



MOR-GRAN-SOU
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Serving Morton, Grant and Sioux counties

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NOVEMBER
2024

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative invests in communities



The Almont Rural Fire District was awarded grant funding to help the district purchase a new fire truck.



INVESTING IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES: **Grant goes to fire district**

BY SAMANTHA VANGSNESS

One of the core values of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative is commitment to the communities and members it serves through sponsorships, grants or participation in community events. The Rural Development Finance Corporation (RDFC) grant demonstrates the true meaning of commitment by awarding funds to local cooperatives, such as Mor-Gran-Sou Electric, which then are passed to community entities.

Earlier this year, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric received a \$3,000 grant allocation from RDFC to benefit its service area, which Mor-Gran-Sou Electric awarded to the Almont Rural Fire District.

“RDFC grants allow us to support local community necessities, such as local fire departments,” says Julie Armijo, chief of staff/member services manager. “We are excited to award funding to the Almont Fire Department to assist with the purchase of a new fire truck.”

Almont Rural Fire District

Morton County is home to five fire departments, including the Almont Rural Fire District. This fire district has 25 volunteers on the squad and serves a 400-square-mile area, which covers about 500 community residents in and surrounding Almont.


Over the past year, the Almont Rural Fire District has worked to upgrade and replace aging fire equipment to best serve local residents. One example is the 1993 fire truck recently replaced by a 2024 Dodge Ram 3500, also known as a brush truck. The new fire truck will be able to hold 360 gallons of water and 5 gallons of foam used to fight fires.

“The newly purchased fire truck has safety cages on the outside of the truck, so volunteer firefighters can stand on the truck and spray water versus having to walk along the side of the truck,” says Frank Melchoir, Almont Rural Fire District assistant fire chief. “There is also a joystick inside the cab to control a hose on the front of the truck.”

The local fire district is also committed to educating area residents by hosting safety training and events for the community throughout the year, such as fire extinguisher servicing. Community members can have their fire extinguishers serviced and ensure they are working properly.

“Every year, we host a burger feed on the Fourth of July,” Melchoir says.

The burger feed has been a staple for about 15 years and helps the department raise money for fire equipment and training for volunteer firefighters.

“We wouldn't be able to upgrade our fire trucks without community support like Mor-Gran-Sou Electric and our community members,” Melchoir says. “We have an active and appreciative community, so it is reassuring that we can continue to provide an essential service for them.” 



The Almont Rural Fire District hosts an annual burger feed on the Fourth of July.

MANAGER'S MESSAGE: Serving up savings



Travis Kupper

Co-General Manager/CEO

The holiday season is just around the corner and festive music will soon flood the airwaves, sparkling lights and decorations will adorn homes and businesses, and good tidings will abound.

The holidays also bring a frenzy of decorating, cooking and family gatherings. Amid the hectic hustle and bustle, you may receive higher-than-usual energy bills.

So, I thought this would be a good time to share some tips with Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative members to help lower your monthly energy use.

Winter months typically bring some of the highest energy bills of the year. Making minor low-cost improvements, such as weatherstripping exterior doors and caulking around drafty windows, can make a positive impact on energy bills

Be festive without breaking the bank

My wife, Crissie, insists I bring the Christmas decorations down from the attic faster than we can finish the Thanksgiving turkey. With holiday lights adorning our home for well over a month, we decided to make the switch to LEDs to save energy.

LED holiday lights use 88% less energy than incandescent holiday lights. To put that into perspective, the U.S. Department of Energy estimates standard holiday decorations using LED lights typically increase energy bills by about \$5 to \$7. But with incandescent lights, energy bills will typically increase by \$33 or more. For homes that go above and beyond with incandescent holiday lighting (think Clark Griswold), energy bills could increase by as much as \$350.

Beyond energy savings, LEDs provide additional benefits, such as being shock-resistant, shatterproof and cool to the touch, making them safer for the home.

You can also lower energy use by conveniently managing holiday lighting. Smart light timers can help you save energy by connecting to a smartphone app or voice assistant to program lights to turn on and off at set times. If you don't use smart home technology, you can still save energy by using traditional timers.


Additional easy ways to save during the holiday season include turning off overhead lights and using your Christmas tree to illuminate your home. If you have a fireplace, remember to close the flue when you're not burning a fire to ensure heat doesn't escape through the chimney.

Cook up energy savings in the kitchen

If you plan to have family and friends over this holiday season, you can cook up energy savings by using small countertop appliances, such as microwaves, air fryers and slow cooking, when possible, as they use much less energy than the stovetop or oven.

When using the oven, bake multiple dishes at once for maximum efficiency. After all, it takes as much energy to cook one dish as it does to cook several. Turn the oven off a few minutes before the recipe's end time and allow the residual heat to finish baking the dish. Once the food is done, leave the stove door ajar to allow the residual heat to warm the room. When using the stovetop, match the pan size to the burner to maximize efficiency.

I hope a few of these tips will be helpful as we approach the holiday season. Remember, we're here to answer any questions you have about managing energy use or your monthly bills. With a little planning upfront, you can find efficient ways to save on everything from holiday decor to your favorite soup recipes.

From your friends at Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, we hope you have a wonderful holiday season. 





MESSAGE FROM MEMBER SERVICES: Help shape co-op's future



Julie Armijo

Chief of Staff/Member
Services Manager

Are you looking for a way to serve the people of central southwestern North Dakota? Look no further, as Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative can help you fulfill that desire. Why not serve as a director for the cooperative?

Director elections

The initial commitment is a three-year term, with provisions in the bylaws limiting a director to serving six consecutive three-year

terms, after which time the director is not eligible for another six consecutive three-year terms until one year has elapsed.

At the annual meeting, June 12, 2025, the following three board positions will be elected:

- **Grant County** – Ryan Petrick (currently serving his first three-year term)
- **Mandan Area** – Pam Geiger (currently serving her second three-year term)

- **Morton County** – Mark Doll (currently serving his first three-year term)

Under the bylaws and due to a mail-in ballot, no nominations are accepted from the floor at the annual meeting. Instead, the bylaws require the board of directors to appoint a Nominating committee of five to nine members who geographically represent the cooperative. These members will provide a list of qualified and willing candidates to the board for approval and inclusion on the ballot. The board of directors has also charged the committee with reviewing and advising the board of any proposed bylaw amendments and resolutions. The committee will soon be appointed by the board. Once appointed the committee will meet for the first time in December.

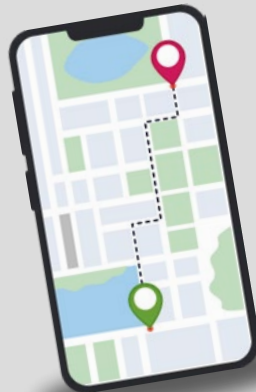
A complete list of the Nominating Committee names, important dates and further information will be published in the December issue of *North Dakota Living* as well as our social media. Follow us on Facebook and Instagram at Mor-Gran-Sou Electric.

SMART PAYMENTS NOW AVAILABLE

YOU CAN NOW PAY YOUR BILL AT PARTICIPATING LOCAL RETAILERS WITH SMARTHUB.

Use your barcode in SmartHub and pay your bill while you get groceries, gas or more in three easy steps:

1. Find a participating location near you in the SmartHub app or on the web
2. Find your barcode in the SmartHub app or print it from the web
3. Visit the participating location, scan the provided barcode at the checkout and pay your bill with a cash payment which is posted to your account immediately.



PARTICIPATING LOCATIONS IN THE MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC SERVICE AREA INCLUDE:

- Family Dollar
- Dollar General
- CVS Pharmacy
- Walmart
- Holiday Stations
- Stamart

MESSAGE FROM OPERATIONS: Celebrating National Apprenticeship Week



Gary Fitterer
Manager of Operations

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative is celebrating National Apprenticeship Week Nov. 17-23 in partnership with the U.S. Department of Labor. Apprenticeships provide demand-driven education, allowing apprentices to earn while they learn and helping to close the gap between the skills job creators seek and job seekers need.

National Apprenticeship Week provides an opportunity to spotlight how apprenticeships can help employees grow in knowledge and skill to succeed in today's workplace. In exchange, these employees have the opportunity to learn from veteran employees and mentors. In turn, those apprentices

work, purchase goods from area businesses, volunteer in our communities and ultimately sustain our smaller towns and improve our quality of life.

The apprenticeship program requires lineworkers to complete 8,000 hours of on-the-job training and 40 tests. Once the program is completed, the lineworkers advance from apprentice to journeyman.

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric is proud to highlight apprentice lineworker Troy Kuball. Additionally, each summer Mor-Gran-Sou Electric hires apprentice lineworkers to join crews to get additional experience in the field. This summer, Ian Eilers and Tyler Yantzer joined the Mor-Gran-Sou Electric crews for a few months.

We thank all the apprentices who are helping electric cooperatives provide a safe, reliable and affordable electric service to communities! 



Ian Eilers, a seasonal apprentice lineworker, visits with kids about being a lineworker during a Touch a Truck event at the Elgin/New Leipzig Public School.



Troy Kuball, an apprentice lineworker, visits with kids at the annual meeting about lineworker gear.

ENTER YOUR YOUTH TOUR ERA



JUNE 15-21, 2025

1,800 students.
7 days.
1 unforgettable trip.

Join us on the adventure of a lifetime. On the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, you'll do it all. You'll explore monuments and museums, meet with members of Congress and get an up-close look at where our country's laws are crafted. You'll stand on the Gettysburg Battlefield, walk the halls of George Washington's iconic 18th-century mansion and witness ceremonies honoring the men and women who fought in uniform for this great nation. For one jam-packed week, you'll be immersed in the cooperative spirit that built and sustains our great nation. And **all expenses are paid** by your local electric cooperative!

Yeah, Youth Tour hits different.

To enter the essay-writing contest:

- You must be a sophomore or junior in high school.
- You and your parents or guardian must be served by Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative.

Essay question:

Why is it important to be involved in your community, and how does that prepare you to be a future leader?

The application deadline is Jan. 17, 2025.

Email entries to Julie Armijo at jarmijo@morgransou.com or mail a hard copy to: Youth Tour Essay Contest, P.O. Box 297, Flasher, ND, 58535-0297.

Questions? Please contact Julie Armijo, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric, at 701-597-3301, 701-663-0297 or 1-800-750-8212 during regular business hours.




Learn more at
ndyouthtour.com

SAFETY STARTS WITH ME: Winter generator safety

As the winter weather arrives, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative is preparing to deal with whatever weather hits us this season. Although we don't anticipate any outages, it is important for members to be prepared and have a plan in place in case Mother Nature throws us an unexpected curveball.

One tool that can help ease extended outages for your family and any animals in your care is a portable generator. With proper use and maintenance, portable generators can provide great convenience during an outage. However, when generators are used incorrectly, they can be extremely hazardous to both you and us!

"While generators provide convenience during power outages, they can quickly become hazardous – even deadly – if improperly operated," says Kale Ohlhauser, a lead lineworker. "Before you operate a portable generator, please become familiar with it and keep the following tips in mind for your safety as well as others."

If you have questions about the proper use of portable generators, we're here to help. Give us a call at 701-597-3301, 701-663-0297 or 800-750-8212. 



Here is what YOU can do

Follow a few do's and don'ts to keep in mind when using portable generators.

Do's:

- ✓ Keep children and pets away from portable generators.
- ✓ Start the generator first, before you plug in appliances.
- ✓ Position generators at least 25 feet outside the home, away from doors, windows and vents that can allow carbon monoxide to enter the home.
- ✓ Ensure your generator is properly grounded. Use a portable ground-fault circuit interrupter to prevent electric shock injuries.
- ✓ Use three-pronged extension cords rated to handle the generator's load. Inspect extension cords for cuts, frays or other damage before use.

Don'ts:

- ✗ Do not operate a generator inside your home or an enclosed (or partially enclosed) space. Generators produce high levels of carbon monoxide, which can be deadly.
- ✗ Do not open windows or doors while the generator is running.
- ✗ Do not rely on generators as a full-time source of power. They should only be used temporarily or in emergency situations to power essential equipment or appliances.
- ✗ Do not overload generators. They should only be used to power essential equipment. Make sure your generator can handle the load of the items you plan to power.
- ✗ Do not connect generators directly into household wiring, unless you have an appropriate transfer switch installed. If a generator is connected to a home's wiring without a transfer switch, power can backfeed along power lines and electrocute lineworkers making repairs.



MOR-GRAN-SOU
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS Aug. 28

The board of directors meeting of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative was held on Aug. 28 at the Mandan Service Center in Mandan. Chair Steve Tomac called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m. A quorum was present. Also present were Mor-Gran-Sou Electric's co-General Managers/CEOs Travis Kupper and Jason Bentz, Chief Financial Officer Alex Craigmile, Manager of Operations Gary Fitterer, Chief of Staff/Member Services Manager Julie Armijo, Interim General Counsel Andrew Fergel and Executive Assistant Connie Hill.

Consent agenda: Additions were proposed to the consent agenda. The consent agenda was approved as amended.

Strategic agenda: Bentz and Kupper presented the co-general managers' report, which included updates on the Basin Electric Power Cooperative annual meeting, North Dakota managers meeting, Cooperative Finance Corporation and more. Several Basin Electric reports, and West Dakota Utility Services

and 3C Construction updates were available for review.

Action items: Action items were discussed and resolved.

Department reports: Craigmile provided a financial report. Fitterer reviewed the operations report, which included updates on the 2024 construction season. Armijo provided a member service report on upcoming youth programs, Operation Round Up and 2025 annual meeting information. Chief Information Officer Charlie Dunbar provided a written report for the board. Fergel provided a general counsel report on projects.

Discussion/general information: No additional items were brought to the board for discussion.

The meeting concluded with the adjournment. Secretary-Treasurer Pam Geiger certified the accuracy of the minutes.

Next meeting date: The next meeting is at 12:30 p.m. Nov. 20 in Mandan.

Our offices will be closed
Monday, Nov. 11
for Veterans Day



Our offices will be closed
Thursday, Nov. 28
and
Friday, Nov. 29
for Thanksgiving



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800-795-0555 OR 811

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Chair.....Steve Tomac
Vice Chair.....Chad Harrison
Secretary-Treasurer..... Pam Geiger
Directors.....Mark Doll, Rodney Froelich,
Bob J. Leingang, Ryan Petrick,
Kathy Tokach, Casey Wells

MANAGEMENT

Co-GM/CEOTravis Kupper
Co-GM/CEO Jason Bentz

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