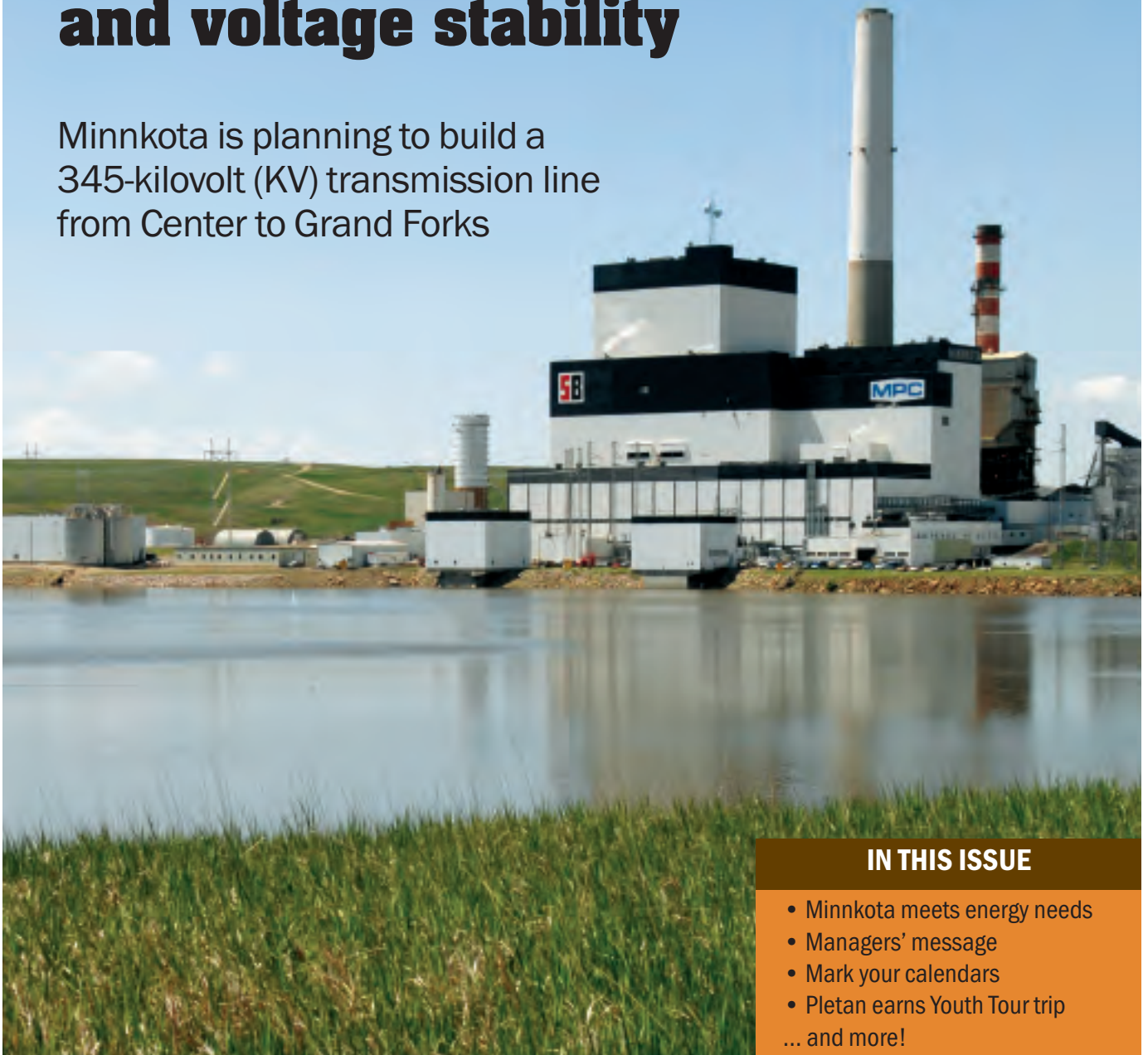


# Minnkota plans transmission line to improve system reliability and voltage stability

Minnkota is planning to build a 345-kilovolt (KV) transmission line from Center to Grand Forks



## IN THIS ISSUE

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- Managers' message
- Mark your calendars
- Pletan earns Youth Tour trip
- ... and more!

# Roughrider members to learn more about Minnkota Power transmission line

## Power line meeting is April 15

by Communications Supervisor Kevin Fee,  
Minnkota Power Cooperative

**B**uilding a long-distance, high-voltage transmission line doesn't happen overnight. It happens over years. And utilities couldn't do it without input from landowners in the proposed corridors, who are getting several opportunities to comment before a line is built on the prairie.

Minnkota Power Cooperative is dedicated to providing accurate and timely information regarding the Center to Grand Forks (CGF) transmission line project.

The route of the power line will extend through part of the Northern Plains Electric territory, potentially affecting landowners who are members of Northern Plains Electric. Minnkota Power operates the Milton R. Young power generation facility near Center. This facility and its 180 employees generate the power Minnkota furnishes to electric cooperatives and municipal utilities in eastern North Dakota and western Minnesota.

A series of public meetings are planned in April regarding the project. The meeting in the Northern Plains Electric area is from 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. April 14 in the Chieftain Conference Center in Carrington. This will be the second time Minnkota will have held voluntary meetings with the public since it announced the project in April 2009.

Minnkota is planning to build a 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line from Center to Grand Forks. The 260-mile, \$300-million line is needed to transmit Milton R. Young 2 output into the northern Red River Valley, improving system reliability and voltage stability.

Minnesota Power has purchased 100 percent ownership of the existing DC line and DC/AC conversion facilities, formerly owned by Square Butte Electric Cooperative, and will use the line to deliver to the Duluth, Minn., area additional wind energy the utility plans to develop near Center.

Minnkota looked at many alternatives for meeting its future baseload energy needs. In the end, the CGF transmission line project was the best fit for both Minnkota, which needed baseload generation, and Minnesota Power, which needed wind energy. The combination of building a new line and reallocating the use of the existing DC line means Minnkota will no longer need to build a third coal-fired unit at the Young Station, which was being studied.

Starting in 2013, Minnkota will begin receiving increasing allocations of Young 2 energy until the year 2026, when Minnkota will purchase 100 percent of the Young 2 output. Currently, the output from Young 2 is purchased under contract by Minnkota and Minnesota Power, with each utility receiving approximately 50 percent of the unit's output.

"Minnkota will end up with 100 percent of the energy output from Young 2 versus 50 percent of the energy output we have today," said Mike Hennes, project manager. "It's the lowest-cost way for Minnkota to meet its future baseload energy requirement."



Mike Hennes, project manager,  
Minnkota Power Cooperative

With preconstruction scheduled to start in late 2010 and actual construction in spring 2011, the project should be completed in early 2013. Minnkota is working to obtain federal, state and local permits required for the new line.

Minnkota cannot begin to procure easements until the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) approves an environmental assessment of the project. Minnkota is analyzing multiple route segments based on environmental, cultural resource and economic impacts. It has conducted a high-level environmental review of the proposed study corridors.

Some route segments are eliminated by analysis while others are carried forward for a detailed environmental review in an Environmental Assessment document. RUS uses the document when considering potential environmental impacts of the project.

Minnkota has been listening to landowners and others interested in the project. The company has solicited comments through the public meetings and also has created a project link on the corporate Web site ([www.minnkota.com](http://www.minnkota.com)) and hotline (800-473-5679).

In May 2009, open-house style public meetings were held in Washburn, Wing, Carrington, Cooperstown and Grand Forks. An additional meeting was held in Center in August. Attendees were able to have one-on-one contact with Minnkota staff, view boards detailing the project and sift through maps of the proposed corridors. A press release, newspaper advertisements and mailed notices alerted landowners of the upcoming meetings.

In addition, Minnkota attended county commissioner meetings to give an overall presentation on the purpose and need of the project to elected officials.

RUS and Minnkota also hosted six public scoping meetings in November. They were held in Grand Forks, Cooperstown, Carrington, McClusky, Wilton and Center. An Alternative Evaluation Study (AES) and a Macro-Corridor Study (MCS), prepared by Minnkota, were available for review at the meetings.

Route segments being considered in the study corridors will be displayed at this year's April open houses. Landowner mailings and public announcements will be used to inform interested parties when meeting locations and times are finalized. Please come join us to learn more about this important capital improvement to the Minnkota system.



Cory Pletan

## Cory Pletan wins trip to Washington, D.C.

This summer, Roughrider Electric Cooperative will send Cory Pletan to Washington, D.C., to participate in the 2010 Rural Electric Youth Tour. Cory competed in an essay-writing contest to earn the honor and opportunity to spend a week in Washington, D.C., to learn about U.S. government and rural electric cooperatives. Cory is a junior at Dickinson High School and is the son of Rocky and Judy Pletan.

Cory will join other participating North Dakota students in an all-expenses-paid trip scheduled for June 12 to 18. The delegation of North Dakota students will travel with Montana students in the day-to-day touring of historic sites, attractions and congressional offices in the Washington, D.C., area.

The students who competed in the Youth Tour essay contest submitted an essay on the topic: "Touchstone Energy cooperatives have launched the 'Together We Save' campaign to promote energy efficiency and conservation nationwide. Why do you think energy efficiency and conservation are important priorities for electric co-ops, and how can co-op members and communities achieve the savings in resources these priorities are intended to accomplish?"

Congratulations to Cory! Roughrider Electric is proud to sponsor a young person of his caliber on the 2010 Rural Electric Youth Tour. His winning essay appears below.

### Through energy conservation, we can change the future

by Cory Pletan

In today's modern industrialized society, we use a lot of electricity. This electricity comes from a variety of sources such as wind, water, solar, coal and natural gas. North Dakota is fortunate to have abundant sources of wind power available, and the state has recently started to take advantage of this resource, but most of our power is still generated by burning nonrenewable fuels such as coal and natural gas.

Energy costs have skyrocketed this past decade, because of increased demand from developing countries such as China and India. In addition, the world's energy reserves are becoming more limited. When this is coupled with our current economic troubles, it is causing many families to feel a pinch. However, customers of electric cooperatives have found that their electric bills have remained stable throughout the years. For instance, my parents bought their current home more than 20 years ago, but their electric bill over the last two decades has not increased significantly.

It is vital that we conserve our natural resources. Because many of them are nonrenewable, they will eventually run out. Unless something is done, we will have to pay for limited resources that keep rising in cost because of their increasing scarcity. I think the electric cooperatives, communities and citizens need to band together to combat this looming problem before it becomes a serious crisis.

One simple but effective method to increase energy efficiency and conservation is to teach people about effective energy usage. Electric cooperatives could mail out informational pamphlets that provide tips on how to use less energy. It could give simple tips like turning off lights when leaving a room or more complex ones like insulating the home against drafts.

Another effective technique to encourage more efficient energy usage would be informational workshops. These could

be sponsored by the area's electric cooperative, and it could be taught by experts from nearby communities. The workshop could cover a wide range of topics that would help save and conserve energy. Instructors could demonstrate how to insulate doorways and windows to cut the cost of heating and cooling bills. The use of fluorescent light bulbs should be encouraged, because they are much more efficient than incandescent light bulbs. They can also last up to 20 times longer than old-fashioned light bulbs. Another way to save energy would be upgrading older appliances for more energy-efficient ones. New, energy-efficient refrigerators and water heaters can make a big difference in monthly energy costs. Refrigerators alone can consume more than 20 percent of a household's electricity.

The workshop could also educate attendees about North Dakota's abundant renewable energy resources. This would encourage customers to support increased usage of wind, solar and hydroelectric energy. Wind turbines are now small enough to make them economical for single-family dwellings, so they could be installed in your own backyard. In addition, solar panels are relatively easy to install on the roof of a house. Both of these renewable energy generators can store energy so it can be used instead of energy generated from fossil fuels. This power could also be sold back to the electric company, relieving some of the burden of meeting the high power demand of customers.

The world is poised on the threshold of a new era in energy generation. As the coming years unfold, it will be exciting to see which new energy sources come to the forefront. These sources are being fine-tuned, and existing energy sources are being improved to make them cleaner and more efficient. All of these new technologies and techniques will help to make our future a bright and clean place.

# Getting Back On Line

A major storm has just hit this electric cooperative system. Here's a simplified look at how your co-op typically goes about the task of restoring electric service.

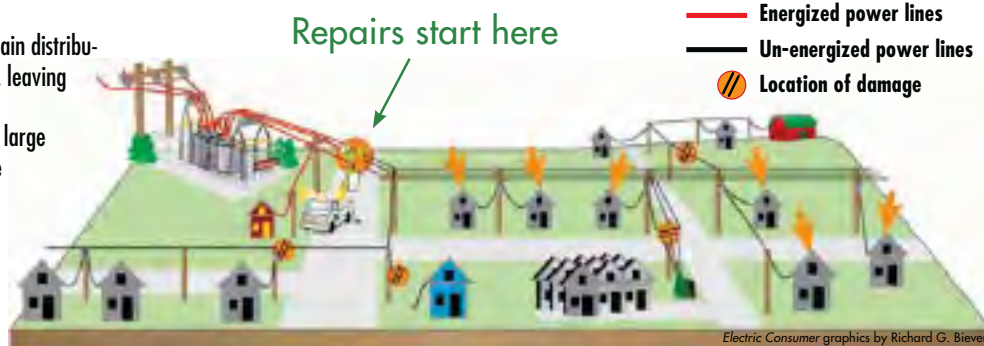
**W**E HAVE COME TO EXPECT THAT IF WE LOSE ELECTRIC SERVICE IT WILL be restored within a few hours at most. But when a devastating event, like a tornado, ice or snow storm causes major damage to a co-op's system, longer outages cannot be helped. Crews work long, hard hours restoring service, but it's a task that needs to be done methodically to be done safely. Every electric cooperative follows a basic principle when it comes to restoring power — priority goes to the lines that will get the most people back in service the quickest. This usually begins with main lines from the substations that can affect 200-600 members, and continues out to tap lines, which may affect 30-200 members, and then to individual service lines affecting just 1-5 members.

**“Priority goes to the lines that will get the most people back in service the quickest.”**

## Step 1. “All repairs start with the main line.”

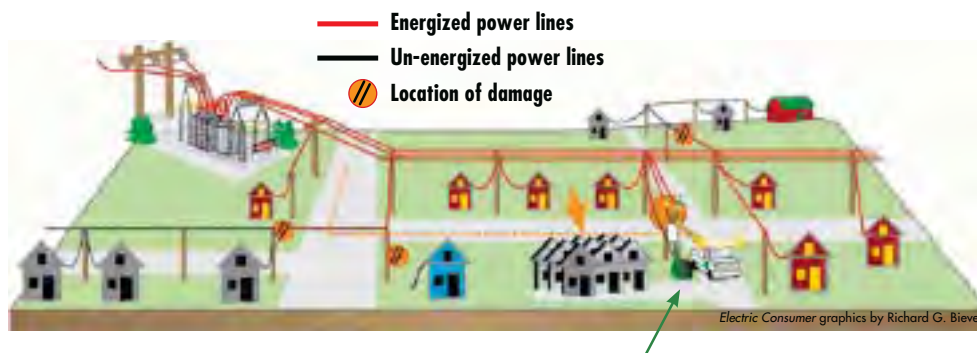
The substation is energized but a main distribution line is damaged near the substation, leaving most members without power.

All repairs start with the main line. A large number of members (shown with orange arrows) will have power returned once the main line is fixed. All other repairs would be pointless until this line is restored as it feeds all the other lines.



Electric Consumer graphics by Richard G. Biever

## Step 2. “With the main line restored, the line crew can isolate other damage.”



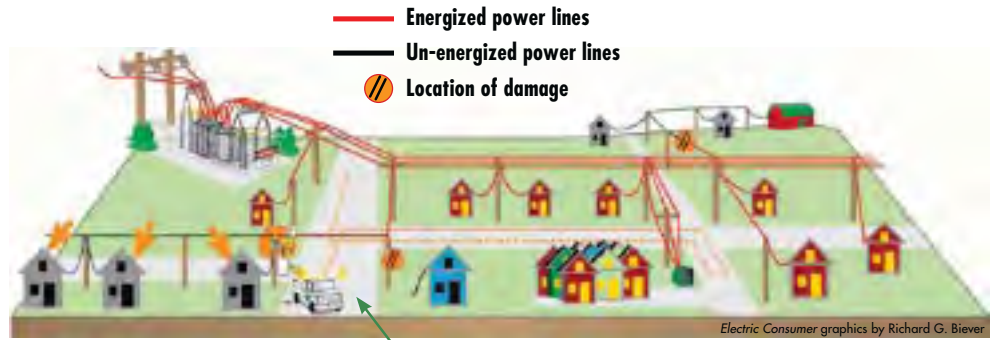
Electric Consumer graphics by Richard G. Biever

With the main line restored (now shown in red), the line crew can isolate other damage and prioritize repairs. Though a couple of repairs were closer, fixing the line that serves this subdivision down the road will get a larger number of consumers on more quickly.

One stop and an entire subdivision has power again.

### Step 3: "To fix this tap line will restore electricity to the three homes"

Moving back down the road to fix this tap line will restore electricity to the three homes marked with arrows.



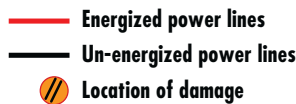
Back down the road, the crew makes one repair and restores power to this stretch of line.

### Step 4: "A smaller tap line...is next on the list for the line crew."

This repair restores power to these homes and farm.

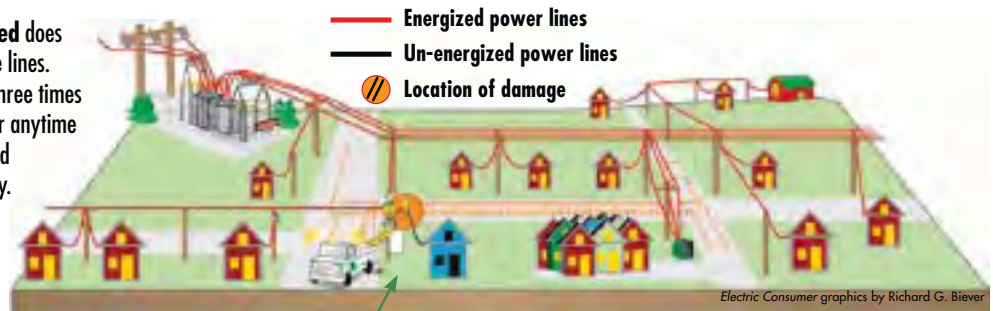
A smaller tap line serving a number of homes and the farm on the hill is next on the list for the line crew. The move probably doesn't make the folks in the blue house too happy. They've seen the crew driving by their home and working right across the road. They see lights in homes of all their neighbors but they don't have power.

That's because even though electricity is coming to their pole (that happened with the first repair in Step 1), the service line from their pole to their meter is damaged. Individual repairs come after all distribution and tap lines are restored.



### Step 5: "Take care of individual repairs last."

Only after the tap lines are repaired does the crew start work on individual service lines. The crew has been past the blue home three times and could have stopped to restore power anytime after the first main line was repaired and electricity was flowing to the pole nearby. But it's not fair to other members for a crew to spend hours fixing one outage, when the crew can move down the road and restore power to dozens of homes in the same amount of time.



Individual repairs begin once all other lines are repaired.

### What to Do When Your Service is Interrupted!

1. Check your fuses. If some of your lights work, the trouble may be in your fuses.
2. Check the circuit breakers on your yard pole below the meter. In the off position, these breakers disconnect all the wiring you own.
3. If all your lights are off, call your neighbor to see if his power is also off.
4. If you determine the problem is in your own wiring, call an electrician.
5. If you determine that your electrical service is interrupted, call the Roughrider Electric office at **701-748-2293, 701-483-5111 or 1-800-748-5533.**
6. Give your name and account number.
7. Don't wait for someone else to call because you may be the only consumer without power, and calls to the office often help us to determine where the problem is on our line.





Clayton Hoffman and Don Franklund,  
alliance co-managers

## MANAGERS' MESSAGE

# Your patience is much-appreciated

by Clayton Hoffman and Don Franklund, alliance co-managers

**A**s we write this message the first week of March, the major storm and long-term outages are over but by no means are we out of the woods. The continual frost and moisture pattern is causing outages every day. We cer-

tainly understand the concern of our members, but please believe that we are just as frustrated.

The lineworkers are becoming exhausted with all the long hours related to keeping the power on. We need to have some sunshine; then, of course, the next concern is flooding.

More than anything else, we need your patience and understanding — and not just for a month or two, but throughout this year. The enormity of the storm damage will take us most of the year to get the system working normally. There is no doubt we will have more outages than typical, but we will be working diligently to keep them at a minimum.

As you are aware, we had a rate increase effective with the January billing. The increase was placed entirely on the base rate for each meter on our system. We have had a number of inquires as to why the base rate was increased and not the kilowatt hours (KWH).

The main reason is due to the recommendation from our

bankers, USDA Rural Utility Services (RUS) and National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC). Their recommendation is that rates should be structured to collect fixed costs through fixed charges.

Fixed costs are classified as those costs that a cooperative has to pay even if there are no KWHs sold. Those costs include depreciation, interest and taxes.

In 2009, those costs amounted to a total of \$4,219,400. We have a total of 10,800 meters which means that we should have a fixed charge of \$390 annually for each meter, or \$32.56 per month. At our current rate of \$18, we have a ways to go. That does not mean we are going to have a base rate increase each year, but it will be reviewed carefully when a rate increase is necessary.

The other area of concern was that some members had a double bill due in February. This was caused by the need to have both the Hazen and Dickinson offices on the same billing process as we proceed with our software conversion.

The question that members were asking is why this could not be done in the summer when the bill would have been somewhat lower. The answer is that it was not in our control. National Information Solutions Cooperative (NISC), the cooperative in charge of making our software conversion, has a very stringent timetable for each cooperative converting to the new software. When you have several hundred cooperatives making this conversation, changes in scheduling are not an option.

Nice visiting with you.

---

## **Mark your calendars for the ANNUAL MEETING**

**Roughrider Electric Cooperative will hold its annual meeting Wednesday, June 2, at the Hazen High School gym.**

### **FREE SHUTTLE BUS RIDE**

Roughrider Electric will be offering a FREE shuttle-bus service to the meeting, leaving from the Dickinson main office. If you are interested in riding the bus to Dickinson, please contact Debbie Lorz at 701-483-5111 or 800-627-8470. You may also e-mail Debbie at: [dlorz@roughriderelectric.com](mailto:dlorz@roughriderelectric.com).

**Look for the annual meeting report in the May issue of North Dakota LIVING.**



# REPORT FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Feb. 26

**When, where and who:** The board of directors and managers met in Dickinson on Feb. 26.

**Recurring items:** The board approved the agenda and the minutes.

**3C Construction LLC (3C):** The Buy-Sell Agreement formula will be reviewed at 3C's next meeting.

**Property review:** An offer to purchase a portion of the old West Plains headquarters was tabled for further consideration.

**Construction projects:** Roughrider completed the Zenith Substation to the point that it can deliver three megawatts of power to GTL Energy under normal operating conditions. Additional work remains to make the substation fully functional. Otherwise, there was no construction work done except work necessitated by the Jan. 19-26 winter storm.

A storm report was reviewed. The superintendents prioritized the work by determining the lines upon which the fewest hours of work would restore service to the most customers. When it became apparent that the storm had affected many cooperatives in the region, line crews from out-of-area were located, hired and mobilized. There

were 111 lineworkers in addition to crews from other cooperatives.

The rumor that Roughrider lost old and rotted poles is simply untrue. Roughrider's pole inspection and change-out program is unrivaled. The poles that came down were solid poles stressed far beyond operational parameters by frost, ice and wind. Storm work will continue all throughout the year.

**Upper Missouri Electric Generation and Transmission Cooperative, Inc. (Upper Missouri) status:** After considerable discussion on the Upper Missouri membership, Roughrider agreed to join Upper Missouri, subject to execution of an All-Requirements contract.

**Basin Electric Power Cooperative board report and Roughrider safety report:** The board reviewed the Basin report and the safety report.

**Meetings:** Board members discussed and arranged attendance at various meetings. The next board meeting will be March 30 in Beulah.

**Other business:** There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

## Don't be in the dark about **GENERATOR SAFETY**



*Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for safe operation and maintenance of your portable electric generator.*

**R**oughrider Electric Cooperative strives to provide you with reliable, uninterrupted service every day of the year, but sometimes Mother Nature creates unavoidable power outages. Then, many homeowners use portable electric generators until power is restored.

"Portable electric generators are a good source of power during electrical outages. However, generators that are improperly installed or operated can become deadly," noted Michael Clendenin, executive director of the Electrical Safety Foundation International.

*Follow these portable electric generator safety precautions to avoid dangerous situations:*

- Do not connect generators directly to household wiring. For everyone's sake — yours and the co-op's line crews — generators need to be isolated from the electric co-op's power lines. This means you should install a double-throw switch on your generator. Otherwise, the generator could feed power back into utility lines as power crews work to restore your electric service, putting their lives at risk!
- Make sure your generator is properly grounded.
- Keep the generator dry.
- Plug appliances directly into the generator.
- Do not overload the generator.
- Do not operate the generator in enclosed or partially enclosed spaces.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for safe operation and maintenance.

# ALWAYS CALL BEFORE YOU DIG



One free, easy call gets your utility lines marked AND helps protect you from injury and expense.

**Safe Digging Is No Accident:  
Always Call 811 Before You Dig**

Know what's below. Always call 811 before you dig.  
Visit [call811.com](http://call811.com) for more information.



**Roughrider  
Electric  
Cooperative**



#### HAZEN OFFICE

800 Highway Drive, Hazen, ND 58545-4737  
Office hours 7:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.  
Phone (701) 748-2293 or (800) 748-5533

#### For emergencies and after-hours call:

(701) 748-2293 for local calls and (800) 748-5533 for long-distance calls

Payments may be deposited in the deposit box by the main entrance at the Roughrider Electric's office or in the drop-off box located at Krause's Super Valu in Hazen or Bronson's Super Valu in Beulah.

#### DICKINSON OFFICE

P.O. Box 1038, 2156 4th Ave. E.  
Dickinson, ND 58602-1038  
Office Hours 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Phone (701) 483-5111 or (800) 627-8470

#### For emergencies and after-hours call:

(701) 483-5111 for local calls and (800) 627-8470

Payments may be deposited in the deposit box west of the main entrance door at the Roughrider Electric's office or in the drop-off box located at Dickinson City Hall, and Dan's Supermarket (both locations).

#### OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

William Retterath, President—Center .....	794-8729
Dean Oe, Vice President—Belfield .....	575-4594
Ervin Binstock, Secretary—Dickinson .....	579-4120
Darell Herman, Treasurer—Beulah .....	873-4371
Roger Kudrna, Dickinson .....	483-8377
Dan Price, Hensler .....	794-3779
Gary Scheid, Hazen.....	748-2250
David Swenson, Halliday .....	938-4521
Bruce Darcy, Golden Valley .....	983-4222
Greg Steckler, Dunn Center .....	548-8122
Troy Sailer, Golden Valley.....	948-2427

#### Innovative Energy Alliance, LLC

Clayton Hoffman, Manager .....	748-6087 or 880-1312
Don Franklund, Manager .....	426-3918

#### EMPLOYEES

Leonard Hibi .....	Dir. of Member Services, Dickinson
Brad Quenette.....	Member Services Advisor, Hazen
Deborah Zillich.....	Dir. of Finance and Admin., Dickinson
Steve Hildebrand .....	Member Services Asst./ Work Order Representative, Hazen
Jackie Kovash.....	Accounting Coordinator, Dickinson
Laurie Miller .....	Billing Coordinator, Hazen
Debbie Lorz.....	Admin. Representative, Dickinson
Jen Gruebele .....	Accounting/Billing Rep., Dickinson
Julie Dukart .....	Customer Service Rep., Dickinson
Kayla Fandich .....	Part-time receptionist, Hazen
Simon Kuntz.....	Line Superintendent, Dickinson
Bill Gress .....	Operations Manager, Hazen
Tim Volk .....	Line Superintendent, Hazen
Lynn Chorney .....	Working Foreman, Dickinson
Tim Ridl .....	Working Foreman, Dickinson
Bryan Braun.....	Working Foreman, Dickinson
Dennis Kinzell .....	Lead Lineworker, Hazen
Chad Hysjulien.....	Journeyman Lineworker, Dickinson
Kevin Randle.....	Journeyman Lineworker, Hazen
Dale Ficek.....	Journeyman Lineworker, Dickinson
Jim Block .....	Working Foreman, Hazen
Wayne Schmaltz.....	Journeyman Lineworker, Hazen
Billy J. Kummer.....	Journeyman Lineworker, Dickinson
Scott Leintz .....	Journeyman Lineworker, Hazen
Dion Gefre .....	Journeyman Lineworker, Dickinson
Russell Walters.....	Journeyman Lineworker, Hazen
Brock Swensrud .....	Journeyman Lineworker, Dickinson
Tony Kordonowy.....	Apprentice Lineman, Dickinson
Zach Maershbecker .....	Apprentice Lineman, Dickinson
Gerald Krebs.....	Staking Engineer, Dickinson
Bruce Buchert.....	Electric Technician/Meter Technician
Cory Halter .....	Lead Meter Technician, Dickinson
Larry Rosenau .....	Radio/Engineering Technician
Nick Schafer.....	Warehouseman/Technician, Hazen
Bryce Jurgenson .....	Warehouse Supervisor, Dickinson
Claud Privratsky.....	Maintenance/Custodian, Dickinson
Russel Goodwin.....	Electrician Foreman, Hazen
Lance Peterson .....	Journeyman Electrician, Hazen
Jorden Pfliger .....	Journeyman Electrician, Hazen
Adam Wilkens .....	Apprentice Lineman, Hazen
Jason Obenauer .....	Plumber, Hazen
Brent Hysjulien .....	Service Center Representative, Hazen

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