

# Meeker Cooperative PIONEER

February 2020

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Official publication of

**Meeker  
Cooperative**  
Light and Power Association

Meeker Co-op is an  
Equal Opportunity Provider  
and Employer

## Here's what VIBRANT subscribers are saying!

*"We like it.  
It's so much faster.  
My wife is a teacher and uses  
the computer a lot. We have  
two kids in high school and  
they use the computer a lot.  
Having VIBRANT has improved  
things immensely."*

**B. Lawrence,  
Fiber to the Premise  
Subscriber**

*"I'm a real estate agent and we have clients who always ask about what internet services are available in the rural area. So I signed up to get experience so I could tell clients about VIBRANT. We had DSL for about 20 years before that and were getting about 3-5 mbps. We cut the cable about 15 years ago, and were streaming Netflix. It was like having a library of movies to choose from. But downloading a game or other large file, it was like 'come back tomorrow.' And when Hulu came out, it was unwatchable. It would play for 3-4 minutes, then buffer, then play another few minutes, then buffer."*

*"Now, with VIBRANT, we can do whatever we want. The image quality on streaming even Netflix is significantly better."*

*"With multiple kids in the household, what we are experiencing now is much more on par with what we need for that many people and devices."*

**Tim Cook, Premier Real Estate Services, Fixed Wireless Subscriber**

*"It's been very good. It's an amazing change. Our church uses a lot of technology during services, Sunday School and Bible study and sometimes it would take 30 minutes to download something. Now it takes 30 seconds."*

*"During our Bible studies we stream international speakers and it works great. When I first came to the church, we had 1.5 mbps download and during service the teens would come into church and hook up to the WiFi, which would slow things way down. It was very frustrating. Now we don't have that issue."*

*"From the guys who did the trenching to the installer, everyone was great."*

**Pastor Brad Hopman, Fiber to the Premise Subscriber**

*"It's awesome!  
Before VIBRANT, we had trouble running one device.  
Now we are using 14 devices and haven't had a  
problem. I haven't even had to run a speed test."*

**J. Kuechle, Fixed Wireless Subscriber**

## Mark your calendars for the 2020 Annual Meeting April 6

### Meeker Cooperative Light and Power Association Notice of Annual Meeting

Please take notice that the Annual Meeting of the members of Meeker Cooperative Light and Power Association will be held at 7:30 p.m. Monday, April 6, 2020, at Meeker Cooperative, 1725 U.S. Hwy. 12 E., Suite 100, Litchfield, Minnesota, for the following purposes:

1. Reading of, and acting upon, the unapproved minutes of the 2019 annual meeting;
2. Receiving and acting upon reports of officers, directors and committees;
3. Electing directors of the Cooperative to fill offices of those whose terms expire on April 6, 2020;
4. Considering any unfinished business and taking up such new business as shall properly come before the meeting and acting on such matters as necessary for the best interest of the Association.

Brad Donnay, Secretary

TIRED OF SLOW INTERNET?  
DREAMIN' OF STREAMIN'?  
LOOKING FOR A CHOICE?

Rip-Snortin' FAST internet is here NOW!

**VIBRANT**  
Broadband  
Powered by Meeker Cooperative

SCREAMIN' STREAMIN' FIBER FAST

People are taking advantage of our high-speed internet right now. Schedule today and get on our preferred install list. We'd love to go over your options.  
Contact us and we will answer your questions or set up a time to meet.

NO PRESSURE, JUST OPTIONS!

TALK WITH US 320-693-3231 CHECK US OUT VIBRANTBB.NET

Meeker Cooperative Light and Power Association

**Sign up for  
the VIBRANT  
Broadband  
package you are  
looking for!**  
*See Sign-Up Form on Page 3!*



## A pool of transformers; Touchstone Energy; VIBRANT Broadband

### A Pool of transformers -

Following is a synopsis of a transformer failure at the Rosendale Substation last summer. I thought it would be interesting for you, the member-owners, to learn a little about the outage, the restoration process, what happened, and the general logistics and costs associated with its repair and replacement. On July 25, 2019, at 2:54 a.m., a transformer at the Rosendale Substation failed, resulting in an outage for close to 300 of the Co-op's members. This transformer receives power from the transmission line at 34,500 volts and reduces it down to 7,200 volts for distribution across the Co-op's lines to its members. The transformer is a 3,750 kilovolt-ampere (kVA) rated unit, meaning it is capable of supplying 3,750,000 watts of electricity at a time.

The "B" phase low voltage windings in the transformer failed and we just aren't sure why they did. The transformer was 40 years old, so maybe it was just time. Like anything electrical or mechanical, a piece of equipment, a part, connection or circuit can fail at any given time. Here's a little background on its failure, the maintenance that goes into those units, the timelines and some of the associated costs.

As part of Meeker Cooperative's regular maintenance program, we inspect our substations and equipment monthly. We test our substation transformers annually. Similar to a car engine, substation transformers have oil in them to help cool the electrical coils inside. One of the tests we do consists of obtaining an oil sample from the transformer and analyzing it for various levels of contaminants. Contaminants may be anything from gases to water to actual particles such as dirt or metal. The hope is that the testing will allow the Co-op to catch and correct potential problems before they create an outage and turn what may be a minor expense into a major one.

This particular transformer was tested as recently as March of 2019. Nothing out of the ordinary was noticed on the oil tests except for a small detection of acetylene gas in the oil. Acetylene may mean some sort of burning or arcing may have been or

was occurring within the transformer coils. The test results were reviewed by our engineering firm and it was determined that the amount of acetylene gas was insignificant at the moment but if it was elevated on the next cycle of testing we may have to take it out of service and examine it for a potential problem. Unfortunately, it didn't make it to the next test cycle. On that July night, one of the electrical windings within the transformer shorted out and the outage occurred.

The failed transformer was built in 1970. Today's cost for a new one is \$180,000. The timeframe to receive a new one is 14 to 16 months. The estimated cost to repair the current one was \$127,400. The repair timeframe is 10 to 12 months. So far, responding to the original outage, back-feeding all the lines out of the Rosendale sub from other substations, testing the transformer, removing it, getting in the temporary replacement, reconnecting it, and shipping the failed unit out, the line crew has about 125 man-hours into this failure. When the repaired transformer is done, pretty much all of these steps must be done in reverse. This is in addition to the steps outlined above.

Thankfully, the Co-op belongs to a group of co-ops that maintain a "pool" of transformers for such emergencies. Great River Energy — one of our wholesale power suppliers — warehouses this "pool" for the group. This demonstrates one of the Seven Cooperative Principles: "Cooperation Among Cooperatives".

This same transformer was taken out and sent in for repair in 2013 when a raccoon got into the substation and caused the transformer's low-side bushings to burn up. At that time, it was completely tested and refurbished to prevent anything that was suspected might cause future failure. Unfortunately, as this outage shows, that doesn't guarantee a future failure won't happen.

Occasionally I'm asked about insurance for equipment failures like this. There simply is no insurance to cover this cost. If the transformer would have failed due to vandalism, such as being shot up, then we could have asked for our insurance coverage

to kick in. Otherwise, this type of failure is an expense the Co-op must bear in its entirety.

### Touchstone Energy –

There are close to 900 electric co-ops in 47 states providing their 42 million member-owners with electricity across the United States. The co-ops' national association — National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) — developed the Touchstone Energy brand in 1998. This partnership of electric co-ops was a way to identify and promote all the electric co-ops across the entire country under one identifying umbrella. With the inclusion of the Touchstone Energy name and logo alongside each electric co-op's name and logo, anyone from anywhere in the country could easily identify an electric utility as a member-owned cooperative.

To be associated with Touchstone Energy, each co-op had to meet and maintain certain best practices and promote its membership in Touchstone Energy, along with paying annual dues. In return, Touchstone provided services such as website hosting, business strategy development, help in membership satisfaction surveys and the use of the Co-op Connection Card.

The Co-op Connection Card allowed members of the Cooperative to receive discounted services at participating local business and some national discounts as well. The most popular use of the card across the country was for the discounts on prescription drugs.

Meeker Co-op has been a member of Touchstone Energy off and on for the past couple of decades. At its December meeting, Meeker's Board of Directors approved the Co-op's 2020 budget and did not include any dues to continue membership in Touchstone Energy for 2020. After major discussion by both management and the board, we all felt that eliminating those dues from the budget and not partnering with Touchstone Energy for 2020 was a prudent decision.

Throughout 2020 we will continue to examine the benefits of Touchstone Energy and its various programs and weigh them against the cost of

membership and the value it brings to the Co-op's member-owners.

Although this means that no new Co-op Connections Cards will be issued for this year and that program will go away for now, rest assured our commitment to providing you with safe, reliable, competitively-priced energy, VIBRANT Broadband and other value-added services will not diminish. We will continue to do so with you, the member-owner, in mind to ensure excellent customer service in all we do.

### It just doesn't get any better than that –

As I've stated in this space before, VIBRANT Broadband continues to prove to be rock solid. The many responses we receive from those using the service is just a small testament to its RIP SNORTIN' FAST speed and all-around solid availability. Many members have told us about being totally frustrated time after time with other internet providers' offers and customer service that just doesn't meet what was promised. That simply is not VIBRANT Broadband.

The benefits for receiving VIBRANT Broadband Internet service from your electric Co-op go well beyond the VIBRANT service itself. It includes benefits such as receiving capital credits on any margins or profits that the Co-op generates, including those on VIBRANT. We are local. As the "crow flies" the Co-op's headquarters here in Litchfield is 20 miles from the furthest corner of our service territory. It is owned by those we serve and you elect fellow local members to govern the activities of the Co-op. Think about that for a minute; wouldn't it be nice if the headquarters and management of every business you dealt with was only twenty miles away and was governed by your neighbors who actually use the same services you are using? It just doesn't get any better than that.

### DID YOU KNOW –

*The Sahara Desert stretches further than the distance from California to New York.*

## Board of Directors

### Karen Becker, President — District 2

Eden Lake in Stearns; Harvey, Manannah in Meeker

### Kevin Issendorf, Vice President-District 4

Litchfield, Greenleaf in Meeker

### Brad Donnay, Secretary — District 3

Luxemburg, Maine Prairie, South Maine Prairie in Stearns; Forest Prairie in Meeker

### Karl Lundin, Treasurer — District 9

North Kingston, Kingston, Forest City in Meeker

### Paul Bugbee — District 1

Roseville, Irving in Kandiyohi; Paynesville in Stearns; Union Grove in Meeker

### Stephen Plaisance — District 5

Fairhaven in Stearns; Cokato, Southside, French Lake in Wright; Dassel in Meeker

### Mark Larson — District 6

Harrison, Kandiyohi, Genessee, Fahlun, Lake Elizabeth, E. Lake Lillian in Kandiyohi; Cosmos, Acton, Danielson, Swede Grove in Meeker; Brookfield, Boon Lake in Renville

### K. Bruce Krueger — District 7

Collinwood, Cedar Mills in Meeker; Stockholm in Wright; Acoma, Hutchinson in McLeod

### Larry Huhn — District 8

Darwin, Ellsworth in Meeker

### Chad Felstul — Attorney

## Meeker Pioneer

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CEO/General Manager: Tim Mergen  
Editor: Becky Sorenson

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### Office Hours:

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

### For 24-hour service call

320-693-3231

Fax: 320-693-2980

Web sites: [www.meeker.coop](http://www.meeker.coop)

[VIBRANTBB.net](http://VIBRANTBB.net)

Use the "Contact Us" form on the home page

### Meeker Cooperative Mission Statement

"To enhance the quality of life of the Cooperative's Members and Customers by providing safe, reliable, competitively priced energy and other value-added services, while practicing environmental stewardship."





## A perfect back-up heat source for homes with no ductwork

What does a homeowner do when their dual fuel primary electric heat is controlled and they don't have an automatic back-up? That's the question posed to the Co-op by Willard and Renee Wendorff of rural Hutchinson.

"When we were younger, we thought it was fun to cut our own wood and heat our home with the wood fireplace," Renee said. "But we're not young now and it's not fun anymore."

The Wendorffs live in the home that Willard's father built in 1929. It's been remodelled and added onto since then. When Willard and Renee moved in during 1971, the home had electric baseboard heat. In order to cut the cost of heating an older farm home, the electric heat was put on the Co-op's load control (or energy management) program. During periods of high electric use — and high electric cost to the

Co-op — the Co-op "controls" or turns off the primary electric heat. An automatic back-up heating system, such as a propane furnace, is supposed to come on to provide heat during the control. However, that would have meant installing a new whole-house furnace and ductwork, which was cost-prohibitive, especially since the Wendorffs talk about downsizing and moving.

When the Wendorffs visited the Co-op to get advice on heating systems that would work, a Steffes electric thermal storage (ETS) room heater was recommended to them. Like a Steffes ETS furnace that heats the entire home, a room heater will only heat the rooms that you use most frequently. The Wendorffs close off some of their home during the winter,

### Wendorffs room heater:

*Continued on page 6*

Renee and Willard Wendorff of rural Hutchinson love their new Steffes storage room heater, which allowed them an automatic back-up system to their electric baseboard heat during times of control, without having to install ductwork or a full-house furnace.

## TIZED OF SLOW INTERNET SERVICE?

### VIBRANT is the solution! Broadband

Powered by Meeker Cooperative

We offer several high-speed Internet connection packages. Stop **Suffering from Buffering** and start **Dreaming of Streaming!**

#### PACKAGES STARTING AT:

**ESSENTIAL PACKAGE**  
Up to 25Mbps download speed \$59.95/MO.

**STREAMING PACKAGE**  
Up to 50Mbps download speed \$69.95/MO.

**ULTRA PACKAGE**  
Up to 75Mbps download speed \$79.95/MO.

**EXTREME PACKAGE**  
Up to 100Mbps download speed \$89.95/MO.

Packages also available for Small Office/Home Office and Business. Contact us or visit our website for more information.

320-693-3231  
VIBRANTbb.net



CLIP IT,  
MAIL IT,  
AND WE'LL  
CONTACT  
YOU!

**YES!** I want to know more about **VIBRANT Broadband** high-speed internet for my home or business.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Property Address

City

Best Way To Contact Me  Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Check all that apply

Phone Number

By giving us your phone number or email, you agree to allow us to contact you. We NEVER give out your information to third parties. See our Privacy Policy on our website.  Text \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Number

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address

Best Time to Call:  Weekday AM  Weekday PM/Evening  Weekend  \_\_\_\_\_ Other

Mail to: Meeker Cooperative • 1725 US Hwy 12 E, Suite 100 • Litchfield, MN 55355



# Power Up! Four Steps to Charging Your EV at Home

By Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen

## Dear Pat and Brad:

*I'm seeing more information about new models of electric vehicles with longer ranges and better prices. Is it worth making the switch from gasoline to electric? And how would I charge the battery at home? – Damien*

**Dear Damien:** You're right! Electric vehicles (EVs) are getting more attention these days. Electricity as a vehicle fuel is typically one-half to one-third the cost of gas or diesel, and EV batteries now enable longer ranges. The upfront price of an EV is still higher than its gas-powered cousin, but the cost is coming down.

The Chevy Bolt, for example, has a range of up to 238 miles on a full charge and costs about \$36,000 before incentives. The number of models is also increasing, and we could even have an electric pickup truck option in the near future.

It's important to note you may have to pay upfront costs to charge your EV at home, but it depends on which charging option you select. Let's take a look at the important steps.

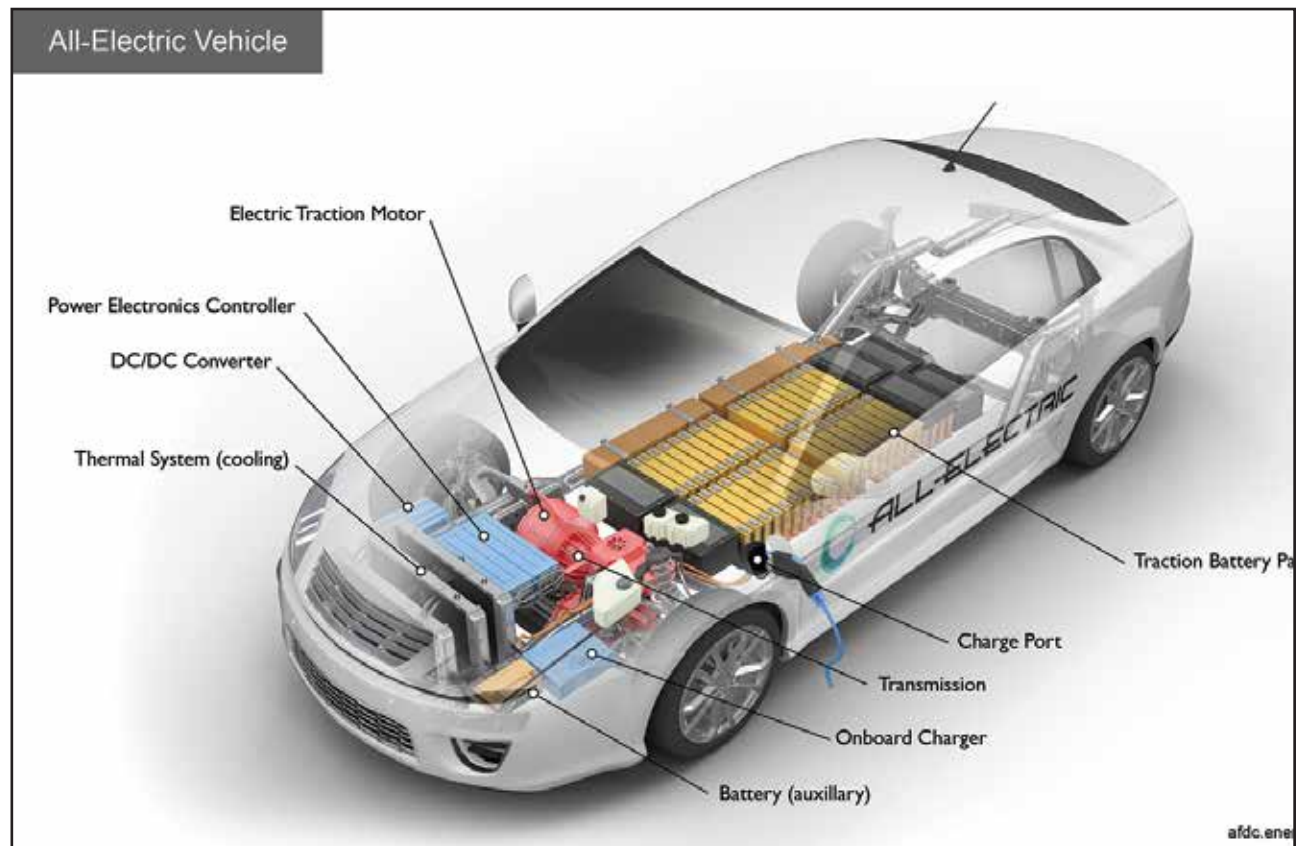
## Step one: Choose your EV.

There are two basic types of EVs: the all-electric vehicle, which is commonly referred to as an AEV or EV, and the plug-in hybrid electric vehicle, also known as the PHEV, which can run using an electric motor or a gas engine. Unlike the gas/electric hybrid that started with the Toyota Prius in 2000, where the battery assists the gasoline engine, yet the car is fueled solely by gasoline, the PHEV features a larger battery that fuels an electric motor, which can power the car independently. A PHEV can run solely on electricity for about 15 to 50 miles depending on the model. This electric-only range may be sufficient for running errands or for those with a shorter daily commute. Location #30-14-410

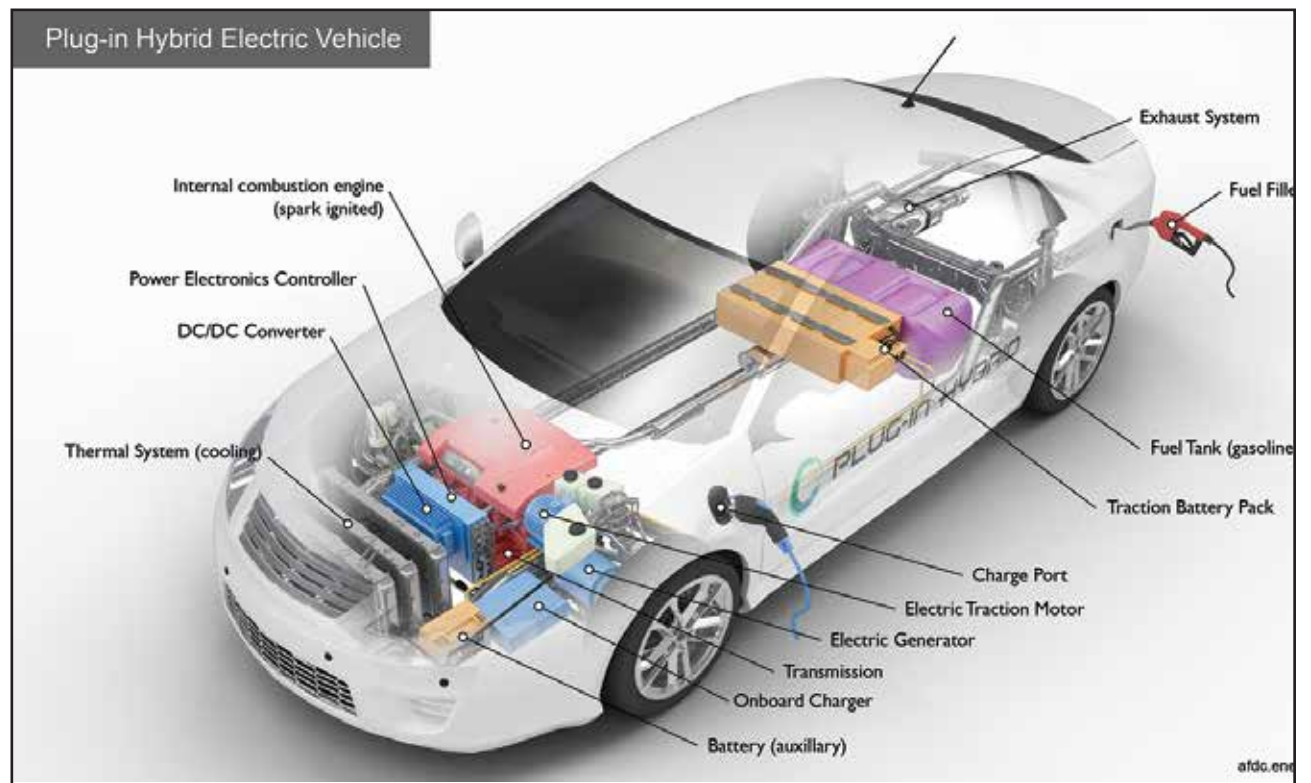
## Step 2: Select your charging level.

There are two levels of charging to consider for your home. A Level 1 charging unit is the most basic. It's usually included with the vehicle and plugs into a typical 120-volt outlet, so it is the easiest and cheapest charging solution.

A Level 2 charging unit is more powerful and needs to be purchased separately. It plugs into a 240-volt outlet, the type used for larger appliances (like a clothes dryer), which most of us don't have in our garages or outside our homes, so there's an additional cost to have the outlet installed.



**An all-electric vehicle (AEV or EV) can have lower overall costs of ownership than a gasoline-fueled vehicle due to its lower number of moving parts.**



**A plug-in hybrid electric vehicle (PHEV) has a gas engine that takes over if the large battery runs out of charge.**

## Step three: Know your needs.

Most EVs travel 3 to 4 miles per kilowatt-hour (kWh). Level 1 charging units distribute charge to the battery at 1 to 2 kWh, giving the battery roughly 3 to 8 miles range per hour of charging. So, if you drive your car 40 miles or less during the day and can charge it for 10 hours a night, this will probably be adequate. Level 1 charging makes the most sense for PHEVs and early EVs with smaller batteries and shorter ranges.

Level 2 units typically supply power levels from 6 to 12 kWh, depending on the amperage of the circuit and the power level the EV can accept. This

means the Level 2 chargers will provide between 18 and 48 miles of range per hour of charging.

## Step four: Count the costs.

A Level 1 charging unit comes with the car and will meet the needs of most PHEVs and early-model, short-range EVs. A Level 2 charging unit can cost \$500 to \$700, with installation between \$500 and \$2,700 depending on how far your electrical panel is from where you will be charging the EV.

Now that you know the basic options, you should talk to your electric co-op before making your



### Could Ameren's new transmission line make congestion worse?

The new Mark Twain transmission line will allow wind power from Iowa and Missouri to travel eastward. But it may come with unintended consequences. The U.S. transmission grid is facing the unprecedented challenge of a shifting generation portfolio stemming from massive additions of intermittent renewable energy.

However, there is a serious issue regarding transmission expansion plans: The process of building new generation happens much faster than building new transmission. This means that attempts to alleviate congestion or deliver power to a new area can sometimes have unintended consequences.

Ameren's new 100-mile, 345-kilovolt transmission line in the region overseen by the Midcontinent Independent System Operator, dubbed the Mark Twain Transmission Project, is the latest example of the challenges regional transmission organizations face when it comes to the shifting grid in the Midwest.

This project illustrates the difficulties of maintaining an efficient and reliable grid in the face of rapidly expanding intermittent wind and solar capacity. Regional transmission organizations operate competitive markets, and as new low-cost wind, solar, and gas generation continue to price out older and more expensive coal generation, flow patterns and congestion will continue to change.

-Greentech Media

### EIA: Wind + solar expected to add 61 GW over next two years

Wind and solar will make up the majority of new electric generation capacity in 2020 and 2021, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration's latest short-term energy outlook.

Over the next two years, EIA anticipates 61 GW of wind and solar additions to come online, replacing capacity leftover from rapid coal plant retirements. Coal-fired capacity is expected to decline by about 18.5 GW from last year through the end of 2020, while natural gas is expected to add 11.4 GW of capacity within that time.

Coal-fired generation is anticipated to drop from 24% of U.S. electricity generation in 2019 to 21% in 2020 and 2021, while natural gas generation is expected to remain stable at around 38% of U.S. electric power. Overall electric power generation is expected to drop 1%.

-Utility Dive



Photo Credit: Tesla

A Level 2 charging unit can provide about 250 miles of charge in 10 hours, making it a suitable charging solution.



This is a 240-volt outlet for a Level 2 charging unit.

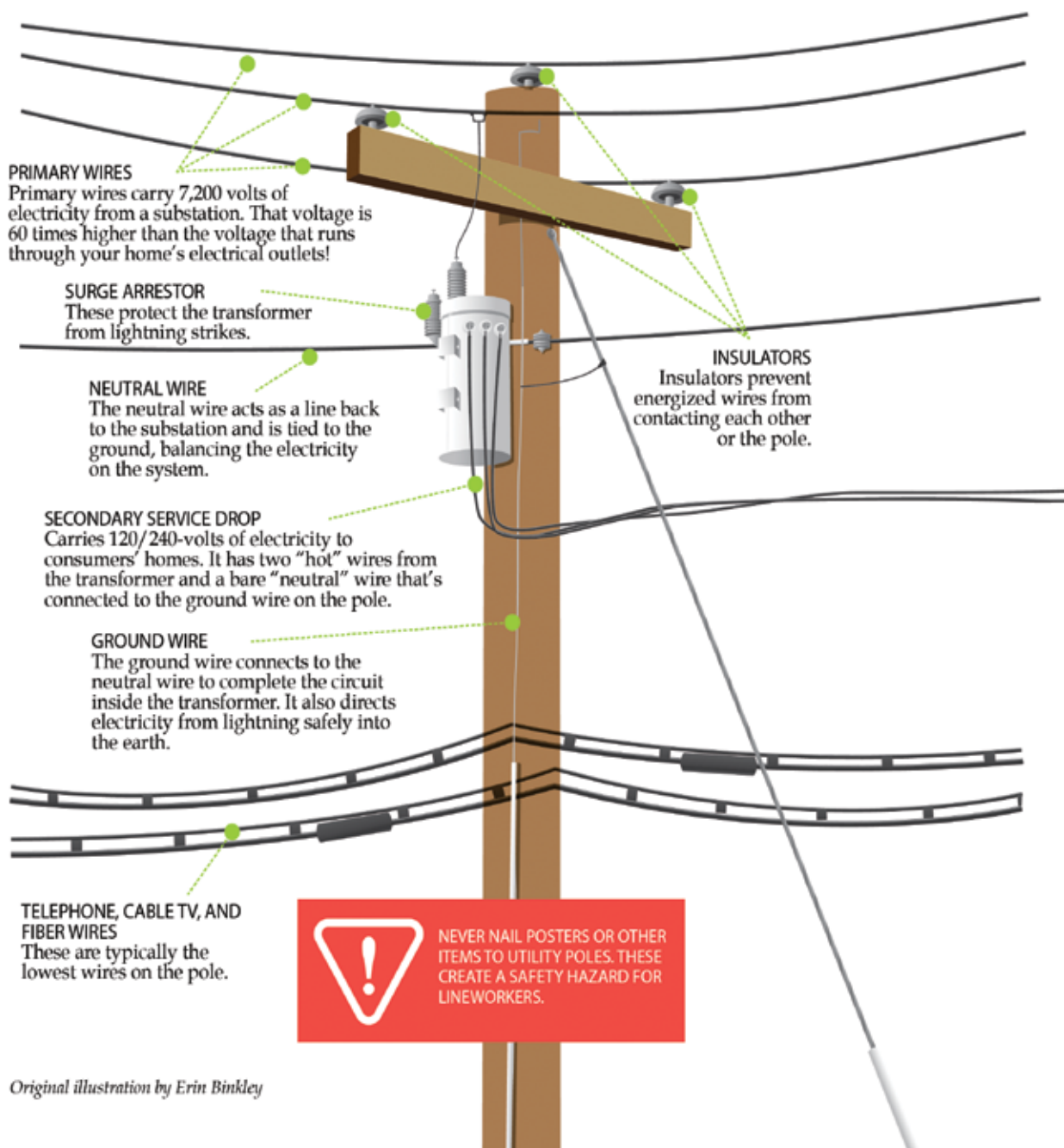
Photo Credit: Dennis Schroeder/NREL

EV charging decision. Meeker Co-op offers a \$500 rebate for members installing Level 2 chargers, as well as a special electric rate for members willing to schedule EV charging during non-peak energy hours. Give us a call to learn more at 320-693-3231!

This column was co-written by Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen of Collaborative Efficiency. For more information on home charging your electric vehicle, please visit: [www.collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips](http://www.collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips).

## WHAT'S ON THAT POLE?

This illustration shows the basic equipment found on electric utility poles. The equipment varies according to the location and the service they provide.



Original illustration by Erin Binkley

## Wendorffs' room heater: "I've never been this comfortable in this house before."

*Continued from Page 1*

so it made more sense to use a room heater than a furnace.

A Steffes storage furnace or room heater is specially designed with electric heating elements encased within high-density ceramic bricks. The great thing about these units is that they heat up during the night, when electricity is underutilized and cheaper and when there is no control. When the electric heat is controlled, the unit continues to deliver stored heat from the bricks, distributing the heat through a variable speed fan. The more the thermostat calls for heat, the faster the fan blows. Location #25-11-316

"I can't believe how nice it keeps the temperature," Renee said. "It's like a warm, wood fire without the wood fire smell." The Wendorffs set the thermostat to about 70 degrees, but it can be adjusted to any temperature and the radiant heat is comfortable and consistent.

"And we don't have to haul in wood or haul out ashes," Willard said.

While some members may be tempted to go off the load control program to avoid control, Willard doesn't see it that way. In exchange for agreeing to have their primary electric heat controlled, they enjoy considerable savings through a nearly half-price electric rate for their electric heat.

"This feels so nice, and the savings is good. I wouldn't even see any reason to go off the program."

The installation was done by calling Bonniwell Electric, who extended electric service into the room where the heater is located. Because the unit is hard-wired into the electrical system, it's not portable. However, it heats a greater area than the Wendorff's expected, due to the fan.


"Everyone, from Pat Hanson at Bonniwell Electric to Terry Heidecker from the Co-op, was just so professional," Willard said. "Pat said our heater was the third one he had installed that week."

"I am completely sold, Renee said. "I've been telling friends about this heater. I've never been this comfortable in this house before."

### Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Are you using your fireplace efficiently? Remember to turn down the thermostat when burning a fire, and close the damper when a fire is not burning.

*Source: energy.gov*



## Did You Know?

Electric cooperatives have retired \$17 billion to members since 1988 – \$1.2 billion in 2018 alone. Because electric co-ops operate at cost, any excess revenues (called margins) are allocated and retired to members in the form of capital credits.

*Source: National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation*



The infographic features two hands holding stacks of coins. One hand holds a stack of coins with a large green circle above it containing the text "\$17 BILLION SINCE 1988". The other hand holds a stack of coins with a smaller green circle above it containing the text "\$1.2 BILLION IN 2018".

## Caramelized Bacon Twists

**Rosalea Hoeft of Kimball** submitted this month's winning recipe for **Favorite Recipe using Bacon**. She will have \$10 credited to her account. Congratulations!

### Caramelized Bacon Twists

1 pound thin-sliced bacon  
1/2 cup packed brown sugar  
2 tsp. ground cinnamon

Cut each bacon strip in half widthwise. Combine the sugar and cinnamon and dip bacon strips into the mixture. Twist each strip and place on a foil-lined 15" x 10" x 1" baking pan. Bake at 350° for 15-20 minutes or until crisp. Serve. Or cool and freeze in an airtight container for up to 1 month.

Yield: 3 dozen.

To use frozen bacon: Bake at 350° for 6-8 minutes or until heated through.

Note: Don't use paper towels for cooling. It will stick to the paper.

**For March, submit your Favorite Cookie Recipe  
by February 28 to:**

Meeker Cooperative, ATTN: Becky Sorenson  
1725 US Hwy 12, Suite 100, Litchfield, MN 55355



# Meeker Cooperative's 85th Annual Meeting

## Get to Know the Director Candidates that were Elected

*Pursuant to Bylaw Article III, Sections 8 and 9, candidates for the board of directors must submit an Application for Director Form at least 120 days prior to the meeting. The Board of Directors will appoint a Qualifications and Election (Q & E) Committee for the purpose of qualifying the candidates for the Board of Directors. The Q & E Committee will "have the authority to place qualified candidates on the ballot for*

*election, and for any district in which there is only one candidate, waive the ballot process and declare the candidate elected." For this election, only one candidate filed in District 1, District 2 and in District 6. These candidates were deemed eligible and declared elected. Therefore no mail ballot will be sent to members in these districts. Their biographies are listed below.*

**District 1:** Roseville, Irving in Kandiyohi; Paynesville in Stearns; Union Grove in Meeker

### Paul Bugbee

29659 Queen Bee Lane  
Paynesville, MN 56362



**P**aul Bugbee has been a Co-op member his entire life. He owns and operates a resort on Lake Koronis near Paynesville. He has been a Co-op director for three years.

Strengths that Paul says he brings to the Board include a lifetime of civic and organizational board involvement, an analytical thought process, research skills and experience in the legislative and lobbying realms.

Board experiences come from his time as a board member and past president of the Minnesota Resort and Campground Association, Paynesville Historical Society and Koronis Lake Association.

Going forward, Paul believes that continued development of Broadband and other programs that benefit members is important, as well as development and installation of charging stations for electric vehicles, which would accommodate and encourage the use of electric vehicles.

Goals Paul is concerned about include continued efficiencies in energy costs, maintenance and service; expanded "good neighbor" activities in the communities we serve, partnering with others in the environmental and climate protection arenas, as well as keeping an eye on emerging trends in alternative energy to keep wholesale energy costs down for our members.

Although we need to honor our fossil fuel contracts, Paul is passionate about keeping an open mind to renewable energy and seeking answers to better utilize those resources through technology and innovation.

There are some challenges that Paul believes are ahead for the Co-op, including the prospect of rising energy costs, environmental mandates, operating expenses, available resources and transmission expenses.

He would like to see a greater measure of energy efficiency and conservation to preserve energy resources.

**District 2:** Eden Lake in Stearns; Harvey, Manannah in Meeker

### Karen Becker

38600 Mn. Hwy. 22 So.  
Eden Valley, MN 55329



**K**aren Becker, the current Chair of the Board, has been a Co-op member for 32 years and a Board member for 9 years. She and her husband are self-employed as dairy farmers.

Karen's strengths she believes she brings to the Board include a willingness to listen to all viewpoints, to look at all sides of a discussion and project, and a diverse background in dairy and construction.

She also has leadership experience as Guild chair, group leader and chair of Assumption Church; the current vice chair of the Peanut Butter & Milk Festival, past chair of Hands of Friendship; and past officer with Heritage Quilters.

As a business woman, Karen is concerned with the cost of services to the member with regard to renewable energy technology and affordable electricity should be the priority goal of the Cooperative.

Karen believes the VIBRANT Broadband project is very valuable for the member and that the Co-op should continue to provide that service. She would like to see the Co-op look into renewable energy initiatives to see how they might play a part in keeping costs affordable, but would like to see the Co-op continue to use coal resources as a solid, reliable base load, while continuing to make it cleaner.

Karen would like the Co-op to consider revising the Gen-Set program, which involves businesses such as farms that run generators during periods of control, to evaluate costs and control periods.

The largest concern facing Meeker Cooperative today is, in Karen's view, the cost of producing energy, the increase in members generating their own electricity through alternative and renewable energy sources, and receiving reliable power from East River and Great River Energy, two of our sources for wholesale power.

**District 6:** Harrison, Kaniyohi, Genessee, Fahlun, Lk. Elizabeth, E. Lk. Lillian in Kandiyohi; Cosmos, Acton, Danielson, Swede Grove in Meeker; Brookfield, Boon Lk. in Renville

### Mark Larson

9217 195th St. SE  
Atwater, MN 56209



**M**ark Larson has been a Co-op member for 36 years and a Director for 24 years. He is self-employed in ag production.

Mark is a past Meeker Co-op liaison to the East River Cooperative Electric Board of Directors, having served in that capacity for two years.

As a Board member, he believes he offers a lot of experience, both as a Board member, and in business. He is willing to listen to members' concerns and bring them to the Board.

Mark would like to see the Cooperative continue to provide reliable, competitively priced electricity to its members, while also continuing to provide VIBRANT Broadband service. He would like to see VIBRANT be a success and continue to provide the excellent speeds and service it currently provides.

Concerns that the Co-op will likely address include the increasing use of renewable energy that will mandate more transmission lines; the continued success of the VIBRANT Broadband service, members generating their own electricity and third-party sales.

**NOTE: When Matt Woetzel retired from the District 5 seat, the Board appointed Stephen Plaisance to fill that seat until the 2020 election. There are two candidates running for the District 5 seat. Members in that District will receive a mail ballot in March. The biographies of the candidates will be included in the March Pioneer.**

## EV Market Growth

Electric vehicles (EVs) accounted for just 2% of the 2018 vehicle market, but EV sales increased by 75% from 2017 to 2018 — a significant jump.

Source: Alliance of Auto Manufacturers



**Pioneer Ads** — Free want ad service for members. Please limit your ad to nine words, one word per line. One phone number please. Use the coupon below or pick one up in our office. Ads will be printed for one month only. Submit again for addtl. months. Three ads per member per month limit. Include your name/address, which will be used for identification purposes. Ads received by **Feb. 28** will be included in the March issue.

### Please run this ad in the next Pioneer

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Remember to limit your ad to nine words!

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_

4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_

7 \_\_\_\_\_ 8 \_\_\_\_\_ 9 \_\_\_\_\_

#### Please check ad category

- For Sale, Misc.
- Agricultural
- Automotive
- Wanted
- Giveaway
- Service
- For Rent

Clip and Send to: Meeker Cooperative, 1725 US Hwy. 12, Suite 100, Litchfield, MN 55355 Attn: Becky Sorenson or email rsorenson@meeker.coop

#### For Sale - Miscellaneous

- Fish hse. Exc. cond., clean, has car tires. \$2,500. 612-702-0363.
- Caloric elec. stove. Clean, missing knobs. \$75. 320-583-9561.
- Otter port. Fish hse. Sled. \$125/obo. 320-693-2277.
- Coach purse. Buckskin color, like new. 320-626-3148.
- Coleman 1850 watt generator, runs good. \$200. 320-905-6597.
- Johnson wood stove, great for shop. \$250. 320-236-4334.

- New Bassette crib/mattress, changing dresser. \$225. 320-693-7197.
- Estate 825 snowblower, 2-stage, elec. start, tire chains, gd. cond. \$225. 320-453-8963.
- Lawn tractor, Cub Cadet 50-in deck, older roto. Snowthrower. \$800. 320-292-6628.
- Dorm size refrig., like new. \$50/obo. 320-693-2529.
- 12-gun pine gun cabinet, 3'W x 6'H. Nice. Remington locks. \$175. 320-275-2493.

- Craftsman 21" snowthrower, single stage, elec. start, exc. cond. \$200. 320-699-0082.
- Toro snowblower 28", new, must see, elec. start. \$300 off. 320-275-2493.
- 2009 Crownline boat/trailer, mint. \$15,500. Lift 96 x 96, \$1,500. 218-841-4330.
- Ladies Baffin snowboots, size 10, worn twice. 320-626-3148.
- Toro 8" weed whip, like new. 320-626-3148.

- 2005 Arctic Cat ATV w/plow. Runs great, low miles. \$2,500/obo. 320-693-8136.
- 2-seater Cat Cutter. \$200/obo. 320-693-8136.
- 3 parcels of productive land, 98 acres total. 320-296-6829.
- Sorel Sub-Zero felt insulated boots, sz. 12, lk. new. \$45. 320-221-2487.
- Toro 2000 snowblower, 4.5hp, runs good. \$75. 320-221-5671.
- Leather holster, Western style, cowboy fast-draw. 320-221-2234.
- Antique fireplace log holder, best offer. 952-938-8269.
- Location #12-36-303
- 2 metal 4-drawer file cabts., includes file folders. \$10/ea. 320-583-8938.
- Snow blade for 2003 Polaris ATV, 5 ft. manual lift. \$200. 612-868-6835

#### For Sale - Automotive

- 2002 Mitsubishi Diamaste; 2000 Cadillac DeVille. Your choice: \$3,750. Paynesville. 320-276-8575.

#### For Sale - Agricultural

- Mitsubishi FG20 forklift, propane, side-shift, 2 extra tanks. \$8,750. 320-857-2886.
- J.D. 7000 6-row corn planter, corn/bean cups & monitor. 320-453-6122.
- Fencing wire, 1/2-roll, bucket plastic fencing clips. Make offer. 320-293-5435.
- Used tractor tire, Goodyear 11-36, gd. cond. \$100. 320-275-3602.
- 2004 JD Bauer built 24-row 22" planter, starter, insecticide. 320-583-5324.

#### Wanted

- Ice fishing spears, old or new. 651-323-8337.
- Location #17-23-201

#### Services

- Someone with sewing machine to do patching and seam work. 320-380-4884.
- Welding fabrication; stainless, alum., shop on-site. 320-290-5950.
- Plumbing/htg., bath/kitchen remodels, in-floor heat, Mastercraft mech. 320-292-9483.
- 2-BR apt., no smoking, no dogs. \$769/mo. 320-503-9561.
- 3-BR apt., no dogs, no smoking. \$1,100/mo. 320-503-9561.
- Resid./Comm. Painting, professional, insured, 30+ yrs. exp. 763-258-3398.
- A & F Painting, restoration. We do it all, int./ext. Insured. 763-200-3970.

#### Find your location number

Four location numbers have been hidden within this **Pioneer**. If you find your number and claim it by calling Meeker Cooperative by February 28, you will have \$10 credited to your account! If you find your number and your information is correct in our system, you'll receive a bill credit equal to one month's output from a Member Solar panel. Jerald Ball of Lester Prairie found his location number and will have a credit on his electric bill. Good luck!

