

The Nodak Neighbor

January-February 2026

Official Publication of Nodak Electric Cooperative
www.nodakelectric.com

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

GOVERNANCE AND RATES

**WHAT MEMBERS SHOULD
KNOW THIS YEAR**

PAGE 3



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Official Publication of the
Nodak Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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January-February 2026
Officers and Directors

Chairman of the Board. Les Windjue
Vice Chairman. Steve Smaaladen
Secretary/Treasurer. Ryan Benson
Directors. David Brag, David Kent,
Luther Meberg, Pete Naastad
Cheryl Osowski and Luke Ressler
President & CEO. Mylo Einarson
Editor Blaine Rekken
Content Provider. Gretchen Schmaltz

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 @NodakElectricCooperative

 @NodakElectric

On the cover: Equipment ready to go
for spring 2026 project installations.

FOUR DIRECTOR POSITIONS OPEN

NOMINATING COMMITTEE MEMBERS APPOINTED

The board of directors has appointed the committee on nominations. At its meeting scheduled for 10 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 18, 2026, at the Nodak headquarters building, 4000 32nd Ave. S, Grand Forks, the committee shall prepare and post a list of nominations for the director positions slated for election.

Committee members are: John Aamodt, Arvilla, 218-779-5250; Richard Hanson, Grand Forks, 701-739-0950; Shannon Johnson, Park River, 701-331-2933; Gary Kaldor, Mayville, 701-430-0581; Robert (Bob) Lenz, Thompson, 218-779-0722; Doug Mohr, Devils Lake, 701-739-8100; Paul Retzlaff, Aneta, 701-326-4235 or 701-270-0181; Linda Stromstad, Hatton, 701-335-3034; and Jody Tibert, Minto, 701-739-9093.

FOUR DIRECTOR POSITIONS OPEN

Four director positions will be open at the annual meeting on April 8, 2026. The directors whose three-year terms expire in 2026 are:

District 1: Cheryl Osowski – Grafton (*incumbent seeking reelection*)

District 2: Peter Naastad – Hatton (*incumbent seeking reelection*)

District 3: Steven Smaaladen – Aneta (*incumbent seeking reelection*)

The director appointed to fill vacancy:

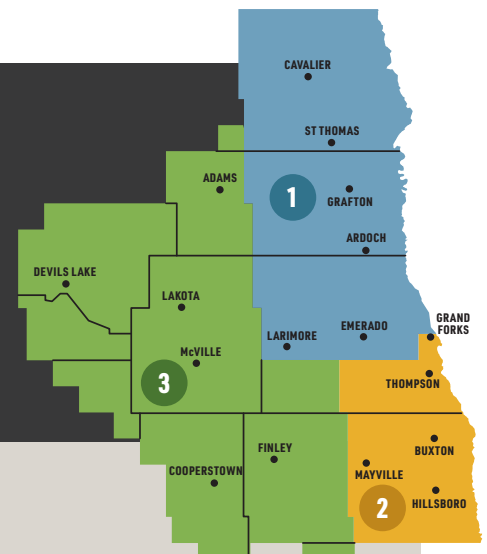
District 2: Luke Ressler (*appointed, seeking election for one-year term*)

NOMINATION BY COMMITTEE

If you are interested in being nominated or would like to nominate an individual, please contact a member of the nominating committee.

NOMINATION BY PETITION

Nominations may also be made by petition signed by at least 15 cooperative members. The signed petition must be received at Nodak's headquarters before **Monday, Feb. 23, 2026**, to verify nominee qualifications and allow sufficient time for voting by mail.





Mylo Einarson
President & CEO

Governance and Rates: What members should know this year

One of the strengths of an electric cooperative is that it is governed by the members it serves. This year, Nodak Electric Cooperative has a unique opportunity for members to engage in that process through our board of directors election.

Under normal circumstances, we have one director seat up for election in each of our three districts, with each director serving a three-year term. This year, however, we also have an additional opening in District 2 due to the retirement of a long-serving director. That vacancy is for a one-year term and is currently being filled by appointed director Luke Ressler.

As a result, members will see two board positions on the ballot this year for District 2: one for a standard three-year term and one for a one-year term. Members interested in running for the Nodak board should contact a member of the nominating committee and express their interest in being placed on the ballot. District 2 candidates should be sure to indicate whether they wish to run for the one-year term or the three-year term when contacting the committee.

Serving on the board is one of the most direct ways members can

participate in their cooperative's governance. Directors help set policy, provide strategic direction, and ensure Nodak remains financially sound while continuing to deliver safe, reliable and affordable electricity. I encourage members who have an interest in leadership and service to consider this important role.

In addition to cooperative governance, many members have asked about electric rates and what changes may be ahead. Our wholesale power provider, Minnkota Power Cooperative, has announced an increase that will affect Nodak beginning in 2026.

The increase will come in two parts. First, Minnkota will implement an average 4.1% increase across its wholesale rate components. Second, Minnkota will apply a per-kilowatt-hour surcharge for the months of April through December in 2026. While the exact amount of that surcharge has not yet been finalized by Minnkota, Nodak will pass it through on retail bills during the nine months we are charged on our wholesale power bill.

At this point, it is too early to determine what the 4.1% wholesale increase may mean for Nodak's re-

tail rates. As we close our books for 2025 and evaluate the early months of 2026, we will have a clearer picture of what adjustments, if any, are necessary. Any potential retail rate change would be brought forward thoughtfully and transparently.

Minnkota's rate increase is driven by rising costs across the electric industry, including significant increases in the price of transmission infrastructure, materials and equipment. Supply chain pressures and inflation have made it more expensive to maintain the reliable system our members depend on. Even so, Minnkota has worked to keep long-term increases modest and continues to pursue opportunities — such as large-load growth — to help moderate future rate pressures.

At Nodak, our goal remains the same: to keep as much money in our members' pockets as possible while maintaining the reliability and service you expect. We are carefully evaluating options, managing costs and advocating for our members every step of the way.

Thank you for your engagement in your cooperative — both through participation in governance and your understanding as we navigate a changing cost environment together.

WHY ARE ELECTRIC RATES RISING?

Electric cooperatives are not-for-profit organizations. When rates increase, it's because they must, in order to maintain the reliability, safety and service our members have come to expect. In April 2026, our wholesale power provider, Minnkota Power Cooperative, will increase its rate for member co-ops (including Nodak Electric Cooperative) by 4.1%. Under this new rate, Nodak Electric Cooperative will also need to consider a rate increase for our members.

Raising rates is never an easy decision. Minnkota worked with its board of directors and membership on a rate adjustment that would allow them to financially counter **substantial supply chain and inflationary pressures that continue to build year after year**. The cost of maintaining transmission infrastructure has rapidly increased since 2020, with items like transformers costing 88% more today than five years ago.

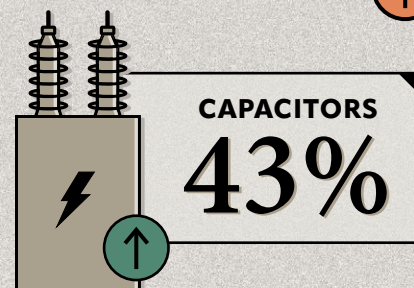
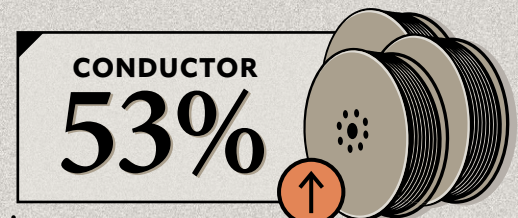
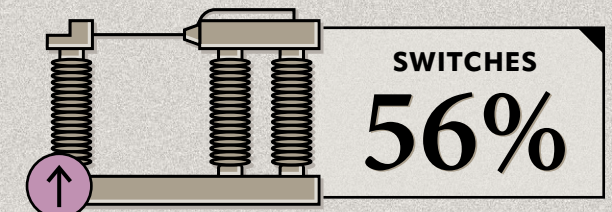
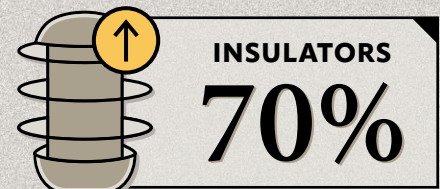
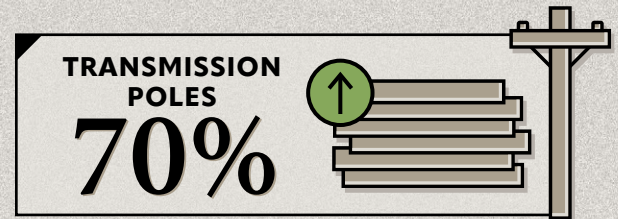
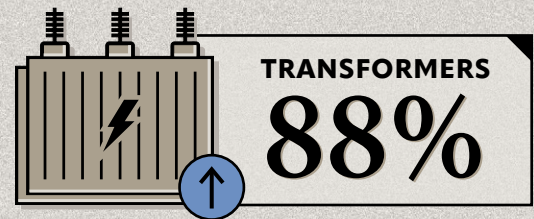
After nearly eight years of consistently flat rates, these growing costs prompted the need for an increase in 2025 and 2026. However, if these increases were averaged over the last 10 years, the annual increase to your co-op has only been 1.3% – well under the rate of inflation.

Minnkota is also working to integrate data center loads in a manner that helps recover a larger share of its fixed costs through increased energy sales, thereby helping to moderate the need for future rate adjustments. These large-load members would not only fund 100% of the electric infrastructure necessary to serve their facilities, but would also provide significant additional revenue to support system operations. This reduces the financial burden on all other members. While some level of rate increase may still be necessary over time, the presence of these large consumers helps significantly flatten the trajectory of those adjustments.

We're committed to communicating our rate plans with our members as we evaluate our budget with our staff and board of directors. In the meantime, we thank you for your patience and understanding as we navigate our next steps. We appreciate your membership!

MATERIAL COST

INCREASES SINCE 2020





POWER
SUPPLY
69%

THE VALUE OF YOUR ELECTRIC DOLLAR

Every dollar you spend on electricity delivers far more than energy to your outlet. It pays for a system that works around the clock to power your home, support your way of life and stand ready in all kinds of weather. It covers the cost of generating electricity, moving it across the region and delivering it safely to your door.

At Nodak Electric Cooperative, we strive to be good stewards of your electric dollar. As a member-owner of your cooperative, that dollar is reinvested back into the system that serves you, with only a small margin included to meet lender requirements and maintain long-term financial stability.

Here's how, on average, every dollar you spend on electricity is used.



TRANSMISSION

16%

DISTRIBUTION

15%

POWER SUPPLY – PRODUCING THE ENERGY YOU NEED **69%**

The largest share of your electric dollar – about **69 cents** – goes toward power supply. This is the cost of generating or purchasing the electricity that powers your home, farm or business. Power supply includes the operation of power plants, electricity purchased through energy markets and long-term investments that help ensure reliable service year-round. These costs can change based on factors such as fuel prices, weather and demand for electricity. To manage these risks and keep power reliable and affordable, Minnkota Power Cooperative, Nodak's wholesale power provider, maintains a diverse power supply that includes coal, wind and hydroelectric resources.

TRANSMISSION – MOVING POWER ACROSS THE REGION **16%**

About **16 cents** of every electric dollar supports transmission, which is the system that moves electricity from where it is generated to local communities. Transmission lines and large substations allow power to travel long distances safely and efficiently, helping keep the electric grid balanced and dependable. This part of the system is especially important during times of peak demand or when severe weather affects power generation in one area and electricity must be delivered from another.

DISTRIBUTION – DELIVERING POWER TO YOUR DOOR **15%**

The remaining **15 cents** of your electric dollar goes toward distribution, including the local poles, wires, transformers and equipment that bring electricity directly to your home or business. This is the portion of the system owned and maintained by Nodak Electric Cooperative. It includes day-to-day maintenance, system upgrades, member services and round-the-clock outage response.

Together, these investments ensure you receive reliable electric service every day. Your electric bill is not just a payment for power – it is an investment in the infrastructure, people and planning required to keep electricity dependable today and into the future.

ELECTRIC HEATING REBATES

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

Max rebate: \$1,500

All electric technology rebates/incentives must adhere to the requirements of the Value of Electricity program. 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. Visit [nodakelectric.com/rebates](https://www.nodakelectric.com/rebates) to learn more about incentives and criteria.



**GRANT
APPLICATION
DEADLINE**



APRIL 1, 2026

Individuals and organizations seeking grant funds – the next deadline date is **April 1, 2026**

For more details and to download an application, visit our website.



<https://www.nodakelectric.com/operation-round-up>

Nodak Electric donates to Spirit Lake Food Distribution Center

The Nodak Food Drive was a success for our neighbors in the Spirit Lake area!

Thanks to the generosity of Nodak Electric employees, a truckload of shelf-stable food was delivered to the Spirit Lake Food Distribution Center in Fort Totten, North Dakota.

This effort put the Cooperative Principle #7, "Concern for Community," into action. Whether through food or funds, thank you for your contributions and commitment to our community!



NODAK EMPLOYEE YEARS OF SERVICE

Throughout the year, Nodak will be recognizing our outstanding employees for their years of service to both the co-op and their communities. We succeed as a cooperative because of their unwavering dedication and commitment to hard work. The following employees began service in the months of January through April.



Jay Raymond
Line Superintendent
35 years



Michelle Markuson
Accountant II
34 years



Wade Haman
GF East Lead Lineman
33 years



Jeremy Steinhaus
Devils Lake Lineman
29 years



Chad Honek
Electrical Technician II
21 years



Todd Lommen
Apparatus Technician
18 years



Gretchen Schmaltz
Media Specialist
18 years



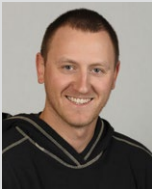
Duddy Weisser
Field Engineer
14 years



Travis Vatthauer
GF East Lineman
11 years



Alex Spitsberg
Electrical Engineer
11 years



Alex Schultz
GF East Lineman
8 years



Brock Janikowski
Grafton Crew Foreman
8 years



Matt Konze
GF West Crew Foreman
8 years



Max Stromsodt
Finley Lineman
5 years



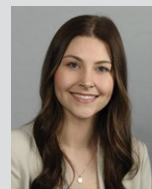
Jacob Lund
Cavalier Journeyman Lineman
4 years



Jordan Johnson
Finley Journeyman Lineman
4 years



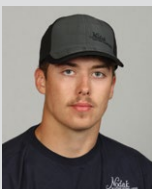
Brad Bergman
GF West Apprentice Lineman
3 years



Bryce Langerud
Member Services Representative
3 years



Mitchell Nistler
Staking/GIS Engineer
2 years



Avery Rosinski
Grafton Apprentice Lineman
1 year



Marina Schaefer
Accountant
1 year



USING A GENERATOR?

8 DANGEROUS MISTAKES PEOPLE MAKE



1 **IN ENCLOSED SPACES**

Always use it in a well-ventilated area.



2 **NEAR WINDOWS OR DOORS**

Place it at least 20 feet away from windows and doors.



3 **IN A GARAGE**

Even if the door is up, never use a generator in a garage.



4 **IN THE ELEMENTS**

Run it on a dry surface under a canopy-like structure (but not in a carport).



5 **PLUGGED INTO A WALL OUTLET**

This can be deadly to you, family members, neighbors or utility workers.



6 **WITH THE WRONG EXTENSION CORD**

Use a properly rated cord to plug appliances into a generator.



7 **WITHOUT CARBON MONOXIDE (CO) TESTERS**

CO detectors should be on every level of your home (test them monthly).



8 **IN DISREPAIR**

Make sure your generator is well-maintained and in good working order.



LEARN MORE AT:

 **Safe
Electricity.org®**