

A newsletter from the Arrowhead Electric Cooperative, Inc.

# The High Line

By Line

June 2009, vol. 15



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

## Knowledge is Power!

**D**oes the future of your electric bill concern you? Are you an Arrowhead Electric member who is wondering why the rates have gone up each year these past couple of years – and are they going to keep going up? Now is the time to get informed, to get involved, and to make a difference!

### Mark your calendar for: Saturday, June 13th

Breakfast served at 8:30 a.m.  
Meeting begins at 10:00 a.m.

Make plans to attend Arrowhead Electric –  
YOUR Electric – Cooperative's 56th Annual  
Meeting.

#### Who can attend?

All Arrowhead Electric Cooperative members and any guests they would like to bring, young and old – are welcome.

#### Why attend?

Because knowledge is power – especially now during these economical times of struggle we are facing. At the annual meeting you will not only get updated on the Cooperative's previous years' business, but you

will also receive critical information on what is happening in legislation and how it will affect you and your electric rates. You will also receive information on what you can do to help make sure that your voice and concerns are heard. Your rates will continue to go up, but to what extent will largely depend on what happens at the state and federal legislative levels. It can't be stressed enough on how important your voice is right now! Mark Glaess of Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA) will also be there as the guest speaker to share with us future legislative issues.

#### What else can you expect?

Along with the update on your electric cooperative, there will be the following available:

- Informational booths including energy efficiency ideas, etc.
- Pancake breakfast
- Door prizes

Bring a non perishable food item for the Cook County Food Shelf and receive a free CFL light bulb. Bring 2 items and receive 2 free CFL light bulbs, bring 3 items and receive 3 free CFL light bulbs. Limit of 3 bulbs per member/family.

## Touchstone Energy Co-op Night with the Minnesota Twins!

Saturday, July 11, 2009

Minnesota Twins vs. Chicago White Sox  
6:10 pm First Pitch

Join your fellow co-op members at the Metrodome as the Minnesota Twins take on the Chicago White Sox.

Tickets are available in **Lower Level Reserved** locations for a special price of just **\$28.00**, a \$5 discount from the \$33.00 face value. You also have the opportunity to purchase a concession coupon redeemable for a hot dog and a soft drink for \$3.75 (regularly \$6.00). Tickets will be filled on a first come, first served basis. Call or stop by Arrowhead to request a ticket order form.



**Questions:** contact Luis Breazeale of the Twins at 612-375-7463, or email [luisbreazeale@twinsbaseball.com](mailto:luisbreazeale@twinsbaseball.com). Order deadline is Friday July 10th, 2009.

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

# MISO: What it is and how it affects you

As though understanding the electric industry wasn't complex enough, now there is another layer to consider – groups like Midwest Independent Transmission System Operator (MISO). MISO, a nonprofit organization, oversees the regional wholesale electric market and the development of the electric system or "grid" across 15 Midwestern states and Manitoba. (See map.) MISO manages the system in a way no individual utility can, and all members benefit in terms of reliability and lower costs. How do you benefit? When wholesalers benefit, the utilities who buy their electricity also benefit ... who in turn, pass those benefits onto customers like you.

Great River Energy, Arrowhead Electric's wholesale electric supplier, is a member of MISO, as are almost all other wholesalers in the region. Great River Energy joined in part because its transmission system is highly integrated with that of other utilities in the region.

"The electric system is completely interconnected," said Jon Olson, manager of market services for Great River Energy. "Bringing electricity to customers is not as simple as building a power plant and then a power line in between to connect the two."

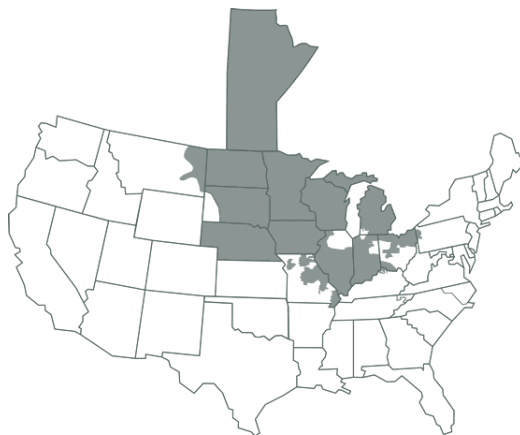
For instance, power lines operated by Great River Energy may feed into a substation operated by another utility, which may feed

a power line operated by a third utility, and so forth. All of the overlap -- and the very nature of electricity -- make individual utilities dependent on each other in order to keep the lights on, at a reasonable price.

Unlike other fuels, electricity currently cannot be stored economically, so precisely the right amount of electricity must be generated and used at all times in order to keep the lights on. That is why having an objective party who can view all of the individual pieces of the system at once is so important.

With its view of the entire interconnected regional electric grid, MISO is able to increase the reliability and efficiency of the system by working with utilities and others to provide information about the best location for new power plants, wind farms and high voltage power lines. MISO also determines which power plants in the region run, and when.

Olson described how MISO brings the region's buyers and sellers to one place, helping everyone get the best price for their customers. "Before MISO, we might have made 20 phone calls before we found power to buy when we needed to purchase more electricity for our members," said Olson. "And we still didn't have a way of knowing if we had gotten the best buy or not."



Midwest ISO Regional Reliability Area

Essentially, all MISO members are both buyers and sellers of electricity in the MISO market. Great River Energy's peaking plants have been called on often to sell electricity into the market when more power was needed. In the past, this has brought in a lot of money for Great River Energy and its member cooperatives. That changed last summer when MISO did not need that service as much due to moderate temperatures and the addition of new power plants and power lines in the system.

"Everyone in MISO is better off for participating," said Olson. "You don't come out ahead in every instance, but on balance, everyone benefits. Our 28 member co-ops benefit and then so do their members."

**For more information, visit [midwestiso.org](http://midwestiso.org).**

## Member Comment Corner:

Thank you so much for your superb service during our last power outage of March 31st and April 1st. Your company kept our household informed and comforted through phone calls – thank you! The overall communication has

vastly improved and we thank you. Be it the phone message of where/who to contact for power outages or reading comments on Cook County Conversations, Announcements on WTIP, or rebates with CCLEP ~ You folks are out in the community!

Thanks again for the excellent customer service and dedication of your entire staff. This is the type of Cooperative that can make a small community strong.

## Utilities risk fines by not trimming trees near lines!

A nationwide order to trim trees near power lines could decrease power outages that plunge whole states into darkness, energy industry experts say. Trees falling onto wires in storms or wires sagging in the heat into tree limbs are to blame for most of the major U.S. blackouts going back to 1996, according to the North American Electric Reliability Corp (NERC). The institute estimates that 90 percent of weather-related outages are caused by trees hitting power lines.

Mandatory tree trimming did not gain momentum until August 14,

2003, when transmission lines owned by FirstEnergy in Ohio came into contact with tree limbs and triggered the shutdown of 21 power plants in three minutes in the eastern United States and Canada. The massive outage cut electricity to 50 million people, some of whom were without power for days. In 2005, Congress passed a bill requiring tree trimming, but it was not enforced until 2007 to give utilities time to comply. The first two fines, totaling \$255,000, were issued in June. NERC says the fines can go as high as \$1 million per day.

-USA Today

A friendly reminder: Postage rates went up \$0.02 on May 11th. The current postage rate is \$.044. AECI is not responsible for mail that is lost along the way or arrives with postage due. Forever stamps will be good "Forever" even when the postage rates increase.

## Are you struggling to make ends meet?

It can be difficult with the high cost of basic needs like food, medicine, transportation, and home heating. For those in need, the Minnesota Energy Assistance Program (EAP) can help take a bite out of heating bills.

EAP serves low income households with an emphasis on seniors, people with disabilities, and families with children under age six. A low income household is defined as earnings less than 50% of the State Median Income. EAP serves both homeowners and renters who pay for heat directly to an energy vendor or indirectly (included in rent to a landlord). In addition, homeowners may get assistance with furnace repair or replacement. Grants range

from \$100 to \$1,325 and depend on family size, income and fuel consumption, with an average grant being about \$500.

Examples of household eligibility based on number in household and annual income:

1 person	Below \$21,185
2 people	Below \$27,703
3 people	Below \$34,221
4 people	Below \$40,739

Minnesota Energy Assistance Program applications will be accepted until July 2, 2009. For more information call:

Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency (AEOA)  
1-800-662-5711

Grand Portage Energy Assistance Program (GPEAP) 1-218-475-2822

## Rebate Information:

Below are the current rebate offers through AECI.

- CFL Bulbs (minimum 5)
- Energy Star Appliances
- Ground Source & Air Source Heat Pumps
- Energy Star Air Conditioners
- Water Heaters
- Storage Space Heating

You will find the necessary forms for the above listed AECI rebates at [www.aecimn.com](http://www.aecimn.com) or call our office.

Special 2009 Rebate offers:

- Outlet Gaskets
- Water Heater Blanket
- Power Strips
- Pipe Insulation
- Retractable Clothes Line
- Water Saver Shower Head
- Door Sweeps
- Expanding Foam
- Indoor Shrink Wrap
- Programmable Thermostat
- Weather Stripping

Simply submit a copy of your receipt to our office for the Special 2009 rebate offers, and remember to include your name and your account number on the receipt.

Right of way clearing continues in the Clearwater Lake and East Bearskin areas. The crew will then be moving to Fireplace Road, Moose Ridge and Washout Rd in the Poplar Lake area.

## Wilkes and Zunker selected as Arrowhead Electric Youth Tour representatives.

Arrowhead Electric has named Martha Wilkes and Jordan Zunker as our 2009 Youth Tour representatives. Martha and Jordan, both are juniors at Cook County High School, will represent the cooperative on an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C. June 13-18 as part of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. The contest is open to juniors who attend Cook County High School. Candidates were required to submit an essay on "Striking the right balance: Environment, Energy and Pricing".

Martha and Jordan will join hundreds of youth representing electric cooperatives from across the United States in Washington, D.C. to learn more about our nation's rich political history, see American government in action, and tour famous historical monuments. Students will also meet with legislators and learn more about the importance of electric cooperatives. Congratulations Martha and Jordan!



## If you need a good laugh, try reading through these children's science exam answers!

**Q: Name the four seasons.**

A: Salt, pepper, mustard and vinegar.

**Q: How is dew formed?**

A: The sun shines down on the leaves and makes them perspire.

**Q: How can you delay milk turning sour?**

A: Keep it in the cow.

**Q: What are steroids?**

A: Things for keeping carpets still on the stairs.

**Q: What is the fibula?**

A: A small lie.

**Q: What does 'varicose' mean?**

A: Nearby.

**Q: Give the meaning of the term 'Caesarian Section.'**

A: The Caesarian Section is a district in Rome.

**Q: What does the word 'benign' mean?**

A: Benign is what you will be after you be eight.

## Are You a Blogger? Your Electric Cooperative Is!

[www.arrowelec.wordpress.com](http://www.arrowelec.wordpress.com) – that's our latest and greatest communication medium. If you're not familiar with blogs, it's simply a way for people to communicate and write about the happenings in their life or organization. Blogs can be updated from computers or web enabled phones and allows Arrowhead Electric to communicate a variety of information quickly and easily at a very low cost. If you follow the feeds on Boreal's website you'll notice Arrowhead Electric's presence. To follow us via the Boreal feed go to [www.boreal.org](http://www.boreal.org) and click on Member Blogs.

Our blog has information on the Watt Savings energy contest which started June 1st (don't forget to sign-up), a few polls inquiring about various topics and links to helpful websites. We hope to expand the blog providing information on energy efficiency and conservation, industry news, projects we're working on and more. We encourage all members to write comments and ask questions on the blog and we'll be sure to respond in short order. We sincerely hope our members ask questions and read our comments.

## Inspections are the law!

Any time you or an electrician does wiring or other electrical work at your home, remember that Minnesota State law requires a State Wiring Inspector to conduct a proper inspection of the work. The state of Minnesota has high wiring standards, which are in the best interest of you and your family. Improper wiring can damage your property and equipment and injure or kill the people you love.

The inspector for Arrowhead Electric Cooperative is: Patrick Ferderber (218) 365-3010

## Arrowhead Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Post Office Box 39  
5401 West Hwy. 61  
Lutsen, Minnesota 55612-0039  
Phone 218-663-7239  
Toll Free 1-800-864-3744  
Fax 218-663-7850

[www.accimn.com](http://www.accimn.com)

CEO: Donald Stead  
Board President: Tom Spence  
Newsletter Editor: Jeanne Muntean

Cooperative Board Meeting Last  
Thursday of each month @ 9:00 a.m.

