



NEWS Lines

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

MAY 2024

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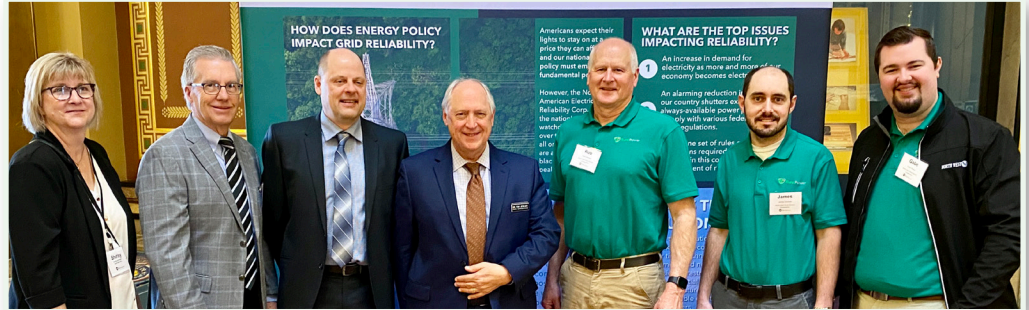
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Iowa's rural electric cooperatives advocate for power reliability during "REC Day on the Hill"



The sun was shining on more than 200 employees and elected directors from Iowa's locally owned rural electric cooperatives (RECs) as they convened at the Iowa Capitol on March 12 to advocate for important issues during the annual "REC Day on the Hill" event.

"Our annual advocacy day at the capitol is a powerful opportunity to meet face-to-face with our state legislators and share a local perspective on issues that impact rural Iowans and rural economic development," remarked Chuck Soderberg, executive vice president and general manager for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives.

Advocates asked elected officials to ensure reliable electric service for Iowans by supporting an "all-of-the-above" electric generation strategy. Specifically, Iowa's electric cooperatives believe it's time to update the state's 2001 advanced ratemaking principles (ARPs) to stipulate an all-of-the-above approach and include nuclear and energy storage technologies.

Also related to reliability, advocates talked with their legislators about Integrated Resource Plans (IRPs) and the potential pitfalls of requiring Iowa utilities to file IRPs as part of contested case proceedings before the Iowa Utilities

Board. IRPs will increase administrative and legal fees which must ultimately be paid by ratepayers. In other states, IRPs have served as a pathway to the premature closure of carbon-based power generation facilities which negatively impacts electric reliability.

Additionally, co-op representatives discussed the issue of "right of first refusal" which allows incumbent, established utilities to have the first option to construct, maintain and operate electric transmission projects. Iowa's electric co-ops are best prepared to respond locally to weather-related outages because we have a proven track record of restoring power quickly and safely.

During the advocacy event, representatives educated legislators on the benefits of the not-for-profit cooperative business model, which includes local ownership, democratic governance and cost-based rates. Several electric cooperatives displayed booths in the rotunda which provided information on topics including economic development, digital metering advancements, investments in technology, safety innovations, energy efficiency efforts and vegetation management work.

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 RLF 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 712-707-4935 or 800-766-2099.

This institution is an Equal Opportunity Employer, Provider, and Lender.

Bid Form - Vehicle for sale

VEHICLE #1 FOR SALE - 2012 Chevy Silverado 2 door, 3500 HD Pickup, 214,914 miles.



VEHICLE #2 FOR SALE - 2015 Chevy Silverado 4 door, 3500 HD Pickup, 147,274 miles.

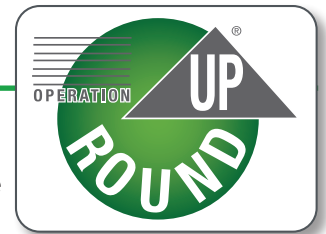


These vehicles will be sold on a bid basis and "as is". Bids can be mailed to North West REC, PO Box 435, Orange City, IA 51041, or bids can be dropped off at any of the three cooperative offices. Bids will be accepted until 4:00 pm, Friday, May 24, 2024. We reserve the right to accept or reject any bid. The sale will be on a cash basis only. Please call 712-707-4935 or 800-766-2099 to set up a time to see it. Either vehicle will all be available for viewing at the Orange City office at 1505 Albany Place SE.

Name of individual submitting bid: _____ Bid: \$ _____ Vehicle # _____

Address: _____ Phone Number: _____

Operation Round-Up Update

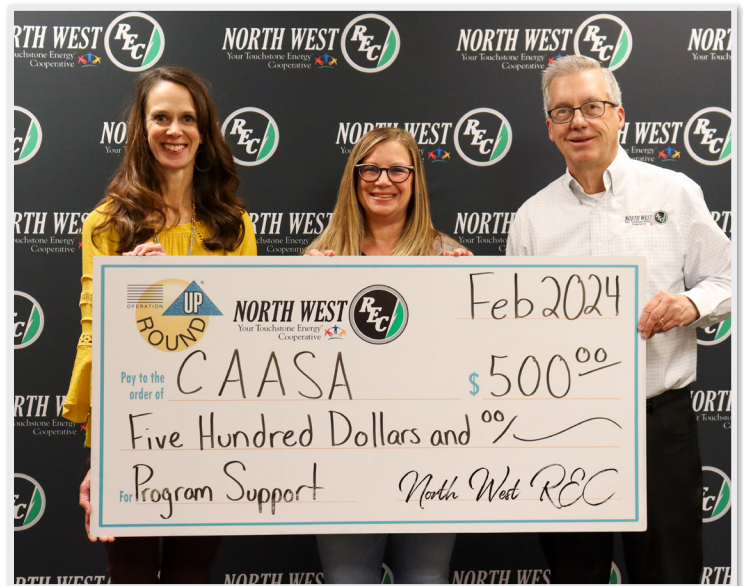


Disbursements made from North West REC's Operation Round Up Trust in the first quarter of 2024 totaled \$15,500. This brings the total disbursements made from Operation Round Up since its inception in June of 1999 to \$717,595. Many people have been helped thanks to our generous members.

- \$5,500.....Medical Emergencies – assist families with unusual expenses resulting from serious health problems and accident related injuries
- \$8,000American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, Beechin Hospice Foundationg, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Siouxland, Center Against Abuse and Sexual Assault (CAASA), Conquering Cancer for O'Brien, Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, Family Crisis Center, Girl Scouts of Greater Iowa, Hospice of Siouxland, Hunger Free Kids of Sioux County, Mid-America Council - Boy Scouts of America, S.T.A.R.S., Siouxland Ag in the Classroom, Siouxland Habitat for Humanity, Then Feed Just One, Zestos Inc - program support
- \$2,000.....Area 4-H Foundations – program support

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

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 or sign up on our website. To receive an application for assistance, please call the office at 712-707-4935 or 800-766-2099.



(L-R) Pictured is Renee Wynia, NWREC, and Lyle Korver, NWREC presenting the Operation Round-Up check to the CAASA Executive Director.



While the load management program operates year-round, connected equipment is not interrupted every day. When needed to reduce peak demand, on the hottest or coldest days of the month, switches will interrupt operation of your qualifying electric devices

during the following times*:

- Summer operating season is June 1 through September 30. Normal summer control periods occur, as needed, usually between the hours of noon - 10:00 PM
 - Winter operating season is October 1 through May 31. Normal winter control periods occur, as needed, usually between the hours of 6:00 AM - noon and 4:00 PM – 10:00 PM. Typically, heat is only controlled during the month of May.
- *These dates and times are subject to change, on an annual basis, without notice.



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*

ANNUAL MEETING WAS WELL ATTENDED



As a member owned electric cooperative, one of the most important events that we hold each year is the Annual Meeting of members. This year the Annual Meeting was held on Tuesday evening, March 26, at the Le Mars Convention Center. I'm pleased to report that we had a great turnout from our members and the meeting went very well.



We served 725 members and guests which was pretty close to the same number who attended last year. We had one director position that was voted on this year and that was in District 3 (Plymouth County). Scott Feuerhelm was re-elected for another four year term. We want to thank Joe Rotta for his willingness to be on the ballot this year.



During the meeting, we had a panel discussion where we answered some of the questions that members had submitted. (Picture of Panel) The panel members included Board President, Jeff Rehder; NIPCO and Basin Director, Tom Wagner; NIPCO Executive Vice President, Matt Washburn and myself. Our panel discussion covered the following topics: generation mix, rate stability and what future rate projections look like, reliability and system improvements, EPA's plans for shutting down coal plants; solar and battery storage and electric vehicle trends.

Other meeting highlights:

- The meeting was livestreamed.
- Youth Tour Report – Ellen Hunt gave a presentation on her Youth Tour trip to Washington, D.C. last summer. The two Youth Tour representatives for 2024 were announced – Elizabeth Arens and Brody Knapp.
- Scholarship Winners – Renee Wynia announced the scholarship winners. 62 college scholarships plus 2 power line scholarships will be distributed totaling \$29,000 this year. Congratulations to all the winners! (The winners will be included in the August newsletter.)
- Prizes - \$5,500 in door prizes were awarded to members from a random drawing from the on-line and in-person registrations and from the returned question cards.

I want to thank all of our members who participated in the Annual Meeting this year. We appreciate your continued loyalty and support of your Cooperative. This support is critical to the ongoing success of North West REC.



OFFICERS ELECTED

During the reorganization meeting of the board of directors at the March board meeting, the following were elected for officer positions in 2024:



President: Jeff Rehder
Vice President: Dale Ullrich
Secretary: Steve Brown
Treasurer: Tom Wagner
Assistant Secretary-Treasurer: Shirley Schroeder

We have very experienced and dedicated directors, and we appreciate the willingness of these directors to serve in these important leadership positions.

HOW HAS YOUR COOPERATIVE CHANGED IN THE LAST 40 YEARS?

One of the questions that was submitted by a member and that we closed the panel discussion with was: **“I have been a member for 40 years. How has the Cooperative changed since 1983 in terms of kWh sales, assets and other categories?”** In answer to this question, we included this summary table:

What isn't included in this table is that we had two consolidations during the last 40 years – one in 1993 when O'Brien County REC and Sioux Electric Cooperative consolidated and then a second one in 1998 when O'Brien/Sioux and then Ida County REC and Plymouth Electric consolidated to form our current organization – North West REC.

40 Year Comparison – 1983 to 2023			
	1983	2023	% Change
<u>Assets</u>	\$22.8 million	\$141.9 million	523%
<u>Debt</u>	\$14.1 million	\$53.4 million	277%
<u>Revenue</u>	\$12.9 million	\$53.6 million	316%
<u>kWh Sales</u>	178 million	710.8 million	299%
<u>Revenue per kWh sold</u>	7.2 cents per kWh	7.7 cents per kWh	7%
<u>Rate for 1,500 kWh's</u>	\$110	\$167	52%

As you can see from this table, the growth we have experienced as a consolidated organization has been incredible. We are definitely stronger together. As we shared during the Annual Meeting, we are proud of our past and we face many challenges as we look to the future. However, we are excited about the opportunities that lie ahead and we are committed to continue to provide safe, reliable and affordable electric service for our members in the future.

Prairie Winds Program

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.

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 form below and return it to your cooperative office or sign up on our website.



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.

Name _____ Number of blocks at \$.20 per month _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail (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.

Pole Maintenance Program

You probably don't pay much attention to the utility poles found throughout North West REC's service territory, but did you know these tall structures are the backbone of our distribution network?

Strong, sturdy utility poles ensure a reliable electric system, which is why we routinely inspect the thousands of poles found on our lines. Throughout the year, our crews check poles for decay caused by exposure to the elements. They know which poles are oldest and conduct inspections through a rotational process. Typically, a standard wooden distribution pole is expected to last more than 50 years.

Occasionally, poles need to be replaced for other reasons besides decay and old age. Weather disasters, power line relocation, and car crashes are potential causes for immediate replacement. When possible, North West REC communicates when and where pole replacements will take place so that you stay informed of where crews will be working.

One of the key ongoing maintenance programs we do annually, in order to try to improve our service

reliability, is pole testing and treating. Each year we test and treat approximately 3,000 poles.

Poles that are rejected due to excessive rotting conditions are replaced. The other poles are treated with a pole treatment which significantly extends the life of the pole. The very low 2% or lower rejection rate we typically have each year is a strong indication of the strength of the Cooperative's system.

This spring you will see contractors working in Plymouth County. Please contact our office if you have any questions about the work they are doing.



Statement of Nondiscrimination

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, USDA, its Mission Areas, agencies, staff, offices, 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.

Program information may be made available in language other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language) should contact the responsible Mission Area, agency, or staff office; the USDA TARGET Center at (202)720-2600 (voice and TTY); or the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a complainant should complete a Form, AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, which can be obtained online at <https://www.ocio.usda.gov/document/ad-3027>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of the alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted 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; or

(2) Fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

(3) Email: program.intake@usda.gov

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**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**



CALL 811 OR 1-800-292-8989

RECare - Consumer Contribution Fund

Your Rural Electric Cooperative has always extended a helping hand to those in need. 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 this 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 _____

THE POWER QUIZ

NORTH WEST REC

1. What county are contractors working in for pole testing this spring?
2. How much is a 100 kilowatt-hour block with the Prairie Winds program?
3. Name someone who received an Operation Round-Up donation this quarter:

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 4. 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*

Maureen Zimmerman - Orange City
 Robert Ver Mulm - Sioux Center
 Bruce Spence - Sioux City
 Vernice Rahbusch - Sutherland
 Monte Erks - Akron
 Nelton Doornink - Sioux Center
 Duane Bajema - Sioux Center
 Danette Burrington - Maurice
 Dennis Dekker - Sioux Center
 Jim Gearke - Le Mars

FEBRUARY & MARCH 2024

Robert Book - Akron
 Rebecca Lampman - Arthur
 Robert Otto - Mapleton
 Joel Ludwigs - Le Mars
 Greg Mills - Hartley
 Ken Sauer - Paullina
 Robert Vondrak - Merrill
 Marvin Wynia - Maurice
 Andrew Schreiber - Ida Grove
 Verdene Kollbaum - Ida Grove



ARE YOU SWITCH SMART?

When are the switches usually operated?

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, 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 June 4. 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:
 (800) 766-2099

24/7 outage reporting using the SmartHub app or nwrec.smarthub.coop Or call 800-766-2099 anytime

Pay your bill online any-time using SmartHub



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