

Sue Freeland retires

Sue Freeland began as a data processor with Menard Electric at just 19 years old. “I didn’t even know who ran the ad in the paper when I answered it,” she says. Lucky for us she took a chance, and the co-op and the job suited her just right.

Sue is currently our highest seniority employee, with more than 43 years of service. “The purpose of my job hasn’t changed a whole lot over the years. I still enter payments and pay bills like in the beginning. But the job itself has changed as the technology has changed,” she says.

In the beginning Sue used an IBM key punch machine and entered meter reads and payments. “Members read their own meters then and would send in small cards with the information and their payments,” she says. Today our meters are read automatically through

the powerlines and payments are input into a computer system.

Never one to shy away from the changes, Sue says, “I have always enjoyed learning the new technology as it came along. It is difficult at the time but I like working through it. I’ve always liked that part of the job.”

Almost 20 years ago, the co-op officially paired up Sue and Chris Hinton into an Accounting Department. Chris says, “Sue has been an invaluable employee in the data processing and accounting departments for a very long time. Her knowledge and experience have been key to the successful daily operations of Menard Electric’s back office. I was lucky to have her in my department. She will be greatly missed.”

So what lies on the horizon for Sue? She plans to do more of the things she



enjoys, including walking her “step-dogs,” hiking, practicing yoga and catching up on her reading. She also hopes to learn the new “skill” of sleeping later each morning.

A lover of travel and motorcycle rides, Sue wants to visit South Dakota, Washington and Florida this year, as COVID will allow.

Stay cozy at home

Baby, it’s cold outside! When you are feeling chilly at home, here are several ways you can keep comfortable without turning up the thermostat.

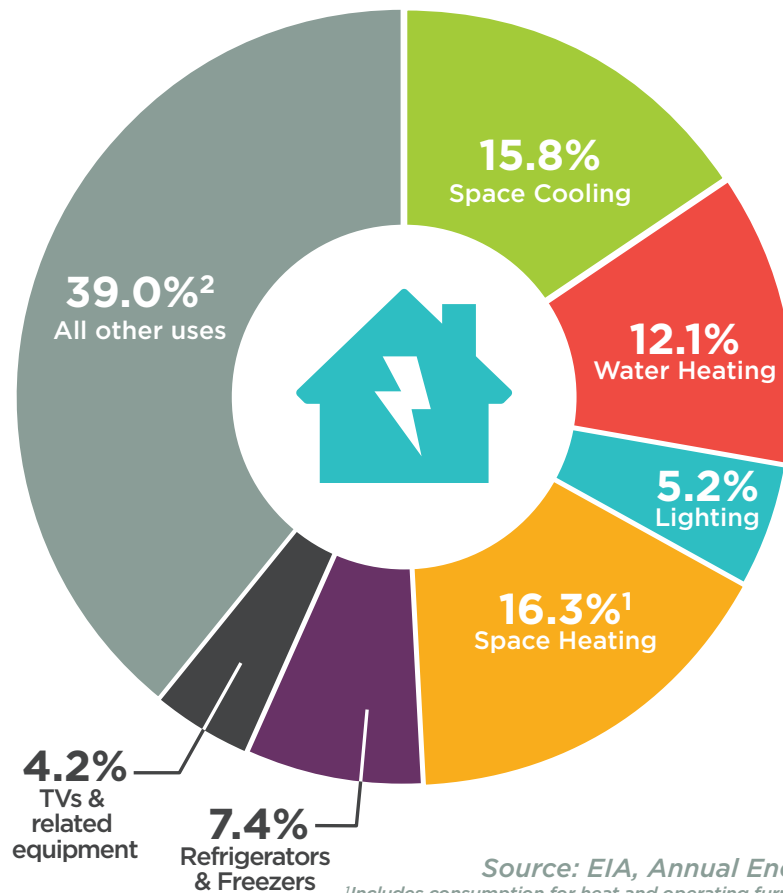
- Whether you are experiencing extremely cold winter temps or you simply “run cold,” an electric blanket can deliver quick warmth. Electric blankets can include a variety of features, like timers and dual temperature settings (if your cuddle buddy prefers less heat).
- One of the easiest ways to stay cozy is to keep your feet warm. Our feet play a critical role in regulating body temperature, so when your feet are warm, your body automatically feels warmer. Try a pair of comfortable wool socks or house slippers to stay toasty.
- On winter days when the sun is shining, take advantage and harness natural warmth from sunlight. Open all curtains, drapes and blinds in your home to let the sunshine in—you’ll be able to feel the difference.



Electric blankets deliver quick warmth and include a variety of features like timers and dual temperature settings. Photo: Abby Berry, NRECA

How Americans Use Electricity

The latest data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration shows the combined use of clothes washers and dryers, computers, dishwashers, small appliances and other electrical equipment (noted as “all other uses” below) accounts for nearly 40% of electricity consumption in American homes.



Source: EIA, Annual Energy Outlook 2020

¹Includes consumption for heat and operating furnace fans and boiler pumps.
²Includes miscellaneous appliances, clothes washers and dryers, computers and related equipment, stoves, dishwashers, heating elements, and motors.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Replace standard power strips with advanced power strips to save energy. Advanced power strips look like ordinary power strips, but they have built-in features that are designed to reduce the amount of energy used by standby electronics that consume energy even when they're not in use (also known as phantom load).

The National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) estimates that the average home loses \$200 annually to energy wasted by phantom load.

Source: www.nrel.gov

RELAX

UNPLUG

SLOW
DOWN

BREATHE

TAKE IT
EASY

MEDITATE

ENJOY
LIFE

HAVE
FUN

SMILE
😊

Make
Things
Easy!

Sign up in January to be
entered into a drawing
for one of four
\$25 Gift Cards

We know you are busy and finding time to make a payment online, call our office with a credit card, mail a check, or drop off your payment can all be inconvenient. Forgetting a payment can lead to late fees and possible service interruptions. We don't want that!

Sign up for our Automatic Payment Service to process your payment from your checking or savings account on the 10th, 17th or 24th of each month. You'll still receive a bill each month to know how much will be deducted.

Sign up on the back of your payment stub this month and never worry about forgetting to pay, possible mail delays, or other payment snafus again!



Board highlights

For full minutes visit menard.com or contact the office.

October 27, 2020

- Present in person and remotely were Directors Frye, Goetsch, Martin, McMillan, Patrick, Ryan & Tate; Manager Anker & Attorney Charles Smith. Directors Holloway & Worner absent. Also present in person for budget presentations were all Staff department heads.
- Approved Consent & Crossing Agreement between Co-op & Glacier Sands Wind Power, LLC to accommodate counterparty's development in Mason Co.
- Staff & Manager presented department budgets.
- Anker: Reviewed monthly and YTD financial operating report, balance sheet & financial trends. Operating Margins YTD as of 9/30 were \$1,471,993 compared to \$1,410,165 last year; equity at 42.26%; 12-mo TIER 2.78 and DSC 1.75. Reviewed Member Svcs report w/ 832 past due notices sent, generating 265 cut-off tickets & \$8,451 in write-offs;
- Ops report w/ 55 incidents affecting 557 members total w/ largest outage impacting 348 members; Safety report - no illnesses or injuries; IT Security Report and a summary of the Hurricane Assistance provided to Jeff-Davis EC.
- Goetsch: Gave AIEC report.
- Martin: Gave Prairie Power Inc. report.
- Board Executive Session held; reconvened.
- Next board meeting 11/24/2020.



*Peggy Ogden,
Receptionist*

Green Chili

- 2-3 pounds pork roast
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 5 small cans chopped green chilis
- 3 cans Rotel diced tomatoes with green chilis
- 1/2 15-ounce jar of sliced & chopped jalapeno peppers with juice
- Cilantro, chopped, to taste
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Tostado chips, optional
- Shredded Colby Jack or Mexican blend shredded cheese, optional

Cook pork roast (oven or crock pot). Keep broth and shred pork. Add onion, green chilis, tomatoes and cilantro. Add salt and pepper. Simmer for an hour on the stovetop or for a few hours in a Crockpot on low. Serve with chips and top with cheese.

Note: This chili tied for People's Choice winner at a Menard Electric employee charity chili cookoff lunch. Not to brag, but our employees have pretty good taste, so this recipe is a keeper.



WINTER WEATHER

CAN BRING POWER LINES DOWN



DID YOU KNOW:

STAY WHERE YOU ARE

You've just been in an accident involving a downed power line. Your first instinct might be to get out and run, but that could cost you your life. In most cases, the safest place to be is inside your car or truck. Wait there until electric utility workers deenergize the power. If your car is on fire or you see smoke, escape as safely as possible by making a clean, solid jump out and hop away with both feet together as far as you can. Warn others not to approach the scene.



- That downed power lines are extremely dangerous and even deadly?
- The current could spread throughout the ground and anything touching the ground?
- Stray voltage spreads like ripples on a pond?
- If you step from one “ripple” (voltage) to another you could be electrocuted?
- Downed lines could be hiding under standing water, ice or debris?

Learn more at:

