




the power of human connections

sparks

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

a monthly newsletter from Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric

June 2025



2024 Annual Report

89 Years
Lighting The Way

inside connections

- 2** General Manager's report
- 3** SWCE board of directors and corporate services; GRE hosting careers camp
- 4** GRE year in review
- 5** 2024 annual mtg minutes; Paperless billing promotion
- 6** 2025 director nominees
- 7** SWCE director districts; Nominating Cmte report
- 8-11** Financial report for 2024
- 12** Cookin' Connection; SWCE community solar
- 13** 5 steps for safe digging; What is a transfer switch?
- 14** Ad Connection; 4-Seasons Vacations
- 15** Ad Connection; Auto pay promotion; Common causes of outages
- 16** SWCE water heater program

calendar of events

June

- 1** Morristown Dam Days ends
- 3** SWCE Annual Meeting, **Office closed until 2 p.m.**
- 12-14** Md'd Straight River Days; Heritage Days in Faribault
- 14** Flag Day
- 15** Father's Day 28963
- 19** Juneteenth
- 20** First day of summer
- 26-29** Ellendale Days
National Dairy Month

SWCE's 89th Annual Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, June 3, 2025 – 9 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.
Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric
2411 West Bridge Street, Owatonna, Minnesota

9 a.m.-10:30 a.m.Present your pre-mailed registration card or register for the meeting and prizes; optional drive-thru available for those unable to attend the business meeting

9 a.m.-10:30 a.m.Popcorn and co-op display booth

10:25 a.m.Early Bird prize drawings

10:30 a.m.Registration ends, business meeting begins
Presentation of Colors.....Color Guard, Owatonna High School and Faribault Middle School

Pledge of Allegiance.....Everyone

National Anthem (please remain standing)

Invocation.....Rodney Krell, Board President

Welcome.....Syd Briggs, General Manager

Call to Order.....Rodney Krell, Board President

Establish Quorum, Adopt Agenda.....Rodney Krell, Board President

Notice of Meeting, Proof of Mailing.....Ron Sommers, Board Secretary/Treasurer

Acceptance of 2024 Reports as printed in *Sparks*.....Rodney Krell, Board President

Board of Directors

Nominating Committee Report.....Charlie Peters, Cmte Chair

Introduction of 2024 Youth Tour Delegate.....Randy Sobrack, Member Services Supervisor

Guest Introductions.....Syd Briggs, General Manager

SWCE Report.....Syd Briggs, General Manager

Employee Introductions.....Syd Briggs, General Manager

Announcement of Election Results.....Tricia Lancaster, SWCE Atty

Unfinished and New Business.....Rodney Krell, Board President
Adjournment

Grand Prizes.....Gift cards and flowers

11:45 a.m.Lunch catered by Hy-Vee, Owatonna

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

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

message to our owners

By Syd Briggs,
 General Manager



Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric is inviting member-owners and their guests to the co-op's 89th annual meeting Tuesday, June 3, with the doors opening at 9 a.m., and the meeting starting promptly at 10:30 a.m.

The purpose of the annual meeting is to provide information and report on last year's activities, and to learn the three directors elected for a three-year term.

This year's election is by mail-in ballot only. Members would have received their ballots during the last week in April and need to have that ballot received in the post office box of Survey & Ballot Systems by 10 a.m., Friday, May 30, in order to be counted.

Steele-Waseca is providing the co-op's audited financials in this edition of *Sparks*, as we do each year, and need to address these reports along with approving last year's minutes.

There isn't any preregistration or call in before the meeting. Steele-Waseca will again be providing registration cards in the mail that are bar coded specifically for each member.

Please bring these cards with you to be scanned at registration. You should be receiving these registration cards in the mail approximately 10 days prior to the meeting. Do not mail these in; just bring them with you to the meeting on Tuesday, June 3. 34313

At the annual meeting, Steele-Waseca will be collecting non-perishable food items and donations for a local food shelf. For those wishing to donate, they will receive (1) free LED lightbulb in appreciation of their donation.

Steele-Waseca's 2024 Youth Tour Delegate Langston Richter will be introduced as he shares his experiences last year in Washington, D.C.

Also returning this year is the great meal served by Hy-Vee and the always popular Dairy Queen Dilly® Bars.

Financially, Steele-Waseca had a good year. Our average number of meters grew from 11,902 in 2023 to 12,001 in 2024, as we experienced a slight decrease in kilowatt-hour (kWh) sales of 1.9%.

Our operating expenses can vary greatly from year to year due to storm activity and different expense cycles in our long-range planning. This year's operating expenses increased only 2.7%.

Equity increased \$1.3 million, and long-term debt decreased \$2.3 million.

In addition, to the primary purpose of an annual meeting, we will have an opportunity to introduce all employees and directors to the membership.

For many of you, it will be another chance to reminisce with the people you have been doing business with for many years.

There are a lot of changes happening in the electric industry and I look forward to providing a brief update along with how the future of Steele-Waseca looks.

Each member who is in attendance to present their pre-mailed registration card, or register, will receive Steele-Waseca promotional products, the \$30 Power Perks to be used at local businesses, and the \$50 Energy Star® gift certificate.

Personally, I'm looking forward to seeing each of you again. If you have questions about our financials, the election process, or any business at all, please feel free to contact me.

• #swceAPPRECIATION



A high-top view of last year's SWCE annual meeting.

member connection



SWCE board of directors and corporate services

The Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric board of directors and corporate services include (seated, left to right): Gary Wilson, GRE director, District 6; Ronald Sommers, secretary/treasurer, District 8; Rodney Krell, president, District 5; PJ Duchene, vice president, District 1; Scott Carlson, assistant secretary/treasurer, District 9. Back row (left to right): Syd Briggs, general manager; Neil Schlaak, District 3; John Beal, District 7; Tricia Lancaster, cooperative attorney; Dennis Ringhofer, District 4; Geraldine Lienke, District 2; and Jenifer Shimpach, executive assistant.

#swceLIFE+

Get energized about a career in energy!

Great River Energy (GRE), Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's wholesale energy provider, will be hosting its Cooperative Careers Camp in June.

This is a great opportunity for high school students to get a taste of the power industry and camp registration is open. This is GRE's second year offering the free one-day camp and have added three additional careers: survey, GIS (Geographic Information System), and UAS (Unmanned Aircraft System).

GRE stated the camp is for students entering grades 9-12 and 2025 graduates.

Participants will learn more about energy careers, tour a substation and peaking plant, do hands-on activities in the areas of metering and apparatus, see equipment used by their line technicians and learn about telecom, HVDC, and the previously mentioned additions to this year's camp. 1005641

This free, one-day camp will take place Thursday, June 26, from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in Elk River. To register, visit: <https://greatriverenergy.com/careers/cooperative-careers-camp/>.



#swceLIFE+

Great River Energy: Powering what's possible

Great River Energy (GRE) is a wholesale electric cooperative owned by 26 member-owner cooperatives, including Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric.



GRE provides wholesale electric service to Minnesota electric cooperatives with an eye toward its triple bottom line of rates, reliability and environmental stewardship.

Great River Energy's wholesale electric rates stand approximately 20% below the weighted regional average cost of electricity. Its reliability scores remain strong, and the cooperative is testing leading-edge technologies to make the electric system even more robust and resilient.

Because of strategic, forward-thinking business decisions made over the last decade, Great River Energy has seen its greenhouse gases emissions fall and renewable energy resources grow, putting the cooperative in a strong position to achieve Minnesota's carbon-free standard by 2040.

Building a better grid

A historic buildout of transmission infrastructure is underway in the Midwest, and Great River Energy is developing critical pathways and making strategic investments.

GRE and Minnesota Power have made progress on the first project of the planned grid expansion. The Northland Reliability Project is a 180-mile, double-circuit 345-kilovolt transmission

line extending from northern to central Minnesota.

The project will help maintain a reliable and resilient regional power grid as more renewable energy is brought online, existing power plants are retired, electrification continues to expand and more frequent extreme weather events occur.

Great River Energy will also be involved in three upcoming projects, including two 345-kilovolt transmission lines in northern Minnesota and a new 765-kilovolt transmission backbone that will start in South Dakota, traverse across southern Minnesota and into Wisconsin and Iowa.

Making strategic investments in these projects helps GRE offset transmission costs for its member-owner cooperatives.

Electricity is evolving

The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission unanimously accepted Great River Energy's integrated resource plan, which outlines the cooperative's expectations for member load growth and new generation resources.

Under the plan, Great River Energy anticipates procuring or constructing more than 1,200 megawatts of wind power, 200 megawatts of energy storage and 200 megawatts of solar power by 2037.

GRE also owns and operates a fleet of natural gas-fueled power plants that can produce electricity in a matter of minutes, often being called upon when electricity demand is elevated or wind

energy production is low.

Clean energy buildout earns federal funding

Great River Energy and a consortium of member-owner cooperatives were approved to receive \$812 million in federal grants for a portfolio of projects that will make the electric system cleaner and more reliable.

The projects funded through the New ERA program have the potential to result in:

- 1,000+ megawatts of renewable energy
- 1,500+ new jobs
- \$40 million in annual cost savings
- 5 million+ tons of carbon dioxide emissions reductions annually

Membership pays

Cooperatives are not-for-profit organizations that are owned by the members they serve with services provided at cost. They only collect enough revenue to run the business and meet financial obligations.

In 2024, GRE's board of directors approved the payment of \$15 million to membership owners through its 2024 patronage capital return.

This is the sixth consecutive year that Great River Energy has issued a patronage capital return to its member-owners.

Learn more about GRE by visiting greatriverenergy.com.

#swceCOOPERATION

Beyond weather: Key drivers that determine load control events

Members who are enrolled in one of Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's load management programs know that when extremely hot or extremely cold temperatures are in the forecast, it's likely that they will receive a notification of a scheduled control event.

That's because weather, particularly temperature, is the primary determinant for load control dispatch as extreme weather events will drive energy demand due to heating or cooling needs.

Steele-Waseca and its wholesale energy provider, Great River Energy (GRE), utilize load management as a

strategy to reduce demand for electricity during high demand periods. These programs encourage members to voluntarily install equipment that stores less expensive off-peak energy or appliances that can be temporarily controlled to reduce energy consumption during times that electricity is most expensive.

But there are days when factors beyond temperature come into play when determining whether to initiate a load control event, including:

• **Market position:** Great River Energy forecasts the demand needs of its

member-owner cooperatives on a daily basis and makes purchases from the regional energy market to serve them. Similarly, generation is bid into the market daily, including wind energy. In instances where there is high demand, load management programs can reduce the cooperative's overall market exposure.

• **High prices:** These can be driven by natural gas prices, which are often price setters in the energy market.

• **Localized outages:** Either generation or transmission issues can lead to localized outages.
(Load control events continued on Page 16)

swce 2024 annual meeting minutes

The annual meeting of the members of Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric (SWCE) was held at SWCE in Owatonna, Minnesota, on Tuesday, June 4, 2024. The meeting was called to order by President Gary Wilson (hereinafter referred to as Chairman) who presided.

At an early bird drawing, two members each won a \$250 certificate toward a vacation with 4 Seasons Vacations, and a \$100 certificate to Nagel Sod or Boonie's Restaurant. Everyone in attendance received a \$30 Member Perks certificate and a \$50 Energy Star® gift certificate.

The Color Guard and the Faribault Middle School presented the colors, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and the National Anthem. Board Vice Chairman Rodney Krell gave the invocation.

There were more than 50 members present (their attendance having been verified), the number needed to constitute a quorum within the meaning of the bylaws of the cooperative. President Wilson declared there was a quorum and instructed the secretary to file the list of members in attendance, establishing a quorum.

The Chairman asked for a motion to adopt the agenda as printed. A motion was made, seconded, and carried.

Ron Sommers, secretary-treasurer of the board, read the Proof of Mailing of Notice of the Annual Meeting. The Proof of Mailing to all members of SWCE was attached to the minutes. A

motion was made, seconded, and carried, to accept the Proof of Mailing as read, and to waive the reading of the minutes and accept them as printed.

The Chairman asked the membership to read the general manager's report, the financial report for the year ending Dec. 31, 2023; the Great River Energy report and the minutes printed in the annual report. The membership was asked if they had any questions pertaining to the reports. There being no questions, a motion was made, seconded, and carried.

Attorney Tricia Lancaster reported the results of the election of directors. Lancaster stated there were three districts in which directors were to be elected. Nominating Committee Chairperson Denise Bartness reviewed the bylaws concerning director election and summarized the minutes of the Nominating Committee meetings held Nov. 15, 2023, and Jan. 18, 2024; a copy of said minutes was attached to these minutes. Bartness introduced the candidates by name and district, and presented a biographical summary of each.

The 2023 Washington, D.C. Youth Tour Delegate Fred Klokonos shared a presentation on his experience of the Youth Tour in Washington, D.C.

SWCE Communications Specialist Randy Sobrack introduced the 2024 Washington, D.C. Youth Tour Delegate Langston Richter and presented him with a gift and certificate.

General Manager Syd Briggs intro-

duced visiting guests and welcomed them to the annual meeting. He also acknowledged retired directors and retired employees who were present.

Briggs updated the membership on current issues pertaining to SWCE.

Briggs introduced current employees and staff, along with their years of service.

Attorney Lancaster reported the official voting results. The director vote was as follows:

District 1: PJ Duchene received 1,235 votes and was declared elected by acclamation.

District 3: Neil Schlaak 487 votes; Anton Seykora 391 votes; Daniel Hansen 321 votes; Ralph Miller 164 votes.

District 5: Rodney Krell received 1,209 votes and was declared elected by acclamation.

Chairman Wilson called for any unfinished business, there being none. He called for any new business, there being none. He then asked for any questions the membership might have.

There being no further business to be conducted, the Chairman asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made, seconded, and carried that the meeting be adjourned. ~~5/25~~

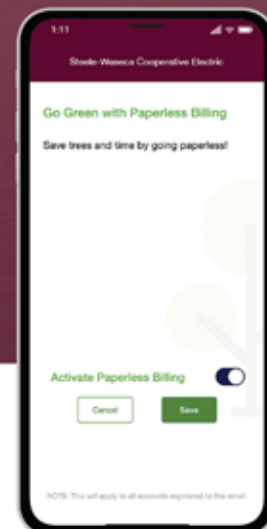
#swceTRUST



PAPERLESS BILLING

The eco-friendly way to instantly access your bill.

SWCE Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric



Visit swce.coop/smarthub for more information

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, Nerstand; Bert Wiersma, Ellendale; Ralph/Leann Miller, Owatonna; Charlie Peters, Lonsdale; Douglas Starks, Owatonna, and Bruce Rumpza, Blooming Prairie. Steele-Waseca members received 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. #swceTRUST

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."

District 6



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."



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."

swce director districts

District 1: Kilkenny Township in LeSueur County; Shieldsville and Morristown Townships and the Southeast one quarter (SE 1/4) of Erin Township, Southwest one quarter (SW 1/4) of Wells Township, and the Northwest one quarter (NW 1/4) of Warsaw Township in Rice County. (Represented by PJ Duchene)

District 2: Dunbar, Lura and Minnesota Lake Townships in Faribault County; Mapleton, Danville, Medo, McPherson and LeRay Townships in Blue Earth County; Freeborn Township in Freeborn County; Alton, Byron, Freedom, Janesville, St. Mary, Vivian and Wilton Townships in Waseca County. (Represented by Geraldine Lienke)

District 3: Hartland Township in Freeborn County; New Richland, Otisco, Woodville, Blooming Grove and Iosco Townships in Waseca County; Lemond Township, the Northwest one quarter (NW 1/4) and the Northeast one quarter (NE 1/4) of Berlin Township, and the Northwest one quarter (NW 1/4) and the Southwest one quarter (SW 1/4) of Somerset Township in Steele County. (Represented by Neil Schlaak)

District 4: Bath and Geneva Townships in Freeborn County; the Southwest one quarter (SW 1/4) and the Southeast one quarter (SE 1/4) of Berlin Township; Deerfield, Owatonna and Meriden Townships; the Northeast one quarter (NE 1/4) and the Southeast one quarter (SE 1/4) of Somerset Township, and Summit Township in Steele County; the Southwest one quarter (SW 1/4) of Warsaw Township in Rice County. (Represented by Dennis Ringhofer)

District 5: Newry Township in Freeborn County; Aurora and Blooming Prairie Townships, and the Southwest one quarter (SW 1/4) of Havana Township in Steele County, and Westfield, Ripley, Ashland and Hayfield Townships in Dodge County. (Represented by Rodney Krell)

District 6: Medford, Clinton Falls and Merton Townships; and the Northwest, Northeast and Southeast one quarters (NW, NE & SE 1/4's) of Havana Township in Steele County, and Ellington, Concord, Claremont and Wasioja Townships in Dodge County. (Represented by Gary Wilson)

District 7: The Northeast and Southeast one quarters (NE & SE 1/4's) of Warsaw Township; the Northwest and Southwest one quarters (NW & SW 1/4's) of Walcott Township; the Northwest, Northeast and Southeast one quarters (NW, NE & SE 1/4's) of Wells Township in Rice County. (Represented by John Beal)

District 8: Kenyon Township in Goodhue County; Richland, Wheeling, Cannon City, Bridgewater, Upper Bridgewater and Northfield Townships, and the Northeast and Southeast one quarters (NE & SE 1/4's) of Walcott Township in Rice County. (Represented by Ronald Sommers)

District 9: Forest, Webster, Wheatland Townships, and the Southwest, Northwest and Northeast one quarters (SW, NW & NE 1/4's) of Erin Township in Rice County. (Represented by Scott Carlson)

swce nominating committee

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's bylaws require the board of directors appoint a nominating committee consisting of co-op members.

The committee first met Nov. 25, 2024 at Steele-Waseca's headquarters.

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.

Lancaster highlighted areas of the board of director position description with the committee. She also addressed potential questions a candidate may have, highlighting the time and 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 always keeping six experienced members on the committee, and adding 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 Charlie Peters was nominated by Daniel Maas. After the nomination was seconded, Briggs declared Peters nominating committee chairperson. After no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

The Nominating Committee conducted their second meeting, Jan. 22, at Steele-Waseca's headquarters.

Board President Rodney Krell called the meeting to order and appointed Executive Assistant Jenifer Shimpach as recording secretary.

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.

The names of the following candidates were announced. They appeared on the mail-in ballot sent during the week of April 27 to members, and mailed back by members so they are received at the return mailing address by 10 a.m., Friday, May 30:

District 2: Lianne M. Possin, New Richland; and Anton H. Seykora, Ellendale.

District 4: Dennis C. Ringhofer (incumbent), Owatonna.

District 6: Alex Ebenhoh, Claremont; Michael T. Herman, Owatonna; and Weston L. Wilson, Owatonna.

A profile of each candidate was published in the May and June 2025 Sparks newsletter.



Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's Nominating Committee this year included the following members (front row, left to right): Ralph Miller, Charlie Peters, and Pam Koester. Back row (left to right): Bert Wiersma, Bruce Rumpza, Matt LaCanne, Casey and Natalie Roeker, and Rene Koester. Not pictured is Daniel and Stacy Maas, and Douglas Starks.

financial report for year 2024

On Oct. 10, 1936, when Steele County Cooperative and Waseca Cooperative Electric voted to consolidate, there were 860 members. By the end of 2024, Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric (SWCE) service locations had grown to 11,986.

SWCE's first office was located in Waseca. After Rice County joined with Steele-Waseca in 1937, the office was moved to Owatonna to provide a more central location. The office was located on West Bridge Street and then on Cedar Avenue until 1954, when a new building was constructed on East Rose Street. That building served as the headquarters until 1994 when the present facility on West Bridge Street was built.

The first part of SWCE's line was energized in February 1938. When completed, the initial project consisted of 350 miles of line. By 1950, that number had grown to 1,562. Today, SWCE has a total of 2,199 miles of line, 20 substations in service, and 900 square miles of service area.

In 1950, SWCE had 2.6 members per mile of line. Currently, SWCE has 5.5 members per mile of line. In comparison, investor-owned electric utilities on average serve 34 customers per mile of line while municipal electric utilities average 48 customers per mile of line.

BALANCE SHEETS DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023

ASSETS	2024	2023
UTILITY PLANT		
Electric Plant in Service	\$107,773,439	\$102,924,169
Construction Work in Progress	<u>1,036,459</u>	<u>216,484</u>
Total	108,809,898	103,140,653
Less: Accumulated Provision for Depreciation	<u>(38,584,926)</u>	<u>(36,760,420)</u>
Net Utility Plant	70,224,972	66,380,233
OTHER ASSETS AND INVESTMENTS		
Investments in Associated Organizations	20,772,452	25,297,855
Investments in Related Companies	711,158	711,192
Other Investments	3,380,659	3,040,355
Notes Receivable - Net of Current Portion	467,181	613,845
Special Funds - Deferred Revenue	<u>4,600,000</u>	<u>3,500,000</u>
Total Other Assets and Investments	29,931,450	33,163,247
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	2,904,852	3,022,607
Accounts Receivable, Net of Allowances of \$10,009 in 2024 and 11,198 in 2023	5,521,523	5,354,009
Materials and Supplies Inventory	2,111,690	1,717,450
Interest Receivable	21,337	191,067
Current Portion of Notes Receivable	<u>146,461</u>	<u>168,973</u>
Total Current Assets	10,705,863	10,454,106
DEFERRED DEBITS	<u>606,328</u>	<u>812,527</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>\$111,468,613</u>	<u>\$110,810,113</u>
EQUITIES AND LIABILITIES		
EQUITIES		
Patronage Capital	\$49,741,068	\$48,813,792
Other Equities	<u>1,937,317</u>	<u>1,565,940</u>
Total Equities	51,678,385	50,379,732
LONG-TERM DEBT, Less Current Maturities		
RUS Mortgage Notes	34,313,692	35,254,377
CoBank Notes Payable	<u>5,147,052</u>	<u>6,512,525</u>
Total Long-Term Debt	39,460,744	41,766,902
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Current Maturities of Long-Term Debt	2,323,339	2,587,978
Accounts Payable	5,124,325	4,475,667
Consumer Deposits	189,225	181,070
Other Current and Accrued Liabilities	<u>1,436,392</u>	<u>1,551,650</u>
Total Current Liabilities	9,073,281	8,796,365
DEFERRED CREDITS	<u>11,256,203</u>	<u>9,867,114</u>
TOTAL EQUITIES AND LIABILITIES	<u>\$111,468,613</u>	<u>\$110,810,113</u>

financial report for year 2024

STATEMENTS OF OPERATIONS

YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023

	2024	2023
OPERATING REVENUES	\$43,353,270	\$43,242,331
OPERATING EXPENSES		
Cost of Power	29,342,366	28,150,246
Distribution Expense - Operation	1,827,374	2,088,010
Distribution Expense - Maintenance	1,501,742	1,483,345
Customer Accounts Expense	686,396	719,201
Customer Service & Informational Expense	686,165	695,640
Sales Expense	194,900	171,594
Administrative and General Expense	2,374,466	2,148,310
Depreciation	3,841,523	3,722,750
Other	37,376	31,819
Total Operating Expenses	<u>40,492,308</u>	<u>39,210,915</u>
OPERATING MARGINS BEFORE FIXED CHARGES	2,860,962	4,031,416
INTEREST ON LONG-TERM DEBT	<u>1,286,667</u>	<u>1,049,727</u>
OPERATING MARGINS AFTER FIXED CHARGES	1,574,295	2,981,689
GENERATION AND TRANSMISSION & OTHER CAPITAL CREDITS	<u>1,041,605</u>	<u>1,776,295</u>
NET OPERATING MARGINS	2,615,900	4,757,984
NONOPERATING MARGINS		
Investment Income	583,709	547,841
Other Nonoperating Margins	<u>8,446</u>	<u>62,102</u>
Total Nonoperating Margins	<u>592,155</u>	<u>609,943</u>
NET MARGINS	<u>\$3,208,055</u>	<u>\$5,367,927</u>

The mission of SWCE is to provide every member with dependable, reliable, high quality electricity. We work daily to accomplish this mission by striving for excellence through continual improvement, applying prudent leadership, partnering and following cooperative principles.

During the year 2024, the average SWCE member had power for 8,759.32 hours out of a possible 8,784 hours. That's a reliability record of 99.72 percent!

For each dollar received from consumers, 3.6 cents goes into operating margins. These margins are used to help finance construction and improvements, pay capital credits, and make payments on our debt. Since 3.6 cents per dollar is not enough to do all of this, we borrow money to finance the shortage of funds needed for these purposes.



WHAT YOUR 2024 CONSUMER DOLLAR PAID FOR

A.	67.6%	Purchased Power
B.	4.2%	Operations
C.	3.5%	Maintenance
D.	1.6%	Billing & Collection
E.	1.6%	Customer Information
F.	0.4%	Sales
G.	5.5%	Administrative & General
H.	8.9%	Depreciation
I.	0.1%	Other Income Deductions
J.	3.0%	Interest on Long-Term Debt
K.	3.6%	Margins

financial report for year 2024

Nature of Operations

Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric's (SWCE) principal line of business is providing electric service primarily to local residential and business customers residing in the nine-county rural area surrounding Owatonna, MN. Rates charged to customers are established by the board of directors.

Financial Statement Presentation

SWCE prepares its financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States. These principles require management to make informed judgments, best estimates, and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets, liabilities, revenues, and expenses. Actual results could vary from those estimates.

Patronage Capital

SWCE operates as a cooperative. Amounts received from the furnishing of electric energy in excess of operating costs and expenses are assigned to patrons on a patronage basis. All other amounts received by the cooperative from its operations in excess of costs and expenses are allocated to its patrons on a patronage basis to the extent they are not needed to offset current or prior deficits.

Income Taxes

SWCE has been granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service and the State of Minnesota. Therefore, the financial statements do not include a provision for income taxes.

STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023

	2024	2023
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Net Margins	\$ 3,208,055	\$ 5,367,927
Adjustments to Reconcile Net Margins to Net Cash Provided by Operating Activities:		
Depreciation	3,894,512	3,894,512
G & T and Other Capital Credits	(1,041,605)	(1,776,295)
Loss on Sale/Disposal of Assets	(15,921)	(5,254)
Gain (Loss) on Equity Investments	340,302	393,898
Changes in Assets and Liabilities - (Increase) Decrease in:		
Accounts Receivable	2,216	(1,147,707)
Materials and Supplies Inventory	(394,240)	40,481
Deferred Debits	206,199	82,509
Increase (Decrease) in:		
Accounts Payable	648,658	1,518,830
Deferred Credits	289,089	1,023,056
Other Current and Accrued Liabilities	(115,258)	209,040
Net Cash Provided by Operating Activities	7,022,007	9,600,997
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Construction and Acquisition of Plant	(7,723,330)	(6,369,373)
Change in Other Assets and Investments	(254,523)	(393,868)
Cash Received from Retirement of Patronage	991,638	803,557
Cash Paid (Received) for Investments	5,000,000	(3,000,000)
Payments Received on Notes Receivable	169,176	244,058
Net Cash Used by Investing Activities	(2,327,416)	(8,715,626)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Increase (Decrease) in Memberships	-	(17,346)
Retirement of Capital Credits	(2,249,704)	(2,097,425)
Change in Customer Deposits	8,155	(6,930)
Proceeds from Issuance of Long-Term Debt	-	5,764,000
Principal Payments on Long-Term Debt	(2,570,797)	(2,244,569)
Net Cash Provided (Used) by Financing Activities	(4,812,346)	1,397,730
NET INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	(117,755)	2,283,101
Cash and Cash Equivalents - Beginning of Year	3,022,607	739,506
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS - END OF YEAR	<u>\$ 2,904,852</u>	<u>\$ 3,022,607</u>
SUPPLEMENTAL DISCLOSURE OF CASH FLOW INFORMATION		
Interest Paid	<u>\$ 1,480,993</u>	<u>\$ 1,005,251</u>

financial report for year 2024

STATEMENTS OF PATRONAGE CAPITAL AND OTHER EQUITIES YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023

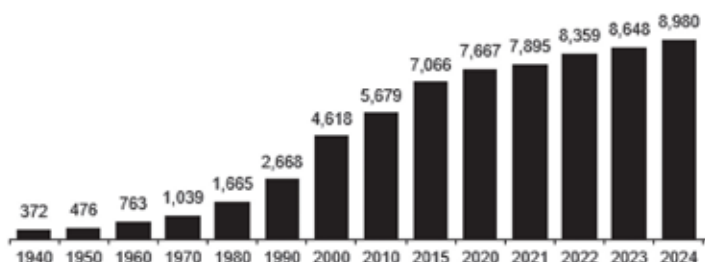
	<u>Memberships</u>	<u>Patronage Capital</u>	<u>Other Equities</u>	<u>Total</u>
BALANCE, DECEMBER 31, 2022	\$17,346	\$45,580,476	\$1,134,856	\$46,732,678
Unassigned Current Year Margins	-	5,367,927	-	5,367,927
Net Gain on Available-for-Sale Securities	-	-	393,901	393,901
Retirement of Capital Credits	-	(1,981,172)	-	(1,981,172)
Estate Settlements	-	(153,439)	37,183	(116,256)
Membership Changes - Net	(17,346)	-	-	(17,346)
BALANCE, DECEMBER 31, 2023	-	48,813,792	1,565,940	50,379,732
Unassigned Current Year Margins	-	3,208,055	-	3,208,055
Net Gain on Available-for-Sale Securities	-	-	340,302	340,302
Retirement of Capital Credits	-	(2,172,667)	-	(2,172,667)
Estate Settlements	-	(108,112)	31,075	(77,037)
BALANCE, DECEMBER 31, 2024	-	\$49,741,068	\$1,937,317	\$51,678,385

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

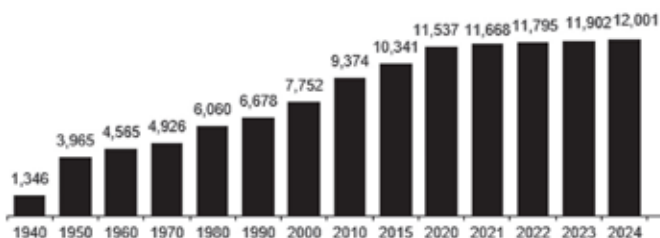
The balance sheets, statements of operations, patronage capital and other equities, and cash flows were taken from complete financial statements which were audited by CliftonLarsonAllen LLP, Certified Public Accountants, who expressed their unmodified opinion on those statements.

Copies of the complete financial statements together with the independent auditors' report may be examined at the office of Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric.

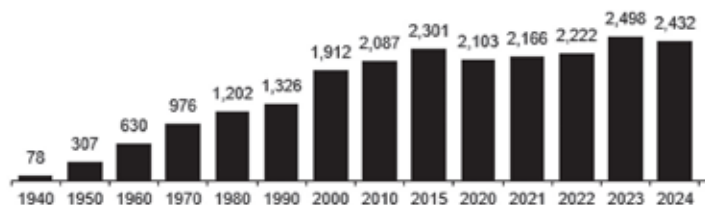
PLANT \$ INVESTMENT PER CONSUMER



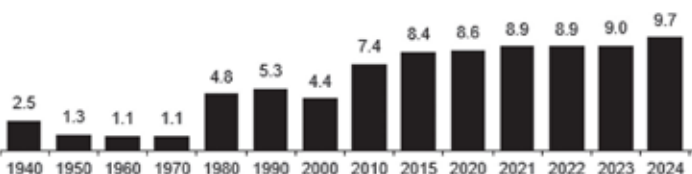
AVERAGE NUMBER OF CONSUMERS



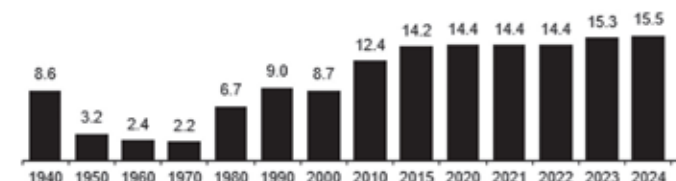
AVERAGE KWH USED PER CONSUMER (PER MONTH)



AVERAGE WHOLESALE POWER COST FOR RESIDENTIAL CONSUMERS (CENTS PER KWH)



AVERAGE ELECTRIC RATE TO RESIDENTIAL CONSUMERS (CENTS PER KWH)



cookin' connection

Cranberry Jello

Ruth Kruger

Hayfield

- 1 can jellied cranberries
- 2 c. sour cream
- 3 (small) pkg raspberry or cranberry Jell-O
- 3 c. hot water

Use beaters on jellied cranberries first. When beaten, add sour cream. Add this to Jell-O/water mix. Pour this into greased tupperware. Chill for overnight.

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 43 kWh credit per panel on this month's statement for energy generated during April 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.

May issue of Sparks



Numbers found:
Edward Muniak or Erin Barnett
Amanda Zahratka

Numbers not found:
Patrick/Mary Duchene
Blake/Cathy Hubers
Andrew Sunder



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 account number 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.

- **April temps** – The average high temperature for April was 56° F, while the average low was 36° F. This resulted in 582.5 Heating Degree Days (HDDs) and 0 Cooling Degrees (CDDs) for April. They compare to last year's average high of 58° F and average low of 37° F, which resulted in 515.5 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 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

5 STEPS FOR SAFE DIGGING

Working on an outdoor project? Always call 8-1-1 first, because you never know what's below. Here are five easy steps for safe digging:

Source: call811.com

1. NOTIFY

Call 8-1-1 or make a request online two to three days before you start.



2. WAIT

Wait two to three days for a response to your request. Affected utilities will send a locator to mark any underground utility lines.



3. CONFIRM

Confirm that all affected utilities have responded by comparing the markers to the list of utilities the 8-1-1 call center notified.



4. RESPECT

Respect the markers provided by the affected utilities. They are your guide for the duration of your project.



5. DIG CAREFULLY

If you can't avoid digging near the markers (within 18-24 inches on all sides, depending on state laws), consider moving your project.



What is a **TRANSFER** SWITCH?



A transfer or throw switch is an essential mechanism that safely shuts off power to the electrical grid before backup power is used. This switch is sometimes referred to as a double-throw switch, as it controls two separate circuits.

The switch's job is to safely transfer power from its primary source to a backup power source, enabling users to maintain power during an outage. It works by connecting a generator to your home's main circuits to provide backup power.

Properly installed transfer switches are essential because they prevent dangerous backfeed into the power grid, which endangers utility workers and others.

Make sure your permanent generator and switch are installed according to code and working properly. Never plug a portable generator into a wall outlet, as this can cause backfeed.

Learn more at:

Safe Electricity.org®

Is my off peak/dual fuel being controlled today?

Visit Steele-Waseca's website at swce.coop, move your cursor over MEMBERS and click on "Are We Controlling Today" to learn what the co-op's wholesale energy provider, Great River Energy, is planning for load management.

ad connection

give away

60+ BUNDLES OF SHINGLES, you haul. 330-8361.

LARGE DOGHOUSE. 334-8827.

PING-PONG TABLE, folding, on wheels, measures 5' wide, total length 9'3", comes w/net, paddles, & balls, you haul away. 461-3324.

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

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

FORD SKID STEER, diesel. 330-1849.

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

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

OLD FEED MIXER MILL. 390-0600 or 676-6094.

JUNKERS & REPAIRABLES, some farm equipment. 332-2300.

for sale

15' SHELL LAKE BOAT w/roller trailer; **16' LUND BOAT**, trailer, trolling motor, 25-hp Johnson motor, new seats, depth finder, & oars. 451-9445.

LANDSCAPE SUPPLIES & DELIVERY SERVICES; STUMP GRIND.; RENTAL EQUIP.; MULCH, DIRT, SAND, GRAVEL, ROCK. 200-4674/New Richland.

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

HARRIS 22' PONTOON w/Mercury 35-hp motor, trailer, \$3500; **BOAT LIFT** w/canopy for above, \$2000; **A-C CA TRACTOR** w/3-point hitch & 6' finish mower, \$2500. 330-3945.

A-C TRACTOR & TIRES; PICKUP FLATBEDS; (2) CHEVY 2500HD, 4x4; WOODS 3-POINT FINISH MOWER; JD 14' DISC. 402-7679.

All area codes are 507 unless otherwise noted

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

NH DISC BINE; JD HAY RAKE, \$650; **4-PLACE ROUND BALE TRAILER**, \$575; **5' BRUSH MOWER**, \$450; **8' 3-POINT BLADE**, \$475. 334-6334.

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

2004 WINNEBAGO VECTRA 40' DIESEL PUSHER, Model WKS40AD; **2009 SMART PASSION CABRIOLET CAR**, gas. 213-0869/leave a message.

14' CRESTLINER, HONDA 7.5-HP OUTBOARD (both need some work), shore ramp, motor stand, package deal, \$650. 838-8351.

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.

1985 CHEV. PICKUP, 3/4 ton, 4x4. 456-5466.

HAY, small squares, Nfld area. 271-9129.

MINI STORAGE UNITS in Morristown, any size. 330-4776.

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

1994 IH STRAIGHT TRUCK w/18' freezer box, \$5400. 334-7177.

BATH CHAIR; BATH TRANSFER CHAIR; COM-MODE; GAIT BELT. 455-3468.

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

6 X 8 TILT-BED TRAILER w/rails, lights, title, permanent license, spare tire, \$750; **DOUBLE STAINLESS STEEL MILKHOUSE SINK** on legs, \$150. 456-7614 (both in nice shape).

SHOWER BENCH, 18x10, 18" high, like new, \$17. 744-2709.

COUNTRY HOME FOR RENT, (4) bdrm, exc. cond., 7 mi. NE of Mdfd. 455-1502.

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

JD 4430 DIESEL TRACTOR, excellent condition; **JD 4230 DIESEL TRACTOR**, exc. cond. (call for details) 475-1392.

WHEELCHAIR, like new, used inside house most of the time, \$125. 279-2489.

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

WEED BURNER, \$40; **AVAILIR RUG SHAMPOO**, fits on Kirby vacuum, never used, \$75. 451-2687.

HAY, 4x5 round; **BURN BARRELS**. 390-0600 or 676-6094.

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

16' LUND FISHING BOAT on trailer, 25-hp Evinrude motor, trolling motor, depth finder, fishing rods & reels, fishing tackle box filled w/lures, will sell individually or as a complete unit, best offer. 612-716-7587.

CHAINS FOR TRACTOR TIRES, #2, 10'4" long, 28" wide, \$275 for the pair; **PADDLE BOAT**, plastic, clean, shedded in winter, \$275. 491-4565.

BOAT/RV STORAGE FOR RENT. 475-2322.

1980 14' ALUMACRAFT DUCK BOAT w/floor, (2) 9.5-hp Evinrude (1 good, 1 parts), \$900. 676-2802.

MINI STORAGE UNITS, Blmg Prairie. 456-2957.

RHUBARB PLANTS; PURPLE IRIS; ALUM. CAN-NONDALE MEN'S BIKE, great shape; **HOSTA PLANTS; WOOD YARD BENCHES**. 330-0729.

LARGE BIRCH ARBOR, \$80; **QUEEN FUTON MATT.** w/washable cover, vry clean, \$65; **POOL TABLE** w/accessories, \$300. 271-1414.

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

(For Sale ads continued on Page 15)

Sparks Free Classified Ad Form for all SWCE Members

Ads need to be received in our office by **June 5** to ensure being printed in the July **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 August issue. 1116212

☐ 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.

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.

NAT'L PARKS: ARIZONA & UTAH, Sept. 8-18. Deluxe motor coach, 14 meals, Durango/Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad, admissions to: Badlands, Grand Canyon, & more! \$2,699 pp w/2 per room.

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.



ad connection

(For Sale ads continued from Page 14)

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

2006 17' LUND CLASSIC, red/gray, 50-hp Mercury, accessories, w/trailer, \$10,500. 456-2223.

TREK 820 MT TRACK, 26x175, 21 spd, men's, \$100; **SPECIALIZED CROSSROADS**, 700x35c, 21 spd, men's, \$100; **TREK GIRL'S**, 20x175, \$40; **TREK BOY'S**, 20x175, \$40. 330-3178.

ENGINES & TRANSMISSIONS, 30-day warranty, ovr 900 vehicles' body parts, tires & more. 332-2300.

(2) PAX BULK BINS, 7 ton, gravity feed, exc. cond., \$900/each; **LARGE ANIMAL PORTER**, composite, exc. cond., \$30; **METAL OFFICE DESK**, exc. cond., great for shop, \$10. 455-3881.

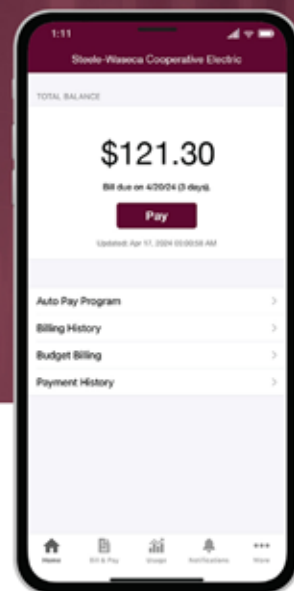
Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric (SWCE) assumes no liability for the content of, or reply to, any item posted. The party posting any advertisement assumes complete liability for the content of, and all replies to, any advertisement and for any claims against SWCE as a result thereof, and agrees to indemnify and hold SWCE harmless from all costs, expenses, liabilities and damages resulting from, or caused by, any advertisement or reply thereto.



SIGN UP FOR AUTO PAY

Save time and money by
automating your bill payments to
avoid late fees.

SWCE Steele-Waseca
Cooperative Electric



Visit swce.coop/smarthub for more information

COMMON CAUSES OF POWER OUTAGES

There is never a good time for the power to go out, but if it happens on a sunny day, you might be left wondering why. Here are the most common causes of a power outage.

WEATHER

High winds, snow and ice can cause tree limbs to fall on power lines. Other weather effects, like wildfires and lightning strikes, can cause major damage to equipment.

CRITTERS

Squirrels, birds, snakes and other animals can inadvertently contact power lines, causing short circuits and disruptions to electrical supply.

Scheduled MAINTENANCE

Occasionally, we plan outages to perform upgrades or repairs to parts of the local grid.

ACCIDENTS

Vehicles can crash into utility poles, bringing down power lines. Construction and excavation work can also result in disruptions to underground lines.

Storage Water Heating Program

Benefits

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

The SWCE Storage Water Heater Program

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

Westinghouse Water Heater

- * Stainless steel tank with heavy-duty insulation
- * 115 gallon weighs 224 lbs. shipping weight
- * Dimensions 27" x 70.5"

How to Sign Up

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

(Load control events continued from Page 4)

tion or transmission outages can affect pricing.

• **Reliability concerns:** While not a frequent driver, there are instances where load control is used to help mitigate reliability concerns. During these events, load is reduced so that transmission congestion is brought below a system operating limit.

• **Monthly events:** Great River Energy will often initiate a load control event one time per month for contractual reasons, ensuring that member-owners receive the value from load management over the billing peak (i.e., the highest demand that is experienced on the system each month).

Using load management as a strategy saves members money by helping GRE

mitigate high-cost market purchases that would otherwise need to be paid by its member-owners. Additionally, there are capacity benefits that accrue to members, allowing the cooperative to better position its resources and reduce costs needed to acquire or build more generation.

More than 300,000 devices—from water heaters to air conditioners to irrigation and space heating systems—enrolled across several load management programs can be dispatched when needed by Great River Energy system operators. Members who participate in these programs receive a reduced electric rate.

Contact Steele-Waseca for more information on load management programs and how you can get enrolled.

 #swceSERVICE

• Plan to arrive at **89 Years** Steele-Waseca Cooperative *Lighting The Way* Electric (SWCE) early enough (doors open at 9 a.m., Tuesday, June 3) to be registered by the time the meeting begins at 10:30 a.m. **Remember to bring your pre-mailed registration card.** If you are arriving via Interstate 35, you will want to take the Bridge Street exit (#41) and head west. There is a roundabout at the nearest intersection with SWCE, so just follow the West Bridge Street sign. The co-op's headquarters are located at 2411 W. Bridge St., Owatonna. 1081883

• **Parking** will be available on the property surrounding the building. **TC Custom Carts**, Owatonna, will be supplying several golf carts to shuttle you to and from the meeting.

• **There will be two Early Bird prize drawings prior to the start of the annual meeting.** There will also be Grand Prize drawings for gift cards and flowers on the stage at the conclusion of the business meeting.

• **SWCE will be collecting donations for an area county food shelf.** Please bring non-perishable food items or monetary donations with you to the annual meeting at the SWCE booth and receive (1) free LED bulb.

• **If you are new to Steele-Waseca or have never attended an annual meeting,** please pick up a complimentary copy of the co-op's 75th anniversary book and DVD entitled, "Making the Connection," at the SWCE booth. Additional copies and/or purchases during regular business hours are available for \$7/each.

• **Lunch will be served after the annual meeting.** The menu will include: smoked pork chops, vegetables, potatoes, salad, dinner rolls, coffee, milk, water, with Dairy Queen Dilly® Bars for dessert.

 #swceAPPRECIATION