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2023 Legislation Will Impact Everyone Who Uses Electricity

Jenny Glumack, Minnesota Rural Electric Association

The 2023 legislative session, which began in January and concluded on May 22, was one of the most consequential in history for Minnesota's 1.7 million cooperative members. Record investments, key policy changes, and a landmark 100% carbon-free by 2040 mandate all made this legislative session one with big long-term impacts on everyone using electricity in the state.

The Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA) represents Minnesota's 44 distribution cooperatives and six generation & transmissions cooperatives who collectively serve over 1.7 million Minnesotans. They are the voice for non-profit electric cooperative member-owners at the Capitol and have been deeply engaged with lawmakers, so Minnesota cooperative-member owners have their voice heard. They worked tirelessly to shape the session's outcomes. Here is an overview of a few items affecting electric cooperative members.

100% Carbon-Free by 2040

The first and most impactful bill for electric cooperatives and their member-owners was the historic 100% carbon-free by 2040 bill, which was signed into law in early February. The legislation, passed in record time, is widely regarded as the most significant energy policy ever

passed in Minnesota and mandates all electricity sold in the state come from carbon-free sources by the year 2040. The law will increase the challenge of keeping the electric grid reliable under all conditions; significant advancements in technology will be needed to achieve the mandate.

Minnesota's electric cooperatives are leaders in navigating the clean energy transition while keeping electricity reliable and affordable. However, this new law does present significant challenges. As a result, MREA worked with lawmakers to add some common-sense amendments to help protect affordability and reliability. Nonetheless, a lot of investment, innovation, and ingenuity will be necessary to avoid cost increases and potential service disruptions, while meeting the mandate.

State Competitiveness Fund

Investments in Minnesota's electric grid are more crucial than ever, and historic funding from the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) necessitates Minnesota think big to attract federal dollars. As a result, lawmakers put \$190 million into a newly created State Competitiveness Fund



which will be used to attract hundreds of millions of dollars for investments in Minnesota's energy infrastructure. Cooperatives across the state will be using these funds, including an additional \$5.3 million specifically for consumer-owned utilities, for projects to improve affordability and reliability and aid in the energy transition.

Electrification Rebates and Grants

The State of Minnesota wants to help you buy an electric vehicle. This includes a rebate up to \$2,500 for a new electric vehicle with a sale price below \$55,000 or up to \$600 for a used vehicle under \$25,000. The rebate is open to individuals, businesses, non-profits and governments; those who have already received an EV rebate or tax credit from Minnesota are not eligible.

Those who would like to purchase a highly efficient heat pump to heat and cool their home could receive rebates of up to \$4,000. The legislature also made grant money available for solar on schools, electric bikes, electric school buses, pre-weatherization work and more.

REMEMBER TO LOOK UP

When Operating Large Equipment

Millions of workers operate large equipment every day. Examples include cranes, dump trucks, farm equipment, bucket trucks, hydraulic lifts and cement trucks. If the equipment you are operating raises or extends, make sure you follow OSHA's rules for the minimum approach distance to power lines.

If you are planning to work within 20 feet of a power line, most situations require you to contact the electric utility (in advance) to deenergize the line. On the farm, examples include loading, unloading or moving/relocating a grain bin within 20 feet of an overhead line.



Always use a spotter when equipment could come near overhead power lines. A spotter's view from the ground provides a much better vantage point than what you can see from the cab. Additional safety steps may be required to prevent encroaching on a power line.

If your equipment brushes or contacts a power line or utility pole, knowing what to do saves lives. Unless there is a fire, stay in the cab and alert others to stay far away. Call for help and stay in the cab until utility crews arrive to deenergize the power.

Do not operate a hydraulic/scissor lift near an overhead power line.



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

ELECTRIC MOTOR

REQUIREMENTS

South Central Electric has requirements in place for electric motors connected to our system. These requirements are in place to eliminate flicker and voltage sag problems caused by member's equipment on our lines. Members need to take these requirements into account when purchasing new motors, grain drying systems or upsizing motors. The requirements are not restricted to new motors. There may be issues with currently installed equipment that exceed these limits.



MOTOR STARTING CURRENT LIMITS

1. The Cooperatives' limits allow single-phase motors up to 10HP and three-phase motors up to 30HP to be started without reducing the starting current (soft start), provided the motor design is NEMA "G" or better. Assuming NEMA Code "G" of 5.29 amps/HP and a power factor of 90% or greater.
2. Maximum Starting Current Limits
 - Single-phase 240 volt: 260 amps
 - Three-phase 208 volt: 520 amps
 - Three-phase 480 volt: 225 amps

The starting current limitations are applied to the sum of motor starting currents if multiple motors are started simultaneously.

It is the member's responsibility to know whether a "soft start" motor may be required. Motor installations outside the parameters which cause unacceptable voltage flicker or sag problems must be remedied at the expense of the member.

Harmonic Distortion from Variable Frequency Drives (VFD's)

Variable frequency drives (VFD) may cause harmonic distortion. It is the responsibility of the member to correct harmonic distortion created by on site equipment. Harmonic distortion may also occur with member owned renewable energy systems.

These requirements are in place to assure reliable and safe delivery of electricity to all our members. If you have questions please contact our office.



Contact SCE about service upgrades, additions or rebuilds

Are you looking at changes to your electrical service this summer? The electric utility industry is not immune to the supply chain issues. If you need to upgrade or change your electrical service with South Central Electric contact us now. This will help us plan to have the materials and equipment we need to complete your project.

SCEA WATER HEATER PROGRAM

SCEA's peak shave water heater program provides members with a Marathon water heater at a discounted price for participating in the load management program.

The cost for water heaters is **\$750**.

This is a great value for members. SCEA pays the cost of the electrician to wire the water heater and radio control. The member would pay any costs incurred by a plumber.



**ALWAYS CALL
BEFORE YOU DIG**





FARMFEST 2023

AUGUST 1, 2, 3 • REDWOOD FALLS, MN

Bring this coupon to Booth #2301

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

PHONE# _____

You must be a member one of the participating electric cooperatives to be eligible to win.



Visit us along with other Touchstone Energy Cooperatives, at Farmfest 2023 and enter for a chance to win a grand prize!



Official monthly newsletter

South Central Electric

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Ron Horman, General Manager

Board of Directors

- President, Ron Jorgenson
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- Mark Sandberg, Director
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The Board meets the fourth Tuesday of the month at South Central Electric's building at 71176 Tiell Dr., St. James, MN.

Please see our website for a summary of the board meetings.

2023 REBATE PROGRAMS

Recipient must be a South Central Electric member. Any checks or credits will be made in the name or account of the member. The program will end when funds are exhausted; additional rebates may be added at a later date. The completed applications will be processed on a first come first served basis as they are received in our office. Rebate applications can be requested by calling the St. James office or available on line at www.southcentralelectric.com.

APPLIANCE REBATES:

Please see rebate applications for details.



Must be an Energy Star® appliance to qualify.

- Dehumidifier**\$20 Credit applied to the energy bill
- Air Source Heat Pumps**\$350 HSPF rating over 9.5 \$600
- Ductless Heat Pump**\$350 HSPF rating over 9.5 \$600
- Ground Source Heat Pump**\$350/ton (Limit 10 tons)
- Air Conditioner Tune Up**\$30
- Managed Electric Heat**\$20/kW
Radio controlled, qualifies for discount of \$.031/kWh on system usage.
Stored or dual fuel heat. Heat pumps are not eligible for this program.
- LED Yard Light**.....\$25/ea. limit 3

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL REBATES:

Rebates are available on a custom basis. Rebates will be based on kW reduction on retrofit projects. To be eligible for a rebate the project must have a minimum savings of 1kW. We do not have rebate programs for new construction. Call SCEA for information on these rebates.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.



www.southcentralelectric.com

