



the power of human connections

sparks

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

a monthly newsletter from Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric

October 2022

OCTOBER IS CO-OP MONTH



inside connections

- 2** Manager Connection
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- 8** GRE reliability through challenging weather; Cyber safety strategies

calendar of events

October

- 3** Child Health Day
- 9-15** Nat'l Fire Prevention Week
- 10** Columbus Day
- 17** Boss's Day observed
- 31** Halloween

TRICK-OR-TREATING SAFETY TIPS



Brighter-colored costumes are better for safety. Consider giving kiddos a glow stick or small flashlight to carry.

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)

Four ways to boost your cyber hygiene

by Abby Berry, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA)

In today's digital world, cyberattacks are unfortunately nothing new.

Cyber criminals can attack on a multitude of levels, from large-scale attacks targeting corporations to smaller phishing attacks aimed to gain an individual's personal information.

October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month, but good cyber hygiene should be practiced year-round. This year's theme is, "See Yourself in Cyber,"—because we *all* have a part to play in cybersecurity. When we hear about massive data breaches, it can feel overwhelming and lead us to think we're powerless as individuals to stop cyber criminals.

The truth is, there are several practical steps we can take to safeguard our devices and data. Here are four easy ways to boost your cyber hygiene:

See Yourself in Cyber.

October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month

Improve your cyber hygiene by doing these four things:

1. Enable multi-factor authentication
2. Use strong passwords and a password manager
3. Update software regularly
4. Recognize and report phishing attacks



(Cyber hygiene continued on Page 8)

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 2411 W Bridge Street, PO Box 485
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This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Website: www.swce.coop
 Email: info@swce.coop



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Office Hours

8:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m., Monday–Friday

Operations Office Hours

8:00 a.m.–3:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

**For Customer Service, Billing
 Questions and Power Outages
 Phone:**

507-451-7340 or 800-526-3514

Before calling to report an outage

1. Check fuses and circuit breakers in your home and on meter pole.
2. Check with your neighbors to see if they have power.
3. Look for possible causes such as a tree branch on wires, a broken pole, twisted wires, etc.

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

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

Call *Before* You Dig
 Gopher State One Call
 811 or 800-252-1166

48-hour notice required for ALL underground cable locations

manager connection



By Syd Briggs,
 General Manager

Fall is almost upon us and with it comes many fun and interesting changes

such as: the weather, fashion, warm foods such as soups and stews, several holidays—and the celebrations that come with them—and gathering with families and friends around fire pits.

One area we don't want change is the 24-hour reliability of the power to operate our homes that electricity gives us; we desire to keep the power flowing as much as possible in every season. So it is a great contrast that we choose to celebrate National Co-op Month each October. Our celebration is the honor of delivering "power" to run our daily lives; not just the product of electricity, but the power that electricity gives us each moment of the day. The power to have lights, refrigeration, heat, meal preparation, and entertainment.

Our core business purpose is to serve as your power provider, but the larger mission of the co-op is to help make our corner of the world a better place. "Concern for community" is one of seven guiding principles that all co-ops share.

Similar to how our wires run through our service territory, our concern for community flows through all of our decisions—because being a co-op means being a responsible partner and good neighbor. 1075210

Steele-Waseca works to help our communities in our service area thrive through initiatives led by our employees and board of directors comprised of neighbors who live right here in our service area. Because we're local, we understand our community's unique needs and strive to help meet them.

We're proud to support local youth

**Electric co-ops power
 over 21 million homes,
 businesses, schools
 and farms in 48 states.**

**Focused on
 YOU.**

Electric cooperatives were created to serve their members. Because we're a co-op, we're able to adapt to our community's unique needs. That's the power of co-op membership.

**OCTOBER IS NATIONAL
 CO-OP MONTH**

through the Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., and through scholarships for post-secondary education. With your assistance at the annual meeting, we collect non-perishable items for the local food shelves.

The word "cooperative" is close to "cooperation," meaning people working together toward a common goal—mutually benefiting one another and the larger community. That's the essence of the cooperative spirit. Our employees and member-elected board members are invested in the communities where we live and serve.

Above all, as a co-op we put our members' priorities first. As your trusted energy partner, we know saving energy and money is important to you. That's why we have numerous programs in place to help, including the water heater program, dual fuel, and interruptible air conditioning options.

We want to empower you to manage energy use at home. If you haven't already, I encourage you to take a moment to visit our website, swce.coop, or download our apps from the App Store or Google Play. Through the app, you can conveniently monitor and manage your energy use. And we're of course here to help, so give us a call during regular business hours if you have questions about your energy bills.

Steele-Waseca is continuously examining ways to operate more efficiently while continuing to provide the highest level of friendly, reliable service you expect and deserve. After all, we're your local co-op. We were built by the members we serve.

#swceTRUST

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 customer's rights and responsibilities;
- (3) a list of local energy assistance providers;
- (4) forms on which to declare inability to pay; and
- (5) a statement explaining available time payment plans and other opportunities to secure continued utility service.

(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.

 #swceTRUST

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.  #swceTRUST

cookin' connection

Ranch Pheasant

Missy Anderson

Blooming Prairie

1 pheasant (cut into pieces)
1 pkg. dry ranch
1/2 stick butter
1 onion, sliced
1/2 lb. bacon
1/4 c. olive oil

Melt butter. Mix dry ranch mix into it and add olive oil. Put pheasant in shallow roaster. Pour ranch mix over it. Slice onion and sprinkle around pan. Layer bacon over each pheasant piece. Bake at 275°-300° for 3 hours.

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 52 kWh credit per panel on this month's statement for energy generated during August 2022. Learn more about community solar and The Sunna Project by visiting Steele-Waseca's website, swce.coop. #swceINNOVATION

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. 1029287

September issue of Sparks



Numbers found:

James/Sharon Drache
Glenn/June Myers

Numbers not found:

Jason/Jennifer Sherman
William/Lorrie Zaharia
Michael Hullett



Sparks in brief . . .

• **Want easy energy payments?** Sign up for **EnergyPay Plus**, our automatic payment plan, or **Energy Prepay**, our discounted advance payment plan. Contact our office for details. You may also pay your bill online at www.swce.coop. By entering your Steele-Waseca username and password you can also view a 13-month history of your account.

• **If you have changed or added phone numbers**, please contact SWCE to update your contact information.

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

• **August temps** – The average high temperature for August was 78° F, while the average low was 58° F. This resulted in 109.5 Cooling Degree Days (CDDs) and 7 Heating Degree Days (HDDs). They compare to last year's average high of 81° F and average low of 59° F, which resulted in 170 CDDs and 10 HDDs.

• **ENERGY STAR® Rebates** – In 2022, 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.



Play it safe near grain bins.

When moving equipment, be aware of power lines and maintain at least a 10-foot clearance to ensure safety. Follow all guidelines set by the National Electrical Safety Code.

#swceLIFE+

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. 1054464

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.

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. 845

#swceSERVICE



Electrical Safety Tips for Hunters

We encourage all members to be aware of electrical equipment while hunting. Keep these safety tips in mind as you enjoy the great outdoors.

- Keep clear of electrical equipment.
- Do not shoot at or near power lines or insulators.
- Know where power lines and equipment are located where you hunt.
- Be vigilant in wooded areas where power lines may not be as visible.
- Never place deer stands on utility poles.
- Never place decoys on power lines or other utility equipment.

#swceCOOPERATION



Is my off peak/dual fuel being controlled today?

Visit Great River Energy's website at www.greatriverenergy.com and click on "Load Management"

Need a history of controls? Click on "History" on the "Load Management" page

TEACH KIDS



A yearly average of

2400

children suffer severe shock from electrical outlets.

Research updated from the National Fire Protection Association. Safe Electricity

ad connection

give away

SANYO 26" COLOR TUBE TV & CONVERTER BOX. 451-2978.

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, or emailed to SWCE.

wanted

DUALLY REAR FENDERS for 2003 Dodge 3500 1-ton pickup. 720-299-0937.

HANDYMAN OR CARPENTER in the Hope/Ellendale area who knows older homes, bring your tools, I pay \$. 612-598-4005.

ALUM. BOAT LIFT for my 20' boat, lift capacity should be at least 3500 lbs; **FLOW ALUM. DOCK SECTIONS.** 612-817-3429.

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

(1) EMPTY 55-GAL. PLASTIC DRUM w/top not cut off incl. bungs, prefer an opaque one for a rain barrel to see level to water flowers, free or less than \$10. 339-1190.

GUNS; AMMO; JD MOWERS; TACKLE; ESTATES. 279-0431/Mark.

EGYPTIAN WALKING ONION SETS for fall planting. 301-2702.

PERFORATED STEEL SHEETS from grain bin floors. 651-214-2357/leave message.

JUNKERS & REPAIRABLES, top \$ pd. 332-2300.

FORD SKID STEER, diesel. 330-1849.

LEGHORN OR RHODE ISLAND RED LAYING HENS. 581-0470.

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

RECIPES for the **Sparks**, only from members who have not submitted a recipe in 2022; please use a 3x5 card; the member who has their recipe published earns a \$7 energy credit on their SWCE statement.

33462

All area codes are 507 unless otherwise noted

for sale

TRAILER (ICE HOUSE TRAILER), 8x16. 259-4080.

MINI STORAGE UNITS FOR RENT (Ellendale). 456-1460.

(2) 200-GAL. FUEL TANKS, \$50/each/obo; **CAMPER**, fits 8' truck bed, \$100/obo. 451-7837.

(4) GENERAL GRABBER HTS60 TRUCK TIRES, size 275/60R20, like new, 10/32 (new depth 11/32), \$450 for set of (4). 612-250-6956.

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

MEN'S RUBBER BOOTS, size L; **ANTIQUE SLED; ROLLER SKATES.** 451-2687.

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

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

(6) STRAIGHT TALK \$45 PREPAID CARDS, have receipt, \$225. 456-3742/leave message.

2014 WOMEN'S TREK BICYCLE, 26", 21 spd w/ mirror & elec. speedometer, like new, \$170/obo. 339-3436.

TRANSFERRABLE BUILDABLE RIGHTS in Webster Twp in Rice County. 612-919-4130 for details.

WINCO TRACTOR PTO POWERED GENERATOR on rubber-tired cart, 230/115V, 15,000 watt, \$1500. 456-4647.

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

48" PULL-BEHIND PLUG AERATOR, exc. cond., \$150. 744-5133.

FARM FAN GRAIN DRYER: 1981 Batch dryer w/1000-bu. holding tank, \$3000. 271-1082.

FOLDING DOG CRATE, med. size, 30.5 L x 19.12 W x 21.5 H, like new, \$30. 612-247-5346.

GRAVEL TRUCK AVAIL. for all your delivery needs: rock, gravel, dirt, etc., 15.5-ton capacity. 456-7774.

1950S BLONDE QUEEN BEDROOM SET: headboard, footboard, frame, nightstand, dresser, & mirror (matt. & box spring not incl.), \$250/obo. 210-9261.

GRASS HAY, round bales. 213-1277/evenings.

KATAHDIN HAIR SHEEP, ewes & rams; **HEREFORD BULLS.** 451-2722.

2-BDRM HOUSE, nice lot, \$160,000 as is—contract for deed; **OLD ASIAN PAPER MONEY.** 491-2667.

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

(7) "SMUCKERS" COLLECTOR CHRISTMAS PLATES, 1979-85, \$50. 334-2860.

FORD 501 MOWER, 3 point, extra sickles & guards, \$275. 456-7614.

FIREWOOD, \$300/full cord; **PICK YOUR OWN HONEYCRISP APPLES**, \$2/lb.; **POTATOES**, \$1/lb. (Nfld area). 651-357-5092/Paul.

50-GAL. WATER HEATER; BOAT/RV STORAGE FOR RENT. 475-2322.

REAR FLIP SEAT for Club Car DS-Buff, never used, new in box, \$300. 612-282-5794/New Rich. area.

PUREBRED DOLL-FACED PERSIAN KITTENS & CATS. 438-6835 for pictures & prices.

MINI STORAGE UNITS, Blmg Prairie. 456-2957.

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

CAB-OVER BED out of a 2016 Winnebago View Camper, light brown, like new, \$900. 515-967-8122.

DUETZ ALLIS 9170 FWA; '95' CADILLAC; GEHL 1865 ROUND BALER; IH 900 PLANTER, 8-30; SUNFLOWER SOIL FINISHER; WHITE 16-HP MOWER. 684-3136.

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

(For Sale ads continued on Page 7)

travel

MEMPHIS, NASHVILLE, & ST. LOUIS, Oct. 23-29. Depart from Albert Lea, 13 meals, city tours, Gateway Arch Riverboat & Tram Ride, Graceland, Grand Ole Opry, & more! \$1,699 pp w/2 per room.

HOLIDAY BRANSON 2, Nov. 8-12. Deluxe motor coach, 8 meals, Doug Gabriel, Dutton Family, Hot Rods & High Heels Christmas shows, Christmas Wonderland, & more! \$939 pp w/2 per room.

SOUTHERN CARIBBEAN CRUISE, Jan. 6-18, 2023. Round trip Delta flights, 10-day cruise on the Enchanted Princess, nightly entertainment, pool-side theater & more! \$3,999 pp w/2 per room.

Call 4-Seasons at 373-4705 or 373-2473, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays, to learn more about their tour information.



TRUST OUR EXPERIENCE. LOVE YOUR VACATION.

Sparks Free Classified Ad Form for all SWCE Members

Ads need to be received in our office by **October 5** to ensure being printed in the November **Sparks**. Please print neatly or type your ad of **20 words or less** on this form. We reserve the right to edit ad copy to allow space for more ads. Ads received after the 5th will be printed in the December issue.

For Sale Wanted Give Away

Phone # _____ Account # _____

Name _____

Clip and mail to: SWCE, PO Box 485, Owatonna MN 55060-0485, deliver to the SWCE office, or email your ad to: sparks@swce.coop.

ad connection

(For Sale ads continued from Page 6)

TREK 7200, women's hyb., 700x35c, 21 spd, \$150;
GT PALOMAR, boy's, 24x175, 21 spd, \$100; **SPECIALIZED HOTROCKS**, 16x175, \$40. 330-3178.

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

1978 SHELBY GOOSENECK HORSE TRAILER, 2-horse straight load, small living qtrs, water heater, cowboy shower, \$10,000. 456-0076.

TRACTORS: (2) AC WD45 tractors, (1) w/loader; Farmall M, \$4000/each; JD 2010, needs radiator work, \$3000. 456-8241.

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

PLAYHOUSE/CHICKEN COOP, 8x12; **SWING-N-SLIDE WOOD SWING SET & SLIDE** w/other accessories. 676-6443.

E-Z MODEL 300 GRAVITY WAGONS; CASE PLOW, 4-btm, variable width. 583-2026.

GRASS/ALFALFA HAY, large round bales, 6'x6', no rain, \$60. 339-0763.

STEEL SHOP DESK, tan, 36x60, (6) drawers, gd shape, \$100/obo; **BLACKSMITH SHOP HAND DRILL PRESS**, antique, \$200/obo; **50-HP 3-PHASE CONVERTER**, wrks well, \$2500/obo. 390-5222.

GRASS HAY, 4x5 wrapped bales, no rain. 451-5131.

HAT STAND; FILTER QUEEN VACUUM; SNAPPER WEED EATER; SCOTT'S REEL MOWER; MISSION OAK MUSIC STAND; 29" ROUND MIRROR, antique; **NIGHT STAND**. 340-0506/iv. msg.

1951 JD G, wide front, \$6000. 440-8831.

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.



Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric

2411 West Bridge Street, PO Box 485 Owatonna, MN 55060-0485

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Storage Water Heating Program

Benefits

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

The SWCE Storage Water Heater Program

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

Westinghouse Water Heater

- * Stainless steel tank with heavy-duty insulation
- * 115 gallon weighs 224 lbs. shipping weight
- * Dimensions 27" x 70.5"
- * Industry best Lifetime Warranty when registered online within 90 days



How to Sign Up

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

 #swceINNOVATION

member connection

(Cyber hygiene continued from Page 1)

1. Enable multi-factor authentication. Also known as two-step verification, multi-factor authentication adds a second step when logging into an account (to prove you're really you), which greatly increases the security of the account.

This second step could include an extra PIN, answering an extra security question, a code received via email or a secure token. Regardless of the type of authentication, this additional step makes it twice as hard for cyber criminals to access your account. Not every account offers multi-factor authentication, but it's becoming increasingly popular and should be utilized when available.

2. Use strong passwords and a password manager. Remember, passwords are the "keys" to your personal home online. Your passwords should always be long, unique, and complex. Create passwords using at least 12 characters, never reuse passwords for multiple accounts, and use a combination of upper- and lower-case letters, numbers,

and special characters. If you have a lot of accounts, consider using a password manager to store them easily *and securely* in one place.

3. Update software. It may seem obvious, but regularly updating software is one of the easiest ways to keep your personal information secure. 28684

Most companies provide automatic updates and will send reminders so you can easily install the update. If you're not receiving automatic software updates, set a reminder to do so quarterly. Be aware that some cyber criminals will send fake updates; these typically appear as a pop-up window when visiting a website. Use good judgment and always think before you click.

4. Recognize and report phishing attacks. Don't take the bait when cyber criminals go phishing. The signs of a phishing attack can be subtle, so take the extra time to thoroughly inspect emails. Most phishing emails include offers that are too good to be true, an urgent or alarming tone, misspellings and poorly-crafted language, ambiguous

greetings, strange requests, or an email address that doesn't match the company it's coming from. Most platforms like Outlook, Gmail, and Mac Mail allow users to report phishing emails. If you suspect a phishing attempt, take an extra minute to report it.

Cyber criminals are here to stay, but when we all take a risk-based approach to our cyber behavior, we're creating a safer internet for all. Visit www.staysafeonline.org for additional cybersecurity tips.

#swceINNOVATION

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric does not sell the mailing addresses, phone numbers, or email addresses of our members.

Cooperatives handle the heat, even during the hottest times of the year

by David Saggau, Great River Energy (GRE) president and CEO

As the summer began, you may have heard news about a shortage of electricity in the Midwest or concerns about the stability of the electric system.

While it was true there was less surplus energy that we typically have, the Midwest electric system still had nearly 8% more electric generating capability than required to meet the expected demand.

In Minnesota, the situation is even better. All utilities in the state, including Great River Energy, have more electric generating capacity than required. As expected, the electric system performed reliably throughout the summer season, keeping members cool and comfortable even during prolonged heatwaves.

When service interruptions do occur, they are typically due to weather events resulting in physical problems with the system, and not a lack of planning for adequate supply. As the electric indus-



David Saggau

try continues to transition to more renewables and we face the impacts of more extreme weather events, Great River Energy is focused more and more on resiliency.

In emergency situations, the region's grid operator calls on additional power supply resources, imports energy from other regions and performs voluntary load reductions to manage the electric system. Temporary controlled manual load sheds, or periodic power outages, are used as a last resort to keep the system in balance.

The reliability of the electric system is paramount to electric cooperatives. Great River Energy and Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric operate and maintain an electric system that is dependable today and carefully planned to be resilient as we continue to make and use electricity in new ways.

Great River Energy is transitioning the way we generate electricity by reducing the use of fossil fuels and adding cost-effective renewable resources, such as wind energy. These resources require no fuel, which makes them environmentally responsible and economically advantageous. Because their

production depends on the weather, however, we must have a dependable backup plan to reliably meet the needs of our members.

We plan power supply resources 15 years in advance to ensure we have what we need to serve members. Furthermore, every spring the team at Great River Energy performs detailed maintenance on our fleet of natural gas and fuel oil powered "peaking" power plants in preparation for response to the peak needs of the system. These plants can produce electricity in a matter of minutes when needed.

In addition, GRE methodically designs, plans and operates a system of transmission lines that can handle high heat and elevated electricity demand. We also work with Steele-Waseca to reduce electricity use during strategic times to provide relief to the grid and ultimately save members money.

As a member of Steele-Waseca, you are served by Great River Energy's diverse and flexible portfolio of resources to ensure you have the energy you need, all year round.

#swceSERVICE