



# NEWS *Lines*

PUBLISHED MONTHLY FOR THE MEMBER-OWNERS OF NORTH WEST RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

## SEPTEMBER 2021

### IN THIS *Issue*

Tips for a  
Safe Harvest  
2

Operation  
Round-Up Donation  
3

Manager's Report  
4-5

Power Surges &  
Blinks Explained  
6

Security Lights for  
Members  
7

We'll pay you to  
"Pull the Plug"  
7

Power Quiz  
8

Are you  
Switch Smart?  
8

## We're looking for high school students who are interested in public service and leadership.

**Students who attend our Zoom sessions in October will have a chance to win AirPods and a \$1000 college scholarship!**

Guided by our cooperative commitment to community, North West REC has a long history of supporting students in the communities we serve through scholarships and leadership opportunities. We've also been sending deserving high school students to our nation's capital every summer for years as part of the national Electric Cooperative Youth Tour program.

Iowa's electric cooperatives are pleased to offer a new opportunity for rural students to learn more about advocacy, electric cooperative career opportunities and the cooperative business model with a three-part webinar series in October. The Iowa Youth Leadership Academy is open to any high school student in our service area and they are invited to register at [www.IowaYouthTour.com](http://www.IowaYouthTour.com).

"This new program is really designed for rural Iowa students who have a passion for public service, leadership or government," remarked Lyle Korver, CEO. "We want to raise students' awareness of how local electric co-ops power people's lives and empower communities. We also want to talk about cooperative career paths that are available in smaller communities."

Once students register online for the Iowa Youth Leadership Academy, they can attend the webinars from their own computer or mobile device. Each Zoom session will last around 45-60 minutes and focus on a specific topic:

- Tuesday, Oct. 5, 7:00 p.m. – Cooperative Business Model
- Thursday, Oct. 14, 7:00 p.m. – Rural Iowa Advocacy
- Tuesday, Oct. 26, 7:00 p.m. – Civic Involvement and Leadership

At the end of each live session, one lucky attendee will be selected at random to win a pair of Apple AirPods. Students who attend all three sessions will be entered into a random drawing for a \$1,000 college scholarship.

During the Zoom sessions, students will be inspired by our line-up of speakers and presenters. Students will learn how to advocate for issues that are important to them and learn about leadership development from a motivational speaker. Attendees will also hear from former Iowa Youth Tour students who pursued their passion for government service and leadership after attending the weeklong trip to Washington, D.C. The 2022 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour is slated for June 18-24 next summer.

Learn more at [www.IowaYouthTour.com](http://www.IowaYouthTour.com) or contact Renee Wynia at 712-707-4935 or [rwynia@nwrec.coop](mailto:rwynia@nwrec.coop) for more information.



# TIPS FOR A *Safe Harvest*



- Maintain a 10-foot clearance around all utility equipment in all directions.
- Use a spotter and deployed flags to maintain safe distances from power lines and other electrical equipment when working in the field.
- If your equipment makes contact with an energized or downed power line, contact 9-1-1 immediately and remain inside the vehicle until the power line is de-energized. In case of smoke or fire, exit the cab by making a solid jump out of the cab (without touching it), and hop away to safety.
- Consider equipment and cargo extensions of your vehicle. Lumber, hay, tree limbs, irrigation pipes and even bulk materials can conduct electricity, so keep them out of contact with electrical equipment.

Agriculture is the backbone of our country, and our livelihood greatly depends on the crops provided by American farmers. In addition to being one of the most labor-intensive professions, farming is also considered one of the most dangerous jobs in the U.S.

The hard work and exhaustive labor are tough, but rushing the job to save time can be extremely dangerous—even deadly—when farming near electrical equipment.

Every year, we see collisions where tractors and other farming equipment accidentally collide with utility poles and power lines, causing injuries and power outages. These dangerous accidents can be avoided by looking up and around your surroundings when operating large farm machinery. If you're preparing for harvest season, please keep the following safety tips in mind:

September 19-25 is National Farm Health and Safety Week but practicing safety on the farm year-round yields positive results. We hope you never find yourself in a situation where farming equipment contacts power lines or poles, but if you do, we hope you'll remember these safety tips.



## Plug into the Power of **smart choices**



Each month North West REC hides a code in our Smart Choices news stories. Find the code 944019SEP in the Smart Choices article, complete the prize entry registration form and submit for a chance to win a KitchenAid® 4.5 qt. Stand Mixer in September.

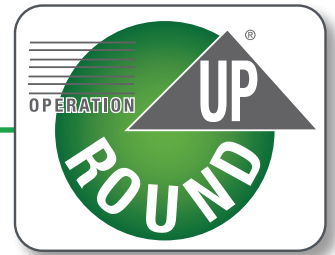
### Don't receive Smart Choices?

Subscribe by scanning the QR code with your mobile device or visit our website:

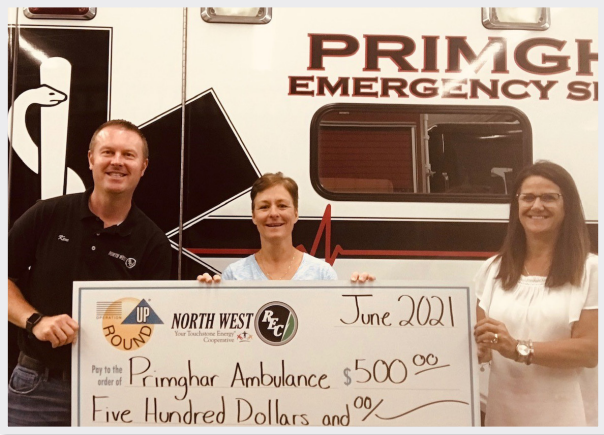
[www.nwrec.coop/smart-choices-sign-up](http://www.nwrec.coop/smart-choices-sign-up)

# 944019SEP

# OPERATION *Round Up* DONATION



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 area.



One of the recipients was the Primghar Ambulance Team. Pictured receiving the check from NWREC Member Service Employee, Ken Miller, is two Emergency Medical Responders from the Primghar Ambulance team. (Top left picture)

Another a recipient of an Operation Round-Up check was Justice for all in Rock Valley, IA. Pictured receiving the check from NWREC Member Service Director, Rob Driesen, is Corwin Walhof. (Bottom left picture)

Yet another recipient this summer was Inspiration Hills Camp & Retreat Center. Pictured receiving the check from NWREC Member Service Employee, Gaylen Schneider, is Inspiration Hills employee, Dave Heilman. (Bottom right picture)

If you no longer wish to participate in the Operation Round Up program, please call the office or email ([nwrec@nwrec.coop](mailto:nwrec@nwrec.coop)) and we would be happy to help.

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 more information. To receive an application of assistance, please call the office at 707-4935 or 800-766-2099.



**MOVE OVER**  
**SLOW DOWN**

## MOVE OVER OR SLOW DOWN

It's that simple, and it's the law in Iowa. By following these two rules of the road, you can help save lives and avoid receiving a traffic ticket – or even losing your driver's license. It's necessary to move over or slow down when approaching stationary emergency, maintenance, and utility vehicles with flashing lights activated.



Lyle D. Korver

# MANAGER'S *Report*

*"Locally owned and governed by the member-consumers we serve, North West REC fully supports energy efficiency efforts"*

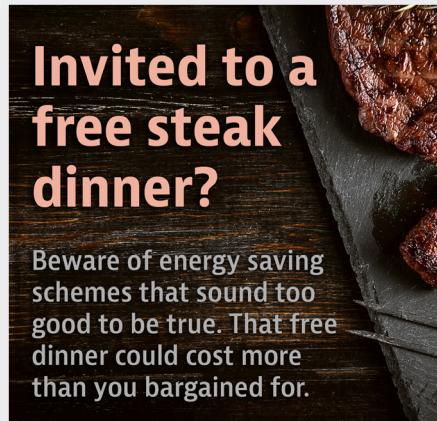
## There's no such thing as a free dinner: Beware of energy claims that sound too good to be true

*"Save 50% on your energy bills!"*  
*"Stop paying your electric utility!"*  
*"Save thousands on your heating and cooling costs!"*

Have you ever received a postcard or an email featuring one of these headlines? The postcard usually includes an invitation to a free dinner at a local restaurant where you can learn more about how to "save big" on your energy bills. There's even a local phone number you can call to reserve your spot, causing you to think that this effort is being organized by a reputable, local company. It almost always is not.

As we move beyond the pandemic, these types of invitations will likely increase in our community. It's easy to let our guard down because we want to believe the incredible claims we find in our inbox and mailbox. These dubious marketing campaigns will tout power converters for your meter, radiant barriers for your attic and other technologies that promise to save you hundreds or thousands of dollars on your energy bills.

Often times, there is some truth to the technology and products being pitched in these postcards. For example, an aluminum radiant barrier placed in your attic can help reduce heat gain during the summer but the efficiency claims are overstated and the product is overpriced.



Before accepting an invitation or signing a long-term contract or financing program, please research the company on the Better Business Bureau website at [www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org). We also encourage you to contact us and speak to Rob Driesen, Member Services Director, about the offer. As a reliable source of information you can trust, we can answer your energy efficiency

questions and suggest practical ways to save energy and money on your electric bills.

Locally owned and governed by the member-consumers we serve, North West REC fully supports energy efficiency efforts. In fact, we offer several incentives, rebates and programs that can lower your electric bill. We can also provide information about which energy efficiency products may qualify for state or federal tax credits. We just want to make sure you're not deceived into spending your hard-earned money on products that don't work as advertised. Be wary of exaggerated claims and overpriced products in these free dinner schemes.

And if you do accept an invitation to a free dinner, don't feel pressured to make a purchase or sign on the dotted line until you've had time to research the company and the claims it is making. Any reputable business would encourage you to take the time you need to make an informed decision.

Please beware of these invitations – the real cost of your free dinner could be more than you're willing to pay.

# Commitment to our Youth

North West REC has a long-standing of commitment to our youth and we continue to look for new opportunities to engage with them. Our Youth Tour program, with trips to Washington, D.C., has been offered for over 30 years. Unfortunately, we weren't able to send any students on this trip the last two years due to COVID constraints. However, we are planning to send two students on this great trip again in June of 2022. More information will be shared this winter, but the tentative dates are June 18-24, 2022.

This year we have enhanced our Scholarship Program and awarded a record number of college scholarships. The number of scholarships awarded this year increased to 84 and the total dollar amount was \$34,250! We were very pleased with the interest and participation in this important program and we congratulate all of the winners.



**Are you a rural Iowa high school student with a passion for leadership?**



Attend our webinar series in October for a chance to win Apple AirPods and a \$1,000 college scholarship! Learn more at [IowaYouthTour.com](http://IowaYouthTour.com)

One new program that has just been announced is a Iowa Youth Leadership Academy. There is more information on this program on our front page of this newsletter and we hope we will have good participation. This program is geared toward high school students with a passion for leadership. I think we can all agree that we need good young leaders in our country today, and we hope this will be well

received. It will provide an excellent learning opportunity and there are also some great gifts!

We are committed to continuing to support our youth. On behalf of the board of directors and employees of North West REC, I want to wish all of our students a healthy, safe and fun school year in 2021/22.



The following is a brief summary of the discussion and decisions from the board meeting that was held on July 29, 2021:

- A safety report was shared by Derald Philips and approved.
- Manager Korver presented his monthly Manager's Report. He shared that kWh sales are up 2.7% for the year-to-date; service reliability/outage numbers are excellent this year – the lowest outage minutes in 20 years; our underground contractor is nearly completed with the 35 miles of new underground projects; and we are continuing to experience very long lead times on transformer and material orders.
- Discussed final plans for the four Member Appreciation/Patronage Day events.
- Manager Korver reported on several economic development projects that are underway.
- Heard reports from Director Tom Wagner on the recent NIPCO and Basin Board Meetings.
- Manager Korver and Director Steve Abma gave an update on the Orange City garage/warehouse expansion project.
- Approved the membership for 32 new members.
- Approved Operation Round-Up donations to several charitable organizations and medical emergency situations.
- Curt Ahrenholz presented the monthly financial reports.

# WHAT'S A *Power Surge* & WHAT'S A *Blink?*

Have you ever noticed your lights blink during a thunderstorm? Or perhaps you've noticed a blinking microwave clock when you arrive home. When this happens, you've likely experienced a brief disruption to your electric service, which could result from a power surge or blink. While the symptoms of surges and blinks can appear similar, what's happening behind the scenes can be quite different.



## What's a power surge?

Power surges are brief overvoltage spikes or disturbances of a power waveform that can damage, degrade or destroy electronic equipment within your home or business. Most electronics are designed to handle small variations in voltage; however, power surges can reach amplitudes of tens of thousands of volts—this can be extremely damaging to your electronic equipment.

Surges can be caused by internal sources, like HVAC systems with variable frequency drives, or external sources, like lightning and damage to power lines and transformers.

North West REC encourages all members to install surge protective devices (such as surge protector power strips) to safeguard your sensitive electronics. If you're experiencing frequent surges in your home or business and you believe the cause is internal, contact a qualified electrician to inspect your electrical system.



## What's a power blink?

Power blinks are also brief service interruptions, but they're typically caused by a fault (short circuit) on a power line or a protective device that's working in reaction to the fault. Faults can occur through a variety of instances, like squirrels, birds or other small animals contacting an energized power line; tree branches touching a power line; or lightning and other similar events. In fact, when it comes to power disruptions caused by critters, squirrels reign supreme. In 2019 alone, squirrels were responsible for more than 1,200 outages across the country.

Any of the events noted above can cause your power to blink, but you may also experience a brief interruption when protective devices that act like circuit breakers are working to detect the fault. Believe it or not, these brief power blinks caused by protective devices are actually good because that means the equipment is working as it should to prevent a prolonged outage.

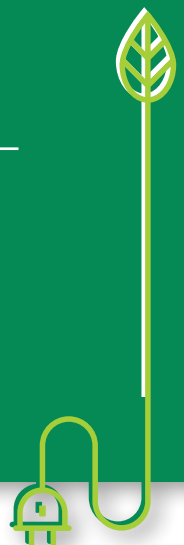
Regardless of the cause, North West REC crews will be on their way to inspect the damage and make necessary repairs after a power outage. And you can help too! Any time you experience repeated disruptions to your electric service, please let us know by calling 800-766-2099 anytime, day or night.

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Energy used for cooling and heating your home makes up the largest portion of your monthly energy bills.

By combining regular equipment maintenance and upgrades with recommended insulation, air sealing and thermostat settings, you can save about 30% on your energy bills while helping our environment.

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)



# PRICING INFORMATION ON *Security Lights*

Security lights and maintenance are available to our members at the prices below.

## Security Light Service Work

- High Pressure Sodium (HPS) - maintenance \$50
- LED - maintenance \$80
  - (Will retrofit mercury vapor or HPS lights to LEDs when maintenance is necessary) \$240 (\$50 rebate = \$190)
- Move security light to new pole \$100
- Move security light and pole \$175
- Remove security light from pole or disconnect light \$100

## Sell security light to member - includes installation

- LED security light (will not install on anything but a pole) \$275 (\$50 rebate = \$225)
- Replace a HPS light with an LED light \$240 (\$50 rebate = \$190)

LED lights have a 5-year warranty, but if we find something wrong on the members side causing an issue with the light not to work, we will charge a \$50 service call fee.

## Poles

- Setting a pole for member \$175  
(We will not set poles for gateposts, basketball hoops, etc.)
- Sell any size used pole to member \$125



## ARE YOU SWITCH SMART?

The program assists your cooperative by deferring the need to construct

Did you know this about the Switch Makes Cents program?

- Helps stabilize future power costs to your coop
- Reduces power plant emissions for a cleaner environment
- Shifts the energy used by electric heating systems, electric water heaters, and other electric appliances to off peak times
- Saves North West REC members money by providing more stable rates

additional power plants or purchase power from external sources to meet the energy needs of our members. Load management programs give cooperative members the power to become partners in the effort to positively influence electricity rates.

## *You* PULL THE PLUG



If you currently own an older, inefficient refrigerator or freezer unit, North West REC will pay you \$50 to "Pull the Plug" on the unit and recycle it at any certified recycling or de-manufacturing facility, such as a county landfill. Up to three (3) appliances may be recycled per calendar year. We no longer accept air conditioning units.

Appliances must be clean, empty and in working order when recycled/dropped off at a certified location. A dated copy of a receipt by the certified vendor/landfill/recycler must accompany the rebate application

form which is available from our office or can be found on our website.

Here are a few of the certified recyclers for North West REC members:

**Ida County Sanitation**  
2078 US 59  
Ida Grove, IA 51445  
712-364-4234

**Plymouth County Sanitary Landfill**  
34898 150th St  
Le Mars, IA 51031  
712-546-6071

**Northwest Iowa Landfill Center**  
4540 360th St  
Sheldon, IA 51201  
712-324-4026



# THE POWER QUIZ

## NORTH WEST REC

1. Name one of the Operation Round-Up Recipients this summer:
2. How much does a new LED security light cost for a NWREC member?
3. What are the two types of appliances you can recycle for a rebate?

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](mailto: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 September 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.

### POWER QUIZ *Winners*

JULY 2021

Rodney Pottebaum - Alton  
 Back Family Trust - Hartley  
 Gilbert Vande Stroet - Inwood  
 Roger Dempster - Le Mars  
 Ruth Detloff - Le Mars

Don Koepnik - Archer  
 Theresa Reuter - Le Mars  
 Tim Harrison - Le Mars  
 Lloyd Cleveringa - Orange City  
 Joe Cronin - Holstein



## ARE YOU SWITCH SMART?

Name one of the benefits the Switch Makes Cents program helps with:

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Acct. # \_\_\_\_\_

What do you know about the Switch Makes Cents program? Find the answers within the content of this newsletter, our website or Facebook posts and you could win a prize. Send your answers to [switchsmart@nwrec.coop](mailto:switchsmart@nwrec.coop), fill out the question form online, or 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 September 30. At the end of the quarter one name will be randomly drawn from all the correct entries for a prize. With a new question every month, you can participate up to 3 times in each quarter!

## 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 open 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
 Wednesdays only

### PHONE:

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

IDA GROVE  
 (712) 364-3341

LE MARS  
 (712) 546-4149

Outside Depository Box Available For After Hours Payments

This institution is an equal opportunity employer, provider, and lender.

Lyle D. Korver  
 CEO & General Manager

Curt Ahrenholz  
 Finance & Office Services Director

Emily Vander Velde  
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