

Connections

October 2018

For the member-owners of Brown County REA



Volume 22, Issue 10

#WhoPowersYou: Nominate your local hero for Touchstone Energy contest

Your local electric cooperative, in partnership with Touchstone Energy Cooperatives, is pleased to announce the third annual #WhoPowersYou Contest.

Cooperative members and employees can nominate someone who's making a difference in our community and celebrate the power of human connections. In addition to being nationally recognized, nominees can win up to \$5,000 for the cause they champion. To nominate a local hero co-op members and employees can go to www.whopowersyou.com to submit their nominee's name, photo and a brief description of how they make a difference in our community. Nominations opened October 1 and must be submitted by midnight of November 4. Only members of Touchstone Energy Cooperative are eligible to be nominated. Winners will be announced in December. An independent panel of judges will select winners based upon the positive impact they make on

Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperatives

WHO POWERS YOU?

Inspired by someone making a difference in your community? Tell their story and they could win a cash prize.

Nominate your hero by November 4, 2018 at www.WhoPowersYou.com. Submit a photo and their story.

\$5,000 GRAND PRIZE
\$2,000 SECOND PLACE \$1,500 THIRD PLACE \$500 HONORABLE MENTION

the community, creativity of the entry and the number of votes they receive. Prize money totaling \$9,000 will be awarded to the following winners:

- Grand Prize Winner: \$5,000
- Second Place: \$2,000
- Third Place: \$1,500

- Honorable Mention: \$500

Your local electric cooperative and Touchstone Energy Cooperatives launched the #WhoPowersYou Contest in 2016 to honor people making a powerful impact in their communities. Nominate your hero today!

Snowbirds: Download the co-op's app before heading south!

Don't be a dodo bird. Use the cooperative's latest technology to stay abreast of your electric bill even when you head south for the winter.

Go to the Apple store or Google to download the Android version. Search for Brown County REA or Federated Rural Electric, depending on your cooperative.

Set up your account on your

computer and then the app will use the same user name and password. View your monthly use, pay your bill with a credit card and more. See your payment history and view your monthly electricity use by kilowatt-hours or demand.

This way you don't have to worry about packing stamps or late fees in case snowstorms delay mail.

At A Glance



Brown County Rural Electrical Association

Adding electric load this fall?

If you plan to install, modify or replace electric equipment at your home, business or farm, please contact BCREA with details before work begins. You can reach us at 800-650-2368. Thank you.

This publication focuses on cooperative savings, programs and events. As this is the official member publication, member's story ideas, letters-to-the-editor and comments are welcomed.

Andrea Christoffer, CCC, Editor
 "Owned by those it serves"

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Energy Wise

Charge ahead with electric forklifts to \$ave, plus reduce maintenance costs and emissions

Electric forklifts offer a number of benefits compared to traditional internal combustion (IC) machines. Electric units cost less to operate and maintain, are quieter and produce no onsite emissions.

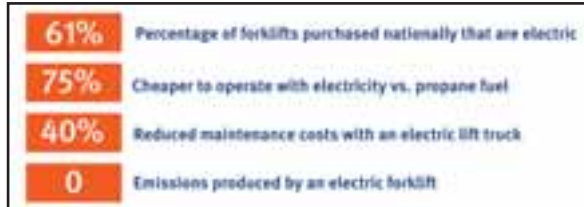
Electric forklifts are critical in many industries, from material handling on shipping docks to shuffling pallets around seed warehouses. Switching to electric forklifts can bring a number of benefits to your business.

Modern 80-volt units cost less to run than their propane counterparts. The Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) Lift Truck Comparison calculator can be used to compare the cost of operating an LPG unit to one powered by a battery. Assuming a propane cost of \$3/gallon and electricity at \$0.11/kWh (kilowatt hour), running the electric lift saves over \$30 per day.

Electric motors have fewer moving parts than IC engines and don't require regular fluid or filter changes. Plus, avoid handling or storing highly flammable fuels, such as gasoline, propane or diesel.

Electric forklifts offer quiet, emission-free operation that complies with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards for carbon monoxide and noise exposure. Electric models also eliminate most hazards with fuel or oil leaks.

Over the last decade the introduction of AC motors and fast charging technologies allowed electric units



just as well as IC equipment both inside and outside the warehouse.

Although electric forklifts have significant advantages, you must decide whether they're the best choice for your business. IC units cost less upfront, but the extra fuel and maintenance can cost you more over time. Electric units, however, require OSHA-compliant charging stations and large batteries that must be regularly cleaned and charged.

Work carefully with your supplier to make sure electric units are the right fit for your application. In addition, visit with the cooperative's energy expert on rebates for electric forklifts used at least 40 hours a week.

You can also Google the "EPRI forklift calculator" to compare the capital cost, fuel and operating costs over a period of time. See if your operation will benefit from reliable electricity! (E)

— *Courtesy of Questline*

to complete most tasks formerly reserved for their IC cousins. Some newer models can support loads of 15,000 pounds, while reaching the highest shelf on a pallet rack. Moreover, high frequency charging allows the battery to last all day on a single nightly charge.

It's commonly believed that only IC equipment can be used outside. Two recent case studies by EPRI indicate that as long as the forklift can negotiate uneven terrain and operate in inclement weather, electric units work

Energy Tips

When you charge electric forklift could impact savings

Charge electric forklift batteries at night to avoid adding to peak demand charges. A 24/7 operation may require additional batteries onsite to prevent downtime. Finally, the electrical capacity of your facility must meet the voltage/ amperage requirements. Talk to the co-op's energy expert. (E)

The Bbounder Barn Light lights up the night

Are you looking for a new, brighter LED light for the outdoors? One model might be leaps and bounds above the others — the Bbounder Barn Light.

The Bbounder Barn Light uses only 70 watts and provides up to 9,800 lumens at 5,000K daylight. While it is not a yard light or security light, it is a great replacement for old metal halide or fluorescent lights that you might have on the outside of your garage or other out building.

Features include:

- LED technology and the dusk-to-dawn photocell turns the light on at dusk and off at dawn automatically. No need to flip a switch. This feature also helps you avoid wasting electricity by accidentally leaving the light on in the day time.
- The barn light is safe, durable and waterproof. It also has an aluminum housing and corrosion-resistant cast.
- The barn light can be installed on exterior walls or various types of mounting arms. It is great for backyards, commercial areas, walkways and parking lots.
- The bulb has a 50,000-hour life, which is 10 times longer than incandescent lights. It also comes with a five-year unlimited warranty.



Brighten up the outdoors with the Bbounder Barn Light. Its LED technology makes it bright and energy-efficient.

The Bbounder Barn Light is available on Amazon.com for approximately \$63. Install it just in time for the long winter nights (E)

Safety

Make sure harvest season is a safe harvest season

Farming is one of the most dangerous jobs in America. Sometimes farm equipment that is normally helpful becomes lethal during an accident. Electricity is essential to the modern farmer, but can be deadly if misused.

Safe Electricity offers the following fall harvest tips to keep you safe on the farm.

- Farmers should be aware of special safety precautions since they often use large equipment and ladders that put them close to overhead power lines.
- Always lower a portable grain auger before you move it, even if only a few feet.
- Keep all objects at least 10 feet away from overhead lines. Know where all overhead power lines are located on your property and inform all workers about them.
- Plan your route between fields,



to bins and elevators, plus on public roads so that you avoid low-hanging power lines. If someone else transports large equipment, always specify a safe route and explain why certain routes must be taken.

- Be sure you and everyone else in your operation know what to do in an emergency.
- If equipment gets hung up on a power line, the operator should NOT get off the machinery unless in immediate danger. If the operator touches the

ground and the equipment at the same time, he or she will become a path for electrical shock.

- If you must leave the equipment, jump as far away from the machinery as possible. Never get back on machinery that touches a power line until the utility company disconnects the line.

- Investigate the possibility of burying power lines in heavily used areas on the farm, such as around grain bins.

- Electric lines may sag as years pass. Do not try to move a power line out of the way. Contact your utility to fix the line, so you can operate farm equipment with enough clearance.

- Use a spotter. It can be difficult to tell where you are in relation to overhead lines. A spotter can help you stay far away from power lines. (E)

— Courtesy of safeelectricity.org

Brown County Briefs

Operation Round Up



The Brown County Rural Electric Trust Board will meet to review applications

November 20. Area organizations wishing to seek funding through the trust should submit an application, found on the BCREA website (www.browncountyrea.coop) before that date. Applications are also available from Trust Board members or by contacting the office at 800-658-2368 or 507-794-3331.

Energy Efficiency Tip

Cooler temps are just around the corner! Is your home's heating system ready? Remember to replace furnace filters once a month or as recommended. If you heat your home with warm-air registers, baseboard heaters or radiators, remember to clean them regularly to increase efficiency. Source: energy.gov

We sprang ahead; now it's time to fall back!



Don't forget to set your clocks back one hour November 4. Day-light savings ends!

BCREA teaches youth electrical safety lessons at annual event



A volunteer from each class got the opportunity to try on safety gear that BCREA Metering Foreman Adam Fischer and his fellow linemen wear while working on power lines, as part of the Sleepy Eye Safety Day electrical safety presentation.

Which is more dangerous to you, 7,000 volts or 120 volts? Why can a bird sit safely on an energized power line?

These and other questions were answered for 125 fourth grade students, their teachers and chaperones as they learned about ways to stay safe around electricity as part of the Sleepy Eye Safety Day Camp, September 19, at the Sleepy Eye Hockey Arena.

Brown County REA Metering Foreman Adam Fischer and Member Services Manager Marcia Solie shared ways to stay safe around electricity in the home, outdoors and around power lines during the event, organized by the Sleepy Eye Chamber of Commerce.

Fourth grade students from Gibbon-Fairfax-Winthrop, Sleepy Eye Public and Sleepy Eye St. Mary's moved through the various sessions to learn about "Stranger Danger," Firearm Safety, Germ City, First Aid, Emergency Preparedness, ATV and Machinery Safety, in addition to Electrical Safety.

Sponsorship for the event was provided by AMPI, BIC Graphic, Brown County Public Health Nursing, Brown County REA, Chuck Spaeth Ford, Christensen Farms Inc., City of Sleepy Eye, Schwartz Farms, First Security Agency, Mark Thomas, Mathiowetz Construction, McCabe's Ace Hardware, Miller Sellner, Schutz Family Foods, Sleepy Eye Ambulance, Sleepy Eye Arena, Sleepy Eye Lions Club, Sleepy Eye Medical Center, Sleepy Eye Police Department, SouthPoint Financial Credit Union, Stark Farmers Insurance, Subway and Volunteers of America/Sleepy Eye Care Center. Volunteers support provided by Safety Day Camp Committee, Americana Community Bank and Sleepy Eye FFA.

Safety Day lesson can be valuable to all ages

Each year Brown County REA provides electrical safety presentations to elementary students at the Sleepy Eye Safety Day. One scenario that is always talked about is how to stay safe if you are in a vehicle accident near a power line. Every year across the country, thousands of cars, trucks and farm vehicles end up striking power lines. These accidents can be extremely dangerous, especially if you don't know how to react to them. Here are some steps to remind drivers and passengers of all ages how to be safe in these situations:

- If a power line is down, always assume that it is energized. Do not get close to anything that is touching the line.
- If a power line falls on your vehicle, stay in it; it's the safest place to be.
- Wait for emergency and utility workers before exiting, as they will ensure the lines are completely de-energized.
- If you must leave the vehicle because of fire or other danger, jump with both feet together as far away as you can. If you step out while touching any part of the car, you will become a path for electricity. After you jump, shuffle away. Be sure that you never touch the vehicle and the ground at the same time.
- If you come upon the scene of an accident involving downed power lines, avoid the area around the downed line entirely and do not touch the vehicle as everything nearby can become energized. Ⓢ



We would appreciate feedback; watch your mail for our survey



A randomly-selected group of Brown County REA members will receive materials (and a token of appreciation) for a survey being conducted through

the Electric Power Research Institute.

The survey looks at the cost of electric service and different ways members can pay for their electricity. You will receive an information leaflet to review prior to taking the survey. We encourage you to participate in the survey via the web link you will receive, along with instructions. However, if you don't have a computer or internet access, you will receive a future mailing to complete the paper survey and return in the postage-paid envelope that will be included.

Full details will be mailed to selected members. Please take the time to share your electric service plan perceptions. Ⓢ

Students visit BCREA solar array



BCREA CEO Mike Heidemann explained the workings of the solar array at the co-op headquarters to Sleepy Eye St. Mary's High School students in Mary Beth Botz's project-based environmental science class. The students work independently, or in groups of two on their projects, and wanted to learn more about solar and how it connects to the grid. Ⓢ




Make your voice count! Be sure to get out and vote in the November 6 elections.



**SAFE,
RELIABLE,
AFFORDABLE
ENERGY.**

**THEN. NOW.
ALWAYS.**

**We are proud to
power your life!**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH



**CO-OPS
VOTE**
A PROGRAM OF AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES



**VISIT VOTE.COOP TO LEARN HOW
TO BECOME A CO-OP VOTER.**



**Will the
best water
heater please
stand up!**

Is your water getting old and worn out? Replace it with one of the best options available — an energy-efficient electric water heater from your electric co-op. It offers a number of benefits:

- A lifetime warranty against leaks for the original owner
- No anode rods
- Stainless steel shell
- Special member pricing

Call your local electric co-op today for more details!

Time for a lot of hot tater tot recipes — share your favorites

Got a lot of tater tot recipes? Jot us a note for a lot of your hot tater tot favorites, ranging from tater tot hot dish, nachos, egg bakes, and more; send to: Editor, Federated Rural Electric, PO Box 69, Jackson MN 56143-0069 or e-mail to christoffer@federatedrea.coop by October 26. Add your name and phone number. Thanks for sharing with us! ☺

Pepperoni Pizza Chili by Colette Landsteiner, Fairmont

1 lb. hamburger	3.5 oz. pkg. sliced pepperoni
15 oz. can kidney beans, rinsed & drained	½ c. green pepper, chopped
15 oz. can pizza sauce	1 tsp. pizza seasoning or Italian seasoning
14.5 oz. can Italian stewed tomatoes	1 tsp. salt
8 oz. can tomato sauce	shredded mozzarella cheese
1½ c. water	

In a large saucepan cook the hamburger over medium heat until no longer pink; drain. Stir in the beans, pizza sauce, tomatoes, tomato sauce, water, pepperoni, green pepper, pizza seasoning and salt. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer uncovered for 30 minutes or until chili reaches desired thickness. Garnish with cheese, if desired. ☺

Cabbage Salad by Janice Yonker, Bingham Lake

Shred:	medium head cabbage	1 carrot
	1 green pepper	
Add:	1 tsp. salt	

Let the cabbage mixture stand one hour. Drain the brine from the cabbage and add the cooled syrup.

Syrup:	2 c. sugar	1 tsp. mustard seed
	1 c. vinegar	1 tsp. celery seed
	¼ c. water	

Boil the syrup one minute and then cool it down. Mix with the cabbage salad ingredients.

Note: I usually make this cabbage salad and freeze it. ☺

Annual Connections Post Office form posted



The Post Office requires our *Connections* newsletter to annually post its circulation counts. ☺



FCC requires CTV to change frequencies; viewers must rescan channels in October

CTV viewers will see some channel disruptions in early October. CTV will try to keep these to a minimum, but the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is requiring CTV to move off some of the channels to new channels. CTV will install new equipment to accommodate the needed changes. Please continue to rescan your TV during this time period. Viewers will experience short periods of time that the rebroadcasting of channels will be off, but hopefully not for long. This is a big change for CTV. We appreciate your patience during this process and continued support of CTV. Watch channel 16.1 for updates. ☺

Call Gopher State One Call before digging!

1-800-252-1166



Call Gopher State One Call before doing any digging more than 12" deep — 48 hours before digging for foundations, trees, tiling and more. You can

also register at www.gopherstate-onecall.org or call 811. Call a licensed electrician to locate the underground lines on your side of the meter. ☺



Brown County Rural Electrical Association

Brown County Rural Electrical Assn.
24386 State Hwy 4, PO Box 529
Sleepy Eye MN 56085

E-mail address: bcrea@bcrea.coop
Website: www.browncountyrea.coop
Phone: 507-794-3331 or 800-658-2368
Office hours: 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday

Mike Heidemann, Chief Executive Officer

Board of Directors

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William Berg, Vice President — 766-1497
James D. Hanson, Sec.-Treasurer — 829-6756
Brad Sprenger — 877-2633
Allen Hanson — 276-0691
Thomas Hayes — 228-8954
Reuben Kokesch — 359-2112
Greg Mages — 794-3540
Joel Christensen — 828-4550
The Board of Directors meets the last Thursday of each month.



Mike Heidemann
Chief Executive
Officer

Staff notes

Cooperative see the future

Dramatic changes are transforming all aspects of the energy industry. Interest in renewable energy is growing and ultimately consumers want greater control over their energy use and payment methods. The prevalence of smart-phone apps and “smart” technology for the home are increasing; plus, consumers and businesses are showing interest in electric vehicles.

Electric utilities will make changes to the way they provide energy to accommodate these trends. Brown County REA is uniquely positioned to meet these changing energy needs because we are a cooperative.

Co-ops are community-led

October is National Co-op Month, which is the perfect time to highlight the many ways Brown County REA and other electric cooperatives are unique.

- We are locally governed with all member-owners having a vote, looking out for the long-term needs of the people we serve.
- Electric cooperatives belong to the communities they serve. Our closeness to the community ensures a better response to member needs because we are led by the people that we serve.

Co-ops are a catalyst for good

Electric co-ops, like Brown County REA, are a catalyst for good in their communities. Co-ops engage their member-owners to do things for the good of the area and people who live in it. More than 80 years ago Brown County REA pioneers worked to bring power to areas where other utilities did not find it economically feasible. Today it means giving members the tools, through Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) and other technology, to manage their usage and use electricity wisely. We help develop future leaders by providing youth opportunities to visit our nation’s capitol through the Rural Electric Youth Tour and supporting community projects in the area through volunteerism, along with Brown County REA and Operation Round Up donations.

The co-op business model is unique. It is mission-oriented and puts people first. Co-ops strive to be a trusted voice in their communities. Co-ops have earned that trust because they always have their members’ best interest in mind. All of us at Brown County REA are determined to enrich the lives of those living and working in the areas we serve — now and in the future. ☺

Board meeting highlights

The BCREA Board of Directors held its monthly board meeting September 27 at the BCREA headquarters in Sleepy Eye. Discussion and/or action were taken on the following agenda items:

- Reviewed and approved the August 2018 board meeting minutes, new member applications, member cancellations, disbursements and payments to estates.
- Conducted the annual review of the cooperative’s Limited English Proficiency Plan.
- Set \$50 as the minimum amount for issuing a capital credits check. Amounts less than \$50 will be credited to members’ bill.
- Reviewed and approved the 2018 capital credits payment.
- Discussed plans for the April 11, 2019 Annual Meeting, to be held at the Sleepy Eye Event Center.
- Reviewed and approved the 2017 IRS Form 990.
- Informed that poles rejected during the annual pole testing are in the process of being replaced.

The Board will meet October 25 at the BCREA headquarters in Sleepy Eye. ☺



Heartland Security can help you protect your home or business with a variety of options. Call us at 888-264-6380 to learn more about our security systems. ☺