

TRIMMING TREES FOR RELIABILITY

An essential part of providing safe, reliable service at a reasonable cost is the establishment and maintenance of a clear power line corridor. Trees contacting power lines is a primary cause of power outages. When tree limbs grow too close to power lines they can cause damage or interrupt your service.



We deeply respect the value that trees hold for our community and the environment. At Arrowhead Cooperative, we understand the significance of preserving trees while also prioritizing safety and reliability in our service territory. While trees contribute to the beauty of our landscape, they can also pose risks to power lines and public safety. Therefore, we conduct regular tree trimming and vegetation management within our power line right-of-way corridors for the following reasons:

PREVENTING POWER OUTAGES:

Trees or branches contacting overhead power lines are a common cause of power outages, ranging from momentary disruptions to prolonged blackouts affecting numerous customers. Maintaining clear rights-of-way is essential for ensuring reliable service and minimizing interruptions.

ENSURING PUBLIC SAFETY:

Trees near power lines present a serious danger to anyone who might come into contact with them, whether intentionally or accidentally. This includes adults, children, and animals, all of whom are at risk of fatal electric shocks. Proper vegetation management is crucial for safeguarding public safety and preventing tragic accidents.

REDUCING FIRE HAZARDS:

When power lines come into contact with tree branches, it can lead to sparks and electrical fires that pose a threat to both property and lives. By removing vegetation from

around power lines, we reduce the risk of fires and help protect our communities from potential disasters.

2024 RIGHT-OF-WAY WORK

In 2024, Arrowhead Cooperative remains committed to proactive vegetation management to ensure the safety and reliability of our electrical infrastructure. With over 333 miles of overhead and 224 miles of underground lines to monitor, maintaining clear rights-of-way is paramount. By addressing vegetation encroachment and proactively trimming trees, we mitigate safety hazards and minimize the risk of vegetation-related outages.

This spring, our crews will be focusing on two specific areas: West County Road 14 to County Road 60 and from Mid Trail to Sag Lake on the Gunflint Trail. Due to the Spruce Beetle kill, there has been a significant loss of trees outside the right-of-way, which could potentially impact power lines. Our teams are working diligently to remove these trees before the summer, ensuring the continued reliability of our electrical service.

If you have any questions about our right-of-way maintenance efforts or concerns about specific trees, please don't hesitate to contact Arrowhead Cooperative at (218) 663-7239. Your safety and satisfaction are our top priorities, and we are committed to serving our community with the highest standards of care and reliability.

GREAT RIVER ENERGY: POWERING WHAT'S POSSIBLE FOR ARROWHEAD COOPERATIVE

Arrowhead Cooperative's wholesale power provider, Great River Energy, continues to transition its power supply portfolio to serve members and adapt to a changing market while charting a path to achieve carbon-free energy requirements — all while recording the strongest financial results in the organization's history.

Great River Energy again rewarded its members' investment in the cooperative by issuing \$25 million in patronage capital returns. Historically strong 2023 margins allowed the cooperative to meet annual financial goals and reserve nearly \$30 million to offset rates in the years ahead.

As a not-for-profit cooperative, Great River Energy operates at cost to keep rates low for its members. Its competitive advantage widened again in 2023 and Great River Energy currently offers wholesale electric rates approximately 20% below the weighted regional average.

MAKING ELECTRICITY IN NEW WAYS

Great River Energy has been thoughtfully planning and

executing the transition of its power supply portfolio for more than a decade. Great River Energy began 2023 by adding two new wind agreements to its growing portfolio of renewable resources that will collectively add more than 300 megawatts of nameplate generating capacity — and zero emissions.

Great River Energy now has power purchase agreements for the output of nine wind facilities located throughout Minnesota, Iowa and the Dakotas. Its portfolio of renewable resources combined with the ability to retire earned renewable energy credits puts the cooperative in a strong position to achieve Minnesota's carbon-free standard.

ADVANCING THE ELECTRIC SYSTEM

By making strategic investments in the grid, Great River Energy and its member-owners are helping keep electricity reliable and affordable as it reduces carbon dioxide emissions.

The Midwest grid operator identified an assortment of



BALANCE YOUR BUDGET WITH BUDGET BILLING

Predictable payments make budgeting easy! Avoid seasonal fluctuations in your electric bill by signing up for Budget Billing.

Budget Billing is the payment plan that helps you balance your monthly payments. Arrowhead Electric determines a set amount based on your previous 12 months usage history, anticipated energy costs and other factors. Budget Billing does not reduce your overall energy expense – it lets you spread out your expense, so you'll be able to manage your household budget a little easier.

Each May, your bill will display your actual account balance, which may be higher or lower than your budgeted billing amount, depending on your actual usage for the year. In June, a new budget amount is calculated for the next 12 months.

CALL (218) 663-7239 TO LEARN MORE OR SIGN UP!

Must be a member for at least 12 months before you can enroll in the budget plan. Enrollment is only available from March 1 to June 30 each year.

transmission projects that will be needed to continue safe and reliable electric service as the regional power system continues to evolve. Great River Energy is teaming up with Minnesota Power to build the Northland Reliability Project, an approximately 180-mile, double-circuit 345-kilovolt transmission line between northern and central Minnesota. When completed in 2030, the line will bolster the power grid in northern and central Minnesota by allowing more renewable energy sources to be delivered where needed.

Great River Energy is a member of Grid North Partners, a group of utilities that collaborate on projects to improve the electric system. The coalition announced 19 transmission upgrade projects that will reduce system congestion and allow the most economic generation, such as low-cost renewable energy, to serve an area.

PURSUING FEDERAL FUNDING

Collaboration is not only a cooperative principle, but an important characteristic in Great River Energy's pursuit of funding opportunities. Great River Energy, along with a majority of its member-owners, filed a Letter of Interest with the United States Department of Agriculture to participate in its Empowering Rural America (New ERA) program to become eligible for nearly \$1 billion in federal funds to advance the work of Minnesota's electric cooperatives in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and modernizing the region's power grid.

The \$9.7 billion New ERA program was created as part of the Inflation Reduction Act with the goal of helping rural America transition to cleaner, reliable and more affordable electricity.

CELEBRATE

the Power Behind Your Power.

LINEWORKER APPRECIATION DAY

April 18, 2024

Our lineworkers are on call 24/7, 365 days a year.

At Arrowhead Cooperative, our lineworkers exemplify the highest standards of professionalism, skill, and commitment. They embody the spirit of service, putting the needs of our community above their own, day in and day out. Their unwavering dedication ensures that power outages are swiftly resolved, storms weathered, and our community remains resilient. They give their all to keep your power on.

Say thank you with us on Lineworker Appreciation Day, April 18.

CO-OP NEWS

SAVE THE DATE

The Arrowhead Cooperative Annual Meeting is scheduled for June 12 at 5 p.m. at the Arrowhead Center for the Arts in Grand Marais. Additional details to follow in the coming months.

COLD WEATHER RULE ENDING

Do you need help paying your electric bill this winter? The Minnesota Cold Weather Rule helps homeowners and renters protect and reconnect heat during the winter months. If your account is past due, you will no longer be protected under the Cold Weather Rule after April 30.

If you are worried about paying your electric bill on time, contact Arrowhead Cooperative at (800) 864-3744 before the due date of your bill. By making/maintaining a payment arrangement we can help you avoid disconnection.

NEXT BOARD MEETING

April 25, 2024 at 9:00 a.m.



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

Call 811 or visit
gopherstateonecall.org
before you dig.



CONNECTING COMMUNITIES: ARROWHEAD COOPERATIVE'S BROADBAND EXPANSION EFFORTS

Since securing the \$18.4 million bid in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) auction in March 2021, Arrowhead Cooperative has been making significant strides in expanding broadband services in our area.

Back in 2010, Arrowhead Cooperative ventured into the broadband realm with the launch of its broadband division, fueled by grants and low-interest loans from the United States Department of Agriculture, as well as a generous grant from Cook County totaling \$4 million. With this support, we swiftly rolled out fiber-to-the-home service to locations connected to our electrical grid, extending high-speed internet access to over 70 percent of Cook County's population.

Now, with the RDOF funding in place, we're poised for even more growth. Over the next decade, we're committed to deploying approximately 20 to 25 miles of infrastructure each year, targeting areas of the county identified by FCC mapping.

As we gear up for the construction season, we're thrilled to kick off this year's focus. Equipment is already mobilized at the junction of the Arrowhead Trail and Shoe Lake Road, marking the beginning of this year's project. Our primary objective is to lay fiber and electric cable to Greenwood Lake along Shoe Lake Road. Subsequently, we will extend cable along the Arrowhead Trail from the junction of Shoe Lake Road to McFarland Lake, followed by installation along Irish Creek Road from the Arrowhead Trail to Tom Lake Road.

Continuing our efforts, cable and fiber will be installed along Brumbaugh Road. Finally, we will focus on laying fiber and cable on Mineral Center Road in Grand Portage, spanning from Highway 61 to the Mount Maude communications tower. Our target is to complete the installation of all 28 miles before the onset of winter freeze-up.

With each milestone reached, we're fulfilling our commitment to bridging the digital divide and ensuring that all residents in our community have access to reliable, high-speed internet services.



APRIL CALENDAR WINNER

Submitted by: Krista Olson



ELECTRIC SAFETY

Warmer weather makes spring an ideal time for getting outside work done. Trimming trees and cleaning gutters will require getting on a ladder, so be aware of power lines around your home and make sure you stay a safe distance away. Never place a ladder or work in close proximity to a power line. Doing so may result in serious injury or death. Maintaining a safe distance of at least 10 feet from any overhead power line is a good safety rule.

ARROWHEAD COOPERATIVE

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