



October 2020 • Volume 80 • Issue 10  
www.wildriceelectric.com  
News from Wild Rice Electric Co-op, Inc.  
PO Box 438 • Mahnomen, MN 56557

# OCTOBER IS CO-OP MONTH

Learn a few ways on how your co-op is unique!

Co-ops and their members work together toward a common **goal.**

Co-ops are **local** organizations, so they understand the communities they serve.

All co-ops operate according to the same set of seven cooperative **principles**

Co-ops don't have customers; we have **members.**

Concern for **community** is the seventh cooperative principle.

Co-ops are **led** by the members they serve.

Wild Rice Electric celebrates National Cooperative Month in October, along with 40,000 other cooperatives serving more than 120 million Americans.

As member-owned and -controlled businesses, we are committed to meeting the needs of our members and communities, rather than generating returns for distant investors.

Co-ops like Wild Rice Electric commit in many ways to meeting the needs of our members and building stronger communities. The dollars you pay for your electricity are spent on purchasing your power and delivering it to you safely. Any funds left are reinvested in the co-op through work plan projects that will strengthen our reliability, and in time, returned to you as capital credits. Your dollars circulate close to home, helping to strengthen the local economy.

### Wild Rice Electric follows the 7 Cooperative Principles

1. Voluntary & Open Membership
2. Democratic Member Control
3. Members' Economic Participation
4. Autonomy & Independence
5. Education, Training & Information
6. Cooperation Among Cooperatives
7. Concern For Community



# Cooperative Principles



# STAFF COMMENTS

Director of Finance & Administration

AROUND THE CO-OP ...

by Duane Gunderson

September 4, 2020



## Outages

Sept. 2nd

I always like to date my articles because so much can happen between the time when I write it and when you receive it. First of all, on Wednesday night around 9:30, a cold front came through ushered in by a storm that mainly caused outages from northeast of Fertile to northeast of Fosston. Several poles, including two three phase poles on feeder lines, were broken from the wind and lines were down in many areas from trees. Crews had everyone back on by mid-afternoon but continued to replace broken poles on Friday. Wind was the cause of these outages and lightning strikes had been the culprit for outages the previous two weeks.



## Service area

Speaking of service area, how many of you know just how large our service area is? Many times, when visiting with consumers, they have told me that they didn't realize how large of an area that we serve. If you have received our annual meeting booklets in the past, you may have seen a map of our service area which covers 3,200 square miles, forty miles wide by eighty long. We serve members in all of Mahnomon County and parts of Polk, Norman, Clay, Becker and Clearwater. To help you better visualize this, starting up in the northwest corner of our service area, we go approximately half way between Fertile and Crookston, then south to about ten miles southwest of Hawley, then east to Detroit Lakes taking in the Cormorant Lakes area and skirting DL on the north side, then east serving the Detroit Mountain Ski Lodge area to just past the Height of Land Lake and Toad Lake areas, then north to about ten miles northeast of Fosston. The only towns that we serve are Lengby, Flom, and Naytahwaush.

We serve 14,475 consumers with four thousand miles of overhead line and 505 miles of underground line. The lines consist of 60,907 poles, 13,925 transformers, 637 oil circuit reclosures (which automatically open the line during a fault and reset when the fault is cleared), 1,069 switch huts for routing underground conductor, 157 regulators that help stabilize voltage and many other pieces of equipment to deliver service. We have \$75,754,618 invested in distribution plant. In addition, we have another \$3.4 million invested in transportation and heavy equipment used to build and maintain service. By the way, we just got a new digger truck that cost \$250,000 and took nearly a year and a half for delivery. It will replace the old unit that cost \$208,000 and lasted ten years.



## Co-op month

The reasons I bring up the previous statistics is that October is Co-op month and we have been in business over eighty years starting in 1939. Minnesota was the first state to declare the official Co-op Month proclamation in 1948. The theme this year is "Co-ops Commit: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion." There have been many businesses that were formed as cooperatives, anything from housing to agriculture, telephone to electrical service. Co-ops are owned by the patrons they serve and the net profit is returned to them in the form of patronage capital. Over 834 distribution co-ops like Wild Rice cover 56% of the U.S. land mass and serve more than 20 million American homes, businesses, farms and schools, serving 42 million people in over 2,500 counties. In addition to distribution co-ops like Wild Rice Electric, there are 63 generation and transmission co-ops that generate and deliver power to substations. Minnkota Power Cooperative, headquartered in Grand Forks, is one of those co-ops of which Wild Rice Electric is part owner. Minnkota owns and maintains 18 substations in our area that service us. You may want to know that Minnkota gets approxi-

mately 40% of their power from wind and hydro.



## Coming up

We are using up the last of the old billing forms and will be changing to a new billing form in the next couple of months. The forms are here and the new billing format has been tested and is ready to go. Despite the fact that no one seems to like bills, we hope the new format is easier to understand and provides some additional information on past usage history. Please remember, that if you would rather go paperless, we are more than happy to provide you with this service and for your convenience, we can also automatically charge your bill to your bank account. These conveniences have been very popular, especially with consumers that go south for the winter.

Also, we have been working with Star Energy of Alexandria, MN to complete a new outage mapping system that will integrate with our meters and our "after-hour" call center to report outages and eventually post the area affected by larger outages to our website. The OMS (Outage Management System) will also provide our linemen with outage information via I-Pads and provide us with better outage statistics for reporting and planning purposes. A few years ago, we converted our paper maps to a digital map system and installed an AVL (automatic vehicle location) system. Being able to view all of our lines and the location of our trucks on a computer screen, especially the big screen in our operations department, has proved to be a valuable tool when dispatching during multiple large outages.

It's been good visiting and like you, I will be glad when Covid-19 goes away so we can all return to a more normal life.

Stay safe.

# Co-op Outage Lingo

We know many industries have their own jargon, but we want to turn that jargon into common knowledge. Here are some of the most likely terms Wild Rice Electric uses during a power outage:

**Animal contact:** Outage term to define the cause of an interruption due to birds or animals such as squirrels and raccoons that use the primary distribution paths or landing spots.

**Arc:** The flow of an electric current across a gap between two conductors, terminals or contacts. An arc can result in sparks, loud noise and momentary or sustained outage.

**Blinks:** A momentary outage usually lasting less than 2 seconds.

**Brown outs:** Drop in voltage in electrical power supply, so named because it typically causes lights to dim.

**Back feed:** The ability to route power from an alternate direction.

**Cable fault:** When the insulation of a power cable deteriorates enough that it's no longer able to contain the voltage, causing a short. Basically, it's a hole/crack, burning through the cable.

**Flicker:** A slight fluctuation in the voltage of AC power lines in which a directly visible change in brightness of a light source is noticed.

**Galloping:** Overhead lines that sway extraordinarily under high wind conditions.

**Substation:** An electrical facility containing equipment for controlling the flow of electricity from supplier to user.

**Switch:** A device for making, breaking, or changing connections in an electrical circuit.

**Transformer:** A device used to raise or lower voltage within electric distribution and transmission lines.

**Voltage:** The pressure from an electrical circuit's power source that pushes charged electrons (current) through a conducting loop.

# Do you know watt?

Ever wonder how much energy is consumed by your big screen TV or that old refrigerator in the garage? You might be surprised how the cost of appliances and gadgets found in our homes can add up on an energy bill each month. An easy to use device called a 'Kill A Watt' monitor is a great way for members to see how much energy an appliance is consuming in their homes.

Available at most home improvement or hardware stores, the Kill A Watt monitor is a small, lightweight device that plugs into a typical 120-volt outlet. Simply plug the Kill A Watt monitor into the outlet and the appliance into the Kill A Watt. Leave the

appliance plugged into the Kill A Watt for an hour, and the easy-to-read LED display will show you the actual cost of power consumed by that appliance. The unit will also project the cost of continued use of the appliance by day, week, month or year.



Appliances and electronic devices can still cost you even when they are in the off or standby mode. Called "phantom loads", these products use a certain amount of electricity all the time. Typical "phantom load" items include cell phone chargers, coffee makers, TV's, computers, game consoles, satellite television receiver, or anything off or left in standby mode when not in use. If you have an appliance that is rarely used and draws power even when off, you might consider unplugging it. Using a power strip for computers and other home electronics is a quick way to switch them off easily.

Products such as a Kill A Watt energy monitor or a power strip can help members manage their electric usage. See how small changes can add up to big savings for you and your family.



# USPS Statement of Ownership

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 MAHONOMET, MN 55557

10. Owner (Do not leave blank. If the publication is owned by a corporation, give the name and address of the corporation immediately followed by the names and addresses of all stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, give the names and addresses of the individual owners. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, give its name and address as well as those of each individual owner. If the publication is published by a nonprofit organization, give its name and address.)

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(4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail®)	0	0
c. Total Paid Distribution (Sum of 15b (1), (2), (3), and (4))	10,220	10,048
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(1) Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County Copies (Included on PS Form 3541)	106	104
(2) Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies (Included on PS Form 3541)	20	21
(3) Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail)	0	0
(4) Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means)	60	60
e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 15d (1), (2), (3), and (4))	186	186
f. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and 15e)	10,406	10,233
g. Copies not Distributed (See Instructions to Publishers at page #5)	16	16
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c. Total Paid Distribution (Line 15c + Paid Electronic Copies (Line 17b))		
d. Percent Paid (Both Print & Electronic Copies) (15c divided by 15h times 100)		

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# Ads

## For Sale

Used radiators – MoPar & Chevy. Aluminum intake “we-land” for small block chev, \$50. Small block headers – Wissota mod, 218-935-5110.

International TDG w/ Bucyrus Erie dozer also International plows, 5,7 & 8 bottoms 945-6278 or 356-8505.

LX 885 A New Holland skid steer. Plasma cutter Pak Master 50, 218-945-3161.

2-10.00x20 tires mounted on Ford 2 ton rims only 150 miles on tires. 1980 CX500 cycle make offer. 1979 F-600 w/ metal grain box & hoist, 218-847-4017 lv message.

Used NH 7450 hay bind in good condition also Skid steer attachments: Jenkins brand buckets, Pallet forks, grapples, tree pullers etc., 701 261-3574.

Square bales of mixed hay; Good for deer feed. Near Cotton Lake, \$4 each. Also registered red angus bred heifers. Bred registered. Due April & May. \$1,400 nine to go, 218-841-2688.

Fresh farm chicken eggs, \$2.50 per dozen, .50 cent discount if you bring own container. Lots of colors: green, olive, dark brown, 510-846-3796.

24' of Formica counter top excellent shape. (2 L shaped sections off white in color) Complete w/ Stainless Steel sink & like new Delta faucet. Photo available. \$150 or bo, 218-280-6939.

Jonsered chainsaw 16" bar model 52 as is \$35. Wood box heater, \$50. Luggage carrier to fit trailer hitch, \$75. Circle saw blade & arbor, 701-866-1075.

Parker gravity box w/ 10 ton Minnesota running gear, 218-431-0232 or 218-230-0256.

8ft field cultivar, make offer, 962-3384.

Ruger 7730-06, \$550. Ruger American 30-06, \$375. Browning stainless 270, \$700, 218-847-7824.

Small squared straw & alfalfa bales. 2 Massey Ferguson flex heads. Donahue Trailer, 218-261-0971.

F150, 04, 4-wheel drive, black, ext cab, like new tires \$1500, or OBO, 701-283-5333.

Tree stand used once, two person, \$65. Lacrosse goal used \$45, 218-790-4197.

80 gal. vertical air tank, 2 corner shelves made from panel doors, 1998 Dodge Durango, 1 owner, never been smoked in 278k, 2800, free foos ball table, 260 gal. fuel oil tank, 701-866-4681.

Homemade quilts, different sizes, 218-983-3538.

Carburetor for Allis ChalmersC, 218-596-8383.

5th wheel hitch, like new Reese 16,000 lb capacity \$200. (new\$550) Airplane cowl winter cover for Cessna172-175-180, two tow bars, David Clark headsets, Sigtronics intercom, & misc. airplane cockpit accessories. 651-764-5537.

Old Fanning mill new Fosston model works, \$50, 218-945-6742.

2000 Ford F350 Duely, 7.3 diesel, club cab 4x4, 99K, \$16,500. Kawasaki 300 2x4, \$650. Two 10:00x20 truck tires w/ tubes new take-offs, \$350, 701-541-2814.

Alf gras mixed 4x4 bales some just grass. Also woven wire, steel parts good treated corner posts & A&H push in posts, 218-935-2471.

Jayco 3250 1993 32 ft camper for sale. Clean and most all appliances work. Heater is great. Nice hunting trailer, 1,000. Please text for pictures or call 217-494-4626 or 217-494-7939.

2 – 2004 Honda AquaTrax Jet Ski's – 55 & 60 hrs. on jet ski's, double trailer, double lift w/ canopy \$11,000. Paddle Boat w/cover \$350, 218-850-2979.

Asian style lg dining room table/ 3 leafs & 6 chairs \$1,300. Lg lighted hutch, \$1,400. Lg TV storage center, \$1,200. 4 counter/bar stools \$50/ea. Loveseat \$100, 218-532-7359 lv mess.

2002 Honda Goldwing 13,512 miles. Wavemaster portable training bag, water filled base. 25 foot light pole 97" Farm King Snow blower, 218-280-0011.

Bedroom Furniture: Long Three Sectioned Dresser w/ Mirror (70" L 30" H 19"D) Armoire w/ 2 Bottom Drawers & Cupboard w/ Drawers (40" W 50" H 19"D) \$200 or BO, 218-473-3114.

Twin Troller X10, Trailer, Swivel Seats, Battery on board charger, Rod Holders, Depth Finder, Boat Cover, 218-230-9531.

## Wanted

15" disk blades w/ one-inch hole, 218-935-5110.

Gas powered log splitter, 701-261-4579. Lv mess

Used Remington 870 12 Ga. Shotgun & Linseed Oil. 218-275-9725. Lv mess.

5500 Hesston round hay bailer for parts, 218-847-8777.

You can submit your ad by mail, email, fax or drop off in office. Phone ads will not be accepted.

Fax ads to . . . 218-935-2519

Email ads to . . .  
info@wildriceelectric.com

Mail ads to . . .  
Wild Rice Electric  
P.O. Box 438  
Mahnomon, MN 56557

## Stray Voltage

Minnesota Rural Electric Association (representing rural electric cooperatives), other utilities including Minnesota Power, Otter Tail Power, Xcel Energy, and the Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association (representing municipal power utilities) joined with the Minnesota Farm Bureau, Minnesota Farmers Union, the Cooperative Network and the Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association in developing an important tool for dealing with stray voltage challenges. Also joining in

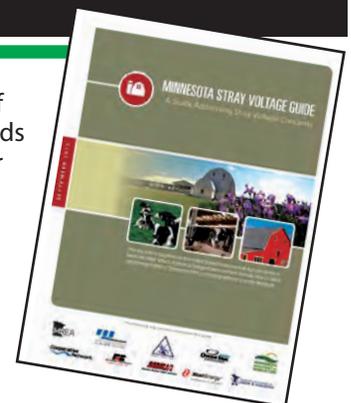
the effort and research were the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry and Department of Agriculture. As a result, the Minnesota Stray Voltage Guide is available for livestock organizations across the state and is being used to address any concerns that may arise.

The presence of stray voltage is a normal result of electricity traveling through utility distribution systems, which must be grounded to earth to ensure safe and reliable operation. However,

if problems occur, the level of voltage present on a farm can reach levels that could impact livestock. Dairy farmers are our member-owners. The Guide provides another tool to ensure any challenges they may be experiencing in this area are being dealt with.

Other states have adopted standard practices to address stray voltage concern, and there has been a lot of research done. This research was used in developing this guide, and has served as the foundation for the develop-

ment of standards in other states. The entire guidebook can be downloaded at [www.minnesotastrayvoltageguide.com](http://www.minnesotastrayvoltageguide.com). There is no cost to download the guidebook. As always we encourage anyone with questions to contact us.



## Cold Weather rule

216B.097 COLD WEATHER RULE; CO-OPERATIVE OR MUNICIPAL UTILITY Subdivision 1. Application; notice residential customer. (a) A municipal utility or a cooperative electric association must not disconnect and must reconnect the utility service of a residential customer during the period between October 15 and April 15 if the disconnection affects the primary heat source for the residential unit and all the following conditions are met:

(1) The household income of the customer is at or below 50 percent of the state median household income. A municipal utility or cooperative electric association utility may (i) verify income on forms it provides or (ii) obtain verification of income from the local energy assistance provider. A customer is deemed to meet the income requirements of the clause if the customer receives any form of public assistance, including energy assistance, that uses an income eligibility threshold set at or below 50 percent of the state median household income.

(2) A customer enters into and makes reasonably timely payments under a payment agreement that considers the financial resources of the household.

(3) A customer receives referrals to energy assistance, weatherization, conservation, or other programs likely to reduce the customer's energy bills.

(b) A municipal utility or a cooperative electric association must, between August 15 and October 15 of each year, notify all residential customers of the provisions of this section.

**Subdivision 2. Notice to residential customer facing disconnection.** Before disconnecting service to a residential customer during the period between October 15 and April 15, a municipal utility or cooperative electric association must provide the following information to a customer:

- (1) a notice of proposed disconnection;
- (2) a statement explaining the customer's rights and responsibilities;
- (3) a list of local energy assistance providers;

(4) forms on which to declare inability to pay; and

(5) a statement explaining available time payment plans and other opportunities to secure continued utility service.

**Subdivision 3. Restrictions if disconnection necessary.** (a) If a residential customer must be involuntarily disconnected between October 15 and April 15 for failure to comply with subdivision 1, the disconnection must not occur;

(1) on a Friday, unless the customer declines to enter into a payment agreement offered that day in person or via personal contact by telephone by a municipal utility or cooperative electric association;

(2) on a weekend, holiday, or the day before a holiday;

(3) when utility offices are closed; or

(4) after the close of business on a day when disconnection is permitted, unless a field representative of a municipal utility or cooperative electric association who is authorized to enter into a payment agreement, accept payment, and continue service, offers a payment agreement to the customer.

Further the disconnection must not occur until at least 20 days after the notice required in subdivision 2 has been mailed to the customer or 15 days after the notice has been personally delivered to the customer.

(b) If a customer does not respond to a disconnection notice, the customer must not be disconnected until the utility investigates whether the residential unit is actually occupied. If the unit is found to be occupied, the utility must immediately inform the occupant of the provisions of this section. If the unit is unoccupied, the utility must give seven days' written notice of the proposed disconnection to the local energy assistance provider before making a disconnection.

(c) If, prior to disconnection, a customer appeals a notice of involuntary disconnection, as provided by the utility's established appeal procedure, the utility must not disconnect until the appeal is resolved.

## 2021 Maximum Energy Assistance Program Income Guidelines

EAP eligibility is based on the three most recent months of income.

Household size	Three Month Maximum	Annual Income
1	\$7,066	\$28,266
2	\$9,240	\$36,963
3	\$11,415	\$45,660
4	\$13,589	\$54,357
5	\$15,763	\$63,054
6	\$17,937	\$71,751
7	\$18,345	\$73,382
8	\$18,753	\$75,013

## Energy Assistance Programs

Becker or Mahnomen County  
**Mahube Community Council**  
 PO Box 747  
 Detroit Lakes, MN 56502  
 218-847-1385

**Mahube Community Council**  
 PO Box 76  
 Mahnomen, MN 56557  
 218-935-5022

**Energy Assistance Program**  
 3303 US Hwy 59  
 Waubun, MN 56589  
 218-473-2711

**Becker County Social Services**  
 712 Minnesota Ave  
 Detroit Lakes MN 56501  
 218-847-5628

**Mahnomen County Social Services**  
 311 North Main  
 PO Box 460  
 Mahnomen, MN 56557

**White Earth Nation Financial Services**  
 PO Box 100  
 Naytahwaush, MN 56566  
 844-282-6580/ 218-935-2359

Clay County  
**West Central Minnesota Communities Action, Inc.**  
 411 Industria Park Blvd.  
 Elbow Lake, MN 56531  
 800-492-4805/ 218-685-4486

**Clay County Social Services**  
 715 11th St No, Suite 502  
 Moorhead, MN 56560  
 218-299-5200/ 800-757-3880

Clearwater County  
**Clearwater Social Services**  
 216 Park Ave NW  
 Bagley, MN 56621  
 218-694-6164

Polk County  
**Inter County Community Council**  
 PO Box 189  
 Oklee, MN 56742  
 218-796-5144/ 888-778-4008  
**Polk County Social Services**  
 612 N Broadway, RM 302  
 Crookston, MN 56716  
 218-281-3127

W. Polk County or Norman County  
**Tri-Valley Opportunity Council**  
 102 N Broadway  
 PO BOX 607  
 Crookston, MN 56716  
 218-281-5832/ 800-584-7020

**Norman County Social Services**  
 15 2nd Ave E  
 Ada, MN 56510  
 218-784-5400/ 833-543-1964

## Heating Sales Tax Exemption

With the start of another heating season, we would like to remind our residential consumers who have electric heat as their primary heating system, that their electric bills are exempt from Minnesota sales tax from November through April.

If you qualify, as determined below, and have not signed a tax exemption certificate previously, please contact our office for details. All certificates signed previously are on record, and no re-filing is necessary. Portions of the sales tax law, which exempts tax from the sale of residential heating fuels, are listed as follows:

Electricity sold for residential use to consumers who are metered and billed as residential heat is exempt from the sales tax for the billing months of November, December, January, February, March and April.

But, if two meters are in place, and one is used solely or primarily to measure heating, then only the power going through that meter is exempt from the sales tax. Electricity measured by the other meter—for lights, appliances, the barn, etc.—is not tax exempt.

The "billing month" is the month the bill is dated regardless of when service is rendered.

Sales to apartment buildings, co-op apartments, condominiums or other

multiple dwelling units with more than four (4) units and having one central heating plant do not qualify for the exemption as they are not metered and billed as residential users.

"Residential user" is a residential customer using heating fuel for general household purposes and includes apartments containing less than five (5) units, fraternity houses, sorority houses, and rooming houses. Apartment units, co-op apartments and condominiums that have their own meter for heating purposes are "residential users" regardless of the number of units in the building.

When electricity is exempt as a heating fuel all other gas or electricity used through the same meter is also exempt for the six (6) month period.

These fuels must be delivered to the residence to be exempt. Sales on firewood are exempt as residential heating fuel whether delivered or picked up by the consumer.

A summer home or cabin is considered a residence and delivery of the above fuels for residential heating use is exempt.

Travel trailers, motor homes, or other recreational vehicles are not considered as a residence so their use of fuel oil, propane gas, and LP gas is not exempt.

## Heating Sales Tax Exemption Certificate

I \_\_\_\_\_ Name Account number

hereby verify that I use 50 percent or more electricity for heating purposes and request that Wild Rice Electric Cooperative, Inc. deduct the 6.875 percent sales tax for those months that are exempt.

Consumers' Signature

Date



### Rural Delight (ISSN 0194 505X)

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Phone: 218-935-2517.

### Wild Rice Electric Co-op, Inc.

*This Institution is an equal opportunity  
provider and employer.*

Phone: Serving you 24 hours  
a day: 800-244-5709

**Office Hours:**

8:00 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.  
Monday- Friday

Website:

[www.wildriceelectric.com](http://www.wildriceelectric.com)

Pay bill 24 hours / 7 days  
a week: 833-250-4481

Also download the Wild Rice Coop  
app for free at your App Store  
of choice, to monitor usage,  
pay your bill and more.

Directors:

Randy Bjornson, Mark Habedank,  
David Hamre, Jim Kaiser, Greg  
LaVoy, Jeff Nornes, Russ Okeson,  
Larry Sollie and Roger Winter.

*The regular scheduled meeting  
of the board of directors is held  
at the Wild Rice Electric office  
on the last Tuesday of each month.*



Kaitlyn and Hannah Obowa work on their fall pumpkin and gourd sales display just north of Mahanomen along Hwy 59. 2020 marks the girls fourth year setting up for sales.