




the power of human connections

sparks

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

a monthly newsletter from Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric

August 2024

Your billing statement this month has a special line listing the amount of your electric sales less power costs in 2023. This is shown as **2023 PATRONAGE BASIS**. Capital credit equity you've been allocated for 2023 is shown as **2023 ALLOCATION**, if electric sales exceeded power costs. Also listed is the **CAPITAL CREDIT BALANCE**, which is the amount of remaining accumulated equity. Please save this month's billing statement if you will need any of those amounts for tax preparation. Only inactive accounts receive separate statements of equity.

inside connections

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- 4** Cookin' Connection; SWCE community solar update; *Sparks* in brief; Steele County Tip Line
- 5** Powering up after an outage; Keeping food safe during and after an outage; Downed power line safety; Call 811 before you dig; Litomysl Summer Festival
- 6** Ad Connection; 4-Seasons Vacations
- 7** Ad Connection; Ductless ASHP promotion; How to find qualified pros to conduct a home energy audit
- 8** Washington, D.C. Youth Tour; How an ASHP works

calendar of events

August

- 2-4** Claremont Hogfest
- 10** Lonsdale Community Day
- 11** 811 reminder to call before you dig
- 13-18** Steele County Free Fair
- 22** Minnesota State Fair starts
- 24** Caleb Erickson Memorial Event in Waseca

National Wellness Month

Youth Tour experience in Washington, D.C.—“unforgettable”

by Langston Richter, Steele-Waseca 2024 Youth Tour delegate

My experience in Washington D.C. with the Youth Tour was unforgettable.

While the Minnesota delegation was in Washington D.C., we not only visited numerous famous monuments and memorials, but also made lifelong friends and connections along the way.

Some of the highlights included the National Cathedral, the Holocaust Museum, the Jefferson Memorial, the Washington Monument, the changing of the guard at Arlington National Cemetery, and so much more. 31097

The monuments that we visited were quite spectacular in themselves, but we also saw them at night while on a Segway tour! My favorite monument

(Youth Tour experience continued on Page 8)



Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric 2024 Youth Tour Delegate Langston Richter is pictured with the Capitol in the background.



Thirty-four delegates from Minnesota participated in this year's Washington, D.C. Youth Tour, June 18-23. The Minnesota Rural Electric Association organized activities for the state's delegates as the Tour was hosted by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. Steele-Waseca's Delegate Langston Richter is pictured kneeling in the front row, second from the right.

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This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Website: www.swce.coop

Email: info@swce.coop



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Office Hours

8:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m., Monday–Friday

Operations Office Hours

8:00 a.m.–3:30 p.m., Monday–Friday

For Customer Service, Billing Questions and Power Outages Phone:

507-451-7340 or 800-526-3514

Before calling to report an outage

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

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

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

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

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

manager connection



By Syd Briggs,
 General Manager

As many continue to navigate through the cost of things during these inflationary times, Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric members may seek value with their energy dollar by utilizing residential rebates offered by the co-op this year.

Steele-Waseca is offering up to \$500 for members participating in the ChargeWise program. This is a voluntary program offered by participating electric cooperatives for qualified members who own a plug-in (PEV) or plug-in hybrid (PHEV) electric vehicle.

The program allows members to charge their PEV/PHEV in their garage or carport using electricity from a specially installed 20-amp ChargeWise outlet. This ChargeWise outlet only provides energy during the off-peak hours of 11 p.m.–7 a.m. Members simply plug in the PEV in the evening and their vehicle is charged during those overnight hours at a reduced rate. They wake up to a fully-charged electric vehicle. 1010124

Rebates for Energy Star® central air conditioners are \$50 with a SEER2 ≥ 14.3 and require a quality installation. Rebates for Energy Star air source heat pumps (ASHPs) range from \$500–\$800 with an HSPF2 ≥ 7, and require a quality installation. Steele-Waseca has extended its promotional rebates for ducted and ductless ASHPs until the end of July 2024. To find a qualified installer, visit Steele-Waseca's website, swce.coop, click on "Residential Rebates," then "Qualified Installers List," listed under "Quick Links."

Rebates for Energy Star ground source heat pumps (GSHPs) are \$100 per ton in 2024.

Heat pump water heaters (HPWHs) this year have a rebate of \$500.

Steele-Waseca is offering a \$50 rebate (retrofit only) for a residential HVAC (Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning) Electronically Commutated Motor (ECM), which offers a higher efficiency rating than typical electric blowers or condenser fan motors.

Energy Star labeled refrigerators and



Products that have earned the Energy Star label have been independently certified to meet strict energy efficiency standards.

freezers are eligible for a \$50 rebate, only if you recycle your old unit.

Dehumidifiers with the Energy Star label are eligible for a \$25 rebate.

Residential lighting rebates in 2024 for LED (light emitting diode) lightbulbs with the Energy Star label are \$2 per bulb (limit 5 bulbs).

Steele-Waseca members who install a 50-100 watt LED yard light fixture (not the bulb) that is Energy Star or DLC (Design Light Consortium) rated are eligible for a \$30 rebate; Wi-Fi smart thermostats are eligible for a \$25 rebate; Energy Star labeled electric clothes dryers are eligible for a \$25 rebate; a central air conditioner or ASHP tune up is eligible for a \$25 rebate per unit; variable speed pool pumps with the Energy Star label are eligible for a \$100 rebate; and pool ASHPs are eligible for a \$200 rebate.

If you have a question, or wish to request a rebate form, please call Operations Assistant Cindy Butterfield at Steele-Waseca weekdays between 8 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Rebate forms are available at Steele-Waseca's website, swce.coop, by clicking on "Residential Rebates." Please visit energystar.gov to check the model number of qualifying products.

Completed rebate forms must be accompanied with a copy of the receipt and submitted within 90 days of purchase. Please allow 6-8 weeks for processing. The rebate will appear as a credit on your Steele-Waseca bill.

#swceINNOVATION

Promotion expires at the end of July 2024

YOUR SOURCE FOR ENERGY-EFFICIENT HEATING AND COOLING.

ENERGY WISE  MN

Take advantage of our additional **\$\$\$** promotional rebate when you install a qualifying, energy-saving ducted/hybrid air source heat pump!


Ducted/Hybrid ASHP Efficiency Rating Requirements	Regular Rebate	Promo Rebate
≥14.3 SEER2 & ≥7.5 HSPF2	\$500.00	\$750.00
≥15.2 SEER2 & ≥8.1 HSPF2	\$800.00	\$1,000.00

An air-source heat pump (ASHP) uses electricity to heat and cool. It works like an air conditioner to cool, and works in reverse to move warmth from outside air into your home to heat. It heats a home up to three times more efficiently than forced-air and electric-resistance heating systems.

Learn more at:

energywisemn.com/air-heat-pumps

Limited funds are available and awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Rebate amounts and promotional dates vary by cooperative. Contact your cooperative to confirm system requirements and rebate amounts.

 #swceLIFE+



MREA perspective on state's completed legislative session

by Jenny Glumack, Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA) director of government affairs

The 2024 legislative session adjourned in complete chaos at midnight on Sunday, May 19.

Democrats, who control the House, Senate and Governor's office, rushed to pass their legislative agenda before the constitutional deadline over Republican objections.

For cooperative member-owners, the session was mostly a success with no new costly mandates, the passage of a bipartisan permitting reform bill and an expansion of scholarship eligibility for students interested in an energy career. Nonetheless, the inability of the legislature to agree on a tax bill that includes common sense property tax relief for cooperative member-owners remains a disappointment.

Permitting Act was a bipartisan clean energy permitting reform package that incorporated various ideas with widespread support from energy stakeholders.

The package will make the electric sector permitting faster and more cost-effective. This bill was a high priority for many stakeholders, especially clean energy advocates, who consider permitting reform critical to building the wind and solar generation and transmission infrastructure needed to achieve carbon-free by 2040. The legislation should help save member-owners money while accelerating the construction of necessary infrastructure to improve reliability during the transition to cleaner energy.

statewide association representing electric cooperative member-owners, was ensuring no new mandates were imposed on electric cooperatives this session. Several bills, including distributed generation mandates, interconnection mandates and a cooperative governance mandate, were introduced or carried over from last year. However, none of these bills moved forward or passed thanks in part to MREA's work and the work of member-owners advocating for their cooperatives. 77300

Cooperatives are governed by the members they serve, and heavy-handed government mandates only work to raise costs, undermine local democracy and add layers of unhelpful bureaucracy. We are grateful to legislators in both parties who stood up and said "no" to additional mandates.

(Legislative perspective continued on Page 8)

Minnesota Energy Infrastructure Permitting Act

The Minnesota Energy Infrastructure

No New Mandates

One of the top priorities of the Minnesota Rural Electric Association, the

cookin' connection

Fish Fillets

Gail Burke

Faribault

- 1 lb. fish fillets
- 1 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- Paprika to taste

- 1 c. sour cream
- 1 Tbsp. onion, finely chopped
- 1/4 c. Parmesan cheese, grated

Place fish in a greased and shallow 3-quart baking dish. In a small bowl combine sour cream, Parmesan cheese, lemon juice, onion, and salt. Spread the mixture over the fish and sprinkle with paprika. Bake the fish uncovered at 350° for 20-25 minutes or until the fish flakes easily with a fork. Enjoy!

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 45 kWh credit per panel on this month's statement for energy generated during June 2024. 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.

July issue of Sparks



- Numbers found:**
Byron/Carla Brady
Thomas/Rhonda Kremer
- Numbers not found:**
Jim Fredrickson
David Ordahl
Gwen/Derick Vandenbroeke



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. 18895

- **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.

- **June temps** – The average high temperature for June was 77° F, while the average low was 59° F. This resulted in 102 Cooling Degree Days (CDDs), and 20.5 Heating Degree Days (HDDs). They compare to last year's average high of 83° F and average low of 60° F. This resulted in 209 CDDs and 16 HDDs.

- **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

Powering Up After an Outage

When the power goes out, we expect it to be restored within a few hours. But when a major storm or natural disaster causes widespread damage, extended outages may result. Our line crews work long, hard hours to restore service safely to the greatest number of consumers in the shortest time possible. Here's what's going on if you find yourself in the dark:



1. High-Voltage Transmission Lines:

Transmission towers and cables that supply power to transmission substations (and thousands of members) rarely fail. But when damaged, these facilities must be repaired before other parts of the system can operate.

2. Distribution Substation:

A substation can serve hundreds or thousands of consumers. When a major outage occurs, line crews inspect substations to determine if problems stem from transmission lines feeding into the substation, the substation itself or if problems exist further down the line.

3. Main Distribution Lines:

If the problem cannot be isolated at a distribution substation, distribution lines are checked. These lines carry power to large groups of consumers in communities or housing developments.

4. Tap Lines:

If local outages persist, supply lines (also known as tap lines) are inspected. These lines deliver power to transformers, either mounted on poles or placed on pads for underground service, outside businesses, schools and homes.

5. Individual Homes:

If your home remains without power, the service line between a transformer and your residence may need to be repaired. Always call to report an outage to help line crews isolate local issue.

Downed and Dangerous

If you see a downed power line, always assume it is energized and dangerous. Avoid going near it or anything in contact with the power line.



Downed power lines can energize the ground up to 35 ft. away - so keep your distance.



Never drive over a downed line or through water that is touching the line.



If you see a downed line, notify the local authorities immediately.



Never try to move a downed power line, even if you think the line is deenergized or if you're using a non-conductive item - this will not prevent injury or death!



Source: ESF.org

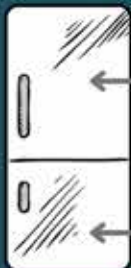


Know what's below.
Call before you dig.

Keep Food Safe

During and After a Power Outage

Refrigerated or frozen foods may not be safe to eat after a power outage. Use these tips to minimize food loss and reduce risk of illness.



4

Refrigerated food will last four hours. After four hours, place refrigerated foods in a cooler with ice.

24 OR 48

Food in a half-full freezer will last 24 hours. Food in a full freezer will last 48 hours.

Food Safety Tips

1. Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible.
2. Throw out any food with an unusual odor, color or texture.
3. Throw out perishable food in your refrigerator after four hours without power or a cold source (like a cooler with ice).

When in doubt, throw it out!



Litomysl Summer Festival

Holy Trinity Catholic Church
9946 SE 24th Ave., Owatonna

Sunday, July 28

Polka Mass - 10:15 a.m.

Festival 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Food, games & prizes for all ages

Live Music

Prune, Poppyseed, & Apricot "Bucht" Silent Auction & Used-a-Bit sale

Everyone welcome!

www.litomyslchurch.org

ad connection

give away

1959 14' LARSON RUNABOUT FIBERGLASS BOAT w/1959 Johnson o.b. motor on Holsclaw trailer. 456-0210.

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

SOMEONE TO DO WEED WHACKING WITH YOUR WEED WHACKER. 451-5172.

OLD DIRT BIKES & MOTORCYCLES, 1970s, '80s, '90s, Kawasaki, Suzuki, or Yamaha. 323-5610.

FORD SKID STEER, diesel. 330-1849.

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

SNOWBLOWER & LEAF BAGGER compatible with a Toro Wheel Horse 520 lawn tractor. 581-3018.

RETIRED P.T.A. WILL ASSIST CLIENTS IN THEIR HOMES w/personal cares, exercises, light house-keeping, errands. 456-0076.

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

USED 5' OR 6' BUCKET for skid loader. 465-8244.

4' X 10' USED CONCRETE HOG SLATS. 456-8094.

TOPPER for a '92 Dodge Dakota pickup, 61.5"x79". 952-652-2933.

for sale

(2) WHITE VINYL WINDOWS, new, single hung, 21.5x43.5, \$170; 23x45.5, \$180 (sold separate). 651-453-1711.

STIHL MM 56 TILLER, used once; KEWANEE 500 ELEVATOR, 50' for bales. 327-9965.

INDOOR WINTER BOAT STORAGE AVAIL., Owat. 456-1874.

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

All area codes are 507 unless otherwise noted

7' X 14' HAY WAGON, painted red & white, shedded when not in use, used for hay rides, really nice shape. 330-1154.

GRAIN CLEANER; WHEELBARROW. 451-5172.

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

2012 MERCEDES C250 SEDAN, needs work. 612-423-4500.

WRINGER WASHER; PROFESSIONAL MEAT CUTTER SAW; (20) PLASTIC DUCK DECOYS w/ weights. 461-0241.

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

15' CEDAR STRIP CANOE, 60% completed w/fiberglass & epoxy resin, instructions & video; GRAIN HOPPER for 6" or 8" auger, \$100. 465-8566.

1990 27' MOTOR HOME, new cond., 40,000 mi., lots of new extras, \$8000. 210-1826.

2000 LUND TYEE 1950, 1 owner, 305 V8 Mercruiser, 15-hp Mercury 4-stroke kicker, Yacht Club tandem trailer w/new tires, great boat, \$18,500. 475-0473.

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

GAS DRYER, gd cond., \$200/obo. 210-6901.

USED ENGINES, TRANSMISSIONS for trucks, cars, used auto parts, 30-day warranty on eng. & trans. 332-2300.

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

2000 CHEV. SILVERADO 1500 LS EXTENDED CAB. 451-2722.

2015 LINCOLN MKS, 85,000 mi., \$16,000. 612-802-9251.

OLDER BOBCAT SKID LOADER, \$3000/obo. 465-8244.

CA TRACTOR, adjustable front & rear axles. 475-7022.

CRAFTSMAN 10" TABLE SAW w/table extensions, roller stand, & dado blade, \$50/obo. 334-8827.

HESSTON 550 ROUND BALER, gd shape, \$3500. 213-1277.

FARM SITE, 9.8 acres w/house & bldgs; WATER TANKS; TRUCK TOOLBOX; FARMALL H, nds wrk; CASE 1816 SKID LOADER; NH 479 HAYBINE; PARTS for NH haybine. 783-9240.

METAL DOG FENCING PANELS, (5) 10'x6' & (1) 10'x6' w/door; 9.5' KAYAK; 20' KAYAK TRAILER. 330-0234.

MINI STORAGE UNITS, Blmg Prairie. 456-2957.

TREK 820, 21 spd, men's, 26x175, \$100; TREK 3700, 21 spd, men's, F.S. Fork, 26x175, \$200; TREK GIRL'S MT 200, 21 spd, 24x175, \$100. 330-3178.

A-C WD 45 TRACTOR w/3-point fast hitch, exc. cond.; 2006 SUZUKI M109R, beautiful custom, must see the paint job! Best offer. 210-1006.

20" GRIZZLY PLANER, 3 hp; 60" BUSH HOG MOWER, 3 blade, 3-point hitch; HAPPY VALLEY APPLE CIDER PRESS; BRAZIL AGATES, PET. WOOD, ETC., 200+ lbs. 330-8361.

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

20' HINIKER STALK CHOPPER; (2) E-Z TRAIL BALE BASKETS; JD 640 RAKE; NH 489 HAYBINE; JD 328 BALER; CASE IH 7500 6-BTM PLOW. 491-1781.

SURECROP STRAWBERRIES, 10 plants \$1; LATHAM RASPBERRY PLANTS, \$1.50/ea.; MARY WASHINGTON ASPARAGUS ROOTS, \$1/each. 581-2301.

1998 HONDA GOLDWING 1500 SE w/CB, approx. 68,000 mi., \$3500/obo. 461-9422.

TREE TRIMMING, REMOVAL, & STUMP GRIND., professional climber & aerial lift to U of M guidelines; 2005 SEA-DOO 3D JET SKI w/trailer & cover, new batt. 456-1609.

1974 CHEVROLET TAILGATE. 649-7794.
(For Sale ads continued on Page 7)

travel

SUMMER ON THE MISSISSIPPI, Aug. 21-24. Deluxe motor coach, 6 meals, 3 nights accommodations, lunch cruise, dinner theater, John Deere Pavilion Tour & more! \$799 pp w/2 per room.

WASHINGTON, D.C., Sept. 13-17. Guided Memorial and Monuments Tour, tram ride through Arlington National Cemetery, full day visit to the Smithsonian & more! \$1,799 pp w/2 per room.

CIVIL WAR BATTLEFIELDS, Sept. 16-25. Deluxe motor coach, 13 meals, Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site, Mill Springs Battlefield, Belmont Mansion & more! \$1,899 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 August 5 to ensure being printed in the September 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 October 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.

ad connection

(For Sale ads continued from Page 6)

PRIDE JAZZY EVO 613 ELEC. WHEELCHAIR in black, used only a few times, indoors only, \$2200. 583-6679.

8' PICKUP BOX TRAILER, 1969, 8' box, hvy duty, \$395; **MF 235 LOADER**, all hyd., incl. 4-way valve, 4 hyd. cylinders, gd cond., \$275; **METAL OFFICE DESK**. 455-3881.

BOAT/RV STORAGE FOR RENT. 475-2322.

8' FARM KING Y960Q SNOWBLOWER; **JD 960 FIELD CULT./DIGGER**, been in shed. 213-0443.

30" NATURAL GAS 4-BURNER COOKTOP, \$50. 456-8968.

WEBER TRAVELER GRILL, used vry little; **REESE 18K 5TH WHEEL HITCH** for Ford F-350 factory pucks. 213-6582.

NH 156 HAY RAKE, \$1200; **JD 2510 TRACTOR w/ JD 48 loader & cab**, \$8500/obo; **(2) 13.9 X 28 TITAN TRACTOR TIRES** on A-C WD rims, new, \$800; **WIDE FRONT** for A-C WD45, \$300. 330-3945.

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

WILLIE G LEATHER COAT, women's med., \$250; **W.G. SM. CHAPS**, worn twice, \$200; **MORE COATS, CHAPS, VEST, BAGS**, variety of sizes. 491-4565.

1952 JD B, \$1200; **1952 CASE DC w/loader**, \$1500 (both converted to 12V & run good); **BROWN ELEC. RECLINER CHAIR**, \$75. 465-8194.

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

(8) CEDAR PORCH RAILING SECTIONS, about 7' long, Colonial Spindles need paint, \$100/obo; **BLK CHERRY LUMBER**, live edge. 339-0763.

A-C TRACTORS C, B, CA, MOWERS; ZERO-TURN EXMARK MOWER; FLATBEDS, new/used; **JD 4-BTM PLOW, DISC, 3-PT MOWER**. 402-7679

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.

Promotion expires at the end of July 2024

YOUR SOURCE FOR ENERGY-EFFICIENT HEATING AND COOLING.

ENERGY WISE  MN

Take advantage of our additional **\$100** promotional rebate when you install a qualifying, energy-saving ductless air source heat pump!


Ductless ASHP System Size	Efficiency Rating Requirements	Regular Rebate	Promo Rebate
≤ 1 ton	≥14.3 SEER2 & ≥7.5 HSPF2	\$100.00	\$200.00
≤ 1 ton	≥15.2 SEER2 & ≥8.1 HSPF2	\$200.00	\$300.00

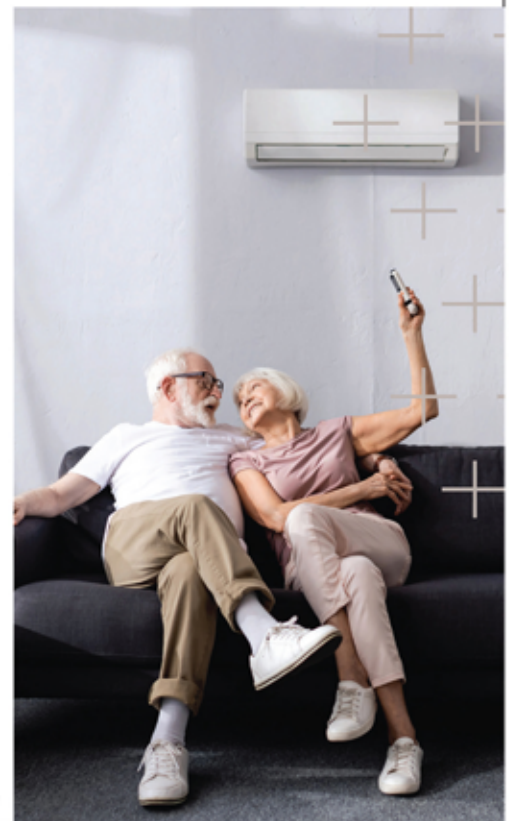
An air-source heat pump (ASHP) uses electricity to heat and cool. It works like an air conditioner to cool, and works in reverse to move warmth from outside air into your home to heat. It heats a home up to three times more efficiently than forced-air and electric-resistance heating systems.

Learn more at:

energywisemn.com/air-heat-pumps

Limited funds are available and awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Rebate amounts and promotional dates vary by cooperative. Contact your cooperative to confirm system requirements and rebate amounts.

 #swceLIFE+



How do consumers find qualified professionals to conduct home energy audits?

Visit energy.gov/energysaver/professional-home-energy-assessments

member connection

(Youth Tour experience continued from Page 1)



Langston stated his favorite memorial to view at night was the Lincoln Memorial.

at night was definitely the Lincoln Memorial, where the twenty foot tall statue loomed over us, glowing over the Potomac River in the night.

My experience in Washington D.C. also involved an opportunity to learn. I expanded my knowledge regarding not only the basis of American society as we know it, but also about the importance rural electric cooperatives hold in our lives.

I received the opportunity to hear directly from Senators Amy Klobuchar and Tina Smith at the U.S. Capitol, their opinions and actions on government policies involving rural electricity.

Beyond sightseeing and learning opportunities, I really enjoyed getting to know the chaperones, and the other teenagers who were selected to be delegates to represent our cooperatives at the Youth Tour. 1081814

During the Washington D.C. Youth Tour, I made many friends who I plan to continue to keep in touch with. I cannot thank Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric enough for this life-changing experience, and I hope many other people my age can also enjoy attending the Washington D.C. Youth Tour!

Langston was also asked about the hot weather in Washington, D.C., with temperatures during the Youth Tour, June 18-23, in the mid- to upper-90s. "The heat was pretty rough, but nothing an ice cream cone couldn't cure!"

#swceLIFE+

(Legislative perspective continued from Page 3)

Workforce Development Scholarships

MREA's proposal to add "energy" to the list of industries eligible for workforce development scholarships at Minnesota state colleges and universities passed as part of the final Higher Education bill and could mean more aid to students looking to join our industry.

The Workforce Development Scholarship Program provides aid of \$2,500 per academic year (\$1,250 per semester) for students enrolled in programs in nine select industries and is now available to those in lineworker education. This program is available at all Minnesota state schools but is geared toward full-time, two-year associate degree programs.

It is especially valuable to students because it has more expansive uses than other forms of financial aid, is provided in addition to other scholarship and grant opportunities and does not have an income limit. Because other types of state aid go only to low-income students and max out before paying for the full cost of attendance, this scholarship can often close the gap between a student's full cost and other aid.

Cooperatives can now work with their local Minnesota state schools to set up a matching scholarship for students who choose to study and energy-related field. The law sets aside 10% of the funding for this program every year to increase awards at colleges that successfully develop local business partnerships and receive matching scholarship dollars from those businesses. This program is a great opportunity to develop our future workforce while helping local students afford college.

Property Tax Relief

MREA's bipartisan property tax clarification bill did not pass, as no final tax

bill was agreed upon before the closing moments of the session when a monster omnibus bill was pieced together. The provision was a priority in Governor Walz's supplemental budget as well as the House and Senate Omnibus Tax bills and faced no opposition. The bill would have provided property tax relief to cooperatives by clarifying existing property tax law.

The bill remains a priority for cooperatives across the state and will hopefully pass next session. In the meantime, the MREA is working with the Minnesota Department of Revenue to help alleviate the problem until a permanent solution is signed into law.

Conclusion

Despite the challenges and last-minute chaos, the 2024 legislative session brought several positive outcomes for Minnesota's electric cooperative member-owners. The passage of crucial permitting reforms, the prevention of new costly mandates and the expansion of workforce development scholarships are significant wins.

However, the lack of progress on property tax relief remains a key issue that we will continue to address in future sessions. The Minnesota Rural Electric Association, alongside member cooperatives, remains committed to advocating for policies that support the affordability, reliability and sustainability of our energy infrastructure.

As we move forward, we will keep working tirelessly to ensure that the voices of cooperative members are heard and their needs met. To help lend your voice in support of cooperative values, you can sign up for alerts at <https://voicesforcooperativepower.com/>.

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