

Photo: Virginia Sondrol, September Calendar Photo Contest Winner

NEWSLETTER

September 2026

Electricity Brings Everyday Value *by Jenny Stryhn, General Manager*

When it comes to electricity, we rarely think twice when we flip on a light switch, brew coffee in the morning, charge our phones or adjust the thermostat. We simply expect the power to be there—and that's how it should be because you are a member of Agralite Electric Cooperative, and reliably powering your life is our mission.

We know that many families across our local communities are feeling the impact of rising costs for everyday expenses. Groceries, gasoline, insurance, and other necessities cost more than they did just a few years ago. And because of that, we understand that every household is carefully considering where each dollar goes.

That's why I think it's important to occasionally step back and consider the value that electricity provides.

The average U.S. residential electric bill is about \$150 a month—roughly \$5 a day. I often think about what that \$5 provides. It's about the cost of a specialty coffee, yet electricity powers nearly every moment of our daily lives, often without us giving it a second thought. In fact, many typical purchases cost more than a day's worth of electricity. A fast-food combo meal averages about \$9, and a single movie ticket can cost around \$13.

For about \$5 a day, your refrigerator keeps food fresh around the clock. Your heating and cooling system helps keep your family comfortable through the seasons. Lights brighten your home after sunset. Appliances make cooking and cleaning easier. 862900 Devices stay charged so you can work, learn, communicate and stay connected with loved ones. When you think about everything electricity makes possible, it's one of the greatest values in the average household budget.

Even with electricity's exceptional value, we know every dollar matters. If you're looking for ways to lower your energy use, Agralite is here to help. Whether you need efficiency advice from our energy advisors, information about co-op rebates and load management programs, or answers to questions about your monthly bill, our team is always available.

Agralite is proud to be more than your electric provider. Because we're a cooperative, we're locally owned by you, the members we serve. That means every decision we make is guided by what's best for our community—not by outside shareholders.

Thank you for trusting us to power your home and your life. We're committed to providing everyday value for you and your family. With reliable and affordable power, you can make the most of every energy dollar.

EMPOWERING
communities

with innovative
and sustainable
energy solutions

FOR OVER
85
YEARS

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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



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

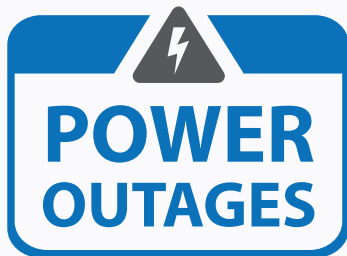
to Tracy Freese and Nicholas Ascheman for finding their account numbers in the July newsletter.

Energy Saving Tip:



September kicks off the fall shoulder season when cooler mornings and milder evenings often mean you can give your heating and cooling season a break. Open windows, use ceiling fans and enjoy the fresh air whenever temperatures allow. It's also the perfect time to schedule annual HVAC maintenance before colder weather arrives. Because demand is typically lower during the fall, heating and cooling professionals often have greater availability, making it easier to book an appointment. Regular maintenance can improve your system's efficiency, help prevent unexpected breakdowns, and keep your home comfortable all year long.

Source: Department of Energy



Call Day or Night
1.888.884.3887

Do not call the office for outages

September Energy Payment
is due October 20.*

*We accept Visa, Discover, and Mastercard.

Operation Round Up: Small Change, Big Impact

At Agralite Electric Cooperative, a few cents can make a meaningful difference. Through the Operation Round Up program, cooperative members help support charitable causes and emergency needs throughout the communities served by Agralite.

Operation Round Up allows participating members to have their monthly electric bill rounded up to the next whole dollar. The spare change, often just a few cents each month, is placed into a dedicated fund. While each individual contribution may seem small, together they create a powerful source of local support. The program was established to address charitable needs across the Agralite service area. Grants from the fund are awarded to individuals and organizations working to improve the quality of life, safety, and well-being of local residents. Eligible organizations must be charitable in nature and focused on meeting community needs.

An independent nine-member board, representing communities throughout Agralite's service territory, oversees the trust and evaluates grant applications. The board meets regularly to review requests and determine funding availability, ensuring contributions are distributed where they can have the greatest impact.

In addition to supporting community projects, Operation Round Up also provides assistance during emergencies. Unexpected events such as medical crises, accidents, or fires can create immediate financial hardship for individuals and families. Emergency grants can be approved quickly to help address urgent needs.

Agralite encourages members to participate in Operation Round Up by enrolling in the bill-rounding program and by sharing information about community needs that may qualify for grant assistance. Through the collective generosity of cooperative members, Operation Round Up continues to strengthen local communities and provide support when it is needed most.

Want to get involved? Members who would like to participate can contact Agralite Electric Cooperative to have their bills rounded up each month.

Do you know a nonprofit organization in our service territory that would benefit from a grant? Apply today! Community organizations and nonprofit groups may apply by completing and returning an application form. Applications can be found at www.agralite.coop under the Community tab.



Unclaimed Capital Credits

Agralite is trying to return Capital Credits to former members who are no longer at their last address on file with us. If you know someone who is on this list, please take a moment to let them know or to let us know. Past members listed may claim their capital credit refund by contacting our office at 320-843-4150. 1296500 You can also search for other Unclaimed Capital Credits on our website at www.agralite.coop/capital-credits. Capital Credits belong to our members and we hope we can return the credits to their owners!

Unsure what to do with capital credit checks received from us or don't want to hassle with them? Donating those funds to Operation Round Up is always an option, where you can help the community that you live in.

Unclaimed Capital Credit List

Anderson, Larry - Grand Rapids, MN	Johnson, Greg - Long Prairie, MN
Angstman, Edward - Maplewood, MN	Johnson, Steven - Silver Lake, MN
Aslakson, Floyd - Benson, MN	Kaftan, Thomas - Chicago, IL
Bank One - Menomonee Falls, WI	Kieffer, Electric - Morris, MN
Barrett, Joseph - Chaska, MN	Kielhold, Lyle - Sioux City, IA
Bredeson, Edwin - Devils Lake, ND	Kittelson, Andrea - Glenwood, MN
Castin, Eliseo - Willmar, MN	Knutson, Adelia - Ortonville, MN
Christensen, Ivan - Montevideo, MN	Lawson, Joshua - Morris, MN
Crosby, Carol - Montevideo, MN	Lenders Asset Management - Littleton, CO
Darrow, H L - Soldotna, AK	Luthi, Reuben - Washington, IL
Decamp, Corey - Alberta, MN	Maijala, Ashely - Alexandria, MN
Erickson, Dennis - St. Paul, MN	Meier, Lynn - Dodge Center, MN
Erickson, Maynard - Morris, MN	Mills, Fred - Council Blfs, IA
First, Preston - Spring Lake Park, MN	Minnesota Towers Systems Inc - Channing, MI
Forbord, Dennis - Alexandria, MN	Mithaugen, Jeanne - Starbuck, MN
Frahm, Jason - Ortonville, MN	Mithun, Carter - Alexandria, MN
Freeze, Clifford - Brooten, MN	Morrill, Cecil - Clinton, MN
Froslic, Michael - Ortonville, MN	Nietzel, Lorraine - Benson, MN
Goff, Donna - Benson, MN	Nordby, Arnold - Morris, MN
Good Shepherd EV Lutheran - Big Stone City, SD	Powers, Pat - Correll, MN
Haase, Rose - Montevideo, MN	Raaf, Utonia - Ortonville, MN
Hamilton, Michael - Sartell, MN	Reuss, Warren - Benson, MN
Hamner, David - Clinton, MN	Schellberg, Carla - Wheaton, MN
Hanson, Russell - Benson, MN	Schmidgall, Janet - Morris, MN
Harrison, James - Benson, MN	Schultz, Victor - Appleton, MN
Haugen, Leroy - Dawson, MN	Sealey, Archie - Ortonville, MN
Hecker, George - Chokio, MN	Soo Line RR - Glenwood, MN
Heicmovick, Rick - Rockville, MN	St. Stephen State Bank - St. Cloud, MN
Heinecke, Henry Jr - Barstow, CA	Temple Inland Mortgage Co - Austin, TX
Hoff, Oral - Brooten, MN	Tolifson, Brian - Waubun, MN
Hoiland, Maurice - Scottsdale, AZ	Van Eps, Darren - Morris, MN
Holl, Treas Aeneas - Hoffman, MN	Vosberg, Mark - Wilmot, SD
Hove, Josephine - Staples, MN	Wewley, Kathy - Cyrus, MN
Hughes, Anne - Hopkins, MN	

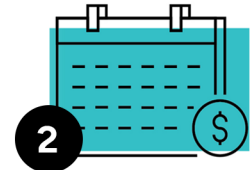


HOW CAPITAL CREDITS WORK

Electric co-ops are not-for-profit and operate at cost. Capital credits are a financial benefit of co-op membership.



1 Members pay their electric bills, and we track their business with us each month.



2 The co-op pays operating expenses throughout the year and allocates any leftover revenue as capital credits.



3 When financial conditions permit, the co-op board votes to retire (pay) capital credits to the members.



4 We send members their share of capital credits as a bill credit or check.

Switch and Save

Save Time and Money
with Auto Pay and
Paperless Billing



How it works

Members who enroll in Auto Pay and/or Paperless Billing through SmartHub will receive a monthly bill credit of \$.50 for each program you enroll in. If you enroll in both, you will earn a \$1 monthly bill credit. Enrollees are entered into a yearly drawing for a Solo Stove.

- Pay your electric bill online anytime 24/7/365. It's convenient, free, and simple to use.
- Check your current and past monthly energy usage
- Receive emails regarding your bill
- View current and past billing statements
- Go paperless
- Set up automatic payments

Call 320-843-4150 with any questions or if you need help enrolling.

Visit www.agralite.coop and click on **Pay Bill to get started!**

TIPS TO AVOID ENERGY SCAMS



Your smart thermostat, security camera, video doorbell, and other connected devices make life more convenient, but they can also be targets for cybercriminals if they're not properly secured.

Change default usernames and passwords for each device and enable multi-factor authentication when available.

Keep your devices up to date by installing software and firmware updates, which often include important security fixes. Secure your home Wi-Fi network with a strong password and modern encryption. A few simple steps can help keep your personal information and smart devices safe from scammers.

Source: CISA



During Harvest: Know And Teach Electrical Safety On The Farm

Harvest means long hours, increased stress, and tight schedules. Because of that, Safe Electricity reminds farmers that it only takes a split second for someone to come into contact with electricity. 1555200 From your most seasoned worker to your least, your spouse, family member, or ag-related worker is at risk of injury or death due to electrical contact.

To help keep those who work or do business on your farm safe not only during harvest but year-round, follow these electrical safety tips:

- Educate everyone that potential electrical hazards include both direct and indirect contact with an overhead power line or pole. Indirect contact (coming too close to a power line or pole), could cause electricity to arc/jump.
- Both direct and indirect contact can change electricity's path to ground. Once that path changes, the stray voltage can energize anything in its path, such as a truck, a tractor, an extension, the ground, or a person.
- Start every workday with a safety meeting. Discuss all operations for the day and go over power line/pole locations. Emphasize safety above speed to everyone on the farm, especially during busy seasons like harvest.
- Never assume that because someone grew up on the farm that they understand the potential of stray voltage or other electrical hazards. In fact, do not assume this for anyone. For example, teens who have moved irrigation pipes to free an animal have been seriously hurt or electrocuted.
- Encourage drivers and operators to position grain augers in their lowest position or to lower truck bed boxes before moving. Be especially cautious of overhead lines when using augers in the field to load trucks on the road.
- Review potential hazards with grain/dump truck drivers and spot them when possible. Also:
 - Encourage drivers to load/unload all materials away from overhead power lines.
 - Even better, create a dedicated drop zone away from all overhead power lines.
 - Post 10-foot clearance rule and "look up and look out" reminders.
- If you see a hydraulic truck bed, an extension, or other equipment within 10 feet of or is in contact with a power line, utility pole, or guy wire, instruct the driver to stay in the cab. Call 9-1-1 to have your electric cooperative or utility dispatched to de-energize the power. Give instructions from 50 feet away and inform everyone else to stay back.
- Know how to instruct someone to properly exit a cab if necessary due to fire (do so from at least 50 feet away). The person should cross their arms close to their chest and make a solid jump out of the cab. Then, the person should make deliberate hops, with feet together, hopping away as far as they can. When people walk or run in an area with stray voltage, they could be exposed to two different voltages at the same time and become electricity's path to the ground. This is known as step potential. [Article continues on page 5](#)



During Harvest: Know And Teach Electrical Safety On The Farm

Continued

- Encourage folding and unfolding to be done well into the field, not at the field's edge, which could have power lines running next to it.
- Do not store irrigation pipes, hay bales, machinery or anything else under power lines.
- Be aware of power line locations in the proximity of grain bins. Always load and unload on the side without a power line. Contact your electric cooperative or utility with questions about grain bin power line clearance/OSHA regulations.

Contact your electric cooperative or utility about damaged or downed power lines or poles. Utility crews would much rather check out an issue than risk a potentially dangerous situation. [Learn more at safeelectricity.org](http://safeelectricity.org).



POWER LINE SAFETY for Drone Pilots

POWER LINES AND DRONES DON'T MIX

Drones are helpful tools in many industries, including inspection, construction, agriculture, emergency response and photography. But near power lines, they can be hazardous.

RISKS:

- ⚠ Power outages.
- ⚠ Electrical hazards.
- ⚠ Falling debris.
- ⚠ Injury or damage.

BEFORE YOU FLY:

- Check the site.
- Look for lines, poles, guy wires and substations.
- Watch the weather.
- Coordinate with utility providers when needed.

DURING FLIGHT:

- Keep your drone in sight.
- Stay a safe distance from power lines, substations and equipment.
- Be extra cautious when near power infrastructure.

IF YOUR DRONE CRASHES or gets tangled in power equipment:

- ✗ Do not retrieve it. Stay clear.
- ✗ Contact the local electric utility.
- ✗ Call 911 if needed.

Learn more at:

 **Safe
Electricity.org**



LOOK UP. LOOK OUT. FLY SMART.

Agralite Electric Cooperative

2027 Calendar Photo Contest

Back By Popular Demand!

Agralite is seeking local photographs for our 2027 calendar contest. Photos should be of a landscape, natural element, or interesting view from within the Agralite service territory. We want you to share the diversity and wonder of our local landscape.

Photo entries are limited to Agralite members and must be submitted by October 2nd, 2026.

Digital photos only. You must specify the subject of the photo and where it was taken. Please include your contact information, account number, phone number, and address in your submission.

Selected photos will receive a \$15 bill credit. Cover photo will receive a \$30 bill credit. Voting will be done on Agralite's Facebook page in October. Please limit 5 photo submissions per member - 1 winning photo per member.

Submit Your Photos To:
mchevalier@agralite.com

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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.

CURRENT AGRALITE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kathy Draeger, Clinton
District 1

Jeff Hufford, Morris
District 2 - Secretary / Treasurer

Bennett Zierke, Hancock
District 3 - Vice President

Steve Nelson, Starbuck
District 4

Dave Barrett, Murdock
District 5

Clay Molden, Danvers
District 6

Warren Rau, Appleton
District 7 - President

MINUTES OF MEETING BOARD OF DIRECTORS

July 2026

Board Chairman Warren Rau called a meeting of the Board of Directors of Agralite Electric Cooperative to order at 8:30 a.m., July 30, 2026. 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 #602, and Work Order #603 were approved.

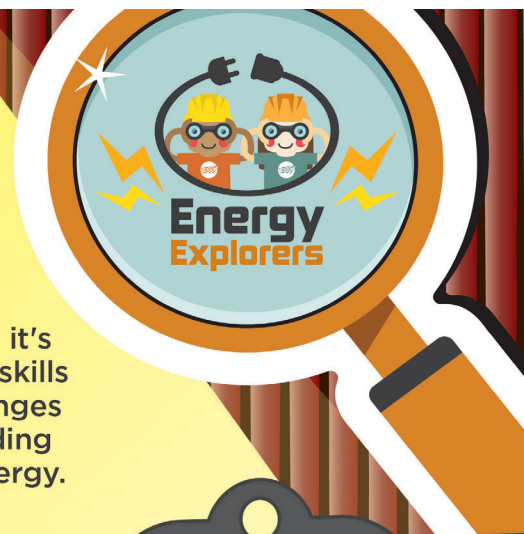
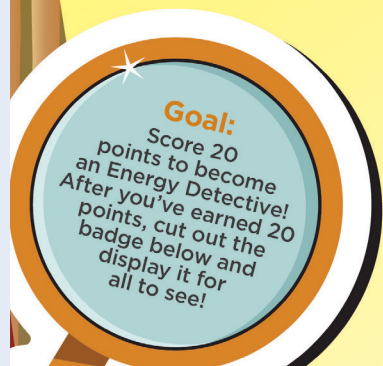
Jenny Stryhn reported on activities for the Member Services department for the month. She discussed load control for the month. She stated that Aaron Friehl has been hired for the open electrician position and his first day is August 3rd. She discussed Battery Energy Storage and Distributed Generation.

Stephanie Wroblewski, Manager of Finance/CFO, reported on activities of her department for the month. She discussed margins for the month of June. She discussed the 2025 Key Ratio Trend Analysis from CFC. She brought forth Form 990 Tax Return and the Board approved it. She stated that the MN paid mileage rate reimbursement has been changed to 76 cents. She brought forth revised Policy 527 Paid Family & Medical Leave and the Board approved it.

The financials were given by Stephanie with a PowerPoint presentation.

Energy Detective Challenge

School is back in session, and it's time to put your observation skills to work! Complete the challenges below and earn points by finding ways your family can save energy.



SCAVENGER HUNT

COMPLETED

- A light is left on in an empty room (2 points) ☐
- A smart or programmable thermostat (4 points) ☐
- A ceiling fan spinning in a room where no one is spending time (2 points) ☐
- A charger plugged in with nothing connected to it (2 points) ☐
- An ENERGY STAR® label on an appliance (3 points) ☐
- A window or door left open or cracked when the heating/cooling system is on (3 points) ☐

MISSIONS

COMPLETED

- Turn off the lights when you leave a room (3 points) ☐
- Open blinds or curtains during the day instead of turning on a light (3 points) ☐
- Unplug a charger that isn't being used (3 points) ☐
- Remind family members to close the refrigerator door quickly (3 points) ☐
- Help your family create a "lights out" check before bedtime (4 points) ☐

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 Stevens Milk Plant and showed a video of the progress at the Darnen Substation. He showed pictures from an electrical safety demo Agralite participated in for Youth Tractor and Farm Safety.

Tom gave the safety report.

Michael Cramer, Stearns Electric Association's District 3 Director, joined the meeting to discuss his interest in running for the MREA District 3 Board seat.

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, and the GRE Strategic Planning session. She discussed the proposed Basin Amended Bylaws.

Director Rau will be the Basin Annual Meeting voting delegate, and Director Zierke will be the alternate.

Director Rau will be the NRECA Annual and Regional Meeting voting delegate.

A roundtable discussion was held discussing nuclear energy. 1640801

The August board meeting was set for the 27th.

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