



the power of human connections

sparks

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

a monthly newsletter from **Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric** **September 2023**

inside connections

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- 8** Rooftop solar questions

calendar of events

September

- 4** Labor Day
SWCE office closed;
Final day of Minnesota State Fair
- 6-10** The Defeat of Jesse James Days, Northfield
- 9-10** Mantorville Marigold Days
- 11** Patriot Day
- 15** National POW/MIA Recognition Day
- 21** Steele County Ducks Unlimited Fall Bash, Owat.
- 23** First day of autumn

Olson pleased with line technician opportunity at Steele-Waseca

“My experience at the co-op so far has been good,” stated Apprentice Line Technician John Olson. “It’s been cool getting to see and do things from the co-op side.”



John Olson

John joined Steele-Waseca Co-operative Electric on June 1. Prior to

Steele-Waseca, John worked for a power line contractor for three years.

“I wanted to get a co-op job so I didn’t have to travel for work and could be home more,” stated John. “I saw this job come up and had heard good things about working here, so I decided to apply.” 29294

Olson is from Austin, Minnesota, where he graduated from high school in 2018. “I wanted to go into a trade and

(Olson continued on Page 3)



Rebate check presentation

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric Safety Coordinator/Member Service Representative Jack Schwab (pictured left), July 12, presented a \$41,300 rebate check to Absolute Air Plant Manager Randy Ritter for their investment of Energy Star® appliances, variable frequency drive motors, and LED lighting. Absolute Air in Faribault draws atmospheric air through an intake filter to remove any dust or debris. The air is moderately compressed and moved into a pre-cooling chamber at 40°F where H₂O and CO₂ are removed. The air is moved into air separators at -297°F, where the oxygen turns into a liquid, then argon and nitrogen gases are separated. Argon turns into liquid at -302°F and nitrogen turns into liquid at -320°F. The gases are piped in their liquid state to storage tanks for later shipment to partners and customers.



READY.

SET.

REGISTER.

9/19/2023

CO-OPS VOTE



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

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Website: www.swce.coop

Email: 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

You may recall in the August issue of Sparks of Steele-Waseca conducting tree trimming for reliability of service. You can also help with reliability and being safe if you're planning to dig to plant trees or any project that requires ground to be broken.

Digging without locating underground utilities could leave neighborhoods in the dark or cause severe electrical shock. Contacting Gopher State One Call (GSOC) before starting your project may allow you to avoid costly damages to underground facilities (the contact number is on the lower left column of this page). This is true regardless of how much area your project will cover or whether you consider the job to be large or small.

GSOC is not responsible for contacting locators to paint or flag your private facilities. Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric also doesn't locate private underground facilities that are the homeowner's responsibility. I wish to emphasize this point as the co-op has received calls in recent weeks to locate lines for projects involving digging.

Private underground facilities usually include any that serve outbuildings, hot tubs, security lighting, pools, and natural gas grills. Other private facilities include natural gas farm taps, private water systems, data communication lines, and invisible fences.

The contact information for a number of locating companies who will locate privately-owned underground facilities



on your property can be found in the industry directory at www.gopherstateonecall.org/homeowners, then click on "Private Facility Locators." This list is by no means an exhaustive list or a list of locators recommended by GSOC. For additional locators, consult a search engine, like Google, or refer to the Yellow Pages under "Utilities Underground - Locating." Remember, private locators will charge a fee for their services.

There are different colors of paint and flags that mark underground utilities, and each color is universal to what utility is buried: Red, electric; Orange, communications, telephone/CATV; Blue, potable water; Green, sewer/drainage; Yellow, gas/petroleum pipeline; Purple, reclaimed water; and White, premark site of intended excavation. 1005885

Even if you previously had utilities located by calling 811, it is best to call before every digging project. Underground utilities can shift, and it is important to be certain of where they are before ever putting a shovel in the ground.

No one should ever remove flags before work is completed for the safety of all digging in the area. If you come in contact with an underground utility, evacuate the area, call 911, then notify your utility provider.

#swceAPPRECIATION

5 STEPS FOR SAFE DIGGING

Working on an outdoor project? Always call 8-1-1 first, because you never know what's below. Here are five easy steps for safe digging:

Source: ca811.com

1. NOTIFY

Call 8-1-1 or make a request online two to three days before you start.



2. WAIT

Wait two to three days for a response to your request. Affected utilities will send a locator to mark any underground utility lines.



3. CONFIRM

Confirm that all affected utilities have responded by comparing the markers to the list of utilities the 8-1-1 call center notified.



4. RESPECT

Respect the markers provided by the affected utilities. They are your guide for the duration of your project.



5. DIG CAREFULLY

If you can't avoid digging near the markers (within 18-24 inches on all sides, depending on state laws), consider moving your project.



member connection



Steele-Waseca tours member businesses

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric board members, managers and employees, Aug. 3, toured BioPlastic Solutions in Ellendale, the Hope Creamery, and Absolute Air in Faribault to learn how their power needs are integral for their respective operations. The co-op's tour group in the above, lower right photo included (front row, left to right): General Manager Syd Briggs, Accountant Darlene Janda, Executive Assistant Jenifer Shimpach, Member Services Division Manager Kim Wilson, and District 2 Director Gerri Lienke. Middle row (left to right): Safety Coordinator/Member Service Representative Jack Schwab, Communications Specialist Randy Sobrack, Steele-Waseca Attorney Tricia Lancaster, District 9 Director Scott Carlson, Assistant Secretary/Treasurer PJ Duchene, Board President Gary Wilson, and Secretary/Treasurer Ron Sommers. Back row (left to right): Vice President Rodney Krell, Master Electrician Joel Dulas, Finance Division Manager Jon Stelter, District 4 Director Dennis Ringhofer, and District 7 Director John Beal. In the above left photo, BioPlastic Solutions President and CEO Gary Noble (standing front left) listens to a question from Steele-Waseca General Manager Syd Briggs (pictured far right). Hope Creamery's Buttermaker Hudson Mrotz (facing group far left) explains the process of making butter at their facility. In the above, lower left photo, Absolute Air's Michael Kellner (pictured far left) explains how their outdoor equipment stores the liquid component of their gases produced at their plant. #swceGROWTH

Great River Energy joins nationwide electric vehicle initiative

Courtesy: Great River Energy (GRE)

A collaborative of 500 utilities, vehicle manufacturers, charging providers, federal agencies, and other organizations are working to align themselves on important issues ahead of the rapid deployment of electric vehicles (EVs) on U.S. roadways.

Great River Energy is one of the founding utility partners of EVs2Scale,

a three-year initiative led by the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) and will add an electric cooperative voice to discussions among critical stakeholders as EV goals increasingly target 50% market share by 2030.

A report released earlier this year by the North American Electric Reliability Corporation notes a dramatic increase

in demand to support this growth of EVs "will challenge the electric power system in many ways." EPRI estimates there will be about 40 million EVs and trucks on the nation's roads by 2030.


This presents several challenges for utilities and system operators as they prepare all the services needed to sup-

(Electric vehicles continued on Page 7)

(Olson continued from Page 1)

being a power line man sparked an interest so I gave it a shot and enjoyed it," wrote John. He went to Minnesota West in Jackson where he earned his A.A.S. (Associate of Applied Science) degree in power line technology. 34234

John is presently living in Austin. His hobbies outside of work include hunting, fishing, watching football, and spending time with friends and family.

Steele-Waseca is pleased with having John in the co-op's family of employees and introducing him to the membership.  #swceLIFE+

8-Family Rummage Sale

Fri., Oct. 6, Noon to 7; and Sat., Oct. 7, 9 to 1
1546 58th St. SW, Owatonna

Proceeds benefit Friends of Rice Lake State Park for improvement of hiking/biking trails.

Featured items: clothing, gardening, lawn/yard care, tools, framed art, pet items, camping, and cabin supplies, etc.

To donate items, call 507-363-1710.

cookin' connection

Pizza Hot Dish

Shelley Viktora

Ellendale

1 pkg. macaroni noodles (fix as directed on pkg.)
1 tsp. milk
1 lb. hamburger
1 can pizza sauce (any kind)
salt and pepper for taste
1 tsp. butter
onion
mozzarella cheese

After boiling macaroni noodles, drain, and add milk and butter. Put on low heat and stir for three minutes. Put in bottom of cake pan (greased with butter). For the topping: brown hamburger to 1/2 lb. with onion. Put on top of noodles, then add pizza sauce. Salt and pepper a little, and put on top of hamburger. Add mozzarella cheese on top, and bake 350° for about a half hour.

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 58 kWh credit per panel on this month's statement for energy generated during July 2023. 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.

August issue of Sparks



Numbers found:
John Jr. & Suzanne Cajacob
Numbers not found:
Rodney Gardner
Hope & Ben Lageson
Sheri Quamme
Adam Wacholz



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.

• **July temps** – The average high temperature for July was 81° F, while the average low was 57° F. This resulted in 146.5 Cooling Degree Days (CDDs), and 29.5 Heating Degree Days (HDDs). They compare to last year's average high of 82° F and average low of 62° F. This resulted in 226 CDDs and 4 HDDs.

• **ENERGY STAR® Rebates** – In 2023, 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. For more information or to receive a rebate request form, phone Cindy Butterfield at 446-4204 or 800-526-3514.

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

507-451-7340 / 800-526-3514

STEELE COUNTY TIP LINE

866-878-7964

TO BE USED TO REPORT ANY CRIME OR SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY ANONYMOUSLY

COVERS ALL OF STEELE COUNTY INCLUDING THE CITIES OF:

OWATONNA ELLENDALE
BLOOMING PRAIRIE MEDFORD

health & safety connection



Don't TOY with your SAFETY

When you are playing outdoors, keep a safe distance from power lines, substations and other equipment your electric co-op uses to send electricity to your home.



Flying remote controlled toys are a great way to have fun, but accidentally making contact with a power line or other electrical equipment can be dangerous and in some cases, even deadly.

- Never fly kites, or remote controlled toys near power lines.
- Stay away from power lines, meters, transformers and electrical boxes.
- Never climb trees near power lines.
- If you get something stuck in a power line, call your electric co-op.
- Never touch or go near a downed power line.

Are you covered if your electronics sustain damage after an outage?

A power outage or power surge—whether triggered by a storm, lightning, trees, animals, or vehicles hitting power poles—can damage computer equipment, TVs, and other appliances in your home. These events are all out of Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's control and the co-op does not compensate for any damaged equipment.

However, most homeowner's insurance policies cover losses from power interruptions caused by lightning, windstorms, and other such weather. Make sure you're familiar with your policy and what is covered. Call your agent if you're not sure about your specific coverage and/or deductible.

You can help protect your own equipment by unplugging them during a power outage and by installing surge protection. Unfortunately, surge protectors will not save you from a low voltage event, or brownout. Dimming lights in your residence are a sign you are experiencing a brownout, the voltage goes down, but the amperage goes up. This potentially can cause appliances with motors, like refrigerators, freezers, and air conditioners that do not have thermal protection to eventually overheat.

If you notice lights dimming or electronics cycling on and off, unplug any sensitive devices immediately to limit the strain they sustain from sagging voltage. By reducing power consumption, you will contribute to ending the brownout due to less usage on the electric grid. 1066560

Under Steele-Waseca's terms and conditions application for membership and electric service, it states, "The Cooperative will use reasonable diligence to provide and maintain uninterrupted service to its members. In cases of cessation, deficiency, variation in voltage, or any failure or reversal of the service resulting from acts of God, public enemies, vandalism, accidents, strikes, riots, wars, repairs, order of court, or other acts reasonably beyond the control of the Cooperative, the Cooperative will not be liable for damages, direct or consequential, resulting from such interruption or failure."

During a power outage, you are encouraged to keep a small lamp or nightlight plugged in and turned on in order to know when power is restored. ^{SWCE}

7 CAMPUS SAFETY TIPS



Every College Student Should Know

Relay these safety tips to your young adults who are about to hit campus for the first time or return for another year.

1. Do not overload electrical outlets, power strips or extension cords. Use power strips with an overcurrent protector.
2. Be aware of your surroundings, especially when listening to music or texting.
3. Unplug small appliances when not in use and all appliances when away for extended periods.
4. This tip still holds true: never walk alone at night.
5. Avoid using generic cubes or cords. They could overheat, shock or burn you.
6. Locate the emergency call buttons or phones across campus in case of an emergency.
7. Do not put your cell phone on or under your pillow or bedding. It could overheat or catch fire.



Safe Electricity.org®

ad connection

give away

LARGE BOULDERS as a lawn ornament, you pick up & haul, I have (2), each one is about 3' or so in diameter, each weighs about 1000 lbs. 456-9546.

WOODEN SPOOLS at SWCE. 451-7340/Todd.

PIANO, Baldwin Upright Compact, 58" length x 25" width x 36" height, Waseca. 381-3462 or 304-5154.

FIELD ROCK. 334-7756 or 581-3901.

STACK OF OLD PALLETS, 4'x5'. 390-5222.

(4) **TABBY KITTENS** w/blue eyes. 213-8237.

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

SMALL ROCKING CHAIR OR GLIDER ROCKER for 1st Luth. Church, Ellendale. 456-2694/Michelle.

FIREWOOD near NR golf course, drop off or will consider pickup if nearby. Text 491-4709 for info.

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

USED/WASTE OIL, 200-gal. minimum. 420-7429.

OLD COINS OR STAMPS, book value pricing paid. 676-0970 for information.

HOME HEALTH AIDE, 2 or 3 days w/flex. hrs, pay negotiable. 384-8789/Patty or 384-7439/Kathy.

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

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

RETIRED NURSE LOOKING TO ASSIST AN ELDERLY COUPLE OR PERSON W/HOME CARE in the Hope/Ellendale area. 330-4125.

FORD SKID STEER, diesel. 330-1849.

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

'50s to '60s **CHEV. CAR TO RESTORE**. 390-5222.

PINBALL MACH., any age or cond. 612-327-0255.

Sparks Free Classified Ad Form for all SWCE Members

Ads need to be received in our office by **Sept. 5** to ensure being printed in the October **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 November 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.

All area codes are 507 unless otherwise noted

for sale

2013 BISON STRATUS 4-HORSE TRAILER w/living qtrs; **FARRIER SERVICE**. 651-260-9225.

JD ROUND BALER, make 600-800 lb. bales; **NH 479 HAYBINE** & extra parts for a 488 & 479; **JD WHL RAKE; HAY CONVEYOR**, new chain w/elec. motor; **BARN LUMBER & STEEL**. 783-9240/lv. msg.

USED CANNING JARS, quart & pint sizes, no lids. 451-9533.

POP-UP CHAIR BLIND; ICE FISHING PORTABLE, 2-man w/tow bar & cover; **EUROPEAN MOUNTS, SNARES, 330, FOOT HOLDS; LADDER STANDS; (2) YOUTH STRAIGHT BOWS**. 612-805-8546.

WEBER TRAVELER GAS GRILL, like new; **REESE 18,000# 5TH WHEEL HITCH**, fits Ford F-350 factory pucks. 213-6582.

(4) **TIRES**, 265/70R16, 8/32 tread, \$200/obo. 319-7782.

BEEF STICKS, JERKY, SUMMER SAUSAGE, CUTS, HAMBURGER; WHOLE CHICKENS (pasture raised). 210-4407.

MINI STORAGE UNITS, Blmg Prairie. 456-2957.

2005 COUNTRY CLIPPER JAZEE 2 LAWN MOWER, 966 hrs, 48" deck, hydrostatic transmission, 20 hp Kohler gas, zero turn, joystick steering, extra belts, vry gd cond., \$1200. 469-1723.

REGISTERED YEARLING PERCENTAGE BOER BUCK, traditional buck w/dapple genetics in his background, \$500. 451-2004 or 456-1522.

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

(2) **MANURE SPREADERS**, (1) is an Oliver brand, \$100; the other is an unknown brand, \$200; **HORSE TREADMILL**, needs work, \$1000; **5' KING KUTTER FINISHING MOWER**, \$800. 202-6287.

GRAVITY BOX, gd cond. 456-4807.

GRAVEL TRUCK AVAILABLE FOR ALL YOUR DELIVERY NEEDS: rock, gravel, dirt, etc., 15.5-ton capacity. 456-7774.

1997 CHEVY BLAZER, 4 door, V6 auto, 4WD, newer tires, 177,690 mi. w/110,000 on motor, \$2500/obo. 317-2824.

BOAT & PONTOON STORAGE, Millersburg area. 612-423-3816.

RENTAL, Izaak Walton League Bldg., 4 mi. south of Owat., seats 100, full kitchen, grill, Wi-Fi, \$150. 451-7946.

USED CONCRETE STEP; 24V BATTERY WHEEL-CHAIR. 455-0900.

STEEL DESK, 36"x60", 6 drawers, \$25. 390-5222.

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

LATHAM RASPBERRY PLANTS, you dig them, \$1.50/each; (5) **COOPER LIFELINE GLS TIRES** w/ rims, 185-70-14, gd cond., \$75 for all. 663-1275 or 581-2301.

FISHER-PRICE SPACE SAVER HIGH CHAIR, exc. cond., like new, \$30. 475-3556.

FRONTIER MANURE SPREADER, 1/2 bu. ground drive, pull w/ATV or lawn mower, hardly used. 612-418-4375.

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

2007 ALUMACRAFT 16.5' BOAT w/60-hp Yamaha 4-stroke motor, EZ trailer, (2) fish finders, trolling motor, many extras. 456-7542.

WOOD UTILITY TRAILER, 9'6"x5'4" inside space, 15" wood sides, 14" auto tires, \$400/obo. 451-9614.

HUNTING BLINDS, weather/rodent proof, insulated & more. 330-2452.

70' NH BALE CARRIER; STEEL ROOFING. 334-7756 or 581-3901.

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.

FRANKLIN F-5 CATTLE WATERER w/2 new spare heating elements, \$500; **PLASTIC GRAIN HOPPER** w/alum. extensions for 6 or 8" auger, \$125. 465-8566.

(For Sale ads continued on Page 7)

travel

HOLIDAY BRANSON, Nov. 7-11 or Nov. 14-18. 4-nights lodging, 8 meals, The Haygoods, Dutton Family Christmas Show, Clay Cooper's Country Christmas, & more! \$1,099 pp w/2 per room.

CARIBBEAN CRUISE, Jan. 25-Feb. 6, 2024. Roundtrip Delta Air from Mpls to Ft Lauderdale, 7-day cruise on Caribbean Princess, St Kitts, Antigua, St Maarten, & more! \$4,199 pp w/2 per room.

NEW ORLEANS, LA., April 13-21, 2024. Deluxe motor coach, 8 nights accommodations, 14 meals, visit historic French Qtr, Mardi Gras World, Louisiana Plantation & more! \$1,599 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.

ad connection

(For Sale ads continued from Page 6)

FARM-THEMED LEARNING & EVENT CENTER, open Fri. to Sun., Nfld, corn maze now open, windywillowfarmadventure.com, 581-9248.

1994 INT 4900 TRUCK w/freezer box, current DOT, \$8000. 334-7177.

BOAT/RV STORAGE FOR RENT. 475-2322.

RELIANCE PORTABLE GENERATOR PWR TRANSFER KIT, for generator w/output up to 7500W, \$150/obo. 334-5412.

PYGMY GOATS, babies & adult females. 475-1468.

INDOOR SEASONAL STORAGE FOR CARS/TRAILERS/BOATS/RVs, 6-mth term, located 10 min. SE of Fbo, \$17 per linear ft for concrete, & \$15 per linear ft for gravel. 210-4532.

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

55-GAL. PLASTIC & STEEL BARRELS w/covers, \$5-\$15; **220-GAL. POLY TANK** w/valve in forklift frame, \$75. 421-2521.

HOUSE CLEANING: bdrms, bathrooms, kitchens, etc. 461-9422.

DOGHOUSE, large, steel sided, \$50; **BASKETBALL STAND**, \$40; **30' LADDER**, missing motor, \$500/obo. 491-2667.

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

2013 DODGE CREW CARAVAN, red, 6 cyl., (1) owner, stow 'n go seats, perfect cond., 215,000 mi., \$8000. 334-6362.

2.5-ACRE BLDG SITE, 8 mi. west of Fbo, \$210,000. 651-248-6044.

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

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

(2) FIRESTONE TRANSFORCE AT TIRES, LT 275/70R18, came off 3/4 diesel Ram, 10 ply, 17,000 mi. on them, lots of tread left, \$300 for pair. 491-4565.

JVS-160 LAARS MINI-THERM BOILER, new, LP, gd standby for OWB, 85% eff., \$1000. 838-0002.

2013 FOUR WINDS HURRICANE RV CAMPER, 32', (2) slide outs, travel south in winter. 651-206-2638 or 451-9445.

AC WD-45 TRACTOR, SNOW BUCKET. 334-9583.

NI 324 CORN PICKER, 2 row; **10' GRAIN DRILL** (all in gd shape). 210-2048.

HANDY M/C LIFT W/DROPOUT; DJI DRONE MAVIC AIR. 330-0957.

40" TV, \$75. 213-7978.

TREK 420 ROAD BIKE, 21 spd, 700x25c, \$100; **TREK 700 MULTITRACK**, 700x35c, 21 spd, men's, \$100. 330-3178.

HAY, 4x5 round bales; **LAST YR'S ROUND BALES**, 4x5, \$45. 390-0600 or 676-6094.

(2) FARMALL H, runs & drives, \$1200 & \$1500 respectively; **81 M-H**, runs & drives, \$750; **22 M-H**, runs & drives, \$750. 456-1181.

CABELA'S INSULATED HUNTING BOOTS, size 14, waterproof, like new, \$50; **PET CARRIER**, large, exc. cond., \$35; **FLARE BOX**, hyd. lift, stored inside, treated extensions, exc. cond., \$575. 455-3881.

IH 4000 SWATHER; GEHL 1865 RD BALER; "95" CADILLAC DEVILLE; "98" POLARIS SNOWMOBILE & TRAILER. 684-3136.

CATERPILLAR D4D BULLDOZER, elec. start, exc. shape, \$12,000; **NH 7' SICKLE HAY MOWER**, \$500; **NH 256 HAY RAKE**, \$1200. 330-3945.

16' BOAT w/trailer, 25-hp Mercury motor, trolling motor, elec. winch, \$1800. 475-2928.

Ads need to be received in the Steele-Waseca office by Tuesday, Sept. 5, to ensure being published in the October 2023 Sparks newsletter.

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric (SWCE) assumes no liability for the content of, or reply to, any item posted. The party posting any advertisement assumes complete liability for the content of, and all replies to, any advertisement and for any claims against SWCE as a result thereof, and agrees to indemnify and hold SWCE harmless from all costs, expenses, liabilities and damages resulting from, or caused by, any advertisement or reply thereto.



A BRIGHT WAY TO SAVE.

Enjoy 30% off all specialty LED bulbs, July 1 through August 31!

ENERGY STAR® certified specialty LED bulbs use up to 80% less energy and last up to 22 times longer than incandescent bulbs, which means you'll save on both energy and replacement costs. LED bulbs are also great for both indoor and outdoor fixtures, since they work consistently despite temperature or humidity changes.

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Make the upgrade today and take 30% off, while supplies last!

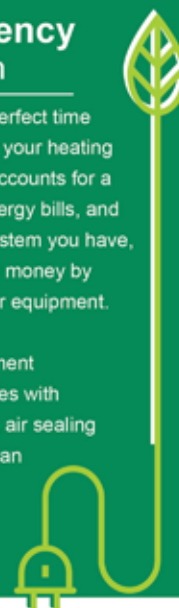
Visit energywisemnstore.com

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Did you know fall is the perfect time to schedule a tune-up for your heating system? Home heating accounts for a large portion of winter energy bills, and no matter what kind of system you have, you can save energy and money by regularly maintaining your equipment.

Combining proper equipment maintenance and upgrades with recommended insulation, air sealing and thermostat settings can save about 30% on your energy bills.

Source: Dept. of Energy



(Electric vehicles continued from Page 3)

port this transition—including charger installations and grid interconnections for consumers/fleets—while maintaining the highest level of reliability and resilience on the grid.

EVs2Scale was designed to address these challenges and, in doing so, contribute key new learnings such as: costs, lead times and workforce requirements

to support 2030 goals; electric transportation programs for underserved communities; and requirements to operate and maintain highly reliable public EV chargers.

“By participating in this initiative, Great River Energy can contribute a cooperative utility perspective that keeps rural communities—like those

served by our 27 member-owner cooperatives—in the conversation as these topics are addressed,” said Rodney DeFouw, member electrification strategist at Great River Energy.

Through its three-year approach, EVs2Scale intends to create the following outcomes:

(Electric vehicles continued on Page 8)

Questions to consider before installing rooftop solar

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

“Free energy from the sun and lower electric bills...Where do I sign up?”

The benefits of installing rooftop solar panels may seem like a no-brainer, but the reality is, not every home (and homeowner’s situation) is always right for solar.

There are several factors to consider before pulling the trigger on a rooftop solar system, like determining if your home will receive enough sun to achieve your goals, finding the right contractor, negotiating contracts and other important details.

Investing in solar for your home is a major decision. If you’re considering rooftop solar, or other solar setup, consult with the operations division at Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric.

Here are eight questions to consider before installing rooftop solar panels:

1. What are my goals? If your primary goal is to save money on electric bills, you may be able to achieve this through an energy audit program, which can identify areas of the home for maximum energy savings.

If your main goal is to use renewable energy and help the environment, consider signing up for Steele-Waseca’s SUNNA community solar program. You can help power renewable energy, without having to invest and maintain a home system.

2. Is my roof suitable for solar? Your roof should be in good condition before installing solar panels. If your roof is old and in poor shape, it may need to be replaced before panels can be mounted. Additionally, your roof should receive a lot of sun to make the most of a rooftop system. Consider how much sun (and shade) the roof receives and if any trees will need to be removed. Solar panels perform best when facing south, so keep this in mind as you think about

where the panels will be mounted.

3. How long will I own the home? If you’re considering rooftop solar, you’re likely planning to stay in the home for several years. But if you plan to sell the home at some point down the road, consider that not all potential buyers will want to maintain a rooftop solar system. If you enter a contract to lease the system, carefully review the terms and what those mean if you decide to sell the property.

4. Lease or purchase? Purchasing a rooftop solar system outright is expensive, which is why many homeowners opt to lease their solar panels. However, federal tax credits can help cover some of the costs for a new system, up to 30%. Regardless of how you decide to finance the solar system, make sure you get several quotes from qualified contractors.

Speaking of contractors, there are several factors you’ll want to discuss with them upfront.

5. Can the contractor provide up-to-date documentation? It may seem obvious but be sure to request proof and documentation of the contractor’s licensing, permitting and other credentials. Comb through company reviews, check the contractor’s status with Better Business Bureau, etc.—do your homework on the front end before signing a contract.

6. Does the contract seem reasonable and fair? If you decide to hire a contractor to install rooftop solar, carefully read the fine print of the contract. Do the system performance calculations seem realistic? Does the project timeframe sound reasonable? Negotiate the contract terms to fit your goals and needs.

7. Who will maintain the solar panels? Determining who is responsible



If you decide to install solar panels, finding a licensed, qualified contractor for the job is extremely important. (Photo Source: Bill Mead, Unsplash)

for maintaining the solar panels will depend on who owns the system. If you lease the system from a solar installer, it may be their responsibility. Periodically, solar panels need to be cleaned as dirt and debris can impact panel productivity. Parts may also need to be replaced, so it’s important to know who will take on these responsibilities.

8. How will I work with Steele-Waseca? Finally, but equally important, you should contact Steele-Waseca if you decide to install solar. The system must be connected to the electric grid, so you’ll need to sign an interconnection agreement. The co-op can walk you through the steps, including how our rates and fees work. 1097512

For many homeowners, solar panels are a great way to help the environment and save on electric bills—but there are many factors to consider before diving in and installing a system.

As with any major home project, do plenty of research upfront, and contact Steele-Waseca if you have questions or decide to move forward with installation.

We’re your local energy cooperative and can serve as a helpful resource throughout the process.

 #swceINNOVATION

(Electric vehicles continued from Page 7)

- Validated data and best practices to share with member-owner cooperatives, regulators and other stakeholders to describe grid needs for EVs at scale and be better equipped to execute planning for wide-scale electrification with critical stakeholders.

- Better support for EV drivers, fleet operators and underserved communities enabled by programs developed using

the initiative’s research and knowledge.

- Improved carbon reduction, air quality and human health while also being cost-effective, equitable and just in the transition.

The initiative was recently highlighted by the White House as part of President Joe Biden’s Investing in America agenda to spur domestic manufacturing, strengthen supply chains,

boost U.S. competitiveness and create good-paying jobs. EVs2Scale was recognized for its mission to accelerate the EV transition.

 #swceCOOPERATION