

member connection

Careers in Energy Week is Oct. 15-19

WE NEED YOU!

If you are purpose-driven, community-oriented and service-focused, we want you to join our national network of dedicated, electric co-op employees. We are seeking talented individuals in these diverse fields:

- Engineering and Operations
- Information Technology
- Business Administration
- Member Services
- Community & Economic Development
- And many more!

Join the cooperative family today by visiting touchstoneenergy.jobs



Great River Energy announces winter load control strategy

Great River Energy (GRE), Steele-Waseca Co-operative Electric's wholesale energy provider, has announced their winter load control plans for the 2018-19 season.

The first day under the winter control strategy for interruptible billing peak load management will be Oct. 1, 2018, and will extend through April 30, 2019. The exception is for storage water heating which started Sept. 19.

Storage water heating controls begin between 7-8 a.m., and end between 11 p.m.-12 a.m., Monday through Friday. There aren't any scheduled controls on weekends and holidays, unless there would be circumstances necessitating the need for load control.

Electric vehicle and ChargeWise control participants will have daily controls beginning between 7-8 a.m., and ending between 11 p.m.-12 a.m.

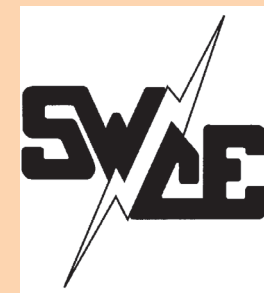
Electric thermal storage space heating controls begin daily between 6:30-7:30 a.m., and end between 10:30-11:30 p.m.

Participants in the 4- or 8-hour interruptible water heating program will only be controlled when needed. The 4-hour program is closed to new loads, and would only be controlled for a maximum of 4 hours/day, not to exceed 20 days and/or 80 hours. Eight-hour program participants would only be controlled for a maximum of 8 hours/day, not to exceed 20 days and/or 100 hours.

Dual fuel program participants will only be controlled when needed. Controls are limited to a maximum of 12 hours/day, not to exceed 20 days and/or 108 hours.

Interruptible commercial and industrial program participants will only be controlled under emergency circumstances like a generating plant failure or MISO (Midcontinent Independent System Operator) citing an emergency situation requiring an extreme load control. 25636

Member-owners participating in a Steele-Waseca load control program with questions regarding GRE's winter control strategy, or needing additional information, are encouraged to contact Cindy Butterfield at Steele-Waseca during regular business hours.



the power of human connections

sparks

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

a monthly newsletter from Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric

October 2018



LOCAL. TRUSTED. SERVING YOU.™

The cooperative difference



Electric co-ops are local energy and technology providers. They are shaped by the specific needs of the communities they serve. This local, member-owned structure is one reason why cooperatives enjoy the highest consumer-satisfaction scores within the electric industry, according to J.D. Power and Associates and the American Consumer Satisfaction Index.

- Co-ops **earned the top spot** in the J.D. Power and Associates 2017 Electric Utility Customer Satisfaction Study.
- Electric cooperatives **score three points higher** than all other energy utilities, according to the American Consumer Satisfaction Index.

Committed to serving the last mile

- Co-ops serve an average of **8 consumers per mile** of electric line; collect annual revenue of \$19,000 per mile of line.
- All other utilities average **32 customers** per mile of line; collect \$79,000 per mile.

Electric cooperatives are guided by seven principles:

1. Voluntary and open membership
2. Democratic member control
3. Members' economic participation
4. Autonomy and independence
5. Education training and information
6. Cooperation among cooperatives
7. Concern for community

inside connections

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calendar of events

- October
- 1 Child Health Day
 - 7-13 Nat'l Fire Prevention Week
 - 8 Columbus Day observed
 - 9 Leif Erikson Day
 - 15-19 Nat'l School Lunch Week
 - 16 Boss's Day
 - 31 Halloween

Wishing to learn about Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's storage water heater program?

Most people don't think much about water heaters and take for granted they make it possible to have hot showers, clean dishes, and freshly laundered clothes. With that water heater in the basement or tucked in a utility closet, it is often out-of-sight, out-of-mind.

However, there are times when your

attention turns to arguably the most essential of all appliances: when an existing water heater fails, breaks, or when you decide to build or renovate a home.

At that point, as a homeowner you need to make a decision that will impact (SWCE water heater program continued on Page 7)

The SWCE Storage Water Heater Program

Storage Program:

- * SWCE will give you a FREE 115-gallon storage water heater and a mixing valve (if needed)
- * Water heater will be controlled from 7 AM - 11 PM M-F

Westinghouse Water Heater

- * Stainless steel tank with heavy-duty insulation
- * 115-gallon weighs 224 lbs. shipping weight
- * Dimensions: 27" x 70.5"
- * Industry best Lifetime Warranty when registered Online



OKTOBERFEST

St. John Lutheran Church

1301 Lincoln Avenue • Owatonna, MN • 507-451-7293
www.stjohnowatonna.org

Sunday • October 7, 2018

Polka Worship Service
featuring Irv Arndt
on the concertina

10:30 a.m.

Early Bird Sales
9:00 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.

Booths Re-open,
Dinner, Games
11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

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

\$10 adults **\$5** age 10 & under

FREE under age 5

Farmers' Market

- Garden produce
- Fall decorations
- Canned goods
- Baked goods
- Fall mums
- Craft items
- St. John Christmas cards

Published monthly by
Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric
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Owatonna MN 55060-0485

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Management

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Division Managers

Darla DeVries *Office*
David Lundberg *Finance*
Kim Huxford *Operations*

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 and listen to the prompts. Please have your account number, phone number, and name on the account available.

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

With October being National Cooperative Month, I wish to elaborate on the person who invented the pot-bellied stove, bifocal glasses, and was a member of both Continental Congresses and the committee that wrote the Declaration of Independence—Benjamin Franklin.

However, 1752 was a particularly good year for Mr. Franklin, perhaps the last true renaissance man. During that year he successfully proved that lightning is a form of electricity with a kite and a key (luckily he was not hurt).

He excelled in politics, diplomacy, journalism, and science, and was one of the most respected men in these fields. However, in American culture, Franklin will always be remembered for flying a kite and his “discovery” of electricity (although he did not actually discover electricity on that day).

You see, in 1752 Franklin also guided the creation of the first cooperative in the United States, the Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insurance of Houses from Loss by Fire—the oldest fire insurance company and operating cooperative in the nation. Franklin promoted the principle of mutual insurance in the United States and, as a signer of our Declaration of Independence, helped create a national climate in which cooperatives might grow.

As we celebrate cooperative month in October, it is interesting to note that more than 40,000 cooperatives in the United States serve 350 million members (many people belong to more than one co-op).

These cooperatives generate \$514 billion in revenue and more than \$25 billion in wages, according to a study conducted by the University of Wisconsin Center for Cooperatives, with support from USDA Rural Development.

What types of cooperatives exist? Consumer cooperatives (electricity, housing, telecommunications, credit unions, health care, child care, and funeral services); producer cooperatives (agriculture, artists, and craftsmen); worker cooperatives (food stores, processing companies, restaurants, taxicab companies, sewing companies, timber processors, and light and heavy industry); and purchasing/shared services cooperatives (purchasing and shared services cooperatives are owned and governed by independent business owners, small municipalities and, in some cases, state governments that band together to enhance their purchasing power).

A cooperative is a business. Co-ops range in size from small storefronts to large Fortune 500 companies. Cooperatives don’t have to answer to outside shareholders as they represent democracy in action, with control exercised by a board of directors elected from the ranks of members; the board hires and directs management and is ultimately responsible to the members. Cooperatives generate jobs in their communities, keep profits local, and pay local taxes to help support community services. 34357

Co-ops are formed by their members when the marketplace fails to provide needed goods or services at affordable prices and acceptable quality. Throughout the world, cooperatives are providing co-op members with utilities, financial services, consumer goods, affordable housing, and other services.

Thank you Mr. Franklin. Although you did not invent electricity, your vision for cooperatives was perhaps one of the best contributions to American business and citizens.

1 OF 900

We are one of more than
900 ELECTRIC CO-OPS in the U.S.
Together, we collaborate
to solve complex
challenges to meet the
energy needs of our
local communities.

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH



Syd

ad connection

(For Sale ads continued from Page 6)
1000-GAL. LP TANK. 696-5764.

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

ROUND HAY BALES, 1st & 2nd cutting, net wrapped, no rain. 475-1392.

'02 FORD ESCAPE, runs gd, vry min. rust, 219K mi., 17-25 mpg, broken door latch on rear passngr side, \$800/obo; **(4) GYM MATS**, 8x16, fair cond., \$10/each/obo. 744-5353.

MIXED GRASS HAY, sm. sq., no chemicals, hvy bales, no rain (also banking hay). 334-6377.

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

JD 2800 MOLDBOARD PLOW, 6-btm. 330-5135.

WHEAT STRAW, 3x3 big squares, \$120/ton/obo. 390-2274.

KING KUTTER 6' BRUSH CUTTER, like new, \$700. 456-7614.

2002 DODGE DURANGO, 4x4, blk, 3rd roll seats, cassette/CD/radio, 4.7L, V8, clean title, \$2700/obo. 835-2814/Kevin/leave message.

AALADIN PRESSURE WASHER, 3000 PSI, 230V, 4-gal. per minute, \$2000. 461-3835.

KIRBY MULTI-SURFACE SHAMPOO SYSTEM for cleaning carpet with Kirby vacuum (Model #293014), new/never used. 455-1752.

'76 CHEVY C65 TRUCK, diesel; **'38 FORD PKUP**, restored; **KENMORE HE3T STACKABLE WASHER/DRYR**, '08 **FORD TAURUS TRANNY**; '00 **GRASS-HOPPER LAWN MOWER**, 48", \$3500. 327-2741.

MIXED & OAK FIREWOOD, selling by 1/2 cord, can deliver, \$75/mixed, \$100/oak. 676-1141.

AUTUMN DATE NIGHT, Oct. 6, 5 pm, Waldorf, couples tix/\$100 through eventbrite.com; **SUN. MUSIC & MORE**, Oct. 21, 11 am-6 pm, Waldrf, food vends, craft fair, Country & Bluegr. Gosp. music. 327-7047.

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.

(SWCE water heater program continued from Pg 1)

your household for at least a decade, if not two or more. Your water-heating choice will have implications for energy efficiency, cost of use, the environment, safety, and reliability. That's where consulting with Steele-Waseca regarding the co-op's storage water heater program can provide clarity regarding the choice that is right for you.

First off, electric water heaters are safe. There is no threat of carbon monoxide poisoning, combustion, or explosion. Electric water heaters are easy to install, don't require gas lines or an exhaust flue.

They are like having a rechargeable battery in your basement as the water heater conserves energy by heating water during off-peak hours when electric

'99 EXISS ALUM. STOCK TRAILER, 7x20, \$9500; **16' SLANT GATES** for calves, \$30/each. 649-0735.

1994 OLYMPIAN CAMPER, 24', stove, refrig., roof a/c, bath, \$2400. 334-2673.

RAT TERRIER PUPS, born 7/28/18, dewormed, vaccinated, docked tails; **BRED BEEF COW**, polled, to calve April 2019. 465-8593/Brad.

HOUSE FOR RENT, Ellendale, (2) bdrm/ba, new appliances & flooring, no smoking, no pets, \$800/mth + utilities. 456-8931.

(2) AUGERS: 7"x60" w/elec. motor, 8"x16" w/elec. motor. 451-2531.

(150) GRASS HAY BALES, sm. sq., no rain, Waldorf area. 327-3672.

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

LARGE ROUND HAY BALES: alf./grass, grass, no rain, net wrapped. 461-0898.

REGISTERED POLLED HEREFORD BULL, 3-yr-old, has settled all my cows & can't use anymore, easy to handle. 838-6920.

2002 FORD F-450, 7.3L, diesel, auto, 14' flatbed & liftgate, \$7000/obo; **HOMEMADE CAR TRAILER**, tandem axle, \$1000/obo. 456-8521.

2011 TOYOTA PRIUS, charcoal gray ext., gray int., tinted windows, 95,576 mi., new tires, vry reliable, gd looking car, \$9000. 491-4565.

WD AC TRACTOR w/Paulson trip bucket & tire chains, \$2500/obo. 456-4254.

TRAILERS, \$175; **7-14 TIRES**; **2000 CHEV. CAR**; **PLASTIC & STEEL BARRELS**. 664-9426.

GENERAL GRABBER AT2 TIRES, 225/75r16, 108S, never used, \$100/tire. 684-3127.

WHEEL HORSE 314A HYDRO GARDEN TRACTOR, 42" cut, new battery & fuel pump, extras, \$525. 838-8870/call after 4:30 p.m.

CASIO SYNTHESIZR KEYBOARD w/(2) drum pads (Casitone MT-205), exc. cond., \$50; **ROLL TOP DESK**, 52"x48", \$35. 645-4309.

FARMALL M, (3) newer tires, 12V, lights, fenders, NF, \$1350/obo. 676-2885/eves.

DUNCAN PHYFE TABLE w/(6) chairs; **(2) ELEC. GUITARS** w/amp; **CORNER TV STAND** w/storage; **FARMER TABLE** w/(4) chairs; **KEROSENE HEATER**, new. 332-0294.

FULL-SIZE BED, BOOKSHELF & FOOTBOARD, real wood, metal sides, gd shape, other things, \$100. 583-6679.

TREK 220 MT, girl's, 24x175, 21-spd, F.S. Fork, \$100; **SCHWINN RANGER**, 26x175, 21-spd, F.S. Fork, \$100. 330-3178.

'15 SEA-DOO RXT-X AS 260 w/cover, incl. Triton trlr & lift, like new, low hrs; **AIRMAX LAKE AERATOR**, HP Series-SW40, incl. (4) airlines & (4) aerators. 612-720-5650.

UTILITY TRAILER on Lund snowmobile trailer base, has permanent registration. 838-2174.

LA-Z-BOY SOFA, LOVE SEAT & CHAIR, incl. solid oak coffee table, end tables & matching lamps, exc. cond.; **(4) PORTERVILLE SWIVEL BARSTOOLS** w/fabric protector, like new cond., \$175/ea. 366-1256.

DINING ROOM SET: table w/(2) leaves, (6) chairs, matching cart w/storage, \$100. 645-6894.

PICNIC TABLE, green steel mesh, 36", w/(4) attached benches, \$250. 451-8498.

NETHERLAND DWARF & POLISH RABBITS, all blue ribbon winners; **HOMEMADE RABBIT HUTCH** w/attached box. 676-3875/call or text.

WEDDING DRESS, white, accented w/blue ribbon, matching hat & attendant light blue dress, \$45 cash for both. 451-7626.

ANTIQUE SNAPPER RIDER, works gd, you pick up. 332-7925.

HVY DUTY TRAILER, 8'x16', (2) 7500-lb. axles, new tires, \$1700; **1996 SUBURBAN**, \$500. 456-9145.

(2) 7' HOUSE PLANTS; **(1) WEEPING FIG**. 451-5456/call after 5 p.m.

INT. CUB CADET 1250 HYDRO. 363-6199.

costs are their lowest. During the week, water heaters will heat from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m., but during weekends and holidays are not scheduled for control.

Member-owners interested in signing up for the co-op's storage water heater program and earning a \$10 monthly credit on your Steele-Waseca bill need to: 1079961

1) Contact Steele-Waseca to schedule a time to pick up the water heater and receiver.

2) The homeowner or a licensed contractor is responsible for picking up and installing the water heater and receiver within 60 days. Wiring diagrams are available.

3) The member-owner must have a state electrical inspection and submit a

copy of the affidavit.

4) Contact SWCE for the co-op to conduct a field check. Credits will not be applied until the field check is completed.

5) If longer than 60 days, the member-owner will be billed for the water heater and receiver.

If registered online within 90 days, there is a lifetime warranty on the water heater tank and six-year warranty on all other parts of the water heater for as long as the original member-owner owns the dwelling.

If not registered online within 90 days or if you are not the original homeowner, there is a 10-year warranty on the tank and a one-year warranty on its parts. **SWCE**

ad connection

give away

CALICO CAT, 8-yr-old, female, spayed, current shots, gd natured, gd w/small dogs. 838-2515/Larry.

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, faxd or emailed to SWCE.

CAT, blk & white, beautiful, to a gd home, declawed & neutered. 451-9594.

SANDBOX, 6'x6'3", 2"x12" wood w/corner seats. 451-5208.

BABY CRIB, maple, non-standard/appropriate for 18-24 mo.—NOT infant, w/matt. 645-4309.

(1) CONCRETE STEP, 4'x4", 14" high. 884-5739.

wanted

APPROX. (12) STRAW BALES, small rectangle. 363-9084.

CRAFTERS for 19th Ann. Christmas for Veterans Homemade Craft & Bake Sale, Nov. 3 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., at Trinity Luth. Church in Owat., booth rentals are \$30/booth, incl. tbl & chairs. 455-2755.

CONCRETE SILAGE BUNKS; UPRIGHT ALUM. SHOWBOX. 213-0059.

FELINE MOUSERS/RATTERS. 744-5353.

WILL DO YARD/DRIVEWAY WORK, have compact tractor w/tiller, bucket, blade & plow. 451-6046.

BUMPER PULL CAMPER, 26' to 28', 2006 or newer in vry gd cond. 465-8566.

391 BIG BLOCK V8 for 1978 Ford F-600 truck. 676-0969.

JUNK & UNWANTED APPLIANCES, no TVs or computers, free drop-off. 210-6728/Dan/lv. msg.

9' MATHEWS CO. ROTARY SCYTHE FLAIL MOWR CONDITIONER OR NI CUT/DITIONER. 676-1496.

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

WETHER GOAT, free or cheap. 363-3975.

66.9 CROP LAND FOR RENT - 2019. 744-2512.

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

All area codes are 507 unless otherwise noted

ANYONE IN STEELE COUNTY AREA THAT FIXES LAWN MOWERS & SNOWBLOWERS. 451-5887.

for sale

'83 YAMAHA VIRAGO MOTORCYCLE, nice; FUEL TANKS ON STAND; CHRYSLER OUTBOARD, 120-hp; CAR TOP LUGGAGE CASE, \$40. 213-7909.

1984 FORD E-150 CARGO VAN, insulated, gd rubber, runs great, lots of updated parts, \$1495; GUN CABINET, mahogany, \$75. 213-8823.

VARIETY OF MEN'S & WOMEN'S OLD WEST/ FRONTIER CLOTHING incl. hats, skirts, vests, frocks, shirts, trousers & accessories.952-451-4821.

WOODEN ROCKING CHAIR, large, white, \$35/obo; RECLINING SOFA, brown, \$85/obo. 869-3191.

BOAT STORAGE, Millersburg area. 612-423-4500.

'07 KEYSTONE SPRINGDALE 38' TRVL TRLR w/(2) slide outs, sleeps 10, full-sz fridge, kitchn area has a dbl sink & large counter area, big bathroom area w/full-sz shower, gd cond., \$12,000. 451-9445.

TROMBONE; DOUBLE SAXOPHONE CASE; JUPITER TENOR SAXOPHONE; TRUMPET; ALTO SAXOPHONE. 340-0506.

ACORN CHAIR LIFT, 2-yr-old, works great, \$2500. 952-652-2661.

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

WHEEL HORSE 418A GARDEN TRACTOR, 18-hp Kohler engine, incl. 42" mower deck, hydraulic equipment lift, \$900. 952-836-6782/Bill.

MF 2705 TRACTOR; PRONTO PWR WHEEL-CHAIR, exc. cond., best offer. 475-2322.

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

MOHAIR (ANGORA GOAT) WOOL & ALPACA FIBER; YARNS, ROVING, BATS, WASHED FIBER & RAW FLEECES. 832-392-1587/cell.

MINI STORAGE UNITS FOR RENT in Ellendale. 456-1460.

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

ANTIQUE 1-ROW POTATO DIGGER complete w/ apron, \$500. 451-8036.

AIRGUN DESIGNS MINIMAG PAINTBALL GUN & ACCESSORIES, exc. cond., \$395. 456-2060.

ANTIQUE ENAMEL GAS STOVE, 1930s era, \$100/obo; AMANA MICROWAVE OVEN w/wall-mount bracket, wrks perfect, \$50/obo. 210-7786/Mdfd area.

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

WINTER STORAGE for RVs, boats, etc. 213-8842.

SMALL TRAILER for garden tractor, nice; TOOL-BOX for pickup. 451-1946.

1993 CHEVY VAN, AWD, runs well, 175,000 mi., \$600. 333-2679.

MINI STORAGE UNITS, Blmg Prairie. 456-2957.

SELF-POWERED SAW RIG w/JD 2-cyl. engine, needs gas tank, runs great, \$2750. 583-2386.

2018 INTERSTATE ENCLOSED TRAILER, 5x8, new spare tire, trailer used once, \$2150. 332-7624.

PAULA YOUNG@ WIGLET, never worn, still in box, med. golden blonde, \$25. 451-8888.

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

STEEL WHEELS, 54", \$70/each or \$120/pair; MODEL "T" FORD CAR JACK, Walker Mfg. Co., Racine, Wis. #216, \$50. 952-652-2678.

MOW-N-VAC, 32-cu.-ft, \$650. 334-3804.

KITCHEN TABLE w/2-chairs, charming, exc. cond., ideal for apartment or sm. kitchen, maple color, \$75. 334-5799.

(For Sale ads continued on Page 7)

travel

SMOKY MOUNTAINS
Oct. 22-29

HOLIDAY BRANSON
Nov. 15-19

HAWAIIAN ISLANDS
Jan. 28-Feb. 10, 2019

PANAMA CANAL
Feb. 28-March 17, 2019

Call 4-Seasons at 800-328-4298 or visit 4-seasonsvacations.com for complete details. 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 the provisions of 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 customer.

(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, x2433	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, x2433	LeSueur County 507-345-6822 800-767-7139, x2433	Waseca County 507-345-6822 800-767-7139, x2433

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.

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.

cookin' connection

Pot Roast

Marlene Lau

Pemberton

1 pkg. dry onion soup mix
1 1/2 c. chili sauce
1 can beer
6-7 lb. beef roast

Mix ingredients and pour over meat. Cook in Crock-Pot until done on low.

Please use a 3 x 5 card when submitting your recipe. The member whose recipe is published will receive a \$7 energy credit. 1032860



Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's solar subscribers will see a 45 kWh credit per panel on this month's statement for energy generated during August 2018. 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.

September issue of Sparks



Numbers found:
Brian P. Maas
August W./Shirley M. Zahn
Numbers not found:
Lawrence Salaba
Matthew Haan
Edward S. Dahle



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.

• **August temps** – The average high temperature for August was 80° F, while the average low was 60° F. This resulted in 175.5 Cooling Degree Days and 15 Heating Degree Days. They compare to last year's average high of 75° F and average low of 56° F, which resulted in 39 CDDs and 33.5 HDDs.

• **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 swce.coop. For more information or to receive a rebate request form, phone Cindy Butterfield at 800-526-3514.

• **SWCE'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. You may also visit: www.minnesotastrayvoltageguide.com.

health & safety connection

Smoke Alarms at Home

SMOKE ALARMS ARE A KEY PART of a home fire escape plan. When there is a fire, smoke spreads fast. Working smoke alarms give you early warning so you can get outside quickly.

SAFETY TIPS

- Install smoke alarms in every bedroom. They should also be outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home. Install alarms in the basement.
- Large homes may need extra smoke alarms.
- It is best to use interconnected smoke alarms. When one smoke alarm sounds, they all sound.
- Test all smoke alarms at least once a month. Press the test button to be sure the alarm is working.
- Current alarms on the market employ different types of technology including multi-sensing, which could include smoke and carbon monoxide combined.
- Today's smoke alarms will be more technologically advanced to respond to a multitude of fire conditions, yet mitigate false alarms.
- A smoke alarm should be on the ceiling or high on a wall. Keep smoke alarms away from the kitchen to reduce false alarms. They should be at least 10 feet (3 meters) from the stove.
- People who are hard-of-hearing or deaf can use special alarms. These alarms have strobe lights and bed shakers.
- Replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old.



FACTS

- ❗ A closed door may slow the spread of smoke, heat, and fire.
- ❗ Smoke alarms should be installed inside every sleeping room, outside each separate sleeping area, and on every level. Smoke alarms should be connected so when one sounds, they all sound. Most homes do not have this level of protection.
- ❗ Roughly 3 out of 5 fire deaths happen in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms.



NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION
The leading information and knowledge resource on fire, electrical and related hazards

National Fire Prevention Week
Oct. 7-13, 2018

SAFE, RELIABLE, AFFORDABLE ENERGY. THEN. NOW. ALWAYS.

The energy landscape may be changing, but we'll never lose sight of who we're working for.



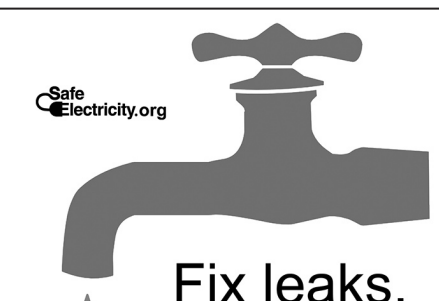
OCTOBER IS NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH
WE'RE PROUD TO SERVE OUR MEMBERS

Tips for a Safe Harvest

Harvest season brings hard work and can be an exhausting, but rushing the job to save time can be extremely dangerous (even deadly!) when working near overhead power lines. We urge farm operators and workers to keep the following safety tips in mind:

- ❗ Use care when operating large machinery near power lines.
- ❗ Inspect the height of equipment to determine clearance.
- ❗ Always keep equipment at least 10 feet away (in all directions) from power lines.
- ❗ Remember to lower extensions when moving loads.
- ❗ If a power line is sagging or looks to be dangerously low, please call us immediately.

Source: SafeElectricity.org



Fix leaks.

1 DRIP per sec. = 1,661 gal. of water and \$35 extra in water bills each year

research collected from the U.S. Department of Energy

No tricks. Just treats.

Don't run electrical cords across walkways that could endanger trick-or-treaters.

