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**October is Co-op Month, please join us for the  
Pie & Ice Cream Social**



**Oct. 18  
2 p.m. to 4 p.m.  
Garrison Auditorium**

IT'S PIE DAY 2022

# Celebrate National Co-op Month with your local cooperatives

BY PATRICIA STOCKDILL

Never pass up a good pie.

That's good advice, as McLean Electric Cooperative (MEC), RTC Networks, Garrison CHS and Farmers Union Oil Cenex of Garrison celebrate National Co-op Month in October, by serving free pie and ice cream Oct. 18.

Cooperative members throughout McLean County are invited to the Garrison city auditorium, where cooperative managers, including MEC General Manager/CEO Mark Doyle, will serve a choice of fall favorites, apple or pumpkin pie, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. They'll even offer to top it off with creamy vanilla ice cream

It doesn't matter which cooperative serves you, added MEC Communications Manager Sonja Moe. It's a thank you to all member-owners. Plus, "it's just something fun to do for our members and get everybody out to visit with our members," she added.

Moe anticipates ordering more than 20 pies for the event.

National Co-op Month began more than 50 years ago as a way to heighten awareness of the role and importance cooperatives play across the United States. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, North Dakota has the third highest number of farmer cooperatives in the United States, including electric cooperatives like MEC, and telecommunication cooperatives, such as RTC Networks. The United States has more than 40,000 types of cooperatives.

Apple pie might be the favorite among guests at the Garrison event in past years, but it's difficult to tell. After all, who can pass up pie? Please join your local cooperatives Oct. 18.

Cooperatives and their member-owners play a major role in the U.S. economy, as well as food and energy supplies.

And that's cause to celebrate. ■

## Want some pie?

Facts a person may or may not know about pies, from the American Pie Council:

- Pies have been around since the ancient Greeks, Romans and Egyptians.
- Ancient Romans published the first pie recipe, a rye-crust goat cheese and honey pie.
- Early pies (spelled "pye" in England in the 12th century) typically had meat fillings. The crust was called "coffyn." Its purpose was mainly to hold fillings, not to be eaten.
- Credit the arrival of pies to America to early English colonists who, like the ancient Romans, usually didn't eat the "coffyn."
- Crust became the acceptable word for the outside pastry during the American Revolution.
- Just as cooperatives across the United States celebrate National Co-op Month, pie enthusiasts have their own day, National Pie Day, celebrated across the United States in January since the 1970s.

## The American Pie Council even has pie and pie crust-making tips:

- Don't skip steps when making pies.
- Cold is key to a good pie crust – cold bowls, cold utensils and even cold shortening. Plus, it helps to chill dough at least an hour before rolling it out. Cold hands help when handling dough, as well.
- Don't be too zealous when working pie crust. Shortening (or butter, depending on the recipe) should be coated with the flour mix, not blended, because overworking creates gluten, which tends to toughen dough.
- Bake pies on the lower third of an oven. Wrapping the edges with foil or an edge protector can protect over-browning the crust edge.
- Try to use fresh, in-season ingredients for the most flavorful fruit pies.

## MANAGER'S MOMENT

# Supply chain affects co-op

BY MARK DOYLE, GENERAL MANAGER



**Mark Doyle**

*I would appreciate a moment of your time...*

Well, fall is upon us.

As we wrap up our construction season, we are already preparing for the 2023 construction season. The supply chain is one of our largest concerns, along with inflation.

As for the supply chain, we are already ordering materials for 2024. If you are considering a new service or changes to your existing service, we ask that you reach out to us now to discuss your plans. Transformers and meters are more than a year out. We will always do our

best to facilitate and plan to carry some additional inventory, but it would be best to know about changes to your service well in advance.

As for inflation, we are all realizing its impact in all aspects of our lives. Here at McLean Electric Cooperative, we have seen significant increases in our cost of materials. During your planning process, keep in mind the increases in the cost of service. We intend to do our best to keep our rates as low as possible.

As always, feel free to reach out to me with any questions or comments. My door is always open. ■



## Focused on YOU.

Electric cooperatives were created to serve their members. Because we're a co-op, we're able to adapt to our community's unique needs. That's the power of co-op membership.

**OCTOBER IS NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH**

# IT'S HEAT SEASON: Check into discounted electric heat rate options

BY PATRICIA STOCKDILL

**E**lectric heat is as affordable as ever, in part because of McLean Electric Cooperative's (MEC) ongoing heat rate discount program.

In addition, MEC's electric kilowatt-hour (kWh) rates haven't fluctuated in price in recent years, compared to the volatile, yo-yo cost of propane and heating oil in today's energy market.

MEC's heat rate program applies to member-owners purchasing a separate sub-meter socket and CT for a 240-volt heating unit. The sub-meter identifies electricity used by the heating system, whether it is baseboard, boiler or other types of heat distribution.

Any building qualifies once the sub-meter is installed and inspected, such as residential, business, shops or other types of outbuildings, described MEC Office Manager Tonya Graeber.

It also applies to single- or three-phase services.

The heat rate program reduces MEC's regular 11.24 cents per kWh rate to 5.5 cents per kWh from Oct. 1 through April 30, which is North Dakota's traditional main heating season.

Given today's energy costs, MEC member-owners not already enjoying heat rate discounts might want to consider their options.

"The heat rate equates to \$1.33 per gallon of propane," MEC Engineering Manager Lucas Schaaf described. "If you're looking for an affordable, stable heating rate, electric heat is it."

And, yes, the heat rate has been stable at 5.5 cents per kWh since 2012. In addition, MEC has not adjusted its kWh electric rate in five years.

Dual-fuel systems are another option to save on heating costs, as a combination of electricity and, typically, propane systems, Schaaf said. It provides the option of using one heat source or the other. MEC's discounted heat rate applies if electricity is used to operate the heating system.

However, sub-meters don't identify the source of alternate electric energy sources, such as solar or wind which cannot be connected to a sub-meter. Alternate energy source systems aren't eligible for the heat rate discount or other energy-savings programs available otherwise for sub-meters, described MEC General Manager/CEO Mark Doyle.

The heat rate discount is provided through MEC's

electric generation-and-transmission cooperative, Basin Electric Power Cooperative. Basin Electric offers the discount to all of its member cooperatives within its multi-state region during heating season months.

The program began decades ago to incentivize electric cooperative consumers to convert to electric heat as electric heating systems were introduced to a newly emerging market.

Approximately 1,500 MEC member-owners are already heat rate discount beneficiaries. There is still time to qualify for the 2022-23 – and beyond – heating season for those with existing 240-volt fixed-in-place heating systems or considering new electric heat options.

Contact Graeber at 463-6700 or 800-263-4922, or go to the MEC website, [www.mcleanelectric.com](http://www.mcleanelectric.com), for more heat rate information. ■

## About the program

About McLean Electric Cooperative's (MEC) 2022 discounted heat rate program:

- 240-volt electrical heating circuits are eligible, providing heat through baseboards, cove heating, wall units, unit heaters, boilers or electric furnaces.
- MEC doesn't load control heating systems on the heat rate, so it's not shut off at any time.
- MEC member-owners can purchase the sub-meter socket and CT from the cooperative. The approximate cost is \$100 plus tax, and equipment can be picked up at MEC's Garrison office.
- A certified electrician must install the sub-meter system.
- The sub-meter must be placed outside of the residence or building, so MEC can access the cooperative's meter and equipment.
- All sub-metered heat usage from 240-volt heating systems qualifies for the 5.5 cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh) discounted rate after it's inspected for proper installation.
- A \$3 monthly sub-meter base charge applies.
- The heat rate is effective Oct. 1 through April 30.
- Electric heat usage during non-heat rate eligible months is billed at the current electric rate of 11.24 cents per kWh.

# Alternate energy policy adopted

BY PATRICIA STOCKDILL



It's all about safety and ensuring reliable electricity for all McLean Electric Cooperative (MEC) member-owners. That was the focus for MEC's board of directors when approving a new policy for member-owners interested in connecting an alternate energy source onto the cooperative's system.

Independent solar or wind generating systems and diesel or propane-fueled generators are examples of alternate energy sources.

The policy, adopted in July, requires MEC member-owners to contact MEC prior to implementing an alternate energy source and to follow policy-specific procedures if the member-owner wants to remain connected to MEC, using MEC's electric service as their backup energy source.

Currently alternate energy sources such as wind and solar lack the technology and capability to run 24/7 and are weather-dependent. A backup source is needed to provide electricity when solar or wind can't meet electric energy demands.

In addition, the alternate energy source has to be connected to MEC's system if the member-owner wants MEC to buy back excess energy the alternate system produces, if usage demand is less than what is produced.

It's all about safety first, stressed MEC General Manager/CEO Mark Doyle and Engineering Manager Lucas Schaaf. For example, an alternate energy source could be

backfeeding into MEC's system. A backfeed of electricity could cause serious injuries to lineworkers if work is being done on the MEC system at the same time.

Damage could also occur to MEC's system if the alternate system isn't properly installed or sized to meet MEC's system, such as single- or three-phase equipment.

MEC will inspect all alternate source systems to ensure they are properly installed to interconnect with MEC's equipment, Schaaf described.

Inspections must occur prior to formalizing a contract between the member-owner and MEC, Doyle added.

"If the procedures are not followed, the member-owner will be separated from MEC's system and reliant on their source until it is inspected to determine proper interconnection," he stressed. Anything needed to be corrected has to be completed before interconnecting to MEC's system.

The new policy isn't unique to MEC. As the electric cooperative industry evolves with evolving energy trends, cooperatives across the region are looking at adopting policies, such as MEC's. The goal is to ensure reliable energy, protect a cooperative's equipment and system and not burden additional costs onto its membership, Doyle explained.

Contracts between MEC and the member-owner interconnected to the MEC system establish parameters for electric energy buy-back rates, base rates for single- and three-phase lines and other stipulations.

It's important for member-owners interested in alternate electric energy systems to contact MEC prior to installation, not only for proper procedures in following the new policy, but to help them determine if it's cost-effective to meet the member-owner's needs and expectations.

For example, none of MEC sub-meter discounts, such as MEC's 5.5 cents per kilowatt-hour discount rate, apply to alternate energy systems, because the actual amount of electric energy used can't be read properly by the sub-meter. It doesn't identify the source of the electricity, Schaaf explained.

Under the new policy, the buy-back per kilowatt rate MEC pays to purchase excess energy is reviewed annually, to adjust as MEC's wholesale electric energy costs fluctuate.

Information on the policy, an application to connect onto MEC's system and to learn more about alternate energy to determine its viability and cost-effectiveness is available by contacting Schaaf at 463-6700 or 800-263-4922. ■

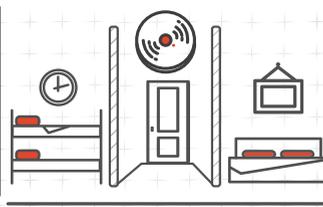
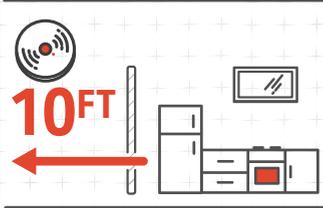
# SMOKE ALARMS SAVE LIVES

According to the **National Fire Protection Association**, an average of **1,450 fire deaths** occur every year in homes with missing or non-functioning smoke alarms.



**2/3** fire deaths occur in homes with missing or non-functioning smoke alarms.

## INSTALL SMOKE ALARMS IN:

<p><b>Every bedroom</b></p> 	<p><b>Outside each sleeping area</b></p> 	<p><b>On every level of your home, including basement</b></p> 
<p><b>On levels without bedrooms, install in living room, den or family room</b></p> 	<p><b>Install near stairways leading to upper levels</b></p> 	<p><b>Install smoke alarms 10 feet from cooking appliances to minimize false alarms</b></p> 



Use **interconnected smoke alarms** for additional safety and early warning



**Low pitch sound and vibration smoke alarms** are available for those who are **hard of hearing**



**DO NOT INSTALL** near windows, doors or ducts



**NEVER** paint smoke alarms

## REMEMBER TO:

**TEST** smoke alarms monthly

**CHANGE** battery yearly

**REPLACE** alarm every 10 years



# DON'T LET HALLOWEEN BE SCARY!

It's time to decorate your yard and home, as ghosts and goblins plan their invasion of the neighborhood for treats.

As you light Halloween night with elaborate decorations, McLean Electric Cooperative recommends some important safety tips:

Cords should be plugged into outlets equipped with ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). Use a portable GFCI if your outdoor outlets don't have them. GFCIs protect you from electric shocks.

Outdoors, use only lights and cords rated for outdoor use.

Always unplug lights before going to bed or leaving your home.

Use only lights that have been safety tested and approved by Underwriters Laboratories (UL). Look for the UL label on the box and on each string.

Make sure extension cords are in good condition. Use only cords rated to carry the electrical load you will connect to them.

Do not run electrical cords across sidewalks or other walkway areas that could trip or endanger trick-or-treaters. Indoors, avoid stretching cords across a room where people or pets can trip over them or become entangled.

Before plugging in the lights, check each string for broken sockets, frayed cords or faulty plugs. Replace damaged strings.

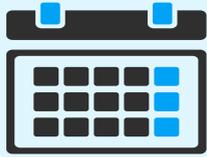
Keep electric cords out of high-traffic areas.

Use flashlights or battery-operated candles when decorating the home, including to light walkways, jack-o'-lanterns and outdoor displays.

Don't staple or nail through light strings or electrical cords.

Do not attach cords or lights to metal objects.

**A SAFE CELEBRATION IS THE BEST CELEBRATION, AND FOLLOWING BASIC ELECTRICAL SAFETY GUIDELINES WILL HELP YOU AVOID REAL SCARES AND KEEP YOUR MEMORIES "BOO-TIFUL" AND FUN.**



## McLean County community calendar:

# Events and activities to see and do

### McLean County community food pantry

#### October distribution dates, times and locations:

- **Community Cupboard of Underwood:** 4-6 p.m. Oct. 6 and 10 a.m.-noon Oct. 22, 208 Lincoln Ave. Like us on Facebook, Community Cupboard of Underwood, for food pantry distributions, thrift store and other information.
- **Garrison Area Resource Center & Food Pantry, Garrison:** Oct. 27, noon-2 p.m. and 5-7 p.m.
- **Our Savior Lord's Food Pantry, Max:** Oct. 17, noon-3 p.m. and 5-7 p.m., Max City Hall, 215 Main St.
- **The Lord's Pantry, Turtle Lake:** Thursdays 2-4 p.m. and Saturdays, 10 a.m.-noon, Trinity Lutheran Church, 515 Kundert St.
- **Wilton Food Pantry, Wilton:** "Mini" distributions every Friday, 11:30 a.m. until gone; full food distribution, 4-6 p.m. Oct. 20, Wilton Senior Citizens Center, 42 Dakota Ave.

Area food pantries often experience high needs for these items: baked beans, pork and beans, canned fruit, tuna, chicken, canned vegetables, cereal, oatmeal, granola and breakfast bars, juice, mac and cheese, hamburger and tuna helper, pancake mix, syrup, pasta, spaghetti, pasta sauce, peanut butter, jelly, rice side dishes, soups and chili, and household and personal items, such as body wash and soap, dish soap, laundry detergent, shampoo and conditioner, toilet paper, toothpaste and toothbrushes. Contact local food pantries for drop-off information or a list of additional needs in your community.

#### October activities:

- **Oct. 9:** Fire Prevention Awareness Breakfast, sponsored by the Garrison Fire Department, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Garrison Fire Hall.
- **Oct. 15:** Audubon National Wildlife Refuge Fall Festival, refuge headquarters a mile east of U.S. Highway 83 on the south shore of Lake Audubon. Visitor Center is open with tram rides, North Country Trail hikes and more. Sponsored by the Audubon Refuge Partners to celebrate National Wildlife Refuge Week.
- **Oct. 15 and 16:** Dakota Feeder Calf Show, with activities for the entire family, Turtle Lake.
- **Oct. 18:** Co-op Pie and Ice Cream, 2-4 p.m., Garrison City Auditorium. Sponsored by McLean Electric Cooperative, RTC Networks, CHS and Farmers Union Oil Cenex of Garrison.
- **Oct. 24:** Max Community Library Hour, 10:30 a.m.
- **Oct. 28:** Max Community Book Club, 7 p.m.
- **Oct. 21:** Blood Drive, 11 a.m.-5 p.m., Garrison City Auditorium.
- **Oct. 29:** Halloween Hike, Fort Stevenson State Park, 7 p.m., meet at Visitor Center.
- **Oct. 31:** Children's Halloween Party for ages 2 through sixth grade, 3:30-5 pm., Max Community Library.
- **Oct. 31:** Annual Children's Trick or Trunk, 4-5:30 pm., American Legion parking lot, Turtle Lake.

*Nonprofit organizations and communities throughout McLean County are encouraged to contact Patricia Stockdill, [stockdill.patricia@gmail.com](mailto:stockdill.patricia@gmail.com), or call 701-337-5462 to submit community events. ■*

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

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#### STAFF:

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