

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.

Dual fuel is a controlled heating 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. 33864

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. ~~5/4~~



PASSWORD DOS AND DON'TS

A strong password can make all the difference in protecting your personal information. Follow these tips for stronger passwords.

DO:

- Change the manufacturer's Wi-Fi password on your router.
- Use two-factor authentication.
- Use unique phrases (like lyrics to your favorite song) to remember passwords.

DON'T:

- Don't use common words or numbers like "password" or "1234."
- Don't use personal details like your date of birth in a password.
- Don't use the same password for multiple accounts.

October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month.

Do Your Part. #BeCyberSmart

(Saggau continued from Page 1)

North Dakota. It is also the right thing to do. In addition, the company buying the power plant will pursue carbon capture and storage technology which we believe is something that could—and should—be replicated around the world. The sale of our high-voltage direct-current transmission system allows our member-owners to recover their investment in that asset, while securing the future use and operation of the critical system for the state of Minnesota and region.

Great River Energy maintains a portfolio of power supply resources designed to provide members with reliable, affordable, and environmentally responsible electricity. We are building a power supply portfolio and transmission system that will serve our membership well for decades.

Great River Energy has never been in a better financial position than it is today. Currently, our wholesale power rates are 12% below the weighted regional average cost of electricity, and we project wholesale rate decreases over the next several years.

Looking to the future, we are committed to electrifying the economy. Great River Energy and our member-owners play an intrinsic role in electrifying transportation, home heating and cooling, business applications, agriculture, manufacturing techniques, and more. Again, it's the right thing to do.

Great River Energy is thankful for the support and guidance we have received from many stakeholders who understand the policy implications, but also the impact on people, costs and communities involved in a transformation

The cooperative difference

Electric co-ops are local 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.

• Co-ops earned the highest average score and had five of the top seven satisfaction scores among all types of electric utilities in the J.D. Power and Associates 2020 Utility Customer Satisfaction Study.

• Electric cooperatives, on average, score higher than all other electric companies, according to the 2021 American Customer Satisfaction Index.

(Courtesy: National Rural Electric Cooperative Association)

like this. Specifically, a special thanks to the Minnesota-North Dakota chapter of the Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA), Center for Energy and the Environment (CEE), Great Plains Institute (GPI), and Clean Grid Alliance (CGA) who have helped us focus on practical solutions while working together, to do what's right.

As a cooperative, our success is determined largely by how well we serve our member-owners and interact with the world and people around us. Our efforts are paying off. Today, our member satisfaction is at an all-time high, and we commit uncompromisingly to being a responsible corporate citizen and leader in the evolution of the electric industry.



the power of human connections

sparks

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



a monthly newsletter from Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric

October 2021



inside connections

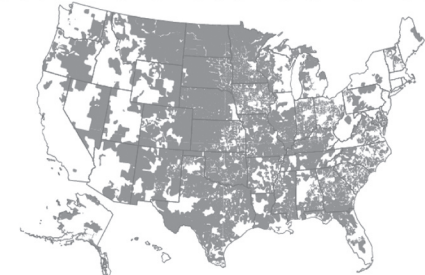
- 2 Manager Connection
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- 8 Checking if your dual fuel system is ready for colder weather; 27998 What is the cooperative difference? Cybersecurity Awareness Month

calendar of events

October

- 3-9 Nat'l Fire Prevention Week
- 4 Child Health Day
- 11 Columbus Day
- 15 Boss's Day observed
- 31 Halloween

Cooperatives power 56% of the nation's landmass



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 1 and April 30 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 1 each year, notify all residential customers of the provisions of this section.

Subd. 2. **Notice to residential customer facing disconnection.** (a) Before disconnecting service to a residential customer during the period between October 1 and April 30, a municipal utility or cooperative electric association must provide the following information:

(Cold Weather Rule continued on Page 3)

Great River Energy: Working together and doing what's right

by David Saggau, Great River Energy president and chief executive officer

Great River Energy is focused on building a better future for the member-owners we serve and the stakeholders who are impacted by the things we do.



David Saggau

Over the past several years, we have reduced costs, mitigated our carbon risk, added renewables and completed a transmission buildout. We've collaborated with member-owners to develop one of the largest demand response programs in the country while encouraging beneficial technologies that utilize renewable energy like the Revolt® program for electric vehicles. In addition, we are demonstrating a

first-of-its-kind long-duration battery storage technology.

Over the years, Great River Energy has been responsibly transforming from a historically coal-dependent cooperative to one with low carbon intensity that will have zero coal. This shift allowed us to meet Minnesota's renewable energy standard (30% by 2025) eight years ahead of schedule, and we will ambitiously meet the state's carbon reduction goal (80% by 2050) 27 years early.

Last year, we announced plans to replace Coal Creek Station with 900 megawatts of wind energy, which will lower our costs and double our current renewable capacity. More recently, we decided to sell the plant because it saves our members money and allows us to preserve the jobs and communities in

(Saggau continued on Page 8)

the power of human connections

SWCE

sparks

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This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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Office Hours

8:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m., Monday–Friday

Operations Office Hours

8:00 a.m.–3:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

For Customer Service, Billing Questions and Power Outages Phone:

507-451-7340 or 800-526-3514

Before calling to report an outage

1. Check fuses and circuit breakers in your home and on meter pole.

2. Check with your neighbors to see if they have power.

3. Look for possible causes such as a tree branch on wires, a broken pole, twisted wires, etc.

To leave a non-emergency message whenever SWCE's Office is closed:

Phone 507-451-7340 or 800-526-3514 and listen to the prompts. Please have your account number, phone number, and name on the account available.

manager connection

By Syd Briggs,
General Manager

ACE Hardware,
A
State Farm,
Land O'Lakes and
Steele-Waseca Coop-
erative Electric all share something in
common: we're all cooperatives.

We may be in different industries, but we all share a passion for serving our members and helping our communities to thrive. In fact, all cooperatives adhere to the same set of seven principles that reflect our core values of honesty, transparency, equity, inclusiveness and service to the greater community good. October is National Co-op Month, so this is the perfect time to reflect on these principles that have stood the test of time, but also provide a framework for the future.

Democratic Member Control

Our co-op is well suited to meet the needs of our members because we are locally governed. Each member gets a voice and a vote in how the co-op is run, and each voice and vote are equal. Steele-Waseca's board of directors, who helps set long-term priorities for the co-op, also live locally on co-op lines. These board members have been elected by neighbors just like you. We know our members have a valuable perspective, and that's why we are continually seeking your input and encourage you to weigh in on important co-op issues, and participate in co-op elections.

Our close connection to this community ensures we get a first-hand perspective on members' priorities, thereby enabling us to make more informed decisions on long-term investments such as equipment and technology upgrades.

Members' Economic Participation

As a utility, our mission is to provide safe, reliable, and affordable energy to our members. But as a co-op, we are motivated by service to the community, rather than profits. Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of Steele-Waseca. At least part of that capital remains the common property of the cooperative. Members allocate surpluses for co-op programs, initiatives, capital investments, and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

Because we are guided by seven co-operative principles, it's not just about dollars—it's about opportunity for all and being fair when engaging with our members. The cooperative way is a values-based business model.

Steele-Waseca is a reflection of our local communities and its evolving needs. We view our role as a catalyst for good and making our corner of the world a better place. And by the way, that sums up the seventh principle, "concern for community," which I'll elaborate on in a future column.

Voluntary and Open Membership

Just like all co-ops, Steele-Waseca was created out of necessity—to meet a need that would have been otherwise unmet in our rural community. So in 1936, a group of neighbors banded together and organized our electric co-op so everyone in our rural area could benefit. For a modest membership fee to the co-op (the \$2 membership fee remains the same today), any farmer could get electricity brought to his farm. Neighbors came together to tackle a problem that they all had, but couldn't solve alone. They worked together for the benefit of the whole community, and the newly established electric lines helped power economic opportunity in our community.

While history may be forgotten, key parts of that heritage remain—the focus on our mission and serving the greater good. In this, we include everyone to improve the quality of life and economic opportunity for the communities in our service area. Membership is open to everyone in Steele-Waseca's service territory, regardless of race, religion, age, disability, gender identity, language, political perspective, or socioeconomic status. 1053387

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH

WE'RE PROUD TO SERVE OUR MEMBERS

ad connection

(For Sale ads continued from Page 6)

MINI STORAGE UNITS in Ellendale. 456-1460.

KRAUSE 15' OFFSET DISC w/cylinder, nice shape; SM. GRAVITY BOX & WAGON, \$275. 456-7614.

(4) BEVELED GLASS OCCASIONAL TABLES w/wicker bottom shelves; 18" X 24' STEEL CULVERT; MERCURY VAPOR YARD LIGHT; ACE PTO SPRAYER PUMP. 465-8566.

OLIVER TRACTORS: 1750, 1650, 88, 77, & 70; '83 MON ARK BOAT, 17.5', Evinrude 115. 455-2599.

OAK FIREWOOD, 1/2 cord/\$120, full cord/\$200, price incl. delivery within 10 mi. of Owat. 475-2651.

SCHWINN CRISSCROSS, 700x35c, 21-sp, men's, \$100; SCHWINN ALUM. ROAD BIKE, 700x25c, 21-sp, \$100. 330-3178.

CONCRETE TROWELING MACHINE, runs gd, \$250; 42" MTD RIDER w/20-hp Briggs V-twin, shift on the go, \$250. 952-652-2933.

10-GAL. SHOP-VAC WET/DRY VACUUM, exc. cond., used once, \$35, SW rural Owat. 390-5707.

GEHL 100 GRINDER-MIXER, always shedded, wrks gd. 528-2856 or 456-6317/cell.

(2) VINTAGE STEAMER TRUNKS, (1) camel back, (1) flat top, both 36"x22"x19", all original, \$45 for both. 612-247-2957.

OAK TABLE w/extra leaf; (4) CHAIRS w/wheels, \$50. 384-3406.

BACKSTOP, all the clean, galvanized parts you need to build an 8'x24' chain-link backstop, \$225. 451-5121.

CIRCLE LK LOT, 0.7 acres. 678-978-7444.

USED SNOWBLOWERS & LAWN MOWERS; WILL REPAIR SNOWBLOWERS & MOWERS. 213-7978 or 475-1311.

GRASS HAY, sm. sq. bales by Waldorf. 327-3672.

ADVANCE WHIRLAMATIC BURNISHER w/pads, 1100 RPM, easy-to-run floor polisher, \$300; 100-GAL. PLASTIC HOLDING TANK w/bottom spicket, 8" opening on top, \$50. 334-8837/Shieldsville.

BABY PLAY YARD, \$30; HIGH CHAIR, \$35; ACTIVITY CENTER, \$20; STROLLER, \$35; BED RAIL, \$10, exc. cond., like new. 450-1763.

'84 CUTLASS CIERA V6 DIESEL, vry rare, rust free, looks & runs vry gd, \$3500. 451-7755.

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.

Color and Mood

ENERGY STAR certified bulbs are available in a wide variety of shades of white light, ranging from yellowish, to white, to bluish white light, which allows you to customize the mood of your space. Many ENERGY STAR certified bulbs come in "warm" colors to match the yellowish light of incandescent bulbs, but you can also choose "cooler" colors with whiter or bluer light.

Choosing the Right Color:

- Light color is measured on a temperature scale referred to as Kelvin (K).
- Lower Kelvin numbers mean the light appears more yellow; higher Kelvin numbers mean the light is whiter or bluer.
- Most ENERGY STAR certified bulbs are made to match the color of incandescent bulbs at 2200-3000K.
 - For a whiter light, look for bulbs marked 3500-4100K.
 - For bluer white light, look for bulbs marked 5000-6500K.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT COLOR

Soft White, Warm White
The standard color of incandescent bulbs.

Neutral White, Cool White
Good for kitchens and work spaces.

Daylight
Good for reading.

2200K

3000K

3500K

4100K

5000K

6500K

2

sparks • october 2021

sparks • october 2021

7

ad connection

give away

BALDWIN ORGASONIC ORGAN w/bench, instruction manuals, you haul. 451-7626.

OWATONNA 350 SWATHER, been stored for several years in shed, free to a gd home. 651-592-7297.

KITTENS: blk, blk & white & tiger. 475-2701.

ROUND DECK TABLE, composite material, & (4) METAL & FABRIC DECK CHAIRS. 456-0348.

COMMERCIAL VENDING MACHINE for chips & candy bars. 334-7177.

ROLLING MACHINE. 213-7978 or 475-1311.

DEAD OAKS & ELMS, you cut—you can have, Mer-ton Twsp. 213-4374/Jim.

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

250-GAL. BARRELS. 279-2407.

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.

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

OLD POSTAGE STAMPS ISSUED BEFORE 1950, individuals or collections, free estimates on purchases, Owat. 676-0970.

TILLING, BUCKET WORK JOBS, have compact tractor. 451-6046.

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

SWING SET FRAME, prefer old school yard hvy duty frame suitable for adults. 838-7060.

MINN KOTA ELEC. TROLLING MOTOR, need not run, tiller type. 456-5466.

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

All area codes are 507 unless otherwise noted

HOUSE OR DUPLEX IN THE COUNTRY TO RENT in the area of Owatonna & close surrounding area. 320-8544.

MILITARY VEHICLES OF ALL TYPES, running or non-running. 612-910-0041.

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

for sale

CASE 85XT SKID LOADER, \$14,000; JD 60, \$1800; NI 385-BU. TANDEM MANURE SPREADER w/gate, \$5000; JD 145 LOADER, \$3500. 330-3945.

12-GA. REM. 870 LAM STOCK, vented rib, \$425; (3) BOXES 17 REM. FIREBALL, \$90; REM. 1100 SHOTGUN, left hand, 2 3/4, 12-ga., \$600. 461-1191.

FARM FRESH CHICKEN EGGS, \$2/dozen; RHODE ISLAND RED CHICKENS, 17-wks-old, hens—\$20/each. 651-260-9225.

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

CRESTLINER FISH HAWK BOAT, motor & trailer. 491-6551.

MINI LOP BUNNIES; AKC BLK LAB PUPPIES. 363-6909.

FLARE BOX, hyd. lift, great wood hauler, exc. shape, \$490; PET CARRIER, non-metal, exc. shape, \$35; FLUORESCENT LIGHTS w/pull switch & cord, 4' & 8', qty (8), \$25 for all. 455-3881.

ISA BRWN LAYING HENS, 18-wks-old, \$15/each; FARM FRESH BROWN CHICKEN EGGS, \$2.50/dozen. 363-2249/Derek.

1995 FORD F-150 XLT, 4WD w/topper, 86,350 mi., 5.0L, EFI V8, \$3500. 451-6653.

REAR-MOUNT 7' "SNOW/GRADER BLADE," fits A-C snap-coupler, \$200/obo. 645-7058.

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

14' ALUM. JON BOAT & 2.5-hp green Johnson out-board motor, \$800; ARCTIC CAT LYNX SNOWMOBILE, \$200. 334-7291.

45' ALLIED 8" AUGER, PTO; 50' ALLIED ELEVA-TOR, PTO, grain or hay. 330-1560.

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

100+ WESTERN BOOKS, \$0.50 each for any or all. 952-652-2949.

BUILDABLE RIGHTS in Webster Township in Rice County. 612-919-4130 for pricing & details.

9T GRAIN BIN w/elec. auger, best offer; STORAGE FOR RENT: boats, trailers. 475-2322.

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

STORAGE SPACE AVAILABLE for RVs, campers, boats, etc.; SUMMER STORAGE AVAIL. 213-8842.

RED ELM FIREWOOD, \$150/pkup load. 384-2730.

2008 NISSAN MAXIMA, vry well maintained, 1-own-er car, FWD, sunroof, heated leather seats, 98,000 mi., \$8900. 744-5672.

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

JD 6620 COMBINE; EZ-FLOW 300 GRAVITY WAGONS; WESTFIELD AUGER, 8"x46'. 583-2026.

PETMATE INDIGO DOGHOUSE, XL, used only 1 yr before dog outgrew it, like new, \$100. 332-7590.

FIREWOOD, \$75/qtr cord, \$280/full cord. 651-357-5092/Paul/Nfld area.

MINI STORAGE UNITS, Blmg Prairie. 456-2957.

DOG KENNEL w/door, 5'x10', chain-link style, 6' high, \$65; (4) TRAILER TIRES, 16", \$60. 334-2673.

STUMP GRIND. & BOBCAT WORK. 612-247-7781.

(4) PELLA WINDOWS, new. 210-3782 for sizes & price.

(2) PULL GOLF CARTS, gd shape, \$30; TAIL-LIGHT for Dodge Ram, \$15. 451-2687.

ARONIA BERRIES; STORAGE FOR RENT: boats, campers, cars, east of Owat. 451-9445.

EXMARK LAZER Z MOWER, 23 hp, 60" deck, vry low hrs, exc. cond., (1) owner, bought new, best of-fer. 339-3436.

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

(For Sale ads continued on Page 7)

travel

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

4 Seasons Vacations, Inc.

TRUST OUR EXPERIENCE. LOVE YOUR VACATION.

cold weather rule connection

(Cold Weather Rule continued from Page 1)

mation to a customer:

- (1) a notice of proposed disconnection;
- (2) a statement explaining the cus-tomer'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 oppor-tunities to secure continued utility service.

(b) At the same time that notice is given under paragraph (a), the utility must also give written or electronic notice of the proposed disconnection to the local energy assistance provider and the department.

Subd. 3. **Restrictions if disconnection necessary.** (a) If a residential customer must be involuntarily disconnected remotely using advanced metering infrastructure or physically at the property being disconnected between October 1 and April 30 for failure to comply with Subdivision 1, the disconnection must not occur:

- (1) on a Friday, unless the customer declines 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 30 days after the notice required in Subdivision 2 has been mailed to the customer or 15 days after the notice has been personally delivered to the customer.

(b) The customer must not be disconnected until the utility attempts to confirm whether the residential unit is actually occupied, which the utility may accomplish by:

- (1) visiting the residential unit; or
- (2) examining energy usage data obtained through advanced metering infrastructure to determine whether there

is energy usage over at least a 24-hour period that indicates occupancy.

(c) A utility may not disconnect a residential customer who is in compliance with Section 216B.098, Subdivision 5.

(d) 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.

(e) For the purposes of this section, "advanced metering infrastructure" means an integrated system of smart meters, communication networks, and

data management systems that enables two-way communication between a utility and its customers.

Subd. 5. **Cost recovery.** A municipal utility or cooperative electric association may recover the reasonable costs of disconnecting and reconnecting a residential customer based on the costs of providing notice to the customer and other entities and whether the process was accomplished physically at the property being disconnected or reconnected or remotely using advanced metering infrastructure.

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.

Subd. 3. **Application to service limiters.** For the purposes of this section, "disconnection" includes a service or load limiter or any device that limits or interrupts electric service in any way.

cookin' connection **Overnight Blueberry French Toast**

Petra Cripe **Ellendale**

- 12 slices sourdough bread (cut into 1" cubes)
- 1 pkg. cream cheese (cut into 1" cubes)
- 1 c. fresh or frozen blueberries
- 1 dozen eggs, beaten
- 2 c. milk
- 1/2 tsp. almond extract
- 1/3 c. maple syrup

Grease casserole pan. Layer bread, cream cheese cubes, and blueberries. Mix eggs, milk, and extract, then pour over the top, and refrigerate overnight. Next day, set on the counter for 30 minutes. Cover with foil and bake for 30 minutes at 350°. Remove foil and bake 30 minutes more. Let cool, dust with powdered sugar and serve with syrup. Serves 6+.

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 47 kWh credit per panel on this month's statement for energy generated during August 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.

September issue of Sparks



Numbers found:
Warren Suchanek

Numbers not found:
Brian Huber
John/Rebecca Mueller
Chris & Kari Ducette
Scott/Cindy Yerington



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. **1073834**

• **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 81° F, while the average low was 59° F. This resulted in 170 Cooling Degree Days (CDDs) and 10 Heating Degree Days (HDDs). They compare to last year's average high of 80° F and average low of 59° F, which resulted in 162.5 CDDs and 35 HDDs.

• **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 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

Learn the **Sounds** of Fire Safety™



Is there a beep or a chirp coming out of your smoke or carbon monoxide alarm? What does it all mean? Knowing the difference can save you, your home, and your family! Make sure everyone in the home understands the sounds of the smoke and carbon monoxide alarms and knows how to respond. Learn the sounds of your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms by checking the user guide or search the brand and model online.

What is your alarm telling you?

SMOKE ALARMS

- A continued set of three loud beeps—beep, beep, beep—means smoke or fire. Get out, call **9-1-1**, and stay out.
- A single “chirp” every 30 or 60 seconds means the battery is low and must be changed.
- All smoke alarms must be replaced after 10 years.
- Chirping that continues after the battery has been replaced means the alarm is at the end of its life and the unit must be replaced.

CARBON MONOXIDE (CO) ALARMS

- A continuous set of four loud beeps—beep, beep, beep, beep—means carbon monoxide is present in your home. Go outside, call **9-1-1** and stay out.
- A single chirp every 30 or 60 seconds means the battery is low and must be replaced.
- CO alarms also have “end of life” sounds that vary by manufacturer. This means it's time to get a new CO alarm.
- Chirping that continues after the battery has been replaced means the alarm is at the end of its life and the unit must be replaced.

Hear a Beep, **Get On Your Feet!**

Get out and stay out! Call 9-1-1 from outside.



Hear a Chirp, **Make a Change!**

A chirping alarm needs attention. Replace the batteries or the entire unit if it's over 10 years old. If you don't remember how old the unit is, replace it!



FIRE PREVENTION WEEK™

National Fire Prevention Week, Oct. 3-9

For fire safety tips, visit firepreventionweek.org and sparky.org
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