

gopher state one call connection

Properly plan for projects that require digging



Protect yourself and those around you. Use GSOC this time and every time.

Whether you are a professional excavator or homeowner, in accordance with Minnesota State law, you must contact Gopher State One Call (GSOC) before starting any excavation project if you are using any machine-powered equipment of any kind, or explosives. You may be simply installing a new mail box or planting a tree, whatever the project may be, contacting GSOC before starting your project may allow you to avoid costly damages to underground facilities.



Please note: Gopher State One Call is NOT responsible for contacting locators to paint or flag your PRIVATE FACILITIES. For more information, flip over this brochure. (see below)



THE ONE CALL PROCESS

When you have a project that requires digging, your first step is to contact Gopher State One Call. You can do this by using GSOC's Homeowner Online Locate Request system or by calling the One Call Center.

(651)454-0002 -or- (800)252-1166
www.gsocsubmit.org

BE PREPARED

When you contact GSOC with a locate request, a series of questions will be asked.

- What is your name, address and phone number?
- What type of work will you be doing? (i.e. planting a tree, installation of fence)
- What is the dig location's address, city, county and nearest intersecting street?
- At the dig location, where will you be digging? (i.e. east side of house, within 5 ft radius of white stake.)
- When will you be digging? (i.e. 3 days, next week)

GET YOUR UNDERGROUND FACILITIES MARKED

Once you have submitted your dig information it is created as a "ticket" which is sent to any utilities that may have underground facilities in the area of excavation. Those utilities will send a locator to the site to either paint or flag the area in question.

CHECK FOR POSITIVE RESPONSE

A good practice before digging is to check Gopher State One Call's Positive Response site respond to determine if each utility company

has visited your dig site or responded to your locate request.

www.gsocsearch.org

DIG!

In accordance with Minnesota, you must wait 48 hours (excluding weekends and holidays) after you've submitted your dig information to begin your digging project.

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND!

OUTLINE THE DIG AREA

Before you contact GSOC, you must outline your dig area with white markings. This helps the locator know exactly where you will be digging. Some good examples of white marking tools include white paint, flags, laths or stakes.

WAIT FOR LOCATES

After contacting GSOC, you must wait. Utilities have 48 hours (excluding weekends and holidays) to locate their facilities. That means if you plan to dig on Saturday, call on Wednesday.



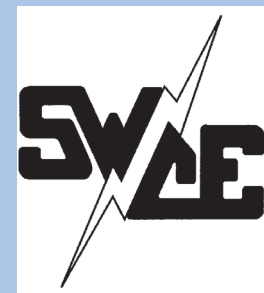
RESPECT THE MARKS!

Once the utilities have been located, you'll see a variety of paint markings or flags on the ground. Respect the marks! Never use mechanized digging tools when you are digging within 24 inches of the markings. Only use hand tools.

WHITE	Area of Proposed Excavation
PINK	Temporary Survey Markings
RED	Electric
YELLOW	Gas, Oil, Steam, Propane
ORANGE	Communication, CATV, Fiber
BLUE	Water
PURPLE	Reclaimed Water, Irrigation
GREEN	Sewer

The contact information for a number of locating companies who will locate privately owned underground facilities on your property can be found in the industry directory at www.gopherstateonecall.org/homeowners, then click on "Private Utility Locators. This list is by no means an exhaustive list or a list of locators recommended by GSOC. For additional locators, consult a search engine, like Google, or refer to the Yellow Pages under "Utilities Underground - Locating." Remember, private locators will charge a fee for their services. **Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric does not locate buried lines that are the homeowner's responsibility.** Private underground facilities usually include any that serve outbuildings, hot tubs, security lighting, pools, and natural gas grills. Other private facilities include natural gas farm taps, private water systems, data communication lines, and invisible fences. 83970

No one should ever remove flags before work is completed for the safety of all digging in the area. If you come in contact with an underground utility, evacuate the area and notify your utility provider.



the power of human connections

sparks

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

a monthly newsletter from Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric

May 2020

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calendar of events

May

- 1 Law Day
- Loyalty Day
- 5 National Teacher Day
- 6-12 National Nurses Week
- 7 National Day of Prayer
- 9 Minnesota fishing opener
- 10 Mother's Day
- 15 Peace Officers Memorial Day
- 16 Armed Forces Day
- 16-22 National Safe Boating Wk
- 25 Memorial Day
- SWCE office closed



Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric prepares for 84th annual meeting

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric is preparing to welcome member-owners to the co-op's 84th annual meeting Tuesday, June 2, at its headquarters in Owatonna.

Unless the coronavirus (COVID-19) situation makes it necessary to postpone, the annual meeting will be held at Steele-Waseca's headquarters located at 2411 West Bridge Street. The annual meeting is open to Steele-Waseca member-owners and their guests. The doors will open at 9 a.m., with display and informational booths open until 11:15 a.m.

On-site parking will be available. Miner's Outdoor & Rec, located at Highway 218 South, Blooming Prairie, will be supplying several golf cars to shuttle members and their guests from their vehicle to and from the meeting.

There will be two early bird drawings for prizes taking place prior to the start of the annual meeting. The business portion of the meeting will begin promptly at 10:30 a.m., with the Presentation of Colors.

There is no requirement to call Steele-Waseca to register your attendance for the annual meeting. Members and their guests will only be required to register at the entrance to the annual meeting on



Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric General Manager Syd Briggs addressed members and guests in attendance at the co-op's 2019 annual meeting.

Tuesday, June 2.

To be eligible to vote for directors, members must be registered by 10:30 a.m.—sharp. Director candidate profiles are featured on Page 3 in this edition of Sparks. Additional candidates may be nominated from the floor during the annual meeting with nominations officially closing at that time. 26508

After the election results have been announced, there will be a drawing for grand prizes, and the meeting will be adjourned. Following adjournment, a "buffet" lunch will be served by Hy-Vee of Owatonna featuring smoked pork chops, vegetables, potatoes, salad, dinner rolls, coffee, white and chocolate milk, water, and Dairy Queen Dilly® Bars for dessert.



Steele-Waseca's annual meeting in 2019 was attended by 766 members and guests.



Steele-Waseca's 2019 Youth Tour Delegates Dawson Drentlaw of Faribault (left) and Leah Transburg of Northfield are being invited to share their experiences in Washington, D.C., during this year's annual meeting Tuesday, June 2.



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This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Website: www.swce.coop
Email: swce@swce.coop
Fax: 507-446-4242



Board of Directors

PJ Duchene District 1
Geraldine Lienke District 2
Duane Edwardson, *Chaplain* . District 3
Dennis Ringhofer District 4
Rodney Krell District 5
Gary Wilson District 6
President, GRE Director
John Beal, *Vice President* . . . District 7
Ronald Sommers District 8
Assistant Secretary/Treasurer
Renee Malecha District 9
Secretary/Treasurer

Management

Syd Briggs *General Manager*

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

I hope our newsletter finds you safe and well. It has been an unprecedented month

with the news and actions dealing with COVID-19. As of, April 1, 2020, we have 629 cases of people who have tested positive in Minnesota, and by the time you receive this issue of *Sparks* in the mail it will be much more. We are fortunate at the cooperative to have no employees or directors testing positive yet, and we are taking many precautions with the health of all with whom we come in contact.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve, so do our actions. In 2009, Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric developed a pandemic procedure which has since been modified. Just having one in place helped to prepare us for only the beginning of a virus that was unknown to us only a few months ago. We have implemented different aspects of each level of risk in the policy based on the current and unique situation that we find ourselves in, and will continue to evolve our actions as the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Minnesota Governor Tim Walz, and President Donald Trump, provide us with executive orders and recommendations.

As you know, Steele-Waseca provides a critical service to our members and communities, and need everyone to do their best to ensure we remain healthy and available to provide that service. As of the close of business Tuesday, March 17, the lobby was closed to the public to further minimize employee and community exposure to COVID-19. There is signage on the door directing members to the drop box for payments as well as a phone number for communication and contact. This information is also posted on our website and social media outlets. Almost all questions/support can be handled via phone or email. All employees are instructed to keep personal interactions to a minimum, and, when necessary, should be conducted by adhering to the six-foot social distancing recommendation. This includes meet-

ings in individual offices or workspaces in addition to line work. All group meetings will be minimized and be conducted electronically when feasible. The board of directors are now meeting electronically. We have also stepped up the nightly cleaning practices and will disinfect frequently touched surfaces, i.e. door handles, light switches, bathrooms, etc.

We are concentrating on essential services to provide operation and maintenance of critical infrastructure and postponing non-essential activities. We have designated all operations employees into the two categories of Mission Critical Duties – Required on-site employees, and Mission Critical Duties – Not required on-site employees. Our crews will be working in specified groups of two to minimize risk to other personnel. Morning briefings for the crew have been moved from the crew meeting room to the vehicle bay to accommodate social distancing. Spray bottles with disinfectant have been supplied for fleet vehicles and are used after each trip.

Although Steele-Waseca is over one month away from our normal date for the annual meeting, we are beginning to discuss possible alternatives on how or when to conduct the meeting should the current situation not be resolved. We are looking forward for the return to “business as normal” and hope to remain on schedule for June 2, 2020, with the anticipation that the restrictions on travel and meeting attendees has been rescinded. Should we need to postpone the meeting, we will announce it in the June 2020 *Sparks* coming with the bills in May, along with announcements on Facebook and our website. 118375

Thank you to everyone for your patience and flexibility as we continue to navigate these uncharted waters. This is an evolving situation and we will continue to provide updates as timely as possible.

For everyone's benefit I will repeat the advice of the CDC: If you feel sick or are experiencing a fever of 100.4 or above, stay home and follow CDC symptom guidelines. (www.cdc.gov/covid19-symptoms).

ad connection

(For Sale ads continued from Page 6)

SPANISH/FAINTER GOAT, male, \$100; **BRINLY SLEEVE HITCH**, 42" blade, \$100; **ENGLISH MASTIFF/CANE CORSO PUPS**, ready in early May, \$900. 456-0893.

JD 960 FIELD CULTIVATOR, 36.5', 7" knock-on sweeps, all are gd, new tires & shank bushings, \$2900. 451-9614.

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

FELLING TRAILER, 10,000#, \$1700; **BOSS EXT V-PLOW**, 9'2", \$5500. 334-7177.

CEDAR MAILBOX POST, new, \$15. 334-3804.

2005 SUZUKI BOULEVARD C50, 3600 mi., \$3000. 455-0022.

DUMP TRUCK AVAIL. FOR ALL YOUR TRUCKING DELIVERIES: rock, gravel, dirt, etc., 15.5-ton capacity. 456-7774.

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

MAYTAG WRINGER WASHER; SOFA; LOVE SEAT; (2) RECLINERS; ENTERTAINMENT CENTER; ROLL-TOP DESK; COMPUTER CENTER (moving sale...much more!). 431-0975/Judy.

FISH HOUSE, 8x16' on crank-down wheels, stove, oven - heater. 210-1826.

TONNOSPORT ROLL-UP COVER off a 2017 Ford 4-door, size is 67"; **HUSKY MATS**, front. 456-8623.

GLASS, (7) pcs, 34"x76"; **GRAIN AUGER**, 15.5'x4" w/motor. 451-9445.

A-C D19, attached loader, gd for parts, add-on 3-point, \$1500; **(2) 2-BTM PULL-TYPE PLOWS**. 456-2339.

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.

Coronavirus may impact your home energy use

Courtesy: Great River Energy (GRE)

With the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic keeping people sheltered in place, the additional time in your home could very well impact your electrical usage, and subsequently, increase your electric bill.

For those with school-aged children, the kids are home all day attending school online, and once the virtual school bell rings, many will be off to watch TV, or play video games.

Adults are working from home due to business need changes, and for some, they may even have a college student living at home again with their needs to conduct online learning too.

The daily activity in your once-quiet home is now changing due to recent world events. With more people in the house, it can create increased cooking, cleaning, laundry (about \$1.50 per load with hot water), showers and water usage, gaming activities, plugged-in electronics of all kinds (cellphones, tablets, laptops, monitors, etc.), and use of a space heater in a cooler part of the home in recent weeks (this can add another \$1.44 per eight-hour day, or an extra \$43 a month). 1026180

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric will work with a member to make a customized payment arrangement. Please call or email our office during regular business hours, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

GE CHEST FREEZER, 6.8 CF, like new, \$250. 319-8711/Fbo area.

HALF-INCH DRIVE SOCKET SET, 10" long ratchet, 5" long extension universal fitting, (13) US sockets, \$15. 685-4126.

1981 MADSEN BIG LAKE PONTOON, 20', 40-hp Mercury motor & trailer, motor compression gd, but needs wrk, \$1500. 763-218-2948.

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

WEIDER SKI MASTER CROSS COUNTRY SKIER EXERCISE MACHINE, \$10. 838-8792.

(2) DOCKS: 16' wooden dock, \$500; 32' dock w/fiberglass deck, \$1195 (both crank up & down, & each have plastic wheels); **(4) GOLF CART WHEELS**, \$100. 491-4565.

TREK MEN'S ROAD BIKE SERIES, 700x25c, \$200; **4-BIKE CARRIER**, 2" receiver, \$100. 330-3178.

BAUER HOCKEY PANTS, boy's jr. size—M, new, \$20. 213-7097.

1938 FORD PICKUP, restored, runs & drives; **1975 CHEVY C65 DIESEL TRUCK**, air brakes, twin screw, 20' box. 327-3626.

HOME OVERLOOKING CANNON LK, 4 mi. w. of Fbo on Hwy 60, 2335 sq. ft., 3-bdrm, 2-ba, 1-level home w/3-garages, hardwood flrs, fireplace, office, & covered patio, \$550,000. 521-1209 or 952-212-8796.

1998 NU-WA SNOWBIRD 5TH WHEEL CAMPER, 28' w/(1) slide, gd cond., \$5500. 390-1717.

MIXED GRASS HAY GROUND FOR RENT. 210-1158.

TREE MOVING, 27-yr experience. 390-1952.

NH 273 BALER THROWER, in shed; **12' HESSTON HAYBINE; FLOOR FANS**, (2) 36", 40", 50", (1) hvy duty 4' stands 56", & (2) 2' round fans. 210-2392.

HERITAGE RASPBERRY PLANTS, hardy & gd producers, \$20/dozen. 465-8593.

CASE IH MOLDBOARD fits 16" 179314 A1 diamond finish; **GRASS HAY**, 4x5 net wrapped bales, cut from waterways & ditches. 451-5131.

MINI STORAGE UNITS, Blmg Prairie. 456-2957.

AUSTRALIAN SHEPHERD: blue-merle, red-merle, blk, red, 1st come/1st pick. 390-4619/lv. msg.

1978 LUND BOAT, 1994 KARAVAN TRAILER, 35-HP JOHNSON, 1978 HUMMINGBIRD 565 FISH FINDER, (3) SWIVEL SEATS, STARTING BATTERY for motor, \$3000. 952-652-2904/Larry.

(3) POT BELLY PIGS, female, all about 3-yr-old. 456-7245.

1995 PONTOON, 18' w/2002 60-hp, GPS, & trailer, \$7500/oob; **1973 LUND BOAT**, 15' w/20-hp & trailer, \$2200/oob (well cared for). 412-0251/Fbo.

JD 8-ROW CULTIVATOR; JD 2600 PLOW; JD 1280 PACKER PLANTER; STEEL ROOFING for barns, outbuildings, & other structures. 213-9095.

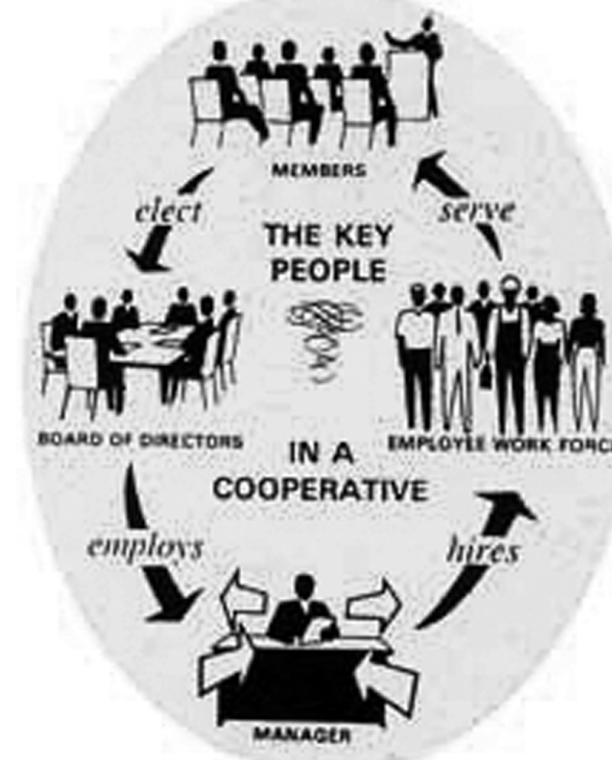
CIRCLE LK LOT, 0.7 acres; **(2) DOWNHILL ROSSIGNOL SKIS**. 470-262-7696.

BOOKS: Unsolved Math and Art, \$20; We Survived Iraq and Turkey, \$20; Earth Once Again, \$10. Email: tm50k@hotmail.com.

'02 SIERRA 5TH WHEEL, 27', (1) slide out, new fridge, (1) owner, great cond., stored indoors, \$6900. 456-6960.

TRAILER, 8x14, tandem axle (7500 each), new tires, \$1700. 456-9145.

JD 3020G POWERSHIFT TRACTOR, restored, \$11,000; **JD 3020 FENDERS**, \$500; **GERMAN SHEP. PUPS**, 6-wks-old. 330-3945.



ad connection

give away

WOOL SWEATERS for making mittens. 676-6510.

BANKERS BOXES, given away every Sat. noon. 952-261-6601/txt to arrange.

STRAWBERRY PLANTS for you to dig & pick up, very tasty June berries. 234-6449 or 380-6978.

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.

wanted

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

DOG HOUSE, medium size. 334-1539.

GUINEA HENS. 421-8735.

WAGON RUNNING GEAR. 456-1017.

PASTURE for (15) beef cows in the Nfld, Dennison, Nerstrand area. 451-2722.

MANURE SPREADER, PTO or ground driven. 330-3387.

TRACTOR TIRE CHAINS, 18-4-34. 456-0296.

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

FORD SKID STEER, diesel. 330-1849.

JUNKERS OR REPAIRABLES, top \$ paid for cars and trucks. 332-2300.

UP TO (6) BRED BEEF COWS OR 5-10 BEEF CALVES, 300- to 400-lbs. 444-9347.

PAINTING JOBS: exterior—houses, garages, barns, sheds, pole sheds, any type—wood, metal, concrete. 308-8556.

FEED GRINDER, doesn't need to work; TREES TO MOVE: maple, red oak, Norway spruce. 390-1952.

for sale

FENCING SUPPLIES, T-POSTS, & INSULATORS. 461-0898.

PUREBRED BOER GOAT KIDS, show quality, born Jan/Feb 2020, stout, balanced, & colorful, prices start at \$200. 456-6828.

All area codes are 507 unless otherwise noted

ROOFING/SHINGLING, roof replacement & repairs, licensed & insured, trusted for over 20 yrs; EXTERIOR HOME REPAIRS. 271-9129.

HUSQVARNA 36 CHAIN SAW, 16" bar, (3) chains, guard & manuals, exc. cond., \$125; CRAFTSMAN CORDLESS DRILL, 18V charger, battery, & case, new, \$30. 455-3881.

SHINGLING & LIGHT CONSTRUCTION, free estimates. 456-0296.

CEMENT MADISON SILO STAVES in gd shape. 465-3380.

COUNTRY FARM HOUSE FOR RENT, 2.5 mi. SE of Owat., large yd, (4) bdrms, appliances incl. washer/dryer, \$750/mo. + utilities. 456-8786.

OWAT. 300 BALE CONVEYOR, 48' on transport w/elec. motor, \$500. 384-8730.

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

MULE. 421-8735.

LARGE CHUNKS OF OAK, 18" diameter. 451-5456 after 5 p.m.

ALUM. JET SKI LIFT w/top cover; ELEC. LEAF BLOWER, like new; HAMMOCK w/stand; (2) PULL-TYPE GOLF CARTS. 334-1539.

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

TORQUE WRENCH, 1/2" drive, in case, like new, ratchet handle 10-150 ft/lbs & 13.6-203.5 NM; ZAREBA DC 12V FENCER, 10-mi. range, \$40. 696-5820.

'09 ALUMA 16' FLAT CAR TRAILER, 4800# axles, side rails, rock guard, storage box. 456-1423.

COIN COLLECTION EXCESS: dimes, qtrs, silver dollars, pennies, SBA dollars, all old. 676-0970.

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

COMPACT TRACTOR YARD WORK: move rock, dirt, tiller, have bucket & blade. 451-6046.

BASSETT® SOFA, 87", 1-yr-old w/(2) pillows, light brown tweed, vry gd cond., \$700. 838-0477.

LA-Z-BOY RECLINER, floral design, \$50/obo; 14' STARCRAFT FISHING BOAT w/Shorelander trailer, \$600 (all in gd shape). 612-309-4995.

REGISTERED DAIRY GOATS incl. some in milk from \$40-\$500, eastervalley.org. 535-9931/txt/Blmg Pr.

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

CAVALIER KING CHARLES PUP, male, blk & tan, 1-yr-old, not neutered, up-to-date on shots, \$800. 384-1972.

HEWITT BOAT LIFT for sm. boat, 1600# lift, \$425. 456-8639.

PING EYE 2 GOLF CLUBS w/bag, full set + woods, men's, \$90; LADIES GOLF CLUBS w/bag, partial set, \$50. 696-5820.

RENTAL, Izaak Walton League Bldg., 4 mi. south of Owat., seats 100, full kitchen, grill, Wi-Fi, \$125. 451-7946.

40' OVERHEAD DOOR, TRACK & WHEELS, \$80. 451-5577.

25 LBS OF CRACKED CORN w/5-gallon pail, \$5; 56 LBS OF CRACKED CORN IN BAGS, \$6.50. 213-0443.

(5) ROLLING TOOLBOXES, all sizes, some w/tools in; STORAGE BENCH, free-standing. 210-2024.

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

JD 955 w/3-attachments, front mount PTO, \$19,800; JD 400 w/cab & snowblower, \$500; DRIED LUMBR: 600 BF blk walnut, 900 BF cherry, 450 BF red oak; JD 265, \$200. 456-1017.

KATHY IRELAND RECUMBENT EXERCISE BIKE, has mileage meter & adjustable seat, vry gd cond., \$40. 451-1713.

1993 GOLDWING ASPENCADE, new tires, fork seals, starter, alternator, reverse, lots of extras, 105,000 mi., \$2500. 271-3278.

1994 CARRI-LITE 5TH WHEEL, 29', gd shape, new tires, \$2000. 421-1458/Dave.

(For Sale ads continued on Page 7)

travel

ARK ENCOUNTER & CREATION MUSEUM, June 14-19. By motor coach, 5 nights, 9 meals, incl. Judge Davis Mansion, Lincoln's boyhood home, museum & tomb, & more! \$999 pp w/2 per room.

ALASKA TOUR & CRUISE, Aug. 15-29. Delta flight, 7 nights land accommod., 7 nights cruise onboard the Grand Princess, incl. sightseeing/entrance fees in itinerary. \$5,099 pp w/2 per room.

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



swce 2020 board of director nominees

June 2



The 2020 Nominating Committee has selected the following nominees for the Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric board of directors. Committee members include: Frank/Joyce Ahlman, Faribault; Lester/Jane Kroeger, Waseca; Peter Rohe, Faribault; Doug/Cindy Finch, Owatonna; Keith/Carol Schrader, Nerstrand; Bert Wiersma, Ellendale; Jane Middlestadt, Owatonna; and James/Patricia Pagel, Faribault. The election of directors will take place during Steele-Waseca's 84th annual meeting, presently scheduled Tuesday, June 2, at the co-op's headquarters located at 2411 West Bridge Street in Owatonna.

District 7



John R. Beal, incumbent, and SWCE board of directors vice president, along with his wife, Colleen, live on a farm in Walcott Township, north of Medford. They have two daughters, a son, five grandchildren, and 4 great grandchildren. John retired in January 2002 after 40 years in manufacturing, sales, and marketing, which included sales management positions. He is a lifetime member of the Bluebird Recovery Program (BBRP). John enjoys flying and is also a lifetime member of the Faribault Area Pilots Association. He has earned his Gold, Board Leadership, and Certified Credentialed Director status by attending all schooling offered for directors. "I want all of our members at Steele-Waseca Co-op to know I always try to keep in mind what is best for our cooperative and the members when representing you both away, and at the board table," stated John. "I consider it both an honor and a privilege to represent you the members." In addition, "I am committed to continue by best effort to do the very best I can to be your representative," wrote John. "Thank You, for your past and future support."

District 8



Ronald D. Sommers, incumbent, and SWCE board of directors assistant secretary/treasurer, along with his wife, Ruth, live on the farm where he grew up in Northfield Township in Rice County. They have a daughter and a son, both married and each with two children of their own. Ronald attended the University of Minnesota and earned bachelors and masters degrees in agriculture. He was an agricultural educator for over 20 years in southern Minnesota. After that, working nearly 20 years with Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc., where he served as a sales accounting manager for their central division, and later sales coordinator in Minnesota. Ronald has been honored as Rice County 4-H Alumnus of the Year, Rice County Conservationist of the Year, and received Honorary Minnesota and Honorary American FFA degrees. "I believe in the cooperative business model and am familiar with the vital role played by cooperatives in bringing modern electric power to rural parts of our state and nation," wrote Ronald. "Today, our industry faces new and different challenges as we address new technology, concerns about our environment and increasing costs. I believe SWCE has been well-directed and well-managed in the past and would like to contribute to moving our co-operative forward into the future during these exciting and changing times." As for his qualities and abilities that he brings to the board, "My background and career experience as an agricultural educator and my work with Pioneer Hi-Bred have provided me opportunities to be an advocate and spokesperson for agriculture and rural communities," wrote Ronald. "As a member of my church's trustees and the Northfield Township Board, I believe I have demonstrated my ability to communicate respectfully with members and neighbors to help us move toward common goals. I would like to apply my skills and talents to our electric cooperative by continuing to serve on its board of directors."

District 9



Renee J. Malecha, incumbent, and SWCE board of directors secretary/treasurer, along with her husband, Greg, farm in the Millersburg area of Forest Township. They have three adult children. Renee is a substitute for the Northfield School District. She enjoys bowling, flower and vegetable gardening, yard work, and spending time with family and friends. Renee has completed board training and earned her CCD, BLC, and received a Director Gold Certificate. "I would like to continue to represent District 9 because I feel I have the knowledge to continue to help the cooperative move forward as we transition from carbon-based generation to more renewables," wrote Renee. "We need to continue to provide safe, reliable and reasonably priced service to our members." As for her qualities and abilities that she brings to the board, "I bring a common sense approach to the board table," wrote Renee. "I work well with the other board members and look out for the greater good of the cooperative and it's members. I have the time needed to attend conferences and meetings to educate myself on industry related issues."

Is my off peak/dual fuel being controlled today?
Visit Great River Energy's website at www.greatriverenergy.com
and click on "Load Management."
Need a history of controls?
Click on "History" on the "Load Management" page



If you wish to reduce clutter and add convenience, you may elect to receive an email that your bill is available to view online. Log in to your online account at www.swce.coop, click on the "Alerts" tab, and check "Bill Notification," and "Electronic Only." Enter your email address and click "Update" to receive your bill notification by email instead of in the mail.

Sparks Free Classified Ad Form for all SWCE Members

Ads need to be received in our office by May 5 to ensure being printed in the June 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 July 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
Shoe String Salad

Rita Dornquast

Owatonna

1 can peas (drained)
1/4 c. chopped onion (adjust to taste)
1/4 c. shredded cheese
salad dressing to moisten as desired
1-2 c. shoestring potatoes

Mix peas, onion, cheese, and salad dressing. Just before serving mix in shoestring potatoes. Rita wrote, "I add a can of drained tuna or chicken for variety."

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 34 kWh credit per panel on this month's statement for energy generated during March 2020. 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.



Numbers found:
Mr. & Mrs. Vilnis Giga
Mr. & Mrs. James Williams
Joseph/Angela Cina
Numbers not found:
Glenn/Lori Lieske
Arlene Quick



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.

• **March temps** – The average high temperature for March was 43° F, while the average low was 30° F. This resulted in 885 Heating Degree Days (HDDs), and 0 Cooling Degree Days (CDDs). They compare to last year's average high of 35° F and average low of 18° F. This resulted in 1,191.5 HDDs and 0 CDDs.

• **ENERGY STAR® Rebates** – In 2020, all ENERGY STAR refrigerators/freezers (with recycling), electric clothes dryers, dehumidifiers, central air conditioners, air and ground source heat pumps, light emitting diode (LED) bulbs purchased (limit 5) are eligible to receive rebates (may not be combined with special promotions). Rebate request forms must be submitted within 90 days of purchase. Rebate forms are available at www.swce.coop. For more information or to receive a rebate request form, phone Cindy Butterfield at 446-4204 or 800-526-3514.

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

507-451-7340 / 800-526-3514

STEELE COUNTY TIP LINE

866-878-7964

TO BE USED TO REPORT ANY CRIME OR SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY ANONYMOUSLY

COVERS ALL OF STEELE COUNTY INCLUDING THE CITIES OF:

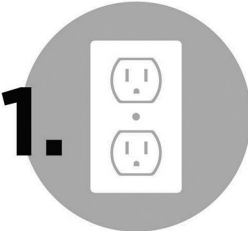
OWATONNA ELLENDALE
BLOOMING PRAIRIE MEDFORD

health & safety connection



4 COMMON CULPRITS OF ELECTRICAL FIRES

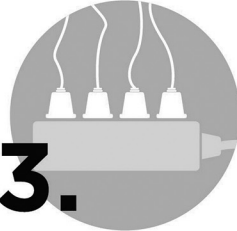
Outdated wiring and overloaded circuits are the most common causes of electrical fires. Check the following areas of your home to ensure your home's electrical safety is up to par.



Electrical outlets: Faulty electrical outlets are a leading cause of home fires. As outlets age, so do the wires behind them that you can't see. Any loose, damaged or warm-to-the-touch outlets should be repaired or replaced.



Electrical wiring: Outdated wiring is another common cause of electrical fires. Frequently tripped breakers, flickering lights and burning smells are clear warning signs. If your home is more than 20 years old, it may not be able to handle today's increased power load. If you suspect your home's wiring is outdated, leave this one to the pros and contact a qualified electrician.



Overloaded cords and outlets: Extension cords are not permanent solutions. If your big-screen TV, home theater system and other electronics are plugged into one extension cord, it's time to call an electrician and install additional outlets.



Old appliances: Older appliances are more likely to have loose or damaged wiring, which means they're more likely to catch fire. Check older appliances for damage and determine if it's time to upgrade or replace. Also check to ensure you're using appliance-grade outlets. A qualified electrician can help with installation.

NEVER use water to extinguish an electrical fire. Use a fire extinguisher or baking soda instead.

May is National Electrical Safety Month

plug into safety

Ground-fault circuit interrupters prevent electrocution

Ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) are available as circuit breakers and receptacles.

GFCIs protect against electric shock and are required in areas where water and electricity may come in contact.

Since the first introduction of GFCIs in homes there has been an:

- 83 percent drop in electrocutions.
- 95 percent drop in electrocutions caused by consumer products.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates:

- 47 percent of current electrocutions could be prevented with proper GFCI protection. 1032384
- 50 percent of American homes were built before the introduction of GFCIs.
- There are potentially 43 million American homes without GFCI protection.

Renovating the following areas in your home? The 2020 National Electrical Code requires GFCIs in these locations:

- Bathrooms
- Basements and crawl spaces
- Garages
- Kitchens
- Laundry areas
- Outdoors
- Counter top surfaces
- Areas within 6 feet of a sink

(Courtesy: Electrical Safety Foundation International)

Is your home properly protected by Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters? GFCI outlets should be used in all kitchens, bathrooms, garages and outdoor outlets.