

# THE HIGHLINE BY LINE

A NEWSLETTER FROM ARROWHEAD COOPERATIVE



## 2020 SUCCESS DESPITE A PANDEMIC

*While the year didn't turn out the way any of us expected, Arrowhead Cooperative stayed focused on reliable service and our community connections resulting in a successful year.*



*I was only six months into my new role as CEO when 2020 began. I had big plans, and the Cooperative had big plans for the year. Plans to host my first annual meeting, plans for a bigger and better Member Week, goals to add new services and increase subscribers, plans to be more involved in our community and plans to continue pursuing excellence in our business. By the end of February, we were well on our way to make these plans a reality but, as you all know (far too well at this point), COVID-19 hit the country like a Tsunami and; by the middle of March, our office was closed to the public, many of our employees were working from home and business as usual became anything but.*

In the midst of a worldwide pandemic, some plans no longer seemed important while others became a necessity. We reminded ourselves of our basic principles and our mission to provide members with safe, reliable, and environmentally friendly utilities. The unwavering dedication of the team at Arrowhead Cooperative made sure that you, our members and subscribers, received the outstanding service you expect and focused on the most important aspects of our business.

Cooperative Principle #7, Concern for Community, rose to the top of our priorities in 2020. Early on in the pandemic, we worked with our schools to ensure that every teacher and student in our community had broadband

access. We worked with our community to ensure that the infrastructure was in place for critical workers. We worked hard to keep up with the steady stream of calls and requests for new broadband service through the spring. New installations were slow due to the Governor's executive orders, supply chain disruptions, and material back orders. None the less, our team persisted, and we were able to catch up by the end of the year.

We noticed a change in our community and network use during this time, as many of our seasonal residents elected to work from "home" here in our community. With our Telecommuter Forward Community Designation, Arrowhead Cooperative was positioned well for these members to make telecommuting on the North Shore possible. Needless to say, data usage increased to levels never seen before. Our partner, CTC, advised that it was time to configure and "light" up a second 10 gig line to provide the most reliable service we can. With this upgrade completed in November, we are proud to be able to offer leading broadband services to our community.

Financially the year started slow, but residential and seasonal energy sales proved to be strong as we recovered by the end of October. County population and fluctuations in weather have a significant impact on cooperative

*Continued on page 2.*

# 2020 SUCCESS CONTINUED...

business. In addition, the increase in electric services built and broadband services installed surpassed our predictions for 2020 by nearly double.

We were also surprised by the number of calls for new electric services. We were excited to see something that appeared to be normal. As soon as the frost was out of the ground this spring, our contractors and line crews were busy installing new electric services. As the cold weather returned this fall, we had installed 28% more new services over 2019. That is a significant increase. Year over year we have been averaging about a 1% growth rate and while this may be a very small percentage, it is above the national average for electric cooperatives which is .68%. Your cooperative continues to grow, and we are excited to continue to “Connect the Tip of the Arrowhead”.

In 2020, we were also able to complete a few projects to enhance and improve our facilities. New steps to the entrance of our headquarters were erected, our employee parking areas were paved, and our storm-water runoff project was completed. All of these projects were needed due to decades of poor drainage around our building. We worked closely with the Cook County Soil and Water District to acquire a grant to help fund our Storm Water Mitigation plan, including a rain garden, sediment traps, and reduced erosion protecting Lake

Superior from sediment runoff. This project highlights our community working together to ensure a healthier and safer environment.

Concerning environmental decisions, our wholesale power provider, Great River Energy, announced Project Phoenix in 2020. Great River Energy will shut down Coal Creek Station in North Dakota and replace the coal-generated power with renewable generation to provide 95% carbon-free energy by 2023. Great River Energy also partnered with Form Energy to pilot an industry-leading, grid-scale, battery technology that is designed to provide up to 1MW of power for 150 hours. Standard battery output is currently anywhere from 1-6 hours depending on the battery size and storage capabilities.

As 2020 comes to a close, we are still working within the confines of a pandemic and the restrictions it has placed on all of us. Together we have gotten this far, and together we will get through to the end. We are honored to serve you and thankful for your support. With hope, the possibilities are endless, and we are looking forward to 2021.

***Have a safe and wonderful Holiday Season!***



*wishing you a*

**W O N D E R F U L  
H O L I D A Y S E A S O N  
A N D A H A P P Y  
N E W Y E A R**



*from all of us at*  
**ARROWHEAD COOPERATIVE**

# EFFICIENT LIGHTING FOR THE HOLIDAYS

*It's a shame that the holidays can lead to high energy bills, but the good news is, there are strategies to save you money without dampening your holiday spirit!*



The holiday season is fast approaching, making for an expensive time of year for many homeowners. All the additional shopping, travel, hosting, and gift-giving adds up quickly, and so do the bigger energy bills that come with heating a home during the coldest months of the year. Adorning the house and trees around it with electricity-sapping decorations doesn't help either.

Fortunately, if you are savvy about how you decorate, increased electricity costs are not a requirement of the season. Read on for tips on how to cut your home energy usage during the holidays without turning into a Grinch.

**SWITCH TO LED OPTIONS** Christmas tree lighting definitely increases the season's electricity bills, but replacing incandescent holiday lights with energy-efficient LED lights can help. ENERGY STAR® qualified LED lights use 70 percent less energy while providing a brighter light.

**USE FIBER OPTIC LIGHT DECORATIONS** Want to take holiday energy savings a step beyond LED? Consider fiber optic decorations. Fiber optic technology uses one lamp source to light multiple light points, making it a super economical and energy-efficient choice.

**USE A TIMER** One of the simplest ways to cut your energy bills is to limit electricity usage to periods when the decorations may be fully enjoyed. Using automatic timers to turn lights off at the evening's end is a good start.

**LOCATE DECORATING ALTERNATIVES** Not all illumination has to come from decorative lights. Festive options such as ornaments and tinsel have highly reflective properties, making them the perfect complement to traditional lighting options.

***We hope these tips help raise your holiday spirits without giving you the budget blues in January!***

## CO-OP NEWS

### COVID-19 UPDATE

As COVID-19 distancing recommendations remain unchanged and cases across Minnesota rise, members are encouraged to conduct co-op business online or by phone.

Both Arrowhead Cooperative and True North Broadband offer easy online access to your account so you can see your current bill, past bills, payments, and more! You can sign up for automatic payments with a checking account, savings account, or credit card. You can also make a one-time payment online or with the SmartHub mobile app.

### OFFICE CLOSED

Arrowhead Cooperative will be closed on Thursday, December 24, and Friday, December 25, 2020, in observance of Christmas. The office will also be closed on Thursday, December 31, and Friday, January 1, 2021, in observance of the New Year. Please call (800) 864-3744 in the event of an outage or emergency.

### NEXT BOARD MEETING

December 17, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.

Like us on Facebook.  
Enter to win a Roku!



*Share a photo of your holiday lights on our Facebook page in December for a chance to win a Roku Premiere!*



**LIKE US ON FACEBOOK**  
[www.facebook.com/aecimn](http://www.facebook.com/aecimn)

# SAFE WINTER DRIVING

*Winter wonderlands are beautiful, but they can be a driving nightmare. Snow, slush, ice, and wind make driving more stressful and hazardous. If you are in an accident involving a utility pole it can be more dangerous than it first seems. The entire accident site could be energized from a downed wire. If you hit a utility pole, especially if you see downed wires, don't get out of your car.*

## WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

- Call 9-1-1.
- Tell anyone who approaches your car to stay away.
- Only leave the car if it's on fire, and don't step onto the pavement while in contact with the car. Jump out instead with your feet together.

## USE CAUTION! THE GROUND MAY BE ENERGIZED

In a collision between your car and an electrical pole, electricity may be flowing through the frame of your car and along the ground. As long as you remain in your vehicle, you're safe. If you attempt to get out, you're placing yourself in grave danger.

## DO NOT EXIT YOUR VEHICLE

While downed lines sometimes reveal they are "live" by arcing and sparking with electricity, this is not always the case. Power lines do not always show signs that they are live, but they are just as lethal. Stay in the car if you are in an accident with a power pole. Warn those who try to help that they must stay far away from the vehicle. Call 911 for help, and wait until a utility professional tells you it is safe to leave the car.

## IN CASE OF FIRE, EXIT SAFELY

The only time you should leave your car is if it's on fire. This rarely happens, but if it does, there is a safe way to exit the vehicle. Jump clear of the vehicle and do not let any part of your body or clothing touch the vehicle and ground at the same time. Land with your feet together and shuffle away (in small steps with your feet still together) to avoid electric shock. This way there will not be a voltage difference between your two feet, which would give electricity the chance to flow through your body. Keep moving away until you are at least 40 feet from the vehicle.

If you come upon a car accident involving a utility pole and downed power lines, keep your distance. While your natural instinct may be to rush to the car to help, instead pause. Do not approach the car or scene of the accident. Tell others to stay away. While you may be concerned about injuries to those involved, the best action you can take is to alert emergency officials, who will in turn coordinate with the power provider. For the same reasons described above, never drive over a downed power line or through water that is touching a downed power line.



## DECEMBER CALENDAR WINNER

*Submitted by: Vienna Volante*



## SAFETY TIP

*Inspect electrical holiday decor for damage before use. Cracked or damaged sockets, loose or bare wires, and loose connections may cause a serious shock or start a fire.*

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