

# NORTHERN

L I G H T S

July 2026

## JOIN US FOR BELTRAMI ELECTRIC'S 86<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING

WEDNESDAY, AUG. 12, 2026

### Beltrami Electric's Night at the Fair Events:

- Annual Meeting (5 p.m.) at the Marilyn Shutter Stage
  - Registration for the meeting opens at 4 p.m. – to receive BEC Food Bucks!
- Take a photo with Touchstone Energy's mascot, LED Lucy!
- Bucket rides for kids
- Duck pond for kids
- Watch a live high-voltage electrical safety demo by BEC's lineworkers – see the exploding hot dog!
- **FREE PARKING** plus golf cart shuttles to the meeting
- Check out our booth in the commercial building!





# Minnesota legislative wrap-up

by Jared Echternach, president and CEO



The 2026 Minnesota legislative session has wrapped up at the Capitol.

It was a session shaped by divided government. With a tied House, a one-seat Senate majority and an election looming in November, every bill needed bipartisan agreement to move. Much

of the Legislature's attention went to a supplemental budget, funding for Hennepin County Medical Center, tax conformity and a capital investment package, leaving less room for major policy changes elsewhere.

Even so, Minnesota's electric cooperatives made important progress on the issues that matter most to members. The session delivered a meaningful step forward on nuclear energy with the help of the newly formed Minnesota Nuclear Energy Alliance led by Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA). The Alliance brings together more than 60 organizations spanning utilities, labor, agriculture, business and environmental groups, and its broad reach helped move nuclear into the mainstream of Minnesota's energy conversation.

Lawmakers approved a state nuclear energy study, the most significant movement on the issue since Minnesota's nuclear moratorium was put in place in 1994. The moratorium itself remains on the books, but the study reflects a growing recognition at the Capitol that nuclear power deserves a serious look as the state works toward its carbon-free electricity goals.

The study itself will examine the costs, benefits and tradeoffs of nuclear energy in Minnesota, including its potential role in supporting affordability, reliability and emissions reductions. Its findings will give lawmakers a stronger foundation for deciding whether to lift the moratorium next year.

## HOLDING THE LINE ON COSTLY NEW MANDATES

Just as important as what passed is what didn't. Several proposals introduced this session would have added new costs, new mandates or new layers of regulation onto Minnesota's electric cooperatives. None of them became law, and that outcome wasn't an accident.

Throughout the session, BEC and other electric cooperatives, through MREA, worked to educate legislators about how mandates from St. Paul affect locally governed, not-for-profit cooperatives.



Bills touching on solar policy, affordability mandates and utility operations all stalled before reaching the finish line. Cooperative priorities like net metering reform also saw little movement, leaving important work for future sessions.

## WHY IT MATTERS

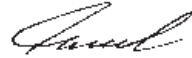
Cooperatives are governed by the members they serve. Decisions about your electricity are made by neighbors you can talk to, not regulators in St. Paul. One-size-fits-all mandates often raise costs, undermine that local democracy and add bureaucracy without delivering real benefits to members.

## LOOKING AHEAD

The November election will reshape the Legislature, and the political landscape next session could look very different. What won't change is the focus of Minnesota's electric cooperatives: advocating for safe,

affordable, reliable electricity and protecting the local, democratic governance that makes cooperatives unique.

Nuclear energy will likely return as a central conversation in 2027, alongside continued debate over mandates, affordability and the pace of Minnesota’s energy transition. Net metering reform will also remain near the top of the cooperative agenda. Modernizing Minnesota’s net metering rules is essential to ensuring all members pay their fair share for the electric grid they rely on. Members who want to lend their voice can sign up for alerts at <https://voicesforcooperativepower.com/>.




**Happy 4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY**

Beltrami Electric offices will be closed Friday, July 3, in observance of Independence Day.

In the case of an outage, call 218-444-2540 or 1-800-955-6083.



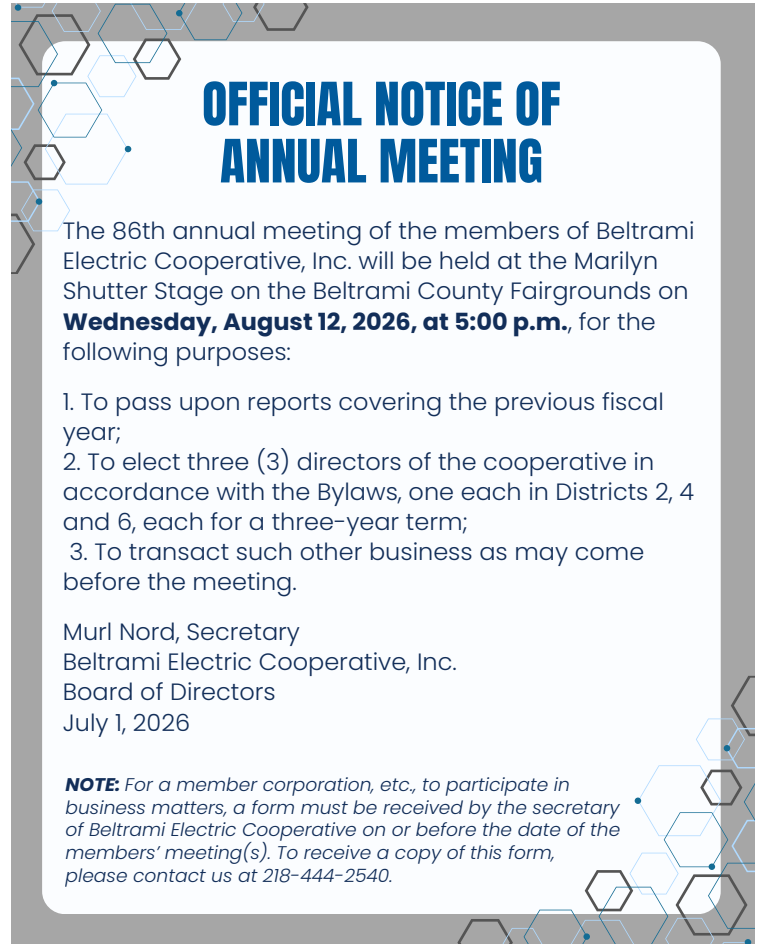
**LIVE IN CONCERT!**

**AUG. 12, 2026**  
**6:30 P.M.**

waddingtonbrothers.com



The Beltrami County Fair will host this **FREE CONCERT** in the grandstand during Beltrami Electric’s Annual Meeting/Night at the Fair.



**OFFICIAL NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING**

The 86th annual meeting of the members of Beltrami Electric Cooperative, Inc. will be held at the Marilyn Shutter Stage on the Beltrami County Fairgrounds on **Wednesday, August 12, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.**, for the following purposes:

1. To pass upon reports covering the previous fiscal year;
2. To elect three (3) directors of the cooperative in accordance with the Bylaws, one each in Districts 2, 4 and 6, each for a three-year term;
3. To transact such other business as may come before the meeting.

Murl Nord, Secretary  
Beltrami Electric Cooperative, Inc.  
Board of Directors  
July 1, 2026

**NOTE:** For a member corporation, etc., to participate in business matters, a form must be received by the secretary of Beltrami Electric Cooperative on or before the date of the members’ meeting(s). To receive a copy of this form, please contact us at 218-444-2540.

## MAY 2026 BELTRAMI ELECTRIC BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Beltrami Electric’s board of directors conducted its regular monthly meeting on **Wednesday, May 27, 2026**. A quorum of directors was in attendance.

- President and CEO Echternach and the board discussed recent safety successes, observations and the Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program site visit.
  - Correspondence was reviewed.
  - President and CEO Echternach made his monthly report, including Beltrami Electric winning the Chamber’s Business of the Year Award, employee updates, legislative update, industry updates, Red Lake Solar Project, large loads and interconnections.
  - Jay Welsh with Brady Martz & Associates presented the Agreed Upon Procedures report.
  - Arlene Hogquist presented the March and April financial reports.
  - Arlene Hogquist presented the cooperative’s Balanced Performance Scorecard.
  - NRECA’s 2026 Member Resolutions were reviewed.
  - Directors and President and CEO Echternach shared highlights of meetings attended on behalf of the cooperative and discussed upcoming meetings, events and education conferences.
  - **The following actions were taken:**
    - Approved the consent agenda.
    - Appointed Jared Echternach as the CoBank voting delegate with Kevin Geerdes as the alternate.
  - Appointed Sue Kringen as the National Information Solutions Cooperative voting delegate with Kevin Geerdes as the alternate.
  - Approved director and president and CEO expenses.
- The next board meeting will be held Wednesday, July 29, 2026.*

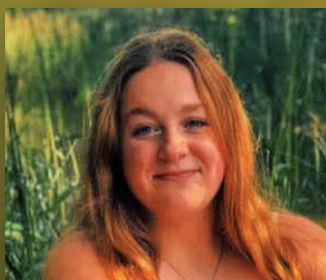
# CONGRATULATIONS

## Class of 2026 Beltrami Electric Cooperative Scholarship Recipients

We award scholarships annually to students attending seven area high schools within our service territory, and one at-large scholarship to a student who attends a school other than the seven listed below. To be eligible, the student's parent(s) or guardian must be members of Beltrami Electric Cooperative, and the student must show proof of enrollment in a post-secondary education institution the following year. Each school selected the winners through committees or guidance centers. Scholarships are funded with unclaimed capital credits that otherwise would be forfeited to the state.



**MAX ZORMAN**  
Bemidji High School  
Parents: Corinda (Scott) Edevold,  
Daniel (Cynthia) Zorman



**ABBIGAIL MACKEY**  
Blackduck High School  
Parents: Michael &  
Sara Mackey



**DESTINEE ROSE WITTNER**  
Cass Lake-Bena High School  
Parents: Dawn & Donahue Wittner



**EMILY MASTIN**  
Kelliher High School  
Parents: Mike &  
Amy Mastin



**MACEY MORRIS**  
Laporte High School  
Parents: Josiah &  
Megan Morris



**MIA LONG**  
Red Lake High School  
Parents: Michael Hill, Sr. &  
Sara Martin



**LILY CAIRNS**  
Walker-Hackensack-Akeley  
High School  
Parents: Josh & Leah Cairns



**KAYLINN HANSON**  
Heartland Christian Academy  
Parents: Andrew & Kerin Hanson  
*\*At-Large Scholarship*

Beltrami Electric is honored to help local students take the next step in their education through our scholarship program. Congratulations to this year's recipients — we're cheering you on as you pursue your goals!

# REAL POWER REQUIRES **REAL** **TRANSMISSION.**

As the United States rapidly adds new electricity generation – especially wind, solar and natural gas – there's a growing realization that building power plants alone is not enough to meet our rising need for power. The electric grid itself must also expand, particularly the high-voltage transmission network that carries electricity over long distances. Without sufficient transmission, new generation cannot reliably reach communities, leading to bottlenecks, higher costs and delayed projects.

The concern is not theoretical. Grid connection queues in the U.S. have ballooned, with hundreds of gigawatts of mostly renewable generation waiting years for transmission access. A key reason is that grid infrastructure has not kept pace with the surge in new generation, creating what the International Energy Agency calls a "critical bottleneck" for integrating supply and demand.

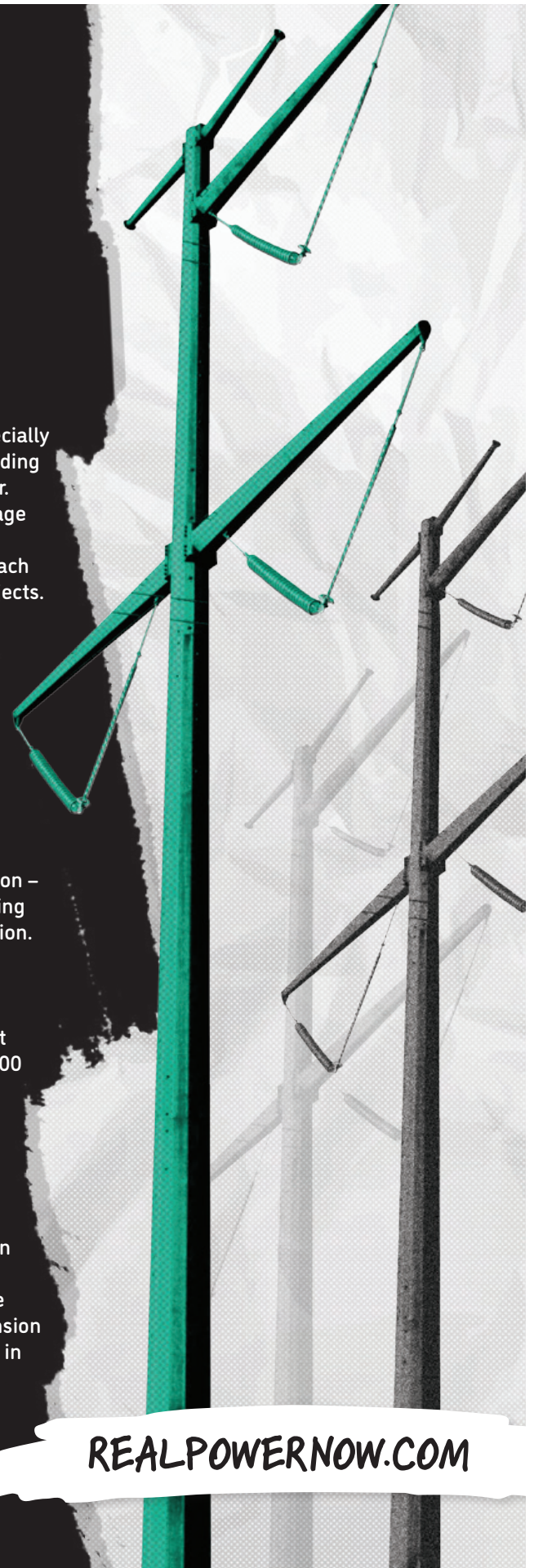
Transmission improves reliability and reduces congestion. A larger, more interconnected grid allows operators – like the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) that oversees Beltrami's region – to move power to wherever it's needed, helping respond to increasing electricity demand and smoothing out variability in energy production. This in turn keeps the power grid stable for end-use consumers.

MISO currently has several transmission projects planned for its Midwest region, but the total scale of the required national buildout over the next decade is enormous. The U.S. likely needs around 5,000 miles of new transmission lines per year to keep up with demand growth and new generation. That's roughly 50,000 miles of new transmission by the mid-2030s. Additionally, new transmission lines often take a decade or more to plan and permit, meaning delays today can affect grid capacity far into the future.

Planning for new generation without also planning for transmission is like building factories without roads to ship the goods. The next 10 years will require tens of thousands of miles of new high-voltage lines to keep pace with the energy transition. If transmission expansion lags, it will increasingly become the limiting factor, not generation, in shaping the future of the electric grid.

**We need real transmission now.**

**REALPOWERNOW.COM**



# Classifieds

## Classified ads rules

- Ads are due by the following dates:
  - **AUGUST ISSUE:** Submit by July 1.
- Please submit ads here: **beltramielectric.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.
- Ads are published at no charge as space permits on a first-received, first-printed basis, **with no guarantee your ad will appear.**

## For Sale:

Homemade quilts: Block, Crazy, Star. Twin, \$50; Full, \$60; Queen, \$80; King, \$90. Lap, baby quilts, \$30. 218-243-2702.

1995 Sylvan model 16 SMB 16 Monster w/bow-mounted 12-volt electric trolling motor, graph, extra battery. Has not seen a lot of use. S/N# SYL312191495. Very nice condition. Asking \$6,000 with trailer. Also have lift w/new canopy, wheel kit, \$1,000. 218-368-0441.

Remington Model 7 6mm. Nice wood. Made in 1989. \$1,200 firm, cash only. 218-586-2808.

Audio-Technica Stereo Turntable AT-PL50, used twice \$125. \*ION Tape

2PC, converts your music/video to PC. Used once, \$70. Call 218-444-2280. If no answer, leave message and I will return call.

Honda EU2200i generator used very little, will sell for \$500. 218-760-0718.

6'x4'x6' outdoor dog kennel. Steel fence with cloth roof, \$300. Yaheetech 42" double door dog kennel with floor tray, \$50. Pet taxi, \$20. Dog ramp for tall bed, \$75. 218-556-8155.

Golfers: Sun Mountain speed cart, Sun Mountain cart bag - both almost new. Full set Callaway Diablo forged irons, TaylorMade 1, 3, 5 metal woods, Odyssey White Hot putter. Will sell separately, all for \$250. Other misc. clubs, carry bag. 218-556-1213.

A.R.E. MX Series 2021 Pickup topper. Fits Ram 1500 Crew Cab 5.5ft box 5th generation. Color is granite crystal. Extra height, carpet headliner, tilt-down front slider, aluminum-framed side sliders and rear glass door. Clamps included. Paid \$3,145, asking \$1,800. Located in Hines. Teresa 612-271-3285.

Chilton repair manual for 03-07-Dodge Caravan and Town & Country minivans, \$20. Smokeless grill, non-stick coating, 1,500 watts, brand new (power) \$50. Pizza oven \$25. 218-444-9422.

Marcy weight lifting system, \$120. Viking 960 sewing machine with carrying bag, \$250. 218-851-6507.

GE cooktop: stainless steel, 2-burner electric, designed to build into counter. Two new cooktops in original boxes and molded packing,

\$195 each. Ideal for two cooking stations or motor home. Honeywell Enviracaire air cleaner series 12500, portable, new HEPA filter lasting 3 years, owner's manual \$99. 218-536-1341.

2002 Arctic Cat 500 4-wheeler, good condition, runs well. \$2,000. 218-508-7588.

Dog bed: New Casper brand orthopedic bed, paid \$225, will sell for \$100. Can send pics, will meet in town, call Mike 218-444-4767 (landline, no text).

1994 Ford F250 XLT HD 4wd pickup, 5.8L gas engine, good tires, dark green, runs great, 187K miles. Clean interior. \$10,000. Call 218-766-0805. No texting.

Porta pontoon lift. Narrow cantilever had 18-ft pontoon on it. \$500. Call Jerry 763-355-7047.

Backyard Creations alpine gas fire column. Used very little. Propane tank is not included. \$75. Two guns, new in box: Ruger 10/22 air rifle, .177 caliber CO<sub>2</sub> powered, multi-shot. \$75; Impala Plus 12-gauge shotgun, \$325. 218-556-8507.

Farm-built single-axle pickup box trailer, 50's vintage International style side box 8'x56". Box has some collector's value, new rubber, spare tire bracket, 2" ball hitch. 218-556-4662.

16-ft Alumacraft canoe with paddles and life vests, \$500. 218-556-6415.

2 pet chain link kennels, 5'x5', 4 ft high with gate, \$75. 6'x6', 4 ft high, with gate, \$150. 218-586-2839.

Curio cabinet, was \$140, will take \$75. Sheetrock tools. 1980 Corvette, \$5,000. 218-308-1227.

2003 1850 Crestliner Fish Hawk, 4 seats/2 consoles/ stored inside. 218-556-5153.

ALMOST FREE: White metal day bed, gently used. Call Marta 218-444-6331 and leave message.

Coffee Brothers coffee machine model MFCJ805DW, hardly used \$150. Vintage America deli slicer, Model 45, 9-in blade, \$200/obo. Minn Kota PowerDrive V2 24-Volt 7-lb. thrust 5-foot shaft trolling motor \$400. Call Jeffrey 218-368-1073.

Shore Station vertical boat lift 3600# capacity, Bemidji lake. New Orbit vegetable garden soaker system \$20. Shark portable steam mop for every type of floor, cleans & sanitizes \$59. New cordless handheld vacuum with attachments. Ideal for counters, auto, upholstery, rechargeable base \$49. 320-583-0471.

## Wanted:

Used wood-fired sauna stove in reasonably good condition with manufacturer's tags or data plates still legible. Must be model without a water tank. 218-556-4181.

Minn Kota Vantage transom mount trolling motor, 24 volt. Call 218-760-3330.

## Free:

Twin bed in good condition. 218-553-0151.

## WE ARE LOOKING FOR YOU!



Beltrami Electric Cooperative is looking for Karrie K. Zummallen (Cass Lake, Minn.).

**Please call 218-444-2540 if you have any information.**



## Unclaimed capital credits

Scan the QR code to use the search feature on our website to determine if you have unclaimed capital credits.



In spite of our efforts to maintain current addresses for past members, some capital credit checks are returned to Beltrami Electric by the postal service without a forwarding address.

**WHY IT MATTERS:** Beltrami Electric has unclaimed capital credit checks for former members whose current addresses are unknown.

**WHAT WE'RE DOING:** We make multiple attempts to locate former members, research updated addresses, and maintain a searchable list of unclaimed capital credits.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- Check the unclaimed capital credit list on our website.
- If you recognize a name, please encourage that person to contact us.

**IF YOUR NAME IS ON THE LIST:** Contact Beltrami Electric at **218-444-2540** or **800-955-6083**, or email **info@beltramielectric.com** to claim your capital credits.



# POWER THAT SHOWS UP

**Beltrami Electric Cooperative** delivers energy you can count on, with a mission grounded in people – not profit. We keep power affordable and reliable because that’s what real service looks like. We know what’s on the line: your warmth, your work, your way of life. Every kilowatt is backed by a promise to care for our communities like they’re our own. **Because they are.**

Check out our new video on YouTube.



## MINNKOTA TRANSMISSION LINE INSPECTIONS SCHEDULED FOR FALL

Minnkota Power Cooperative, Beltrami Electric’s wholesale power provider, will be inspecting its transmission line structures in preparation for upcoming project work. EXO, a contractor, will be assisting Minnkota personnel in the pole testing. All inspections will be completed using ATVs/UTVs. Minimal land disturbance is anticipated.

The purpose of these inspections is to ensure that electricity can be delivered safely and reliably to your area, as well as prioritize project work. If you have questions, please visit [minnkota.com](http://minnkota.com) or call **701-795-4000**.



## JULY 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@beltramielctric.com](mailto:info@beltramielctric.com) with the subject line “Reader’s Contest.” Be sure to include your name and BEC account number. **Entries must be received by July 25.**

1. Cooperatives are governed by the \_\_\_\_\_ they serve.
2. The Beltrami County Fair will host a free concert in the grandstand on Wednesday, Aug. 12, featuring \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The Touchstone Energy® Open golf tournament is a fundraiser for \_\_\_\_\_.

Member Name:
BEC Account Number:
Email Address:

*Congratulations to our May contest winner: Steven & Ginger Johnson*

# NORTHERN

L I G H T S

**JULY 2026 | VOL. 73 | NO. 7**

**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

**Chair** ..... John Lund, *DISTRICT 7*

**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

**Office Hours:** 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
Monday – Friday

**Telephone:** 218-444-2540 or  
1-800-955-6083

**Website:** [www.beltramielectric.com](http://www.beltramielectric.com)

**Email:** [info@beltramielectric.com](mailto: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](mailto:wade.koons@state.mn.us)

### CASS & HUBBARD COUNTIES:

Tony Kohrs | 612-770-1938  
[tony.kohrs@state.mn.us](mailto:tony.kohrs@state.mn.us)

### GOPHER STATE ONE CALL

1-800-252-1166 or 811  
[www.gopherstateonecall.org](http://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.*



*Beltrami Electric*



**Touchstone Energy®  
OPEN**



**SEPT. 11, 2026**

**Castle Highlands  
Golf Course**

**GET YOUR TEAM  
TOGETHER TO PLAY  
TODAY!**

**HELP SUPPORT  
THE UNITED WAY  
OF BEMIDJI AREA**



**UNITED WAY  
Bemidji Area**

### Event Highlights

#### Tournament Format ◀

18-hole, 4-person scramble, begins with a shotgun start at 10 a.m.

#### Prizes ◀

Prizes will be awarded to the top three teams, closest to the pin, and hole-in-one

#### Fundraising ◀

Buy tickets for amazing raffle prizes, enter a 50/50 raffle and play to win a custom corn hole game

#### Team Registration ◀

Register your 4-person team today! Includes 18 holes of golf and one cart for each pair of golfers.



**Register Your Team**  
218-444-2540

**Beltrami Electric Cooperative**  
PO Box 488, Bemidji, MN 56619

