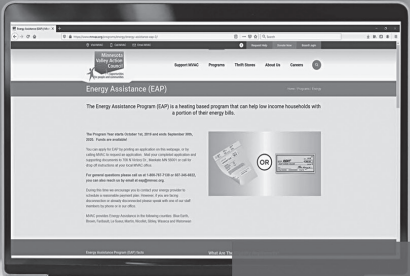


2020-2021



Deadline: September 1st, 2021

Help your neighbor, help your friends, help your family. . .

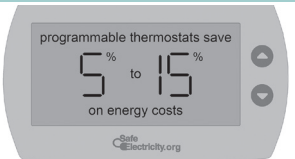
THE Energy Assistance Program

A grant for income eligible households to assist in paying heating and electric bills.

*Crisis assistance is also available for disconnection notices, shut-offs and no fuel emergencies. Assistance with heating unit repairs is available to approved homeowners who have a no-heat situation.

SWCE Area Energy Assistance Phone Numbers

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



ENERGY WISE MN

WHETHER TEMPS RISE OR FALL, YOUR ENERGY BILL WILL STAY COOL.

Air Source Heat Pump	Promo Rebate
≥ 8.2 HSPF	\$1,000
≥ 9.0 HSPF	\$2,000

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS UP TO \$2,000 REBATE WHEN YOU INSTALL A QUALIFYING, ENERGY-SAVING AIR SOURCE HEAT PUMP!

Air source heat pumps provide home cooling and supplemental heating, using 72% less electricity than conventional air conditioners and furnaces.

Visit energywisemn.com/promotions to learn more about the rebate!

Limited funds are available and awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Rebate amounts and programs are subject to change without notice. Offer expires June 30, 2021

the power of human connections



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

a monthly newsletter from Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric June 2021



2020 Annual Report

85 Years Lighting The Way

inside connections

- 2 General Manager's report
- 3 SWCE annual meeting map
- 4 GRE year in review; GRE conducts annual mtg 2020 annual mtg minutes; Voting authorization form
- 5 2021 director nominees; Electric co-op ratings
- 7 SWCE director districts; Nominating Cmte report
- 8-11 Financial report for 2020
- 12 Cookin' Connection; SWCE community solar; Sparks in brief; Steele County Tip Line
- 13 Gopher State One Call usage
- 14 Ad Connection; 4-Seasons Vacations
- 15 Ad Connection; Ductless ASHP promotion
- 16 Energy Assistance extension; Air Source Heat Pump promotion

calendar of events

- June**
- 4-6 Morristown Dam Days
 - 8 SWCE Annual Meeting—Office closing at 3 p.m.
 - 14 Flag Day
 - 16-19 Heritage Days in Faribault
 - 17-19 Mdfd Straight River Days
 - 20 Father's Day; 29071 First day of summer
- National Dairy Month**

SWCE's 85th Annual Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, June 8, 2021 – 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.
Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric
2411 West Bridge Street, Owatonna, Minnesota

Drive-thru Meeting: Enter Steele-Waseca's Bridge Street west driveway; five registration lines available; exit on 24th Ave. See map on Page 3.

Drive-thru Format: For your safety, please stay in your vehicle and roll down your window at the Drive-thru Meeting. Steele-Waseca employees and board of directors will wear masks and gloves while helping you. Please follow the vehicle in front of you once you arrive, through registration and while guided to the exit on 24th Ave. (See map on Page 3).

3:30 p.m.: Nominations from the floor. If you wish to nominate a write-in candidate for districts 1, 3, or 5, please call ahead and come at 3:30 p.m.

4 p.m. - 6 p.m.: Drive-thru Registration—BRING YOUR PRE-MAILED REGISTRATION CARD WITH YOU.

- At registration you can expect:
- Show your pre-mailed registration card for scanning and electronic registration to the Steele-Waseca employee assisting you.
 - Ballot (complete while at registration).
 - Receive a binder with promotional products and certificates.

Election results will be announced in the upcoming *Sparks* newsletter, as well as through local media news releases.

In lieu of food shelf collections this year, Steele-Waseca will make a financial contribution to the food shelf on the members behalf. **PLEASE DO NOT BRING A FOOD SHELF ITEM THIS YEAR.**

What does it mean to be a cooperative MEMBER?

It's a matter of PRINCIPLES.*

*(Seven, to be exact)

LOCAL TRUSTED. SERVING YOU.

Open Membership | One Voice, One Vote | Member Benefits | Education | Cooperation | Community | Independence

Learn more at go.coop

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

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
Assistant Secretary/Treasurer
- Gary Wilson District 6
President, GRE Director
- John Beal, *Vice President* District 7
- Ronald Sommers District 8
- Renee Malecha District 9
Secretary/Treasurer

Management

Syd Briggs *General Manager*

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

message to our owners



By **Syd Briggs,**
General Manager

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric has scheduled this year's annual meeting for Tuesday, June 8, from 4-6 p.m.

We will again have a "Drive-Thru" style meeting as we comply with our Articles of Incorporation, bylaws, and state statutes, along with time schedules, and COVID-19 requirements.

Steele-Waseca will have five lines instead of four to process the registrations and voting for directors quicker, along with allowing two hours to help spread out the time frame, and hopefully aid in having shorter lines of cars.

We greatly appreciated everyone's attendance and patience last year as so many of you helped fulfill an important part of our cooperative life; that of voting and receiving our reports of the previous year. Please feel free to come by anytime between the hours of 4 and 6 p.m., on the 8th as it is convenient for you.

The purpose of this annual meeting remains the same as any annual meeting in the past; to provide information and report on last year's activities, and to elect directors.

Steele-Waseca is providing the co-op's audited financials in this edition of *Sparks*, as we do each year, and need to address these reports along with approving last year's minutes.

This year there will be no need to preregister or call in before the meeting. We will again be providing registration cards in the mail that are bar coded specifically for each member.

Please bring these cards with you to be scanned at registration, which should aid in processing each membership as quickly as possible. You should be receiving these registration cards in the mail approximately 10 days prior to the meeting. Do not mail these in; just bring them with you to the meeting on Tuesday, June 8. 31838

At the drive-thru, each member will receive a ballot including a statement on motions to be turned in at the registration stations. In addition, should anyone wish to nominate a write-in candidate, we will provide a nomination form if requested. To enter any additional names on the ballot as soon as possible, please call ahead of time and plan to be at Steele-Waseca at 3:30 p.m., to turn in the proper paperwork, and we will add the nomination to the ballot.

As you will see from the agenda on Page 1, and the map on Page 3, anyone who attends will access the drive-thru facilities from Bridge Street, which is on the north side of the building. It is probably easier to access our location from the west side of Owatonna

to make a right turn into the parking lot, and avoid turning left across traffic.

For those coming off Interstate 35, please follow the detour to reach West Bridge Street. Each vehicle will then proceed through the parking lot, and eventually be divided up into five lanes for registration and voting.

Steele-Waseca will have large canopies set up to provide shade and protection from possible inclement weather. Everyone who attends will remain in their vehicle the entire time. Our employees and directors will be wearing masks and gloves for your safety as well as theirs, and we encourage all members to wear masks if possible.

After turning in the ballot, each member will be directed to the east side of the property to exit onto 24th Avenue SW, or back onto Bridge Street.

In summary:

- **The 2021 annual meeting will occur on Tuesday, June 8. Please bring your registration card.**
- **On the 8th, everyone will remain in their vehicle.**
- **Final registration and voting will take place in one stop.**

Financially, Steele-Waseca had another good year. Our average number of meters grew from 11,505 in 2019 to 11,537 in 2020, and we experienced a slight decrease in kilowatt-hour (kWh) sales due to the effect of COVID on our commercial and industrial loads. However, we reduced operating expenses and recorded an increase in operating margins for the third consecutive year.

Our cost of power resulted in a slight decrease while we had a significant decrease in operating expenses of \$453,000, partially due to a decrease in activity during the coronavirus pandemic. Steele-Waseca saw an increase in operating margins of \$410,000, which is a significant increase from last year. Equity increased \$2.4 million, and long-term debt decreased \$1.7 million.

Again, this year, we will not be able to provide a meal or ice cream at the drive-thru. However, each member will receive Steele-Waseca promotional products, the \$30 Power Perks to be used at local businesses, and the \$50 Energy Star® gift certificate. Personally, it is always good to see each of you again, even if it is briefly. Also, if you have questions about our financials, the election process, or any business at all, Steele-Waseca will have an insert in the folder on which you can write your question(s) and turn in on the 8th, or any day after, which I will be more than happy to address.

Stay safe, and continue to have a great summer.

ad connection

(For Sale ads continued from Page 14)

1977 CHEROKEE BASS BOAT, 15.5', 50-hp Johnson motor, Shoreland'r trailer, \$1500; **17' ALUMACRAFT CANOE**, 4-person or 705 lb., \$400. 456-2339.

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

IH 1420 COMB. w/corn hd, \$6000/obo; '00 FORD, 4 dr, 3/4 ton, 4x4, some rst, \$4500/obo; **DRAG SECTNS**, \$100; **A/C CHISL PLOW**, \$650; **GEHL FLAIL CHOPPR**, \$350; **1-R. PICKR**, \$250. 456-1181.

LITTLE HOUSE ON THE PRAIRIE DVD SERIES, Seasons 1-7, great cond., \$20. 390-5707.

16' OLD TOWN CANOE w/paddles, loader/rack, wheel portage carrier, all like new cond., \$500. 456-2634.

2009 VW PASSAT KOMFORT, 2.0L, turbo, FWD, leather seats, silver, sunroof, gd tires, a/c, heater, new parts, 97,000 mi., clean title. 308-4513/lv. msg.

A-C WD45 TRACTOR, wide front, gd rubber, 12V, gd cond., \$2250. 676-6715.

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

MUSCOVY DUCKS; MUSCOVY DUCK EGGS, hatching or eating. 412-7045.

ASSORTMENT GATES; (2) GRAVITY FLOW BOXES, 165 bu. 210-2392.

ELKHART ALTO SAXOPHONE; BLK & DECKER CORDLESS ELEC. LAWN MOWER w/bagger, mulching blades, \$75. 340-0506.

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

'71 BOMBARDIER SKI-DO FOR PARTS. 461-1700.

1987 JD 7720 TITAN II, 2WD, Hydro Trans, reverser, chopper, 2-spd cylinder, newer 24.5-32 tires, always shedded, 4100 hrs, gd cond. 213-4900.

4X5 MIXED GRASS HAY & CORNSTALK BALES, net wrapped, no rain. 451-5131.

ANTIQUÉ STONE BOAT, 4x5, steel; (2) TIRE RIMS, 7.5x24, 8-hole; (2) SHOWER CHAIRS. 744-2709.

CIRCLE LK LOT, 0.7 acres; (2) DOWNHILL ROSSIGNOL SKIS. 678-978-7444.

MONGOOSE 29" MTB, F.S. Fork, dual disc brakes, 21 spd, \$150; **TREK 700 MULTI-TRACK**, \$100; **SCHWINN**, F.S. Fork, 21 spd, \$100. 330-3178.

8' FIBERGLASS TOPPER for pickup. 688-3015.

16' LUND BASS BOAT, 60-hp Mercury motor, fully equipped boat, \$3000; **JD 3010 DIESEL** w/loader, \$7500; **HOMEMADE 40' ROLL-IN DOCK**, \$1000. 330-3945.

JD PICKUP HEAD, \$1200; **NH 311 BALER** w/kicker, \$4000. 524-4637.

Ads need to be received in the Steele-Waseca office by Monday, June 7, to ensure being published in the July 2021 Sparks newsletter.

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.

ENERGY WISE MN

WE PUMPED UP OUR REBATES SO YOU CAN SHRINK DOWN YOUR ENERGY BILL

SAVE ENERGY AT HOME WHEN YOU INSTALL A DUCTLESS AIR SOURCE HEAT PUMP.

Ductless/Mini Split Air Source Heat Pump	Regular Rebate	Promo Rebate
Delivered fuels	\$100	\$450*
Electric heat	\$200	\$750*

*Minimum HSPF ≥ 9.0

And when you act now, you'll receive a supersized, limited-time rebate of up to **\$750!**

Ductless air source heat pumps provide **home cooling and supplemental heating**, using **72% less electricity** than conventional air conditioners and furnaces.

Visit energywisemn.com/promotions to learn more about the rebate!

Limited funds are available and awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Rebate amounts and programs are subject to change without notice. Offer expires June 30, 2021

ad connection

give away

LITTLE BOY'S 16" BICYCLE w/training wheels, red. 383-5309.

5-PIECE ILLUMINATED NATIVITY SET, approx. 27" high & an illuminated Santa approx. 42" high. 663-0959.

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

OFFICE DESK & CHAIR. 456-1671.

DAY LABORERS to help clear our land, teens welcome, bring gloves & wear hvy duty shoes, \$10 per hr (Fri., Sat., or Sun.), lunch provided. 612-598-4005.

BARN, GRANARY &/OR OUTBUILDINGS, I remove to repurpose the lumber; **OLD TIN; BARN SIDING; LUMBER.** 330-0258/Tim.

FORD SKID STEER, diesel. 330-1849.

GUNS; AMMO; METAL SIGNS; TACKLE; & ES-TATES. 279-0431/Mark.

2-ROW CORN PLANTER ON RUBBER. 334-9456.

2-BTM PLOW & DISC for Ford 3-pt tractor. 744-2771.

JD 3020 TRACTOR or similar. 581-6950/Nfld.

EXTERIOR PAINTING JOBS: outbuildings, barns, houses. 308-8556.

JOHNSON-EVINRUDE BOAT MOTOR, 9.9-15 hp, any cond. 456-5466.

WILL DO TILLING, PLOWING, BLADE & BUCKET WORK w/compact tractor. 451-6046.

PASTURE TO RENT; SOMEONE TO TEAR DOWN AN OLD BARN, lots of gd lumber. 456-0315.

OLD TYPEWRITERS for repair purposes. 339-8577.

TRUCKLOAD HARD WOOD, WOOD CHIPS. 384-2482.

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

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

All area codes are 507 unless otherwise noted

KITTENS OR CATS for farm. 339-1700.

for sale

(42) STEEL FENCE POSTS, 6.5', green, gd shape, \$2/each. 374-2642.

A-C WD45, new rubber, narrow front; **14" PLOW ON WHEELS**, 1-btm. 475-7022.

7' RED CEDAR CORNER FENCE POST, 8-10" diameter, \$30/each; **WOOD UTIL. POLES**, 35-40', \$125; **4-8' FLUORESCENT LIGHTS** w/cords & pull chains. 455-3881.

MINI STORAGE UNITS in Ellendale. 456-1460.

APPROX. 2500 LICENSE PLATES, CRAFTS, BIRDHOUSES, ETC., \$250/obo; **(8) RUBBER HORSE STALL MATS**, 4'x6', \$25/ea. 440-8831.

BRIGGS & STRATTON LAWN MOWER MOTOR, 17.5 gross hp, runs gd, \$175. 583-6679.

STEEL GRAIN DRILL, \$350; **F-20 TRACTOR** w/loader, \$300. 334-9456.

TREE TRIMMING, REMOVAL, & STUMP GRIND., pro climber & aerial lift to U of M guidelines; **2007 FRONT CHROME BUMPER** for an F-650, like new. 456-1609.

14-HP KOHLER ENGINE, single cyl., runs gd, & **17-HP KOHLER ENGINE**, twin cyl., runs OK, but uses some oil, \$125 for both. 456-0348.

14' BEAN HEAD for older JD combine, \$150. Email: eakerdr@gmail.com.

(2) TRAILER TIRES & WHEELS, brand new, (5) bolt, 5.30-12", tubeless, Load Range C, \$95 for both. 491-4565.

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

9-TON GRAIN BIN w/elec. auger; **BOAT & LOW TRAILER STORAGE.** 475-2322.

STRAIGHT GRASS BALES, MIXED ALF. & GRASS BALES, sm. sq., \$4 per bale. 612-756-1131.

A-C WD, loader, 2-way hyd., 3-pt, new rad. & water pump, new front tires & rims; **50" KOHLER RIDING LAWN TRACTOR**, 20 hrs; **(2) WAGON TIRES ON RIMS**, 7.60x15, 51/4 cntrs.; **EXER. BIKE.** 461-1700.

ENGINES/TRANSMISSIONS, 30-day warranty, 332-2300.

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

KATAHDIN HAIR SHEEP RAM LAMBS; HEREFORD BULLS. 451-2722.

GRAY FLOOR LAMINATE, 64-pieces, waterproof, rubber-backed, 36x6; 36-pieces 24x6 (all new), perfect for ba., \$100. 412-3775.

WIN. SUPERX 12-GA. 3" BB 1 1/8 OZ. 1550 FPS, \$20/box; **WIN. SUPERX 12-GA. 3" 2-SHOT 1 1/8 1550 FPS**, \$20 per box; **REM. 1100**, 2 3/4 fixed choke, left hand, \$600. 461-1191.

HOMELITE 1 1/2" WATER PUMP, discharge hose but no suction line, \$50; **18"X24' STEEL CULVERT** w/(1) apron, \$250. 465-8566.

1996 DODGE RAM PICKUP w/topper, 241,000 mi., \$950/obo. 334-7177.

DUMP TRUCK SERVICES, 15.5-ton capacity for all your hauling needs: rock, gravel, dirt, etc. 456-7774.

RUBBER BOOTS FOR MEN, like new, gd for farm use, \$15; **RUBBER BOOTS FOR WOMEN**, like new, size 7, like garden boots, \$15. 451-2687.

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

LUND FISHING BOAT, 16', Mercury 25 w/elec. start, depth finder, trolling motor, battery & trailer spr., \$2450; **1938 FORD PICKUP**, \$25,000. 327-3626.

OLD COUNTRY SCHOOL DSK, \$45/obo. 451-6695.

MINI STORAGE UNITS, Blmg Prairie. 456-2957.

UNIDEN DUAL CAMERA VIDEO RECORDER, new, \$25. 210-3782.

(2) CANOES & 4-PLACE CANOE TRAILER: 17' Grumman Eagle, used; 16'4" Old Town Penobscot, new. 334-9641.

ALUMACRAFT BOAT, T16XL, Minn Kota trolling motor, Mercury 25 hp, auto pilot, 4-stroke, \$3000. 475-4426.

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

A-C C w/hydraulics & pulley, motor is stuck, built in 1941, \$300. 952-652-2933.

NH 269 BALER w/Pro Quality hay basket, holds about 100 bales, gd shape, ties gd. 456-7614.

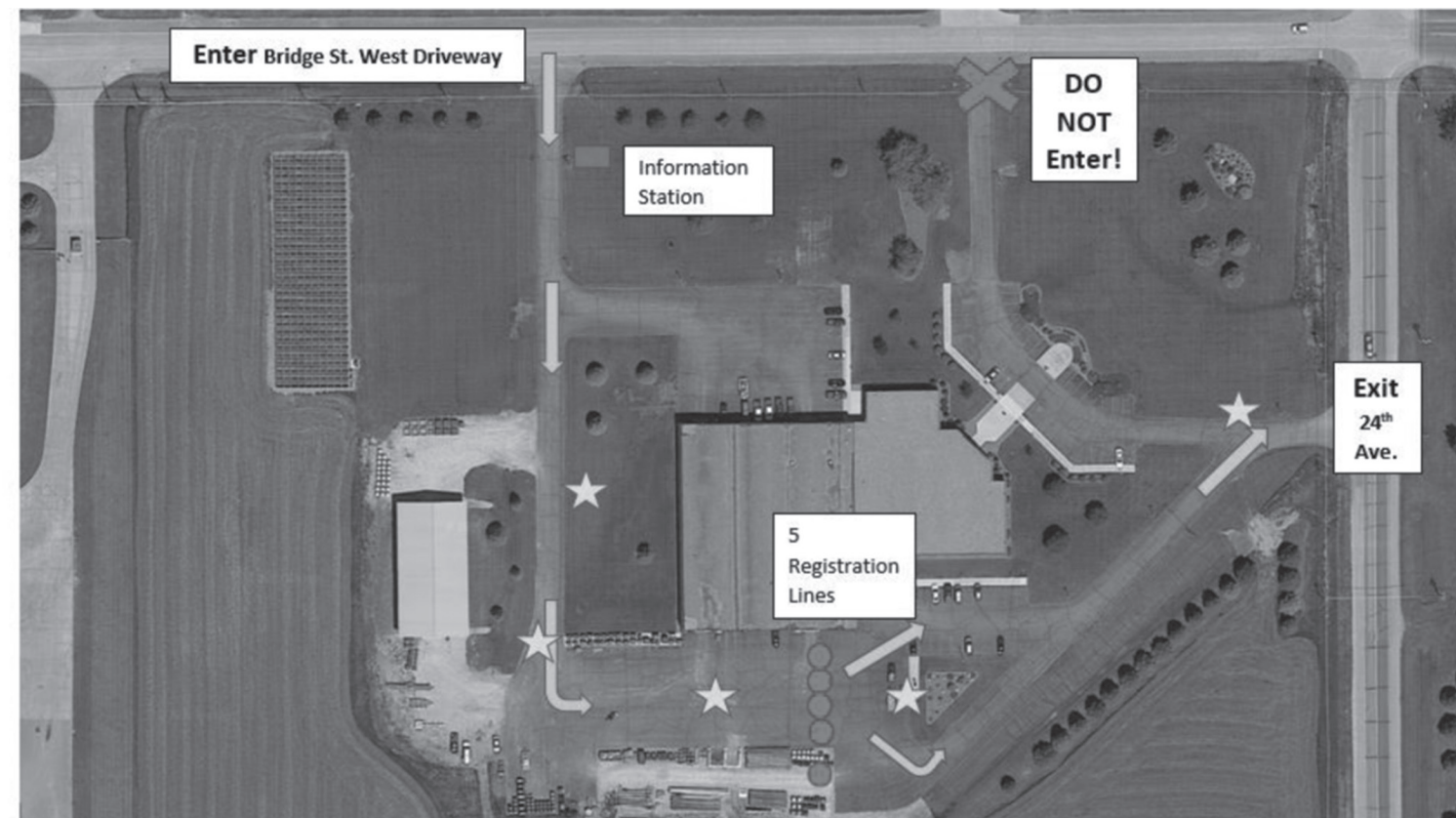
(For Sale ads continued on Page 15)

travel

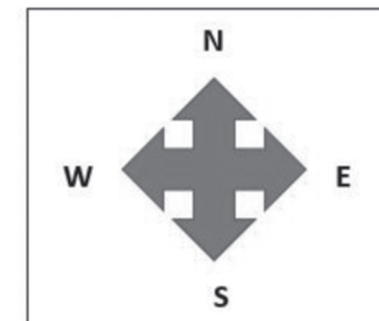
Call 4-Seasons at 373-4705 or 373-2473, from 9 a.m. to noon Mondays, to learn more about their tour information.



map connection



Note: West Bridge Street is closed due to road construction from Interstate 35 to the traffic lights at the intersection of Fleet Farm, so please follow designated detour signs.



Sparks Free Classified Ad Form for all SWCE Members

Ads need to be received in our office by **June 7** to ensure being printed in the July 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 August 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.



The Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric board of directors and corporate services include (seated, left to right): Renee Malecha, secretary/treasurer, District 9; John Beal, vice president, District 7; Gary Wilson, president, GRE director, District 6; Ronald Sommers, District 8; and Duane Edwardson, chaplain, District 3. Back row (L-R): Syd Briggs, general manager; Jenifer Shimpach, executive assistant; Dennis Ringhofer, District 4; Rodney Krell, assistant secretary/treasurer, District 5; Geraldine Lienke, District 2; PJ Duchene, District 1; and Eric Mattison, SWCE attorney (retired).

Despite pandemic, GRE on path to powering the future

In a year when many retreated into their homes for work, school and safety, the importance of dependable energy became clear.

The electric service provided by Great River Energy's (GRE's) member-owner cooperatives proved essential during the COVID-19 pandemic, powering health care facilities, keeping essential businesses operating and enabling remote learning.

Early in the pandemic, GRE adopted safe work practices and social distancing, while quickly understanding new energy usage patterns as members spent more time at home. Great River Energy's goal was to minimize disruptions within the company and continue to safely and reliably operate the electric grid. That early action paid off, as GRE not only endured during a difficult year—the cooperative excelled.

By the summer of 2020, Great River Energy was ahead of its financial targets to such a degree that it began issuing refunds to member-owner cooperatives to assist with pandemic-related financial challenges. The cooperative returned \$8.5 million to its members to offset lost sales, provide late fee holidays, or use in any other way they deemed appropriate.

Great River Energy employees found ways to boost efficiency and control spending throughout the year, identify-



ing more than \$30 million in avoided costs. Year after year, GRE's culture of business improvement and innovation produces new ways to serve member-owners better and more efficiently.

GRE ended the year with excess margins, which it used to issue bill credits to members and pay down financial commitments. The cooperative also retired patronage capital for the second consecutive year, returning more than \$10 million to the membership.

While employees tackled new challenges and implemented health and safety measures, GRE set a course that will fundamentally change the way it serves member-owners.

GRE will phase out remaining coal resources, add significant renewable energy and explore critical grid-scale battery technology. These changes will reduce wholesale electric rates while cutting direct carbon dioxide emissions by 95%. As this transition unfolds, Great River Energy's fleet of fast-starting natural gas-fueled power plants will ensure energy remains reliable.

This decision was welcomed by the membership and financial community. Great River Energy's credit rating was upgraded by Moody's due in large part to the reduced risk associated with its power supply plans.

Great River Energy remains active in the evolution of the power grid as the electric industry transitions toward more non-dispatchable generation resources such as wind and solar. The cooperative is a co-founding member of CapX2020, an alliance of 10 utilities focused on understanding the transmission needs of the future. These utilities released the CapX2050 Transmission Vision Report, which identifies the elements necessary for continued safe, reliable and affordable electric grid operation.

At GRE, employees understand there is no budget or timeline more important than their safety, Great River Energy had the lowest injury rate in its history in 2020, a particularly impressive achievement due to employees adopting new work practices related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thanks to a supportive board of directors, engaged membership and talented employee team, Great River Energy entered 2021 stronger than ever and with a foothold firmly on the path to realizing its vision to competitively power the future.

Co-ops carry on as Great River Energy conducts their annual meeting

Meeting signals conclusion of successful year marked by changes, challenges

In addition to being an opportunity to inform members about the company's performance, vote for directors and elect officers—annual meetings are often a celebration of the cooperative movement itself.

As the COVID-19 pandemic entered a second year, Great River Energy (GRE) once again held its annual meeting virtually on Wednesday, April 7.

“Even though we haven't all gathered in one room, over the past year we have discovered new and effective ways to keep our members informed,” said GRE Board Chair Bob Bruckbauer.

The decision to hold the annual meeting virtually is the latest in a series of moves to keep GRE employees and member-owners safe and healthy. A little over a year ago, Great River Energy adopted safe work practices and social distancing.

“Our goal was to minimize disruptions within the company and continue to safely and reliably operate the electric grid,” said Great River Energy President and Chief Executive Officer David Saggau. “That early action paid off, as Great River Energy not only endured a difficult year—our business excelled.” 1029687

GRE surpassed its financial goals to such a degree in 2020 that the cooperative issued payments to its member-owner cooperatives to assist

(GRE annual meeting continued on Page 5)



Map of Great River Energy member cooperatives



Common activities that are done on the farm or work site that involve excavation require a free call to GSOC to request a locate ticket.

AGRICULTURAL EXCAVATION

GSOC asks anyone excavating on a farm or in other agricultural settings to take extra precaution and understand when they should reach out to GSOC. You are conducting “excavation” within the meaning of Minnesota Statutes Chapter 5216D whenever you disturb the soil by any mechanical or hydraulic means (except for ordinary planting, cultivation, plowing, or harvesting 18” deep or less).

In an agricultural setting the following types of work are not exempt and require contacting GSOC:

- Fencing
- Well drilling
- Burying a wire, pipe or anything else
- Digging a foundation
- Setting a pole
- Cultivating, plowing or any field activity to a depth greater than 18”
- Installing drain tile
- Installing or extending a farm tap
- Any contouring, grading or changing of the land

In addition, please keep in mind that underground facilities may be present on a farm or agricultural property that are not located by underground facility operators. These private facilities that are not located by underground facility operators should be located by either the owner of the property or the party conducting the excavation. For more information, visit www.gopherstateonecall.org/private-facility-locators.

Excavators and homeowners need to call! Below are just a few of the examples of when you should call GSOC.



EXAMPLES OF COMMERCIAL EXCAVATION

- Putting in a foundation
- Adding drainage
- Grading
- Trenching
- Dredging
- Site development work



EXAMPLES OF HOMEOWNER EXCAVATION

- Putting in a fence
- Adding a mailbox
- Putting up a basketball hoop
- Installing a sprinkler system
- Planting a tree
- Installing a garden
- Building a pergola
- Landscaping

EXCAVATOR QUICK GUIDE

File Locate Requests by Phone

Emergency	866-640-3637
Twin Cities Metro	651-454-0002
Greater MN Area	800-252-1166
Nationally	811

File Locate Requests Online

www.gsocsubmit.org

Search for Tickets Online

www.gsocsearch.org

Visit our Website

www.gopherstateonecall.org



Contact Customer Support

By phone: 651-681-7326

By email: customersupport@gopherstateonecall.org

Private Facilities X

Some underground lines in your work area may not be utility owned. These are considered private facilities and will NOT be marked by public utility companies. Inspect your job site prior to entering a ticket for clues as to where private facilities may be buried. Investigate who may have installed them and determine if any records or maps exist. Suggest that the property owner hire a private utility locator. A list of private locators can be found at <http://gopherstateonecall.org/private-facility-locators>

Properly plan for projects that require digging. Regardless of the project, contacting Gopher State One Call (GSOC) before starting your project may allow you to avoid costly damages to underground facilities.

Please see the section below X regarding private facilities. **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, natural gas grills, natural gas farm taps, data communication lines, and invisible fences. **Private locators will charge a fee for their services.**

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.

cookin' connection

Oh-So-Easy Casserole

Annette Balzer

Owatonna

- 32 oz. pkg. frozen hash browns (thawed)
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 can cheddar cheese soup
- 2 c. cooked ham, diced
- salt & pepper to taste

Mix all ingredients together well. Spoon into lightly greased 9"x9" pan. Bake at 375° for 45 to 60 minutes. Serves 4.

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 42 kWh credit per panel on this month's statement for energy generated during April 2021. 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.

May issue of Sparks

Numbers found:

Nicole Meixner

Numbers not found:

David Zeise
Ronald Skala
Chad Hoechst
Suzann Dochniak



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 account number 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. 1081781

• **Need a new water heater?** For information about our Westinghouse Electric Water Heater Program, phone Cindy Butterfield at SWCE between 8 a.m. and 3:30 p.m., 446-4204 / 800-526-3514.

• **April temps** – The average high temperature for April was 57° F, while the average low was 36° F. This resulted in 561 Heating Degree Days (HDDs) and 0.5 Cooling Degrees (CDDs) for April. They compare to last year's average high of 54° F and average low of 33° F, which resulted in 651.5 HDDs and 0 CDDs.

• **ENERGY STAR® Rebates** – In 2021, 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 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

swce 2020 annual meeting minutes

The annual meeting of the members of Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric (SWCE) was held at SWCE in Owatonna, Minnesota, on Monday, Sept. 21, 2020. In order to comply with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's guidance of social distancing due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the meeting took place by drive-thru.

More than 50 members participated (their attendance having been verified), the number needed to constitute a quorum within the meaning of the bylaws of the cooperative.

Ballots were distributed asking for a motion to adopt the agenda as printed in the annual report. A motion was made, seconded, and carried. (A list of motions and members who made and seconded those motions were attached.)

Renee Malecha, secretary-treasurer of the board, reviewed the Proof of

Mailing of Notice of the Annual Meeting. The Proof of Mailing to all members of SWCE was attached to the minutes. A motion was made, seconded, and carried, to waive the reading of the minutes and accept them as printed in the annual report.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the president's and general manager's report, the financial report for the year ending Dec. 31, 2019, and the Great River Energy report printed in the annual report.

Attorney Eric Mattison presided over the election of the directors, which was done on site by ballot, and members were allowed to make nominations from the floor by arriving early. A copy of the minutes for the Nominating Committee meetings held on Nov. 20, 2019, and Jan. 22, 2020, was attached to the minutes.

There were no additional nomina-

tions for District 7; nominations were declared closed.

There were no additional nominations for District 8; nominations were declared closed.

There were no additional nominations for District 9; nominations were declared closed.

Attorney Mattison reported the voting results. The director vote was as follows:

District 7: John Beal, 313 votes.

District 8: Ron Sommers, 315 votes.

District 9: Renee Malecha, 320 votes.

There being no further business to be conducted, there was a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made, seconded, and carried that the meeting be adjourned.

(GRE annual meeting continued from Page 4)

with pandemic-related financial challenges. Great River Energy returned \$8.5 million to members to offset lost sales, provide late fee holidays or use in any other way they deemed appropriate.

Great River Energy ended the year with excess margins, which were used to issue bill credits to members and pay down some financial commitments. The cooperative also retired patronage capital, returning more than \$10 million to the membership.

"Great River Energy is a not-for-profit cooperative," said Bruckbauer. "When we are successful, the entire membership benefits."

While employees tackled new challenges and implemented health and safety measures in 2020, GRE set a course that will fundamentally change the way it serves member-owners. Great River Energy initiated a three-year power supply transition that will reduce emissions and costs for member-owners.

During the board of directors reorganization meeting following the annual meeting, Robert Bruckbauer (Lake County Power, Grand Rapids) was re-elected board chair; Dale Anderson (Kandiyohi Power Cooperative, Spicer) was re-elected board vice chair; Audrey Hjelle (Runestone Electric Association, Alexandria) was re-elected secretary, and Lee York (Nobles Cooperative

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric 2021 Annual Meeting Letter of Voting Authorization

Member corporations, churches, clubs and organizations are encouraged to use this form as proof of designation.

Name of corporation, church, club or organization SWCE Account #

Address of above

Name of officer or agent authorized to vote Office title

is the person authorized to represent the organization as its voting delegate at Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's Annual Meeting on June 8, 2021.

Secretary of organization or other designated official

NOTE: Only officers of an organization are generally authorized to vote on behalf of the organization. For any agent of the organization other than an officer to cast the organization's vote, this form must be accompanied by a certified copy of a resolution of its governing body appointing such person to vote for the organization.

Electric, Worthington) was re-elected treasurer.

In addition to the officers, directors were elected to GRE's 24-member

board, which included Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric Board President Gary Wilson.

swce 2021 board of director nominees

June 8



The 2021 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; Ryan/Jenny Angelow, Faribault; Doug/Cindy Finch, Owatonna; Keith/Carol Schrader, Nerstrand; Glenn/Linda Wiesjhan, Owatonna; Jane Middlestadt, Owatonna; Jim/Patricia Pagel, Faribault; and Joseph Haberman, Blooming Prairie. The election of directors will take place during Steele-Waseca's 85th annual meeting, scheduled Tuesday, June 8, from 4 to 6 p.m., at the co-op's headquarters located at 2411 West Bridge Street in Owatonna.

District 1



Patrick J. (PJ) Duchene, incumbent, resides and operates the family farm in Wells Township, west of Faribault. He has a son, Patrick, and daughter, Sumer. PJ also works as the shop foreman with the Rice County Highway Department. As for why he wishes to represent District 1 on the Steele-Waseca board of directors, PJ responded, "I feel I can be a very good voice for the member-owners of the co-op. I also enjoy learning new things. The last three years have went by so fast." He is a Credentialed Cooperative Director and is presently working on board leadership training. As for the qualities he brings to the board, PJ stated, "I'm young and outgoing. I enjoy being involved in my community."

District 3



Sylvia J. Archer, resides in rural New Richland of Berlin Township. She has been a member of Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric since 1995. Since retiring from Jostens in 2017, Sylvia has worked part time at Cabela's, Whispering Oak, and on the 2020 Census. In 2018, she campaigned for Steele County District 1 Commissioner, and visited every farmstead twice and was pleased to see so many farmers using solar. Sylvia has been an active volunteer in the community including at the Steele County Detention Center. She has held numerous positions in an organization focused on recovery where she has mentored women. Sylvia is currently chairing a committee in the same organization to do outreach to professionals in southern Minnesota. When asked why she wishes to represent District 3 on the Steele-Waseca board of directors, Sylvia wrote, "I'm concerned about the impact of carbon emissions on our environment. I'm pleased to see SWCE taking a leadership role in converting to solar and I want to continue to help work toward transitioning to healthy & cost-effective renewable energy. I also believe in working with other cooperatives so we can learn from each other. I would also like to see more gender-equity on the Board." As for the qualities she could bring to the board, Sylvia responded, "I take my commitments very seriously. I strive to educate myself and do the best, most knowledgeable job no matter what I do. I'm also known to think outside the box and connect the dots for more creative solutions."

District 5



Rodney D. Krell, incumbent, and his wife, Michelle, reside in Blooming Prairie Township. He is presently the assistant secretary/treasurer on the Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric board of directors. Rodney is a fourth generation farmer to operate the Krell family farm. Their diversified crop farm raises corn, soybeans, sweet corn, and peas. The couple has two adult children: son, Justin; and daughter, Jenna. Rodney currently is a member of the Blooming Prairie school board, Blooming Prairie Education Foundation board, Blooming Prairie FFA Alumni Association, Knights of Columbus, Lions Club, and Steele County Agricultural Society. Rodney serves as Eucharistic Minister at his church. Honors include the 1996 Steele County Soil and Water Conservation Farmers of the Year, and the 2012 Steele County Farm Family of the Year.

The cooperative difference

Electric co-ops are local energy and technology partners. Consumer-owned and not for profit, 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 Customer Satisfaction Index.

- Electric cooperatives are built by and belong to the communities they serve. They are led by members from the community and are uniquely suited to meet local needs.
- Electric cooperatives, on average, **score higher** than all other electric companies, according to the 2021 American Customer Satisfaction Index.

Source: NRECA

financial report for year 2020

STATEMENTS OF PATRONAGE CAPITAL AND OTHER EQUITIES YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2020 AND 2019

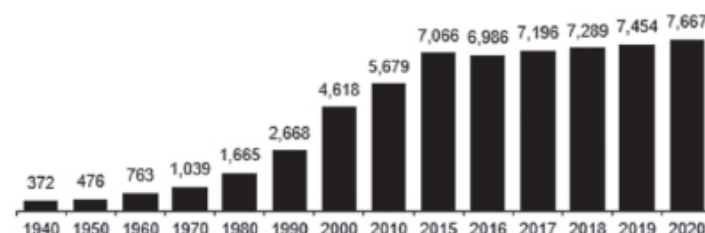
	Memberships	Patronage Capital	Other Equities	Total
BALANCE, DECEMBER 31, 2018	\$17,248	\$38,184,505	\$1,186,741	\$39,388,494
Unassigned Current Year Margins	-	4,060,909	-	4,060,909
Retirement of Capital Credits	-	(1,382,372)	-	(1,382,372)
Estate Settlements	-	(154,747)	70,974	(83,773)
Membership Changes - Net	(78)	-	-	(78)
BALANCE, DECEMBER 31, 2019	17,170	40,708,295	1,257,715	41,983,180
Unassigned Current Year Margins	-	3,972,492	-	3,972,492
Retirement of Capital Credits	-	(1,498,162)	-	(1,498,162)
Estate Settlements	-	(111,562)	36,417	(75,145)
BALANCE, DECEMBER 31, 2020	\$17,170	\$43,071,063	\$1,294,132	\$44,382,365

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

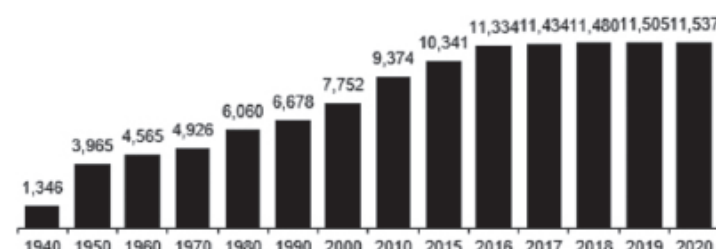
The balance sheets, statements of operations, patronage capital and other equities, and cash flows were taken from complete financial statements which were audited by CliftonLarsonAllen LLP, Certified Public Accountants, who expressed their unmodified opinion on those statements.

Copies of the complete financial statements together with the independent auditors' report may be examined at the office of Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric.

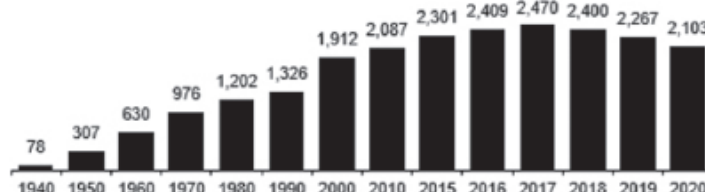
PLANT \$ INVESTMENT PER CONSUMER



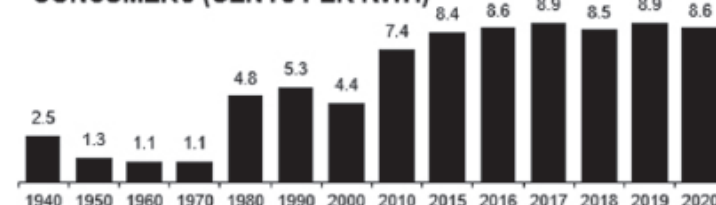
AVERAGE NUMBER OF CONSUMERS



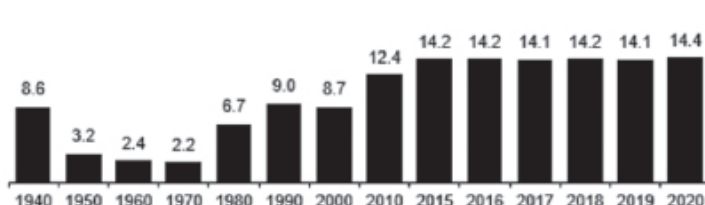
AVERAGE KWH USED PER CONSUMER (PER MONTH)



AVERAGE WHOLESALE POWER COST FOR RESIDENTIAL CONSUMERS (CENTS PER KWH)



AVERAGE ELECTRIC RATE TO RESIDENTIAL CONSUMERS (CENTS PER KWH)



financial report for year 2020

Nature of Operations

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's (SWCE) principal line of business is providing electric service primarily to local residential and business customers residing in the nine-county rural area surrounding Owatonna, MN. Rates charged to customers are established by the board of directors.

Financial Statement Presentation

SWCE prepares its financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States. These principles require management to make informed judgments, best estimates, and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets, liabilities, revenues, and expenses. Actual results could vary from those estimates.

Patronage Capital

SWCE operates as a cooperative. Amounts received from the furnishing of electric energy in excess of operating costs and expenses are assigned to patrons on a patronage basis. All other amounts received by the cooperative from its operations in excess of costs and expenses are allocated to its patrons on a patronage basis to the extent they are not needed to offset current or prior deficits.

Income Taxes

SWCE has been granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service and the State of Minnesota. Therefore, the financial statements do not include a provision for income taxes.

STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2020 AND 2019

	2020	2019
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Net Margins	\$ 3,972,492	\$ 4,060,909
Adjustments to Reconcile Net Margins to Net Cash Provided by Operating Activities:		
Depreciation	3,382,300	3,318,788
G & T and Other Capital Credits	(816,199)	(874,069)
Loss on Sale/Disposal of Assets	(9,990)	(7,148)
Interest Income Credited to Cushion of Credit	(709,185)	(1,046,487)
Interest Expense Paid by Cushion of Credit	-	297,766
Changes in Assets and Liabilities - (Increase) Decrease in:		
Accounts Receivable	554,888	(380,009)
Materials and Supplies Inventory	(24,718)	(51,107)
Deferred Debits	124,926	421,719
Increase (Decrease) in:		
Accounts Payable	62,586	77,254
Deferred Credits	177,065	196,525
Other Current and Accrued Liabilities	230,764	34,727
Net Cash Provided by Operating Activities	<u>6,944,929</u>	6,048,868
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Construction and Acquisition of Plant	(6,849,439)	(4,366,412)
Change in Other Assets and Investments	12,529	
Cash Received from Retirement of Patronage	393,476	365,633
Cash Paid for Investments in Associated Organizations	-	(12,604)
Payments Received on Notes Receivable	248,557	263,475
Issuance of Notes Receivable	(71,000)	-
Net Cash Used by Investing Activities	<u>(6,265,877)</u>	(3,749,908)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Increase (Decrease) in Memberships	-	(78)
Retirement of Capital Credits	(1,573,307)	(1,466,145)
Change in Customer Deposits	(21,795)	(21,240)
Proceeds from Issuance of Long-Term Debt	466,076	3,220,000
Principal Payments on Long-Term Debt	(2,664,908)	(2,910,972)
Net Cash Used by Financing Activities	<u>(3,793,934)</u>	(1,178,435)
NET INCREASE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	(3,114,882)	1,120,525
Cash and Cash Equivalents		
- Beginning of Year	<u>5,267,810</u>	<u>4,147,285</u>
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS - END OF YEAR	\$ 2,152,928	\$ 5,267,810
SUPPLEMENTAL DISCLOSURE OF CASH FLOW INFORMATION		
Interest Paid	<u>\$ 1,405,382</u>	<u>\$ 1,400,351</u>
NONCASH FINANCING ACTIVITY		
Principal Payments on Long-Term Debt Paid by Cushion of Credit	<u>\$ 20,259,319</u>	<u>\$ 3,230,033</u>

swce director districts

District 1: Kilkenny Township in LeSueur County, Shieldsville and Morrystown Townships and the Southeast one quarter (SE 1/4) of Erin Township, Southwest one quarter (SW 1/4) of Wells Township, and the Northwest one quarter (NW 1/4) of Warsaw Township in Rice County. (Represented by PJ Duchene)

District 2: Dunbar, Lura and Minnesota Lake Townships in Faribault County; Mapleton, Danville, Medo, McPherson and LeRay Townships in Blue Earth County; Freeborn Township in Freeborn County; Alton, Byron, Freedom, Janesville, St. Mary, Vivian and Wilton Townships in Waseca County. (Represented by Geraldine Lienke)

District 3: Hartland Township in Freeborn County; New Richland, Otisco, Woodville, Blooming Grove and Iosco Townships in Waseca County; Lemond Township, the Northwest one quarter (NW 1/4) and the Northeast one quarter (NE 1/4) of Berlin Township, and the Northwest one quarter (NW 1/4) and the Southwest one quarter (SW 1/4) of Somerset Township in Steele County. (Represented by Duane Edwardson)

District 4: Bath and Geneva Townships in Freeborn County; the Southwest one quarter (SW 1/4) and the Southeast one quarter (SE 1/4) of Berlin Township; Deerfield, Owatonna and Meriden Townships; the Northeast one quarter (NE 1/4) and the Southeast one quarter (SE 1/4) of Somerset Township, and Summit Township in Steele County; the Southwest one quarter (SW 1/4) of Warsaw Township in Rice County. (Represented by Dennis Ringhofer)

District 5: Newry Township in Freeborn County; Aurora and Blooming Prairie Townships, and the Southwest one quarter (SW 1/4) of Havana Township in Steele County, and Westfield, Ripley, Ashland and Hayfield Townships in Dodge County. (Represented by Rodney Krell)

District 6: Medford, Clinton Falls and Merton Townships; and the Northwest, Northeast and Southeast one quarters (NW, NE & SE 1/4's) of Havana Township in Steele County, and Ellington, Concord, Claremont and Wasioja Townships in Dodge County. (Represented by Gary Wilson)

District 7: The Northeast and Southeast one quarters (NE & SE 1/4's) of Warsaw Township; the Northwest and Southwest one quarters (NW & SW 1/4's) of Walcott Township; the Northwest, Northeast and Southeast one quarters (NW, NE & SE 1/4's) of Wells Township in Rice County. (Represented by John Beal)

District 8: Kenyon Township in Goodhue County; Richland, Wheeling, Cannon City, Bridgewater, Upper Bridgewater and Northfield Townships, and the Northeast and Southeast one quarters (NE & SE 1/4's) of Walcott Township in Rice County. (Represented by Ronald Sommers)

District 9: Forest, Webster, Wheatland Townships, and the Southwest, Northwest and Northeast one quarters (SW, NW & NE 1/4's) of Erin Township in Rice County. (Represented by Renee Malecha)

Nominating Committee selects nominees for board of director seats

Steele-Waseca's bylaws require the board of directors to appoint a Nominating Committee consisting of no less than five cooperative members. Each year's committee is responsible for an important part of the cooperative process—to select nominees for the board seats up for election.

The 2021 Nominating Committee members include: District 1—Frank/Joyce Ahlman, Faribault; Lester/Jane Kroeger, Waseca; and Ryan/Jenny Angelow, Faribault; District 3—Doug/Cindy Finch, Owatonna; Keith/Carol Schrader, Nerstrand; and Glenn/Linda Wiesjhan, Owatonna; District 5—Jane Middlestadt, Owatonna; James/Patricia Pagel, Faribault; and Joseph Haberman, Blooming Prairie.

The committee conducted virtual and phone meetings Dec. 2, 2020, in order to comply with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) guidance to social distancing due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Materials were mailed to all committee members, and followed up with phone calls to each member.

The mailing and calls reviewed the duties of the Nominating Committee as stated in co-op's bylaws, the activities and conduct of individual board members policy, the qualifications for eligibility for service on the co-op's board of directors policy, the director election filing form and affirmation of director qualifications, and questions concerning qualifications for director.

A list of potential questions a candidate may have, highlighting the time commitment it takes to be a board director was also included in the mailing along with the selection process.

The Nominating Committee works on a rotation system that keeps six experienced members on the committee, and adds three new members each year.

A list of members in each district was provided, and it was suggested that committee members from each district call each other to discuss the search for candidates and review the information given to them.

Nominations for committee chairperson for the January meeting were not opened during their December 2020 meeting, and the meeting was adjourned.

The Nominating Committee conducted virtual and phone meetings on Jan. 12, 2021, to comply with the CDC guidance of social distancing due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a result of the calls made to all members of the Nominating Committee, the names of the following candidates were submitted, and will appear on the election ballot for Steele-Waseca's 85th annual meeting scheduled June 8, 2021, at the co-op's headquarters located at 2411 W. Bridge St., Owatonna:

District 1 Patrick J. Duchene

District 3 Sylvia J Archer
Duane R. Edwardson

District 5 Rodney D. Krell

Additional nominations will be accepted prior to the start of the drive-thru registration at the annual meeting on Tuesday, June 8, until the nominations officially close during the meeting.

Steele-Waseca wishes to thank all of the committee members for their time and service. ~~5/21~~

financial report for year 2020

On Oct. 10, 1936, when Steele County Cooperative and Waseca Cooperative Electric voted to consolidate, there were 860 members. By the end of 2020, Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric (SWCE) service locations had grown to 11,595.

SWCE's first office was located in Waseca. After Rice County joined with Steele-Waseca in 1937, the office was moved to Owatonna to provide a more central location. The office was located on West Bridge Street and then on Cedar Avenue until 1954, when a new building was constructed on East Rose Street. That building served as the headquarters until 1994 when the present facility on West Bridge Street was built.

The first part of SWCE's line was energized in February 1938. When completed, the initial project consisted of 350 miles of line. By 1950, that number had grown to 1,562. Today, SWCE has a total of 2,201 miles of line, 19 substations in service, and 900 square miles of service area.

In 1950, SWCE had 2.6 members per mile of line. Currently, SWCE has 5.2 members per mile of line. In comparison, according to the U.S. Department of Energy's 2013 data, investor-owned electric utilities on average serve 34 customers per mile of line while municipal electric utilities average 48 customers per mile of line.

BALANCE SHEETS DECEMBER 31, 2020 AND 2019

ASSETS	2020	2019
UTILITY PLANT		
Electric Plant in Service	\$88,449,700	\$85,756,869
Construction Work in Progress	3,120,763	991,960
Total	91,570,463	86,748,829
Less: Accumulated Provision for Depreciation	(32,647,143)	(31,302,638)
Net Utility Plant	58,923,320	55,446,191
OTHER ASSETS AND INVESTMENTS		
Investments in Associated Organizations	15,791,685	15,368,962
Investments in Related Companies	711,186	723,715
Notes Receivable - Net of Current Portion	761,533	984,747
Total Other Assets and Investments	17,264,404	17,077,424
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	2,152,928	5,267,810
Accounts Receivable, Net	4,204,267	4,759,014
Materials and Supplies Inventory	1,054,744	1,030,026
Interest Receivable	6,643	6,784
Current Portion of Notes Receivable	253,669	208,012
Total Current Assets	7,672,251	11,271,646
DEFERRED DEBITS		
	183,242	308,168
TOTAL ASSETS	\$84,043,217	\$84,103,429
EQUITIES AND LIABILITIES		
EQUITIES		
Patronage Capital	\$43,071,063	\$40,708,295
Memberships	17,170	17,170
Other Equities	1,294,132	1,257,715
Total Equities	44,382,365	41,983,180
LONG-TERM DEBT, Less Current Maturities		
RUS Mortgage Notes	17,005,391	18,049,753
CoBank Notes Payable	10,264,530	11,409,106
US Bank SBA PPP Loan	466,076	-
Total Long-Term Debt	27,735,997	29,458,859
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Current Maturities of Long-Term Debt	1,711,727	2,896,882
Accounts Payable	3,908,489	3,845,903
Consumer Deposits	200,940	222,735
Other Current and Accrued Liabilities	1,200,747	969,983
Total Current Liabilities	7,021,903	7,935,503
DEFERRED CREDITS		
	4,902,952	4,725,887
TOTAL EQUITIES AND LIABILITIES	\$84,043,217	\$84,103,429

financial report for year 2020

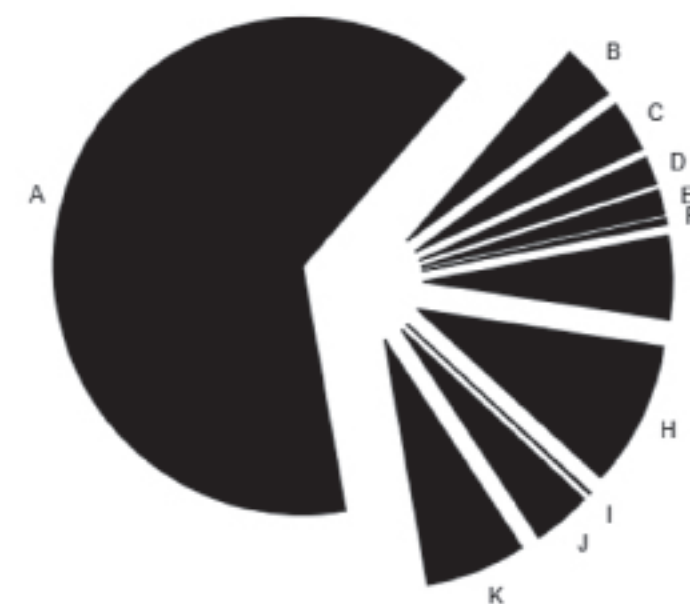
STATEMENTS OF OPERATIONS YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2020 AND 2019

	2020	2019
OPERATING REVENUES	\$36,742,466	\$37,760,682
OPERATING EXPENSES		
Cost of Power	23,578,118	24,552,859
Distribution Expense - Operation	1,331,588	1,483,830
Distribution Expense - Maintenance	1,226,657	1,144,952
Customer Accounts Expense	648,741	644,948
Customer Service & Informational Expense	598,355	721,930
Sales Expense	139,655	154,763
Administrative and General Expense	1,981,101	2,110,963
Depreciation	3,439,252	3,164,648
Other	24,604	124,844
Total Operating Expenses	32,968,071	34,103,737
OPERATING MARGINS BEFORE FIXED CHARGES	3,774,395	3,656,945
INTEREST ON LONG-TERM DEBT	1,398,867	1,690,625
OPERATING MARGINS AFTER FIXED CHARGES	2,375,528	1,966,320
GENERATION AND TRANSMISSION & OTHER CAPITAL CREDITS	816,199	874,069
NET OPERATING MARGINS	3,191,727	2,840,389
NONOPERATING MARGINS	780,765	1,220,520
NET MARGINS	\$3,972,492	\$4,060,909

The mission of SWCE is to provide every member with dependable, reliable, high quality electricity. We work daily to accomplish this mission by striving for excellence through continual improvement, applying prudent leadership, partnering and following cooperative principles.

During the year 2020, the average SWCE member had power for 8,758.64 hours out of a possible 8,760 hours. That's a reliability record of 99.98 percent! 1059712

For each dollar received from consumers, 6.5 cents goes into operating margins. These margins are used to help finance construction and improvements, pay capital credits, and make payments on our debt. Since 6.5 cents per dollar is not enough to do all of this, we borrow money to finance the shortage of funds needed for these purposes.



WHAT YOUR 2020 CONSUMER DOLLAR PAID FOR

A.	64.1%	Purchased Power
B.	3.6%	Operations
C.	3.3%	Maintenance
D.	1.8%	Billing & Collection
E.	1.6%	Customer Information
F.	0.4%	Sales
G.	5.4%	Administrative & General
H.	9.4%	Depreciation
I.	0.1%	Other Income Deductions
J.	3.8%	Interest on Long-Term Debt
K.	6.5%	Margins