



# NEWS *Lines*

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



## NOVEMBER 2023

### IN THIS *Issue*

Home Insulation  
2

Energy Assessments  
Available to Members  
2

Why Do We Advertise?  
3

Manager's Report  
4

Why You Should  
Invest in a Heat Pump  
6

Harvest Safety  
7

Employee Highlight  
7

Power Quiz  
8

Switch Smart?  
8

## Operation Round-Up Report

Disbursements made from North West REC's Operation Round Up Trust in the third quarter of 2023 totaled \$10,000. This brings the total disbursements made from Operation Round Up since its inception in June of 1999 to \$688,195.

Thank you to all of our members who willingly participate in the program to round up their bills to create change in our communities and help those in need. You have all made this program such a success. Thousands of local people have been helped since the start of this program thanks to you.

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, organizations, and families right in your local area.

\$3,000 .....Medical Emergencies — Assists families with unusual expenses resulting from serious health problems and accident related injuries

\$7,000 .....Program support — All Kids Can, Ida County Crisis Funds, Kids Kampus, Le Mars Backpack Program, Le Mars United Way, Noah's Ark Daycare, Orange City Community Chest, South O'Brien Backpack Program, Special Olympics Iowa, Upper Des Moines.

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.



*Thankful* for our member-owners  
*Office Closed*

Thursday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>  
Friday, November 24<sup>th</sup>

# What Type Of Insulation Is Best For Your Home?

Insulation is an essential component of any home, as it helps regulate the temperature and reduce energy consumption. There are several types of insulation available for homeowners, including spray foam, blown-in, foam board or rigid foam panels, and loose fill cellulose. Each type of insulation has its own unique properties and is best suited for specific applications.

1. **Spray foam insulation:** This type of insulation is made from polyurethane foam. It is typically used in unfinished walls, including foundation walls, floors, and ceilings. Spray foam insulation is an excellent choice for insulating hard-to-reach areas and can help reduce air infiltration.
2. **Blown-in insulation:** This type of insulation is made from cellulose or fiberglass. It is typically used in unfinished walls, including foundation walls, floors, and ceilings. Blown-in insulation is an affordable option that can be installed quickly and efficiently.



3. **Foam board or rigid foam panels:** This type of insulation is made from polystyrene, polyisocyanurate, or polyurethane foam. It is typically used in unfinished walls, including foundation walls, floors, and ceilings. Foam board insulation has a high insulating value for relatively little thickness and can be easily cut to fit any space.
4. **Loose fill cellulose:** This type of insulation is made from recycled paper products that have been treated with fire retardant chemicals. It is typically used in unfinished walls, including foundation walls, floors, and ceilings. Loose fill cellulose insulation can be blown into hard-to-reach areas and can help reduce air infiltration.

When choosing the right type of insulation for your home, it's important to consider several factors such as the area of your home that needs to be insulated and your budget. You should also consider the R-value of the insulation material you choose as it indicates its insulating efficiency.

## NORTH WEST REC BUILDING INSULATION REBATE - FORM ON OUR WEBSITE TO FILL OUT, PLEASE INCLUDE A COPY OF YOUR INVOICE

- BUILDING MUST BE ALL ELECTRIC AS THE PRIMARY HEATING SOURCE WITH ELECTRIC BACKUP
- MUST BE PROFESSIONALLY INSTALLED FOR BLOWN-IN, SPRAY FOAM, INSULATING CONCRETE FORMS, AEROSHEILD, RIGID STYROFOAM PANELS, AND/OR STRUCTURAL PANELS
- RESIDENTIAL (HOUSE) – REBATE LIMITED TO 30% OF INSTALLED INSULATION COST UP TO A MAXIMUM REBATE OF \$800 PER BUILDING PER CALENDAR YEAR
- COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL/AG BUILDINGS – REBATE LIMITED TO 10% OF INSTALLED INSULATION COST UP TO A MAXIMUM REBATE OF \$2,000 PER BUILDING PER CALENDAR YEAR

## Energy Assessments Available To Members

In addition to offering energy efficiency rebates, our Member Service department offers energy assessments to our members. Your Coop has an infrared camera to do these energy assessments. This camera creates images of temperature and points out where cold air leaks into a home or where electrical circuits might be dangerously hot.

When scheduling appointments, it is important to know that there needs to be at least a 20 to 30 degree difference between the inside and outside temperatures for the camera to work effectively.

Members will be charged \$45 for an energy assessment, applied to your electric account. Please call the office at 712-707-4935 to schedule an appointment. One of our member service personnel will conduct a walk-through of the house, with the member present, to look for possible ways to save energy. They will review a detailed list of energy efficiency ideas for potential savings. Simple changes in both lifestyle and in the home will pay you back year after year. Some of those improvements won't cost you a lot of money to put into effect.



# Why Do We Advertise?



## WHY DO WE ADVERTISE?

At North West REC we are often asked why we run radio ads or spend resources on mailing out a member newsletter each month. Great question! Proactive communication is essential in any industry or business, and it is especially important for North West REC to communicate often with our members who own the co-op. In fact, the core principles of our cooperative business model include concern for community and keeping our members informed and educated.

We use a variety of communications methods to “cut through the clutter” and make sure we reach our members with our messages. Our monthly newsletter, radio announcements, social media posts, bill stuffers, emails, and website serve as effective ways for us to quickly communicate important information with you regarding safety, energy efficiency, cooperative business, and regulatory notices.

Let’s break these categories down one by one:

### 1. SAFETY AWARENESS

As your electric cooperative, we have a duty to keep you safe from the dangers of electricity. Preventative safety messages are a top priority in our public communications efforts. For example, we remind farmers to watch out for electric lines and poles during planting and harvest seasons. We encourage members to call 8-1-1 before digging so underground utilities can be properly located. During the holidays, we promote safety in the kitchen because the incidence of home fires increases dramatically during that time. Throughout the year, we tell members to “look up and live” as they use ladders and tall equipment around the house, garage, or barn.

### 2. ENERGY EFFICIENCY

At North West REC, we are committed to helping our members use energy wisely. We provide multiple resources to help you find ways to reduce that electricity bill and become more energy efficient, but we need to promote those resources, so you know about them. For example, we often post energy efficiency tips on our Facebook page and within the pages of our member newsletter. We communicate

through various methods to let you know about rebates and incentives for energy efficient products.

### 3. COOPERATIVE BUSINESS

As an owner of the electric cooperative, you need to know important information about the financial condition of the business and when to elect directors of the board. We publish an annual report which includes important information about the co-op.

### 4. REGULATORY NOTICES

We are required to communicate with our co-op members regarding specific state and federal regulations. For example, you may notice the grain bin clearance notice we publish every year in the member newsletter and articles informing members about financial aid available through the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

Communicating frequently with our members is an important business function that helps North West REC achieve our mission of powering lives and empowering communities.

### 5. STAY CONNECTED!

At North West REC, we are committed to keeping our members informed and educated, which is why we communicate through a variety of platforms. Here are a few ways you can stay connected to your co-op:

- Find us on Facebook and Instagram by searching for North West REC.
- Subscribe to our monthly e-newsletter Smart Choices for the latest safety tips and news about your REC.
- Register for a SmartHub account at <https://nwrec.smarthub.coop/Login.html#> so you can track your energy use, report and receive restoration updates on outages, and pay your bill online, or you can download the app.
- Check your recent billing statement to make sure we have an accurate phone number and email on file for your account so we have the best way to contact you.



## ARE YOU SWITCH SMART?

Peak demand determines, in part, the cost of electricity purchased by our wholesale power provider, NIPCO. As peak demand grows, power suppliers must provide more electric generation to keep up with the load demand. Our co-op purchases kilowatt hours from our G&T (NIPCO) based on the demand for our members. **Peak**

**demand** refers to the moment in time when the demand for electricity is the highest. If there isn’t enough electric generation produced to keep up with peak demand, more generation facilities may need to be built which means a higher price per kilowatt and more cost to you, our member-owner. By helping to reduce peak demand, you can help keep power cost lower and conserve energy.



Lyle D. Korver

# MANAGER'S *Report*

## The Cooperative Difference – What Does that Really Mean?

At North West REC (NWREC) we often use the term “cooperative difference”. What does that really mean? Your electric cooperative is member-owned and controlled. Another way to say this is NWREC is “owned by the members we serve.” That is significantly different than the investor owned utilities that are owned by the shareholders. Everything we do at NWREC is with the members in mind. We are always asking ourselves, “How does it impact the members?”

For more than eight decades, NWREC has been focused on providing our members with the best possible service at the lowest possible rates, consistent with sound cooperative business principles. These are the Seven Cooperative Principles that drive our decision-making:



As a part-owner, one of the many benefits you receive is that you have a voice in how we operate. Member-owners like you, democratically elect the co-op’s board of directors, who must also be member-owners. These directors serve your local interests in governing the cooperative.

To help you be aware of who represents you on the board of directors and to know a little bit about them, we are going to be including some director profiles in our upcoming newsletters. Here are the current board members and also the officers of the board:

### District 1 (Sioux County):

Jeff Rehder, President  
Steve Abma  
Dave Bosma

### District 2 (O’Brien County):

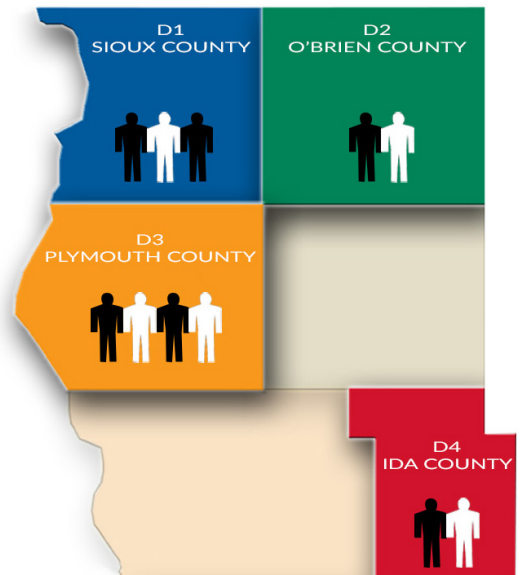
Tom Wagner, Treasurer  
Dan Van Beek

### District 3 (Plymouth County):

Doug Becker, Vice President  
Steve Brown, Secretary  
Scott Feuerhelm  
Shirley Schroeder

### District 4 (Ida County):

Dale Ullrich, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer  
Dan Hoffman



These directors are very dedicated and take attendance at board meetings, committee meetings, meetings of our associated organizations and leadership training, very seriously. They are responsible for providing strong governance, establishing policies and performing other director duties as outlined by the articles of incorporation and by-laws. They are accountable to the membership. We appreciate their hard work and dedication and the commitment they have made to helping NWREC continue to grow and meet the mission of the Cooperative: **"To safely and efficiently, provide reliable and affordable electric service to our members."**



Left to Right: Shirley Schroeder; Steve Brown, Secretary; Doug Becker, Vice President; Jeff Rehder, President; Scott Feuerhelm; Steve Abma; Dale Ullrich, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer; Daniel Van Beek; Dave Bosma; Dan Hoffman; Tom Wagner, Treasurer.

## Congratulations to Directors Wagner and Rehder

NWREC is a member of several associated organizations and is fortunate to have two of our directors serving on the board of directors of two of these organizations.



### Tom Wagner re-elected as a Basin Electric Director:

Tom Wagner represents NWREC on the board of directors of Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative (NIPCO). We purchase our wholesale power supply from NIPCO, which is headquartered in Le Mars. NIPCO gets 23% of its generation supply from WAPA, which markets hydro power and the remaining 77% from Basin Electric, which has a combination of coal, natural gas, wind and other resources. NIPCO has a board seat on the Basin Electric board of directors and one of our directors, Tom Wagner, was recently re-elected to fill this seat on the Basin board for another three years. Basin is headquartered in Bismarck, North Dakota and has eleven directors on their Board.



### Jeff Rehder re-elected as a CFC Director:

Jeff Rehder, NWREC Board President, was recently re-elected to a second three-year term on the board of directors of the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC). CFC is our cooperative lender and is based in Sterling, Virginia. CFC has ten districts throughout the U.S. and Jeff represents District 5, which includes Iowa, Illinois and Wisconsin. CFC provides financing for a majority of the 800 REC's in the U.S. NWREC has been a 100% borrower of CFC since 1996, when we paid off our remaining RUS (formerly Rural Electrification Administration) USDA debt.

Congratulations Tom and Jeff! We are proud of your accomplishments and the leadership you provide for NWREC and these important associated organizations.

# Why Should You Invest in a Heat Pump?

Maybe you were in the process of buying a home, watching the latest episode of your favorite house-hunting reality show, or just making small talk at the office water cooler when you heard the term "heat pump." Perhaps you wondered what it is or what it does. Although it has the word heat in its name, it does more than help warm your home.



Heat pumps for larger homes can save energy with a zone-heating feature, warming only rooms that are in use. High-efficiency heat pumps also dehumidify better than standard systems, resulting in less energy usage.

To determine the best heat pump system for your home, contact a reputable heat pump installer/contractor to assess your home's needs.

## HEAT PUMPS

- **AIR-TO-AIR OR AIR-SOURCE PUMPS (ASHP)** are the most common and are powered by electricity. They have an outdoor compressor/condenser unit that warms or cools the coils inside the air handler. It then circulates the warmed or cooled air through the system and pushes the air through ducts back into rooms. For homes without air ducts, air-source heat pumps are also available in a ductless version called a mini-split heat pump.
- **GEOHERMAL HEAT PUMPS (GSHP)**, also known as ground-source or water-source heat pumps, can heat, cool, and even supply hot water to a home by transferring heat to or from the ground (or nearby water source), according to Energy.gov. Geothermal pumps cost more to install than other versions but have lower operating costs since they take advantage of relatively constant ground or water temperatures. They are typically more efficient and can be used in more extreme climates than air-source heat pumps (although air-source technology has improved).

## WHAT ARE THEY AND HOW DO THEY WORK?

In general, a heat pump extracts heat from one place and transfers it to another (similar to how an air conditioner or refrigerator cools). In warmer months, a heat pump takes heat from inside a home and relocates it outdoors, helping to make your home cooler. In the cooler months, a heat pump produces heat energy from the outside and moves it inside, which helps to warm your home.

## DO THEY SAVE ENERGY?

Since heat pumps move heat, instead of create it, they do save energy! Energy.gov estimates that today's heat pumps can reduce a home's electricity use for heating by approximately 50% compared to traditional systems like furnaces and baseboard heaters.



## NORTH WEST REC ASHP & GSHP REBATES

GEOHERMAL HEAT PUMP – NEW UNITS INSTALLED ON OUR SYSTEM		NEW LOAD	REPLACEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>RESIDENTIAL</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MAXIMUM REBATE LIMIT OF 30% OF COST UP TO \$10,000</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL/AG PROJECTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MAXIMUM REBATE LIMIT OF 30% OF COST UP TO \$75,000</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		\$1,400 PER TON	\$750 PER TON
		\$1,400 PER TON	\$750 PER TON
AIR SOURCE HEAT PUMP – NEW UNITS INSTALLED ON OUR SYSTEM		NEW LOAD	REPLACEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>RESIDENTIAL</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- IF BACK UP HEAT IS ELECTRIC</li> <li>- IF NO BACK UP HEAT OR IF BACK UP HEAT IS PROPANE OR GAS</li> <li>- MAXIMUM REBATE LIMIT OF 30% OF COST UP TO \$10,000</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL/AG PROJECTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- IF BACK UP HEAT IS ELECTRIC</li> <li>- IF NO BACK UP HEAT OR IF BACK UP HEAT IS PROPANE OR GAS</li> <li>- MAXIMUM REBATE LIMIT OF 30% OF COST UP TO \$75,000</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		\$700 PER TON \$500 PER TON	\$700 PER TON \$500 PER TON
		\$700 PER TON \$500 PER TON	\$700 PER TON \$500 PER TON

# Make Your Harvest A Safe Harvest



The fall season brings excitement, fatigue and stress as farmers are trying to maximize their harvest with uncooperative weather, limited workers and shorter days. With the urgency felt by farm families during this season, here are a few safety reminders.

- The majority of roadway accidents involving farm equipment happen at dawn and at dusk. Check to make sure you have the recommended lighting on your tractor and wagons. Use an escort vehicle when necessary.
- When moving large equipment or high loads near a power line, always use a spotter, or someone to help make certain that contact is not made with the line.
- Never attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path.
- Always lower portable augers or elevators to their lowest possible level before moving or transporting. Use care when raising them back up.

- Always turn off the tractor BEFORE you get off the tractor to check or unclog any piece of equipment.
- Do not sacrifice your rest and nutrition. Take short breaks to get out and stretch, stay hydrated and pack nutritious snacks to eat throughout the day.

It is very important for operators of farm equipment or vehicles to know what to do if the vehicle comes in contact with a power line. It is always best to stay in the cab and call for help. Warn others who may be nearby to stay away and wait until the REC arrives to make sure power to the line is cut off.

If there is fire or imminent risk of fire, JUMP – not step – with both feet hitting the ground at the same time. Do not allow any part of your body to touch the equipment and the ground at the same time. Continue to hop or shuffle to safety, keeping both feet together while leaving the area. Once you get away from the equipment, never attempt to get back on or even touch the equipment. Do your part to make this a safe harvest season!

## Employee Highlight Get to know your cooperative's employees



**Name:** James Vondrak

**Title/Position:** IT Director

**Years at NWREC:** 10

**Family:** Wife - Rachel; children - Daniel, Fulton, Andrew, and Maria

**Interests/hobbies:** read, work outside on the acreage, help dad and brother on farm, spend time with family

**Why I enjoy working at NWREC:** The people I work with treat me like family and it's fulfilling to know I help NW IA and the people in it thrive by using technology to improve our efficiencies and provide affordable and reliable power to our members.

**Name:** Robin Maassen

**Title/Position:** Journeyman Lineman, Orange City service center

**Years at NWREC:** 8

**Family:** Wife - Aubrey

**Interests/hobbies:** hunting, fishing, and softball

**Why I enjoy working at NWREC:** I enjoy being able to work outside everyday.



# THE POWER QUIZ

NORTH WEST REC

1. What board was Director Tom Wager re-elected to recently?
2. Name a type of insulation that we rebate if your building has all electric heat:
3. What is one of the 5 reasons that we spend time advertising?

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 December 6. 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* SEPTEMBER 2023

Mark Warntjes - Boyden  
 Beyer Farms - Sanborn  
 Kim Gutheridge - Paullina  
 Kevin Weber - Ida Grove  
 Brian Cronin - Holstein

Tom Miller - Remsen  
 Gilbert Van De Stroet - Inwood  
 Susan Schwartz - Le Mars  
 Robert Eisma - Ireton  
 Paul Dekker - Maurice



## ARE YOU SWITCH SMART?

What does "Peak Demand" mean?

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 December 31. 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 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](http://nwrec.smarthub.coop) Or call 800-766-2099 anytime

Pay your bill online any-time using SmartHub



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  
 Editor



Like us on Facebook & Follow us on Instagram!