



NEWS *Lines*

Published monthly for the member-owners of North West Rural Electric Cooperative

GEOTHERMAL HEAT PUMP TAX CREDITS *are Back*

Consumers who installed a geothermal (also called ground-source) heat pump system after January 1, 2017, can now qualify for a full 30 percent tax credit after Congress passed and the President signed a compromise federal spending bill Friday, February 9, which included a provision that extends the tax credit and phases it out after 2021. The tax credit extension is retroactive to January 1, 2017, so consumers will need to discuss the recent development with their tax preparer.

The phase out schedule of the geothermal tax credit is similar to the schedule for wind and solar technologies. If the unit is installed between January 1, 2017, and December 31, 2019, the tax credit is 30 percent of the cost of the unit. Between January 1, 2020, and December 31, 2020, the credit drops to 26 percent, and between January 1, 2021, and December 31, 2021, it is 22 percent. Without another extension, the tax credit would be finished after 2021.

Geothermal heating and cooling systems take advantage of the stable temperature underground using a piping system, commonly called a loop. Water circulates in the loop to exchange heat between your home, the ground-source heat pump and the earth, providing geothermal heating and cooling. It's one of the most energy efficient and cost-effective systems available.

Please contact our member service department if you would like more information.

BEWARE OF UTILITY SCAMS



Scammers are clever and constantly adapting to find new ways to steal your money, belongings and personal information. Try to stay educated on new types of scams and tips to avoid them.

- Protect your personal information – never provide or confirm personal information, whether by phone, in person or e-mail
- Take your time to think and listen – they will try to rush you to convince you there is an emergency
- Always ask questions – verify their claims
- Call your utility company if you have any questions or concerns. Understand the cooperative's policies and procedures for disconnection of an unpaid electric bill.

Learn to protect yourself, your family, your neighbors and your community!

MAY 2018

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NORTH WEST REC HONORED WITH

Economic Development Impact Award

Iowa's rural electric cooperatives' commitment goes far beyond ensuring safe, reliable, affordable and environmentally responsible energy for their member-owners. Cooperatives actively create strategic partnerships and provide technical and financial assistance to support growth and community vitality. Annually, Iowa Area Development Group (IADG) presents Impact Awards to utility partners who are involved in significant economic development initiatives the prior year.

At Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative's annual meeting in Sioux City, North West REC and two other member electric utilities were recognized for their extraordinary economic development accomplishments and commitment to their local communities.

North West REC was presented with an IADG Impact Award for community development. North West REC has supported economic development in their territory for many years. Recent examples of project support include securing a grant through the USDA Rural Economic Development Loan & Grant program to assist with the renovation and expansion of the Le Mars Public Library and construction of the Sioux County Regional Airport runway and installation of the Medium Intensity Approach Lighting System with Runway Indicator Lights. The repayment of both \$360,000 loans will enhance the existing North West REC Revolving Loan Fund to support additional projects well into the future.

Another initiative benefiting the communities served by North West REC is a partnership with Evertek and the continued deployment of broadband wireless Internet service to underserved areas in rural northwest Iowa.

"We commend North West REC for their steadfast support of community and business development in the counties and communities they serve," said IADG President, Rand Fisher. "They provide important technical and financial assistance that many times is



Accepting the award from Rand Fisher (right), President of IADG, are Lyle Korver, NWREC General Manager, and Jeff Rehder, NWREC Board President.

a key component in successfully securing projects that create jobs and support community vitality."

The Iowa Area Development Group is the marketing and business development office for Iowa's member-owned rural electric cooperatives, select municipal electric utilities and independent telecommunication companies. IADG has assisted with over 2,000 successful business expansions and start-up projects. This growth represents capital investment of more than \$10 billion and 50,000 jobs for Iowa. The Iowa Area Development Group was established in 1985 to promote and strengthen rural Iowa development opportunities. Stay connected with IADG news at www.facebook.com/IADG.IA and www.twitter.com/IADGIOWA.



**Find us on
Facebook**

*Keep up with your cooperative by
liking us on Facebook!*

This social media site is a great way to get the latest information about North West REC, track power restoration when outages occur and learn the latest about safe, efficient electric use. Just head over to www.facebook.com/nwrec and click the "like" button.

Prairie Winds PROGRAM UPDATE

Members of North West REC can support renewable energy through the Prairie Winds program. This program allows individual members to voluntarily contribute to the development of alternate energy production facilities.

Persons who choose to participate in Prairie Winds will pay 20 cents per 100 kilowatt-hour block per month. This is reduced from 50 cents in 2010.

Through this program, members will not be directly purchasing alternate energy, but the extra fee does go to support several wind turbines in the Dakotas, which feed wind-generated electricity into the transmission system that powers North West REC.

If you would like to support the renewable wind energy program, fill out the accompanying form and return it to your cooperative office.



WIND POWER AGREEMENT

Please specify the total number of 100 kilowatt-hour blocks you wish to purchase each month. Remember, each block is an additional \$.20 investment in not only the environment, but in the future of renewable energy.

Number of blocks at \$.20 per month _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email (optional) _____

Signature _____

Date _____

I understand my commitment is for one year and will continue on an annual basis until I notify you in writing to end my participation in the Prairie Winds program.

RECare - CONSUMER CONTRIBUTION FUND

Your Rural Electric Cooperative has always extended a helping hand to those needing it. Now, in response to actions by the Iowa General Assembly, your REC has established RECare, a program of members helping members. RECare will provide funds to be distributed by local community action agencies to help pay winter heating bills and to assist in weatherization of homes of low-income consumers. You may make a one time contribution or you may make a monthly pledge that will be automatically added into your monthly electric bill. You may also make your contribution part of a matching fund, if there is one established. Your contribution is tax deductible. Even a dollar a month pledge will help others!

You care, we care, RECare.

Please return form along with your monthly bill.

CONSUMER AUTHORIZATION FORM

Yes, I want to be a part of members helping members and contribute to RECare.

_____ I will make a one-time contribution to RECare. My check is enclosed.

_____ I will contribute \$_____ per month to RECare.

_____ I understand that this amount will be automatically added to my monthly electric bill.

_____ My gift is a matching fund gift. The matching fund is _____ (an active matching fund must be designated).

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Account Number _____

MANAGER'S *Report*



Lyle D. Korver

“These meetings are great member engagement opportunities for the directors and employees, and we appreciate the excellent attendance we get each year.”

Report on Annual District Meetings

March is a busy and important month for your Cooperative as we hold our four annual district meetings. The last of the four meetings is our Annual Meeting, where we conduct the annual business meeting and ratify the election of directors.

I'm pleased to report that the meetings went very well again this year with excellent attendance. We served nearly 2,000 meals to members and guests at the four meetings. These meetings are great member engagement opportunities for the directors and employees, and we appreciate the excellent attendance we get each year.

The following are a few highlights from the meetings:

- Three directors were re-elected and one new director was elected.
 - Jeff Rehder was re-elected in District 1, Tom Wagner was re-elected in District 2 and Steve

Brown was re-elected in District 3. Virdene Otto retired from the Board in District 4. We thank Virdene for his four years of service and welcome Dan Hoffman, who was elected to fill this position.

- Board President Jeff Rehder and myself reviewed some of the highlights of 2017
- We shared a video highlighting the significant changes that have occurred in the last 80 years as this was the 80th Anniversary of when Ida County REC, O'Brien County REC, Plymouth Electric Cooperative and Sioux Electric Cooperative were formed – and the 20th Anniversary since our last consolidation to form North West REC
- Entertainment was provided by former Hawkeye Quarterback, Chuck Long in Districts 1 and 2, and Gary Tyson, magician, musician and comedian, in Districts 3 and 4.

We want to thank all of the members who took time from their busy schedules to attend one of the meetings. Thank you for your loyalty and support!



Jeff Rehder



Tom Wagner



Steve Brown



Dan Hoffman



NWREC Continues to Grow

I previously mentioned that this is the 20th Anniversary of the Consolidation that formed North West REC. The efficiencies we have gained as a result of the Consolidation have been one of the keys to your Cooperative being able to maintain competitive electric rates. Other keys are the continued growth in number of services and in kilowatt-hour (kWh) sales.

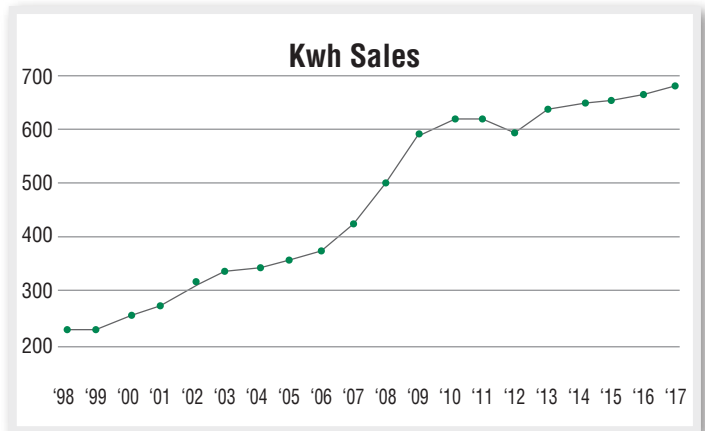
Since the Consolidation in 1998, we have added a net of 1,512 services. We reached a milestone of 10,000 services in December when we hooked up a new service for the Highway 3 Trailer Washout business, which is located west of Remsen.



We also reached a new record of kWh sales in 2017 with 684 million kWh's. Over the last 20 years, annual kWh sales have increased from 228 million in 1997 to 684 million in 2017. That is a 200% increase in sales or an average of 10% per year. A lot of that growth happened

in the 2001 to 2007 time frame when we added four ethanol plants, some large dairies and other commercial and industrial loads. While growth in kWh sales has slowed in recent years, we are still growing and that will have a very positive impact on our rates going forward as it enables your Cooperative to spread its fixed costs over more kWh's.

As we all know, we have just experienced a colder than normal winter and start to the spring. As a result, kWh sales are up over 6% compared to the first quarter of 2017. While these strong sales are good for electric sales, we are all looking forward to some more favorable weather conditions which will be good for our farmers, who are anxious to get the crop planted, and for our crews, who have a busy year of construction ahead. As we get busy with spring activities, I want to remind everyone to be safe around electric power lines. Have a great rest of the spring!



YES, please enter our names in the drawing for the trip. We understand that if our names are drawn, we will be billed \$100.

Our first and second choice of dates:

July 11-13 1st 2nd (please circle)
 Aug 1-3 1st 2nd

I/we have have not participated in this tour in the past.

First Person _____

Second Person _____

Address _____

City _____

Phone _____

Clip coupon and return to REC office by May 25, 2018

Energy Trail Tour

North West REC and Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative invite you to join us for one of two Energy Trail Tours being offered this summer. This 3-day adventure will allow you to view, first-hand, how your power providers convert energy from water, wind, and coal into electricity. View coal being mined and see how those mines are, then, returned to productive farm and native grass lands. Learn how the energy industry is evolving to become more dependent on renewable power generation and glimpse into the future of carbon capture technology. Enjoy the fellowship of other cooperative member-owners on a comfortable motor coach journey to North Dakota's Energy Loop. \$100 per couple covers your lodging, meals and entry fees. The remainder of your tour costs are covered by North West REC. Twelve lucky couples from NWREC will be selected at random from those who sign up.



A Powerful Experience!

STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or con-

tact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
- (2) Fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) Email: program.intake@usda.gov

North West REC is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

BID FORM

FOR SALE:

2008 GMC Sierra 1500 4WD Ext Cab
VORTEC 5.3L V8 Flex Fuel Engine
4 Speed Automatic Transmission
Yellow exterior paint with grey interior.
AC, stereo with CD, tilt, cruise, keyless entry. 242,016 miles
Pick-up sold AS IS.
Bid: \$ _____



This vehicle will be sold on a bid basis and "as is". Bids can be mailed to North West REC, P.O. Box 435, Orange City, IA 51041, or bids can be dropped off at any of the three cooperative offices. Bids will be accepted until 4:00 p.m., Friday, May 25, 2018. We reserve the right to accept or reject any bid. The sales will be on a cash basis only. The pick-up can be seen at the Orange City office located at 1505 Albany Pl SE. Please call 712-707-4935 or 1-800-766-2099 to set up a time to see it.

Name of individual submitting bid: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

OPERATION *Round Up* REPORT



Disbursements made from North West REC's Operation Round Up Trust in the first quarter of 2018 totaled \$12,000. This brings the total disbursements made from Operation Round Up since its inception in June of 1999 to \$415,155. Many people have been helped thanks to our members.

- \$7,200 Medical Emergencies – assist families with unusual expenses resulting from serious health problems and accident related injuries
- \$1,600 Hospice of Siouxland, Family Crisis Center, Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, American Heart Association, American Cancer Society – program support
- \$ 800 Zestos Inc, Then Feed Just One, and Hunger Free Kids of Sioux County – program support
- \$ 800 Camp Autumn, Valero Benefit for Children and S.T.A.R.S. – support programs for children, children with disabilities, or disadvantaged children
- \$ 800 County 4-H Foundations
- \$ 500 Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Siouxland – program support
- \$ 300 Ida Grove King Theater Renovation – community support for events/projects

Operation Round Up funds are generated through a voluntary rounding up of cooperative members' electric bills to the next nearest dollar, and dollars are used to assist worthy causes and organizations right in your local county area.

If you are currently not participating in Operation Round Up and would like to become a part of this worthwhile program, please call our office for information. To receive an application for assistance, please call the office at 707-4935 or 800-766-2099.

REVOLVING LOAN FUND

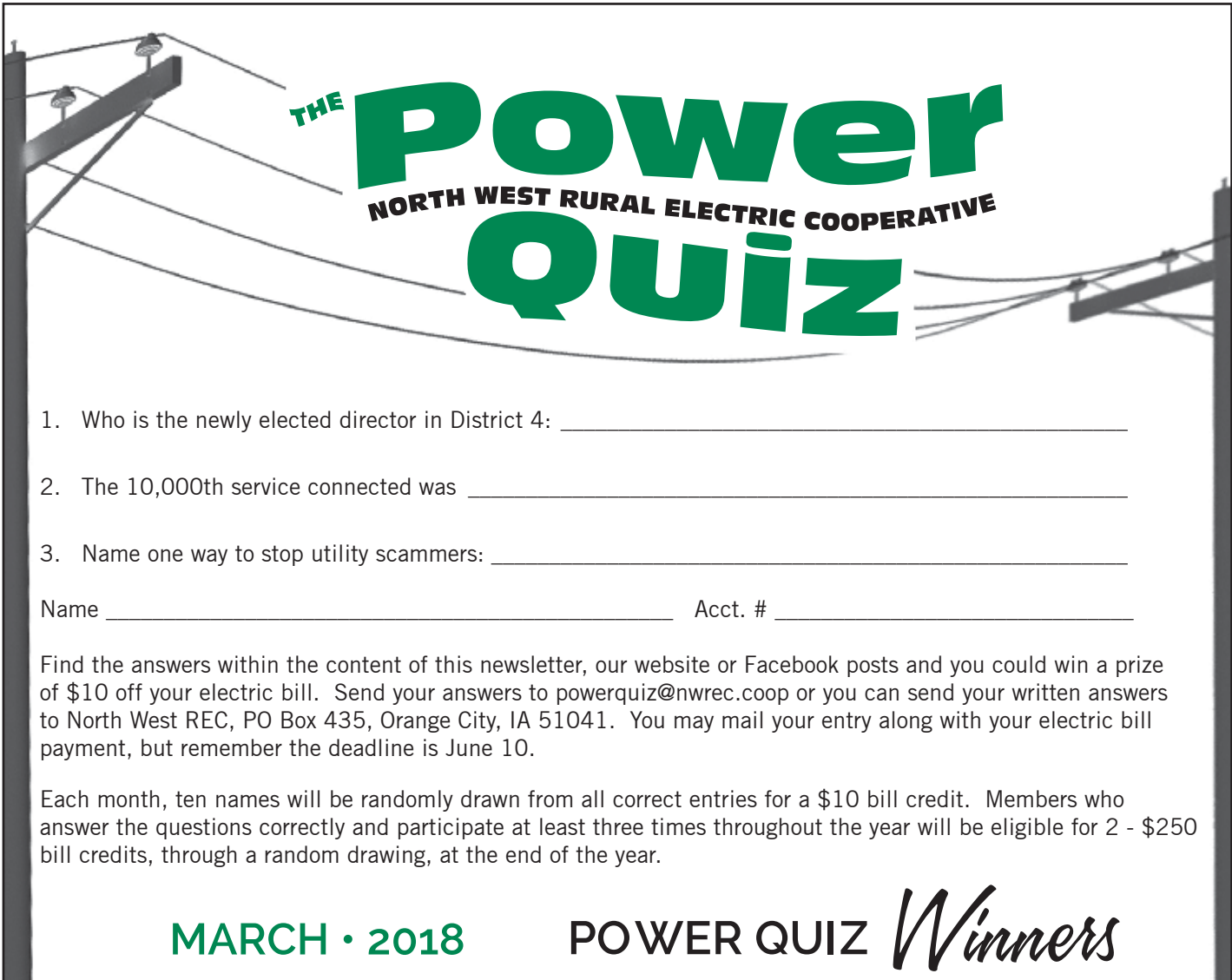
North West REC created the Community/Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) to improve the quality of life in rural areas by contributing to long term improvement in the local economy.

The RFL is a local funding source with a goal of providing low interest loans to assist local economic and community development projects. Our priorities include job creation and retention, diversification of the local economy, improving the skills of the rural workforce, and upgrading the public infrastructure to improve the health, safety, and/or medical care of rural residents. This fund is administered by the North West REC Board of Directors.

Eligible applicants include organizations involved in community or economic development projects such as: new or expanding private business, local governments and nonprofit community development organizations.

For more information on eligible and ineligible uses of funds, loan terms, interest rates and other loan requirements, contact the REC office at 707-4935 or 800-766-2099.

This institution is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.



THE **Power** NORTH WEST RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE **Quiz**

1. Who is the newly elected director in District 4: _____
2. The 10,000th service connected was _____
3. Name one way to stop utility scammers: _____

Name _____ Acct. # _____

Find the answers within the content of this newsletter, our website or Facebook posts and you could win a prize of \$10 off your electric bill. Send your answers to powerquiz@nwrec.coop or you can send your written answers to North West REC, PO Box 435, Orange City, IA 51041. You may mail your entry along with your electric bill payment, but remember the deadline is June 10.

Each month, ten names will be randomly drawn from all correct entries for a \$10 bill credit. Members who answer the questions correctly and participate at least three times throughout the year will be eligible for 2 - \$250 bill credits, through a random drawing, at the end of the year.

MARCH • 2018

POWER QUIZ *Winners*



**Greg Mills, Hartley
Sandra Muecke, Hinton
Gaylen Demarest, Cushing
Roger Brinkert, Primghar
Paul Palsma, Alton**

**Wayne Storm, Archer
Randy Taylor, Rock Valley
Gilbert Aberson, Orange City
Esther Jalas, Sutherland
Floyd Renze, Ida Grove**



North West Rural Electric Cooperative

P.O. Box 435 • 1505 Albany Place SE • Orange City, IA 51041-0435

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday through Friday
7:30 a.m. till 4:00 p.m.

Orange City office open
during noon hour

Le Mars office
closed 12:00 - 12:30 p.m.

Ida Grove office
8:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon, Mon-Fri

PHONE:

ORANGE CITY (712) 707-4935
(800) 766-2099

IDA GROVE (712) 364-3341

LE MARS (712) 546-4149

Outside Depository Available
for After Hours Payments

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Lorraine Egdorf

Editor