



Photo: Paulette Jibben, February Calendar Photo Contest Winner

Agralite Electric Cooperative NEWSLETTER

February 2024

EMPOWERING

communities with
innovative, sustainable
energy solutions

FOR OVER

80 YEARS

Manager's Article by Jenny Stryhn, General Manager

As a cooperative, Agralite Electric Cooperative has a strong sense of commitment to youth and community. This month, I would like to highlight the exciting scholarship and leadership opportunities that Agralite has available to students in our cooperative territory.

Basin Electric Power Cooperative, a wholesale power supplier to Agralite, is again offering a generous scholarship. The Basin Electric Power Cooperative (BEPC) Scholarship Program will award more than 180 scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 each. Agralite will award one \$1,000 scholarship. The scholarships must be used for educational costs, and the student must enter college in the fall of the school year for which the scholarship is given. Checks will be made payable to the school, and will be distributed to the school by BEPC. Scholarships will be distributed in August. Dependent children (including adopted or step-children) of member-system consumers and dependent children of member cooperative employees are eligible. The applicant must also be a U.S. citizen and enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time undergraduate course of study at an accredited, two-year or four-year college, university, or vocational/technical school. Recipients are selected on the basis of academic record, potential to succeed, leadership, and participation in school and community activities, honors, work experience, a statement of education and career goals, and an outside appraisal. The Basin Scholarship application is due no later than February 21st, 2024.



In addition, Agralite Electric Cooperative is entering its 9th year of its annual scholarship program. This program is funded in part from unclaimed capital credits and in part through administration proceeds from the Rural Economic Development Loan program. This program is available to the four-county region that Agralite provides service to—Big Stone, Pope, Stevens, and Swift counties. New this year, the cooperative will award ten \$2,000 scholarships. Two of the scholarship awards are intended for persons interested in becoming an


electrician or electrical lineworker. The Agralite scholarships are due no later than April 5th, 2024. Applicants who applied for the Basin Electric Power Cooperative scholarship may also apply for the Agralite scholarship. Winners will be drawn randomly pending a completed application. *Article continues on page 2*

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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 A.M. – 4:30 P.M.
Closed February 19th
for Presidents Day



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.

Energy Saving Tip:



Area rugs are an easy solution to cold floors.

Adding area rugs to hard-surface flooring can add warmth to any room and keep your feet cozy on cold winter days.

Choose rugs made from wool or other natural fibers and plush or high-pile textures for the most insulation. Place rugs in areas where you need warmth, like the foot of the bed or under a coffee table. Area rugs can enhance the aesthetic of your home and keep you cozier.



Call Day or Night
1.888.884.3887

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

February Energy Payment is due
March 20.*

*We accept Visa, Discover & Mastercard.

Manager's Article *continued*

New this year, Agralite Electric Cooperative is taking applications for the annual Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. Agralite will select a delegate to represent the cooperative. 1268800 They will join hundreds of other students from across the country—all expenses paid—for one incredible week at our nation's capital. The Youth Tour group will explore D.C., spend a day on Capitol Hill, meet their congressional leaders, and see our government in action. The students will learn first-hand about our government and its history, their responsibilities as citizens, and how they work together.

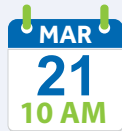


To obtain the forms and applications for this trip, please visit www.agralite.coop, reach out to your school counselor, or contact the Agralite Electric Cooperative office for applications and all other necessary information. Agralite takes great pride in helping develop rural leaders in our region. These scholarship programs are another way Agralite recognizes achievements by the young people in the communities we serve!

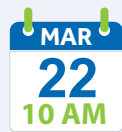
2024 Power Hour Events

Do you want to meet the cooperative's new CEO, discuss the recent rate adjustment, or ask questions about our plans for the cooperative headquarters? Join us for our new 2024 Power Hour events. Power Hour events provide members with the opportunity to meet their directors and staff, 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.

Upcoming Power Hour Events



CHS
31999 US 75
Clinton, MN

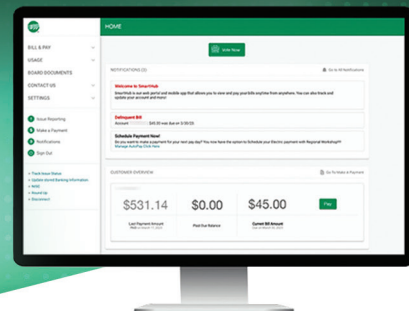


Camp Lake Town Hall
Danelz Ave.
Swift Falls, MN
(Next to Brink's Beer Joint)

Coffee and rolls will be provided. Our 2024 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. Visit our website or call 320-843-4150 if you have any questions regarding these events. We look forward to seeing you there!

SMART MANAGEMENT. SMART LIFE. SMARTHUB.

NEWLY REDESIGNED
SMARTHUB



Save time and money by managing your account at anytime from anywhere.

Director Nominations Now Open for Districts 1 & 2

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 1 and 2. 1391100

District 1 includes the townships of: Almond, Upper Prior, Lower Prior, Malta, Otre, Big Stone, Upper Odessa, Lower Odessa, and Ortonville.

District 2 includes the townships of: Donnelly, Rendsville, Swan Lake, Pepperton, Morris, Framnas, Baker, Scott, Everglade, Eldorado, Graceville, and Moonshine.

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 4, 2024.

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, April 25th, 2024.

**AGRALITE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
PETITION FOR NOMINATION**

To: Jeff Hufford, Board Secretary

I _____, would like to be a candidate to serve as a director for Agralite Electric Cooperative representing District No. _____. I hereby certify that I meet the requirements set forth in Article III, Section 2 of the Bylaws of the Cooperative and I request that my name be placed on the ballot that will be mailed to the members with the notice of the annual meeting of the Cooperative to be held on June 4, 2024. I respectfully file this petition with a minimum of fifteen (15) members of the Cooperative who are residents of District No. _____ and who support my candidacy.

Signature of Candidate

We, the undersigned, certify that we are members of Agralite Electric Cooperative and that we reside in District No. _____. We are familiar with the requirement for serving as a director of the Cooperative and we believe that the above-named candidate meets the requirements to become and/or remain a director of Agralite Electric Cooperative representing District No. _____. By our signatures below we show our support for this Petition for Nomination. We further attest that, to the best of our knowledge and belief, the above-named candidate is a member of Agralite Electric Cooperative and is a resident of District No. _____.

	Printed Name	Signature	Address	Phone #	Date
1.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
7.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____



2024 Residential Rebates

ENERGY STAR® Appliance

\$75 for Refrigerator or Freezer
(must recycle old one)
\$25 Electric Dryer
\$25 for Dehumidifier

Battery-Powered Yard Tools

Lawn Mower: \$50
Snow Blower: \$50
Chainsaw: \$25
Leaf Blower: \$25
Trimmer or Weed Whip: \$25

Check out our website for a full listing of our 2024 rebates:

www.agralite.coop



Attention High School Juniors or Seniors of Agralite Electric Cooperative!

APPLY FOR A **TRIP OF A LIFETIME**



JUNE 18 TO 23, 2024
AN ALL-EXPENSE-PAID TRIP TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

WHAT IS YOUTH TOUR?

Agralite Electric Cooperative is taking applications for the annual Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. This year, Minnesota will be in D.C. from June 18-23, 2024. Delegates will tour monuments, visit museums, meet with elected officials, learn about the cooperative business model, and make new friends from all over Minnesota and 43 other states!

HOW TO APPLY

- Applicants must be a junior or senior in high school.
- You and your parents or guardian must be served by Agralite Electric Cooperative.
- The deadline to apply is February 21, 2024.



The best part? It's FREE! Everything is covered by Agralite Electric Cooperative!
It truly is the trip of a lifetime.

Check out our website for more information or contact Marissa Chevalier at 320-843-4150 or mchevalier@agralite.com with any additional questions.

LEARN MORE AT AGRALITE.COOP

EMPOWER



Service ANNIVERSARY **20 YEARS**
Jeremy Schauer
 Agralite Lineman



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

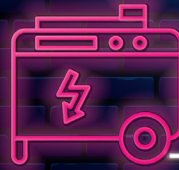
WHAT IS backfeed?

Backfeed happens when a person connects their portable generator to a wall outlet, which allows power to flow in reverse – that is, the alternate power source feeds energy back through their home's electrical system, their meter and back into the power lines.

Avoid deadly backfeed and help keep lineworkers safe.

Potentially deadly backfeed can also happen with permanently installed generators that are not used or installed correctly. They should be wired into your home by a qualified electrician, who will install either an automatic or manual transfer switch, depending on the generator. The job of this switch is to transfer a power source safely from its primary source to a backup source.

To keep utility crews safe, never plug a portable generator directly into a wall outlet or electrical system, and ensure transfer switches are professionally installed and working properly. Electric lineworkers thank you in advance.



Learn more at: [Safe Electricity.org](https://www.SafeElectricity.org)

Congratulations ON YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS

Mitch Koosmann
 Agralite Journeyman Lineman



Congratulations on completing your apprenticeship and earning your Journeyman Lineworker Certificate!

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 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.

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. 1357900
- 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, 2024.

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

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 December 2023

Board Chairman Warren Rau called a meeting of the Board of Directors of Agralite Electric Cooperative to order at 8:30 a.m., December 28, 2023. 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 #554, Work Order #555, and Special Equipment for November 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 discussed the 2024 Annual Meeting and the date was set for June 4, 2024. He discussed the Briggs generator program, MPCA generator reporting, and cookie days. He gave an update on the Mini Sota Children's Museum timeline. He brought forth updated rate policies due to the rate change effective January 1, 2024, and the Board approved them.

Stephanie Wroblewski, Manager of Finance/CFO, discussed margins for the month of November. She stated that the new mileage rate for 2024 is \$.67. 1539900 She stated that RUS approved the Revenue Deferral Plan. She brought forth an updated Co-op Credit Union Corporate Authorization Resolution and the Board approved it.

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 discussed the GRE transmission

WINTER SAFETY WORD SEARCH

Did you know most home fires happen during colder months? Play it safe this winter season.

Read the safety tips below, then find and circle the bolded words in the puzzle.



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

<p>Never overload electrical outlets with too many electronics.</p> <p>Test smoke and carbon monoxide alarms every month.</p> <p>Never leave a candle burning in an empty room.</p>	<p>Keep flammable items at least three feet away from a space heater.</p> <p>Extension cords should only be used temporarily. Damaged or frayed cords should be thrown away.</p>
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project. He discussed projects he has been working on including documentation for the storm event on July 25th for reimbursement from the State Department of Homeland Security and submitting a proposal for the second round of infrastructure grants

Tom gave the safety report.

Jenny Stryhn, General Manager/CEO, reviewed her report to the board. She discussed the East River meeting she attended and stated that the loan request for Abundant Ag was approved by the Board. She discussed the GRE, STAR Energy Services, and Mid-West meetings that she attended. She brought forth an Audit Engagement Letter from Eide Bailly and the Board approved it. She stated that Basin Electric Power

Cooperative's new CEO is Todd Brickhouse. She discussed potential donations to MREA and NRECA and it was tabled.

Jenny showed the headquarters potential building options PowerPoint from the November board meeting. A discussion was held. The Board approved moving forward with a new build at the current headquarters site.

A roundtable was held including discussions on a potential East River board seat and the Mid-West Electric Annual Meeting.

The January board meeting was set for the 25th.

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