

Photo: Joyce Rudningen, April Calendar Photo Contest Winner

# NEWSLETTER

April 2025

## Join Us For Our 2025 Power Hour Events

Power Hour events provide members with the opportunity to meet their directors and staff, as well as ask questions and mingle with other co-op members, in a casual environment. It is a time to hear what is happening at your local electric cooperative including member programs, work plan projects, and the financial health of the cooperative. Coffee and rolls will be provided.

### Upcoming Power Hour Events

APR  
**10**  
10 AM



**West-Con**  
520 County Road 9  
Holloway, MN



Our 2025 Power Hour events are open to all co-op members. You are welcome to attend either event, even if it does not align with your district or area.

APR  
**11**  
10 AM



**Hancock Community Center**  
Atlantic Ave. (Next to ACMC)  
Hancock, MN

Visit our website or call the office at 320-843-4150 if you have any questions regarding these events. We look forward to seeing you there!

## It's All About The Energy: Join Agralite Electric Cooperative For An Energy Tour Bus Trip

Join us: June 11-13 / \$175 per person / 20 seats available. We're excited to invite you to join us for our 2025 Energy Tour from June 11-13! This three-day luxury coach tour will take you through North Dakota's coal country where you'll learn how electric power is generated at a lignite coal plant and how a coal-gasification plant produces natural gas.

The tour includes visits to:

- Basin Electric Powers Antelope Valley Power Station near Beulah, ND
- Great Plains SynFuels Plant
- The Coteau Properties Freedom Coal Mine
- Garrison Dam Hydropower Generation Plant
- The North Dakota History Museum
- Lewis & Clark Riverboat Dinner Cruise

You'll be staying at a hotel in Mandan for two nights. 1036900 The trip cost is \$175 per person. Most meals are included, except for fast food and coffee stops during the bus trip to and from North Dakota, and any restaurants you may visit during your free time.

*This trip promises to be both fun and educational, and we hope you'll join us for this exciting opportunity. Sign up by calling our office at 320-843-4150.*

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**Agralite Electric Co-op**  
*We're member-owned!*

320 US-12, Benson, MN  
(320) 843-4150  
1-800-950-8375  
www.agralite.coop

 Like us on Facebook



**Office Hours**

8:00 am – 4:30 pm

Closed April 18th, Good Friday



Touchstone Energy®

Agralite is a Touchstone Energy® Cooperative.



## Find your account number and win a \$100 credit!

If your account number (as it appears on your monthly electric bill) is one of the [four account numbers](#) hidden in this issue, give our office a call by the end of the month and you will receive a \$100 bill credit. If more than one member finds their account number in a single issue, \$100 will be split equally amongst them.

### Congratulations

to Jim Krosch for finding his account number in the February newsletter.

### Energy Saving Tip:

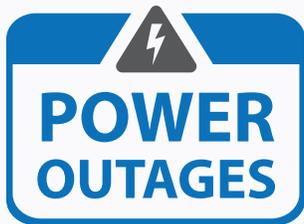


Turn your suds into savings. Lower energy use in the laundry room by washing with cold water whenever possible, as heating water accounts for most of the energy used in a laundry cycle.

Wash full loads to make the most of energy savings and use high-efficiency detergent designed for cold washes. 1607300

For drying cycles, clean the lint filter before each load to improve airflow and use dryer balls to reduce drying time.

Source: energystar.gov



## Call Day or Night 1.888.884.3887

[Do not call the office for outages](#)

April Energy Payment is due  
May 20.\*

\*We accept Visa, Discover & Mastercard.

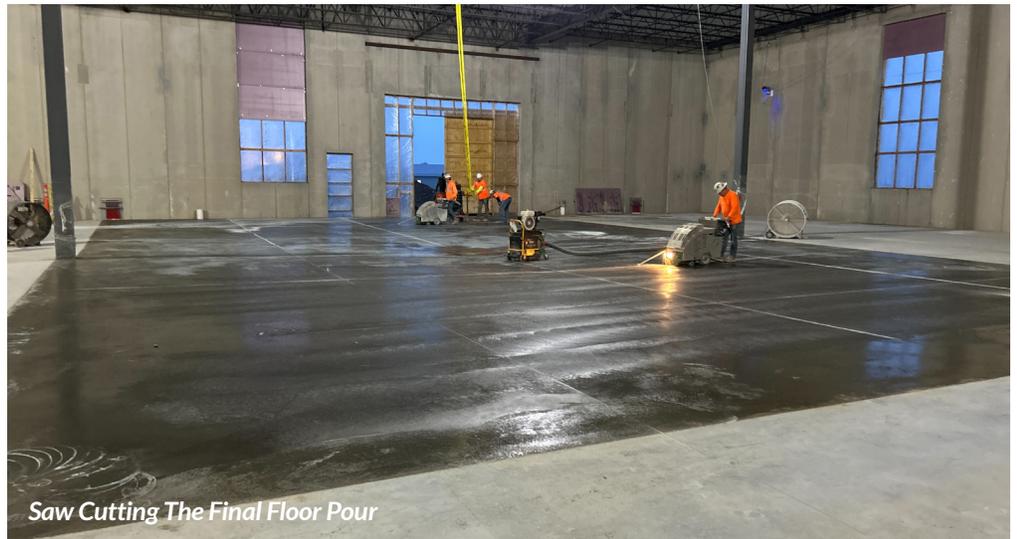
## Cooperative Headquarters Update By Jenny Stryhn, General Manager

We're excited to share the latest progress on our new headquarters facility! Construction continues to move forward, and we're excited with how things are shaping up. The shop area floor has been fully poured, and the installation of exterior garage doors is just around the corner.

Inside, the office area is coming along nicely with drywall completed, and the painters have begun working on the interior walls. In addition, this past month we held an auction for our existing material building, which will allow us to begin clearing a pathway for the new pole yard behind the facility.

Looking ahead, we anticipate shifting business operations to the new facility as we move into late spring and early summer. We will keep you, our valued members, informed as we get closer to that transition. Thank you for your ongoing support and continued engagement with your cooperative!

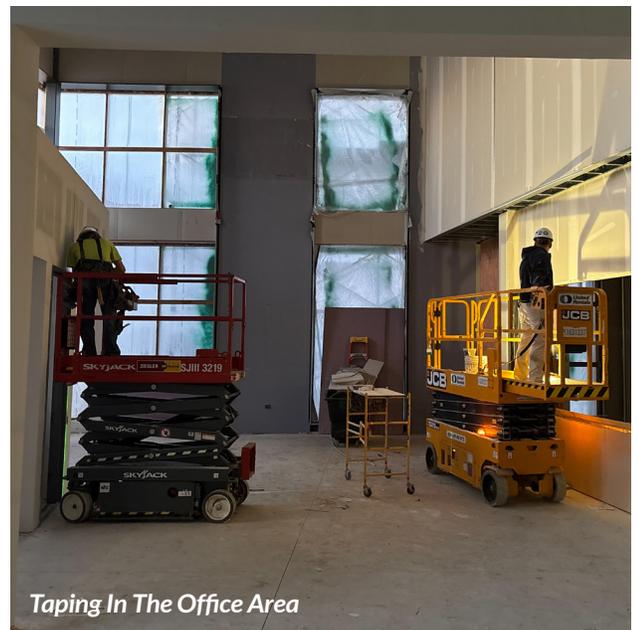
# 2025 ANNUAL MEETING



Saw Cutting The Final Floor Pour



Window Installation Continues



Taping In The Office Area



Agralite Electric Cooperative's Linemen

## ELECTRIC CO-OP SERVICE DENSITY compared to OTHER ELECTRIC UTILITIES

Electric cooperatives maintain more power lines per consumer than other types of electric utilities.

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*Even though we serve fewer consumers per mile of line, we will always go the extra mile for our members.*

### Lineworkers Are Wired For Service

In the quiet hours before dawn breaks, while many of us are still nestled in our beds, lineworkers begin their day, often clad in flame-resistant clothing, safety goggles, rubber gloves and thick, heavy boots.

They are the individuals who epitomize dedication to service in its purest form. As we celebrate Lineworker Appreciation Day on April 14, this is an important moment to reflect on the essential role they play in our daily lives.

Amid towering utility poles and power lines, lineworkers exhibit a strength that goes far beyond the physical. Whether battling inclement weather, troubleshooting technical problems or navigating treacherous heights, lineworkers demonstrate resilience and a quiet determination to keep our lights on, our homes comfortable, and our communities connected.

Agralite Electric Cooperative crews travel across our four-county service territory, building, maintaining, and repairing parts of our local system. Their extraordinary skills ensure our homes remain connected to the grid, businesses stay operational, and emergency services remain accessible—a lifeline that connects us all.

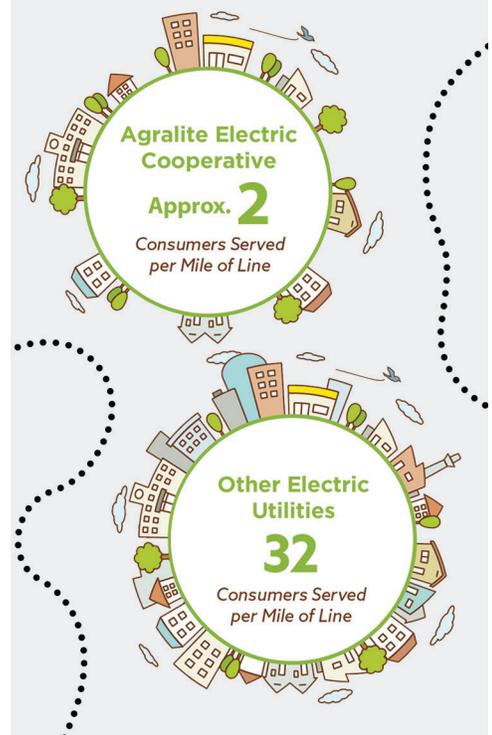
In moments of crisis, when the lights go out and we find ourselves in the dark, lineworkers emerge as beacons of hope. 1046500 Their swift response restores normalcy, offering reassurance in times of uncertainty. Whether repairing storm-ravaged power lines or ensuring continuity during emergencies, their unwavering commitment illuminates life when we need it most.

Agralite Electric Cooperative lineworkers also answer the call beyond the boundaries of home. Our crews travel to fellow co-ops, near or far, when widespread outages occur and additional support is needed. Cooperation among cooperatives is one of our seven guiding principles, and no one embodies this core commitment better than lineworkers.

This month, as we celebrate the remarkable men who ensure reliable power, let's recognize their unwavering dedication to the local communities they serve.

The next time you flip a switch, please take a moment to remember those who make it possible—lineworkers, who are wired for service and dedicated to illuminating life.

**APRIL 14**  
**LINWORKER APPRECIATION DAY**



**Service ANNIVERSARY 5 YEARS**

**Mitch Koosmann**  
Agralite Lineman

Thank you for your dedicated years of service to Agralite Electric Cooperative!

# MOVE OVER

## To Keep Utility Workers Safe



Agralite Electric Cooperative utility employees work on overhead and underground power lines, electric substations, use heavy equipment, and check electric meters every day.

Electricity can be extremely dangerous and is one of the biggest hazards our employees encounter, but another big threat is traffic.

### DRIVING NEAR WORK ZONES

Oftentimes, utility employees must park alongside a road, turn on flashing lights, and place traffic cones in the roadway as an indication to passing motorists that work is being done.

Doing so creates a work zone. It's important to move over when you see flashing lights to keep our co-op workers safe. Failing to do so endangers the lives of utility workers and other emergency responders.

### MOVE OVER LAW

Minnesota's Ted Foss Move Over Law states that when traveling on a road with two or more lanes, drivers must move one full lane away from stopped emergency vehicles with their flashing lights activated. Most drivers are aware of this law as it applies to police officers, firefighters, and ambulances, but it also applies to utility, maintenance, and construction vehicles.

### DRIVING IN A ONE LANE WORK ZONE? REDUCE SPEED.

Working along roadways can be dangerous and moving over is the law. If it's not possible to move over one full lane, drivers are required to reduce their speed until their vehicle has completely passed the parked or stopped vehicle.

**Agralite Electric Cooperative employees are working to ensure that our communities have reliable electric service.**

Please follow safe driving practices when you see them and move over so that everyone can go home safely at the end of each day.



## Minnesota Homeowners Beware: Hidden Costs And Solar Scams Are On The Rise



When it comes to solar energy, not all that glitters is green. While many Minnesota homeowners look to solar panels as a way to save money and reduce their carbon footprint, some are finding themselves trapped in financial headaches instead. A Minnesota attorney general investigation recently uncovered troubling practices in the rooftop solar industry, with homeowners blindsided by massive hidden fees buried in the fine print of contracts.

Adding to the urgency, the Department of the Treasury has issued a consumer advisory warning of rising solar scams, urging homeowners nationwide to be vigilant against high-pressure tactics and deceptive offers. This spotlight on industry pitfalls serves as a wake-up call for Minnesotans eager to go solar.

### The Reality of Solar Scams

The promise of clean energy can make some sales pitches sound too good to be true — and unfortunately, they often are. Many companies advertise solar as a way to “eliminate” your electric bill, but customers frequently find that’s not the case. Others exaggerate the ease of securing tax credits and rebates or downplay the long-term costs associated with financing.

The Minnesota attorney general’s findings also reveal another common problem: undisclosed fees that saddle homeowners with unexpected financial burdens after installation. These practices don’t just cost money — they can erode trust in an industry that’s vital to a sustainable energy future.

### Protect Yourself Before You Install

Fortunately, Minnesotans can take steps to avoid falling victim to solar scams or hidden costs. Start by contacting your electric cooperative or other electric utility before installation. They can provide impartial advice about the feasibility of solar for your property, as well as information on interconnection requirements and local incentives.

*Here are additional steps to protect yourself:*

**Do Your Research:** Investigate the company’s reputation. Look for reviews, check their standing with the Better Business Bureau, and ask for references from previous customers.

- **Scrutinize the Contract:** Read contracts thoroughly. Pay close attention to financing terms, interest rates, and potential fees. Confirm the availability of any promised tax credits or rebates with your utility or government agencies.
- **Avoid Pressure Tactics:** A reputable company will give you time to evaluate your options and won’t rely on scare tactics to rush your decision.

### What to Do If You’ve Been Scammed

If you believe you’ve fallen victim to a solar scam, it’s important to report it. Contact the Minnesota Attorney General’s Office at (651) 296-3353 or file a complaint online. You can also report fraud to the Federal Trade Commission at ReportFraud.FTC.gov, which offers additional resources for consumers.

### The Bright Side — With Caution

Despite these risks, solar energy remains a valuable tool for reducing energy costs and protecting the environment. But as the Department of the Treasury’s advisory reminds us, due diligence is critical. By staying informed, choosing a contractor with a proven track record, and asking questions until you’re confident about the investment, Minnesotans can embrace solar energy’s benefits while avoiding costly pitfalls.

Let’s use this moment to ensure that the transition to clean energy is as positive and empowering as it’s meant to be — for every family and every community.

*Written by Darrick Moe, President & CEO at Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA).*

## Director Nominations Now Open For Districts 3 & 4

Would you like to serve as a Director on the Agralite Electric Cooperative Board for your district? Agralite Electric Cooperative is governed by a seven-member Board of Directors elected by our membership. The cooperative's service territory is divided into seven districts, with each district represented by a director who resides in that district. Directors elected serve a three-year term.

This year we will have an election for directors for Districts 3 and 4.

**District 3 includes the townships of:** Darnen, Hodges, Horton, Moore, Walden, Blue Mounds, Hoff, and Langhei.

**District 4 includes the townships of:** Minnewaska, Glenwood, Barsness, Chippewa Falls, Bangor, Rolling Forks, and Gilchrist.

Any member meeting the qualifications as specified in the Bylaws of Agralite Electric Cooperative may become a candidate for election to the Board by submitting a written petition for nomination with the signatures of no less than 15 members who are residents of the district for which the election is being held. All voting will be done by mail. Ballots will be mailed to all Agralite voting members on record in these districts before the Annual Meeting. The election takes place at the Annual Meeting on June 10, 2025.

*Please call 320-843-4150 or stop by our office if you have questions on the nominating process or about becoming a director, and to pick up a petition for nomination.*

**Petitions are due to the office no later than 4:30 pm on Thursday, May 1st, 2025.**

### COLD WEATHER RULE & ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM NOTICE

*In accordance with Minnesota's Cold Weather Rule, electric service cannot be disconnected for nonpayment between October 1 and April 30 if electricity is the primary heat source and ALL of the following statements apply:*

- Your household income is at or below 50% of the state median household income. Income may be verified on forms provided by Agralite Electric Cooperative or by the local energy assistance provider.
- You enter into and make reasonably timely payments under a payment agreement that considers the financial resources of the household.
- You receive referrals to energy assistance, weatherization, conservation, or other programs likely to reduce your energy bills from Agralite Electric Cooperative.

#### Minnesota's Cold Weather Rule does not completely stop winter disconnects

*Before disconnecting electric service to residential members between October 1 and April 30, Agralite Electric Cooperative must provide:*

- A 30-day notice of disconnection;
- A statement of members' rights and responsibilities;
- A list of local energy assistance providers;
- Forms on which to request Cold Weather Rule protection; and
- A statement explaining available payment plans and other options to continue service.

#### Energy Assistance Program

The Energy Assistance Program (EAP) is a federally funded program through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which helps low-income renters and homeowners pay for home heating costs and furnace repairs. Household income must be at or below 50% of the state median income (\$58,793 for a family of four) to qualify for benefits. Applications must be received or postmarked by May 31, 2025.

*To learn more about the EAP program or to apply for assistance:*

- Visit the Minnesota Department of Commerce Energy Assistance website, <https://mn.gov/commerce/consumers/consumer-assistance/energy-assistance/>, for more details and to access the application portal.
- Contact your county EAP service provider for additional information and assistance.
- Agralite Electric Cooperative exists because of you, and we are dedicated to the people and communities we serve. If you are having difficulty paying your electric bill and do not qualify for either of these programs, please contact our billing department to set up a payment plan.

**Prairie 5 CAC 320-269-7976 West Central CAC 800-492-4805  
Heartland CAC 320-235-0850**

## Attention Teachers

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](http://lignite.com/teachers-seminar)

Held at Bismarck State College campus in Bismarck, ND.

**FREE** to attend (refundable deposit required).

Tour energy production sites and get a close-up look at the role the lignite plays in North Dakota's economy.



## Need CE Hours?

**June 9-12, 2025**



*This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

## CURRENT AGRALITE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kathy Draeger, Clinton  
*District 1*

Jeff Hufford, Morris  
*District 2 - Secretary/Treasurer*

Bennett Zierke, Hancock  
*District 3*

Steve Nelson, Starbuck  
*District 4*

Orvin Gronseth, Murdock  
*District 5 - Vice President*

Andrea Thomson, Benson  
*District 6*

Warren Rau, Appleton  
*District 7 - President*

## MINUTES OF MEETING BOARD OF DIRECTORS February 2025

Board Chairman Warren Rau called a meeting of the Board of Directors of Agralite Electric Cooperative to order at 8:30 a.m., February 27, 2025. All members of the Board were present. The agenda, minutes of the last meeting, the monthly disbursements, the payment of capital credits of deceased members, Work Order #578, and January Special Equipment were approved.

Jonathan Messner, Manager of Member Services, reported on activities of his department for the month. He discussed load control for the month. He stated that Charlie Molenaar was selected as the Youth Tour Delegate. He discussed the Basin scholarship.

Stephanie Wroblewski, Manager of Finance/CFO, discussed margins for the month of January. 1643500 She discussed Capital Credit allocations and retirements, and the New CFO Orientation she attended.

The financials were given by Stephanie with a PowerPoint presentation.

Tom Hoffman, Manager of Engineering & Operations, reported on activities of his department for the month. He discussed line crew projects and outages for the month. He gave an update on the new substations and related projects. Tom brought forth 2025 Substation



## SPRING EFFICIENCY WORD SEARCH

Did you know there are several ways to save energy during spring months? Read the energy-saving tips below to learn more, then find the bolded words in the puzzle below.

E	S	W	Z	S	V	M	P	A	S	M	M	E	Z	R
Y	C	T	Z	I	T	I	B	S	R	D	N	O	L	A
F	K	J	H	Y	N	X	S	U	E	X	U	N	P	I
P	R	K	N	G	R	E	N	F	G	Q	L	J	T	Z
G	Z	I	K	D	I	M	P	E	R	E	X	W	A	S
Q	L	X	L	F	Y	L	P	I	A	Z	Q	C	E	D
F	V	Z	N	X	S	F	D	G	H	U	Z	E	G	X
E	N	E	R	G	Y	M	I	E	C	K	R	N	F	G
B	H	V	J	E	O	F	E	I	L	T	I	C	Q	S
K	P	T	Q	J	J	C	D	L	E	H	G	C	V	I
Q	Z	N	N	C	S	V	Q	D	D	W	P	N	E	M
T	P	T	T	V	L	I	A	U	P	W	X	P	I	F
L	D	R	O	J	A	H	H	I	Q	B	F	F	U	F
C	T	G	B	G	S	P	P	T	G	I	W	K	M	Y
S	W	O	D	N	I	W	R	S	K	M	W	Y	U	K

- Use **LED lights** around your home. LEDs use 75% less energy than traditional incandescent light bulbs.
- Plant **shade trees** around your home to block unwanted heat from the sun.
- Unplug devices and electronics that consume energy when they're not in use, like phone **chargers**.
- Seal air leaks around exterior doors and **windows** to save energy and keep your home comfortable.
- Ceiling fans cool people, not rooms. To save **energy**, turn them off when you leave the room.

Maintenance contract, 2025 Pole Inspection contract, and 2025 Pad-Mount Inspection contract with STAR Energy Services and the Board approved them. Tom brought forth 2025 Underground Construction contract with Integrity Contracting and the Board approved it. Tom brought forth 2025 ROW Clearing contract and 2025 Foliar Spraying contract with Carr's Tree Service and the Board approved them.

Tom gave the safety report.

Aaron Clayton, CPA with Eide Bailly, joined the meeting via Zoom to present the 2024 Audit Report. The Board approved the 2024 Audit Report as presented.

Jenny Stryhn, General Manager/CEO, reviewed her report to the board. She

discussed recent meetings she attended including the East River Managers Meeting, Basin Managers Meeting, GRE Managers Meeting, and the MREA Annual Meeting. She gave an update on the new headquarters facility project.

The Board reviewed the composition of the seven districts as per the Bylaws and the Board declared the districts as equal.

A roundtable discussion was held including the topics of new loads on the Agralite system and the MREA Annual Meeting.

The March board meeting was set for the 27th.

Being no further business came before the Board, the meeting was adjourned.