



# NorVal NEWS

November 2020

## Giving Back to Our Community



Over the years, you've probably heard or read about NorVal Electric's concern for our communities. This is one of the core principles that sets cooperatives apart from other types of utilities and businesses. We've always taken this mission and responsibility to heart. It's who we are as a co-op.

Over the past few months, like so many of you, we've risen to meet new challenges and strengthen the safety net for our community, particularly for those who are most vulnerable. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, we've made numerous adjustments to programs and operations to maintain business continuity while staying focused on the bigger mission of helping our consumer-members during this turbulent time.

Now, with the holidays fast approaching, these recent events have made us pause and think about the role we play in our community. While our purpose is to provide safe and reliable energy to you, the members we serve, we have a greater mission—to be a catalyst for good.

You're probably aware of our scholarship program, where we offer post-secondary financial opportunities to graduating seniors throughout the service territory. For more information see the next page on the upcoming scholarship opportunities! Or our Youth Tour program, where we take our community's brightest young people to Washington, D.C. for a week-long immersion to experience democracy in action. While the Tour for 2020 and 2021 have been cancelled for safety reasons, we are excited to offer alternative opportunities. Details to come soon!


We also have a strong commitment to safety—not just for our employees, but for our community as well. We visit schools to teach children of all ages how to stay safe around electricity. We hold safety demonstrations at community meetings and other gatherings.

Additionally, NorVal Electric invests in the economic development of the community through an active role in our local Chamber of Commerce. We've made our community room and additional office space available for community meetings and events.

You'll also see our employees serving on local non-profit boards, coaching youth sports, volunteering at charitable events and coordinating blood drives. When you work at a co-op, you understand how important a strong community is—after all, without you, the co-op wouldn't exist.

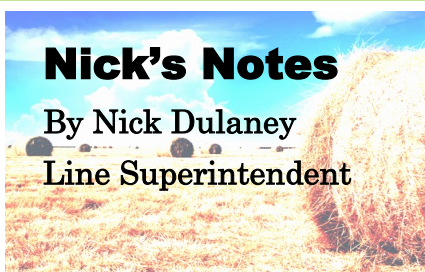
We know that our core job is to keep the lights on but our passion is our community, because we live and work here too, and we want to make it a better place for all.

If there's anything we can do to help you—whether providing energy-saving advice to help lower your monthly bill or discuss payment plan options during these difficult times—please reach out to us at 406-228-9351 or email [norval@norval.coop](mailto:norval@norval.coop)

Concern for community is the heart and soul of who we are. And no matter what the future brings, you can count on *your* electric co-op to care about you. 

## Nick's Notes

By Nick Dulaney  
Line Superintendent



Happy Thanksgiving to you and yours!

The crews have been rushing to install new services with the last few nice weather days left

before it freezes.

The office and line crew also completed the annual CPR and First Aid training certification. The day-long training was complete with test case scenarios, team based work sheets and life saving CPR training for both adults and infants.


The Hinsdale East Circuit rebuild has been completed. We are grateful to Red Rock Power, our construction contractors, for all of their help to get this work finished!

The overhead to underground conversion on Britsch Road is being finished up as we speak. The crews will next focus on the reconductoring of the Rorvik Line, South of Nashua.

Starting next month, we hope to work on trimming trees and clearing right-of-ways. Those beautiful trees in Spring



and Summer tend to grow into the power lines, wreaking havoc during storm season and when the wind blows. This maintenance will ensure better reliability for our members. If you notice a particularly bothersome area where the trees have grown near to your power line, please give the office a call so that we can get it added to our list.

Also, we are very thankful to you, our members, for your continued assistance for patrolling our power lines. Your tips when something doesn't look quite right give our crew a chance to investigate and repair issues before they become larger problems. Frayed wires, loose guy wires, crossarms that are askew and poles in need of change out are some of the biggest issues that we face. It is impossible for our crew to monitor every mile of line, so your help bringing these things to our attention is very much appreciated! 

*Above: Apprentice Kyle Barras disconnects an overhead transformer, completing a conversion from overhead to underground, near Hinsdale. Picture by Kirk Capdeville*



## Recipe of the Month

### 5 Ingredient Potato Soup

#### Ingredients

- 6 green onions, thinly sliced with white and green parts separated
- 5-6 cups chicken or vegetable broth
- 2 lbs. frozen hash browns
- 2 Tbsp. Old Bay seasoning
- 1 c. sharp shredded cheese, plus extra for serving

#### Directions

*In large stockpot, stir together white parts of the sliced green onions (not the green hollow parts), broth, hash browns and seasoning. Heat over medium-high heat until the soup reaches a low boil, stirring occasionally. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover and simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Once the potatoes are cooked and soft, use an immersion blender to puree most of the soup until it is nice and thick (or you can use a traditional blender). Return soup to stockpot and stir in cheddar until combined. Serve warm, garnished with extra cheddar and the green parts of the onions.*



**Wishing you and yours a  
Happy Thanksgiving!  
Our office will be closed  
November 26th & 27th.**

## Scholarship Opportunities Available

The time has come for the 2021 seniors who will be graduating in a few months to think about their future plans. With the rising cost of tuition, NorVal Electric is proud to provide scholarship opportunities to dependents of our members.

This year, the Board of Directors has elected to offer a combined scholarship application for the Montana Electric Cooperatives Association Memorial Scholarship and the NorVal Electric Scholarship to be completed one-time, rather than students filling out both scholarships, to provide a time-savings for our busier-than-ever

student body. The NorVal-MECA Scholarship application will be provided to each school's counselor. In addition, you may find it on our website at [www.norval.coop/content/scholarships](http://www.norval.coop/content/scholarships).

Additionally, NorVal will be offering one member-dependent the opportunity to apply for the Basin Electric Power Cooperative Scholarship, worth \$1,000.00. The applications are available online, or at your school.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Leila at 406-228-9351 or email the completed applications to [leila@norval.coop](mailto:leila@norval.coop).



## 2021 Youth Tour replaced with Scholarship Contest

Montana's electric cooperatives have elected not to participate in The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) 2021 Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. due to the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic.

However, the Youth Tour essay contest for 2021 will still go on, with the statewide winner receiving a \$2,500 scholarship to a college or trade school.

The topic for this year's essay is: *How has reliable electricity benefited you and your community through the COVID-19 pandemic?*

The criteria to be eligible for the Youth Tour Essay Scholarship is:

- The student must be a junior or senior in high school in the fall of 2021 (currently a sophomore or junior).
- The student and/or parent or guardian must be served by an electric cooperative,
- The essay must include a cover page with the student's name, address and telephone number.
- Submit the essay to us no later than Dec. 18, 2020. If you have any questions, please call Leila at NorVal Electric 406-228-9351.



## Heating Assistance Available

With the bitter cold predicted this winter, heating bills will be on the rise. The following programs are here to help your family through the winter months!

### **LIEAP (Low Income Energy Assistance Program)**

The LIEAP program is designed to help Low-Income families and individuals with a portion of their heating bills from October - April; it doesn't matter if you rent or own your home. LIEAP eligibility is based on your household income (all money brought in) and resources (any assets you have in the bank, property or real estate, CD's, Stocks and Bonds, etc.).

Once you are approved for LIEAP, a one-time payment will be sent to your utility. This benefit amount will be posted to your account and will be used for charges during the winter months. Any unused ben-

efits will be returned to the state of MT at the end of the heating season.

### **Energy Share of Montana**

Energy Share of Montana is a private nonprofit organization. The primary purpose is to help Montanans faced with energy emergencies meet their needs and move toward self-reliance. Energy Share offers funds to any family with any energy emergency. Recipients are encouraged to repay these funds if and when they are financially able to do so.

Energy Share is the only assistance available to Montana families who have income too high to qualify for LIEAP assistance. Applicants must first apply for LIEAP before they can apply for Energy Share. If applicants are ineligible for LIEAP or are still in need of assistance once receiving LIEAP, they can apply for Energy Share.



### Connect With Us

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  - PO Box 951, Glasgow, MT 59230
  - 406-228-9351
  - [www.norval.coop](http://www.norval.coop)
  - [facebook.com/norvalelectric](https://facebook.com/norvalelectric)
- This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

### NorVal Electric Cooperative Directors

|            |                               |          |
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| District 3 | Rick Molvig <b>Vice Pres.</b> | 367-5328 |
| District 4 | Chris Christensen             | 364-2367 |
| District 5 | Kurt Breigenzer <b>S/T</b>    | 228-9465 |
| District 6 | Ron Reddig <b>President</b>   | 392-5257 |
| District 7 | Rocky Kittleson               | 367-5366 |
| District 7 | Gary Meyer                    | 526-3600 |

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Energy bills can increase during winter for a variety of reasons, like houseguests, more time spent at home, and shorter days and longer nights. Small actions, like turning down your thermostat, replacing old bulbs with LEDs and washing clothes in cold water can help you save.

