

## member connection

### CoBank sharing

Faribault Middle School Counselor Brent Hawkins (pictured left adjacent photo) accepted a \$1,500 check on behalf of the school, Aug. 16, from Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric Accountant Jon Stelter. In addition, Owatonna Gold Cross Ambulance Lead Paramedic Rick Ellingson (pictured far right) was presented a \$2,100 check from Steele-Waseca General Manager Syd Briggs, Sept. 1, on behalf of the local Search & Rescue Explorer Post. Steele-Waseca participated in CoBank's "Sharing Success" program. CoBank matches contributions from their cooperative customers to the nonprofit organizations of the co-op's choice. CoBank, headquartered near Denver, Colo., is a national cooperative bank providing loans and other financial services to rural power, water and communications providers along with agribusinesses in the U.S.



(DIY energy audit continued from Page 1)

closet, porch or garage?

**4. Thermostat/indoor temperature**—Do you have a programmable thermostat? When was the last time it was programmed? Is the date and time correct? If they are not, this could throw off automatic settings. Is it set so the temperature for the furnace is lower during the day and/or times when no one is home and at night when people are sleeping? Consider lowering the temperature a

few degrees.

**5. Appliances and cleaning**—Appliances are large energy users, and if yours are more than 10 years old, they are likely not as energy efficient as today's options. How and when you use them also make a difference. Do you wash your clothes in hot water, or can you use cold water instead? Do you use your washer, dryer or dishwasher during the day? Consider running them at night, during off-peak times. Does your hot

water heater have a blanket? If not, consider insulating it. Make sure your dryer vent isn't blocked—this will not only save energy, it may also prevent a fire. 29534

Once you have completed the audit, take a look at the findings. Prioritize actions that you can take based on your time and budget, weighing where you can get the most impact for your investment. Increasing your home's energy efficiency will make your family comfortable while saving you money.



## Steele County Ducks Unlimited Annual Fall Duck Bash



Thursday, October 6, 2016

Ritchie Brothers Auction Building  
6000 Frontage Road West  
Medford, MN 55049

Gates Open At 5:00 PM  
Buffet Dinner At 6:00 PM

Exclusive DU Merchandise! Bottomless cups of BEER for only \$10 each! Catering by Toney's! Ticket price includes event, dinner, pop, & DU membership. Wear camo for a chance to win a gun. \$50 Duck Buck packs available. Sponsor ticket INCLUDES SPONSOR DRAWING, 1 DUCK BUCK PACK, & FRAMED PRINT!

Purchase tickets at [www.ducks.org/minnesota/events](http://www.ducks.org/minnesota/events)

### Ticket Prices

\$40 Single	\$300 Sponsor
\$55 Couple	\$315 Sponsor Couple
\$20 Greenwing	\$200 Legacy Greenwing

Ducks Unlimited is the world's largest non-profit organization dedicated to conserving North America's continually disappearing wetland habitats.

Established in 1937, Ducks Unlimited has conserved more than 13 million acres thanks to contributions from more than a million supporters across the continent. Guided by science and dedicated to program efficiency, DU works toward the Vision of wetlands sufficient to fill the skies with waterfowl today, tomorrow, and forever. For more information on our work, visit [www.ducks.org](http://www.ducks.org). Connect with us on our Facebook page at [facebook.com/ducksunlimited](https://facebook.com/ducksunlimited), follow our tweets at [twitter.com/ducksunlimited](https://twitter.com/ducksunlimited) and watch DU videos at [youtube.com/ducksunlimitedinc](https://youtube.com/ducksunlimitedinc).

## RESERVE YOUR TICKETS NOW!

For ticket information, call Bob Hoen at 507-456-5046  
For more information or to buy tickets online,  
visit [https://MN.ducks.org](http://MN.ducks.org)

the power of human connections



# sparks

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner



October 2016

a monthly newsletter from Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric

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Steele County Ducks Unlimited Annual Fall Bash



### CO-OPS PROVIDE 2.1 MILLION JOBS IN THE U.S.

- Co-ops create annual wages of over \$75 billion.
- Co-op farmers provide more than 190,000 jobs and annual wages over \$8 billion.
- Electric cooperatives employ more than 75,000 Americans and account for more than one third of the U.S. electric utility industry.

### CO-OP MONTH | OCTOBER 2016

### Start saving with a do-it-yourself home energy audit

by Anne Prince, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA)

As temperatures begin to drop and your energy focus turns from cooling your home to heating it, consider using this time to increase energy efficiency and cost savings for the colder months ahead. Whether your home is old or new, chances are you are spending more on energy costs than necessary.

Armed with some basic knowledge and a little time, you can conduct a baseline energy audit of your home to identify where you are losing energy (and money). Use a checklist and take notes on problems you find as you walk through your home. Remember, the audit itself won't save you money unless you act on your findings.

### DIY 101

So, where to start? If your home has multiple levels, work from the top down. Begin in your attic or highest floor, and work your way down to the first floor or basement.

**1. Insulation and air leaks (drafts)**—According to the Department of Energy, improving your

home's insulation and sealing air leaks are the fastest and most cost-effective ways to reduce energy waste and make the most of your energy dollars. Check to see whether there is sufficient insulation in the attic. Are openings containing piping, ductwork and chimney sealed?

**2. Electronic devices**—Inventory all of the electronic devices you have and how often you use them. Computers, printers, DVD players, phones and gaming consoles are notorious "vampire power" users—they drain energy even when not in use. If items can be turned off without disrupting your lifestyle, consider plugging them into a power strip that can be turned on and off (or put on a timer).

**3. Lighting**—Note where you still have incandescent lights. Can you replace them with CFL or LED upgrades? Do you have nightlights? If so, consider replacing them with LED nightlights. Are there places where you can install motion sensor lights in low use areas, such as a



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Email: [swce@swce.coop](mailto:swce@swce.coop)  
Fax: 507-446-4242

#### Board of Directors

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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

work for the sustainable development of their communities through employee involvement in local organizations, like Exchange clubs, through charitable contributions to community efforts and through support for schools. 20524

#### Cooperatives Build Jobs

Cooperatives generate jobs in their communities, keep profits local and pay local taxes to help community services. Cooperatives often take part in community improvement programs, ensuring everyone has an opportunity to benefit from the cooperative experience. In last month's column, I detailed how Steele-Waseca has utilized the Rural Utilities Service Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant program. Over \$3 million in loans in our local area has been awarded for economic development. These loans are not subsidized by our membership, which means we are growing our economy by investing our time and attention. This program funds all kind of efforts that allow co-ops to invest in the communities they serve—boosting economic growth and creating jobs at no cost to the federal government.

According to the latest data, more than 130 million people belong to a co-op in the U.S. alone, and co-ops employ more than 2 million Americans.

The second principle, *Democratic Member Control*, gives members a voice in the cooperative's policies and decisions. Through the fifth principle, *Education, Training and Information*, we enable members to contribute to the development of our cooperative.

#### Cooperatives Build Trust

Co-ops strive to adhere to seven key cooperative principles, which combine to help build trust between the co-op, its members and the community. For example, the first principle is *Voluntary and Open Membership*, which means that we are a voluntary organization open to all people to use our services and willing to accept the responsibility of membership.

This speaks to the heart of why we must take every opportunity to celebrate and teach others about the cooperative business model. So plan your own co-op celebration by purchasing co-op products, look to do business with co-ops right here in our local communities and be an active member of Steele-Waseca.

#### Cooperatives Build Community

The seventh cooperative principle is *Concern for Community*. Cooperatives



**ELECTRIC CO-OPS**  
BUILD  
COMMUNITY

## ad connection

(For Sale ads continued from Page 6)

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

**ELECTRIC FENCER** rated for 100 mi. of fence, 6-Joule energy output, \$95; **RED SNAP'R VOLTAGE TESTER**, \$10. 412-1246/Terry.

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

**PASTURE FOR RENT**, fenced, rural Dundas. 952-270-5562.

**1958 CHEV. IMPALA HUBCAP**, 14", \$25; **1959 CHEV. IMPALA HUBCAP**, 14", \$25. 838-8565/John.

**DMI CULTER CHAMP CHISEL PLOW**, (7) 4" twisted shanks. 789-6617.

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

**6650 CONSER-TILL CHISEL PLOW**, (7) shank, vry gd cond. 334-9333.

**STORAGE**: vehicles, boats, campers & RVs, Waldorf area. 380-1609/Chad.

**2013 KAWASAKI TERYX4**, 4-seat ATV, 500 mi., exc. cond., new battery, great tires, \$9000. 995-4106.

**2003 H-D ULTRA ELECTRA GLIDE CLASSIC 100TH ANNIVERSARY**, 76,000 mi., exc. cond., \$9000/obo w/extras. 330-5022.

**CHILDREN'S, YOUTH & ADULT SADDLES**, exc. cond., \$150 to \$300; **WINTER HORSE BLANKETS**, used, clean. 456-6828.

**TRACTOR TIRES & RIMS**: 13-6-38 Firestone Deep Tread 20%, 20-8-34 Firestone Field & Road 30%. 462-3698.

**SCRAPBOOK & RUMMAGE SALE**, Fri., Sept. 23, & Sat., Sept. 24, discounted scrapbook supplies, gift baskets & misc., 2155 Union Lk Trl, Nfld., also the annual Millersburg Area Garage Sales. 663-1569.

**BILLY ROYAL SADDLE**, silver trimmed, \$500/obo. 744-5208.

**1982 HONDA GOLDWING GL**, 1100cc, shaft drive, clean engine, air ride, hand grips, runs great, back rest, 28,735 mi., \$1950/cash. 835-2814/Waseca.

**AMERICAN SADDLEBRED GELDING PALOMINO**, 16- yrs, gd horse, hunt seat, saddleseat, same dresage, \$2000. 612-598-6230.

**1-ACRE WOODED LOTS** w/lakeshore on Beaver Lk. Gravel cul-de-sac, southern exposure, utilities & common well to lots incl. Ready to build your dream home! [www.beaverlkestates.com](http://www.beaverlkestates.com). 438-9503.

**INDOOR WINTER STORAGE FOR RENT**: boats, cars, campers, tractors, trailers, reas. rates, Lonsdale area. 744-2792.

**(2) 400-BU. PARKER GRAVITY FLOW BOXES ON 12-TON GEHL WAGONS**. 676-0551.

**INDOOR STORAGE** for RVs & campers, south of Fbo, low prices. 412-1171.

**OAK FIREWOOD**, you pick up, \$175 a cord; **LP FIREPLACE**, \$100; **RECEIVER** for 2006 Equinox, \$100; **WINTER & SUMMER STORAGE**. 451-8740.

**BLK ANGUS BEEF**: qtrs, halves or whole avail., semi-organically & locally raised. 330-2452/Matt.

**MATCHED PAIR OF PAINT MARES**, Qtr Horse X Morgan, exposed to Mammoth Jack; **TREEING FIEST PUPS**. 465-8593/Brad.

**GRASS HAY BALES**, small square. 612-756-1131.

**MM 52 U**, new battery, ran in spring, currently not running; **OLDER JD 34 MANURE SPREADER**, great shaped (stored); **LAND FOR RENT**, Waterville area. 456-3905.

**RAINBOW VAC** w/attach., \$75; **SHOWER DOORS** for 5' tub, \$15; **CYL. WEIGHT & BRACKET** for lawn mower, \$50; **BLK WOMEN'S COLUMBIA OMNI TECH WINTER COAT**, size XL, new, \$50.648-3913.

**10 X 20 COLD STORAGE** in Morristown, \$99/mth; **6 X 8 COLD STORAGE** in Fbo, \$49/mth. 332-4638.

**CARPENTRY, CONSTRUCTION, HANDYMAN WORK**, free estimates. 213-4060.

**FEB. MARKET LAMB**, 4-H blue ribbon winner. 461-3574 or 835-1134.

**(2) 14.9 X 28 AG TIRES** on WD AC rims, 90% trd, \$700/pr; **(4) 11 X 20 GRIP TRK TIRES**, 90% trd, all \$250; **20 HP PHASE CONVRTR**, converts 3-ph. to 1-ph., \$300. 330-3945.

**GRAIN BINS FOR RENT**, 16,000 bu. total, full floors, fans, gd working order, Summit area. 363-1117.

**IRIS RHIZOMES, HOSTAS, DAY LILIES, CHIVES**. 451-4274.

**USED AUTO PARTS**: engines, transmissions, car & truck parts, 30-day warranties, bst prices. 332-2300.

**GRASS HAY; MIXED ALFALFA GRASS; STRAW**. 744-2871.

**NH SIDE RAKE** on new rubber; **(2) HAYRACKS** on gd rubber, always been shedded; **100-BU. GRAVITY BOX** on gd rubber. 390-4076/south of Owat.

**ASSORTD BANTAM CHICKNS**, \$2-\$10. 456-6989.

**2000 FORD F-650**, Cummins diesel, J-box, new tires. 363-6199.

**WESTERN PLOW PARTS; 4-BULB H-O FLUOR. LIGHTS**, \$20; **POLARIS JET SKI**, 700cc, \$2400; **ALM SNOWMOBILE TRLR**, \$450; **16 HP BRIGGS ENG.**, \$100; **350 CHEV. ENG.**, \$200. 271-6592.

**40' ALUM. LADDER**, hvy duty, \$90/obo. 363-2155.

**500-GAL. GAS BARRL** w/stand & hose. 451-3923.

**2000 HONDA GOLDWING GL1500**, 25th Anniversary Edition, 38,000 mi., \$6000. 645-6286.

**DOG BENCH**, wood & metal, \$50; **LIGHT FIXTURE**, new, \$10; **COOLER**, \$100; **WAGON WHEEL LIGHTS**, \$30/each; **KITCHEN TABLE**, \$50 (can be seen @ faribault online garage sale). 663-1275.

**2007 GMC YUKON DENALI**. 952-652-2926.

**ANTIQUE VICTORIAN WICKER HIGH CHAIR**, no tray, great display piece for doll, plant, etc., \$75. 451-0967.

**1995 FORD F-150**, 4x4, 130k mi., topper, no rust, alum. rims, \$1800. 330-5670.

**SUMMER/WINTER STORAGE FOR RENT**: boats, campers, RVs, cars, snowmobiles, etc., cement floor building. 383-4707.

**(2) FARMALL M's**: (1) converted 12V w/Vaughn loader, pusher & bucket, \$1200; (1) 6V w/power steering, \$1500. 612-382-4084.

**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.**

**TRACTOR TIRE CHAINS** for JD 4020, tire size 18-4-34 & JD 3020, tire size 15-5-38. 451-6507.

**'05 MERC. GRAND MARQUIS LS**, 4.6L, V8, 63k mi., new tires, \$4200; (2) ELEC./KEROSENE HEATRS, \$40/ea.; **DORM FRIG./FRZR**, \$50; (2) **YOKOHAMA SNOW TIRES**, 225/60R16, \$100. 612-290-2704.

**COUNTRY HOME FOR RENT**. 451-3678.

**KUERIG B60**, like new, \$50. 456-7448.

**ANTIQUE VANITY**, \$75. 583-6679.

**CABIN** on French Lk, leased land, 80' shoreline, (2) b

## ad connection

### give away

TRACTOR TIRE for sandbox. 210-5067.

(2) MINIATURE HORSES to a gd home, must stay together, well traind & kid friendly mares. 456-8787.

300-GAL. DIESEL BARREL on stand. 334-7756.

EVERGREENS FOR FIREWOOD, 1-2' diameter, not many branches, you cut & haul. 676-1141.

KITTENS. 451-4274.

PADDLEBOAT. 363-2155.

BARN CATS & KITTENS to a gd home, litterbox trained, gd mousers, blk color. 339-7979.

WURLITZER ORGAN, exc. cond., works great, don't have room for it anymore. 477-2564.

FUEL OIL BARREL, makes a gd smoker, you haul away. 838-8870/call after 5 p.m.

BLACK WALNUTS, you pick up, bring your own containers. 528-2383.

### wanted

ESTATES, COLLECTIONS, FISHING OR HUNTING EQUIP., can setup an online auction or buy direct. 279-0431/Mark or email [wadekamperm@yahoo.com](mailto:wadekamperm@yahoo.com).

WILL DO: garden tilling, post-hole drilling, lawn grading, seeding, rolling, lawn mowing, thatching, aerating, erosion control, dirt leveling, seed & fertilizer broadcasting. 390-1567/cell.

JANITORIAL WORKERS, PT, day/evening, needed in local area, \$10/hr. 412-1248/Laura.

TO RENT FARMLAND FOR 2017 & BEYOND. 456-6521.

CRAFTERS for 17th Ann. Christmas For Veterans Homemade Craft & Bake Sale, Nov. 5, 8:30-3:30 @ Associated Church in Owa. Only homemade crafts, baked gds & plants can be exhibited. 455-2755.

1950s JETSON'S DRINKING GLASS, clear w/pink scene, 5 3/4" tall, 3" dia., top 2 1/4". 838-8565/Kathy.

FARMLAND TO RENT in 2017. 213-9344.

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

GERMAN SHEP. PUP, purebred fem. 330-3945.

### Sparks Free Classified Ad Form for all SWCE Members

Ads need to be received in our office by October 5 to ensure being printed in the November 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 December 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](mailto:sparks@swce.coop).

### All area codes are 507 unless otherwise noted

USED OIL, 200-gal. or more. 420-7429.

THE MOST BOAT THAT \$2500 WILL BUY, seeking 16'-18', 75+ hp, live well, trolling motor, fish finder. 451-1942.

SUFFOLK RAM, breeding age; MOWER DECK for a Dixon ZTR 4421. 835-5421.

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

SOMEONE TO CUSTOM RAISE BULL CALVES on shares. 651-380-5865.

FARMLAND TO RENT in Owat. area. 213-6979.

LARGE JUMBO PEKIN DUCKS. 451-7091.

BARN OR OUTBUILDINGS, I remove to re-purpose the lumber, also looking for any old log bldg, old tin &/or lumber. 330-0258/Tim.

### for sale

2004 CORNHUSKER HOPPER, all alum., \$19,500; 1996 VOLVO CONDO, \$7250; 1991 VOLVO, \$4500. 456-1181.

CROSSBOW SCOPE; (2) 10-38 TIRES for Moline tractor; DUAL WHL HUBS for Moline Z; MOLINE V TRACTOR. 210-5067.

MINI STORAGE UNITS, Blooming Pr. 456-2957.

OLDER LOFTNESS 8' PTO SNOWBLOWER, hydraulic spout & large, single-stage auger w/hvy-duty chain, needs PTO work, \$295. 317-2910.

(6) 15,000-BU. GRAIN BINS avail. to rent 3 mi. north of Blmg Pr. (just east of Hwy 218). 202-4089/Chuck.

1995 FORD F-150, 4WD, fiberglass topper, chrome rims, ext. cab; 1989 YAMAHA MOTO 4 ATV, 200cc. 456-0296.

STORAGE avail. 1-mi. east of Owat., newer shed, concrete floor, boats, trlrs, vehicles, smaller campers. 475-0658.

1991 BUICK LESABRE, 190k mi., FWD, new tires, \$700; METAL FLARE BOX, gd running gear, hyd. lift, \$675. 455-3881.

QUEEN-SIZE NUMBER BED. 528-2422.

'89 YAMAHA VENTURE ROYALE MOTORCYCLE, 1300cc, new battery & clutch, \$1800. 363-2249.

1995 FORD TAURUS, well maintained, only 137,500 mi., \$900/obo. 456-7757.

FORTUNE CRK TRL LOTS, covenant allows for a pole shed, starting at \$75,000; 7.6 ACRES ON GONICK AVE., \$79,900; HAY: 4'x6' large round grass, 4'x4' sm. round alf. & sm. sq. alf. 838-5033/John.

2007 MONTE CARLO SS, fully loaded, 5.3 V8, 129,000 mi., red, vry well maintained, like new cond., \$8700. 213-0973.

WHIRLPOOL PORT. DISHWASHER, 15-yr-old, \$75; BROWN WOODEN CHAIRS; DOGHOUSE. 451-3134.

12.5-GA. CLASS 3 HIGH TENSILE GALVANIZED FENCE for deer & wildlife, 330', \$200. 456-3676.

HOME REPAIRS: plumbing, decks (repair or replacement), window & door installation, drywall (repair or installation) & more, quality wrk, exc. references, affordable prices. 581-6562/John.

RIDING LESSONS, TRAINING CLINICS, SADDLES & TACK; GENERATOR, \$375; 8' TRUCK TOPPER, \$95. 332-2176.

HOME COMFORT ANTIQUE WOOD COOKSTOVE w/warming oven & water reservoir. 440-6738.

USED TUFF HOT WATER PRESS. WASHER, 3.5 gpm @ 3000 psi, 11 hp Honda, GED, \$2295; VAL 6 KBE5L RADIANT HEATER, \$2395. 583-2703.

MAYTAG QUIET SERIES 300 DISHWASHER, white, \$50. 456-0582.

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

DUMP TRUCK AVAIL. for all of your hauling needs: rock, dirt, etc., 15-ton cap. 456-7774.

(For Sale ads continued on Page 7)

### travel

HOLIDAY BRANSON BY MOTOR COACH, Oct. 31-Nov. 4. Five days, 8 meals, 6 shows, Christmas Lights, Steamboat Museum. \$849 per person based on 2 per room.

NEW YORK HOLIDAY TOUR (AIR INCLUDED), Nov. 9-13. Five days in New York City's Times Square, Radio City Rockettes, Lion King & more. \$2,299 per person based on 2 per room.

MN TWINS SPRING TRAINING IN FLORIDA BY MOTOR COACH, March 2-12, '17. Eleven days, 19 meals, 2 Twins games, Nashville tour, Coca-Cola tour & more. \$1,699 pp based on 2 per room.

PANAMA CANAL CRUISE (AIR INCL.), March 14-30, '17; 17 days, all meals on cruise, San Fran., Mex., C. America, full canal transit, S. America, Aruba. Starts at \$4,399 pp based on 2 per room.

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



## member connection

### Cold Weather Rule notification

216B.097 Cold Weather Rule; Cooperative or Municipal Utility

**Subdivision 1. Application; notice to residential customer.** (a) A municipal utility or a cooperative electric association must not disconnect and must reconnect the utility service of a residential customer during the period between October 15 and April 15 if the disconnection affects the primary heat source for the residential unit and all of the following conditions are met:

1. The household income of the customer is at or below 50 percent of the state median household income. A municipal utility or cooperative electric association utility may (i) verify income on forms it provides or (ii) obtain verification of income from the local energy assistance provider. A customer is deemed to meet the income requirements of this clause if the customer receives any form of public assistance, including energy assistance, that uses an income eligibility threshold set at or below 50 percent of the state median household income.

2. A customer enters into and makes reasonably timely payments under a payment agreement that considers the financial resources of the household.

3. A customer receives referrals to energy assistance, weatherization, conservation, or other programs likely to reduce the customer's energy bills.

(b) A municipal utility or a cooperative electric association must, between August 15 and October 15 each year, notify all residential customers of the provisions of this section.

**Subd. 2. Notice to residential customer facing disconnection.** Before disconnecting service to a residential customer during the period between October 15 and April 15, a municipal utility or cooperative electric association must provide the following information to a customer:

(1) a notice of proposed disconnection;  
(2) a statement explaining the customer's rights and responsibilities;

(3) a list of local energy assistance providers;

(4) forms on which to declare inability to pay; and

(5) a statement explaining available time payment plans and other opportunities to secure continued utility service.

**Subd. 3. Restrictions if disconnection necessary.** (a) If a residential customer must be involuntarily disconnected between October 15 and April 15 for failure to comply with Subdivision 1, the disconnection must not occur:

(1) on a Friday, unless the customer de-

clines to enter into a payment agreement offered that day in person or via personal contact by telephone by a municipal utility or cooperative electric association;

(2) on a weekend, holiday, or the day before a holiday;

(3) when utility offices are closed; or

(4) after the close of business on a day when disconnection is permitted, unless a field representative of a municipal utility or cooperative electric association who is authorized to enter into a payment agreement, accept payment, and continue service, offers a payment agreement to the customer.

Further, the disconnection must not occur until at least 20 days after the notice required in Subdivision 2 has been mailed to the customer or 15 days after the notice has been personally delivered to the cus-

tomer. 18459

(b) If a customer does not respond to a disconnection notice, the customer must not be disconnected until the utility investigates whether the residential unit is actually occupied. If the unit is found to be occupied, the utility must immediately inform the occupant of the provisions of this section. If the unit is unoccupied, the utility must give seven days' written notice of the proposed disconnection to the local energy assistance provider before making a disconnection.

(c) If, prior to disconnection, a customer appeals a notice of involuntary disconnection, as provided by the utility's established appeal procedure, the utility must not disconnect until the appeal is resolved.

### SWCE Area Energy Assistance Phone Numbers

#### Blue Earth County

507-345-6822  
800-767-7139

#### Freeborn County

507-864-7515  
800-944-3281

#### Rice County

507-732-7391  
800-277-8418

#### Dodge County

507-864-7515  
800-944-3281

#### Goodhue County

507-732-7391  
800-277-8418

#### Steele County

507-864-7515  
800-944-3281

#### Faribault County

507-345-6822  
800-767-7139

#### LeSueur County

507-345-6822  
800-767-7139

#### Waseca County

507-345-6822  
800-767-7139

### 325E.028 Utility payment arrangements for military service personnel

**Subdivision 1. Restriction on disconnection; payment schedules.** (a) A municipal utility, cooperative electric association, or public utility must not disconnect the utility service of a residential customer if a member of the household has been issued orders into active duty, for deployment, or for a permanent change in duty station during the period of active duty, deployment, or change in duty station if such a residential customer:

(1) has a household income below the state median household income or is receiving energy assistance and enters into an agreement with the municipal utility, cooperative electric association, or public utility under which the residential customer pays 10 percent of the customer's gross monthly income toward the customer's bill and the residential customer remains reasonably current with those payments; or  
(2) has a household income above the state median household income and enters into an agreement with the municipal utility, cooperative electric association, or public utility establishing a reasonable payment schedule that considers the financial resources of the household and the residential customer remains reasonably current with payments under the payment schedule.

(b) For purposes of this subdivision, "household income" means household income measured after the date of the orders specified in paragraph (a).

**Subd. 2. Annual notice to all customers; inability to pay forms.** (a) A municipal utility, cooperative electric association, or public utility must notify all residential customers annually of the provisions of this section.

(b) A municipal utility, cooperative electric association, or public utility must provide a form to a residential customer to request the protections of this section upon the residential customer's request.

## cookin' connection

### Zucchini Brownies

Tai Tolle

1/2 c. oil  
1 1/2 c. sugar  
2 tsp. vanilla  
2 c. flour  
1/2 c. cocoa (special dark preferred)  
1 1/2 tsp. baking soda  
1/2 tsp. salt  
2 c. shredded zucchini

Mix all ingredients in bowl. Bake at 350° for 25 minutes.

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 50 kWh credit per panel on this month's statement for energy generated during August 2016. Learn more about community solar and The Sunna Project by visiting Steele-Waseca's website, [swce.coop](http://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 bill; 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.

## September issue of Sparks



### Numbers found:

Dike E. Deitcler  
Thomas D. Sparrow

### Numbers not found:

Steven Hjelmen  
Ronald D. Mead  
Gregg A. Rollins



## 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](http://www.swce.coop). By entering your Steele-Waseca user name 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 Marathon Electric Water Heater Program, phone Cindy Aamot at our office between 8 a.m. and 3:30 p.m., 446-4204 / 800-526-3514.

- August temps – The average high temperature for August was 80°F, while the average low was 61°F. They compare to last year's average high of 78°F and average low of 59°F.

- ENERGY STAR® Rebates** – In 2016, all ENERGY STAR refrigerators/freezers (with recycling), dehumidifiers, central air conditioners, air and ground source heat pumps, compact fluorescent lightbulbs (CFLs), light emitting diode (LED) holiday lights and bulbs purchased 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](http://www.swce.coop). For more information or to receive a rebate request form, phone Cindy Aamot between 8 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. 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**

## LIVESTOCK OWNERS

If you have questions or concerns regarding stray voltage in your livestock confinement building(s), or are planning an addition, or constructing a new one, call Steele-Waseca at 507-451-7340 or 800-526-3514. Steele-Waseca will work with you and your electrician to eliminate potential stray voltage problems.

## health & safety connection

### Safety tips for students and those who transport them

Students get to school in a variety of ways—riding a bus, being driven by a family member, carpooling, walking, or even driving themselves.

Electricity is not usually the first thing on a student's or driver's mind on the way to school. Yet, it is vitally important to know what to do if there is a downed line or an accident with a power pole along that journey. Safe Electricity® shares tips that can help keep students and those who help transport them to and from school safe.

Severe storms, high winds, and vehicular accidents with power poles can all cause power lines to fall. Just because a power line is down does not mean that it is not carrying electricity. While downed lines can sometimes show they are live by arcing and sparking with electricity, this is not always the case. Treat all downed lines as though they



Courtesy of Safe Electricity

are energized, and stay far away from them. Call 911 to have first responders and the utility notified of the downed line. 23224

If you are in a vehicle that wrecks with a power pole, the vehicle may be

charged with electricity. If this is the case and you step out of the car, you will become the electricity's path to the ground and could be electrocuted. Stay in the vehicle, and tell others to do the same. Call 911 to have emergency and utility services notified. Do not leave your vehicle until a utility professional has told you it is safe.

The only circumstance when you should exit the vehicle is if it is on fire—and those instances are rare. If you must exit, jump clear of it with your feet together and without touching the vehicle and ground at the same time. Continue to "bunny hop" with your feet together to safety. Doing this will ensure that you will not have different strengths of electric current running from one foot to another.

If you come upon or witness an accident involving power lines, do not approach the accident scene. If you see someone approaching, warn them to stay away from the accident until utility professionals and emergency responders have confirmed that there are no electrical dangers.

OKTOBERFEST

St. John Lutheran Church

Sunday • October 9, 2016

Polka Worship Service

10:30 a.m.

Roasted Pork Loin and Old Fashioned Hot Dog Dinners served with fresh homemade sauerkraut, German potato salad, mashed potatoes, cooked red cabbage, coleslaw, lemonade, coffee, and dessert (apple or chocolate)

\$10 adult \$5 age 10 & under

FREE under age 5

Early Bird Sales

9:00 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.

Bocce Ball

11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Rally-Lines

Farmers Market

Proceeds to benefit the heating and air conditioning fund and the parking lot fund

### Don't Wait — Check the Date!

Replace Smoke Alarms Every 10 Years

Fire Prevention Week Oct. 9-15, 2016

Age matters when it comes to your smoke alarms. Check the manufacture dates on your smoke alarms today!

- Remove the smoke alarm from the wall or ceiling.
- Look at the back of the alarm for the date of manufacture.
- Smoke alarms should be replaced 10 years from the date of manufacture.
- Put the alarm back on the ceiling or wall if it is less than 10 years old.

A closer look may reveal a sprout of mold after a month of sitting on the test button.

Two smoke alarms should be placed on every level, outside each sleeping area, and on every level of the home, including the basement. Larger homes may need more alarms. For the best protection, make sure all smoke alarms are interconnected. When one sounds, they all sound.

Call the fire department from a telephone or a smoke alarm. Stay outside until the fire department arrives to go inside.

For more information about smoke alarms, visit [fema.gov](http://fema.gov) and [firepreventionweek.org](http://firepreventionweek.org).

N.F.P.A. | FEMA | U.S. Fire Administration | NFPA