

member connection

# Electric equipment: Yours, mine, or ours?

Questions about the ownership of transformer poles, meter loops, wires, and breaker or fuse panels are usually answered during new construction. But, when existing equipment is damaged by storms, old age, or overload, who owns what? In most cases, on an overhead service all wires beyond the top of the meter pole belong to the member.



Waseca owns the wires up to the meter socket on the house.

3) Wires leaving the meter location to other locations and the connections for those wires.

4) Any disconnect switches, fuses, or breaker panels at the meter site. 32789



Frequently tripped circuit breakers and blown fuses are clear warning signs of faulty electrical wiring. Contact a licensed electrician for an inspection.

Safety starts with you.

Steele-Waseca recommends you have your portion of the service done by a qualified licensed electrical contractor, unless you are qualified to perform this work. The co-op has a master electrician

who can assist you with your complete electrical wiring needs. If you have any questions, or would like to speak with our electrician, please call Steele-Waseca before 3:30 p.m. weekdays. SWCE

## Overhead electric service

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric is responsible for:

- 1) Wires overhead servicing a service stack with a meter socket and meter.
- 2) The transformer/meter pole.
- 3) The meter.
- 4) Connections of wires to the transformer.

Member-owners are responsible for:

- 1) The meter loop (service on the pole including the meter socket, pipe, wire, and disconnect switch) and the connections of the wires.
- 2) Wires leaving the meter pole to other locations and the connections for those wires.

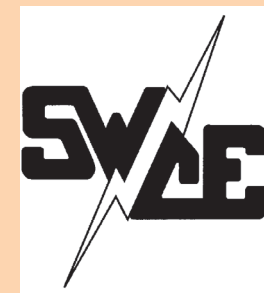
## Underground electric service

Steele-Waseca is responsible for:

- 1) The transformer and meter.

Member-owners are responsible for:

- 1) The meter post and meter socket.
- 2) The pipe and wire from the transformer to the meter socket (non-development). In developments, Steele-



the power of human connections

# sparks

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

a monthly newsletter from Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric

October 2019



## October is National Co-op Month.

Electric co-ops are proud to power more than 20 million American homes, businesses, farms and schools in 48 states.



## Holzem enjoying start with Steele-Waseca

Apprentice Line Technician Tanen Holzem started July 1 at Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric and is enjoying his experience with the co-op.

“Working with the other linemen has been great,” said Tanen.

“Being the only apprentice at the company is pretty interesting. It’s sort of like a whole room full of teachers having one student. There is a ton of knowledge and experience in that room, and I’m trying to absorb as much of it as I can. All the guys have been patient with me as I learn and more than willing to



Tanen Holzem

(Holzem continued from Page 1)

Presently living in Owatonna, Tanen also enjoys the outdoors. “I like to hunt and fish,” said Tanen. “I try to do some snowboarding in the winter and wakeboarding in the summer. I travel when I can; my last big trip was to Iceland, Spain, and Portugal. I love if I’m able to squeeze in some hiking and camping. I’ve backpacked a bit of the Rockies out in Wyoming and Montana.” Adding, “I love watching NFL games, and I’m a big Vikings fan, even when it’s tough to admit it.” SWCE

♥

# Cancer Benefit


SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 28TH

4:00

EAGLES IN OWATONNA

♥

We're here for you!



Never Give Up!

## John Schafer

If you've shopped at Lowe's over the last decade, you probably know John Schafer; smart, funny, and a friend to everyone. John is fighting colon cancer right now and we want to show our support. On June 21st he was diagnosed. The following week he was told he had stage 4 Follicular Lymphoma. One week later he had surgery to remove what they could of the cancer. He is still having chemotherapy treatments, and as we all know, the cost is extraordinary. Please save the date and join us at the Eagles in Owatonna. We will have food, a silent auction, meat raffles, and lots of laughs. Please join us in showing our love for John as he continues to fight this fight.

Questions... please call Vickie or Chris at 506/837-9629 or 507/382-1489

A benefit account for donations has been set up at Profinium Bank, 1080 W. Frontage Road, Owatonna. Donors may call Mariah at 507-444-0111.

## inside connections

- 2 Manager Connection
- 3 Cold Weather Rule notification
- 4 Cookin' Connection  
SWCE community solar update  
Stray voltage questions  
Sparks in brief
- 5 Dual fuel system readiness  
Fire escape planning  
Do not tamper with your meter
- 6 Ad Connection  
4-Seasons Vacations
- 7 Ad Connection  
Sealing air leaks with caulk
- 8 Electric equipment and who's responsible  
Schafer cancer benefit

## calendar of events

### October

- 6-12 Nat'l Fire Prevention Week
- 7 Child Health Day
- 14 Columbus Day observed
- 16 Boss's Day
- 31 Halloween

pass on their knowledge.”

Holzem's initial interest in Steele-Waseca was his belief that it was a step in the right direction for his career and personal life, but the interview process sold him.

“It was actually after my interview that I became very interested with SWCE and knew it was the place that I wanted to be,” stated Tanen. “It was then that I got to see the kind of people that I would be working with and the great environment here.” Adding, “It was the most fun I'd ever had in an interview.”

Tanen reflected when asked about his interest in his career choice. “I really wanted to have a good understanding of electricity and how the power grid operated, and what better way to learn than to do,” said Tanen. “Plus, I had always heard what a good career it was and it feels good being a part of it. It's a pretty cool job, and it's not something that everyone can do, or is at least willing to.” 22367

Holzem grew up on his family's farm in Nowthen, Minnesota. “My great, great grandfather homesteaded it in the 1800s and it's been passed down ever since,” said Tanen. He graduated from Elk River High School in 2012. His parents, Chris and Sara, have careers with his dad working for the streets department for the city of Elk River while farming part time; and his mother is a paraprofessional in the special education department at Parker Elementary School in Elk River. Tanen has a younger sister, Lauren, who attends Augsburg University in Minneapolis.

Tanen started his postsecondary education studying commercial aviation at the University of North Dakota for two years after high school, and eventually attended line school in Wadena, Minnesota, where he graduated in the spring of 2017. He also worked as an automotive technician for a few years for a family-owned garage. Prior to coming to Steele-Waseca, Holzem worked for Legacy Power Line, Inc., and had done some storm restoration work for Steele-Waseca.

“Working for a co-op that I could consider home was a huge goal of mine, and I liked the Owatonna area,” said Tanen. “It's pretty similar to where I'm from.”

(Holzem continued on Page 8)



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This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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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 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

For as much as I would have liked summer to continue, when you think October, you also naturally think of pumpkins, Halloween, and the beautiful fall foliage. But October is notable for another reason—it's National Co-op Month.

This is the time of year when cooperatives across the country including Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric, celebrate who we are, and more importantly, the members we serve.

Cooperatives are different than other types of businesses. When the market declines to offer a product or service, or does so at a very high price, co-ops intervene to fill the need.

Similar to how Steele-Waseca was built by members who came together to bring electricity to our rural area, cooperatives are conveners for the common good. Your electric co-op exists to provide safe, reliable, and affordable energy to you, the members of the co-op. Equally important is our mission to enrich the lives of the members we serve.

As a co-op, we are well-suited to meet the needs of the communities in our service area because we are locally governed. Steele-Waseca's leadership team and employees live near our headquarters in Owatonna. Our board of directors, who help set long-term priorities for the co-op, live locally on co-op lines. These board members have been elected to the position by neighbors like you.

We know our member-owners have a valuable perspective. That's why we continually seek your input. Whether through community events, like our town hall meetings; by phone, email, Facebook, or personal visits to our office,



sparks • october 2019



whether that is during the annual meeting or another time of the year; we want to hear from you.

Our connection to the communities we serve ensures we get a first-hand perspective on local priorities, thereby enabling us to make more informed decisions on long-term investments on equipment and technology upgrades.

Another feature that sets our co-op apart from a traditional utility is one of our core principles, "Concern for Community." We participate in the electric cooperative Youth Tour, where we sponsor two high sophomores or juniors to join other Minnesota delegates to Washington, D.C., for a weeklong immersion to experience democracy in action.

In addition, Steele-Waseca has a scholarship program for high school seniors planning to attend a two- or four-year college or technical school on a full-time basis. In 2019, the co-op awarded (15) \$500 scholarships. 1000771

Ultimately, the larger community benefits from these programs because of you and your neighbors. You empower the co-op through your membership and support of these programs.

We hope you will think of Steele-Waseca as more than your energy distributor, but instead as a local business that supports the communities in our service area, and powers economic development and prosperity for residents.

Steele-Waseca will continue to learn from our members about their priorities so we can better serve you—because your electric co-op was built by the community, for the community.

*Syd*

## ad connection

(For Sale ads continued from Page 6)

**WINTER STORAGE AVAILABLE FOR:** RVs, campers, boats, etc. 213-8842.

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

**REGISTERED HEREFORD HEIFER**, due to calve Spring 2020, bred to registered bull. 456-8094.

**RAVELLI PELLET STOVE**, 80,000-Btu, used 1.5 heating seasons, \$2000. 391-2485/leave message.

**SWIVEL ROCKER** from Erickson's Furniture (Fbo), burgandy, like new, 36"H, 25"W, \$150; **CAR MANU-ALS** for 1977 Buick Century Regal, & 1979 Chev. Monza, \$5/ea. 838-8565.

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

**(25) ACRES**, building site, 6-mi. from Fbo, 20-acres are tillable by Roberds Lk. 301-9694.

**2015 HONDA PIONEER 500 ATV**, side x side, roof, windshield, rear fabric windows, like new, only 500-mi., \$6500. 440-9482.

**YAMAHA VINO CLASSIC SCOOTER**, silver, like new, 1400-mi., \$1000/firm. 334-3804.

**1927 FORD MODEL A CHASSIS RUNNING GEAR**, \$400. 334-2673.

**FORD 8N TRACTOR**, exc. cond., \$2850; **FARMALL F-20**, \$600; **1995 CHEV. S-10**, extended cab, 4x4, has bed liner & toolbox, \$1150/obo. 649-1944.

**(4) MALE PUREBRED GERMAN SHEP. PUPS**, have both parents, \$300/ea.; **CROSSBRED BREED-ABLE EWE LAMBS** from twins/triplets, \$135/ea. 334-5532.

**HAY** for banking or cover flowers. 334-6377.

**TRAILER**, 7x10, \$300; **CHAIN SAWS**, old; **LUMBER**, all kinds; **TIRES**, all kinds. 664-9426.

**PULL-BEHIND LAWN MOWER 38"-WIDE LAWN SWEEPER**. 214-3029.

**SHOREMASTER 2596 CANTILEVER BOAT LIFT**, 2500-lb. capacity, \$2300; **SHOPSMITH BAND SAW, SANDER, DRILL**, etc. + acc., \$650. 334-6362.

**1977 CASE 1070 TRACTOR**, 5300-hrs, pwr shift, great shape, exc. tires, \$7500/obo. 461-1758.

**40,000- & 16,000-BU. GRAINS BINS FOR RENT**, air operated w/hopper bin, unloaders, Little Chicago area. 612-242-7322.

**LP TANK**, 500-gal., \$250. 676-1804.

**(27) SLIDING WINDOWS** from an older Lester barn. 330-5135/Dave.

**CAR DOLLY**, drive on, steering & surge brakes; **FISH HOUSE**, insulated, 6'x8', on skids. 456-1133.

**AGRI-FAB LEAF MULCHER & BLOWER**, 9-hp Briggs & Stratton motor, 26-bu., mow & vac, like new, \$875. 475-4584.

**CASE 970 TRACTOR**, diesel, gd tires, great starting, make great snowblower tractor, \$4850. 213-0254.

**1978 FORD 9000**, tandem axle w/21' box, hoist, tarp, 230-290 Cummins diesel, 6-spd, 22.5 tires, \$8000. 327-3615.

**JD 6620 COMBINE; JD 643 CORN HD.** 583-2026.

**(3) MARATHON ELEC. MOTORS:** (1) 1.5-hp, (2) 1-hp, dual voltage & reversible; **ACE PTO SPRAYER;** **(3) OIL BARREL PUMPS.** 465-8566.

**31' MOTOR HOME**, vry gd cond., \$14,990; **JD GARDEN TRACTOR**, vry gd cond., \$500; **GRADER** for driveway, hvy duty, \$250. 339-0763.

**(20) COMMERCIAL ANGUS & BLK BALDIES COWS**, bred to purebred Angus Renown's son; **HEIFER CALVES, RITO** - Bis-Mark Pedigree's. 838-7721.

**30' STEEL LIGHT POST**, 6x6, \$40; **WENGER SOUND MODULE**, 8x10, 2-door. 451-9445.

**HOLSTEIN FEEDER STEERS.** 451-3678.

**FORD CARGO VAN**, insulated, gd rubber, brakes, mechanical, great hauler, runs gd, 6-cyl., 4-spd w/overdrive, \$1100. 213-8823.

**20' TANDEM AXLE TRAILER**, mobile home frame, \$1200; **1000-GAL. LP TANK**, \$900. 451-9614.

**2000 FORD RANGER**, 4.0 auto, 4x4, 4-door, 129,000 mi., \$2500/obo; **1993 HONDA GOLDWING ASPENCADE**, \$3000/obo. 271-3278.

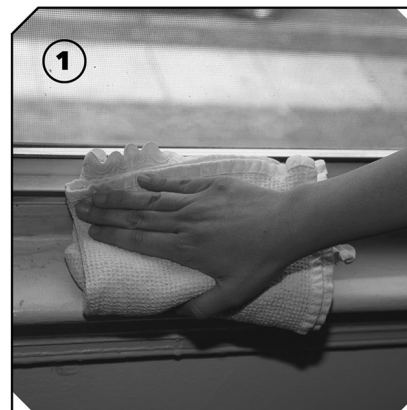
**TURKEY DECOYS & (2) BLINDS**, \$125 for all; **1986 DODGE RAMCHARGER**, great kids project, \$1600. 320-0712.

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.

## SEAL AIR LEAKS WITH CAULK

Did you know heating and cooling accounts for roughly **HALF OF YOUR HOME'S ENERGY USE**? Caulking cracks and gaps around windows, doors and spaces around wires (telephone, electrical, cable and gas lines), water spigots and dryer vents can pay off with **BIG ENERGY SAVINGS**.

\*Approximate cost: \$5-\$30 \*Energy savings: Approx. 5-10 percent - Source: U.S. Dept. of Energy



1

### MATERIALS YOU WILL NEED

• Caulk • Caulk gun • Knife or tool to cut • Rags • Water

**1. PREP** Clean the area where you will be applying the caulk. Remove any dirt, loose paint or old, cracked caulk.

Be sure the area is dry before applying new caulk appropriate for your application.

**2. LOAD** You will need to pull the plunger all the way back to load the tube of caulk into the barrel of the caulking gun.

Next, squeeze the trigger a few times until the plunger makes contact with the tube. Squeeze once or twice more to fill the tip with caulk.

**3. APPLY** To figure out the right amount of caulk needed, experiment with an out-of-the-way section. You may find that you need less caulk than you thought.

Hold the gun at a slight angle. Apply steady pressure on the trigger to create a solid stream from the tip, which should be placed 1/2 inch or less from the intended destination of the material.

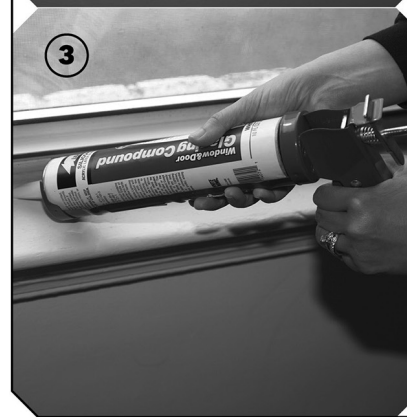
Use just enough caulk to do the job. Use your finger to gently press the caulk into the corner, crack or space.

**4. RELEASE** Once the trigger is fully depressed, allow it to spring back and depress it again. Keep the gun moving while caulk is still coming out of the tip.

**5. CLEAN** Use a damp cloth or rag to clean off most of the excess caulk. Use a dry cloth to clean off the rest.



2



3



4

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ad connection

give away

2-LRG TRACTOR TIRES (sandbox). 612-827-6575.

EMPTY WOOD WIRE SPOOLS, various sizes. 451-7340.

KITTENS: (3) Manx, bobtail, born 8/1, colorful. 583-2173.

FREE ONLINE CLASSIFIEDS, you place & remove your own ad on SWCE's website, [swce.coop](http://swce.coop), these are separate from Sparks & will not appear in Sparks unless mailed, delivered, faxd or emailed to SWCE.

wanted

PATZ SILO UNLOADER FOR PARTS. 339-2872.

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

CRAFTERS for 20th Ann. Christmas For Veterans Homemade Craft & Bake Sale, Nov. 2, 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Trinity Luth. Church, Owa., donations welcome anytime during the year. 271-3596.

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

ALUM. CATTLE FITTING/GROOMING CHUTE. 456-8094.

LAWN MOWING JOBS, Fbo area, call for estimates. 651-354-4405/Tim.

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

TO HIRE: Straight truck fuel driver, semi truck fuel hauler, home every night, HQ in Shakopee. 952-884-4100.

BOER GOAT. 451-3678.

2-TON CALF CREEP FEEDER ON WHEELS, gd/ exc. cond. 213-0059.

for sale

500-GAL. FUEL BARREL ON STAND; ELEC. STOVE w/elec. self-cleaning oven. 456-9409.

(2) DRESSERS: (1) w/mirror, (1) without mirror, \$20/ each. 456-0590.

MINI STORAGE UNITS, Blmg Prairie. 456-2957.

SCHWINN S-40, 21-spd, full suspension, 26x175, men's alloy, \$100; SCHWINN CRUISER, 7-spd, 26x175, women's, fenders, \$100. 330-3178.

Sparks Free Classified Ad Form for all SWCE Members

Ads need to be received in our office by **October 7** 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 7th 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

GRAIN WAGON w/hydraulic lift, 450-650 bu. size, always shedded. 451-5172.

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

(2) POT-BELLIED PIGS, male, fixed, \$50/each; PYGMY & FAINTING GOATS, \$200/female, \$175/ male (obo). 676-5282.

26' DECKOVER TRAILER, steel deck; MASSEY-HARRIS 44, \$1400; 2011 CHEVY 3500HD, 4x4; 2017 MALIBU, 33,xxx mi., \$13,000. 402-7679.

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

TORO LEAF BLOWER, lightweight, elec., works gd, \$10; 1999 LEFT TAILLIGHT for Dodge pickup, \$20; (2) PLANT STANDS, \$10/each. 451-2687.

ENGINES & TRANSMISSIONS, MOST TRUCK & AUTO PARTS, 30-day warranty on engines. 332-2300.

WINTER STORAGE, cement floor, Blmg Pr. area; 1960s GRAIN TRUCK, not a tandem, new tires, does not run well, but I have a brand new engine in a box that will go with it, \$4000. 456-9546.

2010 DODGE CARAVAN HANDICAP VAN; 1995 CADILLAC DEVILLE; GEHL 750 CHOPPER, HAY HEAD & CORN HEAD; GEHL 1540 SILO BLOWER. 684-3136.

1999 38' MOTORHOME w/large slide, low miles, like new, \$18,000; ROLLOUT BOAT LIFT w/new canopy. 210-1826.

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

MANKATO TENT & AWNING FISH HOUSE, suit-case style, like new cond., \$200. 465-9918/4-7 p.m.

2002 HONDA GOLDWING TRIKE MOTORCYCLE, 1800cc, vry nice cond., 39,575-mi., has trailer hitch & light connection. 213-6427/txt.

TRI-AXLE DUMP TRUCK AVAILABLE FOR ALL YOUR HAULING NEEDS: rock, gravel, dirt, etc., 15.5-ton capacity. 456-7774.

TRAILER w/wood sides that measure 5'10" long x 4'7" wide, pulls great, spare & front jack wheel, \$175/ obo. 412-0251/Fbo.

OAK OFFICE TABLE, old, 28"x60", 3-drawers, \$25. 685-4126.

'69 BOAT, 11' 3"L, \$350/obo; '84 JOHNSON SEA-HORSE, 9.9-hp, \$800; '90 SPARTN TRLR, \$900 (or all 3 for \$1500); 2-SNOWMOBS: '04 Yam. VMAX 500 & VMAX 500 Deluxe (& '04 trlr), \$5000. 444-9640.

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

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

1985 FORD BRONCO W/8' PLOW (get both for price of plow). 676-0969.

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

(2) DUCK BOATS & DUCK DECOYS; GOOSE DECOY. 390-5270.

1949 A-C WD TRACTOR, wide front end w/WD bucket, new front & rear tires. 688-9410 after 2 pm.

OAKWOOD INTERIORS 7-DRAWER DRESSER, (2) NIGHTSTANDS, & KING SLEIGH BED; LIFE MAGAZINES, 1946-49. 612-827-6575.

6' FIDDLE FIG HOUSE PLANT. 451-5456 > 5 p.m.

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.

FARM SITE: 4-bdrm home, central air, 4-season porch, large shop/office, 60,000-bu. grain storage, on blacktop, W. Steele County. 461-0898.

PYGMY BUCK, 2-yrs-old, Owat., \$100; FISH HOUSE, 2-person semi cab, ready to fish, \$700. 456-0893.

(For Sale ads continued on Page 7)

travel

SMOKY MOUNTAINS, Oct. 28-Nov. 4. Motor coach from Albert Lea, 7-nights, 15-meals, all day in the Smoky Mtns, Grand Ole Opry, Dollywood, tour of Nashville, & more! \$1,519 pp w/2 per room.

HOLIDAY BRANSON, Nov. 19-23. Motor coach from Albert Lea, 4-nights hotel, 3-meals, St. Olaf Christmas, A Wonderful Life Dinner Theater, Christmas Lights Tour, & more! \$539 pp w/2 per room.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL WEEKEND, Dec. 5-7. By motor coach, 2-nights hotel, 3-meals, St. Olaf Christmas, A Wonderful Life Dinner Theater, Christmas Lights Tour, & more! \$539 pp w/2 per room.

PANAMA CANAL—NEW AGUA CLARA LOCKS, Jan. 11-23, 2020; 2-nights hotel, 10-night cruise, all meals on Caribbean Princess, 7-ports of call in Caribbean. Starts at \$3,299 pp w/2 per stateroom.

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



cold weather rule 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 cus-

tomers.

(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

<b>Blue Earth County</b> 507-345-6822 800-767-7139, x2433	<b>Freeborn County</b> 507-864-7515 800-944-3281	<b>Rice County</b> 507-316-0610 800-277-8418
<b>Dodge County</b> 507-864-7515 800-944-3281	<b>Goodhue County</b> 507-316-0610 800-277-8418	<b>Steele County</b> 507-864-7515 800-944-3281
<b>Faribault County</b> 507-345-6822 800-767-7139, x2433	<b>LeSueur County</b> 507-345-6822 800-767-7139, x2433	<b>Waseca County</b> 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. 1054042

(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

### 4-generations hot dish

Dennise Feidt

Nerstrand

2 c. elbow noodles, cooked  
1 lb. hamburger, browned with onion  
1 can chicken gumbo soup  
1 can corn  
1 can creamstyle corn  
1/2 c. chicken broth

Put all ingredients together, and simmer with cover on for 20 minutes. Salt and pepper to your taste. Dennise wrote, "This recipe has lost its name or never had one? Has been made by 4 generations."

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 54 kWh credit per panel on this month's statement for energy generated during August 2019. 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 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:**  
Bridget/Guy Zahratka  
**Numbers not found:**  
Susan Habeck  
Michael/Tammy Dalluge  
Lorna Sammon  
Bruce/Marsha Madson



## 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 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 76° F, while the average low was 58° F. This resulted in 88.5 Cooling Degree Days (CDDs) and 30.5 Heating Degree Days (HDDs). They compare to last year's average high of 80° F and average low of 60° F, which resulted in 175.5 CDDs and 15 HDDs.

• **ENERGY STAR® Rebates** – In 2019, 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](http://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](http://www.minnesotastrayvoltageguide.com).

## health & safety connection

### Is your dual fuel system ready for cold weather?

If you have a dual fuel heating system, also known as an off-peak system, now is the time to be sure you off-peak controls are functioning, and your backup system is prepared. Your fuel supply should be checked and chimneys cleaned.

Summer storms can damage equipment controls within off-peak heating systems. It is the member's responsibility to contact an electrical contractor should the system not be functioning correctly. 1077707

Dual fuel is a controlled heating program that's offered at a reduced (off peak) electric rate. During the heating season, the electric heat portion of your dual fuel system can be shut off for up to 12 hours at a time, typically during periods of extremely cold weather or when the demand for electricity is high.

The dual fuel program helps control electric demand during peak usage periods, which is why an adequate backup system is required. For more information, visit Steele-Waseca's website, [swce.coop](http://swce.coop), or call Cindy Butterfield before 3:30 p.m. weekdays. ~~SWCE~~

## DO NOT TAMPER WITH YOUR ELECTRIC METER

Meter tampering can result in electric shock, is illegal and increases electricity rates for other co-op members.



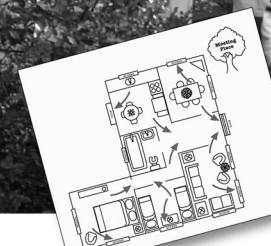
- ⊗ Never break a meter seal.
- ⊗ Never open a meter base.
- ⊗ Never remove a meter or alter an entrance cable in any manner.

If you know or suspect that someone has tampered with their meter, please contact us immediately.

## Escape Planning

**National Fire Prevention Week is Oct. 6-12**

Plan Ahead! If a fire breaks out in your home, you may have only a few minutes to get out safely once the smoke alarm sounds. Everyone needs to know what to do and where to go if there is a fire.



### SAFETY TIPS

- » MAKE a home escape plan. Draw a map of your home showing all doors and windows. Discuss the plan with everyone in your home.
- » KNOW at least two ways out of every room, if possible. Make sure all doors and windows leading outside open easily.
- » HAVE an outside meeting place (like a tree, light pole or mailbox) a safe distance from the home where everyone should meet.
- » PRACTICE your home fire drill at night and during the day with everyone in your home, twice a year.
- » PRACTICE using different ways out.
- » TEACH children how to escape on their own in case you can't help them.
- » CLOSE doors behind you as you leave.
- IF THE ALARM SOUNDS...**
- » If the smoke alarm sounds, GET OUT AND STAY OUT. Never go back inside for people or pets.
- » If you have to escape through smoke, GET LOW AND GO under the smoke to your way out.
- » CALL the fire department from outside your home.



Your Source for SAFETY Information  
NFPA Public Education Division • 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169

[www.nfpa.org/education](http://www.nfpa.org/education) ©NFPA 2016

### FACTS

- ⓘ A closed door may slow the spread of smoke, heat, and fire. Install smoke alarms inside every sleeping room and outside each separate sleeping area. Install alarms on every level of the home. Smoke alarms should be interconnected. When one smoke alarm sounds, they all sound.
- ⓘ According to an NFPA survey, only **one of every three** American households have actually developed and practiced a home fire escape plan.
- ⓘ While **71%** of Americans have an escape plan in case of a fire, only **47%** of those have practiced it.
- ⓘ **One-third** of American households who made an estimate thought they would have at least 6 minutes before a fire in their home would become life-threatening. The time available is often less. And only **8%** said their first thought on hearing a smoke alarm would be to get out!



October is National Co-op Month.

There are more than 64,000 co-ops in the U.S.