

# The Nodak Neighbor

November-December 2020  
Official Publication of Nodak Electric Cooperative  
[www.nodakelectric.com](http://www.nodakelectric.com)

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



**Leading the charge**  
Nodak Electric charges up community  
page 4

Official Publication of the  
Nodak Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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President & CEO . . . . . Mylo Einarson

Editor . . . . . Blaine Rekken

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**On the cover:** Nodak CEO Mylo Einarson (left) and Nodak Member/Energy Services Manager Blaine Rekken showcase the cooperative's newest community energy project – Grand Forks' first DC fast charging station for electric vehicles. The charger was made possible by a grant from the North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality. *Story pages 4-5.*

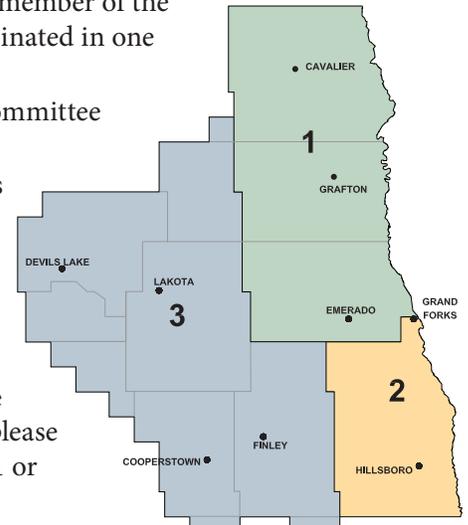
# 2021 director elections

Nodak Electric Cooperative, Inc. will hold its 81<sup>st</sup> annual meeting Tuesday, April 6, 2021, at the Alerus Center in Grand Forks, N.D. Elections for three positions will be held at the annual meeting.

Members who desire to serve as a member of the Nodak board of directors may be nominated in one of two ways:

1. By Nominating Committee. The committee will meet Tuesday, Feb. 16, 2021.
2. By a petition signed by 15 members of Nodak in good standing. The petition must be submitted to Nodak's office 45 days prior to the annual meeting (Saturday, Feb. 20, 2021).

If you are interested, or would like to know which district you reside in, please contact Nodak's office at 701-746-4461 or 1-800-732-4373 for more information.



## Around the co-op

### Amundson retires

After 29 years of dedicated service to the cooperative, Becky Amundson will retire this month from her position as a Nodak member services representative.

Becky began her cooperative career in 1991 at Sheyenne Valley Electric Cooperative (Finley, N.D.) as file clerk and receptionist. In 2001, Sheyenne Valley Electric merged with Nodak Electric and Becky transitioned to the role of member services representative in Grand Forks. She quickly became a go-to source for helping members with billing questions and other general inquiries.

Becky is excited for retirement and plans to enjoy spending free time with her family and doing some traveling.

Thank you, Becky, for all of your hard work and commitment to our members and the cooperative. You will surely be missed at the office.



**Becky Amundson**  
Member Services  
Representative

### Crooks promoted

Rebecca Crooks was promoted to member services representative on September 1.

She began her career with Nodak in 2017 as receptionist and her new role will include answering and directing phone calls, assisting with member related issues, account changes, resolving concerns, and processing transactions. Rebecca has strong member services skills and enjoys working with people. Congratulations, Rebecca.



**Rebecca Crooks**  
Member Services  
Representative



Mylo Einarson  
President & CEO

## A time for reflection

The holidays are a time of year that many of us eagerly anticipate.

The season is marked by home-cooked meals, seasonal decorations and lots of festivities. In many of our local communities, we look forward to the annual gatherings, light parades and local religious or family traditions. We cherish carrying on old family traditions and enjoy creating new ones. For me personally, I look forward to more time spent with family and friends, and especially this year, ringing in the new year and the promise of new opportunities is something we all will be looking forward to.

However, given the hustle and bustle of the season, the holidays can also offer an opportunity to slow down and reflect. For all of us at Nodak Electric, we are grateful for you, the members of the co-op.

You see, one of our founding principles as a co-op is “Concern for Community.” While our main focus is providing safe, reliable and affordable energy, we want to give back. We want to help our communities thrive.

### Reflection

In looking back at this past year, I’m grateful we were able to make a positive impact in our communities through programs such as Operation Round Up. Thanks to your contributions, we collected \$42,646. As a result of your generosity, we were able to help many families, individuals and groups in our local area with the dollars they needed to fulfill critical needs they were unable to fund.

We continue to work closely with Bismarck State College to award scholarships for future lineworkers, and with local Dollars for Scholars chapters to award college scholarships for deserving young students heading off to school. In 2020, we awarded \$10,000 to students completing the classroom portion of their lineworker training

program and \$5,000 for incoming college freshmen.

There are other ways we can help the community. Whether it’s providing information about our many rebate programs for heating, water heating or electric transportation, helping you find ways to save energy at home, or various options to make it easier to pay your power bill – we want you to know we’re here to help.

The holiday season can be a magical time for many of us, but it can also be a difficult time. The added financial pressures that come from this time of year can be especially challenging for those with day-to-day struggles. For those without family or friends to share the holidays, it can be a very trying and lonely time. This holiday season, we think of those having struggles and encourage everyone

to extend a helping hand whenever possible. In the end, it is this “Concern for Community” that makes us who we are.

### Looking ahead

Looking ahead to 2021, we hope you will share your opinions with us. We recognize that our members have a valuable perspective, and that’s why we continually seek your input. Whether through community events, our social media channels or the annual meeting, we want to hear from you. We are led by you, the members of the co-op, and we depend on your feedback.

As we prepare for next year, we look forward to the opportunity to serve you and the greater community. On behalf of the Nodak Electric family, we hope your holidays are indeed merry and bright!

Merry Christmas

**& HAPPY NEW YEAR**  
*from all of us at Nodak Electric!*

*Nodak's offices will be closed for the following holidays:*

**Thanksgiving, Nov. 26 & 27**  
**Christmas, Dec. 24 & 25**  
**New Year's Day, Jan. 1**



Grand Forks Mayor Brandon Bochenski, Nodak Board Chair Steve Smaaladen, Nodak CEO Mylo Einarson and Nodak Member/Energy Services Manager Blaine Rekken cut the fast charger ribbon.

# Charged up community

## NODAK ELECTRIC ENERGIZES GREATER GRAND FORKS' FIRST ELECTRIC VEHICLE FAST CHARGING STATION



The Grand Forks Level 3 DC fast charger sits on the south side of the Wendy's restaurant parking lot on 32nd Ave. S.

It's not often that the 32nd Avenue Wendy's parking lot in Grand Forks draws a small crowd of economic leaders, the media and the mayor. However, that was the scene on Oct. 1, when Nodak Electric cut the ribbon on a first-in-the-community electric vehicle (EV) fast charging station.

"This is an important day for electric vehicle drivers in the Greater Grand Forks area and all around our region," Nodak President & CEO Mylo Einarson told attendees. "As an electric cooperative, we are proud to promote the growth of cleaner, economical electric transportation in our state and beyond."

The ChargePoint Level 3 DC

(direct current) fast charger will deliver a powerful 62.5 kilowatts to EV drivers who park and pay to charge. The project was made possible by Volkswagen settlement money granted by the North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality, as well as the host-site support of Wendy's owner Brad Towers. The unit is powered by the wind of the Infinity Renewable Energy Program.

At a maximum charge rate of 250 RPH (miles of range per hour), a driver can be reenergized and road ready in 30-60 minutes. That's much faster than a standard Level 2 public charger, which would take closer to eight hours. Until now, EV drivers traveling between Winnipeg

**“We are more than selling electrons. We sell a quality of life. That quality of life is anything from hot water to electric heating to all of the things that make our lives better. Electric vehicles are just one of those components to add on.”**

– BLAINE REKKEN, NODAK ELECTRIC MEMBER/ENERGY SERVICES MANAGER

and Fargo or Minot and Bemidji had no options for a speedy “refuel” during their journey.

Nodak Electric Member/Energy Services Manager Blaine Rekken says the fast charge is just long enough for out-of-towners to grab a meal at a local restaurant or shop at a nearby business – a small boost for the city’s economy.

“Grand Forks has always been a destination city, and now we’re just making it that much more available to the electric vehicle community of users,” he said. “That’s a huge benefit.”

Following the ribbon cutting ceremony, Nodak staff stayed on-site to hand out charger fact sheets and vouchers for a free Wendy’s ice cream to those driving by – an educational effort dubbed “Fast Charge and Frostys.” One attendee was Kyle Thorson, a Grand Forks driver of a Tesla Model S.

“This is huge. You’ve seen fast chargers go up in a lot of cities, and Grand Forks was behind, so I’m happy about this one,” he said. “A lot of Tesla owners come through this direction, trying to go to Winnipeg or other places, and they have an option now, whereas they might have taken a longer route to go through other places before.”

Thorson’s car boasts an all-

electric range of 400 miles, but he knows that the anxiety of a depleted battery keeps many from buying EVs in the northern region.

“There have been people who have said, oh, I’d really like one, but I can’t buy it because I don’t know where to charge it, especially in North Dakota,” he said. “This starts to change that landscape a little bit, and it’s obviously a win for everybody.”

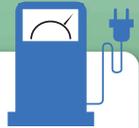
In just the first two weeks of activation, before the ribbon had even been cut, the fast charger had already logged 17 charging sessions. It’s an indication that the Nodak station is already filling a need for drivers around the region.

“We are more than selling electrons. We also sell a quality of life. That quality of life is anything from hot water to electric heating to all of the things that make our lives better,” Rekken said. “Electric vehicles are just one of those components to add on.”

If you are interested in owning an EV and would like information on Nodak’s electric vehicle incentives, please visit [www.nodakelectric.com](http://www.nodakelectric.com) and click on the “Programs” tab.

By Kaylee Cusack / Photography Michael Hoeft  
Minnkota Power Cooperative

### Charging station first month statistics



Gasoline savings (gallons)	46
Total charging energy (kWh)	366
Total number of charging sessions	24
Longest session time (minutes)	93
Average session time (minutes)	30



The local Chamber Ambassadors were in attendance for the Grand Forks fast charger ribbon cutting. The station could serve as an economic booster for the community.



Even though it was a very chilly autumn day, Frosty vouchers were a hot ticket at the event.

# Get your furnace ready for winter

Slightly cooler temperatures are settling in and now is a perfect time to make sure that your furnace is ready to go for the long winter ahead.

Before you fire it up for the season, it is a good idea to make sure that things are in order.

Here are a few tips to get your furnace ready for winter:

## Change your air filters

Your air filters are the first line of defense to stop small particles from making their way into your ductwork where they can get trapped and recirculate around your home. The key to saving your furnace from dirt and debris is to change your air filters every few months. Or, if your furnace uses an electrostatic filter, now is a good time to wash it and reuse it. Not only will changing your air filters increase the air quality of your environment, it will reduce wear and tear on your HVAC units to extend their lifespan.

## Clean the heat exchanger

If your comment is “what is a heat exchanger?,” then it is time to call a professional. A heat exchanger is the part of your furnace that needs to be cleaned and checked for cracks. If there is something wrong with it or it is dirty, it could unwittingly be leaking carbon monoxide, which is dangerous and can be fatal.

## Cover your AC condenser

When you start to use your furnace, you no longer need your air conditioning. Make sure to cover your AC condenser to keep it safe for the months ahead. If you cover it, then it won't be damaged by anything surrounding it. Just make sure that whatever you cover it with won't trap in moisture, or you could end up with mold or mildew growth that can do a whole lot of damage.

## Inspect your carbon monoxide detectors and smoke detectors

Make sure to inspect your



carbon monoxide detectors and smoke detectors to ensure that they are working. Since carbon monoxide is an odorless, fatal gas, it is imperative to know that your sensors are working to protect your home and your family. And it's a good idea to change the batteries in the smoke detectors to ensure they are ready for another year.

**HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE**  Give the gift of safety! 

**Portable Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI)**  
Designed for locations where there is not a permanent GFCI installed, these devices detect an abnormal flow of electricity and shut off the power, preventing shock or electrocution.

**Tamper Resistant Outlets (TROs)**  
Great for families with small children, TROs are wall receptacles that have shutters that stay closed unless a plug with two prongs is inserted into the outlet. Because they help keep children safe, the National Electrical Code requires TROs in new homes and apartments.

**Outdoor Remote Control Outlet Switch**  
Leaving outdoor lighting on overnight can be costly and pose a potential hazard. An alternative to smart lights, this remote control switch allows you to turn outdoor lights or other gadgets on or off remotely.

**Heavy Duty Extension Cord**  
Power devices safely. Too often the tools or equipment necessary for larger projects are powered by extension cords that are inadequate for the environment or heavier electrical load.

Learn more at [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org)

# Stable warmth in unstable times

## Cooperative energy planners predict an average winter season of demand response

Uncertainty has been the name of the game for much of 2020. But as we slip into the last few weeks of the year, Nodak Electric Cooperative feels certain about one thing – your continued warmth and comfort throughout the winter.

The energy planners at Minnkota Power Cooperative (power provider for Nodak Electric) expect a standard season for members with electric heat on demand response. The voluntary program allows the cooperative to temporarily interrupt service to a member's off-peak loads, like electric heating and large-capacity water heaters, in exchange for a lower electric rate. For technologies like air-source heat pumps and plenum heaters, the system automatically switches to a backup fuel source such as propane, so there is no break in comfort.

Todd Sailer, Minnkota senior manager of power supply and resource planning, says he expects the level of winter demand response to be comparable to the past 4-5 years – less than 100 hours. Members should always be prepared for up to 200-250 hours of management, but have historically encountered much less. Last winter, Minnkota only logged 10 hours of interruption due mild weather and low wholesale energy prices.

“The only things that are really going to drive that up are a shift in the energy market, which is typically going to be weather related,” Sailer explained. “If you get a polar vortex or a wind event where there's simply no wind during high loads, that's where that number suddenly goes from 70 to 250 hours really quick.”

Demand response doesn't just hap-

pen during extreme cold. A planned generator outage or extended lack of intermittent resources across the region can push the program into action. “When we see there's no wind in North Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa and those areas where there's often a lot of wind, that's when we start to see high markets, and that's when you'll see more demand response,” Sailer said.

Although Minnkota expects a typical level of demand response this year, COVID-19 may change when it activates. When more people are working and learning from home, times of peak energy usage shift, which impacts the availability of excess resources to cover energy demand.

“Instead of demand response from 7-9 a.m., it might be from 8-11 a.m.,” Sailer said. “The load curve changes, so it might change how we actually implement our load management.”

Nodak Electric will run a demand response test sometime in early December. During that time, make sure your system is working properly and that you have adequate backup fuel before the coldest days arrive. If you are not a participant in the program but are interested in how to save money with an all-season air-source heat pump, a cost-effective plenum heater or zero-maintenance underfloor storage heat, call your energy experts at Nodak Electric.

The demand response program began as a way to manage power during peak seasonal need without building additional generation resources – a costly solution for only a few days a year. But the electric heating technologies that have evolved within the program are helping our members enhance their comfort and safety, things we could all use a little more of in 2020.

## NOTICE TO OFF-PEAK MEMBERS

The off-peak program is designed to reduce electric load during peak demand times and pass energy savings on to participating members by controlling electric home heating and water heating equipment.

**If during the heating season you experience a control event that seems excessively long or have no hot water, please be sure to give us a call first to determine if further help is needed.**

To know if load is being controlled, visit our website at [www.nodakelectric.com](http://www.nodakelectric.com), click on “Energy Information” from the home page and then the link “Load Management Status.” When viewing the Last Switching Status graph, cells that are the color green indicating “on” means there is no load control activity, and red cells with “off” indicate load is being controlled.

If you have any questions, please call 1-800-732-4373 or 701-746-4461.

## GREAT REBATES

### from Nodak Electric Cooperative

Add comfort and energy efficiency to your home with help from Nodak Electric Cooperative. Nodak Electric offers the following rebates to encourage load development, load retention and wise use of energy.

#### Electric heating

Heating Systems	Rebate
Plenum heaters, baseboard, electric furnace and hanging unit heater	\$25/kW
Cable floor heat, electric boiler and brick storage unit	\$45/kW
Mini-split or air-source heat pump	\$150/ton
Ground-source heat pump	\$250/ton

#### Electric heating rebate requirements

- Electric heating must be on off-peak with a qualified backup heating system.
- Electric heat equipment must be hardwired (no plug-in loads eligible for rebate).
- Air-source heat pumps do not have to be a part of an off-peak heating system to be eligible for this rebate.
- Must be at least 240 volts and hardwired.
- Multifamily dwellings do not qualify for a rebate. However, exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Rebate limit of \$1,200 per member/owner account.

#### Water heaters

Electric Water Heaters	Rebate
55 gallon or less	\$125
56-99 gallon	\$200
100 gallon or greater	\$300
Additional rebate for new building construction	\$100
Additional rebate for conversion from existing natural gas or propane to an electric water heater	\$250

#### Water heater rebate requirements

- Must be off-peak controlled.
- Must be at least 240 volts and hardwired.
- Tankless water heaters do not qualify for rebate.
- Hybrid heat pump water heaters do not qualify for rebate.
- Multifamily dwellings do not qualify for rebate. However, exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Rebate limit of \$550 per member/owner account.
- Maximum \$300 rebate for the coupling of two water heaters in parallel or series.

#### Electric vehicle chargers

Electric Vehicle Chargers	Rebate
Electric vehicle (EV)	\$50/kW
Commercial – forklifts, Zambonis, etc.	\$50/kW



#### Electric vehicle charger rebate requirements

- Charger must be a Level 2 unit, wired on a dedicated 240-volt circuit, sub-metered and connected to a Nodak-issued load control device.
- Member must participate in Nodak's load control program for EVs.
- Money-saving energy rate of \$0.062/kWh for charging your vehicle during specific time periods each day, plus a \$3.95/month facility charge.
- One-time rebate per charger installation of \$50/kW with a \$500 maximum rebate.

In addition to the above listed requirements for electric heating and water heating rebates, all systems must be new equipment and controlled on Nodak's off-peak program. A check will be issued to participating members after a visit from a Nodak technician.

Please call our Energy Services team at 701-746-4461 or 800-732-4373 if you have any questions about off-peak or the rebate program.