




the power of human connections

sparks

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

a monthly newsletter from Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric

May 2025

OFFICIAL NOTICE of Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's 89th Annual Meeting

**Tuesday, June 3, 2025
9 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.
2411 West Bridge Street,
Owatonna, MN**

Steele-Waseca annual meeting details, voting with the mail-in ballot

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric will be conducting their annual meeting Tuesday, June 3, at their headquarters in Owatonna.

The co-op's 89th annual meeting will be starting at 10:30 a.m., at 2411 West Bridge Street, Owatonna. The meeting

is open to Steele-Waseca member-owners, and their guests. The doors will open at 9 a.m., with display and informational booths open until 10:15 a.m.

Parking will be available on the property surrounding the co-op's headquarters.
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calendar of events

May

- 1 May Day;
National Day of Prayer
- 4 National Star Wars Day
- 5-9 Nat'l Teacher Appreciation Week
- 6-12 National Nurses Week
- 10 Minnesota fishing opener
- 11 Mother's Day 24645
- 15 Peace Officers Memorial Day
- 17 Armed Forces Day
- 17-23 National Safe Boating Wk
- 26 Memorial Day
SWCE office is closed



Steele-Waseca
Cooperative Electric



Attention Debit or Credit Card Auto Pay Members!

On May 5th, if you are currently registered for Auto Pay with a debit or credit card you will be required to re-register for Auto Pay in our new SmartHub payment system!



Web & Mobile Instructions

After we launch on May 5th, we will have instructions on how to register your account and re-activate your debit or credit card Auto Pay settings on our SmartHub support page at swce.coop/smarthub.



Need Some Assistance?

After launch day on May 5th, if you have questions or issues with the registration process, you may contact customer service at (507) 451-7340.

***YOU CANNOT REGISTER UNTIL THE 05/05 LAUNCH DATE.**

Dates and Information



If you are on our current Auto Pay system using a debit or credit card, please take note of these dates. We will have a grace period regarding late fees.

On May 5th, please register your account in SmartHub. We will have information on how to re-register your account for Auto Pay on our SmartHub support page at swce.coop/smarthub.

Payments During System Transition

After Thursday, April 24th, no payments will be able to be made via debit or credit card on the website during this transition period.

Cash and check payments can still be made in our lobby or checks can be mailed or left in our night drop box.

More information can be found on our SmartHub support page at swce.coop/smarthub.

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 Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric
 2411 W. Bridge Street, P.O. Box 485
 Owatonna, MN 55060-0485

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Website: www.swce.coop

Email: info@swce.coop



Board of Directors

PJ Duchene, *Vice President* ... District 1
 Geraldine Lienke ... District 2
 Neil Schlaak ... District 3
 Dennis Ringhofer ... District 4
 Rodney Krell, *President* ... District 5
 Gary Wilson, *GRE Director* ... District 6
 John Beal ... District 7
 Ronald Sommers ... District 8
Secretary/Treasurer
 Scott Carlson ... District 9
Assistant Secretary/Treasurer

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



Active times at Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric as the co-op prepares

for its 89th annual meeting Tuesday, June 3, at our headquarters in Owatonna.

It's a great opportunity for myself, the co-op's board of directors, and employees to chat with our member-owners and learn more about what they value about their membership and the annual meeting.

We hope you'll join us as we'll open the doors at 9 that morning at 2411 W. Bridge St., with designated parking on the grounds, and golf car shuttles to and from the meeting, which will start promptly at 10:30. 1092322

It's year #2 for the mail-in ballot for electing directors. The mail-in ballot will be arriving the week of April 27, and they need to be received by Survey & Ballot Systems by 10 a.m., Friday, May 30, to be counted. There won't be any in-person voting at the annual meeting, but the results will be announced at the meeting. You may learn more about the candidates on Page 5 of this month's *Sparks* newsletter.

Prior to the start of the annual meeting, co-op employees will be registering members with the postcards being mailed the week of May 19. While members may bring a guest, only members will be eligible for prizes and giveaways. If you are a member who can't attend, you may not have someone else submit your postcard for prizes given to those members able to attend.

The co-op will continue our practice of collecting non-perishable items for an area food shelf. Donors will receive an LED lightbulb in appreciation for their generosity.

If you can't stay for the annual meeting, members may register that morning, prior to 10:30, in person or by utilizing the drive-thru option, and receive the giveaways for members. Non-perishables for a local food shelf will also be collected at the drive-thru location at Steele-Waseca.

The meeting will also share a few brief business updates, and hear from last year's Youth Tour delegate, Langston Richter of Faribault. Unfortunately, Steele-Waseca didn't receive any applications for the 2025 Youth Tour, but will be sharing plans



Hy-Vee in Owatonna is preparing the smoked pork chops, like they were last year at Steele-Waseca (pictured above), as part of the meal being served at the annual meeting Tuesday, June 3. If you like Dilly@Bars, Steele-Waseca will have one of those for you for dessert.

to incentivize applications from eligible sophomores and juniors in 2026.

Spending time with you and hearing your take on our energy future is important to us. In fact, it's essential because everything we do is shaped by the members in our service area. Consumer needs and changing technology impact how we manage and deliver energy to local homes, schools, and businesses.

As we navigate through changes in the coming years, we need to hear from you and your neighbors to best plan to meet the long-term needs of all member-owners.

Our board of directors are comprised of nine members who live and work right here in our service area, so they are in the best position to know where community investments are most needed. Our board members come from all areas of our territory and care about our communities.

Every year, Steele-Waseca invest funds to make updates to our local system, which helps maintain reliability and grid resilience.

We're a co-op and our business model is meant to serve the members and the communities in which it operates.

Our core purpose and mission is to provide safe, reliable, and affordable power. We hope you'll exercise the benefits of your co-op membership and join us for this year's annual meeting. We're looking forward to seeing you!

#swceAPPRECIATION

member connection

(Annual meeting continued from Page 1)

ters. TC Custom Carts of Owatonna will be supplying several golf cars to shuttle members and their guests from their vehicle to and from the meeting.

Registration cards for the annual meeting will be mailed to members during the week of May 19. There won't be any preregistration requirements. **Please bring the registration card with you if you are planning to attend in person or using the drive-thru option.** To be eligible to receive giveaways from Steele-Waseca at the annual meeting, the name on the registration card must match the person submitting it. You can't have someone else present your registration card. If you are unable to attend due to illness (if you are not feeling well, please stay home) or other priorities, you are not eligible to receive the giveaways as this is a thank you for those able to attend.

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric will be collecting non-perishable items for an area food shelf this year. Members with a donation to that food shelf, whether monetary or a non-perishable item, will receive an LED lightbulb.

There will be two early bird drawings for prizes taking place prior to the

start of the annual meeting. The business portion of the meeting will begin promptly at 10:30 a.m., with the Presentation of Colors.

There will be no in-person voting at the annual meeting. Members will receive their mail-in ballots the week of April 27. Survey & Ballot Systems (SBS) is conducting the mail-in ballot process, including tabulation and auditing the election on behalf of Steele-Waseca.

Mail-in ballot materials will include:

- Ballot with voting instructions.
- Candidate biographies.
- Ballot envelope (the completed ballot must be inserted in the ballot envelope to be counted; only one ballot per envelope is allowed).
- Postage-paid yellow return envelope (ballot envelope is inserted into the yellow return envelope) and mailed.

Important voting notes:

- Individual members, meaning resi-

dents, will not need to sign the yellow return envelope.

- Entity members, meaning businesses, corporations, clubs, organizations, trusts, estates, or identified farms [i.e. XYZ Farm(s)] must fill out the authorization section, including signature, on the yellow return envelope for the ballot to be counted.

Mail-in ballots must be received in SBS's post office box (printed on the yellow return envelope) by 10 a.m., Friday, May 30, to be counted. DO NOT bring your ballot to the Steele-Waseca office. Be sure to mail your postage-paid yellow return envelope early.

Election results will be announced at the annual meeting. 1029218

The annual meeting, as in past years, will have the same treats, gift drawings, and meal. If you have questions, please call the Steele-Waseca office during regular business hours. *SWCE*

🐼 #swceAPPRECIATION



Schwab retires from Steele-Waseca

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric Safety Coordinator/Member Service Representative Jack Schwab poses with his original hardhat Wednesday, April 2, as he retired from the co-op after starting as an apprentice line technician Nov. 19, 1990. Jack will reflect on his Steele-Waseca career in an upcoming Sparks newsletter. Steele-Waseca and the many members he interacted with throughout his career wish him the best in his retirement.

🐼 #swceLIFE+

Federal action not likely to impact local energy bills

Courtesy: Great River Energy News Clips

As part of a larger effort to convince U.S. trade partners to take more serious action on drug smuggling, President Donald Trump implemented tariffs ranging from 10-25% on goods from Canada, Mexico and China.

Some Minnesotans worried over how the tariffs and other federal action could impact their electric bill, especially after energy imports coming from Ontario were threatened with a 25% surcharge on U.S.-bound electricity in retaliation to Trump's tariffs. Local utility providers said they expect any impacts of the federal actions around trade to have little impact on consumers in Minnesota.

Syd Briggs, general manager of the Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric, said the co-op sources its power from Great River Energy, which sources its energy from the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO). MISO is a power grid that supplies energy to at least part of 15 states, including Minnesota. It gets 2% of its electricity from Canada.

"I hope things work out between Canada and United States, as far as this going back and forth," he said. "However, as of right now, that one really shouldn't affect us, but it does affect citizens of the United States. So for their benefit, I hope that works out."

🐼 #swceTRUST

cookin' connection

Pasta & Sausage

Petra Cripe

2 Tbsp. olive oil
zucchini (sliced) or mixed mushrooms
1/4 c. white wine
1 small can tomato sauce
1 Tbsp. butter

Excelsior

3-4 Italian sausage (remove casings)
1 garlic clove minced
1/4 c. Parmesan cheese
8 oz. curly pasta
salt & pepper.

Boil pasta and reserve water. Saute sausage in oil until brown. Add garlic, zucchini or mushrooms, and sauce. Season with salt and pepper. Add wine, cheese, pasta, and 1/2 c. of the pasta water. Add butter and 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 March 2025. 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. 1109391

April issue of Sparks



Numbers found:

No members found their number

Numbers not found:

Jason Cummins
Michelle Ruedy
Matthew Gunderson
Edmund Wurst
Rebecca Lundberg



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 the SWCE office weekdays between 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m., or email rebates@swce.coop.

• **March temps** – The average high temperature for March was 49° F, while the average low was 27° F. This resulted in 844 Heating Degree Days (HDDs), and 0 Cooling Degree Days (CDDs). They compare to last year's average high of 48° F and average low of 25° F. This resulted in 897 HDDs and 0 CDDs.

• **ENERGY STAR® Rebates** – In 2025, 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, email rebates@swce.coop or call 507-451-7340 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

swce 2025 board of director nominees

May 2025



The 2025 Nominating Committee has selected the following nominees for the Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric board of directors. Committee members include: Matt LaCanne, Faribault; Daniel/Stacy Maas, Faribault; Casey/Natalie Roeker, New Richland; Rene/Pam Koester, Nerstrand; Bert Wiersma, Ellendale; Ralph/Leann Miller, Owatonna; Charlie Peters, Lonsdale; Douglas Starks, Owatonna, and Bruce Rumpza, Blooming Prairie. Steele-Waseca members will be receiving mail-in ballots the week of April 27. They need to be received in Survey & Ballot Systems post office box by 10 a.m., Friday, May 30, in order to be counted. Results of the mail-in ballot election of directors will be announced at Steele-Waseca's 89th annual meeting, Tuesday, June 3, at the co-op's headquarters, 2411 West Bridge Street in Owatonna.

District 2



Lianne M. Possin lives in rural New Richland. She grew up in Waseca and her parents owned and operated Preuss Bake Shop, where she learned how to bake, cater, and how a business operated. In 1999, Lianne married a grain and livestock farmer, where she helped in the barns, fields, and financial records. Lianne opened a small business in 2017 that involved embroidery and direct to garment printing. She also worked at Roundbank for nine years as a teller, and left to raise her three children. "I feel like I can make a difference, by being a attentive listener to the SWCE members and the board views," wrote Lianne. She credits being a great listener as a characteristic she could bring to the board. "I work well with others and have a fresh look at decisions the board is addressing," wrote Lianne.



Anton H. Seykora, and his wife, Chantelle, live in rural Ellendale. He grew up in Owatonna and after graduating in 1999, attended college and graduated with an ag production degree. Anton raises corn, soybeans, and sweet corn. He owns and operates a trucking company and has a partnership with a local canning company hauling sweet corn. "I would like to represent my district because I am outgoing and enjoy talking with people," wrote Anton. He wants to be the collaborative voice of members in the district, "...so they feel their voices, concerns and suggestions are being heard. I enjoy learning new things." Anton cited leadership experience through involvement with the Minnesota Farm Bureau. He was active for six years with the Promotion and Education Committee and was chairman for one year on the Minnesota Farm Bureau's board of directors. "This gave me leadership experience as well as working with a team on a state and national level," wrote Anton.

District 4



Dennis C. Ringhofer, incumbent, has been a board director at SWCE since 2004. "I live in Steele County, in Somerset Township with my better half, Becca, on my family farm," wrote Dennis. "We raise corn, soybeans and hay." Between Dennis and Becca, they have four children and 10 grandchildren. Dennis is an independent insurance agent for Ringhofer Insurance agency for 37 years and currently serves as vice president of the Owatonna Mutual Fire Insurance Company. "For SWCE, I have completed the Credentialed Cooperative Director Program and hold the Board Leadership Program Certificate," wrote Dennis. "I consider it an honor to be on the Board of Directors for SWCE to see that the needs are met for the farms, residential and industrial as professional as possible. I am very proud to say I am a member and director of SWCE, where we are member owned. There will be lots of changes in the next few years and I would like to be involved with those changes."



Alex Ebenhoh, and his wife, Vikki, live in rural Claremont. They have two children, a nine-year-old daughter and five-year-old son. Alex was born and raised in rural Steele County near Hope. "I had a case of wanderlust and took a 13 year trip to California where I worked in automotive restoration as well as at General Atomics," wrote Alex. "After returning to Minnesota I dabbled in the auction business and finally settled on machine repair. I enjoy spending time with my kids, threshing shows, reading, and swap meets." In finding his motivation to serve, Alex explained, "After joining the Havana town board I discovered how rewarding it is to give back to the community as a public servant. With a desire to continue giving back I would like to bring my unique skill set to our cooperative and assist in helping keep it the thriving and successful utility it has been for over 80 years." As for qualities he would bring to the board, "I am open minded and interested in new ideas and concepts, but also content with maintaining the current framework. Being self employed gives me flexibility to attend various meetings. I believe in being honest to a fault and maintaining integrity in everything I do."

District 6



Michael T. Herman, and his wife, Diana Lobo, live in rural Owatonna. He is president of Culligan Ultrapure, headquartered in Owatonna. He also serves as past president of the Owatonna Chamber of Commerce, and director on the national Water Quality Association board. "SWCE is a very good organization that serves a meaningful purpose and is involved with those communities it serves," wrote Michael. "Being a part of serving those who are members would be an honor and rewarding." As for the qualities he would bring to the board, "I believe that the leadership I have gained through 21 years of military and 19 years in the private sector would serve as an asset to this board," wrote Michael. "I also have several years experience serving on various boards."



Weston L. Wilson, and his wife, Cindy, live in rural Owatonna. Weston has lived in Steele County his entire life, and has been an electrician for 38 years. "I served on the South Central MN Electrical Workers Health Plan Governing Board for 14 yrs," wrote Weston, "where we oversaw the Plan and Financial Assets." He has also served on the Minnesota Board of Electricity for six years. Weston stated he has recently retired as an electrician and will have the time to devote to the responsibilities as a board member. "I would find it rewarding to be part of the Board, working for the members," wrote Weston. He stated his background in the electrical industry will benefit the co-op. "Having served on other Boards, I understand how to work with others to achieve a result that is the best for the members of the CO-OP."

ad connection

give away

KITTENS born March 21. 340-5373.

SILVER LAB, 10+ yrs old, male, fixed, up-to-date on shots, gd w/kids & cats, other dogs. 475-1989.

WOODEN SPOOLS at SWCE. 451-7340/Todd.

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

(2) **BOAT SEAT SWIVELS**. 663-1275.

14" RIM for Minnesota wagon; **RHUBARB PLANTS**. 581-2301.

TDR TRANSFER DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS in Erin & Forest Twsp, CPI vs CER calculation, are you losing them? Sell & transfer off before deadline. 612-756-0271/Dan.

SMALL HARD-SHELL CAMPER, sleeps 2, no pop-up. 497-6402.

JUNKERS & REPAIRABLES, top \$ pd, also most farm equip., Fbo. 332-2300.

FORD DIESEL SKID STEER. 330-1849.

(2) **HUBCAPS** for a 2003 Buick LeSabre Custom. 451-5172.

PLOW SNOW (2025) FARM, steep hill, west side Circle Lk. 744-2512.

QUONSET MACHINE SHED, 30'x40' or larger, looking to tear down or move as one. 317-9246.

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

LOOKING FOR CARPENTERS & REMODELERS! Flexible hrs, full- or part-time work, no experience needed, must have a valid driver's license, \$18-25 an hour. Set up an interview with Natalie. 272-3530.

OLD MIXER MILL, does not need to work. 390-0600.

for sale

TOY HAULER TRAILER, tandem axle, 8' wide, 20' length, rear bifold ramp, new floor, wheels, lights; **YANMAR SIDE-BY-SIDE**. 363-6601.

All area codes are 507 unless otherwise noted

1987 GMC TRUCK, single axle, 15' steel box w/roll tarp, LP gas, runs great, \$3200/cash; **FLARE BOX** w/hoist, \$350. 456-0631.

(6) **HO TRAIN CASES**, approx. 24"x40", \$10/each. 440-8831.

MINI STORAGE UNITS, Blmg Prairie. 456-2957.

MASTIFF LAB PUPS, 8-wks-old. 838-9757.

60" BUSH HOG MOWER, 3 bladed, 3-point hitch w/extra set of new blades, \$1600. 330-8361.

BOAT/RV STORAGE FOR RENT. 475-2322.

17 WSM WINCHESTER, 25 GRS, 50 RD, \$25/box; **300 RSAUM, 178 GR, ELD-X HORNADY, 20 RD BOX**, \$55. 461-1191.

GORILLA CART, large, new cond., \$150. 676-1009.

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

WHEELCHAIR, like new, used inside house most of the time, \$150. 583-6679.

PORCELAIN TILE, 12"x24", gray/white tones, 220.5 sq. ft, \$200. 330-0326.

SHINGLING & LIGHT CONSTRUCTION (free estimates). 456-0296.

OAK FIREWOOD, clean, dry, & bark-free, can deliver, 1 cord for \$175. 451-5121.

"160 ACRES: GROWING UP ON A MINNESOTA DAIRY FARM," newly-published book, author SWCE member, available on amazon.com. 612-701-8988.

FORD 9" REAR AXLE in '75 Torino, \$250.390-5999.

(2) **TRACTOR TIRES**, 18.4-38, \$200 for both. 649-7794.

LATHAM RASPBERRY PLANTS, you dig them, \$1.50/ea. 581-2301.

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

RENTAL, Izaak Walton League Bldg., 4 mi. south of Owat., seats 100, full kitchen, grill, Wi-Fi, \$175. 451-7946.

USED AUTO & TRUCK PARTS: motors, trannys, tires, fenders, doors, Fbo. 332-2300.

1998 HONDA GOLD WING, best offer, call for details. 461-9422.

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

6' STUDDED FENCE POSTS; GALVANIZED GATES, 16"x4'; **BUTLER 300-GAL. FUEL TANK**. 236-0601.

17' ALUMACRAFT CANOE; 2005 27' INNSBRUCK TRAVEL TRAILER by Gulf Stream, vry clean, shedded in winter. 465-8566.

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

TREK GIRL'S BIKE, 20x175, \$40; **TREK BOY'S BIKE**, \$40; **TREK 800 SPORT BOY'S 18-SPD MTB**, 26x175, \$50. 330-3178.

GRAVITY BOX, WAGON, & DRY FERT. AUGER; GEHL 1865 ROUND BALER; "98" INDY TRAIL, & 2-PLACE TRAILER. 684-3136.

TIRES: P265/70/17, 14.9-24, 16.9/14-34 on spinout rims. 456-3136.

1997 5TH WHEEL JAYCO CAMPER. 688-9410.

WATER SKI ITEMS: combo pair skis, \$100; slalom ski, \$125; wakeboard, \$125 (all in good shape). 210-1616.

(2) **CHEVROLET GRAIN TRUCKS**, 1970 & '71, 1 w/cover, both w/hoist, 325-bu. 330-0183/leave msg.

S.S. CHAR-BROIL GRILL w/side burner, \$75/obo; **4' ALUM. WALK-IN GATE**, \$30/obo. 334-5412.

2006 LUND 1660 CLASSIC ALUM. OPEN M BOAT w/50-hp motor, trailer & accessories, \$10,500. 456-2223.

2006 YAMAHA VINO SCOOTER, 50cc, 831 mi., red, vry gd cond., new battery, \$1200. 413-3135.

(For Sale ads continued on Page 7)

travel

QUAD CITIES & GALENA, Jun 25-28. Mississippi River Museum, movie site of Field of Dreams, dinner cruise on the Celebration Belle, Circa 21 Dinner Theater & more! \$799 pp with 2 per room.

CANADIAN ROCKIES w/Calgary Stampede. July 6-13. Round trip Delta flights, 9 meals, city tours of Jasper, Banff, & Calgary, narrated cruise to Spirit Island, & more! \$5,799 pp with 2 per room.

GIRLFRIEND GETAWAY, Aug. 14-17. Ladies only mystery trip! Deluxe motor coach, 3 nights accommodations, 7 meals. \$999 pp with 2 per room. Any reservations made after 7/14/25 will req. full pymt.

Call 4-Seasons at 373-4705 or 373-2473, from 9 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 **May 5** to ensure being printed in the June **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 July issue.

☐ For Sale

☐ Wanted

☐ Give Away

Phone # _____ Account # _____

Name _____

Clip and mail to: SWCE, P.O. 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)

DUMP TRUCK AVAIL. to deliver rock, gravel, dirt, etc., 15.5-ton capacity. 456-7774.

KID'S BED for ages 7-12, dark brwn, bookshelf headboard, (4) large, pull-out drawers, 93" length, 46" width, 50" height, \$150. 301-9999.

2012 JD 6000-WATT GENERATOR, elec. start, like new, only used 25 hrs, \$1200/obo. 676-5560.

JD 10' DISC; PILES OF MANURE, you haul; (53) **COUNTRY MUSIC MAG.** from 2007-08. 213-0443.

FIREWOOD, mixed hardwoods, Nfld area, \$350/cord. 651-357-5092/Paul.

1955 JD 70 TRACTOR, gas, runs gd w/#45 loader, new Powertrol gasket, narrow front, gd tires, wheel weights. 456-3522/text.

GRASS HAY, small square, Fbo. 384-2910.

(2) **8-HOLE RIMS**, 7.5x24, \$25/ea.; **ALUM. WALKER**, like new, \$15; (4) **OAK DINING ROOM CHAIRS**, \$40. 744-2709.

HOLSTEIN BEEF, processed by Herda's (Fbo). 339-8577.

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

MIXED BARNYARD CHICKS. 475-1468.

GROUND UP CUSTOM TRAILERS, you dream it, we build it. 676-4886.

GRASS HAY, round bales, 4x5; **BURN BARRELS**, \$10; (2) **BOATS**, gd duck/fishing w/trailers need some work. 390-0600.

ABOVE GROUND 12' DIAMETER POOL, includes ladder & solar pool heater, \$150. 581-4827.

GRASS HAY BALES, small square, by Waldorf. 327-3672.

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

HAY, alfalfa/grass mix, 4x5, net wrapped, Owatonna. 213-8670.

A-C TRACTOR & TIRES; PICKUP FLATBEDS; (2) **CHEVY 2500HD**, 4x4; **WOODS 3-POINT FINISH MOWER**; **JD 14' DISC**; **PUREBRED GERMAN SHEP. PUPS**. 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.

Electric Cooperatives PAC cites success in 2024

America's Electric Cooperatives PAC reported 2024 was a successful year—thanks to participating members.

The combined contributions of the 27,626 participants helped NRECA:

- Raise a total of \$2,278,960.
- Disburse a total of \$2,047,114.10.
- Contribute \$1,373,000 to federal election candidates.
- Return \$662,004.10 to state-based PACs for local offices.

Additional 2024 highlights include:

- More than 560 individuals are contributing at the highest level, the \$1,000 Leadership Circle.
- 75% of cooperative CEOs contributed in 2024.
- More than 9,300 consumer-members contributed.

Those participating with their contributions empower National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's PAC to make meaningful donations to candidates who support smart energy policies and recognize the consequences of a one-size-fits-all approach.

America's Electric Cooperatives PAC is your PAC if you choose to participate. By staying actively involved in the PAC and grassroots activities, you help strengthen the relationships that connect NRECA, local electric cooperatives, the communities they serve, and



America's Electric Cooperatives PAC

the policymakers who represent them.

"Our success as electric cooperatives is that we're about issues that matter to electric cooperatives," said CEO Jim Matheson. "We're not about one party or the other party. We support people, regardless of party, if they support America's electric cooperatives. We're going to support candidates who support our agenda."

As we advance into the next election cycle, participation remains crucial to the future success of your PAC. For more detailed information, check out the America's Electric Cooperatives PAC 2024 Annual Report (<https://www.cooperative.com/nreca/governance-reporting/Documents/2024-NRECA-Annual-Report.pdf>).

SWCE dump truck for sale

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric (SWCE) is conducting a sealed bid auction (minimum bid \$7,000) for their 2008 Freightliner M2, 6.7 Cummins, 6-speed manual dump truck (pictured adjacent right) with a 14' Crysteel contractor's box. The box was installed new 2013 (adjacent right). The truck has 209,200 miles. Sealed bids must be received at Steele-Waseca's office, 2411 W. Bridge St., Owatonna, by noon Wednesday, May 21. If you would like to see the truck, please call the SWCE office at 507-451-7340 to schedule an appointment with Matt. If you have questions, please call Matt at the number above. The person with the winning bid will be notified by phone at the end of the day Thursday, May 22.

With Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric (SWCE) transitioning to a new billing system, your statement and Sparks newsletter coming out in May will be mailed in two separate envelopes. Thank you for your patience during this transition.

Annual Cogeneration Notification to Membership

In compliance with Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's (SWCE's) adopted rules relating to cogeneration and small power production, SWCE is obligated to interconnect with and purchase electricity from cogenerators and small power producers, whom satisfy the conditions as a qualifying facility. SWCE is obligated to provide information free of charge to all interested members upon request regarding rates and interconnection requirements. All interconnections require an application and approval to become a qualifying facility. Any dispute over interconnections, sales, and purchases are subject to resolution by the SWCE Board. Interested members should contact SWCE, 2411 W. Bridge St., P.O. Box 485, Owatonna, MN 55060-0485, or call 507-451-7340 or toll-free 800-526-3514.

#swceGROWTH



May is Electrical Safety Month

Electrical safety tips to avoid hazards both inside and outdoors

Electricity lights homes and businesses, provides warmth and keeps appliances and equipment running smoothly.

During Electrical Safety Month, Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric and Safe Electricity® provide these electrical safety tips to avoid hazards both inside and outdoors.

Staying safe on the road

Downed power lines can happen because of wind, storms, animals, or an auto accident/collision.

1. If you see a downed power line, call 9-1-1 to report it and stay in your car. You cannot tell by looking or listening if the power line is deenergized. Wait in your vehicle until an electric utility crew member says it is safe to get out.

2. Do not drive over a downed power line. Doing so could cause a domino effect and bring down other lines, poles and equipment.

3. The only time you should exit is if your vehicle or cab is on fire. If this is the case, make a solid jump from the car or cab without touching it, landing with both feet together. Then, hop away with your feet together as far as you can.

Staying safe outside

When working outside, be aware of overhead and underground power lines.

1. Keep at least 10 feet away from overhead power lines. Keep any items you are carrying or using, such as long poles or other extended equipment, 10 feet away from power lines at all times. Carry an extension ladder or other far-reaching tools or equipment horizontally. 15610

2. Make sure that all outside outlets are ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) protected.

3. Before digging, call 8-1-1 or your state's underground locating service. Buried lines such as electric, gas, water, sewer and other lines bring services indoors. Besides the dangers of coming in

contact with a gas or electric line, fines due to damage are the responsibility of the homeowner or landowner. Privately owned lines and systems will not be marked by the free service.

4. When you see lightning, take shelter inside the house, shop or a hard-topped vehicle for protection. Stay away from high places, and do not take shelter under an isolated tree. Stay away from items that conduct electricity, such as metal fences. If you are swimming or in a hot tub, get out. Water is an electrical conductor that is dangerous during a storm.

Staying safe inside

With so many people working from home, the workplace and where you live can be one and the same. This means more devices are plugged into outlets or circuits that may not be able to handle the load.

1. Have a qualified electrician/licensed contractor check for hazards if you notice the following: dimming lights, a sizzling or buzzing sound, the smell of warm plastic, a switch plate that feels warm or looks scorched, sparks when plugging in or unplugging items or circuits that trip often.

2. When working with electrical equipment inside the house or shop, be aware that electrical equipment can spark when flammable vapors, gases or dust are present.

3. Do not overstretch a cord or use frayed or damaged cords.

4. During storms, lightning can enter homes through corded phones, televisions, radios or computers. Lightning can also travel through plumbing, so do not take a bath, shower, or wash dishes when you see lightning strikes. If possible, unplug appliances and electronics before the storm, including cellphones that are charging via electricity. Surges caused by lightning can damage electronics and appliances.

For more information on electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

sparks • may 2025

TIPS TO AVOID ENERGY SCAMS

If you suspect you're dealing with a utility scam, it's crucial to slow down and take your time before taking any action. Scammers will often pressure you to make quick decisions or immediate payments. Instead, take the time to verify the legitimacy of the communication by contacting your utility directly. Use a phone number from a reliable source, such as your bill or the utility's website. Taking this simple step can help protect you from falling victim to utility scams.

*Source: Utilities United
Against Scams*

