

# PowerLines

*Your Trusted Energy News Source*

Monthly Publication of Cooperative Light & Power



August 2021 • [www.clpower.com](http://www.clpower.com)

## CLP Member Appreciation Pancake Breakfast

Carey Hogenson, Marketing Manager

Cooperative Light & Power (CLP) is excited to invite you and your family to attend your CLP Member Appreciation Pancake Breakfast. The breakfast will be held on Saturday, September 18th, at the CLP headquarters building located at 1554 Highway 2 in Two Harbors. A hearty breakfast of pancakes, sausage, coffee, orange juice, and milk will be served from 8:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m.

We are happy to host this event once again. It gives you, our members, a great opportunity to visit with your friends and neighbors, talk with your



CLP staff and elected CLP District Directors, and enjoy a great breakfast. You

will also have a chance to win some fun prizes!

We will once again be collecting cash donations and non-perishable food items for the local food shelf. Member account number six hundred twenty one thousand five hundred fifty six. Any member that donates non-perishable food items or a cash donation valued over \$10 will receive a gift from CLP.

This breakfast is to celebrate you, our members! We look forward to seeing you there.



## ATTENTION BUDGET BILLED MEMBERS:

This month's billing is the budget reconciliation bill. Please call CLP at 218.834.2226 or 800.580.5881 if you have any questions. The new budget year will start with the September billing.

Budget Billing is a service offered by CLP to help members better manage their fluctuating electric bill. Participating members pay the same amount every month in order to avoid the big swings their electric bills can take in the winter months. To sign up for budget billing, call CLP today at 218.834.2226 or 800.580.5881. **Budget Billing, A Bright Idea by CLP!**



## Great River Energy Power Supply Transformation Continues

*New ownership group for Coal Creek Station plans carbon capture and renewables*

Hal Halpern, Chief Executive Officer/ GM

Great River Energy, Cooperative Light & Power's wholesale power provider, reached

an agreement to sell the Coal Creek Station power plant to Rainbow Energy Center, LLC.

The sale of Coal Creek Station averts the plant's closure, which was scheduled for the second half of 2022 unless a buyer was found.

Rainbow Energy Center will continue to operate the 1,151-megawatt (MW) power plant using current plant employees they hire. Rainbow Energy Center also plans to develop carbon capture and storage at Coal Creek Station.

"We are excited for what the future holds for our North Dakota employees and the communities surrounding Coal Creek Station," said Great River Energy President and Chief Executive Officer David Saggau. Selling the plant also offers additional benefits for Great River Energy's member-owners compared with shutting it down. Member account number seven hundred sixteen thousand one hundred fourteen.

Nexus Line, LLC has reached an agree-

ment to purchase from Great River Energy the high voltage direct current (HVDC) transmission system that extends between central North Dakota and Minnesota. Great River Energy will operate and maintain the HVDC system under a 10-year contract.

I personally believe Great River Energy's power supply changes deliver what our members want today and set us up for

River Energy and its employees have established in North Dakota."

Rainbow Energy Center plans to add incremental generation from renewables to fully utilize the capacity of the HVDC transmission system.

Great River Energy will also enter into a power purchase agreement with Rainbow Energy Center, LLC.

These transactions will help ensure Great River Energy continues to provide its member-owners with reliable and affordable electricity as the cooperative builds its future power supply portfolio.

"We are building a power supply portfolio that will serve our member-owner cooperatives with clean, affordable and reliable energy for decades," said Saggau. The cooperative will add 900 MW of wind energy by 2023 and remains on track to meet Minnesota's 80% carbon dioxide reduction goal ahead of schedule.

The sale of Coal Creek Station and the HVDC system is expected to close later this year, after required approvals are obtained.

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***"We are building a power supply portfolio that will serve our member-owner cooperatives with clean, affordable and reliable energy for decades," said Great River Energy President and Chief Executive Officer David Saggau.***

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success for a very long time.

Rainbow Energy Center and Nexus Line are affiliates of Rainbow Energy Marketing Corp. of Bismarck, North Dakota.

"The successful implementation of carbon capture and storage is central to our plans at Coal Creek Station," said Rainbow Energy Marketing Corp. President Stacy L. Tschider. "As a privately held company, we are uniquely positioned to continue the successful legacy that Great

### Call Before You Dig

**800.252.1166**  
it's the law!

Call 800.252.1166 to locate underground wires.

You must call at least 48-hours in advance before any excavations (this notice does not include weekends, holidays or emergencies).

CLP will only locate the underground wires that are owned by CLP, we do not locate or take responsibility for locating wires beyond the meter location.



### PowerLines

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Cooperative Light & Power  
Association of Lake County  
1554 Highway 2 • P. O. Box 69  
Two Harbors, MN 55616  
www.clpower.com  
CLP Office: 218-834-2226 or 800-580-5881  
Power Outage (24/7): 800-927-5550

Summer Business Hours:  
Monday - Thursday 7:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Friday 7:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

### Important Contacts

#### OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Scott Veitenheimer, President/Chair, District 2  
218-340-8968  
Pat Schmieder, Vice-President, District 1  
218-834-2247  
Kyle Weideman, Treasurer, District 3  
218-834-3476  
Roger Peterson, Secretary, District 5  
218-226-8197  
Steve Josephson, Director, District 4  
218-226-4163



# Bitcoin Basics (Cryptocurrency)

Kevin Olson, Telecommunications Manager

There has been a lot of press lately about cryptocurrency. Bitcoin prices, to be specific, have hit as high as \$60,000 per coin recently. But what the heck is it, anyway?

Bitcoin, in simplest terms, is digital money that allows for secure peer-to-peer transactions on the internet. That means there is no physical currency. There are no bills to print or coins to mint. You can't hold a Bitcoin in your hand. And like diamonds or gold, it can be "mined." I'll touch on that later.

## What is the history?

Bitcoin was created by Satoshi Nakamoto, an anonymous person or group who outlined the technology in a 2008 white paper. That's right – no one knows who created it. The goal of the technology was to create a new decentralized, electronic cash system.

Every transaction ever made using Bitcoin is tracked on something called a blockchain, which is very similar to a bank's ledger. Basically, it's a log or spreadsheet of sorts, tracking funds going in and out of accounts. Only it's all anonymous.

Unlike a bank's ledger, however, the blockchain is distributed across the entire global network. No company,

government, financial agency, or third party has any control, and anyone can become part of the network.

## How do you store it?

Since Bitcoins are virtual, you need a virtual wallet to store them. There are cryptocurrency exchanges that do this for you. They take your money and convert it into Bitcoins or vice-versa. Coinbase is the best example of this.

Think of it as exchanging your money for tokens at the casino or arcade. The difference is that since there are daily limits on the number of transactions per day, it can take a day to a week to get your money. And because Bitcoins are so expensive currently, transactions are made in fractions of Bitcoins.

## How is it mined?

People -- or more accurately, extremely powerful, energy-intense computers "mine" Bitcoins to make new Bitcoins and process every transaction. The mining process involves computers anywhere in the world solving an extremely challenging mathematical problem that progressively gets harder over time. Every time a problem is solved (a transaction made), one block of the Bitcoin is processed in the blockchain, and the miner gets a new Bitcoin as a reward.

The result is twofold. First, when computers solve these complex math problems on the Bitcoin network, they produce new Bitcoin (not unlike when a mining operation extracts gold from the ground). And second, by solving computational math problems, Bitcoin miners make the Bitcoin payment network trustworthy and secure by verifying its transaction information.

## What do I think?

Many people think cryptocurrency will be the currency of the future. I am more traditional. I don't like that there is no oversight or guarantees. And because of its anonymity, it is the current choice for Ransomware payments. Member account number six hundred nine thousand two hundred sixty three. You also have probably heard the stories of lost or crashed computers resulting in the loss of the digital wallet. Money is gone. Perhaps my favorite one was in 2010 someone decided to buy two pizzas for 10,000 Bitcoins. At the time of writing this article, if they would have kept those Bitcoins, they would have been worth \$350 million. That better have been some good pizza!

## Cream Cheese Bars

*From the Kitchen of: Vicki Falk*

- |   |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1 Package of cake mix (butter brickle, white or yellow) | 8 oz cream cheese, softened |
| 2 eggs  | 2 eggs                      |
| 1 stick of butter or margarine, melted                  | 1 ½ cups of sugar           |
|   | nuts, chopped               |

Mix first three ingredients and press into a greased 9x13 inch cake pan. Mix cream cheese, add 2 eggs, one at a time. Add sugar and beat well. Spread over cake mix batter. Sprinkle with chopped nuts. Bake at 350 degrees for 35 minutes or until golden brown and set in the center. Cool. Sprinkle with powdered sugar. These bars freeze well.

Submit your favorite recipe! If your recipe is printed in an issue of "Powerlines" you will receive a \$10 credit on your electric bill.

## MN Electrical Inspector

Lake and part of St Louis County:

Justin Barfuss 218-220-0825

Office hours are 7 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.

Monday-Friday

Anytime a homeowner or an electrical contractor installs wiring or performs other electrical work, Minnesota law requires an electrical inspector to perform a proper inspection of the work. A rough-in inspection must be made before any wiring is covered. A final inspection is also required.

For more information, visit [dli.mn.gov](http://dli.mn.gov)

## Why Does CLP Choose to Use Herbicide?

Larry Sandretsky, Operations Manager

Did you know that CLP has 1,065 miles of line that power you, our members? I googled how many driving miles it is to New York City. It's about 1,100 miles. So, CLP has about the same number of miles of line as it takes to drive from Two Harbors to New York!

That's a lot of line and right-of-way (ROW) that CLP must maintain to help bring safe, reliable electricity to our member's homes and businesses. Member account number seven hundred



A typical herbicide maintained ROW

forty one thousand seventy one. So, what does it cost to maintain all of that (ROW)?

I took a three-year average cost to maintain ROW at CLP, both mechanically (trimming and cutting) and spraying (herbicide application):

Mechanically clearing cost  
\$4,900 per mile

Herbicide application cost  
\$720 per mile

The average growth cycle for CLP is five to seven years, depending on tree species. Our goal is to clear about 150 miles a year, as the budget allows. Herbicide application is a safe and cost-effective way to manage our ROW. If we eliminate herbicide application from our ROW maintenance program, CLP would need to budget \$750,000 per year to ROW clearing, an increase of \$550,000 per year. An increase of an average of \$90 per year per member.

## Considering an Electric Vehicle?

**Join us in Duluth!** A panel of EV experts and enthusiasts will be available to answer questions. Take a look at the wide variety of EVs on the market.

**SEPTEMBER 30, 2021**

**5-6 p.m. Panel discussion**

**6-7 p.m. EV parking lot**

**CANAL PARK LODGE  
AND EV PARKING LOT**

Light refreshments will be provided  
**FREE Love Creamery Ice Cream**



brought to you by  **GREAT RIVER ENERGY** and these participating cooperatives  **ARROWHEAD COOPERATIVE**  **CLP**  **EZE**  **Lake Country Power**

## CLP Connect/Disconnect/Reconnect Policies

The following contains important information regarding Cooperative Light & Power Board Policy II-12, Connection/Service Charge. Please read this information carefully so you know and understand your rights as a Cooperative Light & Power (CLP) member.

A \$15 Service Connection Charge is required for any one or combination of the following: connection of new service, change of account from one renter to another, transfer of account to a new buyer/owner, but excluding spousal transfers.

An electric account disconnected for non-payment may not be reconnected until the delinquent account and associated charges have been paid or

satisfactory arrangements for payment have been made with the CLP's Credit Manager.

A \$50 Collection Call Charge and a \$50 Service Reconnection Charge is required of an existing service that was disconnected due to non-payment. If a service is reconnected after business hours, a minimum of \$250 additional charge will be applied.

All trips to the member premises under this policy shall be scheduled to occur during regular business hours, unless otherwise stated. For further information on CLP Board Policies, please contact CLP's CEO, Hal Halpern at 218.834.2226 or 800.580.5881.



**Co-op Light & Power's  
Community Trust is now accepting  
Operation Round Up  
Grant Applications until August 20, 2021.**

Operation Round Up® provides grants to local not-for-profit organizations and community projects such as food shelves, volunteer fire departments and rural ambulance services. Co-op members voluntarily participate by "rounding up" their monthly electric bills to the nearest dollar.

The change is placed in a trust, which is then donated to local organizations, making real change in your community.

**YOUR ORGANIZATION  
COULD BE NEXT**

Visit [www.clpower.com](http://www.clpower.com) to download a grant application, or call CLP's offices at 218.834.2226 or 800.580.5881.

**You will be amazed at what a  
penny can do!**



# What to Check Before Reporting a Power Outage

Ken Jones, Member Services Manager

All of us have become more reliant on our power, and we all take it for granted that when we flip the light switch, the lights will come on. CLP works very hard with preventative maintenance and right-of-way clearing to avoid outages. Still, every once in a while, our power goes out. When this happens, there are a few things you can check to make sure the outage is on CLP's system and not your own side of the meter before calling us. The first place to look would be at your electric meter if it is accessible and you can get to it safely.



## Meter with Blank Screen

This usually means CLP has a power outage. You should call CLP to report the outage.

Once you get to your meter, look to see if there are any numbers or letters on the meter screen or if the screen is blank. If your meter screen is blank, more than likely, the problem is on our side, and you will need to call CLP and report the outage, and our crews will come out and restore your power. If there are numbers or letters on the screen and the screen keeps changing every few seconds, then the power issue is probably on your side. You should check the main breakers in your electric panel to make sure they are not tripped. Some of you may have more than one main breaker. For example, you may have the main breaker in your house panel and one outside on your meter pedestal under your meter. If you have two panels, you will need to make sure that



## Numbers Visible on Meter Screen

This usually means power issue is on the member's side of the meter. Check your breakers.

both of these main breakers are on and not tripped. You can reset your main breaker by switching it off then back on (if you are comfortable doing so), or you can call your local electrician, and they will find and fix the problem.

CLP will bill the member if crews respond to an outage and the problem is found on your side of the meter. If you follow these tips, you should be able to tell if the issue is yours or CLP's. When in doubt, don't hesitate to call, our staff will ask you to check your meter screen, check your breakers, and from there, they will let you know if it is our outage or not.



## House Main Panel

Main breaker is on the top.

These pictures help explain what you should look for before reporting an outage.



## Meter Pedestal or Farm Panel

Main breaker is below (circled)

## Consumer Privacy

Susan Schmitz, Office Manager

In last month's newsletter, I spoke about the process of transferring electric service.

One of the bullet points was asking for private information from you, such as your phone number, mailing and physical addresses, and email address when transferring your account.

There are so many scams going on these days. Whether you're a new consumer or a longtime consumer, we want everyone to know that we DO NOT give out your private information to anyone.

If you are questioning a call or mailing you received from CLP, please call us at 218-834-2226/800-580-5881 or stop by our office at 1554 Hwy 2, Two Harbors. We will verify if the information has come from our office.

## Board Meeting Summary

A regular meeting of the CLP Board of Directors was held at the Office of the Association at 1554 Highway 2, Two Harbors, MN, on May 12, 2021.

Four directors were present at the time the meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. Also present for parts of the meeting were General Manager/CEO Hal Halpern and Operations Manager Larry Sandretsky.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the agenda with revisions.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the board meeting minutes from April 21, 2021

A motion was made and seconded to move the meeting to executive session at 9:05 a.m. for discussion of personnel matters. At the conclusion of the discussion, a motion was made and seconded to exit the session at 10:04 a.m.

The Board reviewed a summary of payments made in the past year to further discuss the topic with the CEO during the May 13 Strategic Planning Meeting.

A motion was made and seconded

to ratify Teamsters Contract.

There was a motion and a second to approve the financial report.

There was discussion on possible need to revisit the Cost-of-Service Study including examining rates across each of the different rate classes and defining parameters that would affect rate changes.

The Board discussed a suggestion from a member where CLP could implement a program allowing bill credits that members want to volunteer to be used to help other members that might need assistance paying their bills in these challenging times.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the consent agenda. The monthly payments were examined. Motion passed to accept all Consent Agenda items.

Operations Manager Larry Sandretsky joined the meeting to discuss ROW issues. The discussion focused on trying to better understand what happened with the clearing last fall along North Shore Drive.

Adjournment was call at 3:00 p.m.

## Year-to-date Financials

| <u>May</u>                     | <u>2011</u>  | <u>2020</u>  | <u>2021</u>  |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Operating Revenue              | \$ 4,412,796 | \$ 5,441,877 | \$ 6,007,641 |
| Cost of Purchased Power        | \$ 2,581,468 | \$ 3,060,173 | \$ 3,586,238 |
| Other Operating Expenses       | \$ 1,493,028 | \$ 2,177,562 | \$ 2,220,223 |
| Total Cost of Electric Service | \$ 4,074,496 | \$ 5,237,735 | \$ 5,806,461 |
| Operating Margin (Loss)        | \$ 338,300   | \$ 204,142   | \$ 201,181   |
| Interest Income                | \$ 28,499    | \$ 76,699    | \$ 31,898    |
| Other Margins                  | \$ 158,363   | \$ (67,869)  | \$ (61,827)  |
| Capital Credits                | \$ 16,551    | \$ 10,387    | \$ 11,526    |
| Total Margins                  | \$ 541,713   | \$ 223,359   | \$ 182,778   |
| kWh Purchased                  | 45,770,991   | 46,538,445   | 48,898,358   |
| kWh Sold                       | 43,187,639   | 44,862,312   | 46,721,843   |
| Line Loss                      | 5.64%        | 3.60%        | 4.45%        |
| Members Billed                 | 5,904        | 6,242        | 6,332        |
| Average kWh Used, Residential  | 1,291        | 1,244        | 1,243        |
| Average Bill, Residential      | \$ 131.90    | \$ 148.82    | \$ 150.78    |
| Average Cost/kWh, Residential  | \$ 0.1022    | \$ 0.1196    | \$ 0.1213    |
| Interest Expense               | \$ 183,795   | \$ 184,388   | \$ 145,572   |

## Dates to Know...

- Aug 16:** Cookies & coffee in the CLP lobby
- Aug 25:** CLP Bills Due
- Aug 25:** CLP Board Meeting
- Sept 6:** Labor Day  
CLP Office CLOSED
- Sept 18:** Member Appreciation  
Pancake Breakfast

*NOTE: CLP dates subject to change*

To view a complete version of the latest CLP Board Meeting Minutes please go to:

<http://clpower.com/board-meeting-minutes>

*Cooperative Light & Power is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*

### TO REPORT AN OUTAGE:

Call CLP at 834.2226 or 800.580.5881 during business hours or 800.927.5550 after hours.

**BEFORE** calling, please check your breakers. If an outage is found to be on your side of the meter, you will be billed for a service call.

### SPOT YOUR NUMBER:

A \$20 electric credit is awarded each month to our faithful readers. Four account numbers are spelled out in each newsletter. If you find yours, notify CLP by the 25th of that month and a credit will be applied to your bill.

**Credits claimed for June:**

Rachel & Jerry Furnish

**Credits not claimed:** Jacklyn Hanson, Tom Anderson, and Douglas Anderson

### OPERATION ROUND UP TOTALS:

June Donations: \$1,643.03

Year-to-date Donations: \$9,969.94

Thank you to all the participants! If you have questions about Operation Round Up, or would like to apply for a grant from the Fund, please contact CLP at 218.834.2226 or 800.580.5881, or visit our website at [www.clpower.com](http://www.clpower.com).