



the power of human connections

sparks

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

a monthly newsletter from Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric

April 2024

inside connections

- 2** Manager Connection
- 3** National Lineworker Appreciation Day
- 4** Cookin' Connection; SWCE community solar update; Stray voltage questions; Members who found their account number in the March 2024 *Sparks* newsletter
- 5** Safe Digging Month; Work Zone Awareness Week; Ways to help limit tree trimming
- 6** Ad Connection; 4-Seasons Vacations
- 7** Ad Connection; Energy Star® certified windows
- 8** Are you covered if appliances damaged from an outage? Eli Underwood benefit breakfast; Energy efficiency monthly tip

calendar of events

April

- 8** NRECA Nat'l Lineworker Appreciation Day
- 11** Minn. Tornado Drill Day
- 13** Thomas Jefferson's b-day
- 15** Income tax filing deadline
- 22** Earth Day
- 24** Administrative Professionals Day
- 30** Vietnam War ended in 1975

The Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric office will be closed on March 29 in observance of Good Friday.



Board candidates for 2024 announced by Steele-Waseca's Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee for Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric have determined their selection of candidates for the board seats up for election in Districts 1, 3, and 5, as election results will be announced at this year's annual meeting scheduled Tuesday, June 4, 2024.

The committee first met Nov. 15, 2023, at Steele-Waseca's headquarters in Owatonna.

Attorney Tricia Lancaster reviewed the duties of the Nominating Committee as stated in the co-op's bylaws, the activities and conduct of individual board members policy, the qualifications for eligibility for service on the co-op's board of directors policy, campaign policy, the director election filing form and affirmation of director qualifications, and questions concerning qualifications for director.

Board President Gary Wilson highlighted areas of the board of director position description with the committee. Wilson addressed potential questions a candidate may have, highlighting the time commitment it takes to be a board director.

General Manager Syd Briggs reviewed the selection process with the committee. He explained the nominating committee policy and the rotation plan for the committee which works on a rotation system that keeps six experienced members on the committee, and adds three new members each year.

A list of members in each district was handed out and reviewed. It was suggested that committee members from each district meet together to search for candidates and review the information given to them.

Nominations for committee chairperson for the January meeting were opened, and Denise Bartness was nominated by Lylia Iverson. After the nomination was seconded, Wilson declared her nominating committee chairperson. After no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

The Nominating Committee conducted their second meeting, Jan. 18, at Steele-Waseca's headquarters.

Lancaster reviewed the director duties, standard of conduct policy, and qualifications for eligibility for service on the board of directors policy.

Briggs reviewed the director position description, highlighting director responsibilities, board-manager relations, board-cooperative member relations, and board-community relations. 1023861


The names of the following candidates were announced. They will appear on the mail-in ballot sent before the end of April to members, and mailed back by members before the end of May prior to Steele-Waseca's 88th annual meeting, June 4, at the co-op's headquarters, 2411 W. Bridge St., Owatonna:


• **District 1:** PJ Duchene (incumbent), Faribault.

• **District 3:** Dan M. Hansen, Ellendale; Ralph F. Miller, Owatonna; Neil R. Schlaak (appointed), New Richland; and Anton H. Seykora, Ellendale.

• **District 5:** Rodney D. Krell (incumbent), Blooming Prairie.

A profile of each candidate will appear in the May 2024 *Sparks* newsletter. Additional candidates may be listed on the ballot if they obtain the signatures of 200 Steele-Waseca members and submit it within 50 days (April 15) of the annual meeting.

This year's Nominating Committee consisted of the following Steele-Waseca members: District 1—Matt LaCanne, Faribault; Daniel/Stacy Maas, Faribault; and Dale/Lynn Groskreutz, New Richland; District 3—Denise Bartness, Owatonna; Rene/Pam Koester, Nerstrand; and Bert Wiersma, Ellendale; District 5—John/Lylia Iverson, Medford; Charlie Peters, Lonsdale; and Bruce Rumpza, Blooming Prairie. 

 #swceTRUST



the power of human connections

sparks

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

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Website: www.swce.coop

Email: info@swce.coop



Find us on
Facebook

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

“We’re here to serve you.” These words may sound generic,

but to us—your local electric cooperative—they mean everything.

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric was created to serve our rural communities. Back in the day, neighbors banded together and formed our co-op for the common good. In our case, it was the only way the area could bring electricity where there was none. In doing so, Steele-Waseca helped the rural communities thrive. That mission-focused heritage is the golden thread that is woven throughout our history.

Today, we are continuing to power our service area. While our focus has remained steady on providing safe, reliable, and affordable energy to our members, today’s energy landscape and consumer expectations are far different than they were decades ago. That’s why we’re adapting, to keep pace with changing technology, evolving needs and new expectations.

Serving as your trusted energy advisor means we want to help you save energy (and money) and provide advice and information on a broad range of energy topics. For example, if you’re looking for ways to save energy, check out our website at swce.coop, for energy-saving tips and ideas to increase the energy efficiency of your home. Identifying ways you can save energy at home. Understanding how your home uses energy can help determine the best ways to modify energy use and thereby keep more money in your wallet.

If you’re considering a rooftop solar installation, our energy advisors in Operations would be happy to give you an unbiased view of the pros and cons.

Investing in a solar panel system is a major decision, and it’s important to fully understand the costs, responsibilities, and potential energy savings. Unlike a solar company that has one objective—to sell their products and services—we will look at the total energy picture and help you determine the best options for your home. We understand that homeowners must undertake their due diligence, and

We’re Proud to Power YOU.

Local, Safe, Reliable Electricity.

we’re here to help you through that process.

In a similar vein, we recognize that many members are considering electric vehicle (EV) options. Steele-Waseca provides information about EV charging and electric requirements to our members so you can make informed decisions about EVs. We can provide a candid assessment of residential and business charging requirements for all types of EVs. Steele-Waseca is also offering ways to save on EV charging like through the ChargeWise program. No matter what our members drive, we want to help you achieve energy savings.

Steele-Waseca continues to offer their dual fuel and electric water heating programs to give members options.

So, the next time you hear Steele-Waseca use the phrase, “We’re here to serve you,” we hope you know we mean it.

Service is deeply ingrained into who we are. We continue to evolve with the times, and in return, we’ve found additional ways to serve you and provide more options for you to power your life.

In the recent past, Steele-Waseca has contacted our members to perform occasional surveys. We plan to continue this valuable practice to remain aware of our members desires and needs for new programs, and/or modifications to existing programs. 23783

Also, please stay in touch by reading *Sparks*, accessing our web page, or watching for links or announcements on Facebook. We have some coming enhancements with some of our rates that you may be interested in.

In this *Sparks* issue, we are recognizing our line technicians. The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) is continuing to recognize lineworkers on the second Monday in April, which this year is April 8. Our line technicians are committed to going out in all sorts of weather conditions, day or night, and restore power when conditions or circumstances interrupt power for our members.

#swceSERVICE

lineworker appreciation connection



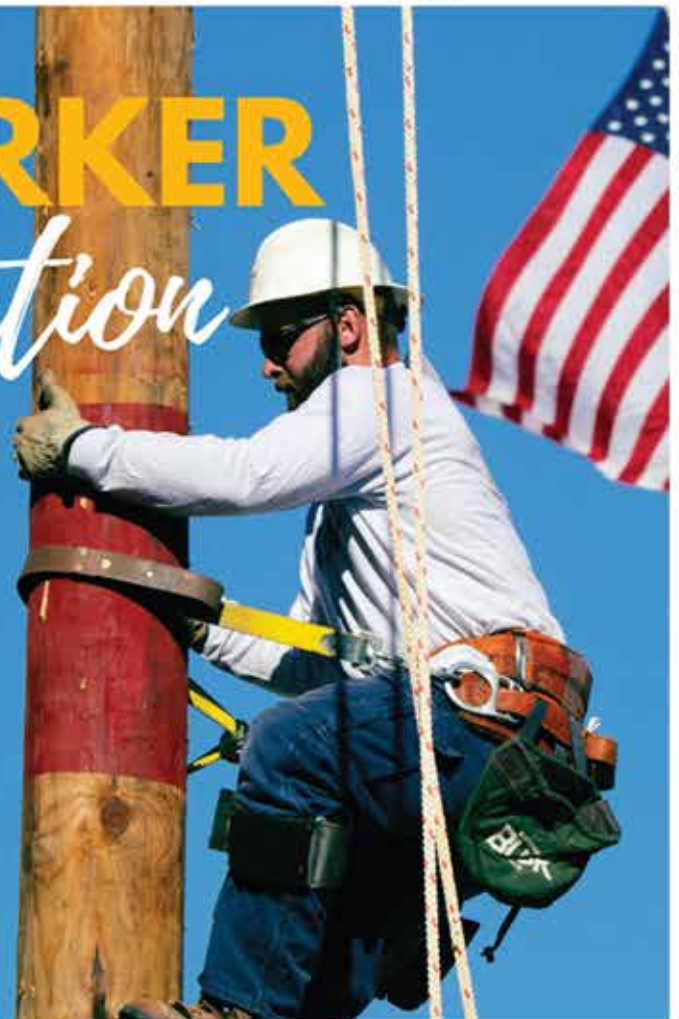
National Lineworker Appreciation Day is April 8

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) has recognized the second Monday in April as National Lineworker Appreciation Day since 2015. Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric is recognizing our lineworkers for their dedication in serving the co-op and its member-owners. The line crew with their Steele-Waseca experience includes (front row, left to right): Line Technician Tanen Holzem, July 2019; Line Technician Collin Wencil, May 2020; Line Foreman Kevin Kjersten, October 2012; Line Foreman Don Bos, May 1991; Line Foreman Pete Hines, October 2012; Line Foreman Troy Pederson, June 1999. Back row (left to right): Assistant Foreman Adam Davis, July 2013; Assistant Foreman Jake Jablonski, September 2013; Assistant Foreman Chad Henderson, July 2015; Line Technician Marshal Madery, September 2016; Apprentice Line Technician John Olson, June 2023; Line Technician Carlos Cruz, September 2016.

#swceSERVICE

LINEWORKER Appreciation DAY

#ThankaLineworker
They put their lives on the
line to keep the power on
and people safe.



cookin' connection

Porcupine Balls

Lee Ann Paulson

Waseca

1 lb. ground beef	1/2 c. rice
1 egg, slightly beaten	1/4 c. onion
2 tbsp. parsley, minced	1/2 tsp. salt
1 can tomato soup	

Mix ingredients with 1/4 c. undiluted tomato soup. Shape into 16 balls. Brown in shortening. Blend the rest of the soup with 1 c. water. Pour over meatballs. Cover. Simmer about 40 minutes or until rice is tender. Stir occasionally. May be stirred with long spaghetti.

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 32 kWh credit per panel on this month's statement for energy generated during February 2024. The latest Steele-Waseca members subscribing to The Sunna Project are Brian/Julie Zwald of Morristown. 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.

March issue of Sparks



Numbers found:

Gary S. Fenger

Numbers not found:

Brian/Nathele Beadell
Peter Keller
Charles Pence
Derek Ussatis



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. 18681

- **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.

- **February temps** – The average high temperature for February was 42°F, while the average low was 21°F. This resulted in 964 Heating Degree Days (HDDs) and 0 Cooling Degree Days (CDDs). They compare to last year's average high of 29°F and average low of 8°F, which resulted in 1,303.5 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 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.



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

3 Ways to Help Limit Tree Trimming

Did you know electric utilities are required to trim trees and other types of vegetation that grow too close to overhead power lines? We know you love your trees, and we will do everything we can to avoid trimming them. Here's how you can help:

1. Plant trees in the right place. Trees that will be <40 ft. should be planted at least 25 ft. away from power lines (>40ft. should be at least 50 ft. away).



2. Don't block pad-mounted transformers. Plant shrubs at least 10 ft. away from transformer doors and 4 ft. from transformer sides.



3. Report dangerous branches. If you spot a tree or branch that is dangerously close to power lines, please let us know.



**Trimming improves safety for all.
Let's work together to enjoy the beauty of trees and reliable electricity.**

ad connection

give away

SM. DROP-LEAF PEDESTAL TABLE; LARGE OAK BOOKCASE. 455-3468.

KITTENS, friendly, litter-box trained, used to being around dogs. 612-910-0041.

FIELD ROCK. 334-7756 or 581-3901.

VACUUM ATTACHMENTS & BAG for elec. Toro Super Blower Vac. 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

WINCHESTER MODEL 88, 243 cal. 651-214-0184.

SOMEONE TO INSTALL SHED DOORS & AN EXTERIOR BARN WALL. 475-0753.

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

TO PURCHASE 2-6 ACRES W/BUILDING SITE on north, east, or south side of Cedar Lake in Rice County (not looking for lakeshore). 210-1616.

OLD POSTAGE STAMPS, both singles & collections, book value paid, free assessment on value. 676-0970.

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

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

MN MANURE SPREADERS for restoration or for salvage. 330-3856.

WOOD CHIPPER. 719-248-1340/Al.

(2) TRACTOR TIRES, 12.4x38. 202-3411/Wayne.

TO PURCHASE A LATE MODEL (2018-24) SEDAN, SVC, OR PICKUP. 612-817-3426.

TO PURCHASE A SET OF JD 27 FORKS for a JD 48 loader OR A 48" OR 60" MANURE BUCKET for the loader. 581-6950.

OLD USED ROUND BALER BELTS, 7'-24" wide & 3' or more long that you no longer want. 384-7439.

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

All area codes are 507 unless otherwise noted

FORD DIESEL SKID STEER. 330-1849.

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

for sale

CAT 279D3, fully loaded, 2 spd, hyd. quick coupler, vry gd undercarriage, 1 owner, have service & maint. records, \$37,000/obo. 612-910-0041.

PRIDE JAZZY EVO 613 ELEC. WHEELCHAIR, blk, used only a few times, indoors only, \$2750/obo. 583-6679.

(2) BAGS, 1-YR-OLD SOYBEAN SEED, Stine 1.9 maturity enlist 3 soybeans, \$45. 456-7754.

MINI STORAGE UNITS, Blmg Prairie. 456-2957.

PASTURE FOR RENT w/18 acres in rural Dundas. 952-270-5562 or email: ghalbers@aol.com.

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

(82) BALES OF DRY GRASS HAY baled last fall, sm. sq. Email: eakerdr@gmail.com.

FLATBEDS, new & used; A-C TRACTORS, MOWERS; (3) CHEVY 2500HD TRUCKS, 4x4; EXMARK ZERO-TURN STAND-UP MOWER. 402-7679.

5TH WHL CHEROKEE CAMPER, new tires, fiberglass siding, TV & radio, (2) spare tires, (2) LP tanks, AC; 27' FISHING BOAT, 40-hp Johnson motor, canvas cover, trolling motor, trailer & canopy. 789-6654.

BOAT/RV STORAGE FOR RENT. 475-2322.

SHINGLING; LIGHT CONSTRUCTION; TREE REMOVAL (free estimates). 456-0296.

DUMP TRUCK FOR YOUR HAULING NEEDS, 15.5-ton capacity for rock, dirt, gravel, etc. 456-7774.

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

WILL DO TREE TRIMMING & REMOVAL OF LIVE & DOWNED TREES within 20-mile radius of Fbo, reasonable rates. 612-817-3426.

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

14' LUND BOAT w/trailer, 9.9 Evinrude motor, Minn Kota motor, w/2 seats. 451-5016.

FIRESTONE DESTINATION AT2 TIRES, P265/75-16, new, never mounted, 2021 manufacture date, \$100. 390-5999.

PORT. GENERATOR PWR TRANSFER KIT, new, up to 7500 watts, \$150/obo. 334-5412.

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

1979 GL1000 FULL VETTER BAGS & FAIRING; 1988 17' MAXUM BOAT, motor (85 hp), & trailer. 339-1507.

2010 ROYAL STAR VENTURE MOTORCYCLE, 5000 mi., \$9000. 649-0857.

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

THOUSANDS OF BASEBALL, FOOTBALL, & BASKETBALL CARDS; OLD WOODEN & CORK DUCK DECOYS. 210-5596.

OLIVER SIDE RAKE & DUMP RAKE, best offer. 456-5130.

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

(6) GRAVE LOTS in Section D of Meadow Ridge, Fbo, \$1800. 330-3411 after 1 p.m.

AMAZING GARFIELD COLLECTION; TEEN-SIZED FIGURE SKATING COSTUMES; SCAFFOLDING, trailer incl., exc. cond. 451-5172.

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

GRASS HAY, full size, sm. sq. bales. 451-2978.

FARMALL SUPER H, gas, wide front w/Farmhand F11A hyd. loader, 6V, new tires & rims in back, snow bucket & manure tine, \$2500; ANTIQ. JD 4247-C HAND CORN SHELLER, 2-ear feed, \$200. 686-0417.
(For Sale ads continued on Page 7)

travel

BRANSON IN SPRINGTIME, May 1-5. Deluxe motor coach, 4 nights, 8 meals, Titanic Museum, Silver Dollar City, 4 shows incl. Dublin Irish Tenors & Celtic Ladies, & more! \$1,099 pp w/2 per room.

ALASKA TOUR & CRUISE, June 3-15. Delta round-trip flights, 5-day land tour, Denali National Park, 7-day cruise on the Royal Princess, 3 ports of call & more! Starting at \$5,999 pp w/2 per room.

FJORDS OF NORWAY CRUISE, June 14-29. Delta round-trip flights, 14-day cruise on the Sky Princess, 9 ports of call, Haugesund, Flaam, Hellesylt, Olden, & more! Starting at \$7,599 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.



Sparks Free Classified Ad Form for all SWCE Members

Ads need to be received in our office by April 5 to ensure being printed in the May 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 June issue. 1053990

For Sale Wanted Give Away

Phone # _____ Account # _____

Name _____

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

ad connection

(For Sale ads continued from Page 6)

FARMALL B 8638-DE w/woods mower. 475-0486.

6' KING KUTTER BRUSH MOWER, 3 point; JD L100 GARDEN TRACTOR, \$50. 884-5739.

1997 JAYCO 5TH WHEEL CAMPER, 25'. 688-9410.

1994 INT 4900 STRAIGHT TRUCK w/18' Johnson refrigerated box, \$5500. 334-7177.

JD 318 LAWN MOWER, power steering, 54" deck, \$2000; A-C WD w/loader & chains, \$1600. 456-1181.

BATHROOM VANITY; SINK; OLD TIN. 334-7756 or 581-3901.

ANTIQUA JD WALKING PLOW, Beam #192, painted, strong oak handles, \$175. 461-0898.

KING BED, adjustable base or can be 2 twin XLs, exc. cond., \$100. 465-3380.

ROUND CORNSTALK BALES, 5x6. 420-0382.

1994 JAYCO EAGLE SERIES 265BH CAMPER, 26', bunk beds, stored inside, no mice, gd cond., rural New Richland, \$5000. 612-282-5794.

WESLO CADENCE TS 310 TREADMILL, used for indoor walking exercise, not abused, \$40. 645-9470.

OLIVER 77 OR 88 WIDE FRONT HUBS, \$350; BINS, DIVIDERS, & ROOF RACKS FOR VANS; FULL-SIZE PICKUP RACK, rusty. 952-652-2933.

2010 CHEV. HHR, navy, 145,000 mi., \$5000/obo. 330-1911.

2003 CHEV. PICKUP, 4x4, 184,800 mi., gd runner, some rust, \$4000. 440-8831.

BAN DUALS, 18.4-34, best offer; (4) HYD. CYLINDERS, best offer. 455-2599.

8' PICKUP BOX TRAILER; 1969 CHEVY BOX, vry hvy duty, \$395; PET CARRIER, large, composite, exc. cond., \$35; MARTIN COMPOUND FISH BOY, REEL, & ARROWS, exc. cond., \$100. 455-3881.

HOUSE FOR RENT, 1 bdrm w/single car garage, no smoking, no pets, \$800 + utilities. 456-8931.

COLOR TV, \$75; WASHING MACHINE, \$100. 213-7978.

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

TORO RIDING LAWN MOWER, 44" deck; '95 SKI-DOO FORMULA 3, \$500; '96 ARCTIC CAT Z440, \$500. 676-5283.

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

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

USED AUTO PARTS, ENGINES, TRANS., REAR & FRONT AXLES, TRANSFER CASES, USED TIRES & BATTERIES. 332-2300.

Ads need to be received in the SWCE office by Friday, April 5, to ensure being published in the May 2024 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.



ENERGY STAR® Certified Windows



Windows in a home are very important. They let in daylight, allow us to see the world, and let in fresh air on a nice day. However, while windows represent about 8% of the surface area of home, they typically account for almost half of the heat lost or gained.

Improving the performance of the windows in your home can save you energy and money and has several other benefits. Windows that earn the ENERGY STAR are better than basic building code products and have performance levels designed to work well in your climate—and they also come in a wide variety of styles, colors, and frame types. Look for the ENERGY STAR label and climate zone map when ordering new windows from a builder, dealer, or contractor to ensure that it is ENERGY STAR certified and provides more comfort and energy savings.

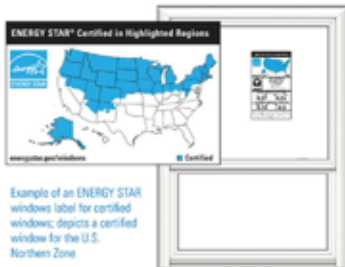
When to Replace Windows

Windows have many uses in your home from adding light to making your home more visually appealing. However, old, poorly made, drafty, or degraded windows can waste lots of energy and leave you very uncomfortable when weather is the most extreme. Here are a few big indicators that it may be time to replace your windows.

- **Single-pane windows (windows with only one layer of glass)** – These windows are poor performers at insulating against cold weather and typically do not have coatings to block solar heat in the summer, increasing air conditioning costs. Single-pane windows are big energy wasters.
- **Windows with air leaks or drafts and degraded sills and sashes** – These windows also waste energy and are very uncomfortable to sit next to when it is cold and windy out. Degraded windows can also leak water into your walls causing more problems and allow insects and other pests to enter your home.
- **Windows that do not open or are painted shut** – Windows that do not open prevent you from enjoying fresh air on a nice day or a cool evening after a hot day which can reduce energy costs. Windows that do not open are also hard to clean and maintain.

Did you know?

You could save an average of about 12% annually on your energy costs by replacing poor performing windows with ENERGY STAR certified models. These savings are based on a national average and will vary based on your climate.



Example of an ENERGY STAR windows label for certified window for the U.S. Northern Zone

How to Select the Right Windows

If you are considering buying new windows, it is important to choose ones that make sense for your climate. While some windows are better at keeping you warm in the winter, others help reduce air conditioning costs in the summer. Some windows balance heat and cold for climates in the middle of the country. Here are some parameters to consider.

- **U-factor** – A measure of the insulating power of a window. The lower the number the more the window will insulate.
- **SHGC (Solar Heat Gain Coefficient)** – A measure of how much solar heat from sunlight is blocked by the window. The lower the number the more heat is blocked.

ENERGY STAR windows are designed to be efficient for where you live and can be separated by four climate zones.

- **The Northern Zone** criteria are focused on better insulation to save on heating costs.
- **The Southern Zone** criteria are focused on blocking solar heat coming through the glass to save on air conditioning costs.
- **In the Central Zones** of the country, the criteria are balanced between insulating and heat blocking.



Incentives to Help You Save

Rebates: Rebates for windows may be available through your local utility company. Check the web site of your local utility and visit the ENERGY STAR Rebate Finder and enter your zip code to see what incentives are available in your area (www.energystar.gov/rebatefinder). You can also check with your contractor to see if they know of incentives or rebates in your area.

Federal Tax Credits: There are currently federal tax credits for the cost of purchasing ENERGY STAR windows, and skylights for 30% of the cost up to \$600. Exterior windows or skylights must meet the **ENERGY STAR Most Efficient** criteria. This tax credit is available through December 31, 2032. Learn more about this tax credit at www.energystar.gov/about/federal_tax_credits/windows_skylights.

Assistance for Low-to-Moderate Income Families: The Department of Energy (DOE) offers a Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) available for households with lower incomes that qualify for Supplemental Security Income, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, and other income eligibility criteria (www.energy.gov/wap). This program includes a home energy assessment and common home improvements such as repairing windows or replacing a few damaged windows—but generally do not replace a whole house full of windows. Some programs also offer storm windows. You can also contact your local electric utility to see if they offer energy efficiency home upgrades for low-income customers.

ENERGY STAR® is the simple choice for energy efficiency. For more than 25 years, EPA's ENERGY STAR program has been America's resource for saving energy and protecting the environment. Learn more at energystar.gov/windows.



INTRODUCING ENERGY STAR HOME UPGRADE

Windows are one of six high-impact, energy efficiency improvements for your home that are designed to work together to deliver significant energy and cost savings. Count on ENERGY STAR to help you transition from fossil fuels to a cleaner, healthier, and more comfortable home.

energystar.gov/homeupgrade



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

member connection

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 equip-

ment 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. 1093087

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

#swceTRUST

Eli Underwood Benefit Breakfast

SUNDAY APRIL 14, 2024
SERVING BREAKFAST
FROM 9:00 TO 1:00

MENU:

- Pancakes and French Toast with Grandma's homemade flavored syrups (gluten free options available)
- Sausage, Eggs, Juice and Coffee

Quilt & Charcuterie Board Raffles
from 9 to 12:30
(need not to be present to win)

"Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a reward from him." - Psalm 127

PANCAKE BREAKFAST AT
ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH,
7126 SW 98th St, Ellendale MN

For more information contact
Jim Arthur at 507-456-1522.



Eli is the son of Racey and Rachel Underwood, he was born on September 21st at 28 weeks weighing 1 lb 13 oz. Eli is a little fighter who has overcome many obstacles to come home to his family. Although Eli is doing well, his medical journey is not over yet and this benefit will continue to help Eli, Racey, and Rachel.



ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

A well-designed landscape can add beauty to your home and reduce home heating and cooling costs. Plant deciduous trees with high, spreading crowns to the south of your home to block sunlight in the summer and reduce the need for air conditioning. Deciduous trees lose their leaves in the winter, allowing sunlight to warm your home.

Plant evergreen trees and shrubs with low crowns to block winter winds. Dense evergreen trees and shrubs planted to the north and northwest are the most common type of windbreak and can help lower energy used for home heating.

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