used equipment. If your home office includes equipment like printers and scanners, you're probably not using these electronics every day. In this case, go ahead and unplug your least-used electronics and devices, since many of these draw energy even when they're not being used.
- 3. Choose Energy STAR®-certified office equipment if you're looking to purchase new equipment for your workspace to ensure you're getting the most energy efficient features. Computers, monitors, imaging equipment and other office electronics that receive the Energy STAR rating include power management features to make saving energy easy, and most are designed to run cooler and last longer.
- 4. Flip the switch and use natural light instead. It's still chilly out there, so take advantage of natural light and additional warmth from the sun. When you're working during the day, open blinds, curtains and other window coverings to let natural light in—and don't forget to turn off the lights to reduce energy use!
- 5. Lower the thermostat. Home heating makes up a significant portion of your energy bills. Turn the thermostat down a couple degrees during the day to reduce energy use and save money. The Department of Energy recommends setting the thermostat to 68 degrees or cooler during winter months. You're more likely to stay focused and alert when it's cooler in your home, so all the more reason to mind the thermostat.

Contact Jerry at (218) 743-1313 if you have questions about your bills or want additional information about saving energy at home.

Abby Berry writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

Name Box/Street City/State Zip + 4 County Send to: North Itasca Electric Co-op P.O. Box 227 Bigfork, MN 56628

Scholarships

Did you know that high school seniors who are children of North Itasca Electric Members can apply for college scholarships?

Minnesota allows unclaimed capital credits to be used for this purpose, so North Itasca Electric donates these funds annually to the Northome School Scholarship Committee.

The deadline for application is in March; more information will be available on the Northome School counselor's web page at www.northome.k12.mn.us/page/2460. Children of families who live out of the area but are Members of the cooperative (i.e. lake cabins) are eligible to apply.

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Archie and Sandy Wass Phone: 218-743-3635 Cell: 218-341-8522

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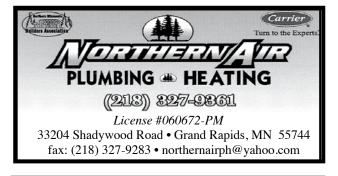
Saarenpaa Firewood Processing

Cutting & pricing for wood by the cord up to 12 feet in length. Cut to length & split & piled. Stacking and clean up extra.

218-343-7219 | 218-343-7739 | 218-246-9208

\$40/cord + travel

\$0.45/mile from Little Bowstring, Deer River *All prices subject to change, please verify.*



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Custom stocks built here. Boyds and Richards microfit
blanks.

RC Keith Gunstock Checkering 218-897-5152



Roxanne's Sales Talk

by Roxanne Prather, Member Services Repesentative

Laundry Myths Debunked 1. Laundry Myth #1: More soap, more clean

A little-known fact is that going overboard with detergent does not make your laundry cleaner or enhance the smell. When there are too many suds, your laundry doesn't get thoroughly rinsed. This can re-deposit the dirt back into your clothes leaving a residue that will live in your machine and garments and transfer back onto your skin.

Excessive detergent ultimately defeats the whole purpose of your intention to have clean clothes.

2. Laundry Myth #2: If I wear it, I wash it

25747 County Rd 340, Bigfork 🌁

Pastor Roger Skogen

218-659-2727

A Bible Based, Christ Centered

Fellowship

Do you wash your sheets every

OLD SCENIC COMMUNITY CHURCH

Come and join us in worship, and a study of the Word.

Sunday Worship Service - 10:30 a.m.

people don't.

Except undergarments for and post-workout clothes, take a all the bacteria and viruses that moment to consider how often your clothes need to be washed. Do your favorite jeans and sweatshirt really need to hit the hamper after a day of just hanging out with friends or sitting at your desk? Much of your wardrobe could be worn a couple of times before it's washed, unless you are exposed to strong smells, dirt and stains.

Consider the sniff test before you wash. How often you need to wash your clothes depends on your lifestyle and activity level. If you work in construction versus behind a desk, your laundry load and fabric

> care demands are much different.

> Being mindful will and your washer.

night after you sleep in them? Most 3. Laundry Myth #3: The hotter, the cleaner

Hot water alone does not kill live in our laundry. Whether it's washing towels, bed sheets, baby clothes or the pajamas of a loved one who's not feeling well, hot water and detergent alone doesn't cut it. Chlorine bleach, pine oil or a phenolic disinfectant (as used in heard of like "National healthcare) not only sanitizes your laundry, but it leaves the machine clean also.

using some of these cleaners work better in warm water and some cold, using all hot water doesn't get your clothes cleaner – it runs up your electric bill and shrinks some clothes.

Just think how much time you washing can save doing laundry when you solve these common myths. Not save you water, only does it save you time but electricity, money and wear and tear on your detergent, time, clothes and the machine as well!

Meter seals

If you or an electrician is performing electrical work at your residence which requires opening meter sockets or load control receivers, you need to contact North Itasca Electric first.

By contacting North Itasca Electric, you can help prevent possible problems which could occur when North Itasca Electric finds that seals have been cut. These problems would mostly be on sub meters where created our list of top load control meters are installed.

This equipment is owned, controlled and maintained serving you, the members by North Itasca Electric. These seals may only be cut of North Itasca Electric if permission is granted by North Itasca Electric in advance or deemed an emergency by an electrician.

North Itasca Electric does realize that there could be instances where work needs to be done, in such cases; North Itasca Electric still needs to be contacted. If it is determined that loads have not been controlled during load control periods, demand charges could be applied to your billing.

Member Warning: Doxo.com

There is an on-line bill pay website that appears to be affiliated with North Itasca Electric, but it is not. Doxo.com allows people to pay their electric bills via their site. There may be extra fees, however, and North Itasca Electric cannot control when we will receive the Member payments To make sure you're paying North Itasca Electric directly, visit our website www.northitascaelectric.com, for our direct link to the online bill payment portal, mypcsportal.com.

Five reasons we love serving our Members



February the shortest but packed with special observances like Presidents' Day, History Black Month Valentine's in addition to a host of unofficial "national" days you've probably never Tater Tot Day." But they all have something in common. They were Depending on what you are created to draw attention to a particular issue or theme.

> Valentine's Day may seem like an observance originally created by a it right. North Itasca greeting card company, Electric Members are a widely celebrated day the know. We do our best generating millions of to avoid power outages, dollars spent on flowers, but Mother Nature can candy and of course, occasionally throw us a greeting cards professing curveball; our members our love. But Valentine's are quick to report any Day isn't just for the power disruptions and lovebirds. It's also the are patient as our crews perfect time to let our work to safely restore friends, family, workers and other special people in our lives know we care about them—with or without a store-bought much to our employees. greeting card.

So, in that vein, we've North five reasons why we love Co-op.

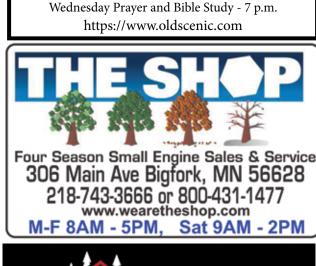
- We love serving members because without you, the coop wouldn't exist. Our purpose is to provide you it thrive. with reliable, responsible and safe Simply put, North Itasca of life in our community Electric exists to serve and look after its longyou. That's why we were formed in 1940—to bring power to our local area when for-profit utilities just like you, want to see would not.
- You enable us to complete our mission by supporting our efforts

by Anne Prince to give back. With your may be assistance, we're able to month, help organizations within our community through programs like Operation Round-Up.

- Members of our Day, co-op also serve on the board of directors. They provide guidance setting co-op priorities and helping make big decisions. Because our board members live in the area, they're able to serve as the pulse of the larger community and identify immediate and long-term
- You help us get but over time, it's become great about keeping us in power. We know outages are frustrating, and your support as we work through storms means so
 - 5. You and other Itasca Electric Members make up the community we —and for us, it's all about community. employees live work here too and care about our community the same way you do. We're invested and work to help

As a co-op, our mission electricity. is to enhance the quality term interests. We love serving our members and our local community, and it continue to thrive.

> Anne Prince writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the NRECA.





Key approvals advance GRE portfolio transition

moved Great River Energy further along in the transition of its power supply portfolio. reduce our carbon emissions Approvals by the Minnesota by more than 80%, while Public Utilities Commission taking advantage of federal and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission will help facilitate Great River also maintain a strong fleet of Energy's sale of Coal Creek Station and its high-voltage direct-current (HVDC) transmission system to Rainbow Energy Center and Nexus Line, respectively

expected to issue a final order Minnesota. Great near future.

Federal Regulatory effective on Jan. 1 approving 2025. amended generator interconnection between Great River the Energy and the region's to system. Great River Energy's rights under the amended sufficiency." generator interconnection the closing of the sale.

The sale is a major Nexus Line. component of Great River Energy's power energy resources. The utility members. will also convert its last remaining coal resource to be

Recent actions by energy fueled primarily with natural regulators in St. Paul and gas and install a 1- megawatt Washington, D.C., have (MW), multi-day battery demonstration system.

> "We are on track to incentives for renewables to keep costs competitive. We dual fuel peaking plants for reliability," said Great River Energy Vice President and Chief Power Supply Officer Jon Brekke.

Included in the sale, and The Minnesota Public also a key element of Great Utilities Commission on Jan. River Energy's power supply 6 approved the transfer from strategy, is an arrangement Great River Energy to Nexus for Rainbow Energy Center Line of the construction and Nexus Line to provide permit for the Minnesota Great River Energy with the portion of the HVDC system right to interconnect to the that spans between central HVDC system and transmit North Dakota and the Twin on it 400 MW of wind energy Cities. The Commission is that would be delivered in confirming its approval in the Energy expects to enter into a long-term power purchase Energy agreement for a 400 MW Commission wind energy facility expected on Dec. 30 issued an order to be online by the end of

"Access to transmission agreement has emerged as one of primary constraints renewable energy grid operator that changes development," said Great Coal Creek Station's point River Energy Vice President of interconnection on the and Chief Transmission electric grid from the Coal Officer Priti Patel. "This Creek Station Substation to transaction opens a new the Dickinson Substation pathway for Minnesota to adjacent to the Minnesota receive renewable energy terminus of the HVDC while ensuring continued reliability and energy

Great River Energy will agreement will be transferred continue to operate and to Rainbow Energy Center at maintain the HVDC system under a 20-year contract with

Closing of the transaction supply to sell Coal Creek Station and strategy. The cooperative shut the HVDC system is expected down two uneconomic power no earlier than May 1 and plants and plans to more is subject to the approval than double its renewable of Great River Energy's

Air Source Heat Pumps are becoming a standard in home heating and cooling

>from p.1 over to a backup heat Minnesota. source you're paying for heat.

point is set too high. Otherwise, contact your ccASHP contractor on what your balance point is and that it's where you want it.

ASHPs have been used for many years in nearly all parts of the United States; yet, until recently, ASHPs were not common in with extended periods of subfreezing temperatures. However, ccASHP technology has advanced and now offer a legitimate space heating alternative in provide heating in

AccASHP can provide more than you should both efficient heating and cooling for your • Aren't sure of home. When properly your ASHP's balance installed, it can deliver point? Take note of the up to three times more temperature where your heat energy to a home backup heating source than the electricity it kicks in and if it's above consumes. A heat pump 10° F, your balance moves heat, rather than generating heat from a fossil fuel source, like propane.

> The Center for Energy and Environment found that the efficiency of the newest generation of

ccASHPS can operate down to minus 13 degrees Fahrenheit. efficiency of The these technologies in moderate climates is also two to three times more efficient than standard electric heating systems.

Since heat pumps

like the winter and cooling pump two heat pump energy- ratings. Like miles per efficiency ratings:

> The Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio (SEER) cooling measures efficiency over the cooling season.

> Heating Seasonal Performance Factor (HSPF) measures heating efficiency over the heating season. HSPF is a standardized rating used to compare efficiencies. HSPF is used by all heat

manufacturers in the summer, look for to indicate efficiency gallon for your car, the higher the HSPF number, the more efficient it is.

> Rebates are available up to \$1,000 for Central systems and \$750 for Mini-Split **Ductless** systems.

> Contact Jerry at North Itasca Electric at (218) 743-1313 to learn more.

WATTS deadlines

Listed below are deadlines for the WATTS News through 2022 for ads and content. The deadline can also be found on the classified page each month. Dates are subject to change.

| March | 2/18 |
|-----------|--------------|
| April | 3/16 |
| May | 4/15 |
| June | see May pape |
| July | 6/17 |
| August | 7/15 |
| September | 8/17 |
| October | 9/16 |
| November | 10/14 |
| December | 11/16 |









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SALE GOOD THROUGH FEBRUARY

NORTH ITASCA ELECTRIC CO-OP 301 MAIN AVE. S BIGFORK, MN 56659 **CALL ROXANNE WITH QUESTIONS: 218-743-3132**

· Gravel · Road construction



Voted # 1 by women!

Solid metal gears and shaft! Made to last 25 years! **Great warranties!**

Speed Queen has suspended some models and will only be producing the TR7003WN & DR7003WE & TC5003WE & DC5003WE

However, I have in stock:

- 2-DR5003WE
- 1-DR3003WE
- 2-TR7003WN
- 1-DC5003WE

A lot of people mix and match the DR & TR models to make a set, but the TC & DC are the new Classic series and have the silver control panel. This is a great opportunity to get a great deal on the best machine you will ever buy.

10 % off on all TR and DR models that are in stock! 8 % off anything that needs ordering.

Financing available to qualified members. 20% down and small monthly payments added to your electric bill, 4% interest up to 3 years!



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Marcell, MN 56657





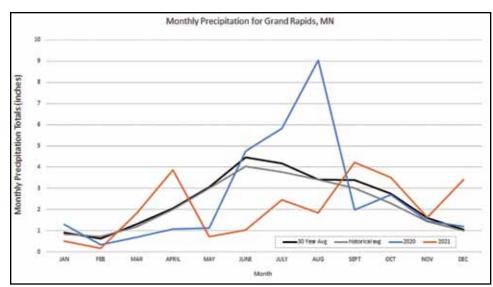
Winter Weather

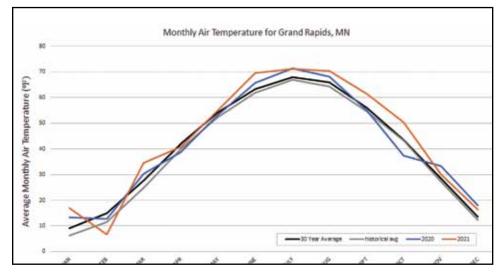
Does this seem unusual? It seems every winter has its own weather personality!

The U.S. Forest Service Northern Research Station summarizes daily observations on temperature and precipitation at its Grand Rapids location and shares them monthly. Observations are compared to records that go back to June 1915.

It turns out that last December was unusual! Precipitation was the highest recorded at 3.42 inches translating to a total of 29.2 inches of snow and an 18 inch depth recorded for Dec. 28. In comparison the driest December mustered only 0.11 inches in 1924.

The warm temperatures on Dec. 24 (45°) did come close to the record on that date (47°) set in 1994, but was far from the record high for the month - a whopping 59° set on Dec. 1, 1962. Still, it was 90° over the record low: -45° set on Dec. 31, 1946.





2020 (blue line) and 2021 (orange line) precipitation (top) and temperature graphs courtesy of Tyler Roman of the U.S. Forest Service Northern Research Station. Monthly totals are compared to historical average (grey line) and 30 year average (black line) numbers. Used with permission.

Phone app available

Did you know that you from your phone! can access your account with your smart phone?

Download the North Itasca Electric mobile app and get your account information on your phone including usage and payment history. You can also make a payment

To download the app, follow these directions:

iPhone: Go to the App Store and search for North Itasca Electric.

Android: Go Google Play and search for North Itasca Electric.

Propane, Auto Parts, Tire Repair, Brakes, Oil, Lube & General Repai

Road conditions: Call 511 or visit hb.511mn.org (low bandwidth: lb.511mn.org).



WATTS Wonderful!

TOYS and JOYS

There is no doubt that these are hard times. What is with the persistence of the darn virus anyway?? Continuing to find JOY every day is essential to our mental health and very survival!

You all certainly provided that for our Kids this holiday season by contributing to the Bigfork Toys project!! This year we partnered with the Bigfork Improvement Group, who were awesome, working the event and making sure that our purchases were tax-

YOU, our community, donated generously providing TOYS (joys), snow pants, jackets, and mittens to 85 kids in December. Wow.

There were legos, Barbies and remote control cars, and books, fishing rods and basketballs; and art supplies, play dough and headlamps worn by spies; and puzzles, games, makeup kits, sleeping bags, electronics and more..... It was a wonderful event made possible only by you and the terrific parents who came and shopped, seeing to it that each of their children had a great gift.

Joy oozed out of the Edge center and hopefully, you all felt it as you gave so generously! Have a Joyous 202211

THANK YOU!

...submitted by Heidi Korstad





Brad Johnson, AAMS Financial Advisor

72 S.E. 7th Street Suite A Grand Rapids, MN 55744 218-327-7280

Edward **Jones**'

Member SIPC



Deer feeding ban now in effect

for the counties - Koochiching, Itasca & Beltrami

by Rena Troy

Last week, I was leaving work and I stopped at the intersection of Highways 1 and 46 in the middle of Northome. I had to wait for oncoming traffic. This time of year, it is usually a long line of pickups pulling fish houses heading to or from the big lakes up north. But this day I didn't have to wait for vehicles, I had to wait for a young buck, a whitetail deer, lovingly known as Apple Jack by people in the community, to leisurely saunter his way across the pedestrian crosswalk heading south.

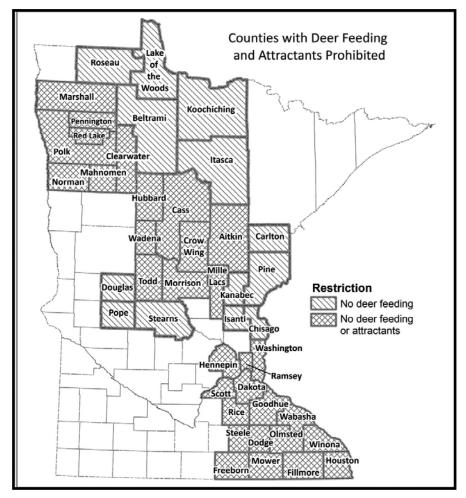
I found this quite amusing as I stopped and watched him mosey his way in front of Deerwood bank, by the apartments and head south down the side of Hwy 46. Whitetail deer can be very entertaining as we watch them gather, interact and feed at feeding sites provided by well-meaning citizens. We watch them on trail cams and document their interactions with other animals that show up at the feeding stations. It all seems very good and beneficial. But it is not.

I remember my parents telling me stories of a young fawn they raised long before I was born. His mother was killed, so my family took him in. Things went well with raising the fawn into a young buck until the day the door to the oat bin was left open. The deer got into the oat bin and died.

This is one of the many reasons the Department of Natural Resources has put a ban on deer feeding stations in our area. Deer are not meant to have a large intake

of food and calories during

the winter months. They are designed to live off their own body fat during the long frigid days where foraging for food is reduced to bark and brush. Their metabolism is meant to slow down, and their body is meant to reserve energy. Their body changes. Their which consists of a four part stomach, is designed to break down the high fiber content present in the food that the winter provides and in turn provide the most nutrition possible from it. When the deer encounters "summertime" foods such as grains, apples, corn, lettuce leaves and other things that are found at individual feeding stations, and then goes back in the wild with their natural "winter foods," their body does not go through the needed change in "gut flora" they require for winter. They may not produce the extra bacteria that is needed in the gut to digest the wood fibers that they usually consume in winter, leaving a high level of acid in the gut which can get into the bloodstream and kill the deer. The other danger of feeding grains and corn to the deer at feeding stations is that they can overeat. They don't seem to



Minesota DNR, reprinted with permission.

brush. Their metabolism eant to slow down, and body is meant to reserve gy. Their body changes. It digestive system, the consists of a four stomach, is designed to bank have an "I'm full" trigger that turns off their feeding frenzy, and they die from enterotoxaemia, a fatal disease commonly called "grain overload." That is what happened to the deer my family tried to raise. He literally ate himself to death.

Now with CWD, chronic wasting disease, being found in deer in neighboring counties and in deer at deer farms, the need for shutting down the private feeding stations is becoming more important than ever. Feeding stations have multiple deer eating from the same piles of corn or grain, which in turn opens the possibility of the deer sharing saliva which will case the spread of CWD easier and faster than if they were foraging in the woods for their meals. Other diseases that feeding sites can spread are bovine tuberculosis or brucellosis.

Deer feeding stations cause large groups of deer to congregate together which is not a normal habit of whitetail deer. Upon reading up on the posts online, I found quite the list of reasons feeding stations are not advised:

- deer congregating together attracts predators and increase risk of death by coyotes or domestic dogs.
 - Spread disease among deer.
- Cause aggression, wasting vital energy reserves and leading to injury or death

- Reduce fat reserves as deer use energy traveling to and from the feed site where normally they would reserve their energy.
- Result in over-browsing of local vegetation and ornamental plants.
- Denies access to food to the youngest and weakest deer who come to feed as the biggest and strongest deer will chase the others away.
- Increase deer-vehicle collisions. Vehicle-killed deer near feed sites can outnumber those that would naturally succumb to winter mortality by enticing more deer to travel across roads to come to the feeding stations. Often they come to feed in the evening or early morning when there is more traffic on the roads from people traveling to and from work.
- Deer feed sites cause deer to depend less on their natural environment and more on humans. Deer may lose their fear of humans and become too used to feed sites and foraging for their own food is lessened, bringing starvation.
- Stomach microorganisms must adjust to the diet change. Ironically, while well-intentioned people try to help the deer by feeding, they may be harming them due to the time and energy needed to convert the microorganisms.
 - Many timber companies and other Deer to next page>







Arts on the Edge

Classic movie series

by Jack Nachbar

It's time for romance again in the Classic Movie Series's annual "Valentine's Day Special" movie at the Edge Center in Bigfork.

Our February movie takes us back to 1936 for one of the great "screwball comedies," Libeled Lady. For this great audience. The purpose is to on Sunday, Feb. 27 starting at rom/com, MGM went all out and featured four, count em, FOUR of their major stars: Jean Harlow, William Powell, Myrna Loy, and Spencer Tracy. Wow! Four of the biggest stars in classic Hollywood that make this movie four times as funny. Laughin' and lovin' at its best.

Libeled Lady will be shown at the Edge Center Theater in Bigfork on Thursday, February 10 at 6:30 p.m. FREE for all. Masks and social distancing required.

CLASSIC **MARCH** MOVIE: Celebration of local superstar Judy Garland on the 100th anniversary of her birth. Judy and Fred Astaire star in the 1948 musical smash hit, Easter Parade. Thursday, March 10 at 6:30 p.m. at the Edge Theater.

EdgeWild Players Project Update

at 1:00 p.m.

bring a lawn chair.

In addition to previous tech students.

With grants from Arrowhead Regional Council and the Bigfork/EOW Age to Age Initiative, we will be offering lights and sound accompanying graphic.)

The first lights training

EdgeWild Players' will be on Saturday, February winter blahs initiative will enter 19, starting at 10:00 a.m. The its next phase in February. We first sound training will be on will continue to read a play on Sunday, Feb. 20, starting at 1:00 Sunday, February 27, beginning p.m. The third play reading event will be on Sunday, Feb. This is not in front of an 27 beginning at 1:00 p.m. Also entertain the readers and to look 1:00 p.m, there will be a joint ahead to auditions. We will be training in conjunction with on stage at the Edge Center, and the play reading. That way the for your comfort we suggest you tech students can work with live people on stage.

You do not have to have readings, we will be joined by participated in previous play readings to participate. Joining "Tech students?' you say. us for the play does not obligate you for future participation, but the it is designed to give you a taste Arts of behind the scenes of a stage production. We hope you enjoy it. And we hope COVID will allow us to present a full play in training for free. (See the front of a live audience in early summer.

Bigfork City Council changes meeting dates

of the year, the Bigfork Council selected Scenic Range NewsForum as a legal paper and changed the updated meetings to the second Bergquist) Tuesday of the month at 5:30 p.m. at city hall.

The council discussed Lakeshirts, has the need to replace about a half mile of city water main and service lines which had experienced a number of expensive breaks over the past council agreed that a new line should run along but purchasing it to market or

by Sally Sedgwick not under Division Ave. rent it. The city was asked adequate. begin to look for funding sources.

Mayor Bryan Boone the council meeting date for regular on the e2ip (formerly commercial property north of town. A prospective buyer, since purchased another facility but may still be interested. If there is no interest in the approximately 30,000 sq. ft. facility by next spring, the Itasca Economic couple of years. The Development Corporation (IEDC) may look into

Deer feeding ban

>from previous page landowners alter cutting practices to protect good deer yards, if deer go to feed sites instead of protected deer yards, then the timber companies will see little value in continuing to protect the

wintering areas. Further, young deer that associate feeding sites with winter habitat may never learn to occupy natural winter habitat.

from Bear Country Chronicles, Jan. 15, 2022. Used with permission.

At the first meeting starting at the hardware if it could provide any store, and that they would in-kind services to keep the building functional, and the council suggested a flat sewer fee and plowing/mowing around the building.

> In other business, the council:

to provide council meeting streaming on Zoom and reviewed the cost, but decided the proximity and size of the city hall was

- Approved moving forward with finding a new water truck.
- · Agreed to look at a new part-time position to help with snow removal and mowing up to 10 hour per week.

The next regular • Considered a request meeting of the council is Tuesday, Feb. 8. 5:30 p.m. in City Hall.

> Excerpted from an article in the Scenic Range NewsForum.

Effie City holds first 2022 meeting

by Sally Sedgwick

At its first meeting of 2022, the Effie City Council made yearly appointments and designated the Scenic Range NewsForum as its legal newspaper.

Council meetings will be the second Monday of each month at 6 p.m. at the community center.

The council thanked John Licke for a \$1,000 donation to the playground fund, bringing the balance to just over \$6,400.

The council heard that sewer sampling passed testing limits for December and tabled discussion on the updated sewer ordinance to the February meeting.

The next council meeting will be at 6 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 14 at the Community Center.

Excerpted from an article in the Scenic Range NewsForum.

Free Theatre Tech Training

Here's your chance! Whether you think you'd like to work in the control booth for Edge productions or get an idea of what is involved or just expand your skills, here is your chance to learn from people who know.

Grants from the Arrowhead Regional Arts Council and the Age to age Initiative are making it possible for the Edge Center for the Arts in Bigfork to offer free training for lights and sound design and operation at the Edge Center Theatre.

On Saturday, Feb. 19 from 10 a.m.to 3 p.m., John Miller and Greg Johnson from the Reif will be training theatre lighting design and set up using the equipment at the Edge.

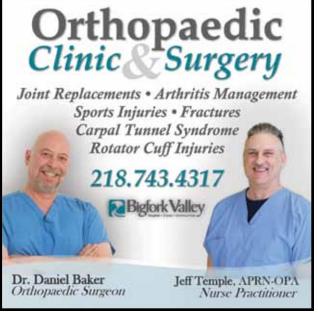
On Sunday, Feb. 20 from 1 to 5 p.m., professional musician Mike Miller will be training on sound, again using the Edge equipment.

You may attend one or both sessions (Feb. 19 and 20).

On Sunday, Feb. 27 at 1 p.m. there will be a combined training. In addition, we will be holding the third play reading session, so the techies can practice their effects realistically.

For more information contact Val Conner (218) 259-4490 or Michaela Raymond (218) 259-4456.





ElderCircle SAIL classes

ElderCircle has replaced Bone Builders with "Stay Active & Independent for Life (SAIL)."

Following is the local schedule as of Jan 18:

- Virtual via Zoom video conference Mondays & Thursdays, 10:30 am-12:00 pm
- Virtual via Zoom video conference Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9:00-10:30 am
- Deer River, Bethany Lutheran, live-in-person Mondays & Thursdays, 10:30 am-12:00 pm

On hold until further notice:

- Bigfork Old Scenic Church, live-in-person Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9:00 am-10:30 am
- Bowstring Town Hall, live-in-person Tuesdays & Thursdays, 10:00-11:30 am
- Togo at Carpenter Town Hall, live-in-person Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9:30-11:00 am

AARP Defensive Driving

Due to the concern for the Omicron variant, AARP has made the difficult decision to postpone in-person classes at this time.

The special 25 percent discount for the on-line class fee has been extended through March 31, 2022.

This option is open to anyone who is not able to renew their car insurance discount due to course cancellations. The discount allows participants to take the class at the same price as in-person classes.

Website: http://www.aarpdriversafety.org Promo code for 25% discount: DRIVINGSKILLS Good through March 31, 2022

AARP sincerely apologizes for any inconvenience these cancellations may cause. The health and safety of volunteers and class participants is a continued priority. For questions or assistance with on-line classes, please contact Peggy Brennan at (651) 895-6465.

Also, for anyone interested in becoming a Smart Driver instructor, please contact Marn Flicker at (763) 291-4411 or Jerry Flint at (218) 360-0278.



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Check out our page on Facebook Lots of pics/videos of our work

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Want to know which highways are clear and which are snow-covered before you leave for your trip?

How about finding out where the state plows are?

Now, how about looking through the windshield on that plow?

It's all available on Minnesota's 511 website, 511mn.org.

There's a wealth of information on snow covered roads, trucker reports, electronic signs and traffic all spotted on an interactive map on the Minnesota Department of Transportation website. There is a network of stationary webcams spotted along highways on mini weather stations that record conditions; one is located east of Effie on Highway 1. And there are mobile dash cams mounted on plows. The current locations of these plows are spotted on the map, and visitors can share the view with a click on the icon.

There are even snapshots of electronic signs, such as "Freeway time to..." for travelers to the Cities.

Traveling across country? Neighboring states and provinces also have 511 road information web pages, and these can be accessed from the Minnesota page.

Defensive Driving Courses

(Refresher)

For drivers age 55 and older who have already completed the beginner's course. Pre-register for classes by calling (218) 750-3189 or e-mailing mnflats@hotmail.com

Date: Wednesday, Feb. 16 Time: 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Location: Board Room, Itasca County Courthouse Cost: \$12.00

For more information on Mike Flatley's upcoming courses visit mndefensivedriving.blogspot.com.

Bigfork Valley Hospital sets mandatory vaccination policy

In the November 2021 special session, December 2021 and January 2022 meetings of the Bigfork Valley Hospital board, the board discussed state and federal support for health care workers and a COVID mandatory vaccination policy.

Non operating income continued to support Bigfork Hospital's bottom line in its financials. October operating income was \$59,932 and net income was \$66,247. November operating income was \$3,560 and net income was \$1,638,956.

Deb Morell, Cydney Neuenschwander, Carol David, Nikki Warrick, Tiffanie Lillo, Michael Martin-Rahier, Shawnae Feltus, Alice Rosin, Gloria Madsen, and Toni Cleath received peer awards in December for excellence. Kyle Buckingham, Jillian Haataja, Amanda Niemala, Angela Smith were recognized n

Minnesota plans to provide \$50 million for incentive payments to long term care workers. There are also federal funds to support staff; part of the \$447,959 that will be received as an American Rescue Plan Rural Payment also can be used.

In a special session on Nov. 30, the board discussed the current mandatory vaccination policy and its impact on the hospital. It was agreed that the hospital was in a no-win situation: it couldn't risk losing Medicare and Medicaid payment of about \$12 million, but also could not afford to lose an unknown number of employees who had indicated they would not accept the vaccine. CEO Aaron Saude was directed to write an email to legislators and ask for advice and help. Sen. Smith and Rep. Stauber responded.

The courts did issue a stay for mandatory vaccination, but this was lifted by the Supreme Court so the hospital COVID vaccination policy has now gone into effect. All employees, volunteers and board members are required to have a vaccination or exemption or be telehealth only.

area bookmobile stops

New to the area? Get your Arrowhead Library Card on the Bookmobile.

Tuesdays: Feb 1, 22; March 15 Note new hours in 2022.

10:30 a.m.-11:30 p.m. Bowstring Store

12:00-1:00 p.m. Spring Lake Store

3:00-4:30 p.m. Effie: Effie Cafe

5:00-6:30 p.m. Bigfork: City Hall

Thursdays: Feb 3, 24; March 17

11:45-12:45 Togo: Junction Bar & Grill

Mondays: (no stop in Feb.); March 14

12:30 -1:00 p.m. Gemmel; Comm.Church 1:45 - 2:30 p.m. Northome; Apartments

3:15 - 4:15 p.m. Alvwood; Hoot-n-Holler 4:30 - 6:00 p.m. Squaw Lake; Community Ctr

Bookmobile or Mail-a-Book information: call Arrowhead Library System at (218) 741-3840

Northome Food Shelf 12059 Main St

Bring your own bags.

1st Mon.: 9 a.m.-noon 2nd Mon.: 2-5 p.m. 3rd Mon.: 9 a.m.-noon

4th Mon.: 2-5 p.m.

Blackduck **Community Library**:

(218) 835-6600 Tues: 1-6 p.m.. Wed: 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Thurs: 1-7 p.m.

Fri: 1-6 p.m.

Sat.: 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Northern Itasca Emergency Food Shelf

200 Main, Bigfork **Thursdays** 12:30-3 p.m. **3rd Thursday** 4-5:30 p.m.

(218) 743-3381

Northome Library (218) 897-5952

Mon: 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Tues: 9 a.m.- 3 p.m. Wed: 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Thurs: noon - 3 p.m.

Fri: 9 a.m.- noon

Resource Centers:

Blackduck: (218) 835-5768

Northome: (218) 897-5952

Community News

Email editor at sedgwick@paulbunyan. net, put Community News in the subject

Bowstring - Squaw Lake - Wirt

These indoor days are perfect to start housecleaning! Treasures Are Fine, an annual community garage sale event, is starting to plan for 2022. Scheduled for May 7 this year, volunteers are needed! Email Chris at bowstringchapel@gmail. com to help out, get your sale registered for the map or just join the fun. The route follows highways and county roads 6, 4, 29 and 46 in northwest Itasca County. Your unused item might be just the treasure someone is looking for.

Community Cafe

The Community Cafe is available to anyone who is in need of a meal. There is no income or financial qualification to receive a free meal. Each Tuesday through Thursday from 4:30 p.m.- 6:00 p.m. (or until gone), a nutritious three-course meal is served. Location: King Elementary School. For more information, visit communitycafemn.org.



Marcell Family Center

218-832-3444 49023 State Highway 38 Marcell, MN 56657

Winter Frolic!

11 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Come to the Marcell Family Center for crafts, games, food, and beverages. All are welcome! (The event is subject to change.)

MFC hours:

Fitness Center, gymnasium, multi-pur- Mon: 11 a.m.-2 p.m., 4-7 p.m. pose room, public computer room and WiFi hotspot.

Tues, Thurs: 11 a.m.-2 p.m., 4-7 p.m. Fri: 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Sat: 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Fitness Walking at the Marcell Family Center 4-7 p.m. Free, register at getlearning.org.

~ February Calendar ~

- Bigfork Valley Hospital Board meets, 9 a.m. Contact (218) 743-1772 for telephone or virtual attendance information.
- Area political caucuses, 7 p.m. Check your caucus location at: caucusfinder.sos. state.mn.us
- The Club I Never Wanted To Join" breast cancer support group meets 3:30 p.m. at Zion Lutheran Church in the chapel, use south entrance, Grand Rapids. More info with Lynn (218) 832-3612, lynn_ettl@msn.com
- Winter Frolic at the Marcell Famiy Center, 11a.m.-2:30 p.m. Crafts, games, food and beverages. All are welcome! Marcell Family Center, (218) 832-3444. The event is subject to change.
- Stop & Stitch meets at the Marcell Family Center the 2nd Tuesday of every month, 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m. For more information, call Judy at (218) 832-3237.
- Bigfork City Council meets at City Hall, 5:30 p.m. Note new date.
- 9 ISD 363 South Koochiching-Rainy River School Board Meeting, 7 p.m.
- 10 The Edge Center in Bigfork hosts the Classic Movies series with Libeled Lady (1936) starring Jean Harlow, William Powell, Myrna Loy, and Spencer Tracy, 6:30 p.m. Free. Masks and social distancing are required.
- Valentine's Day
- Blackduck ISD32 School Board, 5 p.m. in the Media Center. Note changed time. 14
- 14 ISD317 School Board meets, 6 p.m., public forum 5:45 p.m.
- 14 ISD318 School Board meeting in Grand Rapids or at watchictv.org, 6:30 p.m. Public Forum, 6 p.m. Contact for information: jrasmussen@isd318.org or call (218) 327-5704.
- Effie City Council meets at Effie Community Center, 6 p.m.
- Women of the Woods meet at 10 a.m. at Sand Lake Community Center. Call Pat Sievertson at (218) 659-2157.
- No school Deer River
- Edge Center training on theater lighting and set up, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Free. For more info, call Val (218) 259-4490 or Michaela (218) 259-4456.
- Edge Center training on theater sound equipment, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Free. For more info, call Val (218) 259-4490 or Michaela (218) 259-4456.
- Presidents' Day. No school, all schools.
- Edge Center holds free combined training on theater lighting and sound along with EdgeWild Players community informal play readings, 1 p.m.
- Women of the Woods meet at 10 a.m. at Sand Lake Community Center. Call Pat Sievertson at (218) 659-2157.

Area Church Directory

Alvwood Evangelical Free Church Sun 10:00a 58712 Co. Rd. 131

245-1960

659-4681 Blackduck 56630

Balsam Bible Chapel Sun 10:00a

41516 Scenic Hwy 7

Bovey 55709

Bear River Lutheran Church Sun 10:00a

11141 Hwy 22 Cook 55723 376-1012

Bethesda Lutheran Church Sun 9:00a 897-5654 56660

Bigfork Assembly of God Sun 9:30a 101 Golf Course Ln

743-3500 Bigfork 56628

Bowstring Chapel Sun 10:15a 45114 Co Rd 133 Deer River 56636 832-3171

Calvary Covenant Sun 10:30a 54764 Co. Rd. 31 Northome 56661 897-5684

Centennial Lutheran Church Sun 8:30a Hwy 46 Squaw Lake 56681

Deer River Bible Church Sun 10:00a 33276 State Highway 6

Deer River 56636 246-9570

Dora Lake Alliance Sun 10:00a 59329 Co Rd 145

659-4551 Northome 56661

Effie Fredheim Lutheran Church (ELCA) Sun 8:30a

Hwy 1 Fffie

56639

743-3368

First Presbyterian Church, BF Sun 10:15a 109 Ash St.

Bigfork 56628 743-3783 Gemmel Community Church Sun 10:00a

10609 Town Rd 34 Gemmel 56660 897-5966

Grace Community Church (ELCA) Sun 10:15a 401 State Hwy 38 N

56628 743-3368 **Bigfork**

Hope Lutheran Church Sun 10:30 a.m.

897-5654 Northome 56661 Jehovah's Witnesses Tu 7:00p., Sun 10:00a Hwy 38

Bigfork 56628 743-3275 Jesse Lake Lutheran Church Sun 8:30a 45834 Co. Rd. 4

Talmoon 56637 Marcell Community Church Sun 10:30a 49103 State Hwy 38

Marcell 56657

Northome Community Church Sun 10:00a 12071 Bartlett St. 897-5040

Northwoods Chapel Sun 9:00a

Northome 56661

50539 Mushgee Rd. (corner of Co. Rd. 622) Deer River 56636 659-2784 Old Scenic Community Church Sun 10:30a

25747 Co. Rd. 340

Bigfork 56628 659-2727

Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Church Sun 9:00a Mass also W, Th, F 9:00a

320 Golf Course Ln **Bigfork** 56628

Sand Lake Alliance Sun 10:00a

55581 Co. Rd 4

Spring Lake 56680 659-2872 Church website: www.sandlakealliancechurch.org

743-3255

832-3883

244-7089

St. Catherine's Catholic Church Sat 4:00p

52265 State Hwy 46 Squaw Lake 56681

St. Michael Catholic Church Sat 7:00p; Tu 6:00a 12026 Lake St Northome 56661 743-3255

Seventh Day Adventist Sun 11:30a

12352 Hwy 46

Northome 56661

Suomi Evangelical Lutheran Church Sun 10:30a 42935 Co. Rd. 48

Deer River 56636

True Life Church Sun 10:00a

45976 Terry Talmoon 56637

Church directory sponsored by North Itasca Electric Cooperative, send changes to editor, sedgwick@paulbunyan.net

MARCH

1 Bigfork Valley Hospital Board meets, 9 a.m. Contact (218) 743-1772 for telephone or virtual attendance information.

2 The Club I Never Wanted To Join" breast cancer support group meets 3:30 p.m. at Zion Lutheran Church (see Feb. 2)



Call before you dig

800-252-1166

DNR summer internships

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is looking for dedicated students interested in learning more about possible careers with the DNR through paid summer internship opportunities.

The internship opportunities are located throughout the state and run the gamut of agency operations — including fisheries, forestry, park operations, invasive species watercraft inspection, communications and more. Interns work 20 to 40 hours per week and receive a competitive wage of \$15 an hour. Fulfilling an academic requirement or receiving academic credit is a requirement to be considered for a DNR internship.

To apply, visit the state of Minnesota careers website (mn.gov/careers). **Applications will be accepted through Feb. 7.** Positions will start in May and June and last until August or September.



Take steps to protect trees and shrubs from deer

In winter, property owners sometimes begin to notice broken branches or branches missing on tree and shrubs. This damage often is a result of deer browsing and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has tips to prevent it.

"Hungry deer will eat plants they can access, and that can cause trees and shrubs to become quite ragged or in some cases even die," said Eric Nelson, DNR wildlife animal damage program supervisor. "Try a few of these tips before deer become a problem—but make sure to first check local ordinances, which may impact some of these practices."

Eliminate food sources

To start, try removing food sources or blocking deer from them. Temporarily stop feeding seed or grain to birds, and clean-up spilled seed. Switch to feeding only suet during this time.

Cover bushes and low woody plants near the house with burlap, plastic fence, netting heavyweight frost protection blankets made of 2.5- to 4-ounce fabric, and shake off snow before it gets heavy enough to damage covered plants. Do not use tarps or clear plastic because they may make some plants more susceptible to sunscald and fungus. Shake the snow off the covering to prevent breaking of branches from a heavy snow load.

To protect young trees, cover the lower areas with tree tubes, wrap or bud caps. Remove tree tubes or wrap in the spring to prevent unwanted pests and disease.

To protect older trees, create a cage that is 6 inches away from the trunk using at least 6-foot high woven or welded wire cages around the tree or shrub 6 inches or more away to stop deer from accessing the tip of

the branches. Adjust the cage as the tree grows.

If the space between the wires is larger than 6 inches by 6 inches deer will be able to reach in with their slender mouths so add at least 8 inches of additional space from the tip of the branches if the cage has a grid larger than 6 x 6. In some cases deer can push on the cages, so cages may need to be staked down with metal or wood stakes.

Consider planting trees and shrubs that are less palatable to deer such as nannyberry, ironwood and white spruce. Additional ideas are available from the University of Minnesota Extension.

Tactics to deter deer

Deer deterrents can work but be aware that deer become desensitized to disturbances, so property owners may need to vary tactics.

Deterrents include motion-activated flood-

lights to startle nocturnal deer in rural areas. Other deterrents include wind chimes, wind socks, shiny polyester tape, flagging, scarecrows, or ornaments that create both motion and noise to startle deer. Others have reported success using a radio in combination with lights, activated by a motion-detector for both a sight and auditory deterrent.

There are also many commercial and homemade repellants that can be used for deer, but they typically need to be used when temperatures are above freezing. These also need to be reapplied regularly discourage See the manufacturer's recommendations winter effectiveness and application rates.

For more information on living with deer and other wildlife species, visit the DNR website.

• recipes • reci

The annual recipe booklet with all the Member holiday cookie and candy recipes can be picked up at Co-op's lobby in Bigfork, or email roxannep@nieci.com.

NOTE this is a corrected email address.

Raisin Bran Muffins

Thank you to Delores Stafford for this February recipe!

- 1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2-1/2 Tablespoons baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups Raisin Bran cereal
- 1 cup milk
- 1/4 cup honey
- 1 egg, slightly beaten
- 3 Tablespoons vegetable oil

Combine flour, baking powder and salt. Set aside. In a large bowl combine cereal, milk and honey; let stand until softened, about 2 minutes. Stir in egg and oil, mix well. Add dry ingredients, stir just until moistened.

Fill greased or paper-lined muffin cups 2/3 full. Bake at 400° for 18-20 minutes, or until they test done. Cool 10 minutes, makes about 10 muffins.

Jumpin' Jello Salad

Thank you to Pete Bourman for this February recipe!

- 1 16 oz. cottage cheese
- 1 3 oz box Jello®, flavor of your choice
- 1 15 oz can mixed fruit, drained
- 18 oz. tub Cool Whip®

Stir together cottage cheese and Jello, then stir in mixed fruit. Fold in Cool Whip until well mixed. Cover and refrigerate until set up and stiff.

Options: Chop up fresh fruit like apples, oranges, cherries, etc. and add in to salad.

Please share your recipe with us! Every month North Itasca Electric prints two Member recipes. If your recipe is chosen, you will receive a \$10 credit on your electric bill. Send your recipe to the editor, WATTS NEWS, P.O. Box 43, Spring Lake, MN 56680 or email the editor at sedgwick@paulbunyan.net.



Local resident named to state fisheries committee

The group of Minnesota citizens to share detailed spending and budget that monitors fish and wildlife spending by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is in place for 2022 and includes a local resident.

Judi Hart of Squaw Lake is a new appointee to the Fisheries Oversight for oversight committee positions. Committee. She joins six additional new appointees and two returning appointees on the group.

DNR Commissioner Sarah Strommen appointed a total of 15 new members and reappointed four people to the oversight committees that are Fish Fund expenditures began in responsible for reviewing the DNR's annual game and fish fund report in detail and, following discussions with agency leaders and others, preparing legislative reports on their findings.

these volunteers who are giving their time in service of hunters, anglers and conservation," said Dave Olfelt, DNR Fish and Wildlife Division director. "The equipment. appointments continue our commitment

information, bring new participants into the oversight process and ensure revenue generated by hunting and fishing license sales is used appropriately."

A total of 133 Minnesotans applied Factors in choosing the new appointees geographic included distribution, demographic diversity and a mix of interests relating to hunting and fishing in Minnesota.

Citizen oversight of Game and 1994. The Game and Fish Fund is the fiscal foundation for fish and wildlife management, habitat management and conservation officer funding.

About \$110 million a year is "We look forward to working with deposited into this fund from hunting and fishing license sales; a sales tax on lottery tickets; and a federal excise tax on certain hunting, fishing and boating

DNR seeks public input on deer population goals

(DPAs).

"We're with an online questionnaire this year and adding webinars for those who wish to connect directly with area wildlife managers on this topic," Barbara Keller, DNR big game program the Pine Moraines block; leader. "We're excited to have people participate block. and encourage anyone who has an interest in on Jan. 24 and concludes deer give feedback on deer Participants will be population trends in the asked to complete on areas where they live, online work and recreate."

deer population goals how much of an increase increase, decrease, or or decrease is desired in stay a deer population in a provide their rationale. particular DPA — as part of managing the state's last week of January wild deer.

Population

Department of Natural setting block for a 10-year participants' of 130 deer permit areas DPAs that comprise them the live events. are established based on continuing similar habitat, land uses, goal deer populations and deer participate in the process, hunter distribution.

> Uplands - Arrowhead block; the North Central and the Blufflands Plateau

Online feedback opens management to on Sunday, Feb. 13. questionnaire and indicate whether The DNR establishes the deer population in a particular area should the same—and

Webinars during the will present information goals about each goal-setting established in this process block, seek participant

Monday, will provide direction for input and allow DNR Jan. 24, the Minnesota management in each goal- wildlife staff to answer Resources is asking for period, with a midpoint Webinars will be recorded public input on deer review at the five-year and posted online for those population goals in 28 mark. Goal blocks and the who can't participate in

> Details about each block, how to webinar schedule the The targeted DPAs this and how to access the year are in the Superior questionnaire are listed on the DNR's website (mndnr.gov/mammals/ Plains Moraines block; deer/management/ population.html).

> > insertion.)

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AD/EDITORIAL DEADLINE for MARCH, Fri., Feb. 18

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-FOR SALE-

For sale: TV stand, corner unit. 36" wide x 21" deep x 22" high. oak look. \$25. Great condition. Call Mark (612) 812-0412 2/22

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Please note: We are as careful as possible, but are not responsible for errors.

Editor, WATTS NEWS, Send to:

P.O. Box 43

Spring Lake, MN 56680 or

(218) 659-2779 call:

or email: sedgwick@paulbunyan.net

Put WATTS AD in subject line. If no response, please resend.

2022 Rebates available

Appliances

\$25 Dehumidifier Must be EnergySTAR listed Dryer

Must be EnergySTAR listed

Refrigerator or freezer harvest \$75 When removing an older unwanted working refrigerator or freezer from the distribution grid.

Refrigerator (New construction) \$0 No rebates for new construction. There is no energy savings when installing an additional appliance to the distribution grid.

Refrigerator or freezer w/recycling

When replacing an older less efficient working refrigerator and recycling it.

Heat Pump Water Heaters

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ECM Motors \$5 for a hot water recycling pump

HVAC

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WIFI thermostat

ECM motors \$50

When replacing a standard motor with an energy efficient ECM motor.

Ground Source Heat Pumps(per Ton)

When installing new or replacing older equipment up to 5 Tons.

Central Air Source Heat Pumps

\$1,000

\$25

When installing a central Air Source Heat Pump with a HSPF rating of 10 or higher.

Mini Split ASHP When installing a Ductless Air Source Heat Pump of any SEER rating.

Lighting

LED Home Lighting & Holiday bulbs \$1.00 each With proof of purchase of LED light bulbs.

LED Yard light \$30 With proof of purchase of an LED yard light fixture.

Holiday string lighting (See Great River Energy's online store)

CFL bulb recycling \$0.50 each When recycling CFL light bulbs at locations other than North Itasca Electric with proof of recycling.

Load Management

Charge Wise (ETS) \$500 When installing an electric vehicle charging station at one's home

ETS Space Heating \$50 per kW up to \$1,000.00 When installing Storage Space heating and placing equipment on North Itasca Electric's storage heat load control program.

\$400 **ETS Water Heating** When installing a 100-gallon capacity water heater and placing it on North Itasca Electric's storage water heating

Miscellaneous

program.

\$5 Engine block Heater time With proof of purchase.

Faucet Aerator

(See Great River Energy's online store)

Power Strip Surge Protector

(See Great River Energy's online store)

Low Flow shower head (See Great River Energy's online store)

Pool programs

Pool ASHP \$400 When heating pool with a heat pump pool heater.

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Great River Energy's online store at energywisemn.com.





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