

NORTHERN

L I G H T S April 2025

NATIONAL LINEWORKER APPRECIATION DAY APRIL 14, 2025



**Beltrami Electric
Cooperative Inc.**

® Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

On the earliest mornings and latest nights, in the coldest temperatures or on the hottest day, their work keeps reliable power flowing to every member. Our system depends on those willing to brave the storm and keep the lights on. We are grateful for those whose dedication and service is endless.

Thank a Beltrami Electric Cooperative lineworker:

- Adam Huot
- Amy Pillsbury
- Bruce Huderle
- Chase Todavich
- Chris Thronson
- Dustin Steigauf
- Eric Splichal
- Jared Vanasse
- Jerry Solheim
- Kasey Kampfer
- Landon Verbich
- Lee Pemberton
- Logan Mystic
- Matt Roberts
- Nick Zimmer
- Rich Harris
- Ron Komulainen
- Ryan Rogers
- Steve Lapos
- Tanner Turn
- Taylor Schmidt
- Travis Voelkner
- Trent Berglund
- Trevor Gwiazdon
- William Haman

Members can send words of appreciation for our lineworkers to marketing@beltramielectric.com.



THE **POWER** OF BASELOAD ENERGY

by Jared Echternach, *Beltrami Electric Cooperative president and CEO*

Did you know that electricity must be used the moment it's generated? That's right – electricity travels from the power plant, wind turbine or solar panel to your home in less than a second. It either gets used or keeps moving, because it physically doesn't have the patience to hang around until you need it.

On a small scale, batteries have been our way of overcoming this quirk of physics; you can allow electricity to fill a battery with its power to be deployed when it's needed. However, when it comes to power at a larger scale than smartphones or electric cars – say, the greater electric grid, for instance – batteries cannot yet keep up with the amount of electricity needed to power entire communities.

This is why baseload electricity is so important.

Baseload electricity comes from sources that operate continuously to meet regular power demand 24/7, like coal plants, natural gas plants, hydro plants and nuclear plants. Other sources, like wind turbines and solar panels, are more weather dependent. If it's nighttime or overcast, solar panels can't produce much power. If the wind also isn't blowing at that time, turbines also can't produce power. If a grid system doesn't have access to baseload power, electricity stops when the weather says so. Don't get me wrong – renewables are, and should be, part of our energy mix, and we should approach energy solutions with an all-technology-on-deck strategy.

As more baseload power plants are being retired from the grid, we are relying on more weather-dependent energy sources to meet a growing demand for electricity. Grid

operators and regulators are already sounding the alarm that a lack of stable baseload energy will make planning for future demand more difficult and will test the reliability of the electric grid sooner than we think. As a country built on reliable power, it's a test we cannot fail.

Eventually, we may have utility-scale battery storage that lasts for longer than four hours, as well as other technologies we need to further rely on weather-dependent energy resources. Until then, we must protect the baseload resources that keep our homes, businesses, schools, hospitals, farms and economy humming.

BASELOAD RESOURCES

— 24/7 —



NUCLEAR



NATURAL GAS



COAL

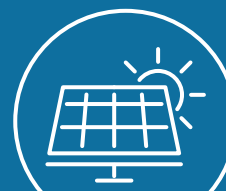


HYDRO

CANADIAN TARIFFS

Minnkota Power Cooperative, our power supplier, assures members that Canadian tariffs will not affect electric reliability, affordability or service. With all power generation based in North Dakota and no reliance on Canadian imports, we are well-insulated from market shifts. As part of the MISO regional grid, we have a diverse and stable energy supply. Any price fluctuations resulting from Canadian tariffs are expected to be minimal and well within normal market variations.

WEATHER DEPENDENT



SOLAR



WIND

First Rate Change in Seven Years

Beltrami Electric's board of directors has approved a rate adjustment, set to take effect with bills received in April. While we are proud to have kept rates stable for the past seven years, rising costs and an increase in wholesale power rates make this adjustment necessary.

Minnkota Power Cooperative, our wholesale power provider, will implement an 8% rate increase in April. Since wholesale power accounts for nearly 70% of our total costs, any change in these rates significantly impacts our operations. On average, members will see a rate increase of approximately 12.7%, though the actual impact will vary based on rate class and electricity use. When spread over

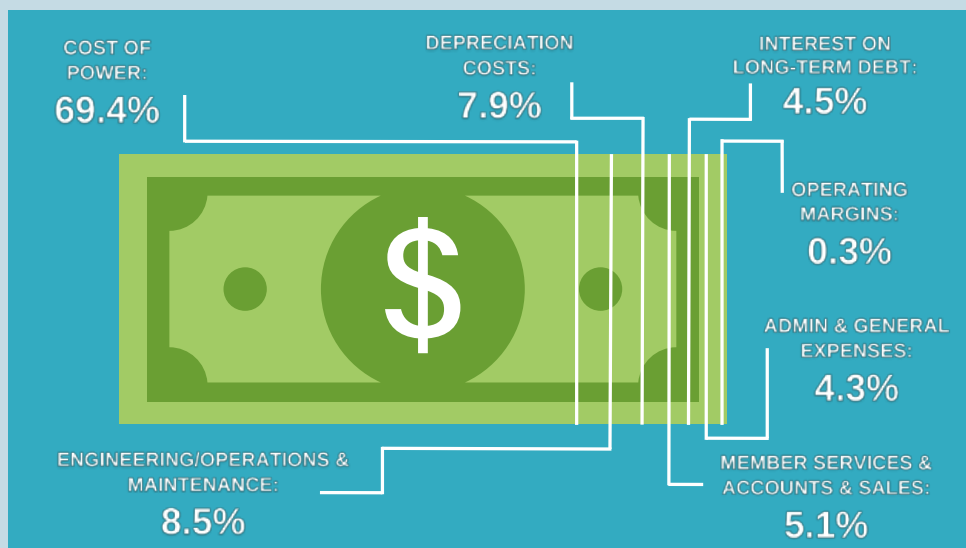
the past seven years, this equates to an annual increase of just 1.8% – a rate lower than inflation during the same period.

As a not-for-profit, member-owned cooperative, we are guided by service to our members rather than profit. We only raise rates when necessary to maintain the integrity of our operations and meet our obligations to lenders. We operate on very thin margins, as shown in the "Where does your dollar go?" graphic. For more details about the 2025 rate adjustment, visit beltramielectric.com/2025-rate-adjustment. We appreciate and value you, our members, as we continue working to provide safe, reliable and affordable electricity.

WHERE DOES YOUR DOLLAR GO?

It pays for a lot more than electricity.

As a cooperative, we answer to you – our member-owners – not investors. That's why we believe in transparency about how your electricity dollars are spent. Every dollar you pay for electricity is carefully allocated to maintain reliable service, improve infrastructure and support our members – all with oversight from our board of directors. At a time when costs are rising, we remain dedicated to maximizing the value of your investment.



BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Beltrami Electric Cooperative's board conducted its regular monthly meeting Friday, Feb. 28, 2025. A quorum of directors was in attendance.

The following reports were given at the meeting:

- President and CEO Echternach presented John Lund and Sue Kringen with their Director Gold education certificates.
- President and CEO Echternach and the board discussed recent safety successes and observations.
- Executive Director Dave Hengel presented an update on Greater Bemidji.
- President and CEO Echternach made his monthly report, including financials, residential sales, the Political Action Plan,

Blackduck Shade Store, key accounts, building maintenance, CFC update, rates and employee updates.

- Arlene Hogquist presented January's financial report.
- Arlene Hogquist presented the cooperative's Balanced Performance Scorecard.
- Rich Riewer and Lee Pemberton demonstrated the operation and value of TripSaver equipment.
- Directors and President and CEO Echternach discussed upcoming meetings and events.

The following actions were taken at the meeting:

- Approved the consent agenda.
- Approved a contribution to Greater Bemidji.
- Nominated Rick Coe as the Minnkota Power Cooperative director.
- Nominated Muri Nord as the Square Butte director.
- Appointed Sue Kringen, Kevin Geerdes and Craig Gaasvig to the Policy Committee.
- Approved the 2025 district meeting dates and locations:

- o District 1, Monday, June 16, at 6 p.m., Kelliher Community Center
- o District 5, Tuesday, June 17, at 6 p.m., Ten Lake Town Hall
- o District 8, Wednesday, June 18, at 6 p.m., Fern Town Hall
- Approved holding September's board meeting on Sept. 17, 2025.
- Approved director and President and CEO expenses.

The next board meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 23, 2025.

Rate Adjustment FAQs

Members will see the new 2025 rates on billing statements in April. More information can be found on our website at beltramielectric.com/2025-rate-adjustment, including a rate calculator that can help you to determine how the changes will affect your monthly billing.

Q. Why Is Beltrami Electric adjusting rates?

A. We've worked hard to keep rates flat for the past seven years. However, an independent cost-of-service study confirmed that an adjustment is necessary to maintain reliable service and financial stability. As a not-for-profit, member-owned cooperative, we only raise rates when absolutely needed.

Why now?

- 1. Rising costs** – The cost of wholesale power will increase by 8% in April. That, combined with the rising cost of materials, equipment and labor due to inflation, supply chain issues and higher interest rates have all contributed to a rate adjustment. Essential components like transformers, underground wire and even basic hardware have become significantly more expensive. Just like maintaining a road or a car, we must continually invest in our system to ensure safe, reliable power.
- 2. Grid changes** – The early retirement of traditional power plants and increased reliance on wind and solar energy have made electricity pricing more volatile. During peak demand times, we pay more for power. To account for these shifts, members will see a new demand charge, which better reflects the actual costs of providing electricity.

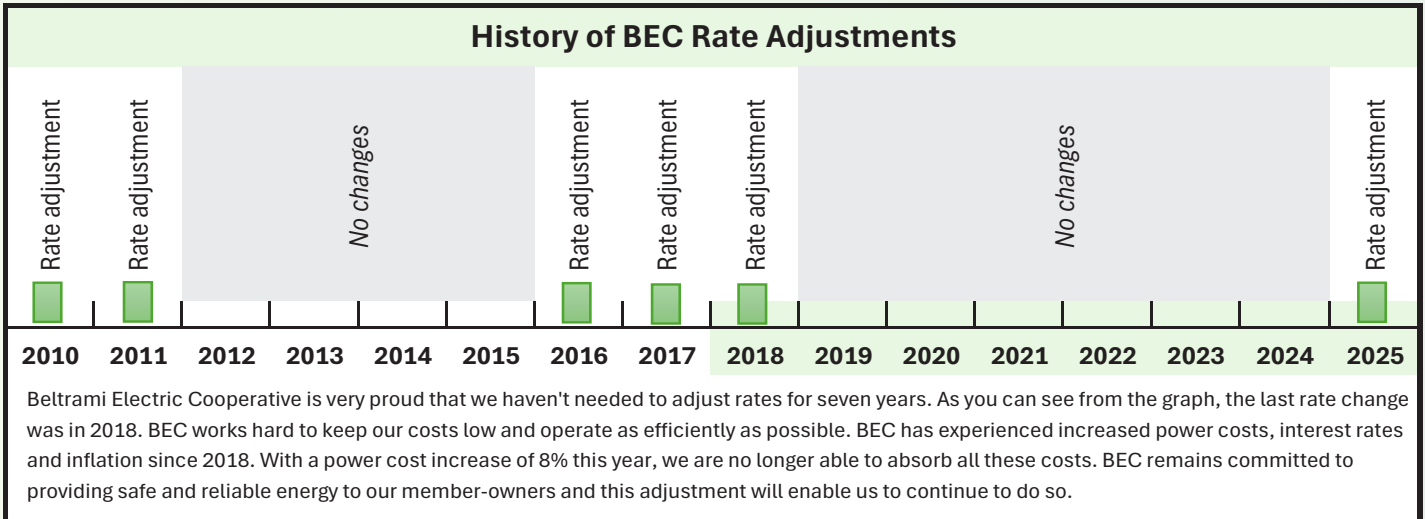
Because of these challenges, our board of directors has approved a rate change starting with bills received in April 2025. We remain committed to providing affordable, dependable electricity and will continue working to manage costs while keeping your power reliable.

Q. Why are you raising the access charge?

A. The monthly access charge covers a portion of our costs for delivering electricity - including labor, billing, member service support, maintenance and repairs to distribution infrastructure. These fixed costs exist whether or not you use a single kWh of electricity, and our fixed costs grow each year. Since we have not adjusted our access charge since April 2018, the increase is \$7.50/month, or the equivalent of about \$1/year increase over the past seven years. We continue to make investments each year in our infrastructure to replace aging lines and equipment, improving reliability and safety.

Q. I can't help what my demand is. Why am I being billed for demand?

A. Demand is not new – it has always been part of your electric bill, just bundled into your energy and access charges. Now, with improved technology, we can measure demand separately, which allows for a fairer distribution of costs among all members. Electric demand refers to the highest amount of electricity you use at one time each month. The cooperative must always be ready to supply enough power to meet members' peak demand, which means investing in equipment like transformers, wires, substations and even power plants. By billing demand separately, we ensure that those who use more power at once contribute their fair share to maintaining the system.



BUSINESS MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

MRS. SIPPI / M SALON



A warm welcome for a growing venture

Beltrami Electric's Business Development team recently visited Mikaela Fisher at her newly relocated M Salon, where they had the pleasure of welcoming her



latest entrepreneurial venture: Mrs. Sippi. Opened in November, Mrs. Sippi is a non-alcoholic bottle shop offering a wide range of alcohol-free beverages, including beers, wines, spirits, mocktails, kombucha and thoughtfully curated gifts.

As the demand for non-alcoholic beverages continues to rise,

Mikaela's vision is to provide a space for sober-curious and sober communities who prefer to socialize without alcohol. Already, the store has built a loyal base of local regulars, and their inventory is expanding rapidly each week, where people can enjoy delicious, mindful drinks and feel welcomed and supported.

Business Development Manager Bob Gregg presents Mikaela Fisher with a rebate check for energy-efficient heating, cooling and lighting measures implemented in her new business.

23933 Tranquility Drive, Laporte, MN 56461

Hours – Monday-Friday: 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.,
Saturday: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., Closed Sundays

THE DOOR OF LAPORTE HONORED WITH MINNESOTA TOUCHSTONE ENERGY® COMMUNITY AWARD

The Door of Laporte has been named the 2025 recipient of Minnesota's Touchstone Energy Community Award, recognizing its dedication to serving those in need. The award was presented at the Minnesota Rural Electric Association's annual meeting in St. Paul, along with a \$2,000 grant to support its mission. More than just a coffee shop, The Door operates as an emergency shelter, providing meals, temporary housing and essential resources to the community. Every cup of coffee purchased helps fund these critical services, making it a true example of a business with compassion. "As a Touchstone Energy cooperative, we are proud to honor organizations like The Door that make a meaningful impact in our communities," said Jared Echternach, President and CEO of Beltrami Electric Cooperative. With this recognition, The Door continues to serve as an inspiration and a lifeline, proving that small acts of kindness – like a warm cup of coffee – can make a life-changing impact.



Pictured: Kevin and Joyce Day, owners of The Door in Laporte, and Jared Echternach, president and CEO of Beltrami Electric Cooperative.

Classifieds

Classified ads rules

- Ads are due by the following dates:
 - o **MAY ISSUE:** Submit by April 4.
 - o **JUNE ISSUE:** Submit between April 5 and May 5.
- Ads may be submitted via our website at www.beltramelectric.com. (preferred)
- NO real estate, rental, personal or commercial ads will be accepted.
- All ads must be 50 words or less and typed or printed clearly.
- Editor reserves the right to edit or reject any ad.
- Members may only submit one for sale and one wanted or free ad per issue.
- Ads are published at no charge as space permits on a first-received, first-printed basis, **with no guarantee your ad will appear.**
- Ads are only allowed to be repeated for **three consecutive months** and must be resubmitted each month.
- Include name and Beltrami Electric account number on all submissions.

For Sale:

2013 Keystone Laredo – 255RB series travel trailer. Includes stabilizer hitch. Sleeps 7. Excellent condition. \$10,999. 218-390-7883.

2007 16-ft Lund SSV with 30 hp, 4-stroke Honda and Shoreland'r trailer, \$4,000. E-Z-GO golf cart with rear seating, \$3,000. 612-275-0633.

2017 Infiniti QX70s, AWD, 3.7 L, great car in great shape (134,000 miles) with winter tires and summer tires. Call 218-760-7552 for more info, asking \$16,500.

2008 Silverado LT, Z71 4x4 Crew Cab 4 dr. Remote start, tow package with factory brake control, salvage title, grey, 171,000 miles, daily driver, some rust, runs good \$5,600/obo. 218-556-0699.

Two vintage sewing machines: an electric "Domestic" brand rotary sewing machine in its original wood desk/cabinet, and a "Montgomery Wards" brand treadle sewing machine in its original wood desk/cabinet. Good condition. Includes original manuals. \$700 each. 218-368-4834.

Henry Lever Action 22 Caliber rifle engraved with Hubbard County by Historical Armory company. 1 of 50 made. \$809 new. \$400/obo call/text 218-252-0878.

Wilson ProStaff right-hand golf clubs w/bag; Spectrum DX5e 5 channel radio system for R.C. airplane; all-season fabric cover for 32+ft class A motorhome; 6 ft. folding ladder; Surge Guard voltage regulator model 10176 120 volt, 30 amp; heavy duty booster/jumper with 11' cable; Roadmaster Falcon Tow Bar. 218-547-1836.

1997 Tuffy Osprey 1760, 100 hp Mariner 2 stroke. Shoreland'r trailer. MinnKota Terrova with footpad and remote, onboard charger, rod storage. Hummingbird Helix chirp, Gen 2. All in good condition, one owner. \$8,900. 218-760-3956.

Propane refrigerator, propane freezer, gas snowblower, propane water heater, TV stand, electric stove/oven, refrigerator/freezer. 218-556-9440.

Need screens? Brand new 14' Victorian Gazebo screen set. Nylon mesh with tan/taupe frames. Full package: 11 total: (7) 88 5/8" x 63 3/8", (1) 53 5/16" x 26 1/2", (1) 63 3/8" x 7", (2) 81 1/2" x 15". Buyer picks up. \$2,500 value, selling for \$250/obo. 218-209-1071.

ShoreStation vertical boat lift. 3,600-lb capacity. Make offer, you move. Local Bemidji Lake. Room & Board white: desk, 3 drawer shelf, storage drawer, bedside table, \$175. Perfect for bedroom or office. 320-583-0471.

Deck furniture: 4-ft high back recliner, dark brown weave, nice swing \$30. 4-ft wrought iron bench black \$12. Wrought iron rocker, black \$12. Wrought iron steel car ramps \$10. Please call Bill at 218-444-9650.

2024 ONN Roku 43" Smart TV, slightly used, make offer. Aluminum boat lift for 20-ft pontoon, \$900. Call 218-536-0102.

Char-Broil Promo H₂O smoker, red color, some supplies, \$50. Sportneer bicycle trainer stand, \$50. Call 701-740-8321 after 6 p.m.

Simplicity walk-behind leaf vacuum holds 3 bushels, \$200/obo. Laporte 218-224-2883.

Three, used, 40-foot steel roll-in docks with cedar decking, on Blackduck Lake. \$1,500 each, \$4,000 for all three. Pictures available on request, 701-740-6738.

Rummage & Bake Sale at New Salem Lutheran Church in Turtle River. April 5, 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Bargain sale 1 p.m. All proceeds benefit community charities!

John Deere 180 snowblower, 36" with 38" mower deck, \$750. Three older Schwinn bikes: touring, mountain and single-speed. BO. 218-243-2958 or cell 218-368-2058.

Excellent condition antique beautiful cane and rosewood sofa with 2 matching high back chairs, hand carving made in England. \$575. Can send pictures, call 218-556-7660.

Carhartt duffel bag, \$50. Laptop bag, \$40. Vintage Ideal Radiant coal heater, \$50. Horse plate and statutes, \$10 each. 218-759-0186.

Wanted:

Techsew 202 industrial sewing machine. Call or text 218-888-2075.

Well-broke horse for early teen kids. 218-556-1230.

Arctic Cat Bearcat – well cared for, lower miles. Must be 2010 or newer. 218-368-9230.

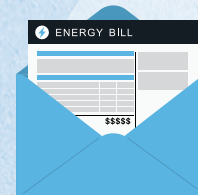
Free:

16-volume set of Childcraft books, includes many topics with great pictures, easy to read. Includes bookshelf. 218-443-0426.

NEED HELP PAYING YOUR ELECTRIC BILL?

Apply for energy assistance by Saturday, May 31, 2025

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



BI-CAP IN BEMIDJI
6603 Bemidji Ave N
Bemidji, MN 56601
218-751-4631

BI-CAP IN WALKER
8245 Industrial Park Rd NW
Walker, MN 56484
218-547-3438

KOOTASCA
201 4th Street NW, Suite 130
Grand Rapids, MN 55744
218-999-0824

LEECH LAKE
115 6th St
Cass Lake, MN 56633
218-335-3783

MAHUBE-OTWA
120 North Central Ave
Park Rapids, MN 56470
218-847-1385

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



OR APPLY ONLINE

Visit energy-assistance.web.commerce.state.mn.us for EAP income guidelines and program information.



Attention Teachers! Need CE Hours?

Lignite Education Seminar – June 9-12, 2025

Learn about North Dakota's coal industry and leave with activities, knowledge and great ideas to take back to your classroom. Register at: lignite.com/teachers-seminar. Held at Bismarck State College campus in Bismarck, N.D. **FREE** to attend (refundable deposit required). Tour energy production sites and get a close-up look at the role lignite plays in North Dakota's economy.



APRIL READER'S CONTEST

For your chance to be entered in a drawing to **win a \$10 credit** on your bill, correctly answer the questions and include with your payment or mail to: BEC, P.O. Box 488, Bemidji, MN 56619. Or email answers to info@beltramelectric.com with the subject line "Reader's Contest." Be sure to include your name and BEC account number. **Entries must be received by April 25.**

1. Beltrami Electric's last rate change was in what year? _____
2. Baseload electricity comes from sources that operate continuously to meet regular power demand 24/7, like _____, _____, _____ and _____.
3. How many times have you visited BEC's website in the last 12 months?
 _____ Never _____ 1-5 times _____ 6-10 times _____ More than 11 times _____ Not sure

Member Name:	BEC Account Number:	Phone/Email Address:
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Congratulations to our February contest winner: Lance Nistler

PITCH IN

FOR OUR PARK



Join us at
Lake Bemidji State Park
Thursday, May 8, 2025
3 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



Help us prepare the park for the 2025 season.



Raking, picking up debris, ditch cleanup and more!



A picnic meal will be provided for volunteers at 6 p.m.



For more information or to RSVP contact Angela at 218-444-3689 or alyseng@beltramielectric.com

SAVE THE DATE!



BELTRAMI ELECTRIC
Indoor Garage Sale

United Way
of Bemidji Area



Saturday, May 3, 2025
8 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

**Beltrami Electric Cooperative's
Garage – Technology Dr NW, Bemidji**

- Enjoy the comfort of indoor shopping!
- Huge variety of **NEW AND USED** merchandise!
- Check out the food booth for lunch or some tasty treats!
- All fees (rent, entrance, food) go to the United Way of Bemidji!

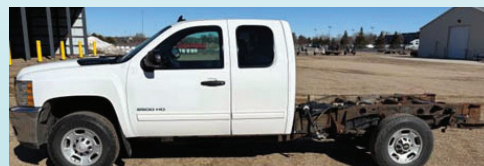
\$1 entrance fee
(12 & under are free)

Landon Yerbich steps into apprentice lineworker role



Landon Yerbich officially transitioned into his new role as an apprentice lineworker in February. He first joined BEC in January 2023 as a mechanic, bringing a strong background in diesel mechanics and welding technology. In the summer of 2024, Landon took a leave of absence to attend the North American Lineman Training Center in Tennessee, successfully completing his training to become a lineworker. Now, he's stepping into the next phase of his career, and we couldn't be more excited for him. Congratulations, Landon – we look forward to seeing you thrive in your new role!

ITEM FOR SALE BY BID



2012 Chevy 2500HD, ¾ ton, gas, automatic, 6.0L, 177K miles. No box.
Minimum bid: \$5,000.

Items are available for viewing at Beltrami Electric's office, 4111 Technology Dr NW, Bemidji, on the east side of the building, in front of BEC's garage area **between April 8-11, between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.** Bids will be accepted during this time as well. BEC does not offer any written or implied warranties and reserves the right to reject any or all bids. Items sold "as-is." Cash only. Successful bidder is responsible for all taxes, license and transfer fees.

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APRIL 2025 | VOL. 72 | NO. 4

Northern Lights (USPS 016488)

Published monthly by Beltrami Electric Cooperative Inc., 4111 Technology Drive NW, Bemidji, Minnesota 56601-5128. Subscription rate is \$5. Periodicals postage paid at Bemidji, MN 56601.

POSTMASTER: Send address corrections to Beltrami Electric Cooperative Inc., P.O. Box 488, Bemidji, Minnesota 56619-0488.

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

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Vice Chair Sue Kringen, *DISTRICT 8*

Secretary Murl Nord, *DISTRICT 1*

Treasurer Sharon Lembke, *DISTRICT 9*

Directors: Charlie Perkins, *DISTRICT 2*; Kevin Geerdes, *DISTRICT 3*; Craig Gaasvig, *DISTRICT 4*; Robert Wallner, *DISTRICT 5*; Rick Coe, *DISTRICT 6*

President and CEO Jared Echternach

Editor Angela Lyseng

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Monday – Friday

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1-800-955-6083

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Email: info@beltramielectric.com

MN STATE ELECTRICAL INSPECTORS

Any time you or an electrician does wiring or other electrical work at your home or farm, Minnesota state law requires a state wiring inspector to conduct a proper inspection of the work. A rough-in inspection must be made before any wiring is covered. A final inspection is also required. Inspectors can be reached weekday mornings between 7 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. Find service territories for electrical inspectors here: <https://workplace.doli.state.mn.us/jurisdiction/>

BELTRAMI & HUBBARD COUNTIES:

Wade Koons | 218-580-8589
wade.koons@state.mn.us

CASS & HUBBARD COUNTIES:

Tony Kohrs | 218-616-1554
tony.kohrs@state.mn.us

GOPHER STATE ONE CALL

1-800-252-1166 or 811
www.gopherstateonecall.org



Anyone who plans to dig is required by law to notify the state of their intentions at least 48 hours in advance. All digging requires a 48-hour notification so that buried telephone lines, TV cable, pipelines, and utility electric lines can be located to ensure that none will be severed or damaged.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

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

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Beltrami Electric Cooperative Inc.

® Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Connecting Communities.
Powering Life.

EMPOWER YOUR HOME



POWER UP YOUR SAVINGS: ENERGY EFFICIENCY, REBATES & SMART SOLUTIONS!

FREE HOME ENERGY EFFICIENCY EXPO!

Join us for an informative and interactive event to explore ways to save energy, lower your bills, and take advantage of incentives for home efficiency!

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS:

- ✓ **Maximize Savings** – Learn how the Inflation Reduction Act tax credits and rebates can help you make energy-efficient upgrades.
- ✓ **Expert Advice** – Meet with energy experts from Beltrami Electric Cooperative and Otter Tail Power Company to discover available rebates, programs and incentives that can cut your energy costs.
- ✓ **Energy Audits** – Hear from Otter Tail Power Company's Energy Auditors about how a home energy audit can help identify inefficiencies in your home, providing expert recommendations to lower energy bills and improve comfort.
- ✓ **EV Charging Savings** – Learn how to charge your electric vehicle on off-peak rates for maximum savings.
- ✓ **Talk to the Pros** – Connect with professional contractors specializing in geothermal and air-source heat pump installations and learn how these systems boost home comfort and efficiency.

Location: Beltrami Electric's Community Room

Date & Time: Thursday, May 1, 2025, 5 - 7 p.m.



Beltrami Electric Cooperative Inc.

® Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative
Connecting Communities. Powering Life.



Citizens' Climate Lobby



CERT
CLEAN ENERGY RESOURCE TEAMS

