



# Hotline Update

News for Wright-Hennepin members

**December 2020**

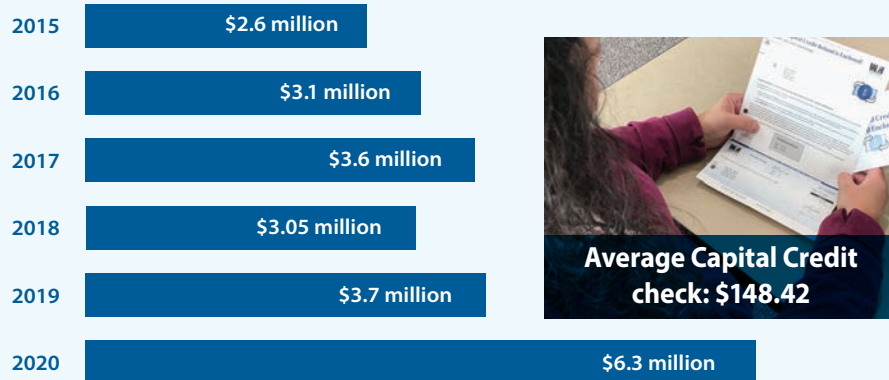
## WH awards \$7 million to members this month!

Wright-Hennepin's (WH) Board of Directors is proud to announce this holiday season, members will receive a capital credit refund of \$7 million! Your refund is coming from one or both of the following sources:

- WH is returning almost \$6.3 million based on the energy purchased during the years 1998, 1999 and a portion of 2000 and 2019. This refund is possible due to WH's excellent operating performance in 2020 and your cooperative's continued strong overall financial condition.
- Great River Energy (GRE), one of WH's Power Suppliers, also returns capital credits. Membership in WH also entitles you to a share of this year's \$773,133 return based on the energy purchased during the years 1984 and a portion of 1985.

Remaining profits or "margins" collected after expenses are returned to you, the member-owners, for purchasing electricity during the years being retired. Members will receive a check in the mail if their refund is \$10 or more unless they have opted to receive a bill credit. Members whose refund is between \$1 and \$9.99 will automatically receive a bill credit.

### LARGEST REFUND IN WH HISTORY!



WH CAPITAL CREDITS RETURNED OVER LAST DECADE: **\$27,151,531**

#### CAPITAL CREDITS 101

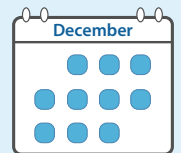
WH is collectively owned by members like you. Our mission is to provide electric power at the cost of service. Any remaining margins are returned to you, the member-owner, in the form of capital credit refunds. Before returning it, WH uses member capital to offset the cost of debt for the construction and maintenance. This working capital represents your ownership equity in the cooperative.

### CAPITAL CREDITS 101

WH tracks the amount of electricity you use and pay for throughout the year.



At the end of the year, WH determines if there is excess revenue, called margins.



WH allocates the margins as 'capital credits' to you, based on how much electricity you've used.



When WH's financial condition permits, your board of directors decides to pay, or retire, the capital credits.



WH will notify you when you will receive your capital credits.



**In this issue...**

Scholarships

**3**

ORU Donations

**4**

Electric Vehicles

**5**

Secure Deliveries

**6**



# CEO's Memo

Tim Sullivan, WH President and CEO

## Member control delivers the cooperative advantage

**DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL.** Those three simple, powerful words capture so much of what's special and unique about electric cooperatives like Wright-Hennepin (WH). Because unlike most other companies and utilities, WH is exclusively owned by and run for those it serves. And this core identity not only explains why cooperatives are so different but also produces a Cooperative Advantage that delivers concrete value to our members.

Let me explain. All cooperatives are organized around Seven Cooperative Principles and Democratic Member Control is Principle Two. So, unlike an Investor Owned Utility (IOU) which is run by a Board of Directors named to promote the interests of its stockholders, WH's Board is chosen by you from among your fellow member-owners to represent your interests. Consequently, choosing your Board of Directors is the central way you exercise governance over your cooperative and ensure your voice is heard.

recommendations of management and evaluate a wide range of policies and investments for WH's \$115 million businesses. It's an immensely challenging role but also one most Directors find deeply rewarding.

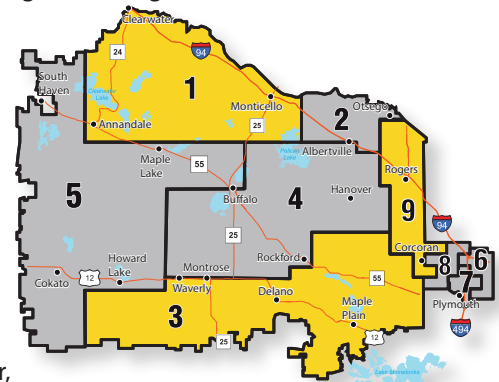
Consider the views of newly elected District 8 Director David Silver. David says that, after 27 years as a WH member, he decided that running for the Board would be a great way to serve fellow members. "I'm quite excited and feel I can contribute. I can listen to constituents and apply [their thoughts] in my decision-making. I've always been pleased with the service from WH, and this is a good way for me to give back."



David Silver  
District 8

In fact, Directors are often the unsung heroes of the cooperative program. While the invaluable contributions of lineworkers are often recognized during outages and CEOs are often quoted in news coverage, it is the directors who ultimately steer the co-op's course. They ask and answer the most fundamental and consequential questions: What are our values? What are our priorities? What choices do we make amid a dizzying array of complex information, competing interests and future uncertainties?

Know someone who might make a good director? Please see the information on page 8 of this newsletter which explains how to apply for a Board seat. In 2021, Districts 1, 3 and 9 are up for election, and District 3 has no incumbent. So, if you've ever entertained the idea for yourself or another, you might consider taking the plunge.



When you review the results, it's clear that Democratic Member Control is not just a good governance idea. It's helped ensure the delivery of safe, affordable, reliable power and a high quality of life for WH members for 83 years. The lesson? Stay involved, attend the Annual Meeting, learn more about the Board candidates and most importantly, keep voting. After all, in a democratically controlled organization like WH, our success ultimately depends on you.

As always, thank you for your business,

PRINCIPLE 2

### DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL

Members like you control the cooperative



Principle Two is made real through Board elections, held each year in the run-up to WH's Annual Meeting. In fact, in 2020, four directors were elected, including three incumbents and a new director for District 8 (Maple Grove), selected from a field of nine candidates. We're humbled and grateful that WH generated so much interest from such a capable group of people! Clearly, our members understand the critical role WH plays in delivering safe, reliable and affordable power and a modern quality of life.

Being elected to the Board is no small feat and serving on the Board is no small task. Consider that Directors typically spend 6-8 hours per week on cooperative business and attend training events that require 10-15 days of travel a year. Beyond this, effective governance of a modern electric distribution system requires sophisticated understanding of a wide range of complex topics including power supply, grid planning, technological capabilities and changing member expectations, to name a few.

You can be proud members of your Board of Directors are so dedicated to enhancing their expertise, as evidenced by the large number of Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) credits they've earned for advanced training from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

In addition, directors actively participate in board meetings which can run 8 hours or more each month. It's not uncommon for board books – which include financials, correspondence and background material – to run 100 pages or more. Board members must be knowledgeable and engaged, willing to discuss and deliberate issues, consider the



## Apply now for 2021 scholarships

The time has come to apply for scholarships. WH offers scholarships to students in cooperative member households, and students are encouraged to start applying now! It's all part of being a member of a cooperative where one of the principles is "Concern for the Community." At WH, that means awarding scholarships to local students whose parent or guardian is a cooperative member.

Scholarships are funded through unclaimed capital credits and a contribution from the WH Holding company WH owns.



WH will award a scholarship to one student whose parent or guardian is a cooperative member at each of the following schools in WH's service territory: Annandale, Buffalo, Dassel-Cokato, Delano, Heritage Christian Academy, Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted, Maple Grove, Maple Lake, Monticello, Orono, Osseo, Rockford, Rogers, St. Michael-Albertville, Watertown-Mayer, Wayzata and Wright Technical Center (Buffalo).

These applications are submitted directly to the high school. Each school listed has its own application deadline and the schools will select the winners.

WH also offers an at-large scholarship to one member's student who attends a private school, a school that neighbors WH's service territory or is home schooled. The application deadline is April 2, 2021.

### EDWARD R. SLEBISKA MEMORIAL LINEWORKER SCHOLARSHIP

Each year, WH awards two \$3,000 scholarships to students pursuing a career as a lineworker to honor Ed Slebiska, the cooperative's first CEO. This scholarship is open to those who are high school seniors or older living within a 30-mile radius of Rockford. Enrollment in a power line technical college is required. The application deadline is April 15, 2021.

### BASIN ELECTRIC POWER COOPERATIVE SCHOLARSHIP

Basin Electric Power Cooperative of Bismarck, ND, will award a \$1,000 scholarship to the child of a WH member and the child of an employee of the cooperative. Basin is one of WH's power suppliers. The deadline is February 7, 2021. For more details and application forms, please visit [whe.org](http://whe.org) and search "scholarships."

If you have questions about the application process, call Chrissy Piekarski at (763) 477-3069 or email [cpiekarski@whe.org](mailto:cpiekarski@whe.org).

Applications for At-Large, Lineworker and Basin scholarships should be mailed to:

**Wright-Hennepin Cooperative Electric Association**

**Attn: Chrissy Piekarski**

**P.O. Box 330**

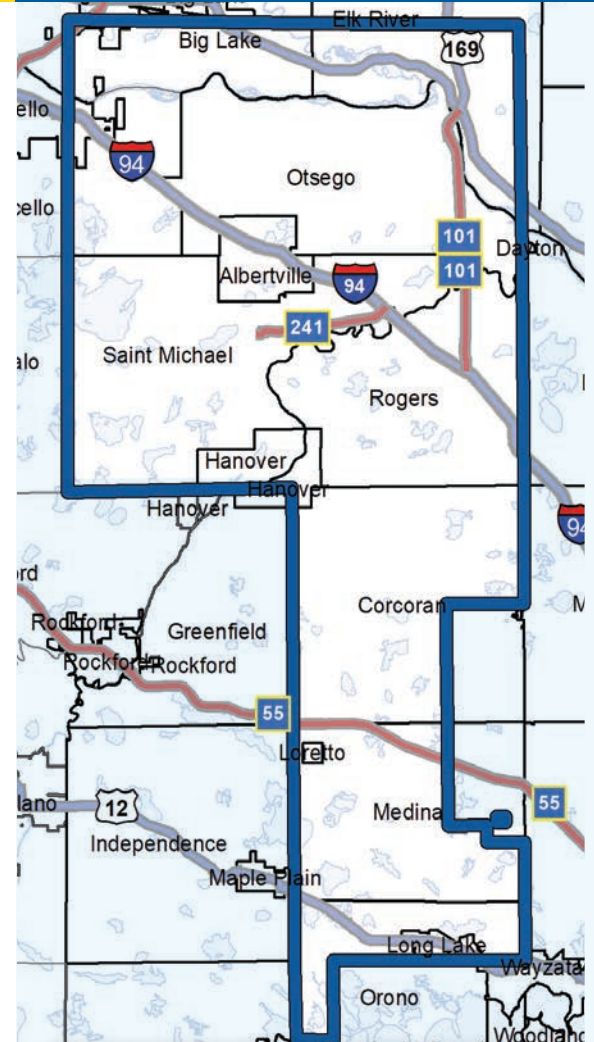
**Rockford, MN 55373**

## Emergency Response Plan Drill

### WH CONDUCTS ANNUAL SAFETY DRILL

Every year, WH conducts an annual safety training to practice safety and ensure reliability in case of emergencies. This year's drill, on December 16, revolves around what to do in case of a chemical spill. Employees practice safety measures, including using personal protective equipment, containment and clean-up of the spill. Safety is one of WH's six core values, and reliability is one of WH's top priorities. In fact, as reported in WH's 2020 Annual Report, WH members averaged less than one outage over two years, and power was on an average of 99.99 percent of the year for all members. Emergency response drills like these help WH remain prepared for anything to maintain the highest level of reliability possible.

## Notice: WH inspecting transformers



### WH WILL INSPECT PAD MOUNT TRANSFORMERS

starting in January. Lineworkers will access and open pad-mounted devices such as transformers, switches, fuse cabinets and transition cabinets. These devices, which are the large green boxes found in yards, are a major part of the system that brings electricity to member homes. The inspection process helps prevent and minimize outages. Lineworkers look for rust on the device or corrosion on the connections inside the device, as well as any damage to the device or pad. They also look for potential issues with access to the device such as blocking trees or bushes. These inspections normally take two lineworkers around 10 minutes to perform. If you have any questions, call (763) 477-3000.

# Co-op Connections featured deal of the month

**Brothers Meat & Seafood, Maple Grove**  
\$5 off \$50 purchase

Lost your card? No problem. For a free replacement or to sign up your business, call (763) 477-3000. For more deals, visit [www.connections.coop](http://www.connections.coop), or use the Co-op Connections app on your mobile device to find all your local deals and more!



## Operation Round Up Recap

In 2020, WH members participating in Operation Round Up (ORU) have donated more than \$175,000 to local programs and organizations, with an additional donation coming in December. In the past three years, ORU donations have averaged \$205,000 per year. By rounding up electric bills to the nearest dollar, WH members have donated more than \$4.2 million to local charities and organizations through the program since 1994. Eighty-seven percent of WH's membership participates in the program and each member gives about \$6 a year.

### 2020 WH MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS

The list below is a summary of donations of \$5,000 and above. For a full summary of 2020 ORU donations, visit [whe.org](http://whe.org)

**Lutheran Social Service Crisis Nursery Serving Wright County** received \$10,000 to support parents in crisis and to keep children safe.

**True Friends** received \$10,000 to support a capital upgrade for exterior cabin improvements at Camp Courage.

**Park View Care Center** received \$10,000 to support consultants' work with family caregivers.

**Catholic Charities of the Diocese of St. Cloud** received \$8,285 to purchase a freezer for the Meals on Wheels program in Buffalo.

**Love INC – Heartland Green** received \$10,000 to provide educational programs for low-income families to gain skills and become self-reliant.

**MN Adult and Teen Challenge** received \$8,000 to support the "Know the Truth" drug prevention program.

**Hope Chest for Breast Cancer Foundation** received \$7,500 to provide financial assistance to breast cancer patients.

**Society of St. Vincent de Paul** (St. Michael-Albertville chapter), received \$7,000 to help families in need.

**Buffalo Rotary** received \$6,000 to provide coats and boots for children in need and to support Beds for Kids to purchase mattresses and frames.

**Toys for Tots of Buffalo** received \$5,000 to purchase toys and gifts for children 0-17 years of age.



### In their own words...

*"One of the most unexpected blessings of this year was that the grant money was available to purchase food for our Lunch Box Express March Distribution. When Rockford Schools were closed due to COVID 19 we provided a box of kid-friendly food for over 40 of our families on the free and reduced lunch program while they were waiting for the school district to begin delivering meals."*

*We are very grateful for the many ways that Operation Round Up continues to support our mission of Community Helping Community!"*



# Is an electric vehicle right for you?

As electric vehicles (EVs) become more common, it can be hard to know which one is right for you. There are many factors to consider before purchasing an EV. Here are a few ways to help you decide the best fit for you.



## HOW FAR IS YOUR DAILY COMMUTE?

There are several affordable EV models that have a range of 250 or more miles. Most people commute much less than this per day. In fact, 250 miles may even be more than you commute all week! As technology continues to progress, the range of EVs continues to rise. Check what the “range-per-charge” is because it can vary significantly between models.



## HOW OFTEN DO YOU TAKE ROAD TRIPS?

Currently, long road trips can present challenges for EVs as the charging infrastructure and battery technology is still improving. As a result, long trips still require planning ahead to locate charging stations along your route.



## HOW MANY CARS DO YOU OWN?

EVs are a great opportunity to save money and improve the environment for people with more than one car. It's easy to use the EV as a commuter vehicle and a gasoline-powered vehicle for longer distances.



## WHERE DO YOU PARK AT HOME?

Plug-in EVs need to be charged, which is typically done at home with a standard 120V outlet or 240V (Level 2) charging station. The Level 2 charging station can be installed in a garage or driveway and charges much faster than a standard outlet.

### An EV may be the correct choice for you right now if...

- You travel less than 300 miles in a day
- You have off-street parking
- You don't take long road trips regularly

If you are considering an EV, WH has charging options. Purchase a ZEFNET charging station and receive rebates up to \$1,000!

Whether you are driving a battery electric vehicle (BEV) or a plug-in hybrid (PHEV), WH has several charging programs for you to choose from. Learn more on our website at [whe.org](http://whe.org).



Source: Energy Wise MN

## PURPA Statement

The Public Utilities Regulatory Policies Act (PURPA) of 1978 states that WH is obligated to interconnect with and purchase electricity from co-generators and small power producers. WH will provide information on its PURPA policies to all interested persons free of charge upon request. Any disputes over interconnection, sales and purchases are subject to resolution by WH. If any member has questions regarding PURPA policies, contact WH at (763) 477-3000.

## WH to change legacy air conditioning programs

WH recently conducted a survey with an outside consultant regarding our three Energy-Saving Air Conditioning (AC) programs. These programs cycle a member's AC on and off for 15 minute intervals during times of peak energy use, typically four to six days per month in the summer. The study revealed that two of WH's programs, Metered AC and Cool Cash AC, are providing a discount larger than the benefit they provide. Quick Cash, which provides a flat \$5 monthly discount from June – September, was found to be economical. As a result, in the spring of 2021, members on Metered AC or Cool Cash AC will have their discount changed. There will be a three-year process to adjust the discount level down to \$5 per month. Further communication will be provided, and each member will receive a personal letter outlining the path forward. If you have any questions, contact WH at (763) 477-3000.

**Quick fix.  
Fast service.  
Fair price.**



Packages Start At

**\$18<sup>75</sup>**  
month

WH Appliance Repair plan helps you with unexpected repair bills. The plan includes **your choice** of 5 appliances.\*

Popular options include:

- ✓ Refrigerator
- ✓ Clothes Dryer
- ✓ Heating System
- ✓ Range
- ✓ Water Heater

\*Additional appliance coverage is also available. No deductible or trip charge. Certain restrictions apply.

(763) 477-3000

[whe.org/services-products.html](http://whe.org/services-products.html)

**WH Appliance**  
Repair



**INTERACTIVE CONTROL**

View your cameras from anywhere via your smart device.

**KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR PACKAGES**

The times are changing and you may be ordering more and more items online these days for delivery right to your door. When your package is delivered to your home, you may not be there to receive it immediately. Surveillance cameras, including doorbell cameras, from WH Security can be set up to keep an eye on your porch or entryway 24/7 to help catch potential package thieves in the act.

Our cameras provide another layer of protection for your home. Want to see if and when that package arrived, or who's on your property? You can customize our cameras to send push notifications to your phone or tablet, alerting you any time someone trips the product's motion sensor. With WH Security's automation services, you can view your cameras in real-time.

If you already have a WH Security system, our cameras work with many different systems. They are also a great tool for those with more than one home or cabin for checking your property when you are away. The possibilities are endless! If you like the idea of being able to see what's happening at your property so you can protect what matters most, give us a call at 763.477.3664. We'd be happy to discuss which camera options will meet your individual needs.

**WHSECURITY**  
Trusted. Local.



RECEIVE UP TO  
**\$1,250** on a new water heater when you sign up for  
**QUICK CASH**  
WATER STORAGE PROGRAM

# Solar Winners

## tenKsolar Winner



**NORMAN O'KONEK** of South Haven wins a credit for 146 kWh, September's output from WH's tenKsolar panel array.

**ROD BURSCH** of Monticello wins a credit for 112 kWh, October's output from WH's tenKsolar panel array.

Learn more at <http://bit.ly/2re3mGN>

## Solar Winner



**ALDEN SANDQUIST** of Delano wins a credit for 212 kWh, September's output from WH's solar panels.

**JEFFREY ELSNPETER** of Buffalo wins a credit for 194 kWh, October's output from WH's solar panels.

## Keep in touch with your cooperative!

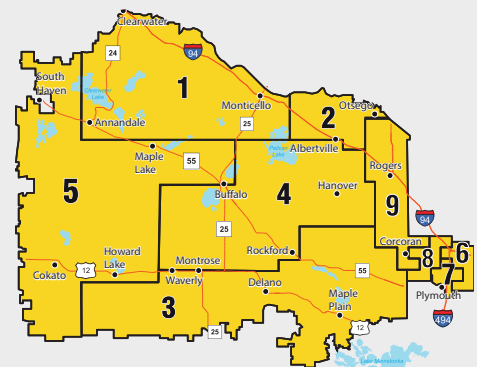
**Member call center:**  
(763) 477-3000 or (800) 943-2667  
Hours: 7:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.  
Monday – Friday

**To report an outage:**  
Dispatchers are available 24/7  
**Call:** (763) 477-3100 or (888) 399-1845

**WH Security monitoring:**  
Security dispatchers are available 24/7  
**Call:** (763) 477-4275 or (800) 858-7811

**Website:** [whe.org](http://whe.org)

**Email:** [info@whe.org](mailto:info@whe.org)



### Board of Directors:

District 1: Timothy Young, Annandale  
District 2: "Butch" Lindenfelser, Monticello  
District 3: Burton Horsch, Howard Lake  
District 4: Dale Jans, Buffalo  
District 5: Chris Lantto, Annandale  
District 6: Mike Tieva, Maple Grove  
District 7: Kenneth Hiebel, Plymouth  
District 8: David Silver, Maple Grove  
District 9: Erick Heinz, Corcoran

**WH President and CEO:** Tim Sullivan

**WH CFO:** Brian Swanson

**WH Holding COO:** Wendy Youngren

*This cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*

## Board Report: Meeting highlights

### October Board Meeting

The Wright-Hennepin and WH Holding monthly Board of Director meetings were conducted October 13, 2020. A quorum of directors was present. Items discussed or Board action taken:

- Approved a general capital credit retirement of almost \$6.3 million during the upcoming Holiday Season.
- Board was informed that WH received a check from Great River Energy for the retirement of 1984 and 1985 capital credits. Board approved to include with WH's general capital credit retirement.
- Approved updated CORP-20 Capital Credit Policy.
- Per the CORP-20 Capital Credit Policy, "there shall be no special retirement of capital credits in excess of \$25,000 per member unless Board approved" Board approved the special retirement of capital credits at discount for a member leaving WH's lines.
- Selected a delegate and alternate for Basin's Annual Meeting.
- Reviewed annual write-off of bad debt.
- Heard reports on reliability improvements and license and insurance requirements.
- Heard reports from directors on recent industry meetings.
- Reviewed and filed the monthly CEO, legal, financial, and operations reports.
- Guest:
  - Power Systems Engineering Representatives Rick Macke and Benjamin Bratrud presented the results of the Cost of Service Study.
  - CFC's Regional Vice President Sarah Bullock presented the annual Key Ratio Trend Analysis report.

### November Board Meeting

The Wright-Hennepin and WH Holding monthly Board of Director meetings were conducted November 24, 2020. A quorum of directors was present. Items discussed or Board action taken:

- Approved 2021 work plan and budget.
- Approved updated CORP-120 Director Fee and Expense and Insurance Policy.
- Approved auditor engagement letters with Eide Bailly.
- Approved two resolutions for Rural Utilities Services (one of WH's lenders) requesting possible revenue deferral.
- Rescheduled September 2021 board meeting.
- Selected delegates and alternates for 2021 business meetings of the Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA) and National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).
- Heard reports from directors on recent industry meetings.
- Reviewed and filed the monthly CEO, legal, financial and operations reports.

**Our office will be closed in observance of the holidays on December 24-25 and January 1.**

**CLOSED**

12/1/2020, Vol. 40 Issue 6, *Hotline Update* (ISSN 08939845) (USPS 000839) Copyright © 2020 by Wright-Hennepin Cooperative Electric Association is published monthly except January, April, July, September and November by Wright-Hennepin Cooperative Electric Association, 6800 Electric Drive, Rockford, MN 55373. Business, Editorial, Accounting and Circulation Offices: Wright-Hennepin Cooperative Electric Association, 6800 Electric Drive, Rockford, MN 55373. Call (763) 477-3000 to subscribe. Subscription is \$1 annually. Periodicals postage paid at Maple Lake, MN 55358 and additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to *Hotline Update*, PO Box 330, Rockford, MN, 55373-0330



**Wright-Hennepin**  
Cooperative Electric Association

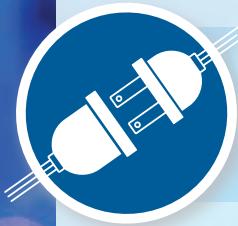
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

6800 Electric Drive  
Rockford, MN 55373

# Hotline Update

December news for Wright-Hennepin members

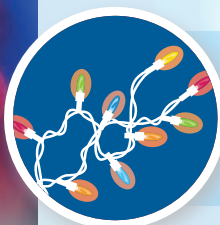
## Holiday lighting safety tips



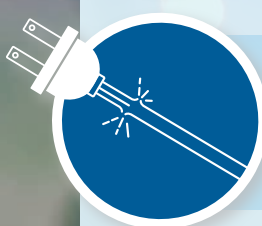
**Always unplug electrical decorations before replacing bulbs or fuses.**



**Consider using LED lights for all your decorating needs this holiday season.**



**Never mount or support light strings in a way that might damage the cord's insulation.**

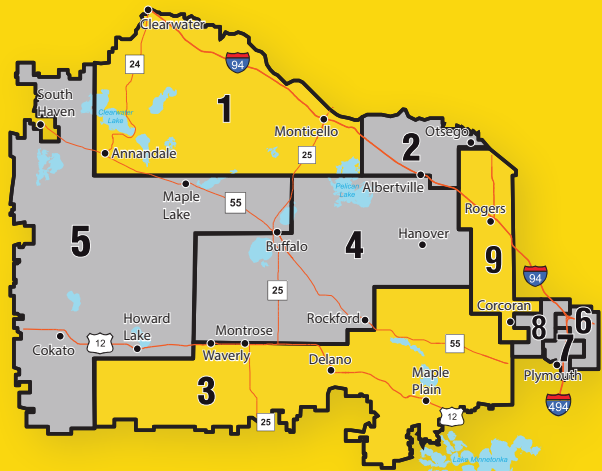


**Carefully inspect all electrical decorations for damaged, loose or exposed wires before you use them.**



**Turn off all indoor and outdoor electrical decorations before turning in or leaving home.**

## Members may now file for board seats



WH is now accepting applications for seats on the board of directors. In 2021, Districts 1, 3 and 9 are up for election. The District 3 seat has no incumbent.

Members in these districts who would like to compete in the election need to file a director nominee application form by February 24, 2021. Find the form on WH's website at [whe.org](http://whe.org) and search "director application form."

**Mail in the form along with a resume to:**

**Wright-Hennepin  
Attn: Dale Jans, Secretary/Treasurer  
P.O. Box 330  
Rockford, MN 55373**



PRINCIPLE 2

### DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL

Members like you control the cooperative