



the power of human connections

sparks

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

a monthly newsletter from Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric

February 2024

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric (SWCE) legacy members will notice the Wholesale Market Adjustment (WMA) is increasing on their statement next month.

Steele-Waseca SMEC (Southern Minnesota Energy Cooperative) members (former Alliant Energy customers) will notice an increase to the monthly service charge and/or electric rate on their statement next month. For details on each, please read SWCE General Manager Syd Briggs' column on Page 2 of this month's *Sparks* newsletter.

Steele-Waseca board of directors approve mail-in ballot option for annual meeting voting

The Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric board of directors during their regular meeting, Dec. 21, decided voting for the co-op's 2024 annual meeting will be conducted by a mail-in ballot, exclusively, prior to the event date in June.

Members in attendance at the 2023 annual meeting approved changes to the co-op's bylaws which allowed voting options instead of the previous in-person voting conducted during annual meetings. The change allows for more member participation in the election of board directors.

There will be no in-person voting

during Steele-Waseca's annual meeting Tuesday, June 4, at the co-op's headquarters in Owatonna. Members that want to participate in the 2024 director vote will need to complete the mail-in ballot during the soon-to-be announced timeframe. Election results will be announced at the annual meeting, as well as the July *Sparks* newsletter coming out with the bills in June. 24592

Further updates regarding balloting and the annual meeting will be featured in upcoming *Sparks* newsletters.

#swceTRUST

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calendar of events

February

- 1 National Freedom Day
- 2 Groundhog Day
- 4 National Thank a Mail Carrier Day
- 11 Super Bowl LVIII
- 14 Valentine's Day
- 19 Presidents' Day

Storage Water Heating Program

Benefits

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

The SWCE Storage Water Heater Program

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

Westinghouse Water Heater

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



How to Sign Up

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

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

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



Board of Directors

- PJ Duchene District 1
Assistant Secretary/Treasurer
- Geraldine Lienke District 2
- Neil Schlaak District 3
- Dennis Ringhofer District 4
- Rodney Krell, *Vice President* . . District 5
- Gary Wilson District 6
President, GRE Director
- John Beal District 7
- Ronald Sommers District 8
Secretary/Treasurer
- Scott Carlson 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*

As most of our members know, Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric passes increases in the cost of power on to our members through the Wholesale Market Adjustment (WMA) on our legacy members and the Power Cost Adjustment (PCA) for our SMEC members who joined the co-op on July 31, 2015, following the closing sale of the former Alliant Energy service territory.

In 2024, our cost of power is expected to increase about 2.2%. Some of you may remember we were expecting an increase last year of about 7%, so this year should be better.

Since the cost of power is our largest expense, it is important we stay current with passing the cost on to our members; if we delay passing the cost on for several years, we end up with large increases

in a later year rather than several small (hopefully) increases over several years.

In addition, the board agrees with management that we should be able to pass on less than the full expected increase due to the timing of the increases in the market, and some expected increases in sales of energy with our members that could help offset some of the cost.

With the current average usage of our residential class, their increase should average around 1.6% or about \$2.46 per month, and the average increase in the whole system should be around 2%. We also have a strategic plan over the next five years to merge the legacy and SMEC rates where we can have just one set of rates system wide, and only one WMA or PCA. 1098782

Your Steele-Waseca board of directors and employees have been working very hard year after year to minimize expenses without sacrificing service, and the results have been excellent. Our expenses, other than the cost of power, have grown very little and stayed consistent with growth in energy sales.

In review, the projected percentage increase is for the average member system wide. The increase each of you experience will be determined on whether your usage is over or under the average.

It is important for our rates to collect as much of the actual costs as is applicable to each class of service. Most of our cost of service is collected in the energy charge, and we try to lessen that with a reasonable customer charge with as much balance as possible.

Steele-Waseca will continue to work hard to provide the best service and realize cost savings whenever possible. We also have an excellent section on our website, swce.coop, entitled, "RE-BATES/PROGRAMS," that provide many ideas and links about efficiency and conservation.

The rate adjustments are not large tones, and it will take effect on the bill you receive in February. Please feel free to call any of our customer service representatives if you have a question or need further clarification.

**4 KEY FACTORS
 That Impact Energy Bills**

You pay for the electricity you consume each month, but there are additional factors that impact your energy bills.



Fuel Costs

Before electricity can be delivered to your home, it must first be generated at a power plant or from a renewable source. The cost of fuels used to generate electricity fluctuates, which is why you see a power or fuel charge on your monthly bill. This monthly charge covers cost fluctuations without having to continually restructure electricity rates.



Service Costs

Your bill includes a monthly service charge, which recovers part of the co-op's ongoing investments in poles, wire, meters, system maintenance and additional costs necessary to provide electric service.



Weather

When temperatures soar or dip, your cooling or heating equipment must run longer and at maximum capacity, which can greatly increase your energy use. Extreme temperatures can also affect electricity market prices. When the need for electricity increases due to extreme heat or cold, the price of power typically rises.



Energy Consumption

This is the amount of electricity you use each month to power your home's cooling/heating system, appliances, lighting, electronics and more. The amount of electricity you consume is measured in kilowatt-hours, or kWh. You have control over how much energy you use, which can ultimately help manage your monthly costs.

#swceTRUST

member connection

Expanding the grid while maintaining reliability, resiliency

Courtesy: Great River Energy (GRE)

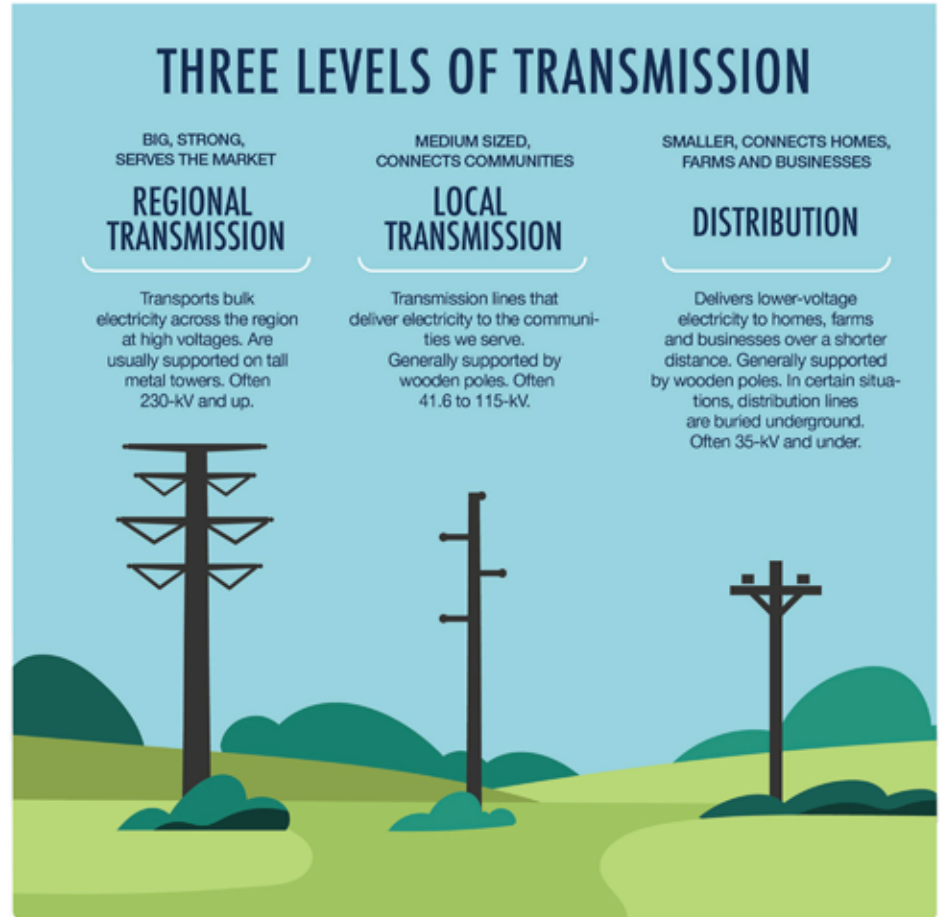
The way electricity is produced is undergoing a dramatic transformation to include much more renewable energy resources.

Because the energy resources used to serve our members are changing, the regional power grid that delivers electricity needs to change, too. Great River Energy, wholesale power supplier to Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric, is investing in new transmission infrastructure to ensure we maintain a reliable, resilient and flexible grid, and enhance its stability long term.

Regional transmission lines transport bulk electricity across the region at high voltages. One of these new regional projects is the Northland Reliability Project, which is being jointly developed by GRE and Minnesota Power. It will run from Minnesota Power's Iron Range Substation near Grand Rapids to a new substation near Becker. The two utilities submitted their application for a Certificate of Need and Route Permit from the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission in August. If approved, construction is expected to begin in 2027 with an in-service date of 2030.

This project, and others like it, will support continued reliable electric service in northern and central Minnesota, as well as the greater Upper Midwest region. It is being developed with two significant technology additions: more resilient structures to better withstand wind, and twisted pair conductors, which are more resilient to icing from winter weather.

One of the biggest weather-related threats to the transmission system in



Minnesota is an ice storm with wind during the winter. Great River Energy's new standard design includes structures that are strong enough to withstand the highest wind speeds recorded in the previous 300 years.

GRE's transmission employees have specific, organized efforts underway to continually address resilience and ensure electric service to its

member-owner cooperatives, including Steele-Waseca. New transmission projects, like the Northland Reliability Project, will allow the power that comes to Steele-Waseca and is passed on to our members to be cleaner and more reliable than ever before.

#swceSERVICE



Winning bids for SWCE trucks

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric successfully conducted sealed bid auctions for their 2013 Chevy 4x4 Crew cab (pictured above left) and 2010 Ford F-150 4x4 SuperCrew cab (pictured above right). The minimum bid requested for the Chevy was \$10,500, and the winning bid was \$15,099.99. The minimum bid requested for the Ford was \$8,500, and the winning bid was \$11,111. The bids needed to be received at Steele-Waseca's office in Owatonna by noon, Wednesday, Jan. 3. The winning bidders were notified by phone by the end of the business day, Thursday, Jan. 4. Steele-Waseca is respecting the privacy of the winning bidders by not disclosing their identities. 17974



Is my off peak/dual fuel being controlled today?

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

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

#swceCOOPERATION
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cookin' connection

Bavarian Wiener Supper

Jeff Koplen

Owatonna

1 lb. (8-10) wieners
1 can cream of mushroom soup
1/2 c. soft bread crumbs (buttered)

1 can sauerkraut (drained)
4 c. diced, cooked potatoes
1/2 c. mayonnaise

Preheat oven to 350°. Cut 4 wieners in half the long way. Slice the rest as 1/4" coins. Mix half of the soup with the mayo, sauerkraut, and sliced wieners. Pour into a baking dish. Stir the rest of the soup with the potatoes. Spread over the sauerkraut mixture. Spread on bread crumbs and top with the halved wieners. Bake at 350° for 30 to 45 minutes.

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 15 kWh credit per panel on this month's statement for energy generated during December 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. 1031838

January issue of Sparks



Numbers found:

No members found their account number.

Numbers not found:

Richard/Sharon Sadergaski
Michael/Barbara Young
Bruce/Judith Myers
Christine Hyatt
Duane Dylla



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.

• **December temps** – The average high temperature for December was 40° F, while the average low was 25° F. This resulted in 1,017 Heating Degree Days (HDDs), and 0 Cooling Degree Days (CDDs). They compare to last year's average high of 24° F and average low of 9° F. This resulted in 1,498.5 HDDs and 0 CDDs.

• **ENERGY STAR® Rebates** – In 2024, 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

ALWAYS ASSUME ALL DOWNED LINES ARE **LIVE**

Downed power lines can be **deadly**. Always assume a downed power line is **live** and avoid approaching them or anything near them.

Use Precaution



Downed power lines can energize the ground up to **35 feet** away. Even more in wet conditions.



If you see a downed power line, **call 911**.



Never drive over downed power lines or anything in contact with them.



Never try to move a downed power line.

If a vehicle contacts a **power line** or **utility pole**...

STAY AWAY AND CALL 911



Consider **all lines** to be live and dangerous.



Stay in place or inside your vehicle unless you see **fire** or **smoke**.



Warn others to stay at least **35 feet** away.



Tell others not to approach vehicle, downed lines, or anything that may be in contact with downed lines.



Call **911**.

In the Event of Fire or Smoke

Do not touch the ground and vehicle at the **same time**.



Jump from the vehicle with your **feet together**.



Shuffle away, avoid lifting your feet.



Please share this free content to save lives



www.facebook.com/ESFI.org

www.twitter.com/ESFI.org

www.youtube.com/ESFI.org

ad connection

give away

KITTENS, friendly, litter-box trained. 612-910-0041.

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

JUNKERS & REPAIRABLES, top \$ paid for trucks, cars, & SUVs. 332-2300.

FORD DIESEL SKID STEER. 330-1849.

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

OLD COINS, get a price from a dealer, but before you sell, give me a call. 612-209-0378.

FREE LANDFILL. 210-9827.

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

CAPRICE PPV w/6.0 engine; SOMEONE TO REPAIR my Sega Outrun Arcade game machine. 440-8831.

GRAIN BIN PERFORATED FLOOR SHEETS, 24" wide minimum (not floor planks). 651-214-2357.

for sale

FISHER SNOW BLADE, fits 1995 Dodge & up. 783-9240/leave message.

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

MF 235 LOADER, all hyd., incl. 4-way valve, built-in reservoir, hoses, 4 hyd. cylinders, gd cond., \$375/obo; **CABELA'S HUNTING BOOTS**, sz 14, \$50; **PET CARRIERS**, large & small, \$35/ea. 455-3881.

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

BELSAW 12" PLANER, \$400; **BELSAW 12" PLANER MOLDER**, \$550; **(2) TIRES** on AC rims, new, 13.6x28, \$800; **WIDE FRONT** to fit AC WD, \$350; **CAT. D4D DOZER**, exc. shape, \$12,000. 330-3945.

100-LB. LP TANK, older one, \$25. 491-4565.

All area codes are 507 unless otherwise noted

(2) BOBCATS: 2006 S250, 2-spd, full cab, newer tires; 2020 2-spd, 800 hrs, fully loaded. 952-445-4620 after 6 p.m.

NZ RABBIT BREEDING STOCK: white buck, \$30; 2 blk does, \$45/ea.; weaned NZ kits, \$15/ea.; **OUTDR RABBIT HUTCH**, 64"x25"x42"h, \$30; **MED. HUTCH**, inside 31"x20"x20"h, \$40. 612-756-2180/Julie.

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

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.

CORNSTALK BALES, 5x6 size, put up dry, net wrapped, \$40/each. 456-0360.

MINI STORAGE UNITS, Blmg Prairie. 456-2957.

NETGEAR NIGHTHAWK AX5400 DUAL BAND WI-FI 6 ROUTER, Model RAX50-100 NAS, new in box, never opened, \$175. 317-2910.

WOMEN'S VAN HEUSEN COAT, med., dark green, hooded, zippered, 2 pockets, 3/4 length. 676-4039.

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

(2) FUEL BARRELS, 280-gal. each, exc. cond. 521-0146.

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

PRIDE JAZZY EVO 613 ELEC. WHEELCHAIR, blk, used only a few times (indoors only), \$3000/obo. 583-6679.

SHOTGUN, Win., Model 12, 12 ga., 3" Magnum, 1 owner, purchased about 1964, like new. 528-2780.

FIREWOOD, mixed, reasonable; **SNOWSHOES**, 2-pair. 334-9583.

FIREWOOD, \$350/full cord; **CUSTOM-BUILT MAPLE CHINA HUTCH; WALNUT DESK; (2) BOOK-SHELVES**, 1 maple, 1 walnut, make offer, Nfld area. 651-357-5092/Paul.

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

MIXED GRASS HAY, 4x5 bales; **55-GAL. METAL BARRELS**, \$8. 676-6094.

BOAT/RV STORAGE FOR RENT. 475-2322.

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

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

HOGS FOR BUTCHER, \$1.25/lb. hanging weight. 475-0490/Troy.

FORTUNE CREEK TRL LOTS, the covenant allows for a pole shed, starting at \$75,000. 332-4623/John.

ARTISTIC QUILTER LONG ARM 18 by Janome w/majestic 12' long frame, like new, used 3 times. 456-0631/Wanita.

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

NEW ORLEANS, April 13-21. Deluxe motor coach, Louisiana plantation tour, historic French Quarter, Mardi Gras World, riverboat cruise on the Mississippi River, & more! \$1,599 pp w/2 per room.

WASHINGTON, D.C., April 25-30. Delta round trip flights, Memorial & Monuments tour, tram ride through Arlington National Cemetery, guided tours of D.C. & more! \$1,799 pp w/2 per room.

ALASKA TOUR & CRUISE, June 3-15. Delta round trip flights, Denali Nat'l Park, Princess Rail to Talkeetna, 7-day cruise on the Royal Princess, 3 ports of call, & more! \$5,999 pp w/2 per room.

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



Sparks Free Classified Ad Form for all SWCE Members

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

member connection

Soil Health Winter Workshop Highway-14 Tour Stop comes to Owatonna February 22.



The annual workshop hosted by the Freeborn Area Soil Health Team has a long-standing history of speakers and information related to

soil health and profitability. This year's headline is **Maximizing Profitability with Carbon, Small Grains, Manure, and More.** Speakers will include Carolyn King of Continuum Ag and Martin Larsen. Carolyn is the Director of Operations for Continuum Ag, a soil health data intelligence company that enables farmers to profit from sustainable and regenerative practices. Martin farms near Byron, MN and raises corn, soybeans, and small grains while implementing cover crops and no-till. This year will feature a panel of farmers that will tackle the subject of applying



Carolyn King

Martin Larsen

QR Code for Registration



manure in minimum and no-till situations. Panel attendees will each be bringing their own expertise from dry litter to hog and cattle manure.

Plan to attend this one-day event at Torey's Restaurant February 22 from 8:30-2:30! There is no cost to attend the event and lunch will be provided. RSVPs are needed by February 15th to reserve your spot, seating is limited. To register scan the QR code or call 507-320-3728 or contact your local Soil and Water office for more information.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Area rugs are an easy, cost-effective solution to cold floors. Adding area rugs to hard-surface flooring can add warmth to any room and keep your feet cozy on cold winter days.

Choose rugs made from wool or other natural fibers and plush or high-pile textures for the most insulation. Place rugs in areas where you need additional warmth, like the foot of a bed or under a coffee table. Area rugs can enhance the aesthetic of your home and keep you cozier.

#swceSERVICE

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



NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION:
SAVE ENERGY

Save 10% on Simply Conserve[®] LED lighting and advanced power strips at energywisemnstore.com/lighting today!

ENERGY STAR[®] certified LEDs use up to 80% less energy than incandescent bulbs and last up to 25,000 hours. Advanced power strips stop household devices, such as televisions and laptops, from using energy when they're turned off. Both products offer a bright (and easy) way to start your new year with new savings.



Offer valid January 1 through January 31, 2024
While supplies last - No coupon necessary
Discount applied at checkout. Customer assumes responsibility for all sales tax.

ENERGY STAR and the ENERGY STAR mark are registered trademarks owned by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

ENERGY WISE  MN

#swceLIFE+
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youth tour connection

Applications being accepted for 2024 Youth Tour to Washington, D.C.

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric is sponsoring up to 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., to learn about cooperatives and our government, tour historical sites, and have fun meeting new friends from Minnesota and other delegates from across the nation.

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; and c) 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. The two Youth Tour recipients will be notified by Friday, March 15.

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 all church, community service and positions held. 1100643
- Share details regarding any work experience and other information that makes you the person you are.

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

 #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 # _____