



# CURRENT CONNECTION

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

BI-Monthly Publication of Crow Wing Power September | October 2023 Volume 75 Number 7

## Maximize the Inflation Reduction Act with Home Energy Upgrades >>>

As valued members of our electric cooperative, we want to share information about the new Federal Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) passed last fall and help you leverage its benefits to improve your home's efficiencies. The IRA presents an excellent opportunity to enhance your home's energy efficiency while saving money on taxes and monthly energy expenses.

The IRA was introduced as a response to the economic challenges many Americans face, and it aims to provide financial relief by offering tax credits for energy-efficient upgrades. Most incentives start from improvements made in 2023 and are planned to continue through 2032.

Where to start – it's probably important that you create your own potential energy improvement plan by starting out with a home energy assessment. Crow Wing Power's member service representatives are trained to do home energy assessments and can help homeowners find opportunities for home improvements. Typically home assessments can be done during their slower work demand times (like after summer construction season).

**Weather Stripping, Insulation, and Upgrading Doors and Windows:** Properly sealing your home against air leaks, insulating, and upgrading energy-efficient windows and doors is a great first step. Measures you take that reduce home energy waste are eligible for a 30% tax credit up to an aggregate maximum credit of \$1,200 annually. Example: upgrade exterior doors to high efficient Energy Star® models and get a tax credit of 30% of the cost up to \$500. Homeowners can do a little each year and receive the annual credits for the next nine years.

**Heat Pumps:** Heat pumps, in particular Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs), are becoming very popular because they are three to five times more efficient than other types of heating and cooling methods, thanks to their energy-efficient heat transfer technology. The IRA allows you to a tax credit up to \$2,000 annually and costs can include labor for installation of heat pumps.

**Solar Panels and Renewable Energy:** Investing in solar panels or other renewable energy sources are eligible for 30% tax credits.

**Electric Vehicle Purchases:** There are new federal tax credits for both new and used EVs. They are tied to MSRP, income eligibility and other requirements. Minnesota has not solidified its 2023 EV rebate plan yet.

**Yet to come, Income-eligible instant rebates:** At the end of July, States were able to begin applying for funding from the IRA when they submit their plan for income-eligible rebates. Depending on Minnesota's plan, low to moderate income families may soon be able to get efficiency improvements at little or no cost.

Go to [cwpower.com](https://www.cwpower.com)'s 'Programs and Rebates' tab for detailed information. We'll communicate updates on this legislation as it becomes available. Connect with a qualified tax preparer to determine if you could take advantage of tax credits.

## CONTENT

CEO	2
Pancake Breakfast	2
Community Award	3
Puzzle	4
Promo Rebate	4

## Crow Wing Power Calendar Contest: Deadline Approaching!

Submit your captivating nature-focused photos for the 2024-member calendar before September 29! We're searching for beautiful landscape shots from Crow Wing Power's service territory. Landscape orientation and high-quality images are a must. You can submit up to five photos for a chance to win \$25 in bill credits.

**How to Vote:** Help us choose the calendar's best photos! Simply hit the LIKE button to vote for your favorites. Check our Crow Wing Power Facebook page to view and vote for your favorite photos, voting will take place from October 2-6.

Submit your photos at <https://www.cwpower.com/events/2024>  
Crow Wing Power Calendar Contest



# A WORD FROM YOUR CEO

## Aggressive Carbon Free Timeline Presents Electric Grid Challenge >>>

*I would like to share with you part of an article written by the CEO of our state wide association, MREA (Minnesota Rural Electric Association)*

By Derrick Moe, CEO MREA

Minnesotans expect the lights to come on every time they flip the switch. However, increasingly, the reliability of our electric grid is becoming a serious challenge as we plot our energy future.

A recent assessment from the North American Electric Reliability Corporation warns that more than two-thirds of North America's electric grid is at risk of energy shortfalls this summer and the problem will only get worse.

Also, let us not forget that just last December, we were a gnat's hair away from having rolling blackouts in Minnesota due to nasty winter weather. The winter before, weather in Texas created power supply issues and caused rolling blackouts in western Minnesota and the Dakotas.

As the CEO of the Minnesota Rural Electric Association, which represents Minnesota's nonprofit electric cooperatives, I am concerned about Minnesota's energy future and how to ensure our power is always reliable, affordable and sustainable.

This year the Legislature passed an aggressive carbon-free-by-2040 bill which sets a clear benchmark for just how quickly our energy transition will need to take place. As the experts in our field, we want to make it clear

that the path to a reliable carbon-free future presents a monumental challenge. (Because the electric grid isn't ready for future energy needs.)

Decades of careful planning are required to build out our grid. To meet the moment, it is imperative that those managing and planning this transition retain flexibility. We advocate for pursuing an "all-tech-on-deck" approach to seek reliable and affordable solutions.

With an aggressive policy direction now established, let the experts who are building, planning and executing this clean-energy transition make the tough choices necessary to proceed without further mandates that limit options and without the additional costs imposed by favored schemes to achieve the goal.

Our vision for Minnesota is an electric grid that is reliable, affordable, and sustainable—a grid that is ready for millions of new electric vehicles, appliances and growing beneficial electrification while keeping electricity affordable.

To get to that future, we can't have mandates restrict our ability to think creatively, we can't afford unnecessarily long permitting delays, and we can't let shortsighted wishful thinking fog our view of reality.

I'll keep you informed,

Bruce L. Kraemer, CEO

### June Board Meeting Highlights

Crow Wing Power's Board of Directors conducted its regular monthly meeting Thursday, June 15, 2023. A quorum of directors was present. President Bob Kangas opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The following reports were given:

- CEO report
- Finance Committee report

The following actions were taken:

The Board approved:

- May Consent Agenda
- Minutes of the May 18, 2023 regular board meeting
- Director expense reports May 2023

Members can review detailed minutes by logging into their SmartHub account. Log in is located on the homepage of our website.

### July Board Meeting Highlights

Crow Wing Power's Board of Directors conducted its regular monthly meeting Thursday, July 20, 2023. A quorum of directors was present. President Mark Ronnei opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The following reports were given:

- CEO report
- Finance Committee report

The following actions were taken:

The Board approved:

- July Consent Agenda
- Minutes of the June 15, 2023 regular board meeting
- Minutes of the June 26, 2023 special board meeting
- Director expense reports June 2023

Members can review detailed minutes by logging into their SmartHub account. Log in is located on the homepage of our website.

August minutes will be available after approval at the September meeting.

## CELEBRATE COOPERATIVE MONTH AT THE MEMBER APPRECIATION PANCAKE BREAKFAST

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7

8 A.M. - 10 A.M.

LOCATIONS:

- BRAINERD AMERICAN LEGION
- CROSSLAKE AMERICAN LEGION
- RED ROOSTER IN GENOLA

\*CHOOSE THE LOCATION THAT WORKS FOR YOU





**CELEBRATING YOU AT THE ZOO!**

**Crow Wing Power Members are invited to the Safari North Wildlife Park with FREE admission which includes a Safari Train Ride and additional attraction discounts.**

**Saturday, Sept. 16 or Sunday, Sept 17.**  
**Park Hours 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.**

Crow Wing Power has partnered with cooperative member Safari North Wildlife Park just south of Brainerd to provide free admission to all Crow Wing Power member families! This event brought joy to members of all ages last year and we are looking forward to seeing smiles again this year. Members can simply show up and Crow Wing Power employees will provide wristbands for free admission.

## Cold Weather Rule for Winter Disconnections >>>

When cold weather hits, it's important to know your options if you find it difficult to keep up on your utility bills. The State of Minnesota established the Cold Weather Rule (Minnesota State Statute 216B.097) to safeguard the interests of residential utility customers during the cold winter months.

Under this rule, all eligible electric service accounts will be protected against disconnection from October 1 through April 30, provided they meet all the necessary Cold Weather Rule requirements and if the disconnection affects the primary heat source.

To AVOID disconnection during the winter months, it is imperative that you take the following steps if you receive a disconnect notice:

- **ACT PROMPTLY:** Upon receipt of a disconnect notice, contact Crow Wing Power immediately at 1-800-648-9401.
- **SUBMIT THE INABILITY TO PAY FORM:** You must fill out the "Inability to Pay" form available on our website at [cwpower.com/billing-policies](http://cwpower.com/billing-policies) and promptly call us to arrange a suitable payment plan.

To qualify for protection against residential utility service shut off, members must meet and adhere to the specific criteria and requirements set forth by the Cold Weather Rule. For a comprehensive outline of the eligibility criteria, kindly visit our website at [cwpower.com/billing-policies](http://cwpower.com/billing-policies) or contact us at 1-800-648-9401.

Please note that Cold Weather Rule protection payment plans exclusively address past due balances.

Other resources include:  
 Minnesota Department of Commerce  
[mn.gov/commerce](http://mn.gov/commerce)

Tri-County Action Program  
 888-765-5597

Lutheran Social Services  
 1-800-829-5902

Bi-Cap Energy Assistance  
 800-332-7161

Salvation Army  
 888-765-5597

Crow Wing County Social Services  
 218-824-1250

For further inquiries or assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out to our billing representatives at 1-800-648-9401.



## Commitment to Community Award Applications Open >>>

Crow Wing Power is seeking applications for our annual Touchstone Energy Community Award, which recognizes businesses, non-profit and community groups that have shown a strong commitment to the community. Any organization that has helped make the lakes area a better place to live and work is eligible for the \$1,000 cash award. Organizations do not have to be a cooperative member but should service people within

the cooperative's service area in Cass, Crow Wing and Morrison Counties.

Apply or nominate your organization, association, or business by completing the application form, available online at [www.cwpower.com](http://www.cwpower.com) under 'Our Community'. Applications are due October 31st.

# BATTERY-POWERED YARD EQUIPMENT



**PROMOTIONAL REBATE**

Lawn Mower/Snow Blower  
Rebate Amount:

- \$50 (Pre-Tax purchase price of \$200-\$500)
- \$100 (Pre-Tax purchase price of \$501 and up)

Yard Tools: Chainsaw/Trimmer/Leaf Blower  
Rebate Amount:

- \$25 (Pre-Tax purchase price of \$100-\$200)
- \$50 (Pre-Tax purchase price of \$201 and up)

PROMOTIONAL REBATES FOR EQUIPMENT PURCHASED BETWEEN SEPTEMBER 1 - DECEMBER 31, 2023



## Credit Union Annual Shred Day October 9

Crow Wing Power Credit Union is once again offering a free document shredding day. Paper Storm will have their truck at Crow Wing Power headquarters on Highway 371 on Monday, October 9 from 10 to noon. Take advantage of this free secure offer.

## CURRENT CONNECTION

Monthly Publication of Crow Wing Power

Publication of  
Crow Wing Power  
218-829-2827  
800-648-9401  
www.cwpower.com

Editor: Char Kinzer

Board meetings are held the third Thursday of each month beginning at 9:30 a.m.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

## Directors. Here to Help!

Following is a list of directors and their telephone numbers:

- Bob Kangas.....218-587-4453
- Paul Koering .....218-851-9954
- Ric Larson .....218-546-5781
- Bryan McCulloch .....218-821-8390
- LuAnn Nelson .....612-400-4627
- Giles Radtke.....218-839-9182
- Gert Roggenkamp.....218-562-4566
- Mark Ronnei .....218-831-8373
- Dwight Thiesse.....218-831-8605

## Puzzlers - Enter to Win One of Three \$25 bill credits! >>>

Complete the bi-monthly crossword puzzle and send it back to us by November 15.  
• Scan and email to info@cwpower.com • Mail it with bill • Online at cwpower.com - click 'Your Co-op' newsletter - September Online Puzzle.

*July Winners: Keith Tuma, Fort Ripley; Bobbi Kochevar, Nisswa; Dale Borgs, Lino Lakes*

### September Puzzle

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Acct number \_\_\_\_\_

### September Puzzle Clues:

#### ACROSS

- Safari North is a \_\_\_\_\_.
- Type of rebate Minnesota is preparing.
- Carbon-free future needs upgrades to this.
- Red Rooster is in this town.
- Could get \$100 rebate for this blower.
- Number of locations for Oct. pancake breakfasts

#### DOWN

- Month paper shredding truck will be here.
- Promotional rebate is on what kind of equipment?
- Paper Storm does this to paper.
- CEO of MREA
- Protections from disconnects goes through \_\_\_\_\_.
- Get a 30% tax credit for replacing these.

Use the clues to fill in the words above.

### JULY PUZZLE ANSWERS

1b b  
l  
o  
3 i  
n  
c  
u  
m  
b  
8 e  
n  
e  
9 t  
h  
s  
4 s  
5 g  
e  
n  
e  
r  
a  
t  
o  
r  
6 t  
o  
r  
7 t  
e  
n  
h  
v  
e  
h  
t  
y