

# PIONEER



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Safety this Spring



The Pioneer Newsletter is the official Cooperative publication.  
Meeker Energy is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

## HEARTLAND SECURITY: LOCAL PROTECTION, BACKED BY COOPERATIVE VALUES

*For Meeker Energy members, safety has always been part of the cooperative story. It shows up in the work crews do to keep power flowing, in the education shared with members, and in the way the Cooperative continues to look for services that support the homes, farms, businesses, and families it serves.*

That commitment is also part of Meeker Energy's connection with Heartland Security.

Heartland Security is owned by a group of electric cooperatives, including Meeker Energy. As one of Heartland Security's cooperative owners, Meeker Energy helps

connect members with security solutions that reflect the same values members expect from their Cooperative: long-term value, dependable service, reliable equipment, and competitive pricing. Through Meeker Energy's association with Heartland Security and the reliable internet service available through Vibrant Broadband, members have access to security solutions designed to fit the way they live and work.

For local sales representative Nate Ellis, that Cooperative connection matters.

*Continued on page 2.*

# HEARTLAND SECURITY CONTINUED...

“Heartland Security has a commitment to deliver long-term value through exceptional service, superior and reliable equipment, and competitive pricing,” Nate said.

Nate serves members and customers throughout the Meeker Energy service territory, helping them think through their security needs and choose systems that fit their homes, properties, and lifestyles. For homeowners, that may mean keeping their family safe while they are home and having the ability to monitor their house while they are away. For farms, it may include monitoring livestock, securing outbuildings with expensive equipment, and protecting both family and property. For businesses, it can mean securing the building after hours, using cameras to reduce liability and loss, monitoring employees and customers, or adding access control for controlled entry during the day.

In rural areas, security often looks different than it does in town. A property may have distant neighbors, multiple buildings, livestock, long driveways, valuable equipment, or family members who are away for part of the day. Farms and rural homes often need protection that reaches beyond the front door.

According to Nate, those differences are a major reason many rural members begin exploring security options.

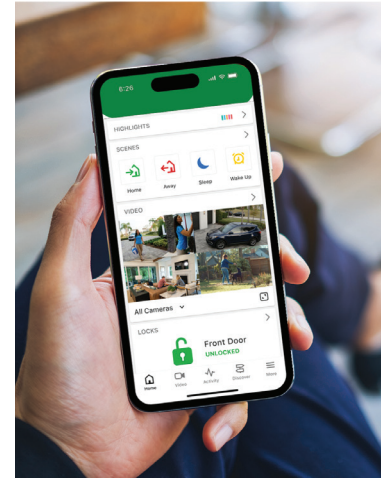
“People may feel the need for security solutions more in rural areas because of distant neighbors, livestock, large properties, and outbuildings,” Nate said.

That is why Heartland Security takes a customized approach. Rather than offering a one-size-fits-all package, Nate works with each customer to understand what they want to protect, how they use their space, and what level of monitoring or notification would be most helpful.

For many customers, the biggest benefit is not just the equipment itself. It is the peace of mind that comes from knowing they have another layer of protection in place.

Today’s security systems can do much more than detect a break-in. Heartland Security offers options that can support peace of mind, home automation, and environmental monitoring. 10-14-101 Sensors can help alert homeowners to what is happening inside the home, while automation features can add convenience and control. Members may also want to check with their homeowners insurance provider to see if a security system could qualify them for potential discounts.

“The peace of mind, home automation, and environmental monitoring that a security system can offer is something more people should understand,” Nate said. “We have many devices that can do more than just burglary.”



*Heartland Security offers more than burglary protection. From cameras, door sensors, and access control to farm and business security, environmental monitoring, home automation, and medical alert options, they provide flexible security solutions for homes, farms, and businesses.*

For Meeker Energy, its ownership connection with Heartland Security is a natural extension of cooperative values. Both organizations are focused on service, reliability, safety, and helping local people protect what matters most.

Members who are interested in learning more can contact Heartland Security to discuss options for their home, farm, business, or family.

“Give me a call at 888-264-6380 to discuss what your needs are,” Nate said. “If you’d like, we can schedule an appointment for me to give you a free custom quote at your home or business.”

At the end of the day, security is not just about alarms, cameras, or equipment. It is about feeling confident that the people and places you care about are protected by a team that understands your community.

## MEMBER APPRECIATION SPECIAL

***Planning to attend Meeker Energy’s Member Appreciation on May 20? Be sure to stop by and connect with Heartland Security while you are there. Heartland Security will be offering attendees a \$200 coupon toward the purchase of a new security system.***

It is a great opportunity to learn more about customized security options for your home, farm, business, or family while taking advantage of a special offer available to attendees.

*Promotions cannot be combined.*



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## KEEPING EVERY RELIABLE ENERGY OPTION ON THE TABLE

*A practical look at reliability, affordability, and why future energy planning requires more options.*

Whether it is the coldest day of winter or a hot stretch in the middle of summer, Meeker Energy members count on electricity to be there when they need it. That reliability matters in every part of daily life, from heating homes and powering farms to running businesses, schools, and essential services across our communities.

That is why the electric industry is asking Minnesota to take a fresh look at one of the tools it has taken off the table for decades: new nuclear energy development.

Minnesota has had a moratorium on new nuclear energy projects for many years. In simple terms, that means the state has limited its ability to even explore whether nuclear energy could help meet future electric needs. Today, many in the industry believe it is time to revisit that restriction, not because a new plant is being proposed tomorrow, but because the demands on our electric system are changing.

### WHY NOW?

Across the country, electricity demand is growing. More homes, businesses, equipment, and vehicles are relying on electricity than ever before. At the same time, the industry is working to reduce emissions and build a cleaner energy future.

That is an important goal, but it also creates a challenge. As older power plants retire, we still need dependable sources of electricity that can replace them and keep the lights on in every season. It is not enough to simply add more power. We also need the right mix of power sources to support reliability around the clock.

That is one of the main reasons industry leaders want Minnesota to lift the moratorium. It would allow the state to study one more option as it plans for the future.

### RELIABILITY STILL HAS TO COME FIRST

Wind and solar are part of today's energy mix, and they will continue to play a role. But they are also weather dependent. They do not always produce electricity exactly when demand is highest.

Nuclear energy is different. It provides steady, around-the-clock power, regardless of whether the wind is blowing or the sun is shining. That kind of consistency matters in a state like Minnesota, where extreme temperatures can put heavy pressure on the grid.

For the electric industry, that is a big part of the conversation. As more intermittent resources are added to the system,

there is growing interest in carbon-free generation that can run day and night. Nuclear is one of the few resources that can offer both.

### THE CONVERSATION HAS CHANGED

Another reason this issue is getting new attention is that nuclear technology has changed over time. Advanced designs, including small modular reactors, are being developed with the goal of offering more flexibility and a better fit for future energy needs.

Lifting the moratorium would not commit Minnesota to a project. It would not mean a plant gets built immediately. It would simply allow state leaders, utilities, cooperatives, and communities to have meaningful conversations about whether newer nuclear technologies are a viable solution for Minnesota's future energy strategy.

That distinction matters. This is not about rushing into one answer. It is about making sure Minnesota is not ruling out an option before the conversation even begins.

### A PRACTICAL DISCUSSION FOR THE FUTURE

Of course, questions about nuclear energy are fair. Safety, cost, spent fuel, and long-term feasibility all deserve careful consideration. Those are exactly the kinds of questions that should be part of an open and informed discussion.

From an industry standpoint, lifting the moratorium is about keeping options open. No single energy source will meet all of Minnesota's future needs on its own. It will take a combination of resources, technologies, and careful planning to deliver the reliability and affordability members expect.

At Meeker Energy, that is how we look at it. Our responsibility is to think ahead on behalf of the members and communities we serve. As Minnesota plans for the future, it makes sense to evaluate every practical option that could help provide reliable, affordable, and responsible power.

Lifting the nuclear moratorium would not answer every question overnight. But it would allow Minnesota to ask the right ones. And when it comes to planning for the future of electric service, that is a responsible place to start.

*Dedicated to keeping the lights on and the data flowing,*

**Luke Johnson**  
CEO, Meeker Energy

# VOTE ON PROPOSED CHANGES TO MEEKER ENERGY'S ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION & BYLAWS

*As member-owners of Meeker Energy, you play an important role in shaping the future of our Cooperative. You should have recently received a packet of information containing a ballot and proposed updates to Meeker Energy's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws. I encourage every member to take time to review the materials and participate in this important vote.*

Meeker Energy has been serving members since the 1930s. Over the decades, our Cooperative has continued to grow and change alongside the communities we serve. While our commitment to reliable service and local ownership has remained the same, the world around us has changed in many ways. The electric industry has evolved, technology has advanced, and member needs and expectations have shifted. Because of that, the Board believes this is the right time to review and update the governing documents that help guide how Meeker Energy operates.

## WHY THESE DOCUMENTS MATTER

Meeker Energy's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws help define how the Cooperative is structured and governed. They outline how decisions are made, how elections are conducted, and how members participate in Meeker Energy.

These documents were last updated in 2013. Over the past several months, the Board of Directors, staff leadership, and internal legal counsel have completed a careful, line-by-line review to make sure the documents remain clear, current, and aligned with today's laws, cooperative practices, and services.

## WHAT MEMBERS CAN EXPECT TO SEE

At a high level, the proposed changes are intended to:

- **Modernize and clarify governance documents.** Update language and structure to align with current Minnesota law and cooperative best practices, fully replacing outdated provisions.
- **Clarify member rights and responsibilities.** Provide clearer definitions around membership, voting, service eligibility, and expectations related to easements, safety, and cooperative services.
- **Expand flexible participation options.** Formalize the use of mail and electronic voting, electronic notices, and modern meeting practices to make participation more accessible.
- **Strengthen board standards and transparency.** Update director qualifications, election procedures, officer terms, and campaign disclosure requirements to support strong governance and accountability.
- **Reflect today's Cooperative services.** Explicitly recognize broadband and other services alongside electric service, clarifying how nonmember patrons participate financially but not in governance.

- **Provide clearer financial and director campaign finance dispute-resolution protections.** Clarify capital credit handling, strengthen protections for Cooperative assets, and establish arbitration as the primary method for resolving director campaign financing disputes.

While the changes are detailed, the overall goal is straightforward: to make sure these important documents continue to serve both the Cooperative and its members well into the future.

## WHEN AND HOW TO VOTE

Voting will take place by mail ballot, and you should have already received your packet in the mail.

Your ballot packet includes:

- Your ballot
- Voting instructions
- A redlined version of the proposed revisions
- Return envelopes

Members can also review the proposed updates through SmartHub. Copies may also be requested from the Cooperative office with membership verification.

After reviewing the materials, please mark your vote and return your ballot in the envelope provided to Pemberton Law. We want to take a moment to apologize that the pieces for you to return do not fit together quite as they should. The printer has acknowledged they made some errors in the size of the return envelope and the spacing of the return mailing address. Please take a moment to cut or fold the form so that the mailing address to Pemberton clearly shows in the envelope's window.

## YOUR VOTE MATTERS

While the Board has approved these proposed updates, they cannot take effect unless they are approved by a majority of members who participate in the vote.

This is an important opportunity to take part in the governance of your Cooperative. Your participation helps ensure Meeker Energy's guiding documents remain strong, relevant, and responsive to the needs of the membership.

If you have questions or need help accessing the documents, please contact us at [articles-bylaws@meeker.coop](mailto:articles-bylaws@meeker.coop). Thank you for your continued support, your engagement, and your membership in Meeker Energy.

*Sincerely,*  
**Brad Donnay**  
Board President  
Meeker Energy

# GET YOUR COOLING SYSTEM SUMMER READY



**Before the hottest days of summer arrive, make sure your air conditioner or air-source heat pump is ready to work efficiently. A seasonal tune-up can help improve comfort, manage energy use, and reduce the risk of unexpected breakdowns.**

A licensed HVAC contractor will inspect and service your system, which may include:

- Cleaning the condenser coil
- Testing system controls
- Checking refrigerant charge
- Clearing drain lines
- Inspecting or replacing filters

Meeker Energy offers a \$25 bill credit to members that have a tune-up on their A/C unit or air-source heat pump by a licensed HVAC contractor. The unit must be five years or older and be in working condition. Rebate funds are limited and administered on a first-come, first-served basis. Do not wait for the first hot stretch to find out your system is not ready. Contact your HVAC contractor to schedule your tune-up today.

Once the tune-up is complete, apply for the \$25 bill credit online at [www.meeker.coop/tune-up-credit-form/](http://www.meeker.coop/tune-up-credit-form/) or call the energy services department at Meeker Energy.

## THINKING ABOUT A NEW COOLING SYSTEM?

Check out our rebates for a new air-source heat pump! It's a smart, energy-efficient upgrade that will save you money year-round. Learn more about available incentives at [meeker.coop/programs](http://meeker.coop/programs)

## CONGRATULATIONS, DAN KOHLS!



**Meeker Energy is pleased to announce that Dan Kohls has been selected to receive a 2026 Meeker Cooperative Electric Trust Non-Traditional Scholarship.**

This \$1,000 scholarship supports adult learners who are continuing their education, building new skills, or pursuing additional training. Dan is pursuing a Graduate Certificate of Completion in Industrial and Organizational Psychology through Grand Canyon University, with plans to continue toward a master's degree in the same field.

Dan hopes to use this training to support leadership development, team growth, professional development, and organizational behavior work.



**WILLIE WIREDHAND'S ELECTRICITY FUN FACT**

Lightning helps create natural fertilizer. During spring storms, lightning does more than light up the sky. Its electrical energy helps convert nitrogen in the air into forms plants can use. Rain then carries those compounds into the soil, giving plants a small natural boost during the growing season.

## MEMBER NEWS

### OFFICES CLOSED

Meeker Energy offices will be closed on Monday, May 25 in observance of Memorial Day.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### 2026 Energy Tour

Reserve your seat for the 2026 Energy Tour, June 10–12. This three-day motor-coach trip includes tours of Freedom Mine and Antelope Valley Station, along with stops at popular North Dakota historical sites. Cost is \$200 per person and includes transportation, lodging, most meals, tours, and a special dinner.



Scan the QR code or visit [www.meeker.coop/tour26](http://www.meeker.coop/tour26) to learn more and sign up!

Space is limited. To register or ask questions call Meeker Energy at 320-693-3231.

## MAY IS ELECTRIC SAFETY MONTH: SPRING SAFETY STARTS BEFORE THE WORK BEGINS



*Spring has a way of making every project feel urgent. The snow melts, the ground softens, the days get longer, and suddenly there is a long list of things to fix, trim, plant, clean, move, and build.*

That makes May a timely reminder for Electric Safety Month. Many electrical accidents do not happen because people are careless. They happen because someone is focused on the task in front of them and does not notice the electrical hazard nearby.

This spring, Meeker Energy encourages members to pause before the project begins and look at their surroundings with fresh eyes.

### THINK ABOUT WHERE ELECTRICITY IS, NOT JUST WHERE YOU ARE WORKING

Power lines, underground utilities, outdoor outlets, transformers, and electric service equipment can become part of a project quickly, especially when tools, ladders, equipment, water, or trees are involved.

Before starting, ask:

- Where are the overhead power lines?
- Could a ladder, pole saw, antenna, irrigation pipe, grain auger, dump trailer, or piece of equipment come too close?
- Are there underground utilities where I plan to dig?
- Is there outdoor electrical equipment that could be damaged by landscaping, grading, fencing, or construction?
- Has water, weather, or wildlife damaged any cords, outlets, covers, or wiring?

Taking a few minutes to answer these questions can prevent a dangerous situation.

### GIVE OVERHEAD LINES MORE SPACE THAN YOU THINK THEY NEED

Spring projects often involve height. Tree trimming, roof work, gutter cleaning, siding repairs, farm work, and moving equipment can all bring people or objects closer to power lines.

Remember:

- Electricity can move through ladders, tools, branches, and equipment.
- A tree limb can shift unexpectedly when cut.
- Tall equipment should be lowered before moving.
- Conditions can change quickly when wind, uneven ground, or wet surfaces are involved.

The safest plan is to keep people, tools, and equipment well away from power lines. If work needs to happen near electric lines, contact Meeker Energy before you begin.

### RESPECT WATER AS A WARNING SIGN

Spring moisture adds another layer of risk. Melting snow, heavy rain, sump pump issues, and wet basements can all bring water closer to electrical systems.

Be cautious around:

- Wet outlets or extension cords
- Flooded basements or garages
- Outdoor tools used in damp conditions
- Pumps, cords, or appliances sitting near water
- Breakers that trip repeatedly

Never stand in water while using electrical tools or equipment. If water has reached outlets, cords, appliances, or electrical panels, stay away and call a qualified electrician.

### MAKE SAFETY PART OF THE PROJECT PLAN

The best time to think about electrical safety is before the ladder is up, before the shovel is in the ground, and before the equipment is moving.

This spring, slow down long enough to look up, look down, and look around. 10-23-303 A safer project starts with noticing what could go wrong before it does.



Four location numbers are hidden within this Pioneer. If you find your number and claim it by calling Meeker Energy before May 31, you will have \$10 credit to your account. When you call and verify your information is correct in our system, you will also receive an additional bill credit equal to one month's output from a Member Solar Panel.

# DO NOT LET DIGGING BECOME GUESSWORK

*Spring is digging season, and many projects seem small enough to do without calling first. But underground utilities can be closer to the surface than expected, and even simple projects can create risk.*

Before you plant, build, install, or improve, call 811 to have underground utility lines marked.

## CALL 811 BEFORE:

- Planting trees or larger shrubs
- Installing fences, decks, mailboxes, or signs
- Adding landscaping borders
- Setting posts for gates or outbuildings
- Installing drainage, irrigation, or outdoor lighting

Calling 811 is free, easy, and helps protect your family, your property, your neighborhood, and the crews who may need to work in the area later.



## GROWING SEASON REMINDERS: WHY RIGHT-OF-WAYS MATTER

*Spring brings new growth across Meeker Energy's service territory. Trees leaf out, brush fills in, and many members begin outdoor projects around their homes, farms, and businesses. It is also an important time to think about vegetation management.*

Maintaining clear rights-of-way helps keep electric service safe, reliable, and accessible. While tree trimming and brush clearing may not always be the most visible part of electric service, they play an important role in preventing outages and helping crews work safely.

### WHAT IS A RIGHT-OF-WAY?

A right-of-way is the area around power lines and electric equipment that must remain clear for safe operation, maintenance, and repair. 01-07-403 It gives line crews the space they need to inspect equipment, restore power, and make system improvements.

### WHY IT MATTERS

Trees and brush are common causes of power outages, especially during storms, high winds, heavy snow, and ice. Keeping rights-of-way clear helps:

- Reduce outages
- Improve safety for members, crews, and the public
- Limit storm damage
- Help crews restore power more quickly
- Protect poles, wires, transformers, and other equipment

### WHAT TO WATCH FOR THIS SPRING

Take a look around your property and notice where trees, brush, or landscaping may be growing near electric lines or equipment.

Pay attention to:

- Branches reaching toward overhead lines
- Trees growing beneath power lines
- Brush, tall grass, or vines near poles, guy wires, or equipment
- Landscaping, fences, or decorations blocking access to pad-mounted transformers

Even if vegetation is not touching a line today, it can become a problem as the season continues. Fast-growing trees, heavy foliage, and spring storms can change conditions quickly.

### PLAN BEFORE YOU PLANT

Before adding trees or shrubs, consider how large they will be when fully grown. Avoid planting tall-growing trees under or near overhead power lines, and keep shrubs, fences, and decorative landscaping away from transformers so crews can access them safely.

## CONTACT US

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# SPRING FARM SAFETY: GRAIN BINS, CLEARANCES, AND FIELDWORK



*Spring is a busy season on the farm. As plans come together for new grain bins, farm buildings, storage areas, equipment changes, and fieldwork, Meeker Energy reminds members to keep electrical safety in mind.*

Grain-handling and storage systems are important investments, but placement near overhead power lines can create serious safety risks. Portable augers, conveyors, elevators, scaffolds, and other tall equipment can come dangerously close to electric lines. 30-06-401 Because high-voltage power lines are not insulated, contact can result in severe injury or death.

Before installing any additional farm buildings or grain bins, please contact Meeker Energy. Our team can help review the location and identify clearance concerns before the project moves forward.

### GRAIN BIN SAFETY REMINDERS

- Maintain proper clearance between grain bins, equipment, and overhead power lines.
- Watch for power lines when moving augers, hoppers, scaffolds, or other tall equipment.
- Keep at least 10 feet of clearance when moving equipment near power lines.
- Never try to move an electric line yourself. Call Meeker Energy for assistance.
- Remember that landscaping or drainage changes can affect clearance heights over time.

National Electrical Safety Code guidelines require an 18-foot minimum vertical clearance from the highest filling point of the grain bin to nearby high-voltage wires and a 2.5 times height plus 22 feet from the highest point of the bin. Clearance requirements can also vary based on the height of the grain structure and the type of filling equipment used.

### PLANTING SEASON SAFETY

Planting season brings another layer of risk. Planters, sprayers, seed tenders, tillage equipment, and other large machinery can be tall, wide, and difficult to maneuver near overhead lines, poles, and guy wires.

As you head into the fields:

- Lower equipment before moving near power lines.
- Use a spotter when visibility is limited.
- Watch for poles, guy wires, and overhead lines near field entrances, driveways, and bin sites.
- Stay alert when GPS, auto-steer, dust, sun glare, or long hours affect awareness.
- If equipment contacts a power line, stay inside if it is safe to do so and call for help.

## MORE NEWS & CLASSIFIEDS ONLINE

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Keep up-to-date with your Cooperative in-between issues of the Pioneer and browse our classifieds online at:

[www.meeker.coop/news](http://www.meeker.coop/news).