

SEPTEMBER 2011

OUTLOOK

SLOPE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

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Beauty of nature

“There would be no advantage to be gained by sowing a field of wheat if the harvest did not return more than was sown.”

—Napoleon Hill

IMPORTANT MEMO

Rate increase announced

Slope Electric has received notification from its power supplier that wholesale power costs will be increasing on Oct. 1. The management and staff are currently evaluating the impact to the cooperative. Due to this cost increase, a rate increase will be required. More information will follow in the coming months.

Kerzman receives Helping Hand Award



Kerzman

Director Jim Kerzman was recognized at the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC) meeting this year, with the Helping Hand Award for all his contributions. This award is given to faithful friends and strong supporters of North Dakota's electric cooperative. His family surprised him by attending the meeting and witnessing his award recognition.

Kerzman has served Slope Electric since 1983 when he was appointed to fill a vacant position and then elected to the board in 1986. As a Credentialed Cooperative Director, he has served on the statewide, regional and national resolutions committees. Kerzman has received numerous other honors including the Farmers Union Family of the Year, Ruth Meiers Mental Health award, the legislative service award from the Association of Retarded Citizens, and the Sister Donna Jean Chapman award from the N.D. Conference of Social Welfare. He has participated in Washington, D.C., fly-ins on behalf of rural electric cooperatives and Farmers Union. He served in the N.D. House of Representatives from 1991 to 2009. Currently Kerzman serves on the Hettinger County Job Development Authority board and the Farmers Union policy and action committee.



Farm Rescue assists farm families in need

Farm Rescue is a North Dakota-based helping hand organization. It began in 2006 and has assisted 149 families in North and South Dakota and Montana. The first person assisted was a 32-year-old farmer who had lost his right hand in a grain auger accident. Farm Rescue doesn't give out money, but lends a hand doing field work to help farmers get through a critical time.

Farmers are chosen through an application process. They must submit financial records and medical verification. Unpaid volunteers come from all over the

country to help, with many of them being retired farmers.

Farm Rescue is funded through donations, grants and sponsorships. Contributions are used to pay for the many costs associated with planting and harvesting a crop, transporting equipment, housing and feeding volunteers.

Slope Electric has donated to Farm Rescue, to help the program continue to be that "helping hand."

If you would like to volunteer or know someone needing help, please contact Farm Rescue at P.O. Box 1100, Jamestown, ND 58402.

FARM SAFELY around POWER LINES



As we observe National Farm Safety and Health Week Sept. 18-24, Slope Electric Cooperative reminds you to work safely on the farm and ranch. We care about your safety.

The following tips will help keep everyone on the farm safe:

- Look over work areas carefully for overhead power lines and utility poles.
- Make sure there are ample clearances of power lines when moving large machinery such as combines, grain augers, sprayers and tractors.

Do this every year as equipment sizes or soil conditions may change. A newer, larger piece of equipment may no longer clear a line. And shifting soil may also affect whether or not machinery avoids power lines from year to year.

- When planning new construction, consider existing power lines.
- Be extra careful when working around trees and brush that often obstruct power lines.
- Train all farm workers on how to properly operate machinery to avoid overhead power lines.

TOP TIPS TO **CUT** WINTER ENERGY COSTS

1. Maintain air filters and HVAC equipment.

Well-maintained equipment runs more efficiently, so change your air filter monthly or as needed and tune up your HVAC equipment yearly.

2. Set your thermostat as low as is comfortable.

Roll temperatures back by 10 to 15 degrees before bed and before leaving for work.

3. Reduce air leaks, which can save up to 10 percent on energy bills.

Seal doors and windows with weather stripping or caulk. Tape clear plastic film to the inside of window frames to further reduce leaks, and consider installing insulated curtains or blinds.

4. Take advantage of the sun's heat and light.

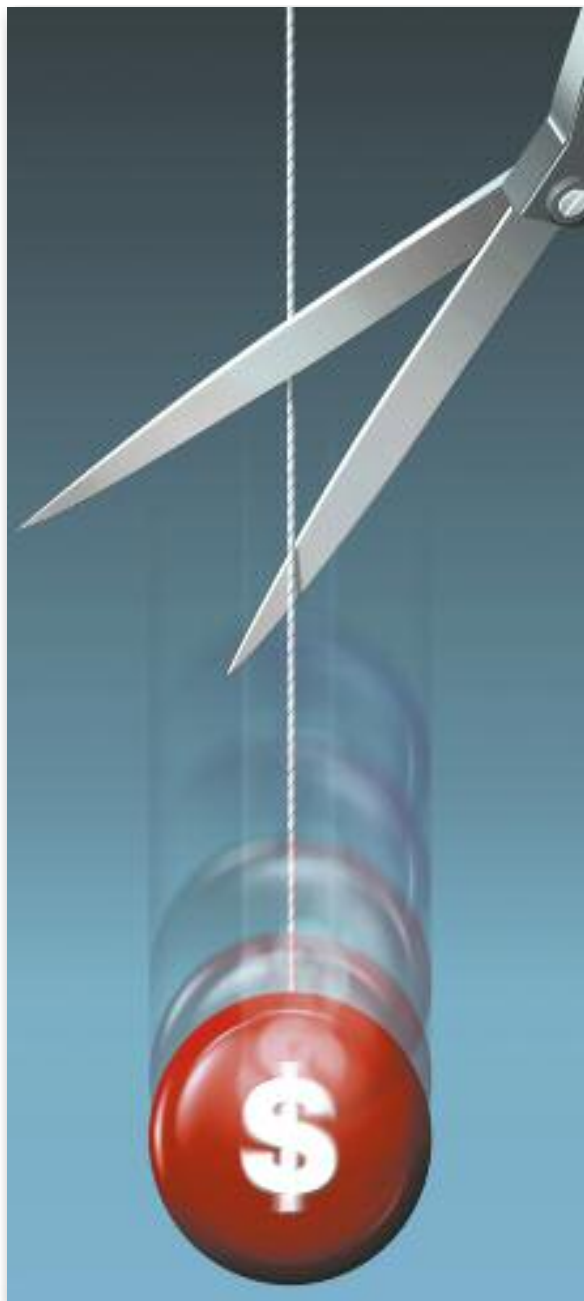
Keep your south-facing windows clean. Open curtains on south-facing windows during the day and close all curtains at night.

5. Add insulation to your attic.

With the right safety practices, this can be a do-it-yourself project.

6. Turn down the temperature on water heaters and provide good insulation.

Most water heaters are set to 140 degrees, but at 115 to 120 degrees, you'll still have plenty of hot



water. Insulate hot water pipes and, if your water heater is more than seven years old, consider a “wrap” to insulate the tank.

7. Plug and seal the chimney flue of fireplaces that are never used.

When using fireplaces, keep the damper closed unless a fire is going and make sure the damper is as snug as possible. Caulk around the fireplace hearth. Consider installing tempered glass doors and a heat-exchanger system to blow warm air back into the room. When a fire is lit, open dampers or open nearest window about an inch, close doors leading into the room, and lower your thermostat to between 50 and 55 degrees.

8. Unplug electronics and appliances when not in use.

Use multiple-outlet strips so you can turn everything off with one flip of a switch.

9. Replace incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs).

Lighting makes up about 10 percent of home energy costs, and CFLs can save up to 75 percent of that energy. They also last longer, saving money on replacements.

Calling after hours

Unfortunately, all outages do not occur during business hours. When you call to report an outage after-hours, you may be confused or unsure of what happens and how the calls are handled. Please be assured you can contact Slope Electric Co-operative 24-hours-a-day, 365-days-a-year. You may call any time of the day and speak to a real person.

All of our phone numbers (800-559-4191 and 701-579-4191) will get you to the same place. Depending on the call volume, the local numbers may be busy. In that case, please try the 800 number; if the outage is large, you could experience a busy line. Please try again in a few minutes.

To handle a large number of outage calls at one time, after-hours calls are initially answered by an automated system. The first thing you will hear is the greeting, "Thank you for calling Slope Electric." Then you will be advised, "Our automated system allows you to report an outage quickly and easily using a phone number or meter number. Agents are also available but hold times vary with high call volumes."

You will then be asked:

If you are calling to report:

- An electrical outagePress 1
- For a billing issuePress 2
- Report a meter readingPress 3
- All other (speak to a person).....Press 0

If you pressed 1 to report an electrical outage:

You will be asked if you would like to report an outage using a phone or meter number. If you have critical information regarding the cause of an outage, you will also have the option to speak to a person.

To use the automated system and phone number to report the outage, you will be asked to enter the 10-digit phone associated with the account. If you are going to use a meter number to report the outage, you will be asked to enter the meter number associated with the outage. If you choose the phone number option and you have more than one meter on the account, you will be asked if you would like to enter the meter number or speak with a person.

When you have answered the questions, you'll receive a message confirming your outage has been reported.

If you ask to speak to a person, the system will connect you. If all agents are busy with other customers, you'll be advised it may be faster to complete your input through the automated system options. You can also continue to wait for the next available agent.



If you pressed 2 for a billing concern:

A message will give you our regular weekday office hours of 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and ask you to call back during that time. We do not have billing personnel available after-hours.

If you pressed 3 to report a meter reading:

A message will ask you to leave your name, account number, phone number, meter reading and date the meter was read. This information will be given to our billing department the next business day.

If you pressed 0 for other issues:

A person will answer your call as soon as the next agent is available. Slope Electric thanks you for your patience when calling after business hours. We try to be efficient and upfront when you report problems. Please remember you will always have an option to speak with a person who will be able to have the appropriate people respond in a timely manner.

A man and a woman are standing in a wooden attic, looking at blueprints spread out on a black metal table. The attic has exposed wooden beams and rafters. Two large windows are visible in the background, letting in bright light. The overall scene is warm and focused on home improvement.

YOU HAVE THE POWER TO SAVE

Your attic insulation provides an important barrier against both the cold of winter and the heat of summer, and improving your attic insulation is still one of the best energy-efficiency investments.

Insulate your home against energy leaks

Your attic insulation provides an important barrier against both the cold of winter and the heat of summer, and improving your attic insulation is still one of the best energy-efficiency investments, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. Most homes should have between R-22 and R-49 insulation in the attic.

Get out the ruler

Your attic or ceiling insulation is the most important part of your home's thermal boundary because it helps reduce heat gain in the summer and minimize heat loss in the winter. To assess your attic insulation, measure the thickness of the insulation, and decide what type of insulation you have. If you're not familiar with the type of insulation, take a small sample to your local building supply store to ask for help in identifying it.

The effectiveness of insulation is measured in R-value per inch. The total R-value of your insulation depends both on its type and its depth. To determine the total R-value of your insulation, decide what type of insulation is installed, and multiply the R-value per inch times the number of inches installed. Cellulose loose-fill insulation, for example, is rated at about R-3.5 per inch. If your attic has four inches of cellulose, that's $3.5 \times 4 = R-14$.



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R-value of insulation

Insulation type	R-value per inch of thickness
Fiberglass blanket or batt.....	2.9 to 3.8
High-performance fiberglass blanket or batt	3.7 to 4.3
Loose-fill fiberglass	2.3 to 2.7
Loose-fill rock wool.....	2.7 to 3
Loose-fill cellulose	3.4 to 3.7
Perlite or vermiculite	2.4 to 3.7
Expanded polystyrene board	3.6 to 4
Extruded polystyrene board	4.5 to 5
Polyisocyanurate board, unfaced	5.6 to 6.3
Polyisocyanurate board, foil-faced	7

Types of insulation—Basic forms

FORM:	METHOD OF INSTALLATION:	WHERE APPLICABLE:	ADVANTAGES:
Blankets: batts or rolls <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fiberglass • Rock wool 	Fitted between studs, joists and beams	All unfinished walls, floors and ceilings	Do-it-yourself Suited for standard stud and joist spacing, which is relatively free from obstructions
Loose-fill (blown-in) or spray-applied <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rock wool • Fiberglass • Cellulose • Polyurethane foam 	Blown into place or spray applied by special equipment	Enclosed existing wall cavities or open new wall cavities Unfinished attic floors and hard-to-reach places	Commonly used insulation for retrofits (adding insulation to existing finished areas) Good for irregularly shaped areas or around obstructions
Rigid insulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extruded polystyrene foam (XPS) • Expanded polystyrene foam (EPS or beadboard) • Polyurethane foam • Polyisocyanurate foam 	Interior applications: Must be covered with half-inch gypsum board or other building-code-approved material for fire safety Exterior applications: Must be covered with weatherproof facing	Basement walls Exterior walls under finishing Unvented low slope roofs	High insulating value for relatively little thickness Can block thermal short circuits when installed continuously over frames or joists.
Reflective systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foil-faced paper • Foil-faced polyethylene bubbles • Foil-faced plastic film • Foil-faced cardboard 	Foils, films or papers: fitted between wood-frame studs joists and beams	Unfinished ceilings, walls and floors	Do-it-yourself All suitable for framing at standard spacing. Bubble-form suitable if framing is irregular or if obstructions are present Effectiveness depends on spacing and heat flow

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

Note
of thanks

Thanks, Slope Electric!

Thank you for the electric grill that we won at the annual meeting. The meal and entertainment were great.

Thanks again!

Melvin and Venny Stafford

Observe Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 5

Our entire organization sends its best wishes for a safe and enjoyable Labor Day. In observance of the holiday, Slope Electric Cooperative will be closed on Monday, Sept. 5.

Members: Line crews will be available in case of an electrical emergency outage.



Don't be in the dark about GENERATOR SAFETY

Slope Electric Cooperative strives to provide you with reliable, uninterrupted service every day of the year, but sometimes Mother Nature creates unavoidable power outages. Then, many homeowners use portable electric generators until power is restored.

Follow these portable electric generator safety precautions to avoid dangerous situations:

- Do not connect generators directly to household wiring.
- Make sure your generator is properly grounded.
- Keep the generator dry.
- Plug appliances directly into the generator.
- Do not overload the generator.
- Do not operate the generator in enclosed or partially enclosed spaces.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for safe operation and maintenance.

SLOPE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE INC.

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