



the power of human connections

sparks

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

a monthly newsletter from Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric

January 2024

\$

Capital Credit Refund

Please check this month's billing statement for your 2023 capital credit refund. If you have any questions regarding your refund, please call Hlou Yang at Steele-Waseca during regular business hours.

\$



inside connections

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calendar of events

January

- 1 New Year's Day
SWCE office is closed
- 15 Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- 24 National Compliment Day

Steele-Waseca installs two electric vehicle chargers

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric in November completed the installation of two electric vehicle (EV) charging stations (four plug-ins in total) located in the front entrance parking lot at its headquarters in Owatonna (see adjacent photo).

Steele-Waseca Operations Engineer Steve Nordahl lead the project and is pleased the co-op can offer electric vehicle charging. The chargers are available to anyone's EV and charging rates are published on PlugShare, a website and smartphone app that shows where EV owners can charge their vehicles. Steele-Waseca's location is found at: <https://www.plugshare.com/location/576499>.

"Steele-Waseca has wanted to install chargers for quite some time," said Nordahl. "The cost of these DC chargers was relatively low. With this we could install DC chargers at a fair cost and not have to install Level 2 chargers." Level 2 chargers are slower than DC chargers and are more commonly found at



resident's home garages for overnight charging.

As for the time required to charge an electric vehicle, Nordahl stated, "It depends on the car as each car takes the charge at it's own rate." Steele-Waseca's charge at a rate of 40 kW DC, which equates to 30-40 miles per 15 minutes. The chargers do not have the Tesla connector, but Steele-Waseca has one available at the front desk to borrow. Simply leave your license as a deposit during business hours. 1091210

A unique aspect of Steele-Waseca's chargers, compared to many other charging sites is where the power is sourced. The co-op's solar garden

(EV chargers continued on Page 3)

Budget, rates set for '24 by wholesale provider Great River Energy

The board of directors for Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's wholesale power provider recently met to determine its budget and wholesale electric rates for 2024.

Great River Energy's (GRE's) average 2024 wholesale rate is projected to increase by an average of 2.2% from the 2023 budgeted rate.

"Our rates remain nearly 20% below the regional weighted cost of wholesale electricity, though we are certainly experiencing cost pressures due to supply chain issues and inflation," said GRE Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Michelle Strobel.

Many of the local distribution cooperatives that purchase wholesale electricity from Great River Energy continue to face cost pressures due to supply shortages and inflation.

"Thoughtful budgeting is critical to



serving our member-owners with energy that is safe, reliable, environmentally responsible and affordable," said Strobel.

Great River Energy is budgeting for revenue and expenses of approximately \$1 billion in 2024. As a not-for-profit cooperative, GRE collects just enough revenue to cover its costs, with a small margin to operate the business. All margins are returned to the membership over the long term.

 #swceCOOPERATION

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This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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



Board of Directors

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- Geraldine Lienke District 2
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- Scott Carlson District 9

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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*



Ringing in a new year sparks a sense of renewed hope and optimism about

the future.

As the general manager of Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric, for me, it's a time to reflect on where we are and where we're going. At the heart of this reflection, I think about ways we can better serve you, the members of the co-op.

Our team at Steele-Waseca is always looking ahead, exploring ways to innovate and utilize new technologies to improve our services. As our nation increasingly relies on electricity to power the economy, keeping the lights on has never been more important. We're committed to powering—and empowering—our community at a cost local families and businesses can afford.

So how are we working to ensure reliable and affordable power while adapting to a changing energy landscape and our community's evolving needs?

One critical component of reliable power is the mix of energy resources used to generate the electricity that keeps the lights on across Steele-Waseca's service area. You may not realize it, but Steele-Waseca doesn't generate electricity. Instead, we purchase it from our energy provider, Great River Energy (GRE), and from there, we distribute it to homes and businesses throughout our community. Our current energy resources are displayed on the graphic below. 32211

We're increasingly using more elec-

tricity generated from renewable energy sources, but we still depend on a diverse energy mix to ensure reliable power that's available to our members whenever they need it.

In addition to managing a reliable energy mix, Steele-Waseca is using technology to enhance our local grid, limit service disruptions and improve outage response times.

Advanced metering technology, also known as AMI, enables two-way communication between the co-op and consumers. In the event of a power outage, AMI helps pinpoint the exact location of the outage and can even analyze damaged or tampered meters. AMI helps Steele-Waseca save money with real-time data, and ultimately improves power reliability for our entire community.

Proactive tree trimming is another way we limit service disruptions. Scheduled trimming keeps power lines clear from overgrown limbs that are likely to fall.

As technology advancements become more accessible, we anticipate using advanced mapping software to better maintain the environment while providing more reliable service.

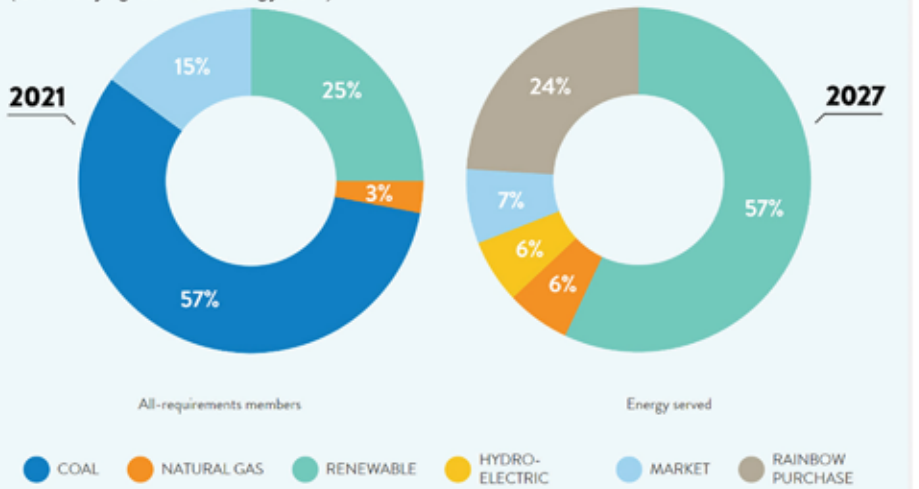
One of the best methods for improving our services to you is monitoring trends and leading practices from other electric co-ops in Minnesota and across the country. Learning from other co-ops is one of the many benefits of the cooperative business model because for us, it's about cooperation, not competition.

As we turn our focus to 2024, Steele-Waseca will continue working to provide the reliable, affordable electricity you expect and deserve—for today and tomorrow.

#swceSERVICE



(Courtesy: greatriverenergy.com)



member connection

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric awarding \$1,000 scholarships to qualified high school graduates in 2024

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric is providing \$1,000 scholarships to qualified high school seniors graduating in 2024. 22270

The Steele-Waseca board of directors last

year voted to increase the scholarship amount for eligible high school graduates. One scholarship will be presented to each participating school. Scholarship eligibility required by Steele-Wase-



ca includes:

1. Applicants must currently be high school seniors, who will be continuing their education on a full-time basis at a two- or four-year technical school or college.

2. Applicants must be dependents of a Steele-Waseca member.

Each participating school is responsible for administering any other eligibility requirements, the selection of their school's Steele-Waseca scholarship recipient, and the disbursement of schol-

arship dollars from Steele-Waseca.

All eligible high school seniors should contact their guidance counselor or scholarship administrator for more information.

In 2023, Steele-Waseca awarded \$1,000 scholarships to 16 high school senior graduates. The co-op's scholarship program has awarded \$214,250 in scholarships since the program was established in 1954. A portion of the funds to support these scholarships come from unclaimed capital credit equity. *SWCE*

 #swceLIFE+

New study reveals Minnesota electric cooperatives contribute nearly \$20 billion to the state's economy

by Ryan Johnson, Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA)

A newly released economic impact analysis reveals the substantial contributions electric cooperatives make to Minnesota's economy.

Between 2018 and 2022, electric cooperatives injected a staggering \$19.6 billion into Minnesota's economy, fortifying the state's financial landscape and supporting an average of 20,800 jobs each year.

In a new study, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) and the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation partnered with Strategen Consulting to unveil the remarkable economic impact of electric cooperatives in Minnesota and across the nation.

"This study's findings underscore the indispensable role electric cooperatives play in our state's economic vitality," said Darrick Moe, CEO of the Minnesota Rural Electric Association. "We are proud to power our communities,

provide meaningful careers and give back to our neighborhoods. As consumer-owned non-profits, our focus is on helping bring a brighter, more prosperous future to the places we call home."

The nationwide survey analyzed economic data between 2018 and 2022. The analysis found electric cooperatives support nearly 623,000 jobs in the United States with \$51 billion in pay and benefits each year. Furthermore, electric cooperatives contributed a staggering \$554 billion to U.S. gross domestic product over the five-year period.

The study was released in October to coincide with National Cooperative Month, which celebrates the successes of the cooperative governance model. Minnesota was the first state to declare an official Co-op month proclamation in 1948 and U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Orville Freeman, a former Minnesota governor, first recognized the holiday

nationally in 1964.

Some highlights of the Minnesota cooperatives economic impact analysis include:

- \$27.3 billion in capital investments.
- \$377 million in capital credits paid to member-owners.
- \$9.2 billion in labor income.
- \$1.4 billion in federal taxes.
- \$3.8 billion in state and local taxes.

The study also determined that across the nation, electric cooperatives bring about \$75 billion in value annually to their local counties in which they serve.

"This economic impact study makes it clear that cooperatives boost the economic prosperity of their local communities, while electrifying the countryside," said Moe.

 #swceGROWTH

(EV chargers continued from Page 1)

(complete with pollinator habitat) supplies the two DC chargers during daytime hours. "Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric also sees this as a great way to provide renewable energy to the car market for CO2 reduction," said Nordahl. Otherwise, it is from Steele-Waseca's distribution grid.

Steele-Waseca funded part of the installation with grants from their whole-

(EV chargers continued on Page 7)



Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric Master Electrician Joel Dulas (pictured far left, obstructed) conducts electrical work, Oct. 2, for the chargers prior to transformer installation.

Chocolate Muffins

Janet Meyer

Janesville

- 1 chocolate fudge cake mix
- 1 c. hot water
- 1 c. vegetable oil
- 1 pkg. instant chocolate fudge pudding
- 4 eggs (add one at a time)
- 1 c. miniature chocolate chips
- 1 c. chopped nuts

Combine ingredients and mix together. Bake at 350° for 20-25 minutes. Makes 18-20 muffins. Frost.

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 26 kWh credit per panel on this month's statement for energy generated during November 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.

December issue of Sparks



Numbers found:

Alan Grabau

Numbers not found:

- Curtis Russell
- Scott/Melanie Crabtree
- Trista/Tim Luckey
- Troy/Jasmine Wagenbach



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.

• **November temps** – The average high temperature for November was 47° F, while the average low was 25° F. This resulted in 868 Heating Degree Days (HDDs) and 0 Cooling Degree Days (CDDs). They compare to last year's average high of 41° F and average low of 24° F, which resulted in 970.5 HDDs and 0 CDDs.

• **ENERGY STAR® Rebates** – 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.

BABY proofing

How does your home stack up?



Learn more at [Safe Electricity.org](https://www.SafeElectricity.org)

#swceLIFE+

Midwest electric system ready for winter weather

Region has sufficient resources for expected conditions, contingency plans for emergencies

The Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) recently released its annual winter outlook in which it outlines expectations for the winter season.

MISO is expecting a mild winter for most of its territory. January is forecasted to have the highest winter peak demand in the range of 102 to 107 gigawatts (GW), with generation supply availability expected to be 122 GW.

“Great River Energy team members are ready to meet our responsibilities to our member owners and MISO by generating and delivering energy regardless of weather conditions,” said Great River Energy (GRE) Vice President and Chief Power Supply Officer Jon Brekke. “Great River Energy is continuing

to invest in its generation and transmission assets to support grid reliability for the future.”

Among other projects, GRE and Minnesota Power are jointly developing the Northland Reliability Project, a 180-mile, 345-kilovolt electric transmission line from northern Minnesota to central Minnesota to ensure continued reliability into the future as the region transitions to greater levels of renewable energy.

MISO stresses the importance of reliability in all seasons, particularly when entering winter and summer when demand for electricity peaks. GRE’s winter reliability plans received an important boost from a recent decision by the

(Energy resources continued on Page 7)
sparks • january 2024

Making a Winter Driving Survival Kit

Use an empty three-pound coffee can or any similar container with a plastic cover to store the following items:

- Small candles and matches
- Small, sharp knife and plastic spoons
- Red bandanna or cloth
- Pencil and paper
- Large plastic garbage bag
- Safety pins
- Whistle
- Snacks
- Cell phone adapter to plug into lighter
- Plastic flashlight and spare batteries

Reverse batteries in the flashlight to avoid accidental switching and burnout. Warm batteries before using them. Store safety items in the passenger compartment when severe winter weather threatens in case the trunk is jammed or frozen shut. Choose small packages of food that you can eat hot or cold.

Suggested food items:

- Raisins in small packets
- Semi-sweet chocolate in pieces for sharing
- Miniature candy bars
- Chewing gum
- Wrapped hard candies
- Food bars
- Canned soup, meat and poultry

Store bulky and heavy items in an accessible place:

- 30-foot cord to use as homing line when you must exit the vehicle
- Booster cables
- Basic tools
- Sand, cat litter or other grit in a plastic milk carton
- Shovel
- Tow cables or chain
- Sleeping bag or blankets
- Road flares and reflectors
- Snowmobile suit and heavy boots

Emergency Phone Calls

If you become stranded in any part of Minnesota, and you have a cell phone, call 911 to summon help. In other states, you may be able to dial 911 or 0 to reach an operator. When you talk with authorities:

- Provide information on your location, condition of all persons in the vehicle and the problem you are experiencing
- Follow instructions; you may be told to stay where you are and wait for rescuers
- Do not hang up until you know who you have spoken with and what will happen next
- If you must leave your vehicle, write down your name, address, phone number and destination. Place the piece of paper inside the front windshield for someone to see



Minnesota Department of Public Safety
Homeland Security and Emergency Management

#swceTRUST

ad connection

give away

USED 24" CEDAR SHAKES. 451-9533.

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

USED WOOD CHIPPER. 612-598-4005.

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

(10) LAYING HENS, 1 to 1.5 yrs old, large to XL eggs. 456-2148.

FORD SKID STEER, diesel. 330-1849.

USED OIL, 200-gal. min. 420-7429/Quentin.

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

for sale

2011 TOYOTA COROLLA, 110,000 mi., runs gd, gd tires, no air, \$4600. 363-3975/Mike.

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

NEW-USED FLATBEDS FOR PICKUPS; GOOSE-NECK DECK OVER TRAILER, 22', \$2900; A-C TRACTORS, Models incl. C, B, CA. 402-7679.

MINI STORAGE UNITS, Blmg Prairie. 456-2957.

OLD GROWTH WOOD, no reasonable offers refused. 612-598-4005.

USA/ALL-AMERICAN MEAT BAND SAW ON ROLLERS, 10' wide x 14" high cut, 115V. 456-2339.

(2) FIRESTONE TRANSFORCE AT TIRES, LT275/70R18, came off 3/4 diesel Ram, 10 ply, 17,000 mi. on them, lots of tread left, \$200 for pair. 491-4565.

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

SINGER 404 SEWING MACHINE in cabinet & seat. 334-5388.

All area codes are 507 unless otherwise noted

10" TABLE SAW w/extras; 12" COMPOUND MITER SAW; 10" EARTHQUAKE TILLER. 391-2485.

BOAT/RV STORAGE FOR RENT. 475-2322.

EGO PWR SNOWBLOWER, 56V, 21" width, used 1 winter, \$350. 279-1854.

KATOLIGHT GENERATOR ON CART, 540 PTO. 995-4791.

CARRIER DUCTLESS MINI-SPLIT HEAT PUMP, used 2 mths, make offer after inspection in Fbo. 612-805-3033.

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

FIREWOOD, \$350/full cord; MAPLE CHINA HUTCH; WALNUT DESK; BOOKSHELVES, (1) maple & (1) walnut, make offer, Northfield area. 651-357-5092/Paul.

FARMALL B TRACTOR, vry gd cond., also has a Woods mower. 475-0486.

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.

NI 324 CORN PICKER. 210-2048.

TOOLBOX for full-size 1990 Ford pickup, locks on each side, \$50. 390-1084.

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

STRIKEMASTER LAZER ELEC. AUGER, new battery, \$150. 320-219-8316.

2020 DODGE JOURNEY LL, 14,000 mi. 461-9373.

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

SCOOTER for indoor & outdoor use, 3-wheel state-of-the-art electronics, exc. cond. 456-0246.

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

2-WHEEL UTILITY TRAILER, 5'x10', wood bed & sides, \$375/obo; 7-TON WAGON RUNNING GEAR & GRAVITY BOX, gd flotation tires, \$675/obo. 451-9614.

PUREBRED GERMAN SHEP. w/shots, avail. Jan. 1. 838-5137.

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

PRESS.-TREATD WOOD ROUND FENCE POSTS, (3) 4"x7", (2) 6"x7", not tapered, \$8/ea./obo; (30) RND STEEL ELEC. FENCE POSTS, provides easy install. of elec. fencing, \$30. 581-6966 near Dundas.

A-C C for parts or restore, complete w/pulley & hydraulics, motor stuck, \$300/obo. 952-652-2933.

ASUS CHROMEBOOK, Model CX1500CN, 15.6" LCD screen, 4 GB RAM 64 eMMC, \$75. 291-6547.

CLIPPER FANNING MILL; 16' STEEL CATTLE GATES; NH 311 BALER w/kicker. 838-8583.

HAY, 4x5 round mixed grass bales. 676-6094.

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

FARM SITE; TRAIN SETS; CASE SKID LOADER 1816C w/20 hp; JD 330; ROUND BALES, 600-800 lbs; JD 2640 TRACTOR, new hyd. pump, runs great; 2002 CHEV. SILVERADO 2500 HD. 783-9240.

OLDER KENMORE ELEC. DRYER, lightly used, gd cond., works great, you haul, \$40; 85-YR-OLD CUT GLASS CRYSTAL PUNCH BOWL w/12 glass cups & ladle, \$50. 390-5707.

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.

travel

CHARMING CHARLESTON, Feb. 24-March 3, Deluxe motor coach, 8 nights, 14 meals, historic City Market & Middleton Place, guided tours, harbor cruise, & more! \$1,599 pp w/2 per room.

SAN ANTONIO, TX, March 9-17. By motor coach, 8 nights, 14 meals, River Walk Cruise, LBJ Ranch, visit the famous ALAMO & IMAX Theater, & more! \$1,699 per person w/2 per room.

WASHINGTON, D.C. April 25-30. Round trip Delta flights, guided tours, Memorial & Monuments tour, tram ride through Arlington National Cemetery, & more! \$1,799 per person 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.



Sparks Free Classified Ad Form for all SWCE Members

Ads need to be received in our office by **January 5** to ensure being printed in the February 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 March issue.

For Sale Wanted Give Away

Phone # _____ Account # _____

Name _____

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


member connection

(EV chargers continued from Page 3)

sale energy provider, Great River Energy (GRE), and CIP (Conservation Improvement Program) grants.


“This benefit of a DC fast charger will bring people needing a charge off the freeway to use Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric chargers,” said Nordahl. He noted one gentleman was on his way from the Twin Cities to Austin for a meeting and stopped on the way down, and then again on his way back through Owatonna. 28668

Nordahl said payments can be made through Google or Apple Pay, Ford App, or with a credit card.

Steele-Waseca utilized Master Electrician Joel Dulas for the electrical work past the transformer. The co-op’s line crews installed the high voltage cables and transformer from the solar garden transformer. Nordahl said Ethan Cords from Spark Plug, LLC, commissioned the chargers and is a local technician.  #swceINNOVATION



SWCE trucks for sale

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric (SWCE) is conducting sealed bid auctions (minimum bid \$8,500) for their 2010 Ford F-150 4x4 SuperCrew cab (pictured above left), VIN 1FT-FW1EV0AFD25832 with 136,000 miles; and (minimum bid \$10,500) for the 2013 Chevy 1500LT 4x4 Crew cab (pictured above right), VIN 3GCPKSE77DG249438, with 122,000 miles. Sealed bids must be received at Steele-Waseca’s office, 2411 W. Bridge St., Owatonna, by noon, Wednesday, Jan. 3. Please state Ford or Chevy in the bid. If you would like to see either truck, please call SWCE at 507-451-7340 to schedule an appointment with Matt. If you have questions, please call SWCE at the number above and ask for Matt. The person with the winning bid will be notified by phone by the end of the business day Thursday, Jan. 4.  #swceTRUST

(Energy resources continued from Page 5)

Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC).

The PUC unanimously approved the addition of dual fuel capability at Great River Energy’s Cambridge Peaking Station, which will enable the plant to operate on fuel oil when its primary fuel—natural gas—is either unavailable or prohibitively expensive.

Natural gas peaking plants are an important part of overall reliability of the electric grid by providing generation at times of greatest system need. The addition of dual fuel capability will further enhance overall system reliability and help keep businesses operating and homes safe and warm.

“Electric cooperatives serving Minnesota must be prepared for extreme winter conditions that are normal for our region,” said Great River Energy President and Chief Executive Officer David Saggau. “Dual fuel capability in Cambridge is a small but absolutely critical enhancement to meet the needs and expectations of our member-owners on the coldest nights of the year.”

Dual fuel capability at Cambridge Peaking Station is expected to be operational in time for the winter of 2025-26.

(Courtesy: Great River Energy)

 #swceSERVICE



Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric line technicians utilize a bucket truck crane, Nov. 10, to position the transformer for the co-op’s electric vehicle chargers.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

During winter months, ensure your home is well sealed to reduce the need for excessive heating. Seal air leaks around your home and add insulation where needed to save up to 10% on annual energy bills.

Install weather stripping on exterior doors and apply caulk around windows. Check attic insulation levels and hire a qualified contractor if additional insulation is required.

Source: energystar.gov

 #swceLIFE+

NOTE: Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric members who received a \$50 Energy Star® gift certificate for their attendance at the co-op’s 2023 annual meeting, June 6, are reminded the certificates expire Dec. 31, 2023. This is consistent with the expiration date of certificates issued in recent years. Thank you for your cooperation:)



youth tour connection

2024 Washington, D.C. Youth Tour scheduled June 18-23

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric seeking applicants; will sponsor two eligible students

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric is accepting applications from eligible high school sophomores or juniors for an all-expense paid trip, valued at nearly \$4,000, to Washington, D.C., for the 2024 Youth Tour, June 18-23.

The tour is coordinated through the Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA) and hosted by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). Participating cooperatives sponsor a member student(s) to travel to Washington, D.C., learn about cooperatives and our government, tour historical sites, and have fun meeting new friends from Minnesota and other delegates from across the nation. 1086575

To be eligible, the entrant must meet the following requirements:

1. The entrant is currently a high school sophomore or junior, and their parent(s)/guardian(s) are a Steele-Waseca member. Dependents of Steele-Waseca employees or directors are not eligible to participate.
2. All entries must include: a) the completed application form below; b) answers to both essay questions digitally videoed that also highlights the applicant's school and community information on the video at least two minutes in length and not to exceed three minutes; d) two letters of recommendation (one from an instructor, counselor or administrator, and the other from a church or community leader).

3. Videos may be emailed to Member Services Supervisor Randy Sobrack at rsobrack@swce.coop. Mail the application form and letters of recommendation to: Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric, c/o Youth Tour 2024, PO Box 485, Owatonna, MN 55060. Entries must be received in Steele-Waseca's office on or before Friday, Feb. 16, 2024. The two Youth Tour recipients will be notified by Friday, March 15, 2024.

Each entry will be evaluated by a panel of judges for:

- The responses to the questions and activity involvement in 2-3 minutes.
- Personality and communication exhibited in the video.
- Quality of the production.

Essay Questions:

1. Why would you like to be Steele-Waseca's delegate for the 2024 Youth Tour? What do you hope to gain from the experience?
2. What does commitment to community mean to you? Share how you contribute to your community.

School and Community Information

- Highlight your school activities – note letters and honors earned, positions held, etc.
- Reflect on your community activities – include church, community service and positions held.
- Share details regarding any work experience and other information that makes you the person you are.

MREA is requiring that each participating cooperative's delegate(s) report to the Crowne Plaza Airport located at 3 Appletree Square in Bloomington for an orientation session Tuesday, June 18, presently at 9:30 a.m. An afternoon flight to Washington, D.C., will follow the session. ^{9/2}

#swceLIFE+



Washington, D.C. Youth Tour 2024 — June 18-23

Name _____ Gender _____ Phone _____

Address _____
street city state zip county

Email address _____ Parent(s) or Guardian(s) _____

I am currently a high school _____ sophomore _____ junior at _____

Parent/Guardian consent: I/we hereby give my/our dependent high school student permission to enter the Rural Electric Washington, D.C. Youth Tour 2024 Contest. I/we understand if they're selected, I/we will be responsible for providing their transportation to the Crowne Plaza Airport in Bloomington and from the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport.

Name(s) _____ SWCE account # _____