



**MOR-GRAN-SOU**  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

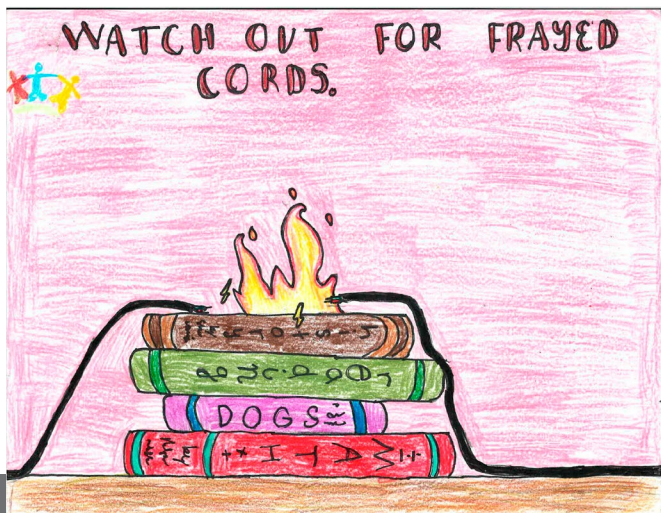
Serving Morton, Grant and Sioux counties

## IN THIS ISSUE:

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- Remembering co-op family
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- Navigating rising costs

**FEBRUARY**  
2026

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



## Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative's **annual safety poster** **contest is back!**

The deadline to enter your safety posters is quickly approaching on Feb. 27!  
Visit our website for more details.







MOR-GRAN-SOU  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

## MANAGER'S MESSAGE:

# We want your feedback



**Jason Bentz**

*Co-General Manager/CEO*

At Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, everything we do begins with you, our members. Your feedback helps shape the way we serve you and plan for the future. That's why we're inviting you to take part in our member satisfaction survey.

We encourage you to take a few minutes to complete the survey, which will be included in your February billing statement. If you prefer, you can also complete it online. Instructions for both options will be included. Whether you choose to respond

by mail or online, your voice will be heard, and you will not receive a follow-up phone call asking for survey participation.


Those who participate in the survey and provide their name will be entered in a drawing to win two Medora Musical tickets.

The short survey gives you the opportunity to tell us how we're doing and where we can improve. The survey only takes a few minutes, but the impact is

long-lasting. We use this data to guide improvements in areas that matter most to you. It also helps us make smart, member-focused decisions.

One example of how your feedback makes a difference is based on the 2024 member survey. We have implemented an e-newsletter, which was indicated as a preferred method of communication from our membership.

We also want to remind you the survey also includes four questions that help us measure our performance through the American Customer Satisfaction Index, which is used across the industry as a benchmark for member experiences.

The better we understand your needs, the better we can serve you, not just today, but in the years ahead. We truly value your time and your input. By sharing your thoughts, you're helping us shape the future of our service. 

# WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU, OUR MEMBERS!

**Your voice, your impact!** Participate in our member satisfaction survey and play a vital role in shaping the future of our services. Complete the survey by filling out the paper copy included with your February bill, visit our website, [morgransou.com](http://morgransou.com), or scan the QR code.

**Paper and online surveys will be accepted through March 1.**



# Remembering past directors and employees

As we look into this new year, we would like to look back on 2025 and pay tribute to those who are no longer with us who were part of the Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative family. With great sadness, we learned past employees Robert (Bob) Hagel, Lavila Meyer and Robert (Bob) Scholl passed away in 2025.



**Hagel**

## Robert (Bob) Hagel

Robert (Bob) Hagel of Mobridge passed away March 25, 2025. Bob married Audrey Ducheneaux in 1956, and they lived in Timber Lake, S.D., later making their home in Fort Yates with their two sons.

Bob enjoyed the western lifestyle, as he rode horses as a young boy and competed in saddle bronc in his later years.

He has two sons and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Bob began working for Mor-Gran-Sou Electric as a lineworker in 1967 and retired in 1994. Additionally, Bob served on the Mor-Gran-Sou Electric board of directors from 1995 to 1996.



**Meyer**

## Lavila Meyer

Lavila Meyer, formerly of Flasher, passed away Feb. 14, 2025. She married Herman Meyer in 1964, and they lived outside of Flasher, where they raised sheep and cattle on the Diamond Lazy M Ranch. They moved to Kansas in 2020.

Lavila was active in many organizations, groups and activities throughout her

lifetime, including the North Dakota Cattlewomen's Association, North Dakota Cow Belles and various others. She was known to always have food for anyone who stopped by and was a wonderful cook. Lavila has two children and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Lavila began working at Mor-Gran-Sou Electric with accounts receivable and as an office machine operator in 1964. She left less than a year later to stay home with her children and help on the ranch. In 1987, Lavila

found herself once again working for Mor-Gran-Sou Electric as a coordinator surveying the membership. Once the survey ended, she was asked to continue in the member services department and later dispatch and engineering. She eventually found herself back in the billing department until she retired in 2008.

"Lavila worked in various positions within the cooperative. Whatever position she held, her dedication to the Mor-Gran-Sou Electric membership was apparent," says Jackie Miller, retired Mor-Gran-Sou Electric employee. "She was also known as quite the multitasker. Lavila would have two pans of buns baked for her family and made apple bars to share with her fellow employees before she got to work at 8 a.m."



**Scholl**


## Robert (Bob) Scholl

Robert (Bob) Scholl of Mandan passed away July 19, 2025. Bob grew up on his family's farm near Raleigh. He married, Kim Goetz, in 1974, and they have two sons, Jessy and Jerry. Bob was known for helping others, including his parents, fellow co-workers and his wife. He had various hobbies, such as leathercraft, hunting, riding

motorcycles, playing cards and traveling with family.

In 1975, the Scholls moved to Steele, where Bob worked as a lineworker for KEM Electric Cooperative. A few years later, they moved to Mandan, where he joined Mor-Gran-Sou Electric as a journeyman lineworker and later as a foreman. He retired from the cooperative in 2015 as an engineering technician.

"Bob was the guy who always brought a positive attitude. He was an excellent lineman and teacher of the lineworker trade," says Jason Helgeson, senior staking technician at Mor-Gran-Sou Electric. "His willingness to always help others on and off the job and his dedication to restoring power and serve our Mor-Gran-Sou Electric members was topnotch."

To their family and friends, please know how much we appreciated their shared time and talents as they served the members of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric. The board of directors and staff express our heartfelt condolences. They will be deeply missed. 

## MESSAGE FROM MEMBER SERVICES: Director nomination details



**Julie Armijo**

Chief of Staff/Member  
Services Manager

As we begin to prepare for Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative's annual meeting on June 11, we have begun to seek director nominations. Our board of directors leads our cooperative with passion and forward thinking to ensure the longevity of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric. If you are interested in running for a director position, learn more below!

### 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 on June 11, the following three board positions will be elected:

- **Grant County** – currently held by Casey Wells (serving his sixth and final three-year term)
- **Mandan Area** – currently held by Robert Leingang (serving his sixth and final three-year term)
- **Sioux County** – currently held by Rodney Froelich (serving his second 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 at the board of directors' meeting scheduled for Feb. 25. This date has been set so there is adequate time for each candidate's biographical information to be included with the notice of meeting sent to the members in May, along with the mail-in ballot for those who are unable to attend the annual meeting in person.


### Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee, which is appointed by Mor-Gran-Sou Electric's directors, met for the first time Dec. 15, 2025. The committee will meet for a final time at 6:30 p.m. CT on Feb. 19.

For a person to be nominated, the member running for a board seat must submit the completed

declaration of candidacy form to Mor-Gran-Sou Electric by 4 p.m. CT on Feb. 12. All qualified and willing candidates who have completed and forwarded the written declaration of candidacy form to the Mor-Gran-Sou Electric office by the Feb. 12 deadline will be included in the list the Nominating Committee will provide to the board.

### Bylaws and resolutions

Under the bylaws, any bylaw amendments or resolutions must be presented to the members in writing in advance of the annual meeting scheduled for June 11. The board of directors has charged the Nominating Committee with reviewing and advising the board of any proposed bylaw amendments and resolutions. Therefore, any proposed bylaw amendments and resolutions should be submitted in writing no later than Feb. 12 and/or they can be presented in person at one of the Nominating Committee meetings. 

### Mor-Gran-Sou Electric annual meeting deadlines

**Feb. 12** – Declaration of candidacy deadline, submitted by 4 p.m. CT to the Flasher or Mandan office

**Feb. 19** – Final Nominating Committee meeting, 6:30 p.m. CT, Flasher

**June 11** – Mor-Gran-Sou Electric annual meeting

#### Contact info

For board nominations, contact the Nominating Committee or Julie Armijo at Mor-Gran-Sou Electric.

Completed board declaration forms, bylaws and resolutions can be mailed to: Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 297, Flasher, ND, 58535-0297 or P.O. Box 1090, Mandan, ND, 58554-7090. Forms can also be emailed to Julie at [jarmijo@morgransou.com](mailto:jarmijo@morgransou.com).

For additional information or questions, call Julie at 800-750-8212, 701-663-0297 or 701-597-3301.

#### Nominating committee:

Jennifer Bonogofsky, St. Anthony  
Jackie Buckley, Mandan  
Rosie Erhardt, Mandan  
Garek Murphy, Fort Yates  
Jim Neubauer, Mandan  
Toby Olin, New Salem  
Donald D. Roth, New Leipzig  
Jeff Striegel, Carson  
Katie Wirt, Selfridge  
Kathy Tokach, board liaison



## MESSAGE FROM OPERATIONS: Navigating rising infrastructure costs



**Gary Fitterer**

*Manager of Operations*

The past five years have been a period of rising costs for everyone, including the electric utility industry. Increased costs are a result of soaring demand for electricity, supply chain challenges, material shortages and increased labor costs. The impact beyond increased infrastructure costs includes more unpredictable timelines.


Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative uses a multi-year work plan, which allows for ample time to order and

secure materials for upcoming projects. Along with cooperatives across the country, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric has not been excluded from the supply chain and material challenges. For instance, the cost of transformers and regulators has doubled in the last five years and lead time to secure them continues to change. Uncertainty in the supply chain causes the operations team to step back and reevaluate projects to

ensure time and money are efficiently utilized.

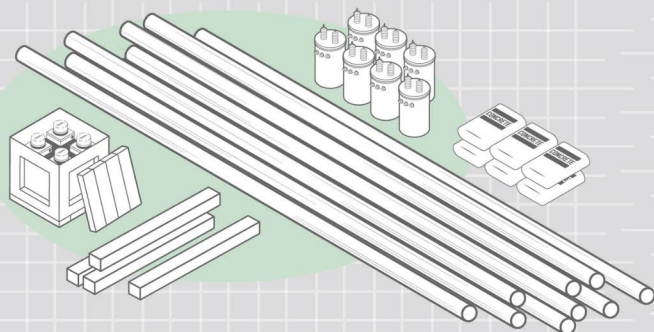
Impacts can be seen all the way down to equipment and materials used by crews every day. Bucket trucks and digger derrick trucks have seen price increases of \$35,000 to \$40,000, and lead time for ordering has increased. The price tag on utility poles has increased by \$300 over the last five years. Underground cable and wire prices have fluctuated over the years and lead times are expected to be six to seven months.

Due to the increase in price and lead times, we know it is important to plan and adapt to changes. Thankfully, we have an effective team of operations personnel and engineers who work efficiently to ensure co-op projects continue, so we can deliver reliable electric services to our members.

We understand prices for essentially everything are rising, and that puts a strain on everyone. As Mor-Gran-Sou Electric navigates rising industry costs, we work closely with our CEO\Co-General Managers and board of directors to explore ways to manage costs for you, our members, while ensuring the reliability of your electric service. 

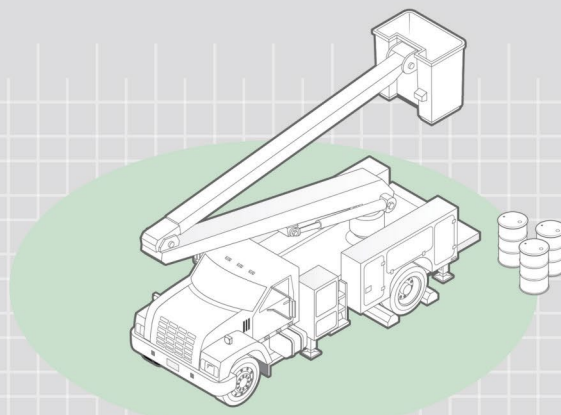
### Infrastructure Costs

Utility poles (wood, steel, composite) .....	<b>+25-40%</b>
Crossarms & braces (steel/wood) .....	<b>+20-35%</b>
Conductor wire (aluminum/copper) .....	<b>+30-50%</b>
Transformers .....	<b>+70-100%</b>
Grain-oriented electrical steel .....	<b>+80-100%</b>
Circuit breakers/reclosers .....	<b>+20-35%</b>



### Fleet Costs

Light trucks .....	<b>+25-40%</b>
Bucket trucks, digger derricks .....	<b>+20-50%</b>
Fuel costs (especially diesel) .....	<b>+20-30%</b>
Maintenance .....	<b>+15-25%</b>





MOR-GRAN-SOU  
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# JOIN MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC FOR THE CAREER TOUR JUNE 24-25

**FROM COAL MINES TO WIND TURBINES, POWER PLANTS TO COOPERATIVES  
DIVE INTO THE HEART OF NORTH DAKOTA'S ENERGY SECTOR**



## ENERGY TOUR

This tour offers experiences and expert insights that will broaden your understanding of energy production and distribution. The tour will also introduce you to professionals who are shaping the future of energy in our state. Learn about different career paths and the pivotal role you could play in powering tomorrow's world.



## WHO CAN ATTEND?

- 2025-26 high school juniors, sophomores and freshmen who are interested in exploring careers in energy.
- Students who are curious about the diverse opportunities within North Dakota's energy sector.
- Open to Mor-Gran-Sou Electric members, and non-members!



## LEARN MORE

Limited spots available. Learn more by visiting [morgransou.com/north-dakota-career-tour](http://morgransou.com/north-dakota-career-tour). The application deadline is May 1.

**NORTH DAKOTA YOUTH  
POWER TOUR**



SAFETY STARTS WITH ME:

## Snow removal around electrical equipment



**Doug Roethlisberger**  
Journeyman Lineworker

Winter is here. As wind, snow and ice conditions continue, members break out their shovels and snowblowers once again. While removing snow and ice, it is important to keep any electrical equipment Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative may have on or near your property in mind.


Equipment, such as meters, pad-mounted transformers, commonly known as the big green box, or even overhead lines, are typically located

near snow removal sites such as homes, shops and businesses.

"Keeping areas like your meter and pad-mounted transformers on your property clear of snow and ice helps us act quicker in the event of an outage," says Doug Roethlisberger, a journeyman lineworker. "But it is important to do so safely."

Here are a few tips to keep in mind this winter as you remove snow:

- **Locate electrical equipment:** Before a heavy snowfall, mark the location of electrical equipment with flags to easily see it when removing snow.
- **Be gentle when clearing snow:** Always use a shovel to clear snow around electrical equipment. Never use a snowblower or plow directly against it.
- **Maintain clearance:** Ensure a safe distance is carefully cleared around pad-mounted transformers, which is typically at least 10 feet in front and 3 feet on the sides.
- **Be aware of overhead lines:** Be mindful of overhead power lines, especially when removing snow from roofs. Never attempt to remove ice from power lines.
- **Report damage:** If you notice any damage to electrical equipment due to snow removal, contact our office as soon as possible. Do not try and fix the damage yourself.

Keeping these tips in mind will help Mor-Gran-Sou Electric ensure safe and reliable electrical services continue to power your homes and businesses. Please remember, if you notice any damage to electrical equipment, contact our office as soon as possible at 800-750-8212. 

# COOPERATIVE SCHOLARSHIPS

THE APPLICATION DEADLINE IS ON FEB. 13.



Various scholarships are available including lineworker, mechanic and more! Scan the QR code or visit **morgransou.com** for more information and to apply.





MOR-GRAN-SOU  
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## MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS Nov. 19, 2025

The board of directors meeting of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative was held on Nov. 19, 2025, at the Mandan Service Center. Chair Steve Tomac called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. A quorum was present. Also present were Mor-Gran-Sou Electric co-General Managers/CEOs Jason Bentz and Travis Kupper, Chief Financial Officer Alex Craigmile, Manager of Operations Gary Fitterer, Chief of Staff/Member Services Manager Julie Armijo, Interim General Counsel Andrew Fergel and Administrative Assistant Samantha Fischer.

**Consent agenda:** The consent agenda was approved as presented.

**Strategic items:** Bentz and Kupper presented the co-general managers' report, which included updates on Basin Electric Power Cooperative, Western Area Power Administration and other items. Several additional Basin Electric reports and board documents were available for review.


**Department reports:** Craigmile provided a financial report. Fitterer reviewed the operations report, which

detailed the projects currently being handled by line crews and conferences he has attended. Armijo provided a member services report on 2026 member events and cooperative programs. Chief Information Officer Charlie Dunbar provided the board with a written report. Fergel provided a general counsel report on legal topics and projects, such as board policy review.

**Action items:** Action items were discussed and resolved.

**Discussion/general information:** The board discussed the preliminary operating budget, bylaw amendments and other items.

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

**Next meeting date:** The next meeting is at 10 a.m. on Feb. 25 in Mandan. 

**Members, if you have  
received a capital credit  
retirement check, please  
cash it as soon as possible.**

**Call our office with any questions.  
800-750-8212, 701-663-0297 or 701-597-3301.**



MOR-GRAN-SOU  
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UNDERGROUND LINE LOCATES  
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/CEO .....Travis Kupper  
Co-GM/CEO .....Jason Bentz

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