

# Current CONNECTION



Quarter 1 • Volume 78 • Number 1  
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**A NEW CHAPTER**  
Comprehensive  
Facility Planning

**CURRENT CORNER**  
Celebrating  
Our Lineworkers

**RIGHT TREE, RIGHT PLACE**  
Benefit your Property  
and Your Energy Bill

**PUZZLERS**  
Enter to win one of  
three \$25 bill credits

## *Built for the Future*

### A New Chapter for Your Cooperative

Crow Wing Power has a long history of growing alongside the members it serves.

In June 1937, Crow Wing Power Rural Electric Cooperative was formed. By January 1938, electricity flowed to 140 members for the first time. In those early years, the cooperative operated out of a small headquarters on Maple Street in Brainerd.

As membership grew, so did the need for space. By 1949, the cooperative was serving nearly 9,000 members. New offices were added, along with warehouse space and garages for trucks and equipment. The building even featured display rooms

showcasing modern electric kitchens, a sign of the exciting changes electricity was bringing to rural homes.

By the late 1970s, it became clear that the Maple Street facility could no longer support the cooperative's growing operations. In 1978 and 1979, Crow Wing Power moved to its current Baxter campus after purchasing a former recreational dealership originally built in 1968. The building was remodeled to house offices, operations, and warehouse space for crews and equipment.

Since then, the campus has continued to evolve. In 1995, garage areas inside

the main building were converted into office space. In 2002 and 2003, an addition created a new lobby and reception area, relocated executive and board offices, and upgraded building systems. Departments shifted locations to make the best use of the space available.

While these updates helped the cooperative adapt, the facility was not originally designed to support the size and operations of a modern electric utility. Today, trucks, trailers, materials, and equipment are spread across multiple buildings, and some storage areas were never intended for that purpose.

Safety is another growing concern. The main campus sits along the busy Highway 371 corridor, where traffic speeds and volume have steadily increased. Entering and exiting the property with bucket trucks, digger



# THE Current Corner

## Celebrating Our LINEWORKERS

As I sit at home during a Minnesota storm, I sometimes think about what it would mean if the power went out. Sure, it is an inconvenience for me, but then I think about the lineworker who leaves their family, answers the call, and heads out into the elements. They are performing a dangerous and demanding job, often in extreme cold, ice, or wind, to restore power so that homes, farms, and businesses stay connected.

It is in those moments I feel incredibly grateful and thankful for the people who make our electric system reliable. Their dedication, skill, and knowledge allow us to live our lives with confidence that the lights will turn on, the heat will

work, and our communities will remain safe.

Lineworkers don't just do a job; they carry a responsibility to every member, every home, and every business we serve. Their focus on safety, their teamwork, and their unwavering commitment make it possible for us to depend on electricity every day.

On this National Lineworker Appreciation Day, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks. We are truly fortunate to have such remarkable professionals protecting our system, serving our members, and showing the kind of dedication that deserves recognition and gratitude every single day.



*Your Cooperative, Our Commitment*

*Tim Thompson*

Tim Thompson  
Chief Executive Officer

### **BUILT FOR THE FUTURE** *Continued from page 1*

trucks, and trailers carrying poles has become more difficult. These vehicles make multiple trips each day and even more during outage responses.

In the fall of 2024, the board approved plans for a cold storage building to help protect trucks and equipment from the elements. However, after CEO Tim Thompson joined the cooperative in early 2025, leadership and the board agreed to pause construction and take a broader look at the cooperative's overall facility needs.

That conversation led to a comprehensive facility planning study with Cooperative Building Solutions. The study evaluated the current campus, future growth, safety considerations, and potential options for the cooperative moving forward.

One option under exploration is Crow Wing Power's Highway 371 south property, land the cooperative purchased in 1997 with long term infrastructure needs in mind.

A building committee made up of employees from several departments and board leadership has been reviewing information, visiting facilities, and meeting with contractors and architectural firms. Recommendations will continue to be reviewed by the board as part of the planning process.

It is important for members to know that no final decision has been made. Projects of this size move through several phases, with opportunities along the way to pause, adjust, or reconsider options.

Crow Wing Power's board and leadership team are carefully evaluating what is best for the cooperative as a whole. The goal is simple: to serve a growing membership safely, reliably, and responsibly while being good stewards of member dollars.

As discussions continue, members will be informed through each step and each decision along the way.



*Thanks to our lineworkers!*



*real* **PEOPLE** *real* **POWER** *real* **PURPOSE**

Riley Thramer  
Jon Gummert  
Bryan Imdieke  
Gene Retka  
Scott Seeling  
Justin McKee  
Justin Wilson  
Luke Kasella  
Tyce Lee  
Allen Dahl  
Sam Miller

Marshall Michienzi  
Alex Anderson  
Mason Sullivan  
Karl Martinson  
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Johnathon Fleek  
Henry Wamre  
Ben Lundberg  
Jake Dehne  
Kelly Story

Todd Treichler  
Dave Ethen  
Gage Wattenhofer  
Kyle Ashman  
Billy Segler, Jr.  
Josh Hofmann  
Adam Dolen  
Justin Sjostrom  
Matt Ackerman  
Tim Allen

## Board Meeting HIGHLIGHTS

### JANUARY 2026

Crow Wing Power's Board of Directors conducted its regular monthly meeting Thursday, January 26, 2026. A quorum of directors was present. President Mark Ronnei opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### The following reports were given:

- CEO Report
- COO Report
- CFO Report
- Directors reported on meetings they attended on behalf of the cooperative.

#### The following actions were taken:

- Approved January Consent Agenda.
- Approved the Minutes of November 19, 2025 and December 18, 2025.
- Accepted the December Financial Report.
- Approved Director Expense Reports for December 2025.

## The **Right Tree** in the **Right Place**



Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.

Planting the right tree in the right place can do more than beautify your yard. It can also help lower energy use at your home. As we celebrate Arbor Day on April 24, 2026, it is a great time to think about how thoughtful tree planting can provide long term benefits for both your property and your energy bills.

Crow Wing Power has once again partnered with the Arbor Day Foundation to provide trees as a member appreciation gift during our Annual Meeting. Trees add value to our communities and can play an important role in improving home energy efficiency when planted strategically.

Deciduous trees planted on the east and west sides of a home can provide shade during the hottest parts of the day. This shade can help reduce indoor

temperatures and lower the demand on your air conditioner. Studies show that properly placed shade trees can reduce cooling costs by up to 20 to 30 percent. In the winter, those same trees lose their leaves and allow sunlight to reach your home, providing natural warmth.

Evergreen trees can also make a difference. When planted on the north or northwest side of a property, they can act as windbreaks that help block cold winter winds. Windbreaks can reduce heating costs by as much as 10 to 15 percent by limiting heat loss from your home.

Before planting, always plan ahead. Call 811 before you dig and avoid planting large trees near power lines. Learn more about energy smart tree planting at [cwpower.com/planting](http://cwpower.com/planting).



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

[CWPower.com](http://CWPower.com)



# It's project season.

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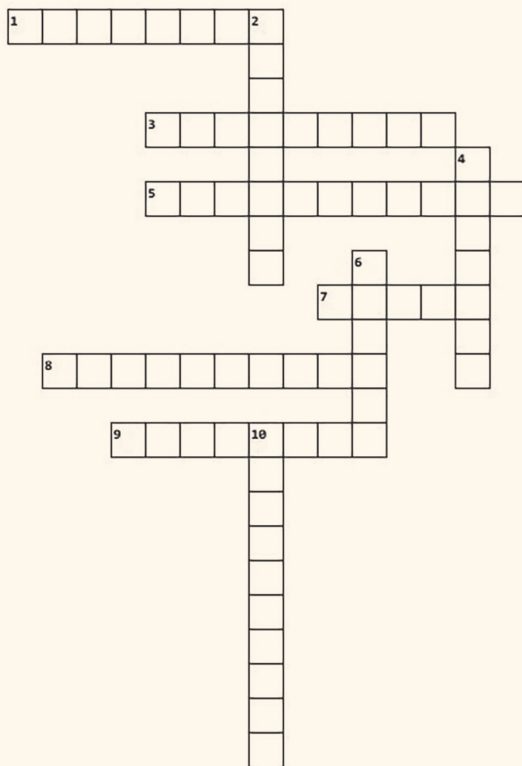
## 2026 QUARTER 2 PUZZLERS

Enter to win one of three \$25 bill credits!

Complete the puzzle and send it back by **MAY 15, 2026**. Three easy ways:

Send a photo to [info@cwpower.com](mailto:info@cwpower.com) / Mail in with your bill. / [cwpower.com/news](http://cwpower.com/news), click Online Puzzles.

Quarter 1 winners: **Mitchell Dennison Backus MN, Steve Miller Nisswa MN, Dan Pettit Brainerd MN**



### Across

- Where members can view full detailed minutes.
- Type of tree that provides summer shade and winter sunlight.
- They brave storms, ice, and wind to keep our homes and businesses connected.
- What street was Crow Wing Power headquarters located on?
- Crow Wing Power is a \_\_\_ energy Cooperative.
- Land purchased in 1997 for future cooperative infrastructure planning.

### Down

- City where the cooperative's early headquarters was located.
- Its \_\_\_ season.
- Essential quality that keeps communities safe and the electric system reliable; lineworkers put it first.
- Trees planted on the north side of a home to act as windbreaks.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City / State / ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Account # \_\_\_\_\_



Publication of  
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Jenna Anderson

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Dwight Thiesse..... 218-831-8605

Board meetings are held the fourth Thursday of each month beginning at 8:00 a.m. This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

### 2026 QUARTER 1 ANSWERS:

Across: 3. Mental 4. Equitable 5. Scholarship 7. Heritage 8. April 9. Coffee  
Down: 1. Seventeenth 2. Rate 5. Safety 6. Website