

Connections

November 2023

For the member-owners of Federated Rural Electric



Volume 27, Issue 11

Add electricity to your Thanksgiving blessings

During this month of Thanksgiving, we count our blessings for our family, friends, food and good health. Let's take a moment to add one more blessing — affordable, reliable electricity — as we sit down to enjoy the traditional Thanksgiving meal.

While the United States and much of Europe lives with nearly 100 percent reliable electricity, many third world countries do not have this luxury. In fact, the World Bank lists reliability for several countries less than 50 percent in 2021:

- Tanzania 43 percent
- Uganda 45 percent
- Rwanda 49 percent.

The World Bank also has statistics for the total cost of electricity billed in U.S. dollars using 2014 dollars. In these same countries mentioned above the average cost is:

- Tanzania 19 cents
- Uganda 19 cents
- Rwanda over 40 cents.

Keep in mind that the 2021 U.S. average residential cost of electricity was 13.7 cents/kilowatt-hour (kWh). Minnesota's average kWh cost was 13.5 cents in 2021. Your electric cooperative's average residential rate was 10.83 cents/kWh for 2022.

Plus, compare this to the European Union. Their average electricity cost is about two times that of the United States.

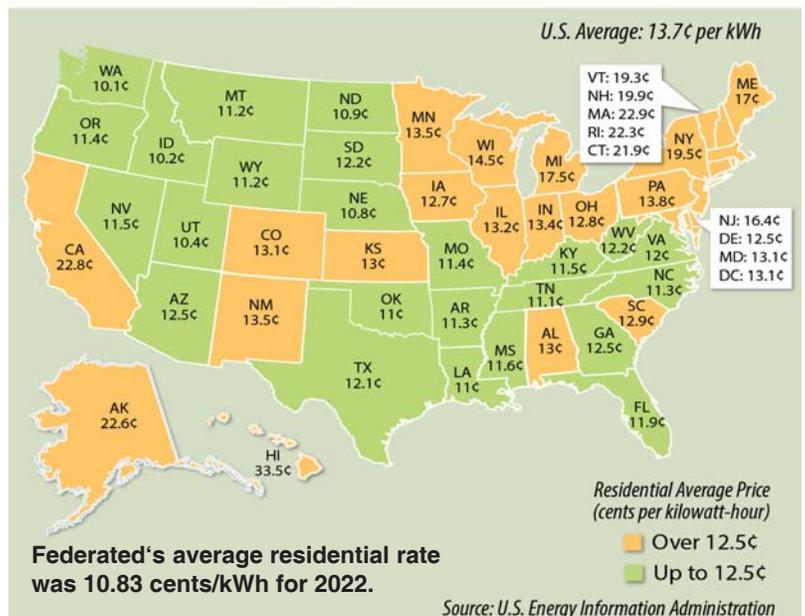
Now factor in the economic impact electric cooperatives have nationwide. These numbers come from a recent study on the economic impact of electric cooperatives between 2018-2022.

- Electric cooperatives employed about 69,442 workers a year, plus created 98,429 jobs for direct contractors through spending on capital projects, totaling 167,874 direct jobs.

- Electric cooperatives nationwide spent about \$409 billion in the U.S. economy between 2018-2022. It's broken down to \$303 billion spent on operations, \$75 billion on capital improvement projects, \$24 billion on maintenance and \$7

Average Prices for Residential Electricity

2021 figures, in cents per kWh



billion was returned to cooperative member-owners in the form of capital credits.

- Electric cooperatives power 56 percent of the U.S. land mass. 832 distribution cooperatives, including your electric co-op, distribute this electricity and other services to co-op member-owners, like you. Meanwhile, 63 generation and transmission cooperatives provide wholesale power to these local distribution co-ops through their own electric generation facilities or by purchasing power.

- Electric co-ops serve 42 million people powering over 21.5 million businesses, homes, schools and farms in 48 states. So here's a tip of the hard hat this Thanksgiving! The electricity provided by your local co-op employees to you, our member-owners, is a relative bargain when compared nationally and internationally. (E)

At A Glance



Stamp price going up in January so sign up for Auto Pay

Save the price of a stamp each month. Sign up for Auto Pay. Your electric bill will be automatically paid from your checking or savings account on the due date. Find the form on our website or call/e-mail us to sign up now for hassle-free payment; paperless bills are an option too. (E)



Well, well, well, how does your well add to your monthly electricity bill?

The energy a residential well system uses depends on the equipment and water use. The homeowner is responsible for maintaining the well, ensuring drinking water is safe and paying for the electricity needed to run the well pump. Improve and maintain your residential well to use less electricity.

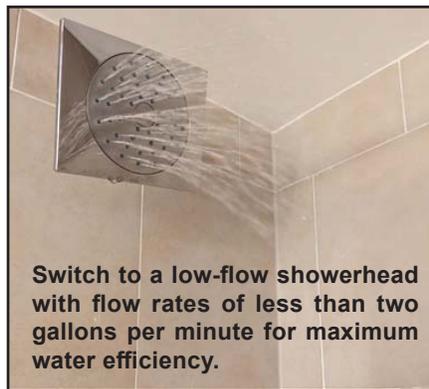
Inspect your well system

If you're concerned about how much you pay to pump water from your well, start with an inspection. Similar to heating and cooling systems, well pumps work daily; parts will wear over time. Regular maintenance can improve efficiency and increase the lifespan of the system.

The proper system design and sizing can save energy. Oversizing equipment wastes energy. Ask a well professional if your well equipment is properly sized for your needs. In some cases adding a variable-speed drive can save energy. Keep in mind, well systems don't last forever. Consider design and sizing before the existing system fails.

Things can go wrong with your well that are hard to spot. The water system may even act normally with good water pressure and flow, while using more energy and causing higher bills.

One of the most common causes of increased energy use is underground water line leakage between the pump and the home. Water lines can freeze and break or be damaged by digging or a vehicle driving over underground lines. Other issues can include waterlogged pressure tanks



Switch to a low-flow showerhead with flow rates of less than two gallons per minute for maximum water efficiency.

and malfunctioning equipment. Even if your well is in good working order, there are practices you can implement to save on your electric bill.

Lower water use to save money

The less water you use, the less energy you use. Take advantage of these water-related energy-saving tips.

1. Toilets. Check your toilet for leaks by putting a few drops of food coloring in the tank. If the color appears in the bowl without flushing, your toilet has a leak. This is likely caused by a worn flapper, which is an inexpensive and easy do-it-yourself fix.

If your toilets were installed before 1994, they are likely using more than 4 gallons per flush, which is well above new energy standards of 1.6 gallons. The average family can save nearly 13,000 gallons per year by replacing old, inefficient toilets with WaterSense-labeled models.

Another option is the tried-and-true plastic bottle method. Place sand or pebbles into a one- or two-liter bottle; place it in your toilet tank or buy toilet tank bags. This results in less water

filling the tank and less water being flushed.

2. Dishwasher — If you wash dishes by hand, start using your dishwasher instead. Did you know new Energy Star-certified dishwashers use less than half the energy it takes to wash dishes by hand? According to the Department of Energy, this simple change in habit can save more than 8,000 gallons of water each year.

3. Washing machine — Run your machine only with full loads to save water and energy. You may also consider upgrading to an Energy Star washing machine, which uses about 20 percent less energy and about 30 percent less water than regular washers.

3. Showerheads and faucets — Fix leaky showerheads and faucets. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, a leaky faucet that drips at the rate of one drip per second can waste more than 3,000 gallons of water per year.

Faucet and shower aerators are inexpensive devices that reduce the amount of water flow. For maximum water efficiency look for faucet aerators with no more than one gallon per minute (GPM) flow rates and low-flow showerhead flow rates of less than two GPM.

Of course, if you have a leaky water heater, call your electric co-op for your next replacement model.

Understanding proper well system design, maintenance and water conservation will help you save. (E)

— Courtesy Efficiency Services Group

Elevate your home-made cuisine to higher level with an electric dumpling machine

Dumplings can be so tasty, but so time consuming! Elevate your dumpling making electrically!

An electric dumpling machine offers two modes: first, manual mode: put the dumpling skin and filling on the machine and then press the button to create a dumpling. Automatic mode: After you put the dumpling skin and filling on it, press the button on the right to select the gear, which is to work once in six seconds or once in nine seconds. After pressing the button the dumpling will be created.

If the edges are not tight enough because the consistency of the flour used for each one is different, try to wet the edges of the dumplings a little. Sprinkle some flour on the mold in case it sticks.

The device uses the USB power cable to charge it up. It can make about 1,500 dumplings on one charge.

This dumpling making machine consists of high-quality food grade material so it's easy to clean and durable. Enjoy perfect dumplings and family time with your kids. What a great holiday gift too.



No more fumbling with dumplings thanks to an electric dumpling maker. Use the manual or automatic mode to make dumplings fast and furiously just in time for the holidays.

Find this dumpling machine on Walmart.com or Amazon.com for about \$25. 

Safety

Electrical safety key ingredient to kitchen recipes

The kitchen is the heart of every home for delicious meals and delectable treats. However, the kitchen is also a place where electrical appliances are frequently used so prioritize electrical safety when cooking and baking.

Inspect/maintain your appliances

On your culinary journey it's essential to inspect and maintain your electrical appliances regularly. Check for any frayed cords, exposed wires or damaged plugs. If you notice any issues, repair or replace the faulty components immediately. Ensuring that your appliances are in good working condition reduces the risk of electrical accidents.

Use GFCI outlets

Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) outlets are a kitchen's best friend. They're designed to quickly shut off power when they detect an electrical fault, preventing electrical shocks and fires. Install GFCI outlets where electrical appliances are frequently used, such as near the sink and countertops. If you don't already have them in your kitchen, consider hiring an electrician.

Avoid overloading circuits

While preparing a meal, it's easy to plug in several appliances into one outlet or power strip. However, overloading



circuits is a recipe for disaster. Avoid connecting too many appliances to a single outlet, as this can lead to overheating and potentially cause a fire. Distribute your appliances across different outlets; use power strips with surge protection.

Keep water and electricity separate

Water and electricity are a dangerous combination. Never operate electrical appliances with wet hands or near water sources. Ensure that your countertops and workspaces are dry before using any electrical device.

Unplug when not in use

When you're finished using an electrical appliance, always unplug it. Leaving appliances plugged in when not in use increases the risk of electrical accidents and it also saves energy. Unplug toasters, blenders and coffee makers for both safety and energy efficiency.

Be mindful of appliance placement

Pay attention to where you place your electrical appliances. Keep cords and wires away from stove tops, sinks or flammable materials. Ensure adequate ventilation around appliances, like microwaves and toasters to prevent overheating. 

Federated Focus

Operation Round Up deadline



The next Operation Round Up funds will be distributed in the spring. The application deadline is February 1, 2024. Applications can be found at www.federatedrea.coop. Otherwise, call the office or e-mail info@federatedrea.coop to request it. See the November recipients on Page 5.

Power through dirty dishes!



The holidays mean more baking and dirty dishes, plus more house cleaning and guest showers. Be ready with a new water heater from Federated. Don't risk a cold shower with a water heater more than 20 years old! Upgrade today before it leaks or washes out in its performance. Federated's water heaters cost \$589, plus tax, and feature free installation! The only extra charge is if you want us to haul the old one away for \$50 or \$25 for a gas conversion wiring/breaker. Call the co-op to schedule the installation on a date that works for you.

Hate the old fridge or freezer?



Wait no more! Buy a new Energy Star refrigerator or freezer. Receive a \$50 Federated rebate with proof of recycling the old unit. Find the rebate form on our website. Otherwise, call or e-mail us to mail it to you. Check out the other rebates for Energy Star dehumidifier and heat pumps too! ☺



Scott Reimer

Manager's Message

2024 electric rate increase is likely

We have been evaluating revenue requirements using the financial model for awhile now. While we are not ready to commit just yet, I think it's safe to say that an overall increase around 4 percent will be needed. Just how that will look is undetermined, but will likely be in the facilities charge; if warranted, the energy and demand could be affected.

Our wholesale power supply is seeing slight increases overall. However, Basin Electric (70 percent of our portfolio) is actually seeing a slight decrease. Great River Energy, which is 5 percent of our portfolio, will see a slight increase in energy and demand, while the transmission rate may stay steady until 2025. Another power supply contract with Alliant shows 12 percent of our portfolio will show an increase for all components, including energy, demand and transmission. Regarding our hydropower allocation (12 percent of our portfolio), will see an increase due to a drought adder for 2024. All in all, we are looking at about 1.5 to 2 percent on the wholesale side. We have the benefit of having a very good load factor; this means we are purchasing more of the lower cost kilowatt-hours versus the higher cost demand components.

We discuss options with the Board every month. I predict that at the November meeting we will come with a formal recommendation. Our rates aren't driven by power supply alone. Several other factors come into play, such as system improvements through our work plan, comprising of materials and the workforce of our own employees and contracted vendors.

The total operation makes up the financial needs. We still focus on the four pillars of our cooperative success: rates, reliability, safety and member service. You could rate them anyway you choose; however, these are our top focus every day. We realize our country has been on a steady diet of price increases no matter where you look: fuel, food, healthcare, goods and services. It's been a challenge. Our goal is to provide our supply of energy to you in the most cost-effective manner possible. Statistically, we have accomplished that and look to continue that trend. If everything works out, we will implement the new rates on January 1, 2024.

Broadband updates for fiber internet deployment

We are having a good year and subscriber counts continue to increase. We believe that members have trust in their cooperative for electric service; we hope that sentiment carries over to broadband too. We just completed a buildout in the city of Northrop and connecting members to gig-speed fiber optic internet will begin soon. The Border-to-Border project in Jackson County is well underway with the planning aspect. We will begin construction as soon as practical in the spring of 2024 with completion by the end of 2025. Initially, 480 passings were identified. Yet, we think that number is closer to 600. If you are a Federated Broadband fixed wireless subscriber now within that footprint (see map on Page 8), you will be converted to fiber once it gets to your location. That number is currently at 208. We are inviting members to call now and sign up; if possible, transition over to our fixed wireless now to simplify things when we get to your location for fiber. Not everyone will take the service, but it will be offered to everyone.

For all other Federated electric members, we plan to get you fiber to your home or business as soon as practical. We are constantly working on plans and have the layout for Martin County done. We have a first draft of the Jackson County plan. This is an expensive proposition, as you can imagine; we will get there with good planning and grants where possible.

Until next time, wishing you all a blessed Thanksgiving season. ☺

Congratulations Alex Kunz, journeyman lineman



Here's a tip of the Federated hard hat! Congratulations Alex Kunz, on becoming a journeyman lineman, effective October 1, 2023, at Federated. Kunz works out of the Jackson warehouse. Federated celebrated this achievement with Kunz October 10 with a cake.

Kunz is a May 2019 graduate of Minnesota West Community & Technical School in Jackson. He was an 1,000-hour employee for Missouri River Energy Services working for the City of Jackson before coming to Federated October 14, 2019.

The Career Development for Linemen (CDL) program instructs utility personnel in the safety-related work practices and technical skills necessary to install, operate and maintain power distribution systems. The CDL Journeyman program also meets the Federal and State Department of Labor requirements for apprentice training.

This certification program involves on-the-job training, along with testing in different areas, ranging from safety to meters, transformers, power lines and substations. The program covers more than 7,500 hours of training and testing.

Kunz resides in Jackson. He celebrates this milestone with his girlfriend Sydney Gouchanour. In his free time he likes archery hunting for deer, fishing and building guns. 🏹

Operation Round Up recipients announced totaling \$20,984; thanks co-op members!

Organization	Amount	Purpose
Human Services of Faribault & Martin Co.	\$225	Buy 25 Love & Logic Way parenting workbooks
JCC Ag Department	\$250	Fund 18 students with OSHA work-based training certification
MCW Speech Department	\$400	Speechwire software used for speech meets
HL-O Family Career Community Leaders of America	\$450	Cricut machine so students can make display boards for classes/events
HL-O Elementary Special Education	\$478	Five flexible wobble chairs & set of alphabet cards
MCW Trimont Elementary	\$500	Toward pickleball paddles/balls for grades 3-6 phy ed classes
HL-O Agriculture Program	\$500	Kitchen tools to demo taking raw ingredients to make products
Jackson County Riverbend Quilters	\$500	Toward professional quilting of quilts made for veterans
Alano Society, Fairmont	\$500	Toward coffee, toiletry/paper supplies & sanitizer for meetings
Ruby's Pantry, Sherburn	\$500	Toward an electric pallet jack for food distribution
Helping Hands, Ceylon	\$500	Toward new park equipment in Mondale Park
Beautiful Inside & Out (BIO) Girls	\$500	Scholarships for JCC girls in grades 2-6 for mentoring program
JCC Discovery Place Preschool/ECFE	\$569	Seating for reading area & removable wall-mount ball hoop
Caregiver Response Effort & Service Team	\$600	For informational mailings & printing of brochures
Southwest West Central Svc. Cooperative	\$669	Buy Blaze Pods for JCC special ed student training tools
HL-O H.S. Family & Consumer Science	\$700	10 new stools for higher classroom tables
HL-O Robotics	\$750	Additional kit/materials for a third team to compete
Fairmont High School Robotics	\$750	Toward control system and swerve motors/controller
Jackson Co. Animal Protection Society	\$800	For microchipping scanner, vaccination/spray/neutering
JCC H.S. Shop Class	\$848	Rockler router table for wood shop for students
St. James Lutheran School, Northrop	\$995	Replace failed 8-year-old weather station to teach about weather
SW Crisis Center, Worthington	\$1,000	Program supplies & personal need items
Family Services Network, Jackson	\$1,000	Buy coats & snowpants for families in need
Truman Public Schools, Ag Dept.	\$1,000	For Ag Centric Technology Trailer for K-12 hands-on learning
Martin County Historical Society	\$1,000	Scan 1,850 cardboard mount slides for digitizing/preservation
HL-O Elementary	\$1,000	Roller skate rentals for phy ed classes
Des Moines Valley Health & Human Svcs	\$1,000	20 car seats for low-income households
Ceylon Fire Department	\$1,500	Toward new portable radio replacing failing old one
HL-O H.S. Industrial Tech Program	\$1,500	Toward a new welder replacing one that quit working
Total	\$20,984	

CTV offers 60 channels for only \$8 a month, which requires UHF antenna

Looking for low cost TV? Want to ditch the satellite dish? Try out CTV, which is owned by four local electric cooperatives, including yours.

What you need is a UHF antenna. Buy one from Walmart or online and install it yourself. Otherwise, reach out to a local TV antenna installer so they can climb the roof and add a booster, splitter and run the cable; find a list of installers at www.ctv.coop.

CTV operates three towers at Godahl, Jackson and Frost. The Godahl tower has about a 45-mile radius coverage area due to the tower height. Meanwhile, the Jackson and Frost towers have about a 30-mile radius coverage. A UHF antenna needs to be pointed toward the tower. Line-of-sight can be an issue, along with the summer heat and humidity, affecting CTV reception.

"If you are looking for a low-cost TV viewing option, consider CTV," stated Dave Sunderman, CTV general manager. "As an electric co-op member, you can add \$8 as a line on your electric bill for CTV. Just call or e-mail your co-op to do so. Your \$8 a month helps pay for the tower operations, the maintenance technician and licensing."

CTV viewers on the Jackson tower can now receive additional channels by doing a rescan with each TV. Additional channels were added for the channel 2s and 9s in late September.

For the latest channel updates or when a channel is down refer to channel 16.1.

Thank you for supporting this low-cost, local TV option. 



CTV channel Listing — Clip & set by your TV remote

- | | |
|--|--|
| 2.1 TPT - Twin Cities PBS | 16.1 CTV local access channel |
| 2.2 TPT MN | 16.2 LAFF |
| 2.3 TPT Life | 16.3 NASA |
| 2.4 TPT Kids | 16.4 To be determined |
| 2.5 TPT NOW | 16.5 CowGirl Channel |
| 2.6 TPT MN | 19.1 Laff (Godahl Tower) |
| 4.1 WCCO 4 - Minneapolis CBS (not on Godahl tower) | 23.1 WUCW 23 - The CW Twin Cities |
| 4.2 Start TV | 23.2 Comet |
| 4.3 abl | 23.3 Charge Network (not on Godahl) |
| 4.4 FaveTV | 23.4 TBD Network |
| 5.1 KSTP - Minneapolis ABC | 23.5 Rewind |
| 5.2 Channel 45 | 23.5 GRIT (Godahl tower) |
| 5.3 MeTV - Television Classics | 23.6 Antenna TV |
| 5.4 GetTV - Television Classics | 24.1 (Not finalized) |
| 5.5 Defy TV | 25.1 Telemundo - Spanish Channel |
| 5.6 ThisTV - MGM Movies | 25.2 SonLife Christian TV Channel |
| 5.7 H&I | 25.3 COZI TV |
| 9.1 & 9.9 FOX 9 - Minneapolis FOX | 25.4 LX Lifestyle & Entertainment |
| 9.2 FOX9+ - Minneapolis | 25.5 Bein Sports |
| 9.3 Movies TV - Classic movies | 25.6 GetTV Classic Movies and TV |
| 9.4 Buzzer - Old game shows | 41.1 ION TV - TV shows and movies |
| 9.5 The Grio | 41.2 BOUNCE |
| 9.6 Catchy Comedy | 41.3 GRIT |
| 9.7 Fox Weather | 41.4 Mystery |
| 9.8 Stories | 41.5 Laff |
| 9.10 9+ (repeat not at Godahl) | 41.6 Scripps |
| 9.9 Fox 9 | 41.7 Jewelry |
| 11.1 KARE - Twin Cities NBC | 41.8 QVC (shopping) (not on Godahl) |
| 11.2 Court TV | 45.1 Trinity Broadcasting - religious (Godahl Tower) |
| 11.3 True Crime Network | 45.2 TBN Inspire (Godahl Tower) |
| 11.4 Quest | 45.3 Smile (Godahl Tower) |
| 11.5 Circle | 45.4 Positiv (Godahl Tower) |
| 11.7 Twist | 45.5 Enlace TV - Spanish (Godahl Tower) |
| 11.8 Home Shopping Network | |



Yes, add the CTV \$8 a month payment to my electric bill. I want to pay my fair share.

Yes, I want to pay my fair share, but this is a cabin so please bill me \$48 (for six months).

Yes, I want to pay my fair share, but bill me once a year \$96.

Name _____ Address _____

City/state/zip _____ Account number _____

Return this coupon with your next electric bill payment, call or e-mail this information to your electric cooperative.



Aah shucks! Shuck out some oyster recipes to share for holidays

Get shucking! Dig up some oyster recipes; share your favorite oyster recipes whether it's as an appetizer, on the half shell, oyster stew and yes, we will even take oyster cracker snack recipes too. Send your favorite oyster recipes to Editor, Federated Rural Electric, PO Box 69, Jackson MN 56143-0069 or e-mail to christoffer@federatedrea.coop by November 27. Add your name and phone number. Thanks for sharing with us! 🍴

Energy assistance for 2023-24: apply now using this QR code



Income-eligible assistance exists for homeowners and renters who pay heating/electricity costs. Assistance is also available for disconnection notices, shut-offs and no fuel emergencies. This link takes you to the Minnesota Public Utilities application. Otherwise, call the cooperative's phone number to request a hard copy or phone number to call for the local agencies, depending on where you live. 🍴

Graham Cracker Bars

by Elizabeth Shimon, Granada

- 1 c. butter
- 1 c. brown sugar
- 1 c. chopped pecans

Line an ungreased cookie sheet with graham crackers. Bring butter and sugar to a gentle boil, stirring constantly. Remove from heat and add pecans. Pour the mix over the crackers and spread evenly.

Bake at 350° for 10 minutes — watch it closely. Let cool, break up and enjoy! 🍴



Happy Thanksgiving

The co-op is closed for Thanksgiving November 23 & 24. Crews are on call in case of outages.



Just make the 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 and tiling. Register at www.gopherstateonecall.org or call 811. Call a licensed electrician to locate the underground lines on your side of the meter. 🍴



Rural Electric

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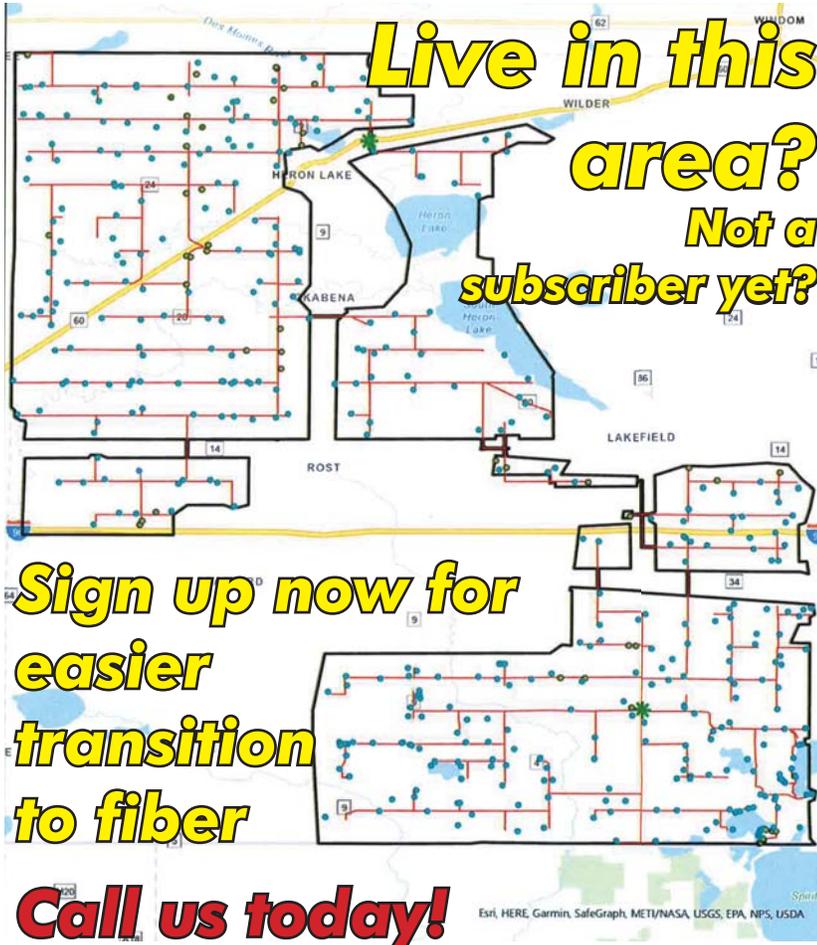
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Scott Thiesse — 399-6427

The Board of Directors generally meets the last business day of the month at 8 a.m. at the Jackson office. Regular board meetings are open to the membership. Members interested in discussing business items should contact the general manager or president three days before the meeting.



Federated Broadband's Residential packages:

6MB down/2MB up

- \$50/month
- Perfect speed for e-mails, surfing & Facebook

15MB down/2MB up

- \$70/month
- Upgrade to streaming TV & drop satellite TV

25MB down/3MB up

- \$80/month
 - Works with larger households, downloads & gaming
- ### 40MB down/3MB up
- \$90/month
 - Gamers, work from home and all of the above!

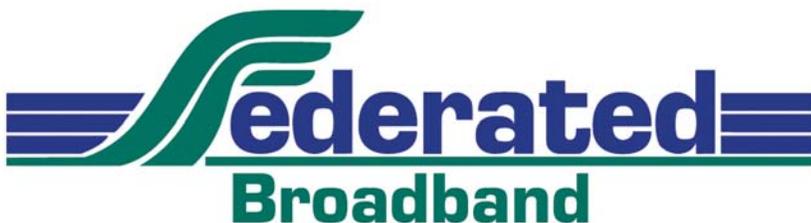
Basic installation fee \$150

TV package starts at \$70/month for 100 channels.

All you need is a Roku Ultra or Roku Ultra LT.

Call the office, e-mail or see our website for details.

This area of northwestern and central Jackson County is eligible for the Border-to Border fiber internet. Become a wireless subscriber today for an easier transition to fiber as work progresses next year. FREE installs for this area! Visit www.federatedbroadband.coop/JacksonB2B.htm for more info.



info@federatedbroadband.coop • www.federatedbroadband.coop

507-847-1001 or 1-833-847-8001

Businesses: ask about our larger data plans