



the power of human connections

# sparks

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

a monthly newsletter from Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric

December 2022

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## calendar of events

### December

- 7 National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
- 21 First day of winter
- 25 Christmas Day
- 26 Christmas Day observed; **SWCE office is closed**

Merry Christmas

From our co-op family to yours, we wish you a joyous holiday season!



## Record retirement of capital credit equity approved by Steele-Waseca board of directors

The Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric board of directors, during their Oct. 26 meeting, approved the co-op's record-breaking retirement of \$1.89 million in capital credit equity allocated in 1996, 1997, 2021, and estate settlements for 2022. The previous record was \$1.694 million retired in 2021.

All current and former member-owners who received electric service from Steele-Waseca during the years listed above are eligible for the refund if electric sales exceeded power costs.

For convenience and to save on check processing and mailing costs, current member-owners eligible for this year's refund will have the amount of their equity applied as a credit on their Steele-Waseca bill received next month (December 2022). 1008713

All former member-owners eligible for a refund will have their equity mailed to them by check.

Capital credit equity comes from the cooperative's margins or profits. The co-op's margin each year is determined by subtracting operating expenses from operating revenue collected during the year.

Your equity is reserved for you, even if you move away from the area. That's why it is important for you to make sure Steele-Waseca always has your current

## Did You Know?

Electric cooperatives have retired \$19 billion to members since 1988 - \$1.5 billion in 2020 alone.

Because electric co-ops operate at cost, any excess revenues (called margins) are allocated and retired to members in the form of capital credits.

Source: National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation



address and phone number.

Until it's refunded to members, the equity is used to finance new construction and system improvements. Using members' equity helps Steele-Waseca provide electric service at a lower cost than if all construction funds were borrowed from other resources.

 #swceTRUST



## Thermostat Reminder

Your heating system works harder when the outdoor temp drops. Adjust your thermostat to the lowest comfortable setting.

 #swceSERVICE

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

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*

Website: [www.swce.coop](http://www.swce.coop)

Email: [info@swce.coop](mailto:info@swce.coop)



### Board of Directors

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

### Management

Syd Briggs . . . . . *General Manager*

### Division Managers

- Kim Wilson . . . . . *Member Services*
- Jon Stelter . . . . . *Finance*
- Dan Meier . . . . . *Operations*

### Office Hours

8:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m., Monday–Friday

### Operations Office Hours

8:00 a.m.–3:30 p.m., Monday–Friday

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

507-451-7340 or 800-526-3514

### Before calling to report an outage

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

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

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

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

**48-hour notice required for ALL  
 underground cable locations**

## manager connection

By Syd Briggs,  
 General Manager



You may have noticed on the front page of this month's *Sparks* newsletter, the Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric board of directors approved the retirement of \$1.89 million in capital credit equity allocated in 1996, 1997, 2021, and estate settlements in 2022.

Our average retirement, or refund, over the past 10 years has been \$1,213,161, which makes this year's refund \$676,839 more than the average.

The seventh cooperative principle is Concern for Community. Steele-Waseca carefully makes contributions each year to community organizations like United Way and food shelves, along with scholarships to a number of our graduating high school seniors. We have been diligent in maintaining a healthy equity ratio in recent years and were able to increase the refund for this year. We will also be able to maintain our great history of retiring similar amounts in years to come.

Every year Steele-Waseca receives questions from our member-owners regarding capital credit equity. For those who are new to a cooperative, or not familiar with how capital credit equity works, keep in mind that when you signed up to receive electric service from Steele-Waseca, you became a member of an electric co-op. 1075343

With investor-owned utilities returning a portion of any profits back to their shareholders, electric co-ops operate on an at-cost basis. This means Steele-Waseca allocates 100 percent of its margins or profits (revenue less expenses) to its members who purchased electricity during the year, and retires or pays back those margins at a future date to those very members.

Instead of returning the margins to people or companies who had little or nothing to do with the generation of those profits, or who probably don't even live in the same region or state that you do, Steele-Waseca returns margins to those who actually purchase and use our product. Steele-Waseca allocates and retires capital credits based on how much electricity you purchased during a year.

**Where does the money come from?** Member-owned, not-for-profit electric co-ops set rates to generate funds to pay operating costs, make payments on any loans, and provide an emergency reserve. At the end of each year, the co-op subtracts

operating expenses from operating revenue collected during the year. The balance is called an operating "margin."

**Can we get our retirement of capital credits sooner?** The board of directors has the responsibility of balancing the amount of equity with the cost of debt, and therefore, the amount of capital credit retirements each year. The higher the equity we maintain, the lower the debt, and the less we have retired in capital credits. However, the cost of our debt is one of the major components in our rates. Most co-ops attempt to maintain an equity-to-asset ratio between 30% and 50%; Steele-Waseca is at 47%. Our overall objective is to reward both past and current ratepayers with a balanced approach of retiring past and current capital credits each year, and maintaining the most manageable level of debt possible.

At Steele-Waseca, the board of directors make a decision in the fall of each year to retire capital credits. The co-op has retired over \$23.8 million in capital credits to its members since 1966.

**I did not have electric service from Steele-Waseca during 1996, 1997, or 2021. Will I get any retirement?** No. This year capital credit retirements are only being made to members who purchased electricity from Steele-Waseca in 1996, 1997, and/or 2021.

**How will the retirement of capital credit equity work?** Inactive or former members, who no longer purchase electricity from Steele-Waseca (but purchased electricity during the years being retired) will receive a check. Due to the expense involved with processing printed checks, current members eligible to receive capital credit equity will have that amount credited to their Steele-Waseca account on their bill coming in December 2022.

**What if I moved?** If you move or no longer have electric service with Steele-Waseca, it is important you inform the cooperative of your current address, so future retirements may be properly mailed to you. If you purchased electricity from Steele-Waseca during the years being retired, then you are entitled to a capital credit retirement, even if you move out of Steele-Waseca's service area. If Steele-Waseca has your current address, then the co-op will send your retirement check by mail.

If you have additional questions regarding your equity, please feel free to contact Steele-Waseca during regular business hours.

#swceTRUST

# Five ways to fight the winter chill and save energy

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

We all have our favorite season. Some people love crisp, cool weather and bundling up under a favorite blanket, while others prefer the warm temperatures summer brings and all fun outdoor activities that go with it.

But there's one thing we can all agree on: high winter bills are never fun. Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric is here to help you find ways to manage your home energy use and keep winter bills in check.

Here are five tips to help increase your home's energy efficiency this winter:

**1. Mind the thermostat.** This is one of the easiest ways to manage your home energy use. It is recommended to set your thermostat to 68 degrees (or lower) when you're home. When you're sleeping or away for an extended period of time, try setting it between

58 and 62 degrees; there's no need to heat your home when you're away or sleeping and less active. 26645

**2. Button up your home.** The Department of Energy estimates air leaks account for 24% to 40% of the energy used for heating and cooling a home. Caulking and weather stripping around windows and doors is another simple, cost-effective way to increase comfort and save energy. If you can feel drafts while standing near a window or door, it likely needs to be sealed.

**3. Use window coverings wisely.** Open blinds, drapes or other window coverings during the day to allow natural sunlight in to warm your home. Close them at night to keep the cold, drafty air out. If you feel cold air around windows, consider hanging curtains or

drapes in a thicker material; heavier window coverings can make a significant difference in blocking cold outdoor air.

**4. Consider your approach to appliance use.** When combined, appliances and electronics account for a significant chunk of home energy use, so assess how efficiently you're using them. For example, if you're running the dishwasher or clothes washer, only wash full loads. Look for electronic devices that consume energy even when they're not in use, like phone chargers or game consoles. Every little bit helps, so unplug them to save energy.

**5. Think outside the box.** If you're still feeling chilly at home, think of other ways to warm up—beyond dialing

*(Fighting winter chill continued on Page 7)*

**Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric**  
2411 West Bridge Street, PO Box 485, Owatonna, MN 55060  
507-451-7340 / 800-526-3514 • Fax: 507-448-4242 • [www.swce.org](http://www.swce.org)

**FREE 2023 Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric calendars are available at the co-op's office, 2411 W. Bridge St., Owatonna, while supplies last. You may pick them up during regular business hours. #swceAPPRECIATION**

## cookin' connection

### Nutty Snack

Diane Racek

Claremont

1 c. almonds  
4 Tbsp. sesame seeds  
1/2 c. sunflower seeds  
1/4 tsp. cinnamon  
Full package of figs or dates  
1 Tbsp. coconut oil  
2-4 Tbsp. water

Process ingredients in a food processor to a paste. Roll into balls and into coconut flakes.

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 October 2022. Learn more about community solar and The Sunna Project by visiting Steele-Waseca's website, [swce.coop](http://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.

## November issue of Sparks



**Numbers found:**  
Butch Ford  
Amanda/Sjon Volden  
**Numbers not found:**  
Thomas Polacek  
Russell/Lynn Koehler  
Scott Bock



## 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](http://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.

• **October temps** – The average high temperature for October was 61° F, while the average low was 37° F. This resulted in 500.5 Heating Degree Days (HDDs), and 3.5 Cooling Degree Days (CDDs). They compare to last year's average high of 63° F and average low of 44° F. This resulted in 370.5 HDDs and 20 CDDs.

• **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 [www.swce.coop](http://www.swce.coop). For more information or to receive a rebate request form, phone Cindy Butterfield at 446-4204 or 800-526-3514. 1031825

• **Steele-Waseca's tree service contractor** – Carr's Tree Service, Inc., is contracted to do SWCE's tree trimming. To report a tree concern, phone: **507-451-7340 / 800-526-3514**

STEELE COUNTY TIP LINE

**866-878-7964**

TO BE USED TO REPORT ANY CRIME OR SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY ANONYMOUSLY

COVERS ALL OF STEELE COUNTY INCLUDING THE CITIES OF:

OWATONNA ELLENDALE  
BLOOMING PRAIRIE MEDFORD

## health & safety connection

Keep Your Holidays

# MERRY & BRIGHT



Don't add stress to your holiday season. Knowing how to properly use and hang lights could prevent injury or fire.



Make sure your home's electrical system can handle the load.



Unplug lights or decorations before changing a bulb or other parts.



Do not use cords or plugs that are damaged, frayed or cracked.



Only use lights certified by a reputable testing lab.



In addition, consider LED lights when replacing old light strands. LEDs use 80 to 90% less energy than incandescent bulbs.

Learn more:

Safe  
Electricity.org

#swceLIFE+

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Blocked air vents force your heating system to work harder than necessary and increase pressure in your ductwork, which can cause cracks and leaks to form.

Make sure all air vents are unobstructed from furniture, drapes or other items to ensure sufficient circulation throughout your home. If necessary, purchase a vent extender, which can be placed over a vent to redirect air flow from underneath furniture.

Source: [energy.gov](https://www.energy.gov)

#swceINNOVATION



# ad connection

## give away

**QUEEN-SIZE 4" MATTRESS PAD**, vry gd cond. 363-6503.

**WOODEN SPOOLS @ SWCE**. 451-7340/Todd.

**FREE ONLINE CLASSIFIEDS**, you place & remove your own ad on SWCE's website, [swce.coop](http://swce.coop); these are separate from Sparks & will not appear in Sparks unless mailed, delivered, or emailed to SWCE.

## wanted

**FARMLAND TO RENT** in Fbo, Lonsdale, Montgomery area for crop year 2023. 413-3266.

**LUMBER MILLING SERVICES** for a large oak log, approx. 8' long, 3' diameter, it's heavy. 475-1743.

**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.

**FARMLAND TO RENT**, beginner farmer south of Owat. 676-5685.

**FORD DIESEL SKID STEER**. 330-1849.

**TO RENT COUNTRY HOME** around Owat., Waseca, Mdfd, Meriden area, will do lawn care & snow removal, pet friendly. 696-1007.

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

## for sale

**PET PORTER CARRIER**, large, exc. cond., \$30; **RED CEDAR POSTS**, new, 10"x7", \$30/each; **PORTABLE CANVAS FISH HOUSE**, older, may need work, \$25. 455-3881.

**ANTIQUES**: high chair, \$50; folding chair, \$25; large, old mirror, \$100; caned rocking chair, \$50. 456-7757.

**2011 POLARIS RUSH PRO-R SNOWMOBILE**, retro color, 5500 mi., \$6000; **2021 POLARIS INDY 550**, 671 mi., \$6800. 456-7754.

**2-ACRE WOODED/SECLUDED BUILDING SITE**. 210-5596.

**20' KEWANEE DISC** w/folding wings, \$1500; **12' BRILLION CHISEL PLOW**, 12 shanks, \$1500; **WHITE 508 PLOW**, 4 btm, \$2000. 304-0903.

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

## All area codes are 507 unless otherwise noted

**3 JERSEY HEIFERS** born 1st wk in May. 384-8091.

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

**2013 CASE IH 1220 PLANTER**, 8 row, 30" w/dry fert., \$22,000/obo; **1989 311 SMALL SQ. BALER** w/thrower, \$7500/obo. 456-4235.

**BUCKET & VAUGHN LOADER** for a 706-708 Int'l, gd cond. 475-0486.

**60 RDS 17 REM. FIREBALL 20 GR.**, \$95; **WINCHESTER 410 SHELL**, 3", 6 shot, \$30 a box; **45 COLT RELOADING 3-DIE SET**, new, \$30. 461-1191.

**DUMP CART**, \$4500; **JD DIESEL ENGINE**, runs gd in picker, have to take out, \$4500; **24' DEUTZ-ALLIS DIGGER**, \$2500. 456-1181.

**COOKIE WALK**, Sat., Dec. 10, 9 a.m. to noon, St. John Lutheran Church, 1301 Lincoln Ave., Owat., hundreds of cookies & Christmas goodies, most items \$5/dozen or \$3 per half dozen.

**WESTERN SNOWPLOW**, 7.5, off an '81-'87 Chevy/GMC w/(2) extra pumps, complete setup, \$800. 339-9168.

**OWAT. BLUE GRADUATION CAP & GOWN**, all you would need to get it the tassel, \$15. 390-5999.

**1964 FORD GRAIN TRUCK** w/hoist, Model 600, parked inside since 1990, \$1000/obo. 595-3912.

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

**TRANSFERRABLE BUILDABLE RIGHTS** in Rice County, Webster Twsp. 612-919-4130 for details.

**(2) BLK COCHIN BANTAM ROOSTERS**, 2022 spring hatch. 977-7869 or 952-564-0778.

**GROUND BEEF**, 1 lb. vacuum-sealed pkgs, \$5.25/lb. 210-4032.

**ALL-NATURAL SOAP**, nothing artificial, [www.dandelionnaturals.com](http://www.dandelionnaturals.com), Hayfield. 261-4992.

**LIVESTOCK GATES**, steel silver 5-tube gates, hardware incl., 50"x8"/\$70, 50"x12"/\$90. 612-247-5346.

**REG.-SIZE BED; FURNITURE** from the '50s: end table, & flower stand. 451-2687.

**MIXED GRASS HAY BALES**, 4x5. 451-5131.

**FARMALL SUPER H TRACTOR**, new wheels & tires on the rear. 254-8251.

**(2) TIRES**, LT 275/70R18, Firestone Transforce, 10 ply, more than half the tread left, 17,700 mi. on them, \$200 for the pair—firm. 491-4565.

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

**1996 DODGE RAM V10**, 3/4 ton, 4x4 long box w/ Hiniker plow, 1-yr-old battery, 118,000 mi., runs great, \$5000/obo. 420-3807.

**1998 SPARTAN 16' ROLLER BOAT TRAILER**, \$800/obo; **50-GAL. WATER HEATER; BOAT/RV STORAGE FOR RENT**. 475-2322.

**1946 FORD SEDAN**, minor engine gasket repair needed, great winter project, must see, \$20,000/obo. 332-0294.

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

**2008 FORD ECONOLINE E250 CARGO VAN**, 134,167 mi., \$8000. 402-9389.

**LAYING HENS**, 2-yr-old. 456-8973.

**ACORN CHAIR LIFT**, like new, \$1400. 475-4584.

**ARIENS ST824 WALK-BEHIND SNOWBLOWER**, \$250; **SEARS CRAFTSMAN LT1000 RIDING MOWER**, 42" cut w/bagger, \$200. 250-4429.

**IH SUPER MTA**, wide front, 3 point, pwr steering; **JD 3520 w/loader**. 461-2410.

**SPEED QUEEN WRINGER WASHER**, wrks gd, \$75/obo. 214-3029.

**16' BASS BOAT** w/110-hp Merc. motor & trlr, \$500; **MIRA-FOUNT FROST-FREE CATTLE WATERER**, \$150; **(2) TIRES**, 12.4x28, on A-C wheels, \$150; **8' SKID LOADER SNOW BUCKET**, \$600. 330-3945.

(For Sale ads continued on Page 7)

## travel

**THE NUTCRACKER FANTASY**, Dec. 17. Bus ride to the State Theater in Minneapolis. The matinee also includes dinner at the Porter Creek Hardwood Grill. \$159 per person.

**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.

**PANAMA CANAL**, Feb. 18-March 2, 2023. Round-trip air on Delta Airlines, 10-day cruise on the Caribbean Princess, visiting 7 ports of call, & more! Starting at \$3,599 per person with 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 **December 5** to ensure being printed in the January 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 February issue. 30319

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](mailto:sparks@swce.coop).

## ad connection

(For Sale ads continued from Page 6)

**ALFALFA, MIXED GRASS HAY**, sm. sq., no rain, hvy bales. 210-1158.

**FIREWOOD**, \$330/full cord; **POTATOES**, \$1/lb., Nfld area. 651-357-5092/Paul.

**DAIRY GOATS**, (2) April 2022 kids, Saanen & Sable/Saanen cross, commercial genetics, \$250-\$300 or \$500 for both. 456-3838.

**INT 300 UTILITY LOADER TRACTOR**, new front tires, gd rear tires w/chains, gd runner, gas, some extra parts, \$3500. 676-2802.

**125-GAL. SALTWATER FISH TANK**, includes pumps, filters, stand, 100 lbs of rock, & RO water filter. 612-867-9533.

**JD 16" BOY'S BIKE**, yellow & green; **HUFFY 26" BIKE**, 18 spd (both in great cond., \$60 for each). 363-2219.

**MONARCH WOODSTOVE**, furnace add-on type, \$100; (2) **CHIMNEYS**: 14' modular masonry; 12' Class A metal (best offer). 952-652-2933.

**ARIENS ST824 SNOWBLOWER**, 120V, elec. start, ready to go, \$235. 451-9614.

**MINI STORAGE UNITS**, Blmg Prairie. 456-2957.

(2) **DOWNHILL ROSSIGNOL SKIS**. 678-978-7444.

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

**DR DUAL-ACTION LOG SPLITTER**, Briggs & Stratton 900 engine in gd working condition, \$900/obo. 323-1566.

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.

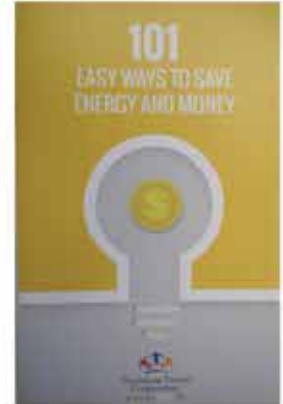
(Fighting winter chill continued from Page 3)

up the thermostat. Add layers of clothing, wear thick socks and bundle up under blankets. You can even add layers to your home! If you have hard-surface flooring, consider purchasing an area rug to block cold air that leaks in through the floor.

Winter months often bring some of the highest energy bills of the year. By being proactive about saving energy, you can increase the comfort of your home and reduce monthly bills. Visit Steele-Waseca's website at [swce.coop](http://swce.coop) for additional energy-saving tips.

#swceSERVICE

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric has energy-saving brochures (pictured right) from Touchstone Energy® in the front lobby of the office in Owatonna. They are free for members and may be picked up during regular business hours.



'TIS THE SEASON FOR ENERGY SAVINGS



The holiday season is one of the most energy-intensive times of the year, but that doesn't mean you should keep your twinkling, strobing and glittering decorations packed away. Instead, **use up to 90% less electricity** by switching from incandescent models to durable, longer-lasting LED holiday lighting. And now for a limited time, you can save 10%!

Save 10% on LED holiday lights at [energywisemnstore.com/holidaylights](http://energywisemnstore.com/holidaylights)



Offer valid Nov. 1 – Dec. 31, 2022.  
No coupon code necessary.  
Discount applied at checkout.  
Customer assumes responsibility for all sales tax. While supplies last.

ENERGY WISE MN

#swceINNOVATION

sparks • december 2022

## member connection

### Non-Discrimination Statement

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric is the recipient of Rural Development funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

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This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

## ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH

1301 Lincoln Avenue, Owatonna

# COOKIE WALK

Saturday, December 10, 2022

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.



Hundreds of Cookies  
& Christmas Goodies



All Delicious!!



Incredible Variety



Most items \$5.00/dozen  
or  
\$3.00 per half dozen



\$1.00 ea

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- safe
- dependable
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- hassle-free
- save time and postage

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