

# Connections

May 2018



For the member-owners of Federated Rural Electric

Volume 22, Issue 5

## Raise your hand if you know the answers to the questions of this electrical safety quiz!

May is Electrical Safety Month. Test your electrical safety IQ. Answers are the end of the story.

**1. The most dangerous place to use electrical equipment is where?**

- A. indoors.
- B. outdoors.
- C. near water.
- D. near other electrical equipment.

**2. Where does electricity always want to go, even if it means traveling through a person? \_\_\_\_\_**

**3. The safest ladder to use around electricity is?**

- A. wood.
- B. fiberglass.
- C. aluminum.
- D. a step stool.

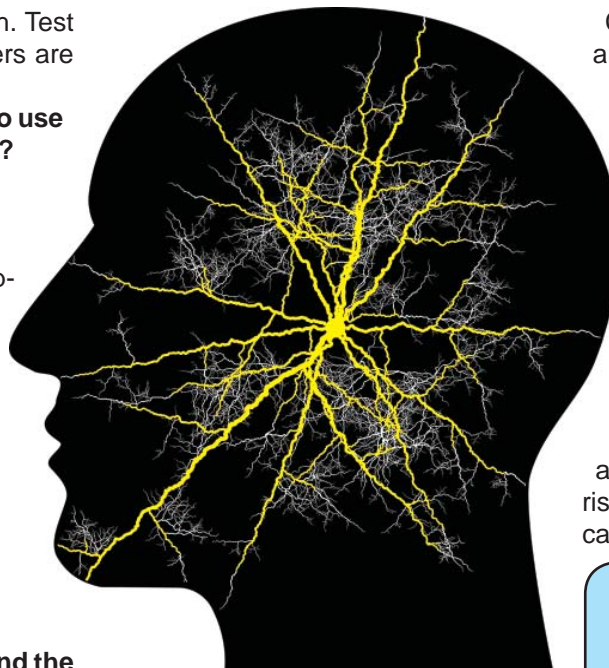
**4. The earth, water, concrete and the human body are all conductors of electricity. True or False**

**5. The effects of an electrical shock on the body depend upon all of the following except:**

- A. current.
- B. path.
- C. duration.
- D. body weight.

**6. Injuries from electricity can include which of the following?**

- A. electric shock that may or may not result in electrocution.
- B. falls.



- C. burns.
- D. all of the above.

**7. Flammable materials can easily be ignited by \_\_\_\_\_ electricity.**

**8. When should power tools and extension cords be inspected?**

**9. Flexible cords can be used in the workplace:**

- A. as a substitute for permanent wiring.
- B. if they are run behind walls to reduce the chance of abrasion and damage.

C. if heavy or extra heavy-duty cords are needed for temporary purposes.

D. if any obvious splices are repaired with electrical tape.

**10. Fuses and circuit breakers are designed to protect people from shocks. True or False**

How did you score? Check below. 8-10 right — you are an electrical safety guru! 6-8 right — you know a fair amount; now you know more! 4-6 right — raise your awareness to stay safe around electricity. Less than 4 right — you are perhaps taking unnecessary risks with electricity. Learn to be more careful.

### May Safety Month Answers

1. C
2. Electricity always wants to travel to ground, which will complete the circuit.
3. B
4. True.
5. D
6. D
7. Static electricity can easily ignite a flammable material.
8. Inspect power tools and extension cords before using.
9. C
10. False. Fuses and circuit breakers protect machinery and electrical systems. Ⓢ

### At A Glance



**Mini-road trip! Go on the Basin Tour July 10-12 & leave the driving to us**

We still have open seats for the power plant, lignite mine, synfuels plant and riverboat ride. Price is \$138 for one Federated member or \$275 for a Federated couple. The price includes air conditioned charter bus, hotel, all meals and snacks too! Call Federated to sign up; ask for Andrea. Ⓢ



**Energy Wise**

# Study on cold climate air source heat pumps reduced the heating costs up to 54%! Ka-ching!

"How low can you go?" is a common phrase in limbo, but it now applies to the next generation of air source heat pumps.

Ducted cold-climate air source heat pumps (ccASHPs) now go down to 5° to 10° F. Previously, heat pumps went down to around 20-30°. An ASHP uses a refrigerant system involving a compressor, condenser and evaporator to absorb heat at one place and then release it at another. While an ASHP work like a central air conditioner in the summertime, with a reversing valve it can absorb heat from outside air and transfer it indoors.

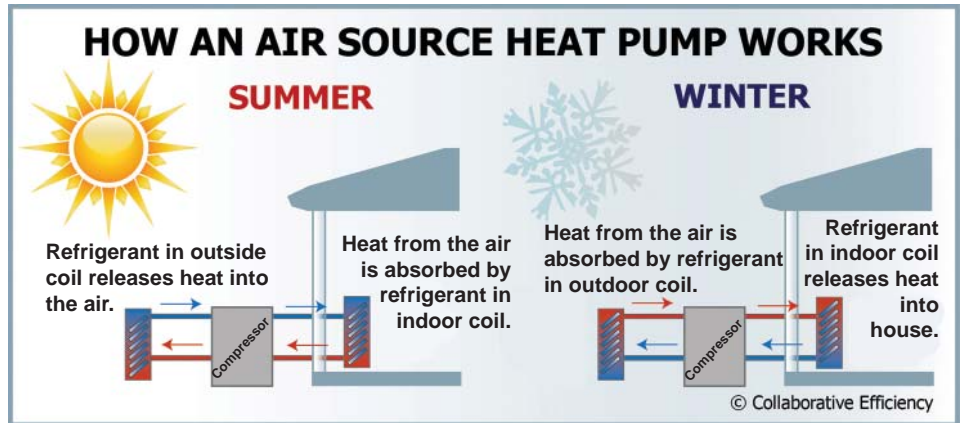
A recent study by the Center for Energy and Environment (CEE) studied ducted cold climate air source heat pumps on four homes in Minnesota. The grant was funded by the Minnesota Department of Commerce, Great River Energy and the Electric Power Research Institute.

The units installed in four homes varied in sizes from three to five tons and were:

- Carrier Infinity with Greenspeed
- Bryant Extreme heat pump
- Trane XV20i

These heat pumps were paired with LP furnaces with a variable speed fan as backup running below 10° F. The annual energy use was then studied at the four sites.

Results showed energy savings from 37 percent to 54 percent for the homes' energy consumption, which reduced heating costs from 28 percent to 54 percent. Plus, the ccAHSPs met 84 percent of the homes' heating load. This translated into an average of 64 percent



**Is your central air system so old you can't remember when it was installed? That's probably a sign you should install a new cooling system, but go with an air source heat pump instead for energy-efficient cooling and heating too. Check out the cooperative's larger summer rebates for added savings.**

less propane use a year, typically using one LP tank of fuel a year. Thus, energy savings for each home ranged from \$358 to \$767 a year.

The average installation cost for a ccASHP with an LP condensing furnace in this study was \$14,000. National studies show that the average cost would be \$10,340; this breaks down to about \$6,340 for a ducted ccASHP with \$4,000 for a new condensing LP furnace (92 percent efficient) with a multi-stage fan. Compare that to a new central air, which would cost about \$5,540.

One way to look at that would be if the furnace or central air needs replacement, the payback with a new ccASHP would be six years from the energy savings. Factor in your electric cooperative's ASHP rebate to increase the savings, along with the \$300 federal energy-efficiency

tax incentive.

One control option's dynamic controls allow the homeowner to program in fuel costs for electricity and LP so it looks at costs and operates in the cheaper mode.

Before buying your next central air, go with a more efficient ccASHP that works year-round to save you money. For more information on this study go to [mncee.org](http://mncee.org) and click on research projects.

In addition, check out your cooperative's larger incentives this summer for air source heat pumps. These larger rebates cover some of the price difference between a central air and air source heat pump. You also gain energy-efficient heating this way. See Page 4 for details. Be sure to visit with the cooperative's energy expert to learn about the benefits of ASHPs, especially cold climate units. <sup>(1)</sup>

## The SentryPal travels with you to help keep you safe

Heartland Security, a subsidiary of your electric co-op, offers a variety of medical alerts to help keep seniors independent in their homes. One type of alert is a SentryPal Mobile Personal Emergency Response System or a GPS medical alert.

The SentryPal GPS medical alert system is lightweight and water-resistant. The pager-like unit can be worn on a lanyard or in a belt-clip holder. When there is an emergency, push the button and the two-way voice communication connects you with the response center that can send help.

A SentryPal GPS medical alert system can be installed temporarily or permanently; no long-term contracts apply. Pay a one-time installation fee



**Security with GPS travels with you. The SentryPal calls for help, but requires a good cell phone signal.**

of \$45 and then a monthly monitoring fee of \$49.95. The unit must be charged every night and should be tested monthly. Because the SentryPal GPS medical alert system uses cellular, satellite and mapping systems that are beyond Heartland Security's control, you may not have service in certain areas.

For nearly 20 years Heartland Security has installed residential and commercial alarm systems and medical alerts for more than 8,000 customers in central, western and southern Minnesota, plus northern Iowa. For more information about their medical alerts please call 1-888-264-6380 or visit Heartland Security's website at [www.heartlandss.com](http://www.heartlandss.com). ☎

### Safety

## *Some things don't go together, like water and electricity*

So your daughter just brought home her boyfriend from college and to say the least, you are not impressed. As you endure a week-end of having him around, you can't help but think, "These two just don't go together!" Quite frankly, no one will ever be good enough for your daughter, but that's another story.

So, as you head to the basement to escape his laugh that grates on every nerve, you step into a pool of water on the bottom step. Yup, your basement has water flowing like you were filling up a bathtub. Welcome to spring in Minnesota!

Just as you can't help but think your daughter should not be dating this guy, the same goes for the water in your basement with all of your electrical appliances. "These two just don't go together!"

So, if you find yourself in this predicament, know these safe actions.

1. Be aware that submerged outlets or electrical cords may energize standing water. Do not enter a flooded area until it has been determined safe by a professional.



2. Do not touch a circuit breaker or replace a fuse with wet hands or while standing on a wet surface.

3. Have an electrician inspect electrical appliances that were wet; do not turn on or plug in appliances unless an electrician tells you it is safe. A trained professional may be able to recondition some devices, while others will require replacement.

All electrical equipment, panels, switch gear, motor control centers, boilers and boiler controls, electric motors, transformers, receptacles, switches, light fixtures, electric heaters and appliances such as water heaters, ovens, ranges and

dishwashers that were submerged need to be replaced or repaired by the original manufacturer or an approved representative.

Electrical wiring may require replacement depending on the type of wire or cable and the extent of the damage.

4. All breakers, fuses, disconnect switches, ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI), Arc Fault Circuit Interrupters and surge protective devices that were submerged must be replaced. No method insures these life safety devices will operate as intended once exposed to water.

5. To reduce the risk of shock from using electrical appliances in wet locations, ensure your wet/dry vacuum or other equipment is plugged into an outlet that uses a GFCI.

6. If your home experienced flooding, depending to what extent, keep the power off until an electrician inspects your system for safety.

As for the boyfriend, trust that you raised your daughter to come to her senses sooner than later. If not, welcome him into the family! ☎



# Federated Focus

**More heat. More cooling. More rebates on air source heat pumps so save!**



Install a ductless air source heat pump from May-September

and now receive a \$500 rebate. Install an air source heat pump that's 14-16 SEER and receive a \$1,000 rebate, while SEER 17+ earns \$1,500, while funds last. These are the largest ever so don't go with central air, but air source instead! Find the new forms on our website: [www.federatedrea.coop](http://www.federatedrea.coop) or call Federated to request one.

## Apply for Operation Round Up

The spring recipients are listed on Page 5. The next Round Up application deadline is September 28. Recipients will likely be announced in November. The application is available by calling or e-mailing Federated; otherwise, fill it out on Federated's website: [www.federatedrea.coop](http://www.federatedrea.coop).

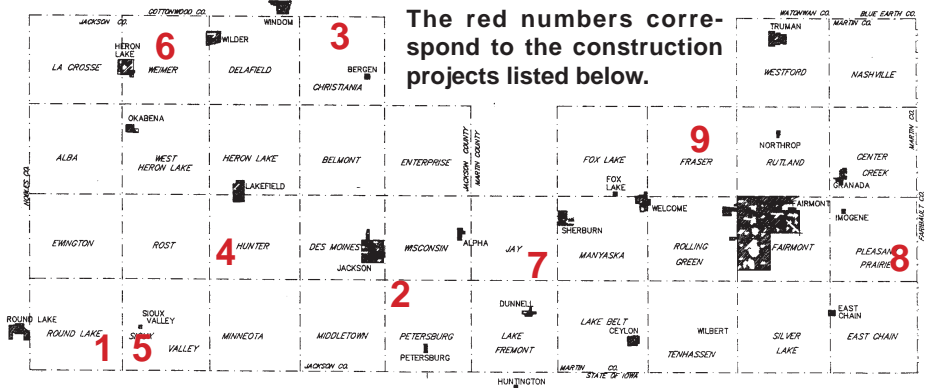
## Your next water heater awaits!



Turn to Federated when your water heater goes cold or shows its age with a leak. Federated installs energy-efficient, insulated Westinghouse water heaters for \$539, plus tax. In return for this

half-priced water heater, Federated installs a radio control to shut it off during peak periods on the hottest days of summer and coldest nights of winter. The larger-sized tank means you won't run out of hot water. This helps Federated avoid buying power during these expensive peaks, which helps keep your electric rates stable. (U)

## Federated plans more than \$2 million in 2018 work plan projects for reliable electric service



Federated will invest nearly \$2 million on replacing, rebuilding and improving the reliability of electric service for Federated members this year.

### Jackson County

1. Rebuild 3½-miles three-phase overhead from the Round Lake substation east on County Road 4.
2. Replace ¼-mile two-phase underground at the intersection of 750<sup>th</sup> Street and 560<sup>th</sup> Avenue going south.
3. Rebuild 1½-miles three-phase overhead at the intersection of 880<sup>th</sup> Street and 520<sup>th</sup> Avenue going east.
4. Replace ¾-mile single-phase underground at the intersection of 440<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 760<sup>th</sup> Street going west.
5. Rebuild 3½ miles of overhead line to underground due to the County Road 4 road grade project where project number one (listed above) ends.
6. Install a ¾-mile underground line connecting the Wilder and Heron Lake Bio Energy substations for backfeeding and reliability.

### Martin County

7. Rebuild 1¼ miles of single-phase overhead line from the intersection of 60<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 80<sup>th</sup> Street going south.
8. Rebuild ¾-mile overhead single-phase line at County Road 26 and 290<sup>th</sup> Avenue going south.
9. Rebuild ¾-mile overhead single-phase line at the intersection of 170<sup>th</sup> Avenue and County Road 38 going south.

In addition, Federated will also invest nearly \$1.5 million in system improvements, such as service rebuilds, new services, pole replacements, transformer change-outs, upgrading reclosers, adding wildlife protection and underground outage restoration. In addition, the underground work will be contracted with Oddson Underground. This allows the crews to make progress on needed maintenance. All of this comes to a total of nearly \$2.4 million for 2018 construction work, along with other work that may arise from Mother Nature. (U)

### Take the seasonal spikes out of your payments

**Sign up for Even Pay.**

Use form on website or call us; enrollment is open during May.

# Members fund \$32,742 in Operation Round Up

Organization	Amount	Purpose
Southwest MN American Red Cross	\$500	Buy fire detectors for Jackson & Martin Co. at-risk residents
HL-O Elementary School Library	\$500	Buy 45 new nonfiction books, updating old ones with new info.
The ARC MN Southwest, Fairmont	\$500	Buy new printer & three-year virus protection system
Reinbows of Windom	\$500	Scholarships for kids to attend Art & Horses summer program
United Community Action Partnership	\$500	Buy STEM materials for Jackson Head Start classroom
MCW Summer Ball Program	\$500	Toward safety gear for catchers, umpires & batting helmets
HL-O Family/Consumer Science classroom	\$512	Kitchen utensils for 4 kitchens, cutting boards & omelet pans
Heron Landers 4-H Club, Lakefield	\$520	Buy sunscreen dispenser & refills for Lakefield Aquatic Center
JCC Anatomy/Physiology class, Jackson	\$600	Toward bus cost for students visiting SDSU cadaver lab
Heritage Acres, Fairmont	\$600	Hire blacksmith for education at July 4 <sup>th</sup> & Harvest Festivals
Southwest Crisis Center, Jackson	\$615	Buy printer, stand and crisis cards used in referral process
Minnesota West, Jackson	\$700	Scholarship for Jackson or Martin County lineman student
Truman Public Preschool	\$700	Replace 15-year old bound rug that's worn & stained
Truman Schools/ECFE	\$726	Buy 16 little chairs and table for young children
Jackson Pool	\$800	Buy new swim belts & life vests for swim lessons, phy ed, etc.
MCW Prairie Fire Children's Theater	\$850	Toward touring costs for local youth summer performance
Greater Round Lake Community Assn.	\$890	Buy 10 round banquet tables for cafeteria/events
Jackson County Library	\$900	Toward Zooman summer-reading program at three towns
Jackson Splash Pad	\$900	Buy three benches
Prairie Ecology Bus, Lakefield	\$1,000	Toward portable planetarium & lessons for kids & schools
Trimont Fire Department	\$1,000	Finish deck gun project for tankers & grass rig for fires
Lakefield Ambulance Service	\$1,000	Buy intubation head & moulage kit for training
Sherburn Fire Department & Ambulance	\$1,000	Buy handheld carbon monoxide monitor to check patients
Family Services Network, Jackson Co.	\$1,000	Toward school supplies for 300 kids in need for Fall 2018
Family Services Network, Jackson Co.	\$1,000	Coat drive: coats, snowpants & boots for 300 kids in need
Fox Lake Area Sports Commission	\$1,000	Toward two scoreboards on fields that don't have them
Granada First Responders	\$1,107	Buy two new pagers
South Central Dive Team, Trimont	\$1,022	Buy two pagers to respond to emergencies
Des Moines Valley Health & Human Svcs.	\$1,500	For Federated members w/emergency utility costs assistance
Heron Lake Emergency Medical Svcs.	\$1,500	Buy one replacement AED for 1 of 5 HL-O public buildings
Salvation Army Heat Share	\$2,000	For Federated members w/emergency utility costs assistance
9 \$700 high school scholarships	<u>\$6,300</u>	For Federated members' high school senior graduates (C)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$32,742</b>	

## Career fair sparks interest in future jobs



Federated participated in the Fairmont Career Fair April 11. Area sophomores visited booths to learn about future job opportunities and the education each requires. Students also enjoyed playing with the static ball as Apprentice Lineman Jeremy Radcliffe visits with them. (C)

## Twins Play Ball Free Clinic May 12 at Lakefield's King ballfield

- 6-9 year-old boys/girls 9 a.m.
- 10-13 year-old boys/girls 10:30
- 706 Menage Ave., Lakefield, MN



Play Ball is sponsored by the Twins Community Fund, Great River Energy and Federated. No registration is required, but parents must complete a waiver on-site. Equipment is provided, but bring your glove. Learn the fundamentals of hitting, throwing and fielding. In case of inclement weather the clinic will be moved into the Jackson County Central Middle School gym. Kids: register to win one of five \$10 Dairy Queen gift cards from Federated. Thanks JCC Community Ed for hosting! (C)

# CTV channel notice for WCCO off Godahl Tower

As of April 16, if you receive CTV service from our Godahl Tower, you cannot receive the WCCO (CBS) signal. CBS no longer allows CTV to retransmit CBS network programming on WCCO at the Godahl Tower. CBS's technical limitations and an inability to reach a mutually agreeable resolution with the necessary parties requires CTV to discontinue WCCO (CBS) on the Godahl Tower.

If you are among those viewers, CBS programming may still be seen on KEYC VHF Channel 12.1. Channel 12.1 is the only CBS option for the foreseeable future. If you are unable to receive Channel 12.1, contact your local antenna service provider.

We are sorry for any inconvenience. Viewers who receive

CTV service from our Frost and Jackson towers can still receive the WCCO (CBS) signal.

If you watch local TV channels, chances are you are watching CTV. CTV is owned and operated by area electric cooperatives and supported by paying subscribers. If you are not a paying subscriber, support CTV today by signing up below. Your subscription fee helps bring basic low-cost, high-definition TV to our region. CTV is also a cooperative. That means it doesn't operate to make money off its customers. It operates to bring the best possible service to its customers. The more paying customers CTV has, the better the service as each member does their part to contribute to the whole. (C)

## CTV Channels

2.1 TPT 2	11.4 KARE	41.2 QUBO
2.2 TPT MN (Godahl and Frost Towers)	11.5 KARE WX	41.3 ION Life
2.3 TPT Life (Godahl and Frost Towers)	11.6 Justice Network	41.4 SHOP
2.4 TPT Kids	11.7 Quest	41.5 QVC
2.5 TPT WX	16.1 CTV	41.6 HSN
4.1 WCCO 4 (Jackson and Frost Towers)	16.2 Action Channel	45.1 Trinity Broadcasting (Godahl Tower only)
5.1 KSTP	16.3 Heartland	45.2 Hillsong Channel (Godahl Tower only)
5.2 KSTC-TV	16.4 AMGTV	45.3 Smile of a Child (Godahl Tower only)
5.3 MeTV	16.5 BizTV	45.4 Juce TV
5.4 Antenna TV	20.6 Vibrant TV	45.5 Enlace TV (Godahl Tower only)
5.6 ThisTV	23.1 WUCW 23	46.1 KDLT HD (Jackson Tower only)
5.7 H&I	23.2 Comet	46.2 COZI TV (Jackson Tower only)
9.1 FOX 9	23.3 Charge Network	
9.2 FOX+	23.4 TBD Network	
9.3 Movies TV (Godahl Tower only)	23.5 GRIT TV	
9.4 Buzzer (Godahl Tower only)	23.6 CTV Two (Canada) (Godahl Tower only)	
9.5 Light TV (Godahl Tower only)	24.1 Rev'n (Godahl Tower only)	
9.9 KMSP (Godahl Tower only)	31.1 Retro TV (Godahl Tower only)	
	35.1 LAFF TV	
	40.1 YouToo	
	41.1 ION TV	

### I want to support CTV

\_\_\_\_\_ Bill me \$8 monthly on my electric bill. I'm a member of (circle one): Brown County Rural Electric, Sleepy Eye; Federated Rural Electric, Jackson.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have a seasonal residence at \_\_\_\_\_ I am interested in paying a prorated amount of \$48 a year.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to your electric co-op or include with your bill payment.

## Teachers: earn two continuing education credits

The Lignite Energy Council will conduct an education seminar June 11-14 for approximately 130 elementary and secondary teachers. Participants can receive two credits from the University of North Dakota, North Dakota State University or Minot State University.

The seminar will be held at Bismarck State College, Bismarck, ND. It will provide teachers with the information and educational materials to teach their students about how lignite is mined and used to produce electricity for homes, farms and businesses in the Upper Midwest. In addition, the seminar covers lignite's economic impact

on the region, as well as important environmental issues affecting the lignite industry.

This is a no-cost seminar for K-12 teachers in North Dakota, Minnesota, Montana, South Dakota and Iowa. Teachers may incur transportation costs. The Lignite Energy Council provides housing and most meals during the seminar. Graduate credits are paid by the Lignite Energy Council. A \$60 deposit is required to reserve your spot in the seminar. The deposit will be returned to you upon check-in at the Seminar Monday, June 11. Visit <https://lignite.com/events/teachers-seminar> for more information. (C)



## Fix & forget with freezer meals for fast meal time; share recipes

Freezer meals are cool! Make in advance when you have time and freeze it; cook it when you need a fast meal. Share with us your recipes for freezer meals; send to: Editor, Federated Rural Electric, PO Box 69, Jackson MN 56143-0069 or e-mail to christoffer@federatedrea.coop by May 25. Add your name and phone number. Thanks for sharing with us! ☺

## Add 'recycle fluorescent bulbs' to your spring do list



State law requires the recycling of fluorescents and compact fluorescent bulbs due to the mercury. Check out these local recycling options.

### Brown County

The dates are set for May 9-10. The cost ranges from 50 cents for four-foot fluorescents, 75 cents for CFLs and 8-foot fluorescents. Recycling occurs at:

- Jim's Market (formerly Tauer's), 101 W. Central St., Springfield, May 9 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

- New Ulm Steel & Recycling, 218 19th St. S., New Ulm, May 10 from 2 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Questions? Call the Brown County Planning and Zoning office at 507-233-6640.

- McCabe's Ace Hardware, 1200 Main St. E., Sleepy Eye, accepts fluorescents year-round and will dispose of broken bulbs for a fee. Call 507-794-3611 or stop by the store for pricing. They also accept high pressure sodium, mercury vapor and metal halide lamps for a fee.

River View Sanitation (formerly Braun & Borth) will sponsor an Electronics & Appliance Recycling Day, which will include fluorescent bulb recycling, on May 17, from noon-6 p.m. at the Sleepy Eye Baseball parking lot. Fluorescent lamps 8' and under \$1, ballast – PCB \$1/lb. and PCB capacitors \$2/lb. Free appliance recycling (refrigerators, freezers, microwaves, etc.); electronics (computer CPU, printers, VCR, etc.) cost \$10; computer monitors and TVs cost \$15.

### Jackson County

Businesses can recycle electronics, fluorescent bulbs and appliances August 17 at the Jackson County Fairgrounds from 9:30 a.m. to noon and 1-2 p.m. Residents can recycle electronics, appliances and fluorescent bulbs (LED bulbs do not need to be recycled) August 18 at the Jackson County Fairgrounds 8 a.m. to noon. A recycling fee will apply.

Residents may bring fluorescent bulbs to the Jackson County Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Facility (at the County Highway Department on County Road 34) from June to October (first Monday 9 to 11:30 a.m., third Monday from 2 to 4:30 p.m. or the third Saturday 9 to 11 a.m.). Electronics not accepted at HHW; bring to the Fairgrounds August 17-18. Fees apply for recycling all items. Call Jackson County's Environmental Office for details: 507-662-6682 extension 4.

### Martin County

Recycle fluorescent bulbs May 3 and October 4 at the northeast corner of the former K-Mart parking lot in Fairmont from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Bulbs are accepted from the homes and businesses in the county. It costs 50 cents for 4-foot and under fluorescents, while it's 90 cents for longer than that. Call the Fairmont Area Chamber of Commerce at 507-235-5547. ☺

### Orchid Inn Shrimp Dip by Diana Schaefer, New Ulm

- 8 oz. pkg. cream cheese
- 1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1 c. Miracle Whip
- 1 tsp. Tabasco sauce
- 1 tsp. horseradish
- 1 c. small shrimp

Mix together and serve on chips or crackers. This was originally published in the *New Ulm Journal* in 2018. ☺

### Baked Shrimp by Mary Jane Portner, New Ulm

- ½ c. olive oil
- 1 lb or more shrimp
- 2 T. cajun or creole seasoning
- 2 T. parsley
- 1 T. honey
- 1 T. soy sauce
- pinch cayenne pepper (optional)

Combine all ingredients except shrimp in a 9x13" glass pan. Add shrimp and toss to coat. Refrigerate one hour. Preheat oven to 450°. Bake about 10 minutes or until shrimp is cooked through, stirring occasionally. Pour over cooked angel hair pasta. ☺

### 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.gopherstateonecall.org](http://www.gopherstateonecall.org) or call 811. Call a licensed electrician to locate the underground lines on your side of the meter. ☺



**Scott Reimer**

## *Manager's Message*

### **Be safe while farming this spring!**

The onslaught of red, green and yellow machinery will hit the roads and fields. This might be a broken record, but please look up as you enter your fields for lower than normal electric lines. With some of the equipment being wider be careful when turning. Be safe and go home at night with everything intact. If you do see something that looks out of place, call us so we can look into it.

### **Lobbying for rural issues in D.C.**

I just returned from Washington, D.C. where our Minnesota electric co-ops met with the congressional delegation. Topics included protecting the Power Marketing Administrations. We receive about 12 percent of our wholesale power supply from the Western Area Power Administration (hydroelectric power) at cost; it is a part of how we keep your rates as low as possible. The current executive branch indicated that it should privatize those assets. All of our legislators agree with us that it will do nothing but raise costs and should be vigorously opposed. A majority on both sides of the aisle are asking President Trump to leave well enough alone.

I spoke on the 2018 version of the Farm Bill. The current bill expires in September 2018. It's one of the more important items on the hill this year. Cooperatives also have a vested interest in a robust farm bill:

1. The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) loan program helps co-ops finance most of the electric infrastructure that we have installed the last 80 years.
2. The Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant programs funds economic development, while the Rural Energy for America program and the Rural Energy Savings program both fund energy efficiency.

Federated is an RUS borrower and uses many of the programs available for economic development efforts in many of the communities we serve. The legislators were understanding and are doing their best.

3. The investment in Rural Broadband was a hot topic and is getting the attention it deserves. It's tough to do business anywhere today without a stable and high-speed broadband connection.

### **Cold April means higher bills**

With the weather staying cold for so long many of you will see your April electric or gas bills higher than normal, especially for this time of year. April is customarily a shoulder month where energy costs can give you a break from winter to summer costs; however, this year is different.

### **Line construction begins!**

We will start our construction season soon. One thing that we are trying to do is replace more of the old underground cable that has seen several outages over the years. (See story on Page 4.) We have a goal of fewer outages for our members and that comes with greater investment in infrastructure. Our staff has done a good job of balancing these costs. Crews are looking forward to starting.



### **Rural Electric**

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The Board of Directors generally meets the last business day of the month at 9 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.

### **August 1 rate increase letters mailed**

As you all know, Federated, along with 11 other cooperatives, purchased the distribution assets from Alliant Energy August 1, 2015. The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC) regulated this. We currently have two separate rate books: one for the former Alliant customers and one for our legacy members. It's been a challenge, but things are settling down. After completing a cost-of-service study we submitted a two-year rate plan to the PUC, which is currently under review. We also did a second cost of service study, which was more of a rate design effort, for both legacy and acquired rates. The cost of service study revealed a rate increase was needed for the acquired members. Notices were sent out to those affected in mid-April. The new rates go into effect on August 1, 2018. A similar process occurs August 1, 2019. Finally, on August 1, 2020 we can merge the two rate plans into one. Your Federated Board of Directors knows the importance of competitive rates. We will address any questions or concerns you may have and are doing our best to make this a seemingly painless process.

Please have a great month. As always, feel free to call or e-mail us with any questions or concerns. ☎