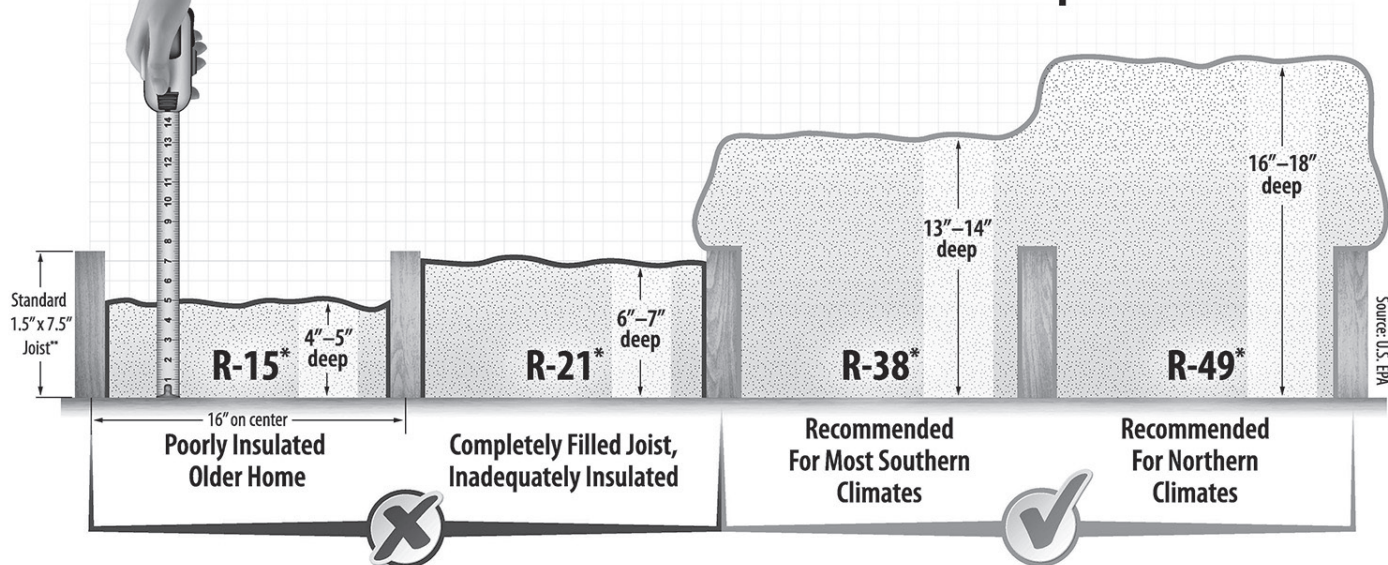


Does Your Attic Insulation Measure Up?



* Recommended Dept. of Energy attic insulation levels for commonly used fiberglass, mineral wool, and cellulose insulation assuming about R-3 per inch.

** Standard joists are sold as 2" x 8" but usually measure closer to 1.5" x 7.5."

(Ready for cold weather continued from Page 1)

ing program 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 program helps control electric demand during peak usage periods, which is why an adequate backup system is required. For more information, visit Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's website, swce.coop, or call Cindy Butterfield before 3:30 p.m. weekdays. swce.coop

(Cybersecurity Month continued from Page 5)

raising community awareness, educating vulnerable audiences or training employees—our interconnected world will be safer and more resilient for everyone. 1077090

Now in its 17th year, Cybersecurity Awareness Month continues to build momentum and impact with the ultimate goal of providing everyone with the information they need to stay safer and more secure online.

For more information about Cybersecurity Awareness Month and how to participate, visit staysafeonline.org/cybersecurity-awareness-month/. You can also follow and use the official hashtag #BeCyberSmart on social media channels.



the power of human connections

sparks

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

a monthly newsletter from Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric

October 2020

Our lines are shaped by you, the members we serve.

October is National Co-op Month.

#PowerOn



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 your 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. 28847

Dual fuel is a controlled heat- (Ready for cold weather continued on Pg 8)

inside connections

- 2 Manager Connection
- 3 Cold Weather Rule notification
- 4 Cookin' Connection
SWCE community solar update
Stray voltage questions
Sparks in brief
- 5 National Cybersecurity Awareness Month
Leading areas of origin in home fires caused by electrical failures
- 6 Ad Connection
4-Seasons Vacations
- 7 Ad Connection
SWCE storage water heater program
- 8 Is your home under-insulated?

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-driven 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.

Electric cooperatives are economic engines in their communities

contributed
\$88.4 billion
to the U.S. GDP
annually



generated more
than **\$22 billion**
in federal, state
and local taxes

invested **\$12 billion**
annually
in local economies



Source: The Economic Impact of America's Electric Cooperatives, FTI Consulting, March 2019

calendar of events

October

- 4-10 Nat'l Fire Prevention Week
- 5 Child Health Day
- 12 Columbus Day
- 16 Boss's Day
- 31 Halloween

Breast Cancer Awareness Month



COMMON UTILITY SCAMS: OVERPAYMENT TRICK

Scammers call claiming you overpaid your bill, asking for your personal banking information.



Know what's below.
Call before you dig

Published monthly by
Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric
2411 W Bridge Street, PO Box 485
Owatonna MN 55060-0485

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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



Board of Directors

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Secretary/Treasurer

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Division Managers

Darla DeVries *Office*
David Lundberg *Finance*
Dan Meier *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

As an electric co-operative, our top priority is always to provide safe, reliable, and affordable energy to you, the member-owners we serve.

Because we are a co-op, our mission is to enrich the lives of our members and serve the long-term interests of the rural communities in Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's service territory—and this mission has never been more critical than in recent months.

One of the seven principles that guides all co-ops is "concern for community." To me, this principle is the essential DNA of Steele-Waseca, and it sets us apart from other electric utilities.

October is National Co-op Month, and electric cooperatives across the country are highlighting the ways we "Power On." Keeping this theme in mind, I recognize the essential role we play in serving the communities in our service territory. 31807

Who would have fathomed in March 2020, the COVID-19 virus would amount to a test of our communities and nation? The changing circumstances due to the pandemic have created both challenges and opportunities.

Over the past several months, we've all been challenged to operate differ-

ently. As an essential service, and to ensure reliability of your power supply, Steele-Waseca modified our operations to safeguard business continuity. Our line technicians have maintained pairings to minimize any potential of spreading the coronavirus. Some co-op staff have worked remotely. In the office, we have limited and modified meetings and gatherings to allow for safe separation.

We also adjusted our walk-in office availability and in-person service calls to ensure the health and safety of our employees and our valued members. In addition, Steele-Waseca implemented its first drive-thru annual meeting Monday, Sept. 21, for the health and safety of everyone, which we believe was the prudent course of action for the times we presently are in. It provided member-owners to have their voice heard by casting a ballot for board directors. Unlike utilities owned by investors or municipalities, cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions.

For our members impacted by COVID-19, Steele-Waseca waived late fees and worked with those hardest hit to make special payment arrangements.

And while we certainly miss visiting with you in person, we appreciate your understanding and patience in working with us to safely serve you.

Then. Now. Always.
We're proud to power your life.
October is National Co-op Month.



#PowerOn

ad connection

(For Sale ads continued from Page 6)

JD 6620 COMBINE; A-C 7020 TRACTOR; EZ-FLOW 300 GRAVITY WAGONS. 583-2026.

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

FIREWOOD. 210-2048 or 744-5277.

ENGINES & TRANSMISSIONS; USED TRUCK & AUTO PARTS, 30-day warranty on eng. & trans. 332-2300.

OAK PEDESTAL TABLE w/(2) leaves & (5) chairs, dark color, gd shape, \$200/obo. 421-0343.

LIFT CHAIR from Ashley Furniture, new, color: brown, \$400. 210-4314.

BROWNING GOLD 10-GA., semi auto field, 3.5", 28" BBL, like new, shot twice w/choke tubes; **CAMO.** 451-9445.

RAT TERRIER PUPS, dew claws, 1st shots, wormed, all males (mom is a proven hunter), \$300. 475-1989.

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

WIN 3" BB & #2 SHOT, \$10 a box; **40 SMITH & WESSON 180-GR., (100) RDS,** \$35 a box; **'96 CHEVY 271,** 4x4, fix to drive or parts, \$1000/obo. 461-1191.

FUTURA ELEC. HIGH PRESSURE COMMERCIAL GRADE WASHER, hot or cold water on wheels, wand long hose nozzles. 456-1104.

FARMALL 706 TRACTOR, no motor, \$1500; **GERMAN DIESEL MOTOR,** hole inside block, \$800; **MF 880 PLOW,** 6-btm, \$1500; **MILLER STICK WELDER** w/motor, \$800. 456-1181.

(5) COOPER TIRES, 185/70R14 w/Toyota rims, exc. shape, \$75; **CUSTOM WELDING,** small jobs. 663-1275.

GRASS HAY BALES, full size, sm. sq. 451-2978.

WOOD SPLITTER, homemade horizontal, trailer mounted, hvy duty, motor shot, \$225. 952-652-2933.

HOSPITAL BED, best offer; **SIT-TO-STAND LIFT,** best offer. 456-4992.

'75 GMC SIERRA CLASSIC, 3/4 ton, new batt., starter, & ring gear, 454 eng., \$2600/obo. 451-5131.

USED SNOWBLOWERS & CARS. 213-7978 or 475-1311.

BEIGE LEATHER COUCH. 676-4039.

3-PIECE LUGGAGE SET ON WHEELS, blk, largest is 29" tall, 20" wide, & 10" deep, (2) sm. ones fit in large one, \$20. 363-2219.

2000# ELEC. WINCH, works gd, \$25. 456-7614.

1984 CUTLASS CIERA, V6, diesel, vry rare, rust-free car, have receipts for new parts & maintenance, looks & runs vry gd. 451-7755.

1938 FORD PICKUP, 4L, V6, tilt hood, 5-spd standard transmission, pwr steering, pwr brakes, new pickup box, chrome wheels & new tires. 327-3626.

GRAIN BIN SHEETS, 8000-bu. capacity. 291-0287.

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.

Storage Water Heating Program

Benefits

Installing an electric water heater lets you enjoy the cleanest, safest, most efficient water heating system.

The SWCE Storage Water Heater Program

- * SWCE will give you a FREE 115-gallon Westinghouse water heater
- * Water heater will be controlled from 7AM-11PM (Mon-Fri)
- * You will receive either the dual fuel rate (if on dual fuel) or a \$10/month credit (when over 400 kWh are used)

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 within 90 days



How to Sign Up

- * Contact SWCE to pick up water heater and receiver
- * Homeowner or licensed contractor is responsible for picking up and installing water heater and receiver within 60 days
- * An affidavit is required by the state of Minnesota for all new wiring
- * Contact SWCE at 507-451-7340 to schedule a field check after it has been inspected by the state electrical inspector. Credits will not be applied until field check is complete
- * If longer than 60 days, member will be billed for the water heater and receiver

ad connection

give away

3500-BU. GRAIN BIN, you remove & haul; **COR-RUGATED TIN MACH. SHED**, you remove & haul. 521-1209.

250-GAL. GAS BARREL ON STAND w/hose. 208-3722/Fbo.

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

ALUM. CANOE, looking to further my environmental stewardship & passion for the outdoors. 461-1852.

2-3 FEMALE FARM KITTENS, orange/white, calico, blk/white, they will have a gd home; **PAINTER** for (2) sides of a house damaged by hail. 463-3721.

INDOOR SPACE FOR RV, Nov.-April yearly, vehicle-type building only, RV dimensions 16x36'. 612-720-0372.

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

FORD SKID STEER, diesel. 330-1849.

SEEKING PLASTER FOUNDATION JOBS on old houses, barns, stone walls, & sm. cement jobs, close to Owat. area. 273-3587.

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

TO ASSIST PEOPLE IN THEIR HOMES w/personal cares, exercises, meal prep, errands, 40+ yrs experience. 456-0076.

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

JUNKERS OR REPAIRABLES, top \$ pd for cars & trucks. 332-2300.

STALK CHOPPER, 6-row. 210-2048 or 744-5277.

GLEANER F2 COMBINE PARTS, bean header, corn head. 451-5131.

for sale

BLK ANGUS CATTLE; FRESH EGGS; MEAT. 451-3678, 213-4060, 319-404-4835.

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. 1026768

☐ 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.

All area codes are 507 unless otherwise noted

FLARE BOX, hydraulic lift, treated 2x8 extensions, \$625; **PET KENNEL**, \$30; **FLORESCENT SHOP LIGHTS**, 4'-8', \$6/each. 455-3881.

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

REGISTERED AUSTRALIAN SHEPHERD PUPS, blk tri's, red tri's, blue merle's & red Merle, companion, loyal family, herding & agility type. 475-2509.

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

GEHL 1065 CHOPPER, 5' hay head, 2-row corn head; **GEHL 920 CHOPPER BOX** w/MN run. gear; **GEHL 940 CHOPPER BOX** w/Gehl run. gear; **BAD-GER CHOPPER BOX** w/run. gear. 676-1591.

TROY-BILT TRAILBLAZER SICKLE MOWER, 38", 4 hp. 363-1274.

OLDER SUPER B AUTO BATCH GRAIN DRYER & 850-BU. HOLDING BIN, \$1500/obo. 521-1209.

STUMP DEER BLINDS, new, email inquiries to kingwhitetails@gmail.com. 456-1152/Dave.

WALCO W-599 GRADER BLADE, \$125; **TECH-NICS SPEAKERS**, \$20/each. 952-261-6601/text.

MINI STORAGE UNITS, Blmg Prairie. 456-2957.

EXERCISE MACHINE: total body workout, Lifestyler 300 multifunction fitness program. 363-6696.

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

EXERCISE MACH.: Weider Ski Master Cross Country Skier, works out arms & legs, \$10. 838-8792.

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

ALLIED AUGER, 8"x45', \$500/obo; **50' ALLIED GRAIN OR HAY ELEVATOR**, \$375/obo. 685-2285 or 330-1560.

CEDAR MAILBOX POST, new, \$15; **YAMAHA VINO CLASSIC SCOOTER**, silver, like new, 1400 mi., \$1000. 334-3804.

5TH WHEEL HITCH, plate style, \$250; **7# GOLF CART WHEEL & TIRES**, lots of tread left, all for \$100. 491-4565.

RED TAILGATE for a 1-ton '91 Dodge Ram diesel 4x4 pickup, \$50. 334-7177.

'99 FORD ESCORT, needs work, \$100; **GRAIN AUGERS**, 6"x12', \$100; **SIDE-MOUNT TOOLBOX**, \$100. 271-6592.

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

WINTER STORAGE for boats, campers, & RVs. 213-8842.

1974 INTL LOADSTAR 1600 GRAIN TRUCK, \$900. 210-5526.

OLD VOEGEL'S IMPRINTED MILK BOTTLES: 2 qt w/handle, 1 qt babyface, 1 qt, 1/2 pint, & (2) cream dippers, exc. cond., \$75. 645-8610.

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

GRASS HAY; BEEF HAY, sm. sq.; **OLD WHEEL-CHAIR**, (3) wheels from 1800s. 744-2871.

BANKING HAY OR COVER FLOWERS. 334-6377.

(2) HIGHLANDER BULLS, 15-mths-old, \$700/each. 952-652-2678.

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

NH 520 MANURE SPREADER; JD 336 BALER. 553-3500.

(1) CORD MAPLE WOOD, cut up, \$80 + (2) logs down 2 yrs. 451-6695.

NH 185 MANURE SPREADER, slop gate, tandem axle, poly floor, exc. cond., \$5000. 645-8024.

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

SCHWINN RANGER GIRL'S MTB, 24x175, 21-spd, \$100; **HUFFY GIRL'S BIKE**, 20x175, 1-spd, \$40. 330-3178.

LONGHORN COW & HEIFER CALF (born 2020), pair sold together for \$1000. 465-8593.

20' TANDEM-AXLE TRAILER w/wood bed, new tires, dovetail, 2 5/16" hitch, \$1000/obo; **15' BRADY STALK CHOPPER**, 4-wheels, 1000 PTO, \$2750/obo. 451-9614.

TERV-TIKE PUPS occasionally, mini Belgian Tervuren look-alike, sm. dogs, extremely rare. 583-7718.

(For Sale ads continued on Page 7)

travel

Call 4-Seasons at 800-328-4298 to learn more about their tour information.

4 Seasons

Vacations, Inc.

TRUST OUR EXPERIENCE. LOVE YOUR VACATION.

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 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		
Blue Earth County 507-345-6822 800-767-7139, x2433	Freeborn County 507-864-7515 800-944-3281	Rice County 507-316-0610 800-277-8418
Dodge County 507-864-7515 800-944-3281	Goodhue County 507-316-0610 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.

cookin' connection

Carrot Casserole

Eunice Meixner

Owatonna

1 med. onion, chopped and sauteed in 4 T. butter
1 1/2 # sliced carrots, partially cooked
1 can cream of mushroom or celery soup
1/4 - 1/2 c. milk
1 1/2 c. grated cheese (cheddar works well)
1 1/2 c. seasoned stuffing mix

Mix all together and bake covered at 350° for 30 minutes.

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



Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's solar subscribers will see a 50 kWh credit per panel on this month's statement for energy generated during August 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.

September issue of Sparks

Numbers found:

No members found their number

Numbers not found:

Thomas/Suzanne Heaslip
Richard Symes
Thaddeus/Darcy Monroe
Jaslyn Dobrahner
Kevin Zak



SWCE inadvertently omitted Micah/Margie Lynn as members finding their account number by the deadline in the August 2020 Sparks.

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 59° F. This resulted in 162.5 Cooling Degree Days (CDDs) and 35 Heating Degree Days (HDDs). They compare to last year's average high of 76° F and average low of 58° F, which resulted in 88.5 CDDs and 30.5 HDDs.

• **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 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

"If you Connect it, Protect it," highlights Cybersecurity Awareness Month

National Cybersecurity Month, held annually in October, has this year's theme, "Do Your Part. #BeCyberSmart," aimed to empower individuals and organizations to own their role in protecting their part of cyberspace.

The human element is oftentimes the biggest cybersecurity risk. Each of us has a critical role to play to ensure the security of our personal and professional data.

National Cybersecurity Awareness Month is spearheaded by the National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA), and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Agency (CISA) of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The overarching message of this year's theme, "If you Connect it, Protect it," dives into the importance of keeping connected devices safe and secure from outside influence.

With more people spending time at home due to the COVID-19 pandemic, now more than ever before, connected devices are an integral part of how we communicate and access services essential to our well-being. Data collected from these devices can include highly-specific information about a person or business, which can be exploited by bad actors for criminal gain. 1034224

Cybersecurity Awareness Month aims to shed light on these security vulnerabilities, while offering guidance

We can all play a part in making our interconnected world safer.



Do Your Part. #BeCyberSmart.



October is National
Cybersecurity Awareness Month.
Visit staysafeonline.org for cybersecurity tips.

surrounding simple security measures to limit the susceptibility of threats for common devices.

This year, Cybersecurity Awareness Month's focus areas will revolve around:

- Understanding and following general security hygiene for connected devices and home networks;

- The importance of maintaining the security of connected devices for re-

mote workers;

- How connected devices play a pivotal role in the future of health care; and,

- The overall future of connected devices for consumers, professionals, and the public domain.

If everyone does their part—implementing stronger security practices,

(Cybersecurity Month continued on Page 8)

Oct. 4-10, 2020, is National Fire Prevention Week

Electrical Fast Fact

The leading areas of origin for home fires caused by electrical failures are the kitchen, bedroom, and attic or roof assembly.

#NESM



**NATIONAL FIRE
PROTECTION ASSOCIATION**

The leading information and knowledge resource on fire, electrical and related hazards

