

# The Nodak Neighbor

September-October 2018  
Official Publication of Nodak Electric Cooperative  
[www.nodakelectric.com](http://www.nodakelectric.com)

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Cooperstown  
substation  
page 4



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Official Publication of the  
Nodak Electric Cooperative, Inc.

746-4461 or 800-732-4373

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**On the cover:** The American flag waves in the breeze on Sept. 11 as Minnkota Power Cooperative crews work on the new Cooperstown substation.

# Around the co-op

## Nowacki retires

Nodak would like to wish Loren Nowacki a wonderful retirement.

Loren started at Nodak in November 1998 as an information technologist, a position he held until retirement. He was excellent at servicing and maintaining computers. He was always patient while educating employees with new programs and the continually changing technology world.

Blaine Rekken, manager of member/energy services, said, "Loren has been a great asset and faithful employee of Nodak during his 19-plus years serving as information technologist for the cooperative, and we wish him many years of health and happiness in his retirement! I will miss Loren's cooperative spirit, dependability, attention to detail and quick wit. Congratulations, Loren, for achieving this milestone in your life!"

Loren's retirement plans include work on home projects, travel, spend time with family and grandchildren, and do volunteer work.



Loren Nowacki  
Information Technologist

## New hire

Jeff Bolstad, a Valley City native and a graduate of Valley City State University with a bachelor of science degree in computer information systems, joined the Nodak team as an information technologist in July.

Prior to Nodak, Jeff worked for Eide Bailly Technology Consulting and Network Center, Inc., in Fargo and Grand Forks, as a help desk technician/team lead.

At Nodak, Jeff will provide onsite and remote software support as well as multiple server hardware and operating software support. He will also ensure stable operation of the cooperative LAN, WAN and PC workstations, and use risk management to identify vulnerabilities and threats to information.

In his spare time, Jeff enjoys brewing beer, gardening and is a fan of both the Minnesota Twins and the Minnesota Vikings.



Jeff Bolstad  
Information Technologist



Our office remodel is complete. Stop in to check out the newly renovated reception area.



Mylo Einarson  
President & CEO

# Maintaining geographic diversity

I'm sure you are aware that Nodak's service territory is divided into three separate districts, with three of our nine board members residing in each district. This is done for several reasons, but most importantly it ensures a certain degree of geographic diversity among our board members.

This geographic diversity spreads our board members throughout our service area. That increases the chance there will be a board member you know, live near, or interact with occasionally. It also increases the likelihood that the board will more closely match the diversity of our membership. The life experiences and perspectives that come from raising livestock in the western part of our service area may be somewhat different from that gained by raising sugar beets in the northern Red River Valley, dealing with the rising water near Devils Lake, or the congestion of a larger city in the east. Member districts guard against one area dominating the board and falling to special interests or just losing touch with our membership.

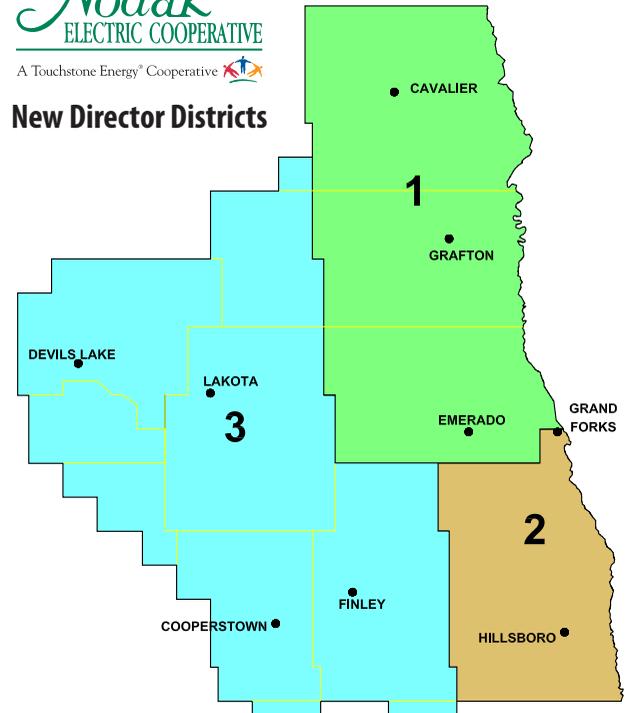
With the goal of maintaining that geographical diversity, from time to time our board reviews the makeup of the three districts and makes adjustments to their boundaries. Our bylaws require that "the cooperative service territory shall be divided into three substantially similar districts based on member population." While we do experience growth throughout our service area, the growth around the population centers has a tendency to skew the numbers toward the more populated areas. In

an effort to reestablish parity between the districts, your board has adjusted the district boundaries ahead of our next board election.

To accomplish this, each of the three districts were modified slightly to bring the member population substantially equal again. The maps below show the new districts that will be used for our next board of director election in April. If you live close to the new district boundaries and are unsure which district you live in, feel free to call the cooperative headquarters and we will be happy to assist you in determining which district you are part of.



## New Director Districts



## 7 WAYS TO PAY YOUR BILL

In addition to paying your monthly bill by mail, Nodak Electric offers other convenient payment methods. If you'd like help figuring out the best method for you, call us at 746-4461 or 1-800-732-4373.

### PAY ONLINE WITH SMARTHUB

Visit [nodakelectric.com](http://nodakelectric.com) and click the My Account tab. Click on SmartHub Overview and Signup. If you don't have an account, you can create one. You can even pay on the go by downloading the mobile app.

### PAY BY MAIL

Members/owners may send their check, along with their payment stub (lower portion of billing invoice) by U.S. Mail to Nodak Electric Cooperative, Inc. P.O. Box 13000, Grand Forks, ND 58208-3000. Do not send a cash payment by mail.

### PAY-BY-PHONE

A practical solution for members who do not have internet access and can be used for one-time and recurring payments. The service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by dialing 844-846-2690.

### PAY IN PERSON

You can make payments at Nodak's headquarters in Grand Forks, Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

### PAYMENT DROP BOX

A payment drop box is located in the parking lot across from the main door of the headquarters building in Grand Forks.

### AUTO PAY

Payments can be automatically deducted from your checking or savings account each month. Members can enjoy the benefit of not writing checks, paying postage or mailing your electric bill, and there is never a late payment!

### BUDGET BILLING

Available to members/owners receiving service under the General Service, Urban and High Density rates. Call us at 746-4461 or 800-732-4373 to sign up.

# Smart grid technology to improve reliability, benefit Nodak members

In its nearly 70 years of operation, the Cooperstown substation has powered it all.

The facility helped bring electricity out to farms and ranches in the early 1950s. It energized the development of Minuteman Missile sites during the Cold War. And it stayed stride for stride with our demand for energy in a digital world.

This fall, the substation is set for a well-earned retirement. The aging equipment will be replaced with a new, modern substation to meet the area's long-term energy needs.

Substations, those collections of wires and transformers you see behind chain-link fences, raise the voltage of electricity at a power generation facility for efficient transmission over long distances, then lower it so it can be safely used in homes and businesses. Nodak receives power at the substation from Minnkota Power Cooperative, its wholesale power provider, and then brings it out to its member-consumers.

"The existing Cooperstown substation was basically at its maximum capacity," said Jay Bushy, Minnkota's lead engineer on the project. "If Nodak would have had additional load out there, we wouldn't have been able to provide for it without expanding the substation."

Once the new substation is

energized later this year, the existing substation will be decommissioned, the equipment will be removed and the site restored to its original condition with grass planted. The entire project is estimated to cost \$900,000.

Minnkota operates and maintains more than 250 substations on behalf of Nodak and 10 other electric cooperatives in eastern North Dakota and northwestern Minnesota. Initiating the rebuild of an existing substation or replacing equipment goes through a meticulous review process where age, location, system demand and many other factors are considered. A construction work plan is developed on an annual basis and approved by a board consisting of representatives from the 11 Minnkota member cooperatives.

## Real-time data

The new Cooperstown substation provides significant benefits in terms of communication and reliability, Bushy said. An upgraded computer system, known in the industry as SCADA, will help gather and analyze data, while also monitoring and controlling equipment processes remotely. It is part of a long-term upgrade project to add smart grid technology at the older substation sites. All new



Luke Dockendorf, Minnkota electrician, wires a motor operator for a new switch at the Cooperstown substation.

substations have the technology in place.

"We'll be better able to isolate outages and switch lines on and off," Bushy said. "That's a benefit to Nodak and its members."

Smart grid technology has been added this summer at the Robbin substation (near Drayton), Depuy substation (near Grafton) and Adams substation (west of Park River) in Nodak's service area. The goal of these projects is to replace the meters and regulator panels with state-of-the-art technology that will provide real-time communication back to Minnkota's Energy Control Center.

By receiving real-time data from the substations, personnel can more quickly respond to outages and other power quality issues.



**SAFE,  
RELIABLE,  
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ALWAYS.**

**We are proud to  
power your life.**

**OCTOBER IS NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH**

## Celebrate Co-op Month!

By providing the electricity that powers your home, farm or business, cooperatives play a role in your daily life. As we observe Co-op Month in October, electric cooperative members should be proud of the success of the cooperative business model and the spirit of cooperation these organizations promote. Cooperatives are a true example of grassroots involvement because cooperatives are owned and controlled by those they serve.

Look across North Dakota's landscape and you'll notice cooperatives improve our quality of life everywhere. Electric cooperatives bring light to our lives, cool our food and heat our homes.

So, when you turn on a light, or power up your computer, remember your electric cooperative is standing behind you each and every day.

### **Co-ops are community-led**

October is National Co-op Month, which is the perfect time to highlight the many ways electric cooperatives are unique.

Cooperatives are locally governed, looking out for the long-term needs of their consumer-members.

### **Co-ops are a catalyst for good**

Electric co-ops are a catalyst for good in their communities. Co-ops engage their consumer-members to do things that might otherwise be impossible or difficult, like more than 75 years ago when electric co-ops brought power to areas where other utilities did not find it economically feasible.

Cooperatives exist to meet a need that was previously unmet in the community, and they are ever striving to anticipate and plan for the future

needs of their consumer-members.

Electric cooperatives often partner with local groups to bring economic opportunity to their local community. It is this facilitation role that is often the most valuable strength of the co-op.

The co-op business model is unique. It is pragmatic, mission-oriented and puts people first. Co-ops strive to be a trusted voice in their communities. Co-ops have earned that trust because, while not perfect, they always have their members' best interest at heart and are determined to enrich the lives of those living and working in the communities they serve – now and in the future.



## OFF-PEAK HEAT RATES BEGIN OCT. 1

Members with subtractive or separately metered off-peak electric heating systems will be charged the applicable off-peak rate for energy usage beginning Oct. 1. The off-peak rates will continue to be charged for energy usage through May 31, 2019. Current off-peak rates are \$0.062/kWh for long-term and \$0.077/kWh for short-term controlled systems (price includes the \$0.004/kWh renewable energy market adjustment charge). It is a good idea to inspect, clean and test your heating system before cold weather arrives. Please check to make sure all of your electric heat circuit breakers are on prior to Oct. 1.

## Daily cycling of electric storage heat to begin in October

Members heating with electric thermal storage, such as thermal storage room units, thermal storage furnaces or slab/in-floor heating, should turn on their heating system prior to Oct. 15 to allow a heat reservoir to build up before daily cycling of loads begins. The actual date cycling begins varies each season. Thermal storage heating is controlled each day from 7 a.m. to noon and 5 p.m. to 11 p.m.



**Y**ou're at home and suddenly the lights get really bright in part of the house while dimming in another. Or your lights and appliances work in one part of your home but not in other areas. What's going on? Those could be symptoms of "brownouts," also called partial power or low voltage. But don't confuse partial power with blinking lights.

### Brownouts or partial power

Partial power at a home is usually caused by a problem with neutral or ground connections. This could be a bad connection at the transformer, a bad connection to the pole ground, a bad connection to the primary neutral conductor, a bad connection in the meter base, a secondary conductor that is failing, or problems within the home at the breaker panel or individual circuits. Signs of partial power include dim lights or appliances that work in some parts of the home but not in others, and some lights getting really bright while others dim. For a large number of members, partial power could be caused by a transmission problem or a voltage regulator not working properly. It also occurs when one phase of the transmission three-

phase is not energizing a substation transformer. If that happens, two of our distribution phases will have low voltage and therefore cause low voltage within the home.

### What should you do?

If you experience partial power, you should turn off your main breaker and call Nodak or an electrician. If the partial power is affecting everything in your home, call Nodak Electric so we can advise you on whether the source of the problem is ours or if it's on your side of the meter.

### Blinking lights

Blinking lights is a complete, momentary power outage – perhaps just for a few seconds. Sometimes, the lights may completely blink off just once, and then everything is fine again. Or the lights may blink on and off a few times followed by a complete power outage. Blinking lights occurs when there is a fault on our electric system, such as a tree or branch in contact with a power line. If this happens, it's a sign that our electric system is working as designed. If you have questions regarding partial power or blinking lights, please contact Nodak Electric at 1-800-732-4373.

# ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT IS NEVER IN SEASON!

As various North Dakota hunting seasons approach, please remember that electrical insulators, conductors and electrical equipment are NOT on the hunting season list. Nodak Electric Cooperative encourages hunters to be aware of electrical equipment



while enjoying the great outdoors this season.

Hunters and other gun owners should not shoot near or toward power lines, power poles and substations. A stray bullet can cause damage to equipment, could be deadly to the shooter, and potentially interrupt electric service to large areas.

Be aware of what's behind that big buck or it might cost big bucks. Repairs can be costly and damages cause outages to our members. As a nonprofit cooperative, owned by the members, we all share in this expense.

We recognize the majority of hunters practice safe hunting and understand the potential risks when discharging a firearm. We encourage experienced hunters who are familiar with the area to identify the locations of utility properties and equipment to young or new hunters in their group and remind them to avoid shooting toward these facilities. Enjoy the great outdoors safely.

## HUNTING SAFETY TIPS:

- Do not shoot at or near power lines or insulators.
- Familiarize yourself with the location of power lines and equipment on land where you shoot.
- Damage to the conductor can happen, possibly dropping a phase on the ground. If it's dry and the electricity goes to ground, there is the possibility of electrocution and fire.
- Be especially careful in wooded areas where power lines may not be as visible.
- Do not use power line wood poles or towers to support equipment used in your shooting activity.
- Take notice of warning signs and keep clear of electrical equipment.
- Do not place deer stands on utility poles or climb poles. Energized lines and equipment on the poles can conduct electricity to anyone who comes in contact with them, causing shock or electrocution.
- Do not shoot at or near birds perching on utility lines. That goes for any type of firearm, including pistols, rifles or shotguns.
- Do not place decoys on power lines or other utility equipment. Anything attached to a pole besides utility equipment can pose an obstruction – and a serious hazard – to electric cooperative employees as they perform utility operations.

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 Has Changed During Preceding 12 Months

13. Publication Title: **The Nodak Neighbor**

14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: **July/August 2018**

15. Extent and Nature of Circulation	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run)	14734	14733
b. Paid and/or Requested Circulation (Sum of 15b(1) and 15b(2))	14649	14648
15b(1) Paid or Requested Paid Distribution Outside the Mails (Selling, Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Channels)		
15b(2) Paid or Requested Paid Distribution Through the Mails		
c. Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation (Sum of 15b(1), 15b(2), and 15b(3))	14649	14648
d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 15d(1) and 15d(2))	75	75
15d(1) Free or Nominal Rate Outside-the-Mails (Selling, Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Channels)		
15d(2) Free or Nominal Rate Through the Mails		
e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 15d(1), 15d(2), and 15d(3))	75	75
f. Total Distribution Outside the Mails (Sum of 15c and 15e)	14724	14723
g. Copies not Distributed (Net press run minus 15f)	10	10
h. Total (Sum of 15c and 15g)	14734	14733
i. Paid and/or Requested Circulation (15c) ÷ Total (15h) × 100 = 99%		99

16. Publication Title: **The Nodak Neighbor**

17. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: **Sept Oct 2018**

18. Extent and Nature of Circulation	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Paid and/or Requested Circulation (Sum of 18b(1) and 18b(2))		
18b(1) Paid or Requested Paid Distribution Outside the Mails (Selling, Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Channels)		
18b(2) Paid or Requested Paid Distribution Through the Mails		
c. Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation (Sum of 18b(1), 18b(2), and 18b(3))		
d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 18d(1) and 18d(2))		
18d(1) Free or Nominal Rate Outside-the-Mails (Selling, Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Channels)		
18d(2) Free or Nominal Rate Through the Mails		
e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 18d(1), 18d(2), and 18d(3))		
f. Total Distribution Outside the Mails (Sum of 18c and 18e)		
g. Copies not Distributed (Net press run minus 18f)		
h. Total (Sum of 18c and 18g)		
i. Paid and/or Requested Circulation (18c) ÷ Total (18h) × 100 = 99%		99

19. Publication Title: **The Nodak Neighbor**

20. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: **Sept Oct 2018**

21. Extent and Nature of Circulation	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Paid and/or Requested Circulation (Sum of 21b(1) and 21b(2))		
21b(1) Paid or Requested Paid Distribution Outside the Mails (Selling, Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Channels)		
21b(2) Paid or Requested Paid Distribution Through the Mails		
c. Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation (Sum of 21b(1), 21b(2), and 21b(3))		
d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 21d(1) and 21d(2))		
21d(1) Free or Nominal Rate Outside-the-Mails (Selling, Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Channels)		
21d(2) Free or Nominal Rate Through the Mails		
e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 21d(1), 21d(2), and 21d(3))		
f. Total Distribution Outside the Mails (Sum of 21c and 21e)		
g. Copies not Distributed (Net press run minus 21f)		
h. Total (Sum of 21c and 21g)		
i. Paid and/or Requested Circulation (21c) ÷ Total (21h) × 100 = 99%		99

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- The deadline is Jan. 31, 2019. Emailed entries should be directed to [gschmaltz@nodakelectric.com](mailto:gschmaltz@nodakelectric.com), and hard-copy entries mailed to: Youth Tour Essay Contest, Nodak Electric Cooperative, 4000 32nd Ave. S., PO Box 13000, Grand Forks, ND 58208-3000.



### ESSAY QUESTION:

*Electric cooperatives are member-owned and controlled. As a future member-owner of your cooperative, describe ways that smart technologies and social media might be used to communicate with young adults. How might they be used to increase awareness and interest in the many career opportunities with electric cooperatives?*

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