

NORTHERN

L I G H T S

April 2026



THEIR COMMUNITY knows them for their pole climbing skills, their bucket trucks, their hard hats.

THEIR COWORKERS know them for their selflessness, their courage, their resilience in harsh environments.

THEIR FAMILIES know them for their muddy boots, their ringing phone during the storm, their suntanned faces.

HOWEVER YOU KNOW THEM - TAKE TIME TO THANK A LINeworker TODAY.

Lineworker Appreciation Day
Monday, April 13

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 Yerbich
Lee Pemberton
Logan Mystic
Matt Roberts
Nick Zimmel
Rich Harris

Ron Komulainen
Ryan Rogers
Shawn O'Brien
Steve Lapos
Tanner Turn
Taylor Schmidt

Travis Voelkner
Trent Berglund

Trevor Gwiazdon
William Haman



Beltrami Electric Cooperative Inc.

® Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Jared Echternach,
president and CEO

BORN IN POLITICS

Electric cooperatives were born in politics – and we engage our legislators and advocate on your behalf on issues affecting your electric cooperative. The 2026 MN Legislative session began Feb. 17. Here are two issues impacting your cooperative at the state level:

Reform net metering

Under existing net metering laws, those who cannot afford to install their own generation subsidize those who can. Net metering was intended to allow consumers to self-generate. We support this. We do not support members being forced to subsidize their neighbor due to outdated state laws.

Why it matters

We are seeing more merchant-style generators installing systems larger than their existing service. This allows the generators to distribute and sell more electricity to the cooperative, and we are required by law to pay the average retail rate when we could purchase it for less from our wholesale power supplier.

The bottom line

Implementing a size-to-load provision would allow members to offset their own use as the law intended, while protecting other members who may not want to or cannot afford to install their own generation. We support net metering reform under HF845/SF1142.

Lift Minnesota’s nuclear energy moratorium

Minnesota continues to have the strictest nuclear moratorium.

Why it matters

All electricity sold at retail in Minnesota must be carbon-free by 2040. How are we going to achieve and maintain this if nuclear energy is not at least part of the conversation?

The bottom line

The Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA) is co-leading the Minnesota Nuclear Energy Alliance, a coalition of 60 utilities, unions, businesses and environmental organizations. HF2002/SF2953 is bipartisan legislation emphasizing the importance of new nuclear technology in achieving a stable and carbon-free energy grid. We support lifting Minnesota’s nuclear moratorium.

Our commitment to you

We will continue to advocate on your behalf to provide our members with safe, reliable and reasonably-priced electricity now and into the future.

BELTRAMI ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Beltrami Electric’s board conducted its regular monthly meeting on **Wednesday, Feb. 18, 2026**. A quorum of directors was in attendance.

- President and CEO Echternach and the board discussed recent safety successes and observations.
- President and CEO Echternach presented Murl Nord with his Director Gold education certificate.
- President and CEO Echternach made his monthly report, including the 2025 audit process, district meetings, Political Action Plan, legislative issues affecting our cooperative and rate communications.
- President and CEO Echternach and Arlene

Hogquist presented the cooperative’s Balanced Performance Scorecard.

- Directors and President and CEO Echternach discussed upcoming meetings and events.

The following actions were taken:

- Approved the amended agenda.
- Approved the consent agenda.
- Opposed the new language in Continuing Resolutions of The Minnesota Rural Electric Association, Resolution 29.

- Nominated Rick Coe as the Minnkota Power Cooperative director.

- Nominated Murl Nord as the Square Butte director.
- Approved to hold the board retreat on Tuesday, May 26, 2026.
- Approved the 2026 district meetings.
- Set the June board meeting for Monday, June 29, 2026.
- Approved director and president and CEO expenses.

The next board meeting will be held Wednesday, Apr. 20, 2026.

DISTRICT 2, Thursday, June 25 at 6 p.m., Red Lake Nation College

DISTRICT 4, Tuesday, June 23 at 6 p.m., Beltrami Electric Cooperative Community Room

DISTRICT 6, Wednesday, June 24 at 6 p.m., Beltrami Electric Cooperative Community Room

RATE FAQs

2026 rate adjustment effective with April bills

Q. WHY ARE YOU HAVING A RATE CHANGE?

A. Our wholesale power supplier, Minnkota, increased their rates 4.1% and implemented an energy surcharge. When BEC set rates in 2025, we used the most current forecast for all expenses/costs to run your cooperative, including the average cost for wholesale power. Wholesale power accounts for 70% of our costs.

Q. HOW MUCH WILL MY BILL INCREASE?

A. The average increase will be around 6.1%, but bills will vary depending on each individual's energy usage.

Q. WHAT IS THE ACCESS CHARGE?

A. A fixed charge that accounts for the equipment and service necessary to turn on the lights whenever you want, because fixed costs exist regardless of usage.

Density (the number of consumers per mile of line) influences how these costs are divided.

The image above shows the difference in density between electric cooperatives and other utilities. Picture the system like a shared driveway. If six neighbors share the cost of maintaining a long driveway, each pays more than if 35 neighbors share it. The driveway still needs grading, snow removal and repairs either way. The difference is how many people are contributing. Electric service works much the same way.

Q. WHAT IS THE KWH CHARGE?

A. This is the rate you pay for each kilowatt-hour (kWh) of energy used in the billing period. The amount of energy you consume can vary from month to month and can be impacted by extreme temperatures. The kWh (energy) charge represents costs associated with wholesale power, including energy, transmission, substation and capacity charges.

Q. WHAT EXACTLY IS DEMAND?

A. Demand is the amount of power needed to run everything in your home at a specific time – measured in kilowatts (kW), not kilowatt-hours. BEC pays more for power when members use a lot of electricity at the same time. **Your demand is calculated on the one hour of highest demand during the billing period.**

Example: If you run your oven for 1 hour, and during that hour you also run your washing machine, dryer and other devices for the entire hour, they would create a higher demand than normal. The key is to spread out the use of these devices over multiple hours instead of using them all at the same time. Dive deeper into demand at www.beltramelectric.com/understanding-demand.

Q. WHAT IS THE PURCHASED POWER ADJUSTMENT?

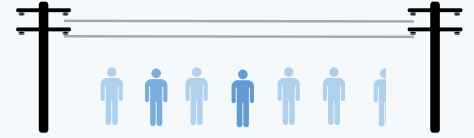
A. It is a direct pass-through of changes in the average cost of purchased wholesale power from Minnkota Power Cooperative. When BEC sets rates, we use the most current forecast for all expenses/costs to run your cooperative, including the average cost for wholesale power. This allows for BEC to manage changes to the average cost of wholesale power without changing rates.

Q. WHAT IS BEC DOING TO CONTROL COSTS?

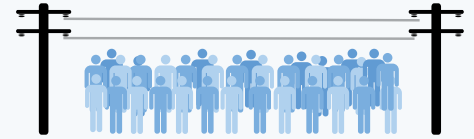
A. We continue to work to increase efficiencies throughout our organization and manage the costs of our operations, including doing our due diligence to secure quality products and materials at the best value for our members.

NUMBER OF CONSUMERS PER MILE OF LINE

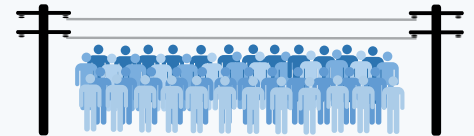
Beltrami Electric Cooperative:
6.6 consumers



Investor-owned utilities:
35 consumers
(Examples: Otter Tail Power Co., Xcel Energy, Minnesota Power)



Municipalities:
48 consumers
(Examples: City of Fosston, City of Bagley, City of Thief River Falls)



APRIL IS NATIONAL SAFE DIGGING MONTH



ASK THE EXPERT: WHEN SHOULD I CALL 8-1-1?



Rebecca Zaiser,
Dispatch Coordinator

THE SHORT ANSWER: ALWAYS CALL BEFORE YOU DIG.

Digging is not as simple as it once was. Today, electric, gas, water, internet and cable lines often run underground. Even a small project can create a big problem if you hit a buried line.

WHO NEEDS TO CALL? Everyone. Homeowners. Farmers. Contractors.

If you plan to disturb the ground, you are required by Minnesota law to notify Gopher State One Call (GSOC) before starting. If you don't call and you hit a line, you will have to pay the costs to repair.

WHAT IS GSOC? Gopher State One Call is Minnesota's one-call notification system. It connects excavators and homeowners with underground facility operators so underground lines can be located and marked.

WHEN SHOULD YOU CALL? Before any digging project. Large or small. That includes using power equipment or simply planting a tree with a shovel.

WHY SHOULD YOU CALL 8-1-1?

1. It prevents costly repairs if lines are hit or damaged.
2. It's FREE!
3. IT'S THE LAW.

Call 8-1-1 or submit a request online at www.gopherstateonecall.org before you begin.

ONE MORE THING:

Public utilities mark their lines, but private facilities are not included. This can include power to outbuildings, invisible fences, pool heaters, septic systems, fiber lines and more. If needed, contact a private locator, such as Cooperative Development, to identify those lines.



When in doubt, make the call. It is free, simple and it PROTECTS EVERYONE.

ASK THE EXPERT!

What would you like our experts to explain next? Send your idea for a future Ask the Expert to info@beltramielectric.com. We may feature it in an upcoming issue.



Tell Us How We're Doing

Your feedback helps guide our cooperative. We invite you to take a moment to complete a short **Member Survey**.

- It's quick - just five questions.
- Your feedback helps us improve our services to you and plan for the future.

Scan the QR code or visit the link below to take the survey.
Member Survey Link: surveymonkey.com/r/Beltrami2026



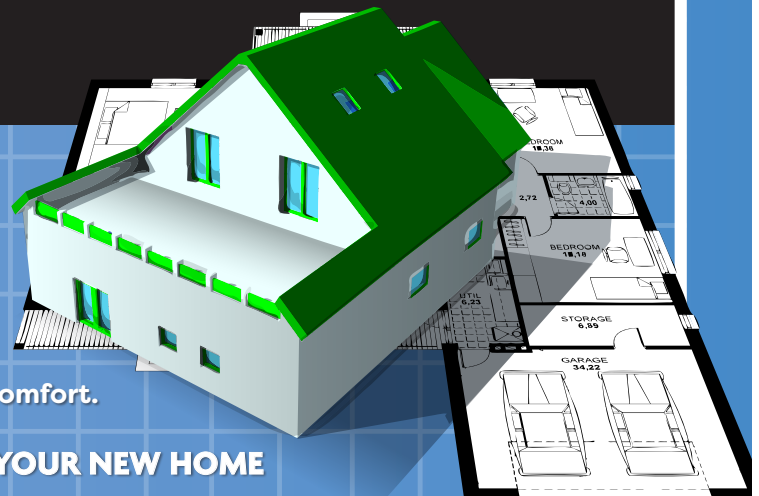
Thank you for sharing your feedback.



BUILDING A NEW HOUSE?

Think off-peak.

Building a new home is an opportunity to start fresh and make design decisions that work best for you and your family. It's also a perfect time to consider electrification, from how you heat your home to how you fuel your car. Combined with Beltrami Electric's off-peak energy program, you can lay a foundation for savings, efficiency and comfort.



CHECK OUT THESE ELECTRIC PICKS FOR YOUR NEW HOME

AIR-SOURCE OR MINI-SPLIT DUCTLESS HEAT PUMPS

Whether it's a whole-home air-source heat pump or a small mini-split ductless heat pump, these are the hottest technology in home heating and cooling.

LARGE-CAPACITY ELECTRIC WATER HEATERS

A large-capacity electric water heater can also be set up on the off-peak program to draw heat energy during lower-demand times of day. The water is heated inside a specially insulated tank, which allows almost no heat loss over a 24-hour period.

ELECTRIC VEHICLE (EV) CHARGERS

You may not have an EV now, but it's smart to include a garage charger in your building plans (*or at least the wiring for one*). Down the road, it will be easy to set up a charger on our off-peak program to save big on every mile driven. Plus, a charger can increase your home value.

Great rebates available! Visit beltramielectric.com/rebates to learn more!

What is the off-peak program?

The off-peak program helps balance demand for electricity during times when it's at its highest. Members who participate allow Minnkota Power Cooperative, our wholesale provider, to temporarily turn off electric heating, water heating and vehicle chargers, to reduce strain on the electric system and help avoid the need to purchase high-priced power on the wholesale market. During these "control periods," members will rely on storage heat or a backup fuel source, such as propane, to continue to maintain the comfort in the home.

How does off-peak reduce my electric costs?

The off-peak program offers a lower electric rate that is about 40-50% below the regular service rate, all for helping your utility lower demand on the system when it's at its highest. For home heating, this makes electricity one of the most stable and cost-effective energy sources available. With the off-peak rate, electricity is very competitive with other heating fuels such as propane or fuel oil.

Learn more about the off-peak program and electric technology at valueofelectricity.com.



Classifieds

Classified ads rules

- Ads are due by the following dates:
 - **MAY ISSUE:** Submit by April 6.
- Please submit ads here: beltramelectric.com/submit-ad.
- 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.

For Sale:

First City Lions Annual Garage Sale. Saturday, May 9, 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Eckles Town Hall Community Center, 9735 Cardinal Road NW, Bemidji, Minn. First City Lions are hosting an awesome bake sale and a huge rummage sale. All proceeds go to local charities.

2020 Featherlite 3-horse stock trailer. Bumper pull. Never had a horse in it. Used for storage only, \$17,500. Littlest Pet Shop vintage sets. 218-759-0186.

2005 40 hp Mercury outboard. E.F.I. tiller, electric start, manual tilt, tank/gas line. \$1,200. 218-835-6579

Low-profile foundation and frame for a full-size bed. \$35. 218-835-7484

Firewood, dry, cut and split, you haul, \$175/pickup load. 8' pickup box trailer, \$500. Four different 14' Aluminum fishing boats, \$300-\$600/each. Three different aluminum canoes, \$400-\$700/each. Call Gary, 218-760-8266.

Hand-painted ceramic coin banks (elephants, trees, pumpkins). \$7 each. Email serenity_ii@yahoo.com for more info/photos.

Golfers! Golf balls, new in box. 4 doz. Nike, 2.5 doz. ProV-1, 2 doz. Bridgestone, 1.5 doz. misc. \$7/ doz., all for \$60. 218-556-1213.

Large antique porcelain letters spelling (PIE) in very good condition. Text for pictures. Must see to appreciate! \$75 for all three. 218-556-5088.

Schwinn 270 recumbent exercise bike-used twice-orig. price \$699, paid \$549, will sell for \$400. 218-243-2497.

Join us for the annual Rummage & Bake Sale at New Salem Lutheran Church in Turtle River. ALL proceeds benefit community charities! Apr. 18, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Bargain sale from 12-1 p.m.

Golden LiteRider Envy motorized wheelchair for sale. \$800 Like new, lightweight design disassembles into four parts for transport. 15.5-mile range with 22 Ah batteries. 218-727-0278.

Spring hatched chicks, straight run \$3 to \$5 each. Spring bunnies \$15 to \$20 each. Baby Coturnix Quail \$3 to \$5 each. Quail eggs for hatching are available; some are Celadon (blue eggs), \$8/doz. Text is best 218-368-3714.

1999 4-wheel drive Chevy Silverado. Three door, good tires. \$1,500. 218-556-6970.

ShoreStation vertical boat lift. 3,600 lb. capacity canopy acceptable. Local lake. Make offer. Shark steam pocket mop, optimal for every type of floor. Cleans and sanitizes flat surfaces, countertops \$59. Room & Board white desk with laminate top, excellent condition \$89. 320-583-0471.

New to the Bemidji area. Offering longarm quilting service. E2E. Call 1-406-897-3381.

Aero Craft aluminum canoe, 17-18 ft, square back. Fair condition, vintage with two paddles. \$200. 612-281-5089.

King 5-piece bed set: bed frame w/headboard, two nightstands, one long dresser with mirror, one tall dresser. Color, antique ivory. Purchased at St. Michael's. Call or text for pictures and dimensions 218-760-6797. Asking \$3,000.

Wanted:

Wanted to trade: large mouth quart jars or small mouth quart jars. Wanted wood chipper. Please contact 218-243-3112.

Free:

Free 1980s furnished mobile home if willing to remove from property on Evergreen Lake. 651-271-6140.

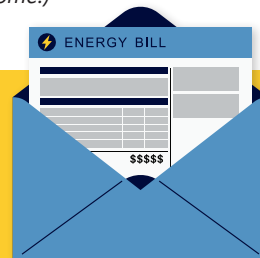
"Peace with God" booklets by Billy Graham, if you would like some, call 218-751-3632.

Ice auger found on the road in Wilton, Minn., in March 2026. Call if you lost one and can identify. 218-210-3186.

NEED HELP PAYING YOUR ELECTRIC BILL?

Energy assistance may be available!

The Energy Assistance Program (EAP) helps income-qualified households pay for home heating costs and furnace repairs. 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

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. Before any digging project, you should call _____ or _____.
2. Volunteers are needed for _____ at Lake Bemidji State Park on May 14.
3. Off-peak electric rates are about _____-_____ % lower than regular electricity rates

Member Name:	BEC Account Number:	Email address:

Congratulations to our Feb. contest winner: Warren Wittwer



View EAP income guidelines and **APPLY ONLINE.**

TIPS TO AVOID ENERGY SCAMS

Don't fall victim to power outage scams. When widespread outages occur, scammers may target affected utility customers. They can contact you via call, text or email, urging you to act quickly and provide personal information to restore service. Always communicate with your utility through official channels, such as their website, mobile app or phone number listed on your bill. Your safety and personal information are worth taking a moment to pause and verify unknown senders.

Source: [ftc.org](https://www.ftc.org)

PITCH IN FOR OUR PARK



Volunteers Needed!



Join us at

Lake Bemidji State Park
Thursday, May 14, 2026
3 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

For more information or to sign up to volunteer, contact Angela at 218-444-3689 or email info@beltramelectric.com



Help the park prepare for the 2026 season.



Great opportunity for students needing volunteer hours!



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



Raking, picking up debris, ditch cleanup and more!

SPRING INTO ENERGY SAVINGS.

- Schedule a tune-up for your cooling system.
- Set ceiling fan blades to run counterclockwise for cooling.
- Adjust your thermostat a few degrees.
- Take short showers to save on water heating.
- Spread out the use of major appliances throughout the day to reduce demand.

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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. 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.

PROFESSIONAL OFFICE SPACE AVAILABLE FOR LEASE

Beltrami Electric Headquarters

Suite# 203: Features 923 sq. ft. office suite

- Includes a large, open area, plus three separate offices
- Will modify to suit
- Second-floor location with an elevator
- Adjacent conference/meeting room, bathrooms
- Located in a safe, clean, quiet, low-traffic area of a well-maintained professional building



For further details on this space, contact Jennifer at 218-444-3672.

ATTENTION VENDORS:

GARAGE SALE BOOTH RESERVATIONS OPEN MARCH 19!

- Ready for spring cleaning? Sign up for a booth (or two) at Beltrami Electric's Indoor Garage Sale and get access to more than 1,500 bargain-hunters!



- Booth rental fees and a \$1 entry fee at the door the day of the sale go to benefit the United Way of Bemidji Area.

If you are interested in a spot in our 2026 Indoor Garage Sale, stop by our office at 4111 Technology Dr. NW in Bemidji and sign up, or contact Cammie at 218-444-3675 or cvogel@beltramielectric.com.

2026 BEC Indoor Garage Sale:
Saturday, May 2, 2026
8 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

