

member connection

Assistance sought in locating former Steele-Waseca members

Capital credit checks for the following former Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric members have been returned to the co-op because their mailing addresses are no longer accurate.

If you know any of the following former members and can provide information about them, please call Teresa Hertle at the Steele-Waseca office during regular business hours.

Amundson, Lloyd H.	Waldorf
Bigelow, Jami	Claremont
Borchert, Roger R./May L.	Aitkin
Canterbury, John	Faribault
Dusbabek, Catherine	Faribault
Evenson, Robert D.	Owatonna
Jacobsen, Mr. & Mrs. Curtis C.	Owat.
Johnson, Joe E.	Ellendale
Johnson, Karen	Ellendale
Jones, Jerry or Sally	Waterville
Jones, Wilfred J.	Faribault

Kane, John or Betty	Faribault
Kenevan, Casey G.	Canada
Kirby, Donald	Faribault
Klocek, Mark	Wells
Kottner, William or James	New Richland
Larson, Carol L.	Owatonna
Malecha, Lawrence D.	Faribault
Martin, Tina	Garden City
Meyer, Carmen O. S.	New Richland
Moen, Jason	Claremont
Osborne Jen, Jodi	Austin
Parmelee, Mr. & Mrs. Michael	Faribo
Petersen, Mr. & Mrs. Ronald M.	Dundas
Quiram, Scott	New Richland
Reece, Richard L.	Northfield
Rowe, John R.	Owatonna
Schewe, Herbert C.	New Richland
Smith, Michael R./Teresa M.	Faribo
Stevermer, Mr. & Mrs. Eric E.	Faribo
Stoltz, Paul	Blooming Prairie
Swanson, Craig A.	Blooming Prairie
Ulrich, Holly	Faribault

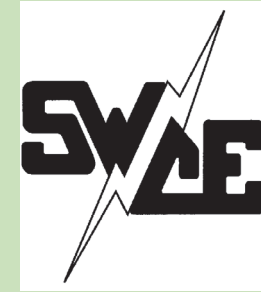
(Tree care tips continued from Page 5)

that dries for a short period will allow adequate oxygen to permeate the soil.

After your tree has been established in your yard for two years the roots will be established. This will allow your tree to withstand a wider range of water conditions on its own because it has proper root structure.

(Courtesy: Steele County Soil and Water Conservation District)

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's line crews in March and April will be conducting their yearly inspection of the co-op's power lines. The co-op services the lines up to the meter pole on member residences, so it may be necessary for Steele-Waseca trucks to enter driveways during line inspections. The yearly check is mandated by the co-op's insurance provider. Thank you for your cooperation. 19719



the power of human connections

sparks

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

a monthly newsletter from Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric

March 2018

inside connections

- 2** Manager Connection
- 3** What to consider when purchasing an electric vehicle
- 4** Cookin' Connection
SWCE community solar update
Sparks in brief
Steele County Tip Line
- 5** Tree selection and placement tips
- 6** Ad Connection
4-Seasons Vacations
- 7** Ad Connection
Cogeneration and Small Power Production
Daylight saving time reminder
- 8** SWCE seeking former members
SWCE line crews conducting yearly inspection
Steele County Food Shelf
Hometown Sampler

calendar of events

March

- 2** Dr. Suess' birthday
National Read Across America Day
- 3** "The Star-Spangled Banner" made U.S. national anthem in 1931
- 11** Daylight saving time starts
- 17** St. Patrick's Day
- 20** First day of Spring
- 25** Palm Sunday

Grandparents for Education Benefit Lenten Fish Fry

All you can eat
Supports Grandparents for Education (GFE)
Includes fried or baked fish plate, vegetables, mashed potatoes with country gravy, coleslaw, roll, milk, and coffee.

Friday, March 9, 2018
5:00 PM to 7:00 PM

Owatonna KC Hall & Lounge

820 South Elm Avenue, Owatonna
Tickets in advance \$10, at the door \$11, kids 6 and under free
Tickets are sold at Kottke Jewelers or any GFE member or call Linda at 507-390-4468 or Email lindabreyer@hughes.net

Steele-Waseca conducting auditions for national anthem singer at co-op's 82nd annual meeting

Selected performer earns \$100

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric is conducting auditions for the singing of, "The Star-Spangled Banner," at this year's annual meeting, June 5, at the co-op's headquarters in Owatonna.



Lisa Quimby of Faribault was selected to sing the national anthem for Steele-Waseca's annual meeting in 2017.

Interested Steele-Waseca members or their dependent child will need to audition before a panel of judges at the co-op. 15486

For those auditioning (whether solo, duet, etc.), you will be judged on your vocal performance, stage presence, and personality. You may schedule an audition by contacting Jenifer Shimpach at Steele-Waseca. Auditions must be completed by Friday, April 27.

Shimpach enjoys serving members as executive assistant with Steele-Waseca

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric Executive Assistant Jenifer Shimpach started with the co-op Nov. 1, 2017, and is enjoying the experience.

"The experience here has been so refreshing for me," said Jenifer. "There is such a prevailing attitude to work for and serve the members."

Jenifer credits her previous work experiences for putting herself in her current position. "I've been a waitress, a bartender, a file clerk with a financial services company—where eventually I obtained several securities licenses and advanced to the position of assistant operations manager. I've also been an apartment manager, and more recently I worked for a small financial firm," stated Jenifer. "I never would have imagined that having such a varied background was actually preparing me

Steele-Waseca increases Wholesale Market Adjustment for legacy members

For the first time since January 2015, Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric has increased the Wholesale Market Adjustment (WMA) for its legacy members.

The WMA has been increased from the previous \$0.00311 per kilowatt hour (kWh) to \$0.00581 per kWh, effective with January 2018 usage reflected in your statement received this month.

The WMA reflects only the cost of power increase experienced from our legacy power supplier, Great River Energy (GRE).

The WMA increase amounts to approximately a 1.9 percent increase on an average residential bill.

The performer(s) selected will need to be available to sing the national anthem "live" at the annual meeting. The selected recipient will also receive \$100 at this year's annual meeting.



Jenifer Shimpach

to take on my newest role as executive assistant, but I use what I've learned daily on this job."

Even though she has lived in other glamorous areas of the U.S., Jenifer ap-

(Shimpach continued on Page 7)

Supporting the Steele County Food Shelf since 1994

2018 HOMETOWN Sampler

25th Annual CONCERT SERIES

STEELE COUNTY FOOD SHELF

Bad Tangerines, The Gogs, Hot 'n' Bothered, Mile 5 Band

Encores Dave Otto & John Havelka

Friday, March 2 @ 7 PM
Saturday, March 3 @ 3 PM & 7 PM
Sunday, March 4 @ 2 PM

Little Theatre of Owatonna
360 Duane Ave, Owatonna

Join us for great local music and to support our community by helping restock the Steele County Food Shelf with admission of food or monetary donations.

Thank you to our Corporate Sponsors!

FEDERATED COOPERATIVE, KOTTKE JEWELERS, KOWZ, OWATONNA, TFS, US BANK

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 Owatonna MN 55060-0485

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 Email: swce@swce.coop
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Office Hours

8:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m., Monday–Friday

Operations Office Hours

8:00 a.m.–3:30 p.m., Monday–Friday

For Customer Service, Billing Questions and Power Outages Phone:

507-451-7340 or 800-526-3514

Before calling to report an outage

1. Check fuses and circuit breakers in your home and on meter pole.
2. Check with your neighbors to see if they have power.
3. Look for possible causes such as a tree branch on wires, a broken pole, twisted wires, etc.

To leave a non-emergency message whenever SWCE's Office is closed:

Phone 507-451-7340 or 800-526-3514
 Press "2" and leave message including name, account #, and phone # you can be reached at the following business day.

Call *Before* You Dig
Gopher State One Call
 811 or 800-252-1166

48-hour notice required for ALL underground cable locations

manager connection



By Syd Briggs,
General Manager

Well, we are past the snowstorm of Jan. 22, and after digging out my vehicle, and several others belonging to family and co-workers, it was easy to exercise patience for road crews to blade off the snow and ice buildup on the streets, highways, and interstate. I always appreciate good driving conditions, and that feeling was magnified after mandatory shoveling just to get out of the parking lot in order to go home.

If you were among the Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric members having to exercise patience during weather-related outages as a result of the snowstorm, you most likely have a greater appreciation for having reliable electric power. Or, for most of you who didn't have any blinks or outages, you have the same appreciation I had for not being inconvenienced by a power outage. A number of the outages were the result of a snow and ice buildup on the power lines which started swinging in the wind and colliding with each other, subsequently causing outages. 27227

We continue to add conveniences that are powered by electricity (conveniences for some people may be considered necessities by others). Take a moment in the next few days to consider all the necessities and conveniences we enjoy because of the power lines running to the electric meter outside your home.

Count up your televisions, desktop, laptop and tablet computers, printers, your gaming consoles, music and video players, and personal assistant devices. Whether they get used every day or just occasionally, the electricity that keeps them working is distributed by Steele-Waseca.

Have you looked around your kitchen lately? Between the coffee maker, toaster, microwave, and electric skillet, many of us have added several other modern small appliances.

If you have a craft nook or workshop, the power tools and machines you use to cut and shape your projects are either plugged in or recharged from the outlets connecting your household wiring to Steele-Waseca.

You use electricity to run all these devices, and we still keep the lights on, use

the stove, heating or air conditioning, and get hot water from the tap. The good news is, even as we rely more on electricity, it's still a bargain, especially compared to other things we pay for regularly.

Since 2011, medical care, residential rental rates, and education have increased at rates of 3 percent or more per year. Butter, meat, and egg costs have been up by more than 1 to 2 percent annually, and even bread costs have risen better than a half point on average.

Electricity costs rise about 1 percent a year, but co-ops across the country have reported a decline in average residential use per household since 2010. That means we're doing more things with less energy.

Kilowatt hour (kWh) use per household dropped by 8 percent between 2010 and 2016, slightly less than the 9 percent decline reported by all electric utilities nationwide.

When it comes to value, electricity is a clear winner, and we're always looking for ways to work with you to make it even better. That's why Steele-Waseca urges energy efficiency, encourages you to look for Energy Star® appliances, and promotes technology, designed to give members more control over their electricity use.



Smart thermostats, power strips, and appliance settings that shift most water heating, laundry, and dish washing outside of peak demand periods help reduce the co-op's overall power demand. They also give you opportunities to control or even trim your monthly utility bills.

That's good for families, couples, and individuals trying to live within their budgets. It's going to become even more important as digital devices and internet-connected technologies become even more important in our lives.

The average home now has 10 Wi-Fi connected devices. That number is expected to explode to 50 by 2020. Technology and the gateways that keep it working use electricity, so you'll depend upon Steele-Waseca for more than the power that keeps the lights on.

That's why we're always working to provide service that's reliable, keep it affordable, and make it even more valuable to you, our member-owners.

ad connection

(For Sale ads continued from Page 6)

UNIVERSAL BIKE TRAINER, \$40; **TREK MT 200**, 24x175, boys, 21-spd, \$100; **HARO FREESTYLE**, 20", \$50. 330-3178.

(2) **TRAILERS**: 8x8 flatbed, pickup box trailer, \$150/each. 456-8675.

ROOFING; SNOW REMOVAL; LAWN CARE, & more, trusted since 2000. 271-9129.

2012 CHEVY MALIBU LT, remote start, heated leather, 81,000 mi., \$5300; **2-WHEEL TRAILER**, 7x13, \$850. 456-1629.

'97 **FORD F-250**, 7.3 diesel, Super Cab, new tires, lic., brakes, has toppr, bed liner, v-gd shp, \$5900/obo; **CENTURY SPRAYR**, 60' boom, tandm axl, 750-gal. tank, v-gd con., always shed., \$4300/obo. 451-9614.

WINNERS ONLY INC. ROLL TOP DESK, large solid oak, locking, many drawers, exc. cond., \$425/obo; (2) **BRIDGESTONE BLIZZAK WS80 SNOW TIRES**, new, 215/60R16 95H, \$240/both. 612-328-6564.

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric (SWCE) assumes no liability for the content of, or reply to, any item posted. The party posting any advertisement assumes complete liability for the content of, and all replies to, any advertisement and for any claims against SWCE as a result thereof, and agrees to indemnify and hold SWCE harmless from all costs, expenses, liabilities and damages resulting from, or caused by, any advertisement or reply thereto.

(Shimpach continued from Page 1)

precipitates living in this area of the state. "I was born in Hawaii, thanks to a father who served in the military, but my family is originally from here, so I grew up in Owatonna and went to OHS through my junior year," said Jenifer. "For the last year of high school, I moved back to Hawaii and managed to avoid the lure of the many beautiful beaches long enough to graduate. Later it was Los Angeles where my career really took off, but I finally gave up the smog and congestion to move home to Owatonna, and I don't regret the decision for a moment."

As for her family, Jenifer explained, "At any given time, my house is a menagerie of myself, my four-year-old son—who believes he's a superhero, my mother, her dog, and Maui, the cat. My father suffers from MS and lives at Koda Living Community." Adding, "Being from Owatonna, I have a lot of other family around, so we get together quite often. We really love spending time on my aunt and uncle's farm in Kenyon."

As for interests outside of work, "Recently I started gardening, and I live for the warm weather and being outside," said Jenifer. "I'm a member of Owatonna Business Women and am currently serving as their historian, which is perfect for me because I'm intrigued by the past and its people. I also like entertaining, have a bit of a shopping problem, and spend as much time as possible with friends and family. When I'm not busy with all of that, I love to read and explore roads less traveled."

PURE POLARIS SNOWMOBILE COAT & PANTS w/suspenders, XL, soft blk leather, \$295; **SKI-DOO COAT**, gray, XL, \$150 (both like new). 491-4565.

PLASTIC PALLETS; PLASTIC BARRELS; TRACTOR CHAINS, (2) different sizes. 664-9426.

2014 JD 1025R, LGT, 250 hrs, 60" deck, H120 loader, 54" blower; **2003 JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE**, 203,000 mi. 612-386-5098.

2008 WILDERNESS 260XL TRAVEL TRAILER, exc. cond., (1) large slide-out, pwr hitch, (2) doors, full awning. 451-6046.

(33) **2ND CROP BALES OF BALEAGE**, 164 RFV; (30) **5TH CROP BALES OF BALEAGE**, 188 RFV; (40) **3RD CROP MEDIUM SQ. BALES**, 142 RFV. 456-2628.

BLK WALNUTS, pressure washed, vry healthy, high in Omega-3 fatty acids, twice the protein of English walnuts, can crack 200 a day. 451-7578.

DRIED RED OAK/BLK WALNUT, approx. 500 board ft. 456-1017.

HONEYBEES, 3# Carniolan Calif. pkg bees, mid-April delivery, queen bees limited quantity, call for prices. 456-0753.

CABIN, French Lk, 80' shoreline, leased land, (2) bdrm, deck, patio, \$65,000. 334-6362.

20-GAL. FISH AQUARIUM, 1-yr-old, comes w/everything to start up including wooden stand, \$175. 456-7757.

MUSCOVY DUCKS, ready for butchering or setting, 2017 hatch; **PAIR OF AF-GEESE**, 2017 hatch. 446-0090/leave message.

1983 FORD PICKUP w/snowplow, needs wrk, 1-ton, 4WD. 528-2443.

1980 INT 1086, 3800 hrs, vry gd cond., has duals, always shedded. 456-1597.

While not experienced with cooperatives, Shimpach was impressed with Steele-Waseca's beginning. "I read about some of the history of the cooperative, and how a few men with vision sought to bring electricity to our rural areas," said Jenifer. "These men had the courage and the care to better people's lives and make their work on farms easier, and I thought to myself what a great job this would be, working for a place that makes a difference in the world. I'm inspired by people who are game-changers and visionaries, and those who always manage to find a way, even when all the doors around them are closed." 1009050

Jenifer believes her past has allowed her to be where she is today. "I always had this deep-rooted belief in myself and knew that, with hard work and perseverance, I would succeed at whatever I put my mind to. That philosophy hasn't failed me yet," said Jenifer. "I like helping others and being of service, as well as working with a variety of people. The great diversity that goes along with being an executive professional suits my personality well. No two days are the same in my job—and I'm happy about that." SWCE

Cogeneration and Small Power Production

In compliance with Minnesota Adopted Rules Relating to Cogeneration and Small Power Production Chapter 7835, Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric is required to connect with and purchase electricity from cogenerators and small power producers which satisfy the conditions of a qualifying facility. Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric has available and will provide free information to all interested members regarding rates and interconnection requirements.

An application for interconnection is required for a qualifying facility to interconnect and operate in parallel with the cooperative's distribution system and is subject to approval by the cooperative. Any disputes over interconnection, sales, and purchases are subject to resolution by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission. Members interested in further information should contact the office of Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric.



ad connection

give away

STONES, sizes XL to small, come & get, nice for landscaping. 465-8086.

FREE ONLINE CLASSIFIEDS, you place & remove your own ad on SWCE's website, swce.coop, these are separate from Sparks & will not appear in Sparks unless mailed, delivered, faxed or emailed to SWCE.

wanted

OLD POSTAGE STAMPS issued before 1950, \$ paid per book value, free estimates. 676-0970.

MINNESOTA BUTTER BOXES, "those I do not have." 684-2101/Ron.

USED OIL, 200-gal. minimum. 420-7429.

HEAT HOUSER for AC WD or WD45. 456-7614.

OLD OR ANTIQUE COLTS & SMITHS. 301-9053.

TO BUY DEER ANTLERS. 952-292-1352.

JUNK & UNWANTED APPLIANCES, no TVs or computers, free drop-off. 210-6728/leave message.

UNWANTED BIKES & LAWN MOWERS, \$ pd on delivered. 330-3178.

JUNKERS OR REPAIRABLES: trucks, cars, pickups, most constr. & farm equip., top \$ pd. 332-2300.

ESTATES, COLLECTIONS, FISHING OR HUNTING EQUIP., METAL SIGNS, willing to purch. your collection/estate, shed or barn of stuff. 279-0431/Mark.

OUTDOOR CHILDREN'S PLAYHOUSE that could double as storage in the winter. 456-1617/Brandon.

LILLISTON CULTIVATOR, prefer 6-row or larger. 456-7633.

LOVE SEAT - SLEEPER. 413-2646.

BARN, GRANARY &/OR OUTBUILDINGS, I remove to re-purpose the lumber; **OLD TIN, BARN SIDING OR LUMBER**. 330-0258/Tim.

TV CONVERTER BOX. 451-7578.

for sale

VILLAGE PCS, differ. styles/\$5-\$10, people & misc. pcs/\$1-\$3, (2) shelvd mirror units to expand village upward/\$30 ea.; **T9200 PLATFORM TREADMILL**, has elevatn, spd, distnce, etc., exc. cond. 334-5961.

All area codes are 507 unless otherwise noted

KING-SIZED HEADBOARD + BED FRAME, MIRROR, DRESSER, & CHEST, dark walnut tone, \$350. 380-2759.

FORTUNE CREEK TRL LOTS, covenant allows for a pole shed, starting at \$75,000. 838-5033/John.

PET PORTER, XL, composite, metal wire door, \$35; **TV CONVERTER BOX**, new, \$40. 455-3881.

(2) WESTERN SADDLES, new, never used, matching headstalls & breast collar, \$450/each. 390-4619.

SKID STEER BUCKETS, GRAPPLE, & SPEAR; 2500HD SERVICE TRUCK; FIREWOOD, JD 5020; 2015 MITSUBISHI MIRAGE, \$4700. 402-7679.

RENTAL, Izaak Walton League Bldg., 4 mi. south of Owat., seats 100, full kitchen, grill, Wi-Fi, \$100. 451-7946.

AALADIN H-WTR PR. WSHR, used, 4 gpm@3000 psi, 230V, 1-phase, LP, \$2450; **REZNOR RA140 WASTE OIL HTR**, \$3000; **VAL 6 KBE5L RADIANT HTR**, diesel fired, 115V, 2-stage, \$2395. 583-2703.

MINN KOTA ENDURA MAX TROLLING MOTOR, new, still in box, 50# thrust, 36" shaft, Model 1352150, \$245. 339-1190.

"BONE COLLECTOR SERIES" GAMO .177-CAL. PELLET GUN, (4) CANS OF PELLETS & 4-PWR SCOPE, like new, \$125. 612-805-8546.

CLIMATE CONTROLLED UNITS FOR RENT, 11'x9' to 16'x10'. 332-4623.

BELTED GALLOWAY CATTLE, blk/white & brwn/white, bulls, bred cows, heifers, & steer calves, all are calm w/gd disposition. 456-0121.

'07 KEYSTONE SPRINGDALE 38' TRVL TRLR w/(2) slide outs, sleeps 10, washr, dryr, full-sz fridge, kitchn area has a dbl sink & large counter area, big bathroom area w/full-sz shower, \$14,000. 451-9445.

BEACHFRONT VACATION CONDOS FOR RENT in Fort Myers Beach, South Padre Island & Mexico, visit www.sandysbeachfrontcondo.com for details & photos. 612-865-9604/Sandy.

SONY HT-CT780 TV SOUND BAR w/wireless subwoofer, \$269. 456-2060.

MINI STORAGE UNITS, Blmg Prairie. 456-2957.

FARM KING 3-PT HITCH 8' SNOWBLOWER, exc. cond. 684-3151.

JD 435 ROUND BALER, 4x6 bale, baled 300 bales a yr, exc. cond. 330-2068.

21.5' FIFTH WHEEL, great cond., truck bed incl., camping ready, best offer. 332-7294.

'05 CADILLAC ESCALADE ESV, blk, 345 hp, heated leather front/rear, sunroof, heated mirrors, pwr seats, DVD, multi CD, 167,000 mi., \$9900. 210-1706.

HARDWOOD, aged 2 yrs, 2' or less, dry enough for newer stoves, near Owat., would deliver. 273-3587.

CANARY GRASS for bedding. 744-2871.

TREE TRIMMING, REMOVE & STUMP GRINDING, pro climber & aerial lift to U of M guidelines; **FRONT CHROME BUMPER** for an F-650, new. 456-1609.

15.5-TON CAPACITY DUMP TRUCK AVAIL. for all your hauling needs: rock, gravel, dirt, etc. 456-7774.

KATAHDIN HAIR SHEEP, never shear sheep again, super mothers, fast growing, great for beginners, organic & grazers, reserve yours now. 451-2722.

SHINGLING; LIGHT CONSTRUCTION; TREE REMOVAL. 456-0296/free estimates.

(2) 2000-GAL. LP TANKS on trailer; **2500-GAL. LP TANK**. 477-3498.

USED ENGINES, TRANSMISSIONS, AUTO & TRUCK PARTS, 30-day warranty. 332-2300.

SHIPPING CONTAINERS, store your stuff on your property, moisture & rodent proof, 20' & 40'. 612-418-4375.

GLASSTITE TOPPER; ANTIQUE 5X140 RECEIVER; LARGE SNOWSHOES; ANTIQUE CHERRY WOOD BED; AGED CYPRESS SLABS; C20 ROUND OAK WOODSTOVE. 446-8866.

HESSTON PT-10 HAYBINE. 744-5277.

(For Sale ads continued on Page 7)

travel

MN TWINS SPRING TRAINING IN FLORIDA, March 15-25. Deluxe motor coach, 10 nights, 18 meals, incl. (2) spring training games, Best of Nashville guided tour & more! \$1,799 pp dbl occ.

SAVANNAH & CHARLESTON, April 13-21. Deluxe motor coach, 8 nights, 13 meals, Biltmore Estates, Gospel dinner cruise, Savannah's historic Davenport House tour & more! \$1,549 pp dbl occ.

MONUMENTS OF WASHINGTON, D.C., April 27-May 1. Round trip flights from Mpls, (2) full-day guided tours of D.C., WWII, Lincoln, & Korean War Memorials, Capitol Hill & more! \$1,499 pp dbl occ.

NATIONAL PARKS UTAH & ARIZONA, May 11-21. Deluxe motor coach, 10 nights, 14 meals, Durango/Silverton train ride, Badlands, Mt. Rushmore, Grand Canyon & more! \$1,599 pp dbl occ.

Call 4-Seasons at 800-328-4298 and reserve space today! Be sure to tell us you are Steele-Waseca members!



member connection

Factors to keep in mind when purchasing an electric vehicle

Courtesy: Great River Energy (GRE)

The decision to purchase an electric vehicle (EV) instead of a conventional car that runs on gasoline is getting easier to make every year.

Between operational cost savings and the fact you can install a personal, at-home charging station, owning an EV means no more trips to the mechanic or gas station. As you get closer to making that choice, here is a list of items to keep in mind when searching for the right EV for you.

1. Not all EVs are created equal. There are three types of EVs: hybrid electric (HEV), plug-in hybrid (PHEV), and battery electric (BEV). HEVs have a gas-powered internal combustion engine along with an electric motor, but do not plug in for charging. A PHEV has two ranges: electric and gasoline. Once the electric charge runs out, the vehicle seamlessly switches energy sources. On average, they can travel between 10 and 50 miles on electricity before needing to be plugged in, while their gas tanks extend total range to between 300 and 600 miles. Lastly, BEVs run exclusively on electricity from the grid, and do not produce any exhaust from the burning of fuel.

2. You'll save money up front and over time. Through federal and state tax incentives, along with time-of-use rates provided by your electric co-op to save money on charging your EV's battery overnight, and not having to even get oil changes again, you'll realize a variety of savings. Your co-op even provides rebates for installing a charger at home.

3. Ranges have improved. Range anxiety is real, but with BEVs now typically equipped with ranges of more than 100 miles—plus Tesla, Chevy and Nissan all having cracked the 200-mile range—you're not likely to be left stranded. Future models are even promising ranges of around 300 miles. Typical U.S. drivers travel less than 60 miles on weekdays, so owners of most 2017 model EVs could go multiple days without recharging.

4. Public charging stations are easy to access. There are three types of charging stations with varying charging times. Level 1s, on average, fully charge in about eight hours; Level 2s take anywhere from two to six hours; and DC fast chargers can fully charge

Types of Electric Vehicles

If you're looking to purchase an electric vehicle, use this cheat sheet to help determine the various options. Drivers can choose between three types of electric vehicles (EVs). EVs are classified by the amount of electricity that is used as their energy source.

Fuel:	Fuel:	Fuel:
Gasoline	Gasoline and/or electricity from grid	100% electricity from grid
HEV HYBRID ELECTRIC VEHICLE	PHEV PLUG-IN HYBRID ELECTRIC VEHICLE	BEV BATTERY ELECTRIC VEHICLE

Source: Electric Vehicle Research Platform

an EV in about 30 minutes. There are nearly 270 public charging stations across Minnesota, most of them Level 2, but about 30 fast chargers as well. Infrastructure continues to build out into non-metro parts of the state, including an all-new electric corridor that makes it easy to travel up through Minnesota's North Shore and back with an EV.

5. EV "fuel" is getting greener. Electric motors are already 80 to 95 percent efficient, so they use significantly less energy than vehicles with a traditional drive train. But the fuel used in those

EVs is being generated by a growing number of renewable energy sources. Utilities, including Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric, are incorporating more wind and solar energy in their portfolios to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. EV owners can even be rest assured that their vehicle is being fueled solely by wind energy if they enroll in Steele-Waseca's Revolt program.

Find out more by visiting mrevolt.com.

Sparks Free Classified Ad Form for all SWCE Members

Ads need to be received in our office by **March 5** to ensure being printed in the April Sparks. Please print neatly or type your ad of **20 words or less** on this form. We reserve the right to edit ad copy to allow space for more ads. Ads received after the 5th will be printed in the May issue.

For Sale Wanted Give Away

Phone # _____ Account # _____

Name _____

Clip and mail to: SWCE, PO Box 485, Owatonna MN 55060-0485, or fax to: (507) 446-4242 or email your ad to: sparks@swce.coop.

cookin' connection

Simple Hot Dish

B.J. Zerby

Owatonna

- 5 medium potatoes
- 1 lb. hamburger
- 2 cans condensed vegetable soup (undiluted)

Peel and slice thin the potatoes. Line the bottom of a 9x13 pan with the raw, sliced potatoes. Brown the hamburger and top the potatoes with the meat. Cover the top with two cans of vegetable soup. Bake at 350° until the potatoes are tender.

Please use a 3 x 5 card when submitting your recipe. The member whose recipe is published will receive a \$7 energy credit.



Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's solar subscribers will see a 21 kWh credit per panel on this month's statement for energy generated during January 2018. The latest to subscribe with two additional panels is the Izaak Walton League of Owatonna. Learn more about community solar and The Sunna Project by visiting Steele-Waseca's website, swce.coop.

Was your account number in Sparks?

Each month five account numbers are printed in *Sparks* and a total of \$35 in energy credits is divided among however many of those numbers are found. For example, if all numbers are found, a credit of \$7 will be applied to the members' following month's electric bills; or, if only one number is found, that member receives the full \$35 credit. Members finding their numbers who have a load management receiver on their dual fuel, electric water heater, air conditioner, or genset will receive an additional \$7 credit. When you find your number, phone our office no later than the 7th of the month following receipt of the *Sparks*, or the amount will be forfeited.

February issue of Sparks



Numbers found:
Harold Trandem

Numbers not found:
James/Pam Engels
Scott Archibald
Timothy/Mikako Jurgens
Beulah Noel



Sparks in brief . . .

• **Want easy energy payments?** Sign up for **EnergyPay Plus**, our automatic payment plan, or **Energy Prepay**, our discounted advance payment plan. Contact our office for details. You may also pay your bill online at www.swce.coop. By entering your Steele-Waseca username and password you can also view a 13-month history of your account.

• **If you have changed or added phone numbers**, please contact SWCE to update your contact information.

• **Need a new water heater?** For information about our Westinghouse Electric Water Heater Program, phone Cindy Butterfield at our office between 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m., 446-4204 / 800-526-3514.

• **January temps** – The average high temperature for January was 23° F, while the average low was 5° F. They compare to last year's average high of 27° F and average low of 13° F.

• **ENERGY STAR® Rebates** – In 2018, all ENERGY STAR refrigerators/freezers (with recycling), electric clothes dryers, dehumidifiers, central air conditioners, air and ground source heat pumps, light emitting diode (LED) bulbs purchased (limit 5) are eligible to receive rebates (may not be combined with special promotions). Rebate request forms must be submitted within 90 days of purchase. Rebate forms are available at www.swce.coop. For more information or to receive a rebate request form, phone Cindy Butterfield at 446-4204 or 800-526-3514.

• **Steele-Waseca's tree service contractor** – Carr's Tree Service, Inc., is contracted to do SWCE's tree trimming. To report a tree concern, phone:

507-451-7340 / 800-526-3514

STEELE COUNTY TIP LINE

866-878-7964

TO BE USED TO REPORT ANY CRIME OR SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY ANONYMOUSLY

COVERS ALL OF STEELE COUNTY INCLUDING THE CITIES OF:

OWATONNA ELLENDALE BLOOMING PRAIRIE MEDFORD

health & safety connection

Think spring! Proper tree care tips and techniques

The Steele County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) has been distributing trees in Steele and surrounding counties for decades. They are again taking orders for spring delivery and offer a wide variety of services including windbreak plan development.

You may visit their website, steleswcd.org, for a list of services along with their tree order form, or stop by their office at 235 Cedardale Drive in Owatonna. They are taking orders until Feb. 28, 2018, so get your orders to them as soon as possible. Below are some tips for your spring plantings. Contact them with any questions you may have. 1059854

Proper tree care begins with selecting the right tree and planting it in the right place. Trees are for a lifetime, so it pays to spend time now making sure that your tree will thrive where you want to plant it.

Planting large trees under utility lines can eventually lead to major trimming or removal as trees grow to maturity, but planting short, flowering trees won't clash with overhead utility lines. Large evergreens close to the house on the south, block the warm winter sunlight. Instead, opt for large deciduous trees on the south and west to provide cooling shade in the summer, but don't obstruct the low winter sun. No trees on the north side of the house can leave it vulnerable to cold winter winds. Planting an evergreen windbreak on the north and west will block cold winds in winter.

A newly planted tree's best friend is mulch. Use of mulch or weed barrier matting in tree plantings will greatly improve tree growth and survival, while reducing labor for weed control. You can use the traditional wood chip mulch or several types of weed barrier matting are available. By adding mulch or matting to your tree in a three to 10 foot area will reduce the risk of lawn mower damage to the trunk which can cause deformation and disease of the tree.

When using natural wood chip mulch, it is important that you keep the mulch from touching the trunk of the tree. Wood chips that are tight to the trunk can cause fungus, disease, and trunk rot. Just like wood chips, regular inspection of weed barrier mats should be done. As trees age and the trunks increase in size,

Plant the Right Tree in the Right Place

For more tips on smart tree planting in your community, contact your local electric cooperative or visit www.ArborDay.org.

Trees beautify our neighborhoods, and when planted in the right spot, can even help lower energy bills. But the wrong tree in the wrong place can be a hazard... especially to power lines.

LARGE TREES

Height/spread of more than 40 feet, such as:

- Maple
- Birch
- Oak
- Sweetgum
- Spruce
- Linden
- Pine

MEDIUM TREES

Height/spread of 25 to 40 feet, such as:

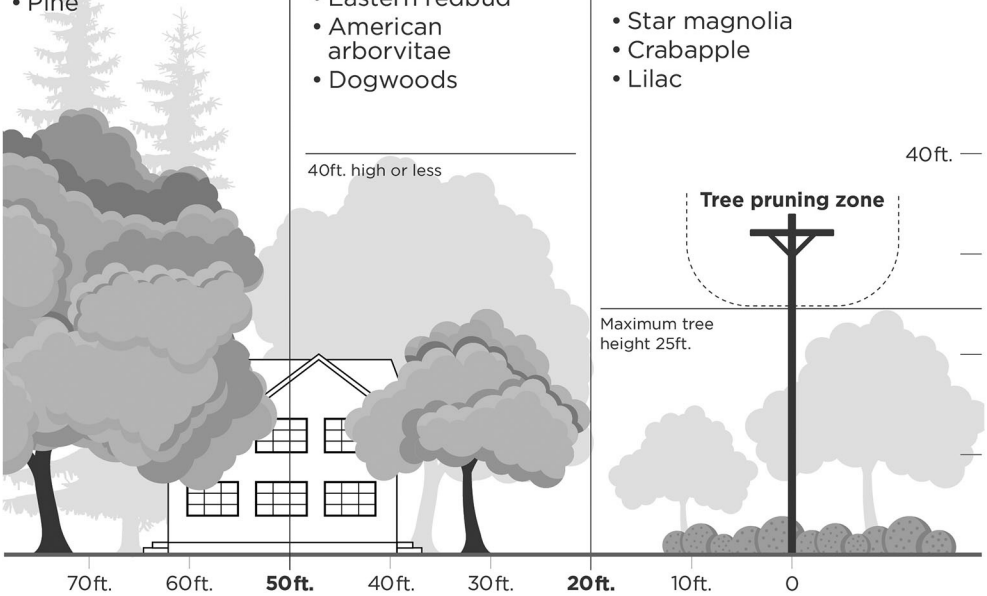
- Washington hawthorn
- Goldenrain tree
- Eastern redbud
- American arborvitae
- Dogwoods

SMALL TREES

Avoid planting within 20 feet of power lines. When planting within 20 feet is unavoidable, use only shrubs and small trees.

Height/spread of no more than 25 feet such as:

- Star magnolia
- Crabapple
- Lilac



Be safe! Always call 811 before you dig to locate any buried utility lines.

Source: The Arbor Day Foundation and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

it is important to cut or remove the mats as not to girdle the trunk. Other advantages of using mulch include moisture retention, weed suppression, and insulation from extreme temperatures.

Tree watering is a key part of tree care and it is difficult to recommend an exact amount due to the varieties of soil types. But a few guidelines will help you to water your trees properly.

For new trees, water immediately after you plant. During the first couple growing seasons, your newly planted tree is expending a lot of energy trying to get its roots established in the soil.

Especially during the first few summers of your new tree's life, it will have a difficult time dealing with heat and drought. You can make this easier by providing water and covering the soil with wood chip mulch. Deep watering can help speed the root establishment. Deep watering consists of keeping the soil moist to a depth that includes all the roots.

Not enough water is harmful for the tree, but too much water is bad as well. Over and under-watering are common tree care mistakes. Soils should be moist after watering, not soggy. A damp soil

(Tree care tips continued on Page 8)