



## BENCO Electric Annual Meeting Held

Over 1,600 members and their families attended the BENCO Electric Annual Meeting at the Verizon Wireless Center in Mankato on Saturday, April 10. Najwa's Catering provided the lunch and Pastor Wesley Hafner of St. Paul & Immanuel Lutheran Churches, Blue Earth, gave the invocation. Mary Guentzel and her Quintet provided the musical entertainment.

Capital credit checks were available for pick-up by members. Checks totaled over \$880,000 and could be picked up by members who received electric service in 1990, 1991 and 2008. Members could also check out load management programs, and pick up their free gift for attending the annual meeting.

During the lunch and business meeting, members heard reports from Board President Gary Stenzel, General Manager Wade Hensel, and CPA Joe Willaert from Eide Bailley. Door prizes were given out.

Directors elected included: Harlan Lanz - District 2; Blake Meshke - District 6; and Duane Ehrich - District 8.

At the organizational meeting following the annual meeting, the board of directors elected the following officers: Blake Meshke - President; Duane Ehrich - Vice President; Harvey Hesse - Secretary; and Harlan Lanz - Treasurer.



# 5 Ways to Spring Into Energy Efficiency

Spring is a perfect time of year to make your home more energy-efficient. Here are five quick tips that will save both energy and money. To learn about additional ways to cut your energy bill this spring, visit [TogetherWeSave.com](http://TogetherWeSave.com).

**1. Seal the cracks and gaps around your home.** Spring may be the right time to put away those storm windows, but it is also a good time to add weather-stripping and caulking around leaky window panes. TogetherWeSave.com shows how easy it is to use a caulking gun to seal up leaks around your house near doors, vents, ductwork and windows.

**2. Change filters regularly.** Furnace and air conditioner filters need to be changed monthly and this can really help lower monthly energy bills. Dirty filters can restrict air flow and reduce the overall efficiency of your cooling system and make it work even harder on hot summer days.

**3. Clean the refrigerator inside and out.** Now is a good time not only to throw out the leftover fruitcake from the holidays, but also to check the temperature settings on your refrigerator. Ideally, a refrigerator's temperature should be between 37 and 40 degrees for maximum operating efficiency. When it's time to replace that old refrigerator, be sure to buy an ENERGY STAR® rated appliance.

**4. Think sun block.** TogetherWeSave.com demonstrates that by pulling the shades on your windows this spring and summer, you could save about \$35 a year. Your local hardware or do-it-yourself store has lots of inexpensive window coverings. Best of all, by blocking the sun, your house will stay cool and comfortable year-round.

**5. Enjoy the spring breezes.** Use a clothesline throughout the warmer months to let the sun and breeze dry clothes naturally. This will reduce both energy and water bills, and add a genuine clean scent to your family's laundry. You can learn more about ways to lower your monthly energy bill by visiting [TogetherWeSave.com](http://TogetherWeSave.com).

# From the Board

Friday, March 26, 2010  
Gary Stenzel, Presided

The board reviewed and approved:

- The minutes of the February 25 board meeting.

- Capital Credits to estates totaling \$3,660.27.

Wade reviewed plans for department head succession.

The attorney reviewed the Whistle Blower Policy and other recent legal work.

Directors' reports were as follows:

Brad reported on the March GRE Board Meeting. The resolution on the NextEra wind purchase was reviewed.

CTV board members reviewed the March CTV board meeting.

Harvey reviewed recent MREA activities and the MREA annual meeting.

Directors attending reported on the MREA annual meeting and the NRECA directors conference.

New business:

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the 2009 Audit as recommended by the Finance and Audit Committee.

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the margin allocation resolution as included with these minutes.

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the 2010 Capital Credit Retirement of \$884,827.00 as per board policy.

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the NextEra Energy Resources, LLC and Wind Energy Purchases resolution.

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve Policy 107, the Whistleblower Policy.

## PCA Update

Actual PCA for April  
\$0.0264

Estimated PCA for May  
\$0.0264

Estimated PCA for June  
\$0.0377

The Power Cost Adjustment (PCA) is due to changes in the monthly wholesale rate from our power supplier, Great River Energy (GRE).

## BENCO ELECTRIC

This newsletter is published monthly by BENCO Electric Cooperative, PO Box 8, Mankato, MN 56002-0008.

**Office Hours:** 8:00 am - 4:30 pm

**Phone:** 387-7963 or 1-888-79BENCO

**Outages/After Hours:** 387-7963 or 1-888-792-3626

Dave Sunderman - *Member Services Manager*

Kathy Gerber - *Editor*

### Board of Directors:

Blake Meshke - *President - District 6*  
Duane Ehrich - *Vice President - District 8*  
Harvey Hesse - *Secretary-MREA Director - District 5*  
Harlan Lanz - *Treasurer - MAC Director - District 2*  
Garfield Eckberg - *District 1*  
Brad Leiding - *GRE Director - District 3*  
John Wells - *District 4*  
Gary Stenzel - *District 7*  
Scott Johnson - *District 9*  
Wade Hensel - *General Manager*  
John C. (Chuck) Peterson - *Attorney*

**Board Meetings:** The last Thursday of each month - members are welcome to contact directors with items of interest or concerns in advance of the meetings.

# BENCO Helps Make Fluorescent Bulb Recycling Easy

Have you been doing your part to save energy and the environment? Using CFLs can really make a difference, and now BENCO Electric can help make it easier to recycle those fluorescent light bulbs.

## Why Recycle?

- CFLs contain a small amount of mercury that can be harmful to the environment. Each bulb contains approximately 5 milligrams of mercury, enough to cover the tip of a pen. Approximately half the mercury in the bulb is vapor and the other half is contained in the powder and the glass.
- Because CFLs contain small amounts of mercury, it is important that they are recycled.
- In Minnesota it is illegal to place them in the garbage.

## Disposing Of CFLs

You can now recycle your used CFLs for free at any Menards store in the state of Minnesota. To find a Menards near you, visit [www.menards.com](http://www.menards.com). You do not need to take a BENCO bill to Menards.

Residential members can also bring in up to 10 fluorescent light bulbs per account and recycle them for free at the following locations.

Please bring a BENCO bill with you to verify that you are a BENCO Electric member.

If you have any questions, please call John Hutchens at 387-7963.

Remember do your part to save the environment and recycle your fluorescent light bulbs at one of these locations or Menards.

## Blue Earth County

### Household Waste Recycling Center

651 Summit Ave.  
Mankato, MN 56001

### April - October

Every Tuesday Noon - 6:00 pm  
2nd Saturday of the month  
8:00 am - 12:30 pm

## DENCO Lighting

626 N Riverfront Dr.  
Mankato, MN 56001

Six days a week, year-round  
9:00 am to 5:30 pm Mon- Fri  
9:00 am - 1:00 pm Saturday

## Menards

1771 Premier Dr.  
Mankato, MN 56001

CFLs only  
all year - during store hours  
Call store for hours:  
507-387-3400

## Nicollet County

### Riverbend Recycling Center

600 Webster  
North Mankato, MN 56003

Seven days a week, year-round  
8 am to 4:30 pm

## Color & Mood

CFLs are available in a wide variety of shades of white light, ranging from yellowish-white to bluish-white light, which allows you to customize the mood of your space. Many CFLs come in "warm" colors to match the yellowish light of incandescent bulbs, but you can also choose "cooler" colors with whiter or bluer light.

### Choosing the right color:

- Light color is measured on a temperature scale referred to as Kelvin (K).

- Lower Kelvin numbers mean the light appears more yellow; higher Kelvin numbers mean the light is whiter or bluer.

- **Most ENERGY STAR qualified bulbs are made to match the color of incandescent bulbs at 2700-3000K (soft white).**

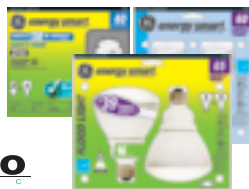
- **For a whiter light, look for bulbs marked 3500-4100K (cool white).**

- **For bluer white light, look for bulbs marked 5000-6500K (daylight).**

MANUFACTURERS COUPON EXPIRES JULY 31, 2010

# SAVE \$3.00

on any GE ENERGY SMART®, ENERGY STAR® qualified compact fluorescent lighting product multi-pack



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**BENCO**  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE



Because of the presence of mercury, CFLs must be recycled. In Minnesota, it is illegal to place them directly in the garbage.

**Consumer:** Coupon valid only on your purchase of any GE ENERGY SMART®, ENERGY STAR® qualified compact fluorescent lighting product multi-pack. You pay sales tax. Coupon may not be reproduced or combined with another offer and is non-transferable. Void if transferred, exchanged, sold or reproduced. Offer limited to one purchase in U.S.A., its territories and military exchanges. **Retailer:** GE will reimburse you the face value plus 8¢ handling provided you have accepted this coupon in accordance with GE's Coupon Redemption Policy. Void where prohibited. Cash value 1/100 of 1¢. For copy of policy and/or coupon redemption mail to: GE Consumer & Industrial Lighting Products, P.O. Box 880650, El Paso, TX 88588-0650.

Coupon expires: July 31, 2010

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**What's Cookin': Apple Coffee Cake**  
**From the Kitchen of: Ruth Hahn**

**Cream** 3/4 c butter and 1 c sugar

**Sift** : 2 1/4 c flour      1 1/2 tsp soda      1/2 tsp salt  
 Add mixture to creamed mixture, plus 3/4 c milk.  
 Fold in 2 c finely chopped apples. Put in greased 13 x 9 pan.

**Topping:**  
 2 T melted butter      3/4 c brown sugar  
 1 1/2 tsp cinnamon      2 T flour      3/4 c chopped nuts  
 Spread over mixture in pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 25 - 30 minutes, until golden brown.

You can receive a \$10 credit on your electric bill, if you send in your favorite recipe and it gets printed in the newsletter. Send your favorite recipes to:  
 Kathy  
 BENCO Electric  
 PO Box 8  
 Mankato, MN 56002

**All Aboard for Coal Creek Station**  
**August 10, 11 & 12**

- Trip includes:
- Accommodations for two nights at the Ramkota
  - Transportation by motorcoach
  - Tour of Coal Creek Station
  - Tour of Falkirk Mine
  - Lunch on tour day
  - Two buffet breakfasts at hotel

Optional sights to see include:

- A city tour
- North Dakota Heritage Center
- Shopping at the mall

**Registration Form - \$125 per person for members**

Names of all guests: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Account #: \_\_\_\_\_

Tour Dates: August 10, 11 & 12

Number of places to reserve: \_\_\_ Members \_\_\_ Non-Members

Room Preference:

\_\_\_ Nonsmoking single (1 bed) \_\_\_ Nonsmoking double (2 beds)

\_\_\_ Smoking single (1 bed) \_\_\_ Smoking double (2 beds)

Send in your payment (by check) with your reservation to Kathy. If you have any questions please call Kathy at 387-7963 or 1-888-792-3626. Trip open to members who have not been to Coal Creek Station.