

MiNNews

June 2026 Vol. 10 Issue 6
A monthly publication for members of
MiEnergy Cooperative.

**Lower your
energy bill
without
spending big**

**Co-op celebrates
scholarship
winners**

*Why members
are choosing heat
pumps*



MiEnergy's Darrin Peterson (in the bucket) and Jamie Breaser (on the ground) are shown doing the work necessary to de-energize the city of Wykoff as part of a planned overnight power outage to replace five poles. In total, 24 lineworkers took part in the outage to remove deteriorated poles.

National energy issues

When MiEnergy Cooperative has the opportunity to speak up for our members, we take it. Last month, I traveled with Board Director Jenny Scharmer and Line Staking Technician Brad Dull to Washington, D.C., for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Legislative Conference. We joined more than 1,500 cooperative leaders from across the country to talk with our elected officials about critical issues impacting our nation's electric cooperatives.

This year's conference focused on four key areas:

- Streamlining the federal permitting process
- Expediting and modernizing Federal Emergency Management Agency disaster programs
- Increasing funding for the Rural Utilities Service
- Mitigating the risk of wildfires

Speaking to our elected officials about critical cooperative issues and gaining their support for needed changes helps us maintain affordable and reliable service for our members.

Streamline permit process: Today's federal permitting process takes far too long. Federal environmental reviews can delay projects, and litigation can further delay the work. These delays raise costs and postpone reliability improvements.

MiEnergy has several examples of wanting to bury an underground line, but waiting for environmental approval has delayed the jobs significantly. Our most recent case was near Brownsville. Dead ash trees falling off the hillside continued to interrupt service on an overhead distribution line. Yet, it took more than a year to gain environmental approval to put the line underground.

We asked Congress to pass permit reform legislation to expedite federal permitting and include judicial reforms to limit costly lawsuits.

Modernize FEMA disaster programs: FEMA is the primary source of federal disaster recovery funding for our nation's electric cooperatives. Without FEMA assistance, rural members would face higher electric rates following disasters. We clearly communicated that electric cooperatives do not want Congress or the president to eliminate FEMA, but to reform it.

We asked Congress to pass the FEMA Act of 2025, H.R. 4669. FEMA reform is needed to expedite disaster reimbursement, expand resiliency programs, better account for damage in rural areas and limit unreasonable clawbacks.

MiEnergy has had several instances where FEMA support was needed. Our two largest include the February 2007 ice storm in northeast Iowa that took down a large portion of our distribution system and the August 2007 flood that destroyed our office, warehouse and 26 fleet vehicles in Rushford.

While FEMA support was critical and greatly needed, the reimbursement process took years.

RUS loan funding: Electric cooperatives are rebuilding their distribution systems nationwide at record levels. The USDA's Rural Utilities Service is one of the most successful government support programs, and it repays the government with interest. MiEnergy recently received approval for a \$9.7 million loan and will be applying for another loan near the end of the year.

Wildfire mitigation: Wildfires are a growing threat to electric infrastructure across the country. While they have not directly impacted MiEnergy, utilities as a whole are experiencing difficulty obtaining federal approval to implement vegetation management practices on thousands of miles of line across federally managed lands to help defend against wildfires. To be proactive, MiEnergy has developed a wildfire mitigation plan. We asked Congress to pass the Fix Our Forests Act, H.R. 471.

MiEnergy was grateful to receive support for all of our issues from both our Iowa and Minnesota elected officials.

Meeting elected officials in their Washington, D.C., offices gives us a chance to share our concerns and offer solutions that make a difference.

As always, I welcome your calls, emails and personal visits.



IOWA COUNTY FAIR CONTESTS

Sponsored by MiEnergy



Entries are judged on appearance, taste and texture.

1st Place - \$25; 2nd Place - \$15; 3rd Place - \$10

HOWARD COUNTY FAIR

Homemade Salsa Contest

- Judging at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, June 24.
- Entry Times: 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
- One pint per entry. Chips will be furnished.
- Limit of two entries per individual.

Strawberry Dessert Contest

- Judging at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, June 24.
- Entry Times: 12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.
- Must be in a disposable container.
- Limit of two entries per individual.

Light Bulb Decorating Contest

- Judging on Thursday, June 25.
- Entry Times: 10 a.m.-3 p.m. on Wednesday, June 24.
- Open to kids 12 years of age and under.
- Each child entering will receive a new LED light bulb.
- Entries picked up between 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Sunday, June 28.

WINNESHIEK COUNTY FAIR

Homemade Apple Pie Contest

- Judging at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, July 14.
- Entry Times: 10:30 a.m.-11 a.m.
- Please use disposable pie tins for entries.
- Limit of two entries per family.

Chocolate Chip Cookie Contest

- Judging at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, July 14.
- Entry Times: 10:30 a.m.-11 a.m.
- Any type of chocolate chip cookie allowed.
- One dozen cookies on a disposable plate or tray per entry.



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Board room highlights | May 28, 2026

- CFO Shelly Hove presented the financials for April.
- Approved the newest strategic planning summary for MiEnergy Cooperative.
- Received an overview and update from Federated Insurance Exchange Representative Keith Johnson.
- Safety and Compliance Coordinator Brad Pecinovsky provided the quarterly safety update.
- Approved applying for the construction work plan loan through the Rural Utilities Service.
- Reviewed the updates to the new service extension policy.
- CEO Brian Krambeer provided an update on cooperative subsidiaries.

The next board meeting is June 30 at 9 a.m. at the Cresco office.

- 1974 Hawkeye REC's security light program.
- 1975 Electric motors – your most efficient helper. A promotion published in Hawkeye REC's September 1975 newsletter.
- 1976 During the 1976 bicentennial, employees of Tri-County in front of the garage and warehouse.
- 1976 Members of the Tri-County board. Seated from the left: John Papenfuss of Dakota, Harvey Rislow of Lewiston and George Mathis of Winona; Standing from the left: Erling Burtness of Caledonia, Elton Redalen of Fountain, Edward Albrecht of LaCrescent, Lloyd McKenzie of Spring Valley and Manager Earl Johnson of Rushford.
- 1976 Annual report cover: Alfred Froiland and Bob Spartz in front of the Pickwick Mill in Winona County.



Co-op invests \$76,000 in Class of 2026

From volunteering in their schools to serving local organizations, 76 area students are being recognized for making a difference close to home. MiEnergy Cooperative awarded \$76,000 in Community Service Scholarships to local high school seniors who exemplify service to others. The scholarship program reflects MiEnergy's commitment to community and is funded through unclaimed capital credits that would otherwise be turned over to the state. This year's 2026 MiEnergy Cooperative Community Service Scholarship winners are as follows:

Caledonia: Sophie Blocker, child of Matt & Jen Blocker; Adeline Colsch, child of Jason Colsch; Jack Schmitz, child of Barb and Al Schmitz; and Isabella Stemper, child of Matt and Amy Stemper.

Chatfield: Andrew Eickhoff, child of Jeffrey and Andrea Eickhoff; and Grace Schroeder, child of Kate and Jonathan Schroeder.

Cotter: Logan Fritts, child of Tessa and John Fritts; and LeYan Thean, child of Jane Chow and Kim Thean.

Crestwood: Makenzie Gallagher, child of Tom and Stephanie Gallagher; and Carter Schmauss, child of Tom and Laura Schmauss

Decorah: Ariana Albert, child of Rhonda and Chopper Albert; Rylee Averhoff, child of Forry and Amy Averhoff; Reid Berns, child of Brent and Anne Berns; Riley Berns, child of Brent and Anne Berns; Carson Bohner, child of Scott and Shantelle Bohner; Jerikah Dodd, child of Austin and Marcie Dodd; Caleb Johnson, child of Jeromy Johnson and Kelly Johnson; William Robinson, child of Amy and Jerry Robinson; Annika Schmelzer, child of David and Jennifer Schmelzer; and Mitchell Stemper, child of Holly Kanengieter and Rich Stemper.

Fillmore Central: Cora Britton, child of Lori and Craig Britton; Kyla Hellickson, child of Abbey and Matt Hellickson; Lillyan Kiehne, child of Benj and Kristi Kiehne; Sarah Schriever, child of Nicole and Paul Schriever; Brooke Tieskotter, child of Andy and Jackie Tieskotter; and Madelyn Topness, child of Michelle and Erik Topness.

Homeschool: Caden Heusinkveld, child of Seth and Lindsay Heusinkveld; Savannah Holty, child of Ron and Kimberly Holty; and Evelyn Lemke, child of John and Mary Lemke.

Houston: Grayden Beckman, child of Neil and Pam Beckman; Averie Evanson, child of Joseph and Shannon Evanson;

Cadence Koehler, child of Sarah Duffy and Josh Koehler; and Danica Stampka, child of Brent and Lynn Stampka.

Kasson-Mantorville: Allison Graunke, child of Brent and Carrie Graunke.

Lanesboro: Ellie Howard, child of Justin and Nicole Howard; Jensyn Storhoff, child of Steve and Beth Storhoff; and Camden Twait, child of Shannon and Sara Twait.

Lewiston-Altura: Jonathan Gomez, child of Desirè Mendoza; Seth Harper, child of John and Emily Harper; Kyli Ketchum, child of Mike and Mary Ketchum; Conner Loken, child of Melissa and Nicholas Loken; Jocelyn Mehling, child of Natalie and Brandon Mehling; Dexter Nelson, child of Jeff and Melissa Nelson; Tyson Prigge, child of Trevor and Terri Prigge; and Hayden Randall, child of Abbigail and Joshua Randall.

Luther (Onalaska): Kamryn Anderson, child of Amber and Jeremy Anderson.

Mabel-Canton: Isabella Torgerson, child of Jeffrey and Joan Torgerson; and Tylar Wenthold, child of Trisha Ryan and Joel Wenthold.

New Hampton: Ella Knutson, child of Rodney and Jennifer Knutson; Emmett Kuehner, child of Eric and Kim Kuehner; Easton Monteith, child of Jeff and Jennifer Monteith; Colin Shatek, child of Randy and Lori Shatek; Jordan Thronson, child of Eric and Stefanie Thronson; and Kelly Thronson, child of Eric and Stefanie Thronson.

Riceville: Trace Baethke, child of Erica and Doug Baethke; Chance Christensen, child of Corwin and Dorene Christensen; Kennedy Linkenmeyer, child of Dallas and Rebecca Linkenmeyer; and Jace Newell, child of Justin and Lacey Newell.

Rushford-Peterson: Avree Connaughty, child of Kerry and Susan Connaughty; Ava Helgemoe, child of Jennifer and Matthew Helgemoe; William LaFleur, child of Megan and Peter LaFleur; Quinn Potter,

child of Erin and Brian Potter; Nathaniel Redig, child of Melanny and Timothy Redig; and Torryn Schneider, child of Todd and Melissa Schneider.

South Winneshiek: Bradley Dahl, child of Jill Dahl; Kyle Kuboushek, child of Lori Kuboushek and Brian Kuboushek; Jadrienne Langreck, child of Kenny and Jackie Langreck; Jule Sadler, child of Annie and Sam Sadler; and Ella Theis, child of Mark and Jean Theis.

Spring Grove: Cashton Newgaard, child of Brent and Becky Newgaard.

St. Charles: Scarlet Chaney, child of Nicole Thorland and Jared Chaney; Ryan Kreidermacher, child of Joe and Melanie Kreidermacher; and Chloe Wendt, child of Dianna Wendt.

Turkey Valley: Bree Balk, child of Doug and Karen Balk; and Jenna Thronson, child of Dale and Renee Thronson.

Winona: Ava Henderson, child of Craig and Gail Henderson.

Recipient of first lineworker scholarship announced

MiEnergy Cooperative is pleased to announce its first recipient of a \$1,000 Next Generation Lineworker Scholarship to Kyle Kuboushek. Kyle is a graduate of South Winneshiek High School and the child of Lori Kuboushek and Brian Kuboushek.

This scholarship is funded by MiEnergy's wholesale power provider, Dairyland Power Cooperative, of La Crosse.

The scholarship is awarded to one graduating senior who has been accepted into a post-secondary electrical lineworker training program.

Low and no-cost ways to save energy

Saving energy doesn't have to be expensive or time consuming. You don't need to spend thousands of dollars or get the newest technology to use less energy. There are several steps to lower energy use, even on a tight budget.



ADJUST THE THERMOSTAT

Nudge the thermostat a few degrees closer to the outside temperature, especially on extreme weather days. On the hottest and coldest days, your heating and cooling equipment must work much harder, and use more energy, to maintain the same temperature. Add an extra layer of clothes or some cozy slippers in the winter and lighter layers in summer.

FIX LEAKS

Those tiny drips from faucets can add up to big energy waste, not to mention water waste. If you need to hire a pro to fix it, turn the shutoff valve under the sink to stop the leak until you can get it fixed.

COLD WATER WASH

Wash laundry in cold water to avoid using the energy required to heat it. Washing on hot or warm settings can really add up, especially if you have a top-load or older washing machine that uses more water.

AIR SEALING

This is a do-it-yourself, beginner-friendly project that improves comfort and reduces energy waste. For around \$20 and couple of hours of time, you can fill gaps, cracks and holes to prevent air from leaking in and out of the home. From the inside of the home, seal trim on windows and exterior doors with caulk for about \$4 a tube. Buy paintable caulk so you can touch it up when it dries, if needed.

A can of spray foam is about \$5 and seals gaps around plumbing lines. It's great for sealing gaps around pipes under sinks and in the crawlspace or basement. Cold air can travel up through those spaces, causing drafts and wasting energy. Sealing these areas also stops insects and rodents from using these gaps to enter your home.

Spray foam is messy. Wear disposable gloves and clothes you don't mind dirtying, and use drop cloths to protect finished floors. Be careful if you're working with spray foam overhead. If you get it in your hair, it's not coming out with anything less than a haircut. For \$10 to \$15, you can buy weatherstripping to improve the seal on exterior doors. If you can see light around doors or feel a draft between the door and the door jamb when the door is closed, weatherstripping will help.

Try these easy, low- and no-cost improvements to reduce energy waste and improve comfort in your home.

Do The **SUMMER SHIFT**

DISCOVER

SUMMER SHIFT TIPS

Doing The Summer Shift helps keep electric rates affordable for all members. Anyone can participate by shifting or reducing energy use between the hours of 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.

Program your smart thermostat to go up 4 degrees on summer weekdays. You'll stay cool and save on electricity costs!

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UTILITY WORK AHEAD

respect the orange
move over and slow down

Working on MiLines

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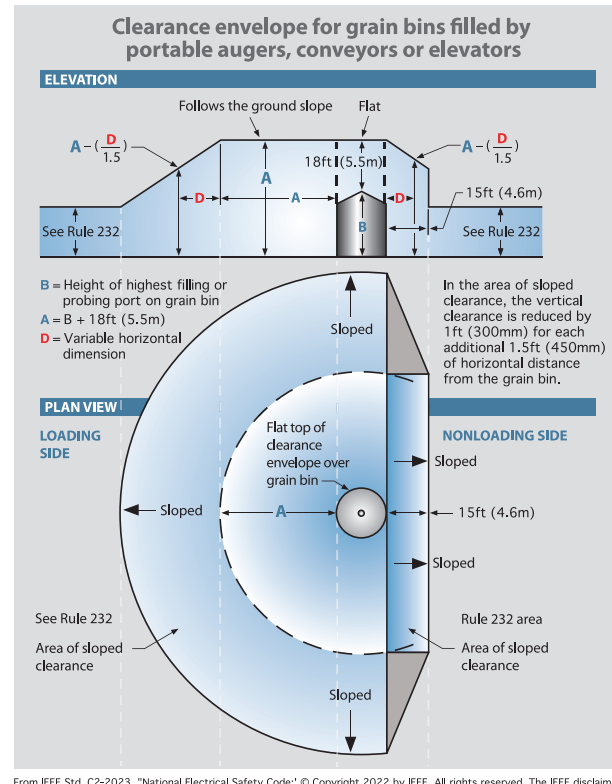
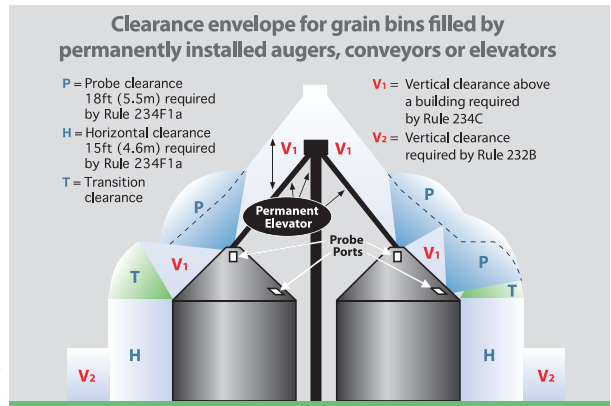
It was all hands on deck in Wykoff the evening of May 6 as 24 MiEnergy lineworkers shutdown power to the city for about four hours to change out five poles. The poles were found to be deteriorated during routine inspection. While crews oftentimes work on energized lines to prevent planned outages, this particular job would have been difficult to complete safely due to dead-end conductor attachments. A single night-time outage helped minimize impact to businesses and members working during normal business hours. With the poles spread throughout town, attempting to complete the work with multiple smaller outages would have resulted in several businesses and members experiencing repeated interruptions to their electric service. Projects like these require significant planning and coordination between line crews, staff, the local community and communication providers to ensure the work is completed safely and efficiently. Proactive maintenance helps improve system reliability by reducing the risk of unplanned outages, service interruptions, property damage and emergency repairs. It ultimately reduces cost to the membership.



Grain bin clearance notice for Iowa members

When you start to plan for a new grain bin, please contact MiEnergy. We will provide assistance in planning for a safe environment for everyone working and living around grain bins. According to the Iowa Electric Safety Code found in Iowa Administrative Code Chapter 199 – 25.2(3) b. An electric utility may refuse to provide electric service to any grain bin built near an existing electric line which does not provide the clearances required by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) C2-2023 “National Electrical Safety Code,” Rule 234F. This paragraph “b” shall apply only to grain bins loaded by portable augers, conveyors or elevators and built after September 9, 1992, or to grain bins loaded by permanently installed augers, conveyors, or elevator systems installed after December 24, 1997. (As adopted by the Iowa Utilities Board) MiEnergy is required by the Iowa Utilities Board to provide this annual notice to farmers, farm lenders, grain bin merchants, and city and county zoning officials. If you have any questions concerning clearance regulations, please call MiEnergy at 800-432-2285.

Disclaimer: These drawings are provided as part of Iowa electric cooperatives’ annual public information campaign and are based on the 2023 Edition of the National Electrical Safety Code. To view the actual drawings, refer to that publication. Every care has been taken for the correctness of the contents for these drawings. However, the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives and its member cooperatives accept no liability whatsoever for omissions or errors, technical inaccuracies, typographical mistakes or damages of any kind arising from the use of the contents of these drawings, whether textual or graphical.



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2026 OFFICES CLOSED
JUL 3 Independence Day Observance
SEP 7 Labor Day
SEP 10 Employee Development Day
NOV 26-27 Thanksgiving Holiday
DEC 15 Employee Development Day
DEC 24-25 Christmas Eve and Christmas Day
DEC 31 New Year’s Eve, close at 11 a.m.
JAN 1 New Year’s Day

CRESTWOOD FFA FEED THE FARMERS—CRESCO

The Crestwood FFA Chapter organized their “Feed the Farmers” event again this year and MiEnergy partnered with them to share electric safety messages. The FFA students put together sack lunches for area farmers to pick up at local ag cooperatives in Howard and Winneshiek counties within the school district boundaries. MiEnergy provided handouts that included important safety tips for planting season around power poles and electricity. This event demonstrates two cooperative principles: Cooperation Among Cooperatives and Concern for Community. Pictured L-R: Ms. Burt Crestwood FFA Chapter Co-Advisor, Clara Keller, Marina Burke, Kenzie Moellers and Nolan Schatz. Thanks to all of these young students for thinking of our area farmers.



PRESCHOOL VISIT—CRESCO

MiEnergy’s Kyle Quam and Caleb Steiner visited the Notre Dame preschool class in Cresco. They showed the students different parts of the MiEnergy bucket truck and demonstrated some of the tools that a powerline worker needs to wear and use to be safe when working near electricity.



TESMER FARM SAFETY DAYS—PRESTON & CALEDONIA

MiEnergy’s Grady Hengel and Tony Rislove gave electric safety demonstrations at the Tesmer Farm Safety Day held at the Fillmore County Fairgrounds on May 5. Kent Whitcomb and Wendy Jacobson did the same at the Houston County Fairgrounds on May 7. A total of 491 students and 58 teachers/chaperones from 18 public, private and homeschools took part in the events organized by the University of Minnesota Extension.



TROUT DAYS—PRESTON

From L-R: Brenda Tesch, Ajay Ristau, Tyler Thomas, Annie Hoiland and Heather Larson represented the cooperative in the Preston Trout Days Parade on May 16.



ATTORNEY GENERAL VISIT—CRESCO

Brenna Bird, the attorney general for Iowa, visited on May 18 as part of a tour through Northeast Iowa. Employees gave her a tour of the building and discussed the topics of economic development in our local communities, our membership, and our relationships with local law enforcement and community leaders. Pictured L-R: MiEnergy’s VP of Member Services Kent Whitcomb, Iowa Representative Mike Bergan, Attorney General Brenna Bird, MiEnergy’s CFO Shelly Hove, CEDA VP and Howard County Business and Tourism Executive Director Jason Passmore, Howard County Sheriff Rick Busch and Cresco Police Chief Tim Ruroden.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

During these warm summer months, a smart thermostat can help keep your home comfortable while reducing cooling costs. Smart thermostats learn your routine and automatically raise the temperature when you’re away and cool things down before you return, avoiding unnecessary energy use. You can also adjust settings remotely from your phone, so you’re never cooling an empty house. Setting your thermostat a few degrees higher while you’re away or asleep can lead to significant savings.

**Nominate a local volunteer
and they could win
\$3,000 for their charity!**

Contest entries accepted during June at
IowaShineTheLight.com

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Could a heat pump be right for your home?

Heating and cooling your home takes energy, and the system you choose can make a real difference in comfort and cost. Electric heat pumps are a highly efficient option for year-round comfort because they provide both heating and cooling. Paired with MiEnergy Cooperative's energy management rates, they can make electricity a safe, affordable and efficient choice for your home.

AIR-SOURCE HEAT PUMPS

This is one of the most efficient ways to heat and cool your home with central venting systems. New cold-climate air-source heat pumps (ASHPs) can provide heat with lower temps than in the past. A backup heating system is required to be on the energy management rates.

There are two common types of ASHP systems:

- **Ducted:** Best for homes with existing ductwork. These homes typically already use a furnace and central air system with vents throughout the home.
- **Ductless:** Also known as mini-split systems, these work great in homes with no heating or cooling ducts in place, such as older homes or new additions.

The level of efficiency of ASHP systems ranges from 200% to 400%. Lower efficiencies typically occur during the coldest winter days.

Electricity /kWh	Propane /gallon	Fuel Oil /gallon	Natural Gas /therm
7¢	43¢	50¢	47¢
9¢	56¢	65¢	61¢
11¢	68¢	79¢	74¢
13¢	80¢	93¢	88¢

The chart above compares the cost of a 300% efficient ASHP (10.2 HSPF) to a 92% efficient propane and natural gas system and a 70% efficient fuel oil system. If your cost per kWh is 11¢, it is the equivalent to paying 68¢/gallon for propane, 79¢/gallon for fuel oil or 74¢/therm of natural gas.

GEOTHERMAL HEAT PUMPS

This is the most efficient heating and cooling system available because it uses a renewable energy source: the earth. It works just like gas furnace and air conditioning systems with central venting.

It will meet 100% of a home's heating and cooling needs. The efficiency level of a geothermal system can be in the range of 300% to 600% efficient.

Electricity /kWh	Propane /gallon	Fuel Oil /gallon	Natural Gas /therm
7¢	35¢	40¢	38¢
9¢	44¢	52¢	49¢
11¢	54¢	63¢	59¢
13¢	64¢	75¢	70¢

The chart above compares the cost of a 500% efficient geothermal heat pump (5.0 COP) to a 92% efficient propane and natural gas system and a 70% efficient fuel oil system. If your cost per kWh is 11¢, it is the equivalent to paying 54¢/gallon for propane, 63¢/gallon for fuel oil or 59¢/therm of natural gas.

If you have questions about electric heating and cooling systems, contact the co-op for more details. MiEnergy rebates are available for qualified purchases.

Safety Tip

Keep extension cords in the open. Never run cords under rugs, through doorways, around windows or pinched behind furniture. Heat and wear can build up fast and lead to shocks or fires.

