

A newsletter from Arrowhead Cooperative

The High Line

December 2019, vol. 24

By Line



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Concern for Community Shines All Year Long

Year-end message from CEO/General Manager John Twiest

The holidays are here, and it's a time when our community members come together to celebrate. Gift-giving abounds for friends and loved ones. It's also a time when many people give back.

Sharing with others, whether that's through charitable giving or through volunteering your time and talents, is a way to strengthen communities.

As a not-for-profit electric cooperative – created to serve the needs of our members – one of our core principles is “Concern for Community.” In addition to providing safe, reliable and environmentally friendly utilities, giving back is a cornerstone of our business model. We work hard to help our communities thrive not only during the holiday season but all year long.

Amid the hustle and bustle of the season, it's also a wonderful time to slow down and reflect. We enjoy looking back and seeing how our member-owned cooperative gave back throughout the year. Because you're an owner of Arrowhead Cooperative, you played an essential role in contributing to our mission to be helpful stewards in the community.

By serving the community, we're proud to offer reliable electric service that keeps homes warm during Minnesota's cold and snowy winters. During the holidays, indoor and outdoor lights shine brightly and serve as festive reminders of the season. Inside the home, implementing energy efficiency measures keeps dollars in your wallet. That's a gift that keeps giving all year long!

By offering broadband services, our members can stream their favorite holiday movies, shop online from the comfort of home and search Pinterest for recipes to bake cookies with the kids or serve as a side dish with the Christmas ham.

Throughout the year, Arrowhead Cooperative supports community-wide efforts, such as Empty Bowls, Elders Bus Trip and the Cook County Booster Club to name just a few. Because of your electric co-op's local ownership structure, we're members of the community just like you. We're proud to help make a meaningful impact where we all call home.

Our employees generously give their time to support our community in different ways. Volunteering with Ruby's Pantry, Fire Departments and First Responders are ways our employees are deeply rooted in the community.

Investing in the next generation of leaders is part of every electric cooperative's mission. By funding scholarships, donating school supplies, supporting youth activities and sending students on an all-expense-paid Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., devoting resources to youth is an important way your co-op gives back.

Operation Round-Up is a wonderful way for our members to support many facets of our community. We also help the community by investing in economic development projects to help retain and attract area businesses.

Arrowhead Cooperative's members, employees and directors know that no matter how great or small the act, every time we give back, we strengthen our community. We're proud of how you help us to support these efforts.

As we prepare for 2020, we're grateful for the opportunity to serve you and the greater community. On behalf of the Arrowhead Cooperative family, we hope your holidays are safe, merry and bright!

Holiday Note

All of us at Arrowhead Cooperative & True North Broadband wish you a safe and joyful holiday season.

To allow our staff to celebrate with their families our office will be closed December 24th & 25th and December 31st & January 1st.

As always, in the event of an outage, please call 800-864-3744 and follow the prompts to report a power or fiber issue.

Blandin Foundation recognizes Cook County and Arrowhead Electric Cooperative, Inc. with Courageous Leadership Award

At their October conference in Nisswa the Blandin Foundation recognized the cooperation between Cook County and Arrowhead Electric Cooperative, Inc. in the efforts to bring broadband to the area. The award was given in recognition of the County's early work on community access to dial-up internet which led years later to the innovative partnership with Arrowhead Electric Cooperative that enabled deployment of over 800 miles of fiber-to-the-home network throughout Cook County.

As an early and consistent Blandin Foundation partner in the Get Broadband and the Minnesota Intelligent Rural Community programs Cook County implemented sophisticated and innovative broadband adoption initiatives, including increasing the capacity of local community-owned ISP Boreal Access, creating a public-access distance education hub, tele-health, and streaming local sports on local public tv.

In 2010, the United States Department of Agriculture awarded Arrowhead Electric Cooperative, Inc. over \$16 million in grants and low interest loans to build a fiber-to-the-home broadband network throughout Cook County. This USDA funding was provided through the Broadband Initiatives Program of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Cook County awarded Arrowhead Electric Cooperative, Inc. a \$4 million grant from its 1% local economic development sales tax fund to support construction of the fiber optic network.

Local leadership saw the need in our community.

We were ranked last in the state for access to high speed internet. They started asking questions, formed a broadband commission, and led the direction. The leaders of Cook County and of Arrowhead Cooperative had a vision and Arrowhead was able to fulfill that vision. This project, to build a fiber-to-the-home network from scratch, in such a remote, geographically challenging area, is

a huge victory. To go from nothing to gigabit internet service in five years is amazing. Today Arrowhead Cooperative's True North Broadband connects over 3,000 homes and businesses with world-class internet. The economic benefit to the county is widespread. We added seven full-time jobs at our organization. Cook County businesses have the technology to be competitive beyond our borders. Many new residents are living here year-round because they can efficiently work remotely with their high-speed connection. It took tremendous dedication from local leaders as well as from Arrowhead Cooperative's membership, management, board of directors, and staff.



In attendance to receive the Courageous Leadership Award on behalf of Cook County and Arrowhead Electric Cooperative were Roger Opp, Arrowhead Cooperative Board President; John Twiest, Arrowhead Cooperative CEO/General Manager; Sara McManus, Subscriber Services Manager; and Ginny Storlie, County Commissioner Board Chair.



Mitten Tree

Once again Arrowhead Cooperative will be collecting mittens (and hats and gloves and scarves!) to donate to those in need. Contributions of new or homemade winter accessories can be brought to Arrowhead's Lutsen office and we will get them to Operation Family Christmas coordinators to distribute. Please bring donations before 4pm on Monday, December 9th.

Help us decorate our tree with warmth, comfort, and cheer!

Get Connected & Stay Connected!

We all want fast, reliable home Wi-Fi. With more connected devices than ever in your home, and more bandwidth-intensive applications, nothing less than the best Wi-Fi will do. That means a strong signal in every room and blazing-fast speeds so you can stream HD video, game with your friends online, and share anything and everything without missing a beat. True North Broadband offers high performance Wi-Fi that just works so you get the home wi-fi experience you deserve.

Not all wireless routers are created equal. True North's router makes use of the latest technology to give you the best possible performance. It's a Wi-Fi experience that's second to none. But if you do have any technical issues, we've got you covered with sophisticated remote monitoring and diagnostics that help us quickly identify and resolve any problems you may be experiencing -and, in most cases, without having to send a technician to your home. True North's local customer support staff can see which of your devices are connected, which ones are having



issues, and help you troubleshoot the problem quickly. In fact, we can perform a wide range of diagnostics to make sure you're getting the best possible service.

Does your wireless network cover your whole home? True North Broadband has Superior Home Wi-Fi – a mesh Wi-Fi system that will give you superior coverage. Our mesh satellite units connect to our router to ensure you have outstanding Wi-Fi coverage no matter where you are in your home. They're small, easy to set up, and faster and more reliable than Wi-Fi extenders.

Visit Truenorthbroadband.com, email us (Truenorth@arrowhead.coop) or call us (877-602-7769) today to learn more!

Electric Vehicle Charging Station Update

Did you know we just celebrated our one-year anniversary of having Direct Current Fast Charging (DCFC) available here in Cook County? As many of our members know, Arrowhead Cooperative has joined utilities across the state in beginning new programs for electric vehicles.

Here in Cook County, Arrowhead Cooperative has partnered with Great River Energy, ZEF Energy, and the City of Grand Marais to work towards the creation of three total DCFC charging stations. Two stations have been completed so far: A DCFC station in Lutsen at the Clearview Plaza, and in Grand Portage at the Lodge and Casino. A station in Grand Marais is planned to begin construction after the spring thaw.

Each station presently operating has two chargers: a 25 kW DCFC combination Chademo and CCS unit, and a level 2 ZEF charger.

All stations are operated by ZEF energy. They offer the level 2 units gratis to electric vehicle drivers, but DCFC charging sessions are \$12/hour. ZEF also offers a monthly charging packages for EV drivers on the go.



For members or community stakeholders interested in more information about how the EV stations operate, or just about electric vehicles in general, please get in touch with our knowledgeable and friendly staff!

We also have two great promotions: Residential EV chargers are significantly discounted through Great River Energy: <https://energywisemnstore.com/electric-vehicle-chargers/>

OR A commercial EV charger program available directly through Arrowhead Cooperative. Please call 218-663-7239 or 800-864-3744 for more information.

Dates to Remember

Friday, December 20
Thursday, December 19
Tuesday, December 24
Wednesday, December 25
Tuesday, December 31
Wednesday, January 1

Electric & Broadband bills due
Board of Directors Meeting
Christmas Eve; Office closed
Christmas Day; Office closed
New Year's Eve; Office closed
New Year's Day; Office closed



Minnesota Cold Weather Law

Do not hesitate to contact the Arrowhead Cooperative office with any questions. We are eager to work with you so that your electricity stays on all winter long.

What is the Cold Weather Rule?

The Minnesota Cold Weather Rule helps homeowners and renters protect and reconnect heat during the winter months beginning October 15.

When is the Cold Weather Rule in effect?

October 15th – April 15th

Can my power be shut off during the winter?

Yes!

In order to keep your electricity on you must make a payment arrangement with Arrowhead Cooperative and stay current on your payment arrangement. If you are income-eligible, you must also apply for AEOA Assistance. This is true for all residential customers; including senior citizens, those with disabilities, families with children, and single adults.

How do I set up a payment plan?

If you are worried about paying your electric bill this winter, contact Arrowhead Cooperative at 800-864-3744 **BEFORE THE DUE DATE** of your bill.

What if I get a shut-off notice?

Fill out the form in the Cold Weather Law brochure included with your bill or call our office to get a form sent to you. Return the form to us **BEFORE** disconnect day and call us to set up your payment arrangement.

How can I get more help?

Call the following numbers
Energy Assistance Hotline: 1-800-657-3710
Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency (AEOA):
1-800-662-5711
Grand Portage Energy Assistance: 218-475-2822
Salvation Army Heatshare: 1-800-842-7279

Winter will be here soon. Let's work together to keep everyone safe and warm.

Right-Of-Way

Rights-of-way clearing pauses during the winter months. We will resume as soon weather permits. Keep in mind, clearing and hazard tree removal can happen at any time, in any area as needed.

What can you do to help?

- Please be sure the right of way is clear of personal items to ensure the mowers and equipment can pass through with ease.
- Brushing and/or mowing your private right-of-way from the meter to your home, following your electric or fiber line, would be extremely helpful. The suggested width is 10 feet for both overhead and underground services.

Please mark survey pins, septic systems, well heads, wire or fencing with a five foot permanent reflective marker post within the right-of-way, and remove any personal items that may be damaged by flying debris. Arrowhead Cooperative will not accept liability for damage of these items if not notified. If you do not live at your service address, please call the office to inform us of known obstacles in your right-of-way.

Arrowhead Cooperative encourages members to contact the office with any questions or concerns regarding Right-of-Way clearing.

Arrowhead Cooperative True North Broadband

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Cooperative Board Meeting last Thursday of each month @ 9:00 a.m. with the exception of November and December due to the holidays.
This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

