



# NEWS *Lines*

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

## OCTOBER 2023

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## October is National Co-op Month

### *Electric Co-ops Grow for the Communities They Serve*

October is National Co-op Month, and North West REC is joining cooperatives across the U.S. to celebrate. Co-ops come in all shapes and sizes, but they each have a common goal: to provide goods or services for the members of the co-op.

Electric co-ops, including North West REC exist to serve their members. Our priority is to provide affordable, reliable energy to our local communities. Because we are led by you, the members we serve, we can evolve to meet your needs.

This October, as we celebrate Co-op Month, we're focusing on the ways "Co-ops Grow" for their members.

**Co-ops Grow Communities:** Co-ops help communities grow by promoting economic empowerment, fostering community engagement and supporting the unique needs of co-op members. "Concern for Community" is one of our core principles—and being community-focused is essential to everything we do.

**Co-ops Grow Together:** Co-ops are all about cooperation, not competition. That's why electric co-ops work together to share lessons learned, successful strategies and better ways to serve our members. We're better when we grow together!

**Co-ops Grow Tomorrow's Leaders:** Electric co-ops serve as fertile ground for growing tomorrow's leaders through a variety of youth engagement programs. Whether through school demonstrations, community events or the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour program, we're committed to providing opportunities for local youth to learn and thrive in our community and beyond.

**Co-ops Grow for You:** At North West REC, your satisfaction is our number one goal. It's why we were formed many years ago to fulfill a uniquely local purpose. We've come a long way since then, and your needs continue to evolve. That's why we'll never stop growing for you!



# Prepare Your Heating System for Colder Weather

Maintaining your heating system is important to ensure it's running efficiently and effectively. Here are ten energy efficiency tips for maintaining your electric heat pump:

1. Clean the outdoor unit regularly to remove dirt and debris that can reduce its efficiency. Use a garden hose to gently spray the unit from top to bottom and remove any leaves, grass clippings, or other debris that may have accumulated on or around the unit.
2. Check the air filter monthly and replace it as needed to ensure proper airflow. Dirty filters can restrict airflow and cause your heat pump to work harder than necessary.
3. Schedule routine maintenance for your heat pump to ensure it's running efficiently. A professional technician can inspect your system, clean it, and make any necessary repairs.
4. Keep the area around your heat pump clean and free of debris. Debris around your heat pump can reduce its efficiency and increase the risk of breakdowns.
5. Use a programmable thermostat to automatically adjust the temperature when you're away from home or sleeping. This can help you save energy and reduce your heating costs.
6. Seal air leaks around windows and doors to prevent drafts and save energy. Use weatherstripping or caulk to seal gaps and cracks around windows and doors.
7. Use ceiling fans to help circulate warm air throughout your home. This can help you feel more comfortable at a lower temperature setting.
8. Install a smart thermostat that can learn your schedule and adjust the temperature accordingly. This can help you save energy and reduce your heating costs.
9. Use curtains or blinds to block sunlight during the summer and keep your home cooler. This can help you save energy and reduce your cooling costs.
10. Consider upgrading to a more energy-efficient heat pump model if your current model is old or inefficient. A more efficient model can help you save energy and reduce your heating costs.



Don't have a heat pump and are looking to get one, or looking to update your old one? Check out our rebates to help you save on your new heat pump!



**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.



ARE YOU  
**SWITCH SMART?**

### How does the Switch Makes Cents program save you money?

When you choose to participate in the Switch Makes Cents (SMC) load management program, you will have the benefit of avoiding peak demand costs as well as being able to receive the all-electric interruptible heat rate of just \$0.049 per KWH. This is for all KWH's sold for electric heating, cooling, and water heating usage that are connected to the switch! The SMC program also helps stabilize future power costs to your cooperative by reducing peak demand which determines, in part, the cost of electricity purchased by our wholesale power provider NIPCO. Reducing peak demand reduces the amount of electricity the electrical generation facilities need to produce, thus keeping them from having to build more facilities which would result in a higher price per kilowatt and more cost to you.

# Low-income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

The 2023-2024 Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), offered through Mid-Sioux Opportunity, Inc., may be able to help you pay your winter heating bill. This program is funded through the Iowa Department of Human Rights and has been established to help qualifying low-income Iowa homeowners and renters pay for a portion of their primary heating costs.

Your local Mid-Sioux office will be taking applications from November 1, 2023 through April 30, 2024. Each applicant will need to furnish a copy of their most recent heating and electric bill, original Social Security or I-94 card for each household member, and proof of the household's income for the past month (4 weeks), the past twelve (12) months, or 2022 or 2023 tax return.

Eligibility for participation is established according to the federal income guidelines listed to the right. Applicants eligible for the help will be paid on a first come, first serve basis, and all payments are subject to availability of funds. The assistance is based on household income, household size, type of fuel and type of housing.

INCOME MAXIMUMS	
Household Size	Annual Gross Income
1	\$29,160
2	\$39,440
3	\$49,720
4	\$60,000
5	\$70,280
6	\$80,560
7	\$90,840
8	\$101,120

**For households with more than eight members, add \$10,280 for each additional member.**

## APPLICATION

**Social Security Card or I-94 Card** – We require a copy of the original card for each household member.

**Current Heat Bill and Electric Bill** – This may be two separate bills.

**Proof of Income** – This includes total household gross income from all sources (for all household members age 19 and over). We must have complete proof of income to process your application.

- **Fixed Income:** Includes Social Security Income, Aid to Families with Dependent Children or F.I.P., Veterans' Assistance, Unemployment Insurance and Pensions. Provide a copy of your most recent check or a bank statement showing automatic deposit.
- **Wage Earners:** Attach copies of your check stubs for 30 days preceding the date of application, the past 12 months or the most recent calendar year federal income tax return, 2022 or 2023.
- **Self-Employed/Farmers:** A copy of your 2022 or 2023 federal income tax return.
- **Other Income:** Alimony and child support will also need to be verified.

**Please call your local outreach office for an appointment to apply for LIHEAP:**

### Mid-Sioux Opportunity, Inc.

Ida County - Ida County Courthouse 712-364-2175  
401 Moorehead • Ida Grove 712-225-3322  
Thursday 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Cherokee County 712-225-3322  
921 So 2nd St • Cherokee  
Mon, Wed, Fri 8:00 am – 4:30 pm

Lyon County 712-472-3746  
302 S Lincoln • Rock Rapids 712-722-3611  
Wednesday 9:00 am – 4:30 pm

Plymouth County 712-546-6603  
180 10th St SE • Le Mars 712-225-3322  
Tues & Thurs 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Sioux County 712-722-3611  
618 14th St NE • Sioux Center  
Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri 8:00 am – 4:30 pm

Central Office 800-859-2025  
418 S Marion St • Remsen 712-786-2001  
Mon – Fri 8:00 am – 4:30 pm Fax: 712-786-3250

Visit us on the web at: [www.midsioux.org](http://www.midsioux.org)  
Hearing Impaired Call 711

Upper Des Moines Opportunity  
O'Brien County Outreach Center 712-957-1023  
140 2nd St SE • Primghar  
Mon – Fri 8:30 am – 4:00 pm, Wed – open until 6:30 pm





Lyle D. Korver

# MANAGER'S *Report*

## Member Appreciation Day Events Well Attended

We were very pleased to see another great turnout from our members for the four Member Appreciation events that were held at the end of August and in early September. One of the events was during the extremely warm stretch of weather, but the other three were beautiful evenings. Nearly 2,500 members and their families attended and enjoyed a pork shop or hot dog meal. One of our goals with having these events in the fall and having outside activities was to encourage more participation from younger members and families. In the past, our primary member engagement events were typically held in March and revolved around a meeting format. The turnout from younger members and families for those events was usually quite low.



I'm pleased to report that the turnout from our younger members and families for the fall Member Appreciation events was once again up considerably compared to our March meeting format events. We had a number of activities for everyone including inflatables for the kids, an EV and classic car and tractor show, and electric safety demonstrations. We also handed out patronage checks.

The prize winners and more pictures are included in another section of the newsletter. We are always looking for new ways to try to improve our member engagement. These events seemed to be a real hit and we appreciate the great participation we had. If you have ideas for ways that we can improve these events in the future, please share them with us. Thank you for your loyalty and support.

## Derald Philips Retires With 45 Years of Service

North West REC has been fortunate over the years to have many longtime dedicated employees. One of those will be retiring at the end of October following 45 years of service. Derald Philips began his career with Plymouth Electric Cooperative as a part-time summer help employee. He became a full-time employee in October 1978, when he filled the position of work order clerk.

Derald was always very willing to serve wherever he was needed and has been involved in the accounting, information technology and operations departments. His most recent position has been Safety and Loss Control Director.

Derald was a very dedicated and loyal employee. He served as a mentor and positive example for many younger employees over the years. We thank Derald for his 45 years of service and wish him and his wife Jane all the best in their retirement years!



# \$2,051,000 in Patronage Checks Distributed

One of the important benefits our members receive from being a member of North West REC is the return of deferred patronage dividends. Following the closing of the Cooperative's books each year, the margins are assigned to the members based on the dollar amount of electricity they have purchased during the year. These assignments are referred to as deferred patronage dividends.

The Board of Directors approved a patronage retirement in the amount of \$2,051,000 this year and we have returned this to the members in the form of checks or bill credits this fall. We used a combination of the First In, First Out (FIFO) and Last In, First Out (LIFO) method this year. This year's retirement covered the remaining assignment of the year 2010 and a portion of 2022.

With this year's patronage refund, it brings the total patronage that has been returned to the members during the last 84 years to over \$33 million. We believe this is a true demonstration of what a Cooperative is about.



Pictured is North West REC CEO, Lyle Korver (right) and North West REC Operations Director, Doug Alons (left) presenting a patronage check to Kraig Kruger, Plant Manger — Valero Ethanol, Hartley (Center).



Pictured is (left to right) North West REC Operations Director, Doug Alons and North West REC CEO, Lyle Korver, presenting a patronage check to Jim Dean and Bruce Dooyema with Center Fresh Egg.



Pictured is North West REC CEO, Lyle Korver (right) and North West REC Member Services Director, Rob Driesen (left) presenting a patronage check to Greg De Jager with Kooima Company, LLC (Center).

The following is a brief summary of the discussion and decisions from the July and August board meetings.

- The monthly safety report was presented by Derald Philips. The board thanked Derald for his 45 years of dedicated service and the great job he has done in leading our safety program.
- Doug Alons and Derrick Haak presented an Operations Update, including number of new services and services revisions for the year and system improvement projects completed.
- Curt Ahrenholz presented the monthly financial reports. For the year-to-date, total margins are \$477,874 higher than budget.
- Membership applications for 33 new members were approved.
- Manager Korver presented his monthly report, including updates on service reliability, kWh sales, CFC patronage assignment of \$167,054, update on purchased power costs and load factor changes for the year-to-date, update on the Energy Trail Tours to Basin Electric and Youth Tour to Washington, D.C.
- An update on the first Member Appreciation Day event and plans for the remaining three.
- Several policy updates were approved.
- Manager Korver reported on some economic development projects that are underway.
- An N.E.T. Broadband update was shared. An open house for the Holstein fiber project was successful.
- Heard reports from Director Wagner on the recent NIPCO & Basin Board Meetings.
- Directors Becker & Schroeder reported on the Basin Annual Meeting they attended.
- Heard a report from Director Rehder on CFC Board meetings.
- James Vondrak presented a technology and cyber security update.
- Approved Operation Round-Up donations.



# Keep Safety in Mind During Harvest Season



It's that time of year again when combines are plugging through fields and tractors with wagons are busy carrying loads to and from the grain elevator. It's time for harvest and time for safety, especially overhead power line safety.

Farmers need to be alert when working with farm equipment. Many pieces of farm equipment, such as grain augers or elevators, can reach heights that exceed power lines. Before harvest even starts, it is a good idea to walk around your farm to see where overhead lines are located and check the height of farm equipment.

## Other tips to remember this harvest season:

- Be alert to power lines when you reach the end of your field.
- Inform family members and hired hands about safety procedures.
- Keep all objects at least ten feet away from power lines.
- Contact your local REC before you build or move a grain bin.

## What you should do if you're inside a tractor that touches a power line:

- Try to back away from the line.
- If you can, stay put and have someone call NWREC.
- If you must leave your tractor, jump clear (putting both feet forward) so you won't make contact with the ground and the vehicle at the same time.

## Safety tips for handling loose grain:

- Lock out power to all types of grain-handling equipment.
- Never work alone. If you must go into the bin, use a lifeline and have someone assist you.
- Never permit children to ride in grain wagons or enter grain storage areas.
- Be especially careful when working with old grain.

Being aware of the dangers could mean the difference between a safe harvest season and a disaster. Take that extra minute for safety – the life you save may be your own! Stay alert and stay alive!

## FALL into A New Habit

With daylight savings time coming this fall (November 6), you should remember to change something other than your clock. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) recommends that you change the batteries in your smoke detector. According to the NFPA, smoke detectors have reduced the number of home fire deaths by half since they were installed in homes during the 1970s. Ninety five percent of the homes have at least one smoke detector.

Unfortunately, a third of those smoke alarms won't sound due to dead, missing or disconnected batteries according to NFPA.

While changing your batteries this fall, keep these other smoke alarm tips from NFPA in mind:

- Don't paint the smoke alarm or place decoration snear it, which might cause it not to work properly.
- Test smoke alarms monthly by using the alarm's "test button".
- Replace the batteries for your smoke alarms every fall or when the alarm "chirps".
- Regularly clean your smoke alarm to keep it in proper working order.
- Replace smoke alarms every 10 years.
- Never "borrow" a battery from a smoke alarm.

There are many steps homeowners can take to reduce the chances of an electrical fire. We



encourage all members to conduct a basic assessment of their electrical systems, including all electrical cords, extension cords, power plugs and outlets.

Be aware of warning signals, such as:

- Flickering lights
- Unusual buzzing sounds
- Circuit breakers that trip repeatedly
- Mild shock or tingle when touching an appliance
- Warm or hot ceiling light fixtures
- Light switches or electrical outlets not working
- Burning odor from outlets or switches

Have an electrician check the wiring in your house if you are experiencing any of these things. Also remember to practice a home escape plan frequently with your family. Prevent electrical fires and stay safe around electricity!

# Member Appreciation Days Thank You

It was great to see so many of our members at our four Member Appreciation events this fall. We want to take this opportunity to thank the members who attended. We have some pictures from the events and a list of the prize winners of the Blackstone Electric Griddle, the rocker lawn chair, grilling utensil sets, and kids bikes below.

## Ida County Winners

Blackstone: Craig Todd

Lawn Chair: Madison Schrieber

Grilling Set: Carol Maymon

Bike: Rosey Rydberg

Bike: Modesty Wernberg

## Plymouth County Winners

Blackstone: Roger Hawkins

Lawn Chair: Marilyn Hoffman

Grilling Set: David Attrill

Grilling Set: Eric Newberg

Bike: Shelby Groom

Bike: Harper Reuter

## Sioux County Winners

Blackstone: Robert Mantel

Lawn Chair: Shawn Burrington

Grilling Set: Allan Bolkema

Grilling Set: Rhoda Hansmann

Bike: Olivia Van Bruggen

Bike: Brielle Postma

## O'Brien County Winners

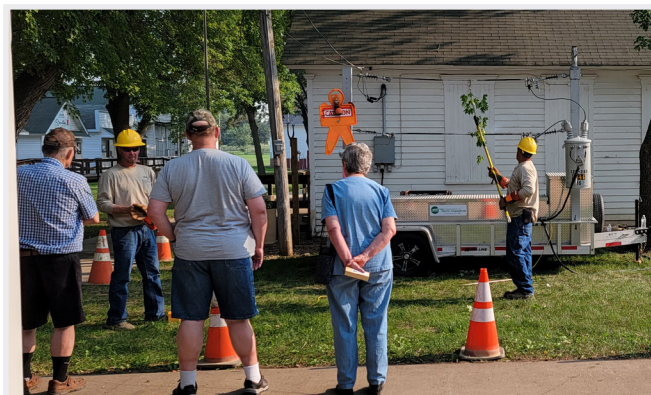
Blackstone: Jim Benner

Lawn Chair: Carla Hofland

Grilling Set: Pauline Storm

Bike: Sawyer Stoll

Bike: Kovey Bakker



# THE POWER QUIZ

NORTH WEST REC

1. What program does Mid-Sioux offer to help with your winter heating bills?
2. Name one way to maintain your heating system:
3. Who recently retired after working 45 years at North West REC?

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 November 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*

AUGUST 2023

Nal Farm - Melvin  
 Jerry Wendt - Le Mars  
 North Pork - Sanborn  
 Glen Leusink - Orange City  
 Bobby Back - Sutherland

Rachel Popken - Ireton  
 William Aberson - Orange City  
 Roger Schmid - Kingsley  
 Dennis Vander Schaaf - Sheldon  
 Rick Roghair - Hartley



## ARE YOU SWITCH SMART?

How does the Switch Makes Cents program save you money?

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



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