



# Capital Electric

COOPERATIVE

## APRIL 2025

As the prevalence of substance abuse in local communities continues to increase, organizations such as the Heartview Foundation are expanding facilities and services to keep our citizens healthy and safe.



**"My life before treatment was total chaos. I felt lost, didn't belong. Today, I feel good and I have a plan."**

*The Heartview Foundation's team of professionals collaborates to share and learn from each other as they maximize the quality of care.*

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The Heartview Foundation has 180 employees, including doctors, licensed addiction counselors, mental health professionals, nurses and residential staff, who supervise patients 24/7.

## Heartview Foundation focuses on creating strong community

BY WES ENGBRECHT

**A**s Capital Electric Cooperative members and North Dakotans, we care for our families and neighbors. Helping people who experience physical and mental health issues is vitally important. Organizations such as the Heartview Foundation are available to assist those dealing with addiction and mental health issues.

The Heartview Foundation story is one of care and support, serving residents of North Dakota for more than 60 years. With its beginnings as an alcohol treatment center, it continues to expand services today as community needs change.

The serious challenges of substance abuse and the resulting mental health issues are broad-reaching needs.

"Current research reflects approximately 20% of people in our country experience some type of substance abuse issue. This number has increased from 10% in the past decade. This is more than a modest increase," says Heartview Foundation CEO Kurt Snyder.

"We currently serve 650 clients with 180 professional employees," he continues. "More than 1,000 are treated during the year. Most are treated on an outpatient basis, but we also have residential services, where staff are working 365 days a year to care for clients."

**"Before treatment, life was unmanageable. I was doing whatever I could to get to my next high. Unfortunately, I resorted to stealing from loved ones and taking advantage of those close to me. Now that I'm sober, I no longer have to live in shame. Life has done a 180. I get to live a life that I am proud of, and I don't have to hurt people in the process."**

One of the most frequently asked questions relating to Heartview's services is "What types of addictions and health issues are treated?" Today's answer is much different than 60 years ago. Due to the increased availability of illicit drugs, complex addiction issues have skyrocketed.



**"Before I was alone, vulnerable, scared and lost. Now I have faith things are going somewhere. I have a sense of direction, confidence in my sobriety and myself."**

A short list of these drugs includes alcohol, opiates (including fentanyl), heroin, methamphetamine and prescription drugs. Information regarding tobacco and nicotine usage is also available to help. All Heartview facilities, Bismarck/Mandan, Dickinson and Cando, can treat people with addiction-related mental disorders as well.

The opioid epidemic has reached all areas of society. While alcohol addiction is still the primary treatment need, opiates comprise approximately 28% of those treated at Heartview. This number increases consistently and is the reason it is renovating the facility in Bismarck to work with the 280 clients experiencing this form of addiction.

"The needs are growing, plus we want to provide better efficiency and privacy during treatment," Snyder says.

While there are still various types of opioid addiction in our area, fentanyl use has increased the most. Fentanyl is more powerful than other opiate and is usually the drug of choice as addicts move beyond a prescribed painkiller, such as oxycontin.

The use of methadone as an opiate treatment has had a positive effect on these clients.

"Methadone treatment reduces a 61% overdose rate to 1%," Snyder says. "There is hope. Even when it feels hopeless, you can't give up."

Seventy-five percent of Heartview clients are unemployed, while 25% are homeless. They frequently don't have insurance, so they require financial assistance to receive care. They often have lost everything, including their families. Heartview staff provide career and living skills to reintroduce them back into society. Community financial support makes these services possible.

Professionals and other working members of society make up another segment of the clients.

"Many times, the stigma of their substance abuse keeps them from asking for help, as they don't want co-workers and others to know. Many times, the struggles they face interfere with their families and home life. This is often the reason they eventually seek care," Snyder says.

As we look deeply into the addiction issue, one troubling fact is children who are introduced to drugs at a young age will have an extremely difficult time with recovery.

"Drugs alter important parts of the brain, and it



**Wanda**, a licensed addiction counselor at Heartview Foundation in Cando, works with an equine therapy horse. Heartview Foundation - Cando is the only adult substance use treatment facility in North Dakota to offer equine-assisted growth and learning.

becomes programmed into it. Throughout the young person's life, it will continue to be an obstacle to living a normal life," says Heartview's Director of Communications and Public Affairs Jennifer Greuel.

Health care facilities have seen a significant increase in patients requiring behavioral health intervention. Substance abuse and mental health are intricately connected. Anxiety or depression can result in substance use and abuse, while substance abuse can result in those mental health conditions. According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 43% of those in substance abuse treatment also have a mental health disorder.

Electric cooperatives are built on the concept of community and keeping members healthy and strong. Capital Electric Cooperative's Operation Round Up program has funded many community betterment organizations over the years, including Heartview. Our co-op members and employees are involved in positions of care and healing, and they participate in volunteering opportunities to help others.

To learn more about the Heartview Foundation, the services it provides and how you can help, visit [www.heartview.org](http://www.heartview.org) or call 701-222-0386. Heartview will provide you with the care you and your loved ones need, along with volunteer opportunities to make life better for others. ♻️



## University of Mary achieves success

**T**he University of Mary continues to solidify its reputation as one of the nation's premier nursing schools, with its 2024 graduates achieving a 100% pass rate on the rigorous American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) certification exam. This extraordinary achievement places the graduates of the University of Mary's Larry and Eileen Weigum Division of Nursing at the Saint Gianna School of Health Sciences well above the national average and underscores the institution's unwavering commitment to academic and clinical excellence.

The AANP FNP certification exam is a highly regarded, competency-based assessment that validates a nurse's clinical knowledge and professional expertise in providing care to individuals and families across the lifespan. Passing this exam grants nurses the FNP-C credential, a critical step toward licensure and clinical practice. According to the latest data from the AANP certification board, the national average pass rate for this exam stands at 73%, making the University of Mary's perfect pass rate even more impressive.

### A program built for success

The 100% pass rate reflects the exceptional quality of education and training provided by the University of Mary's nursing program. The FNP program is distinguished by its rigorous, evidence-based curriculum, which seamlessly integrates advanced clinical practice, leadership development and health care policy. The program is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate

Nursing Education, ensuring the highest standards of academic excellence and professional preparation.

"Our graduates' remarkable success on the AANP certification exam is a testament to the caliber of our program, the dedication of our faculty, and the commitment of our students," said Dr. Billie Madler, associate dean of nursing at the University of Mary. "At Mary, we prioritize a holistic approach to nurse practitioner education, combining cutting-edge clinical training with the Benedictine values of servant leadership and compassionate care. This achievement demonstrates that we are equipping our graduates with the knowledge, skills and ethical foundation needed to excel in their careers and make a profound impact on their communities."

### Exceeding national standards


The University of Mary's FNP program ensures students gain superior hands-on experience with over 1,000 hours of clinical training, well beyond national minimum requirements. Students work alongside experienced practitioners in primary care, specialty care and rural health care settings, preparing them to transition confidently into their roles as nurse practitioners.

Faculty members, who are practicing nurse practitioners and health care leaders, provide expert mentorship and individualized instruction. The university's commitment to small class sizes, in-person and hybrid learning opportunities, and strong faculty-student relationships further supports student achievement and career readiness.

"This accomplishment is not just a milestone for our graduates, but a reflection of the University of Mary's enduring commitment to excellence in nursing education," Madler said. "We are proud to be shaping the next generation of nurse practitioners who will lead with skill, integrity and a deep sense of service."

### Leading the way

As FNP-C credentialed professionals, University of Mary graduates are prepared to diagnose and manage conditions, prescribe treatments and educate patients on disease prevention. With the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projecting a 46% increase in nurse practitioner jobs by 2033 and *U.S. News & World Report* ranking the profession as the No. 1 job in America for 2025, these graduates enter a thriving field with abundant opportunities to make a meaningful impact.

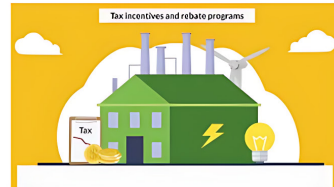
For more information about the University of Mary's nursing programs, visit [www.online.umary.edu/FNP](http://www.online.umary.edu/FNP). 



#1 Cost Pressures



#2 Billing Structure Explained



#3 Cost Savings Options

## Videos explain rate process

Over the past three years, Capital Electric Cooperative has instituted rate increases based on several factors. High inflation, higher interest rates and increased equipment and infrastructure costs resulted in the need for higher rates.

During this process, we have done our best to institute equitable rate changes for all Capital Electric members. Those who require higher electricity demand have seen more significant increases. We have worked hard to communicate these rate changes along the way.

At the beginning of the changes, we created three videos explaining the rate increase, the change in the billing process and how we can help reduce your monthly electricity costs.

We encourage you to watch these videos as a reminder of how the process works from start to finish. The three videos can be found at [www.capitalelec.com](http://www.capitalelec.com).

### Video 1 – Cost pressures

To maintain the level of reliability our members expect, we needed to provide the same materials and services. Material shortages during COVID-19 resulted in up to 50% cost increases.

Capital Electric counts on contractors to build and bury electric lines. The competition and demand for those services resulted in higher costs as well. Our generation and transmission electricity providers have also passed along their cost increases.

An explanation of on-peak demand costs is also included in this video.

### Video 2 – Billing structure explanation

Prior to 2023, your Capital Electric monthly invoices reflected two components, the monthly base charge and usage charge. The monthly base charge helped cover a portion of the fixed costs of running the cooperative while the remainder of the needed revenue was raised from the usage charge. The usage charge, or kilowatt-

hours, is based on the total energy consumed over time.

As changes were necessary to cover increased costs, a new component that could more accurately index to our expenses was introduced. We labeled this component the grid capacity charge. This charge focused on each member's maximum draw from the electric grid over the most recent 12 months. The funds collected from this component are used to pay for the poles, wires, transformers, and other components that allow us to deliver energy to your home or business.

Later, the on-peak demand charge was added. This allows us to pass along the cost we recognize from our wholesale provider for the highest half-hour of demand each month. To help members control the costs associated with on-peak demand, we began notifying members when there is a high probability of the peak occurring. By reducing consumption during those times, members can positively influence their bill.

### Video 3 – Cost-savings options

During this process, our energy services department worked with members on how to reduce their costs. This video explains the various opportunities to save.

As always, we are working hard to provide equitable rates for all members to cover our costs and maintain excellent reliability.

We need our power to heat our homes and keep the lights on, and that is our focus. We thank you for your understanding as we move forward.

Visit <https://capitalelec.com/cost-pressures-and-rateincreases> to review the relevant rate change data or call us at 701-223-1513. ☎





# CELEBRATE

the Power Behind Your Power.

Lineworker Appreciation Day | April 14



- Learn about co-op issues.
- Elect board directors to represent you.
- Enjoy a free meal.

**Save the date for  
your annual meeting**

**June 10  
Bismarck Event Center**

## Online voting for directors

**Sign up for SmartHub to vote online!**

In addition to traditional in-person voting at our annual meeting June 10, Capital Electric Cooperative will again offer online voting through SmartHub, a web and mobile app that allows members to access their bill, manage their account and monitor electric usage. To register for the free resource, visit [www.capitalelec.com](http://www.capitalelec.com) and click on "New User? Register to use SmartHub!" at the top of the home page. You will need to enter your billing account number, last name and email address to sign up.





# STAY SAFE WITH LARGE EQUIPMENT

As spring planting begins, Capital Electric Cooperative urges farmers to be safe.

Overhead power lines are necessary to deliver electricity to hardworking farmers and ranchers, but those same power lines can also be deadly if not treated with respect. While focusing on the field and your machinery, also watch for power poles, lines and other electrical equipment.

## Size of equipment

- **If you have purchased new equipment, be aware of antennas or other attachments that may pose new hazards.** Newer, larger equipment may no longer clear a power line. In addition, shifting soil may also affect whether or not machinery avoids power lines from year to year.
- **Power lines may sag over the years.** If power lines on your property are sagging, contact your electric cooperative to repair the lines. Never try to move a power line on your own.

## Be aware

- **Observe your surroundings.** Always check above and around before moving or raising equipment.
- **Plan your route.** If there's any doubt equipment will clear a power line, opt for an alternative route.
- **Keep a distance.** Always keep equipment at least 10 feet away from power lines and poles. Sprayers can often reach as high as 12 feet in the air.

- **Keep it lowered.** Always lower equipment extensions, portable augers or elevators to their lowest possible level before moving or transporting them. Folding and unfolding should be done well into the field, not at the field's edge, which could have power lines running next to it. Don't raise augers near a power line.
- **Take over steering.** Don't rely on auto-steer around power lines and poles.

## Use a spotter

- **Avoid moving large equipment alone.** Have someone watch as you move equipment to ensure you are clear of power lines.

## Educate the crew

- **Make sure you, your family and employees know the location of overhead power lines, and use routes to avoid the lines when moving equipment.** Do this every year, as equipment sizes and soil conditions may change.

## Look around, too

- **Overhead power lines are not the only electric hazard on the farm.** Pole guy wires, used to stabilize utility poles, are grounded. However, when one of the guy wires is broken, it can become charged with electricity. If you break a guy wire, call the cooperative to fix it. Don't do it yourself. ⚡

The regular meeting of the board of directors of Capital Electric Cooperative was held on Feb. 28. All directors were present.

**Also present were:** Manager Paul Fitterer, Business Manager Luke Steen, Operations Manager Jeff Holzer, Engineering Services Manager Greg Owen, Energy Services Manager Josh Schaffner, Manager of Communications and IT Wes Engbrecht and Attorney Zachary Pelham of Pearce Durick PLLC, who acted as recording secretary.

**Financial Review:** Prior to the board meeting, Directors Kyle Tschosik and Sara Vollmer reviewed the January check register and expenditures. They advised that all checks and expenditures were in order. The financial review was approved as presented.

**Management Reports (Business Department, Operations Department, Engineering Services, Energy Services and Communications/IT):**

**Business Department Report:** Steen presented the January financial and statistical report to the board.

Revenue was ahead of budget for January, as \$4,379,478 was generated in comparison with the budgeted figure of \$4,337,995 (favorable variance of \$41,482 or 1%).

Capital Electric's January net load factor was just ahead of budget by 0.49%.

The operating margin for January was 177,284, ahead of the budgeted amount of \$137,962. The total margin for January was \$178,284, which was ahead of the budgeted \$142,873.

Capital Electric began billing 14 new services in January, bringing our active services to 22,536 versus 22,247 at this time last year, or a net increase of 289 accounts over the last 12 months.

The cash flow statement as of Jan. 31 was reviewed.

**Estate Retirements:** Following review of the financial condition of the cooperative, nine estate payments totaling \$5,398.72

were authorized.

**Lincoln Franchise Agreement:** Fitterer reviewed the proposed electric franchise agreement. Following discussion, the board accepted and executed the agreement as presented.

**Operations Report:** Holzer reviewed the written report from the operations department. Holzer reported annual line inspections were nearing completion, connection of new residential services continued and monthly substation inspections resulted in discovery of minor repairs needed at the Sterling substation.

**Safety Report:** There were no lost-time accidents since the last board meeting. The North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC) safety instructor conducted first-aid/CPR training in February.

**Engineering Services Report:** Owen reviewed the written report from engineering services. Four work orders were completed in January. Owen reported on ongoing and upcoming projects, including completion of three new service lines, continued work to convert overhead lines to underground lines at the Brownsville subdivision and work on single-phase distribution for the residential buildout at the Summit Point subdivision.

**Wildfire Mitigation Plan:** Owen reviewed a draft wildfire mitigation plan.

**Energy Services:** Schaffner reviewed the energy services report. Seventeen service orders were completed in January. Schaffner reported on work by the department in resolving heating service calls, supporting the co-op booth at the 2025 Agri-International conference and legislative work with NDAREC.

**Physical Inventory:** Schaffner reported completion of the 2024 energy services department year-end inventory. The inventory was approved as presented.

**Two Track Malting:** Fitterer reviewed the loan for rural development and stated documentation had been received and reviewed. It was approved to execute the

loan documents.

**Communications and IT:** Engbrecht reviewed the communications and IT report. Engbrecht reported on upcoming features in the local pages of *North Dakota Living*, the successful employee engagement day recently held, the upcoming Nominating Committee meeting and work to engage the township officers association.

**Strategic Planning:** Fitterer reviewed and summarized efforts and progress to achieve the goals identified during strategic planning. Following discussion, it was moved to renew the resolution to balance infrastructure needs with rising costs as presented.

**Procedures:** Fitterer reviewed a proposed procedure for management/board travel guidelines.

**Basin Electric Power Cooperative:** Fitterer reported on Basin Electric matters.

**Central Power Electric Cooperative:** Dave Charles reviewed Central Power Electric's February board meeting.

Charles was elected as Capital Electric's director to Central Power's board. Vollmer was elected as the alternate director to Central Power's board. All directors will be voting delegates at Central Power's annual meeting in March.

**Industry Update:** Fitterer reviewed materials related to power markets and general cooperative news.

**NDAREC:** Vilhauer reviewed statewide matters. Fitterer reviewed the information from the Member Advisory Committee meeting.

**National Rural Electric Cooperative Association:** Fitterer reported on the upcoming Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C.

**National Information Solutions Cooperative (NISC):** Fitterer reported on NISC's annual meeting.

**Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC):** Fitterer reviewed proposed bylaws changes that would change the makeup of the CFC board. ☺

## CAPITAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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Website: [www.capitalelec.com](http://www.capitalelec.com)

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Deon Vilhauer, Pres. ....	Bismarck
Dave Charles, V. Pres. ....	Bismarck
Kyle Tschosik, Sec.-Treas. ....	Bismarck
Lyndon Anderson, Asst. Sec.-Treas. ....	Baldwin
Greg Dehne .....	Bismarck
Dwight Wrangham.....	Lincoln
Kayla Pulvermacher.....	Lincoln
Sara Vollmer .....	Wing
Bret Weiland.....	Bismarck

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TROUBLE CALL: 701-223-1513

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