



# NEWS *Lines*

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

**JULY 2020**

IN THIS *Issue*

Congratulations  
Graduates  
2

Member  
Appreciation Days  
Save the Date  
2

An Easier Way  
To Pay  
3

Manager's Report  
4-5

Recycling Program  
6

It Pays to Read  
6

COVID-19 Update  
7

Power Quiz  
8

## OPERATION ROUND-UP *Donations*

The Operation Round Up program is designed to provide benefits to individuals, organizations, and communities in our service area. These funds are generated through a voluntary rounding up of cooperative members' electric bills to the next nearest dollar, to assist worthy causes right in your local county area.



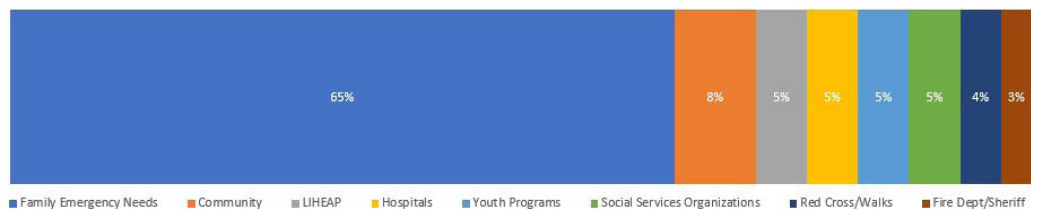
One of the recipients in May was the Parks and Recreation department in Primghar, who will be using the money to purchase a new score board for its little league program. Receiving the donation from Ken Miller, Member Service Employee, is Carol Chicoine, Administrator/Clerk from the City of Primghar.

If you are not currently participating in Operation Round Up and would like to become a part of this worth while 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.

**\$500,000**

The total disbursements made from Operation Round Up since its inception in June of 1999 have now **surpassed \$500,000**. Thank you so much to all of our members who participate in this program. This program has helped so many of our members and their families, as well as organizations in the communities.

The chart below gives a good idea as to where all the Operation Round Up money has been donated. Over half of the money has gone to helping members and their families with expenses with emergencies.



# Congratulations Graduates



North West REC celebrated graduating seniors in May and June with banners outside the Orange City and Le Mars offices. Everyone who is graduating deserves a celebration, and we know that many people are missing out with having most graduation ceremonies either cancelled, postponed, or held with limited attendance due to COVID-19. We want all the seniors to feel celebrated for achieving this important milestone in their lives. From preschool all the way up to your senior year of high school or college, we know you have all put in a lot of hard work just to have it all lead up to having your senior year cut short and your graduation day gone. That is why we here at North West REC celebrate you, Class of 2020. We are all in this together because in one way or another COVID-19 has affected all of our lives by now. This will certainly be a year that will not be forgotten soon. Hats off to you, congratulations to all the graduates!



## Member Appreciation Days

### Ida County

Tuesday, August 25th  
Ida County Fairgrounds  
209 1/2 Moorehead Ave  
Ida Grove, IA 51445

### Plymouth County

Tuesday, September 1st  
Plymouth County Fairgrounds  
500 4th Ave NE  
Le Mars, IA 51031

### O'Brien County

Thursday, September 3rd  
O'Brien County Fairgrounds  
555 3rd St SE  
Primghar, IA 51245

### Sioux County

Tuesday, September 8th  
Terrace View Event Center  
230 St Andrews Way  
Sioux Center, IA 51250



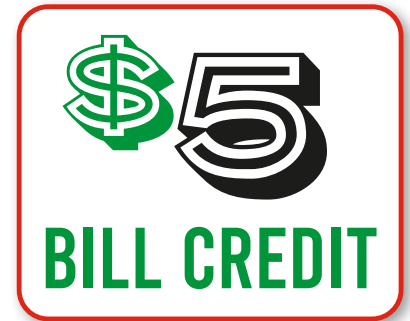
# SAVE the DATE!

# An Easier Way TO PAY

Save time and money with our **bank draft** and **SmartHub e-bill options** by having your monthly electric bill deducted from your bank account and receiving your bill electronically. You would no longer receive printed billing statements in the mail. If you sign up for either of these services, you will receive a **one-time \$5 credit** on your next bill. Even if you are already participating in the automatic bank draft plan, you will still need to sign up for SmartHub e-bill to receive the **one-time \$5 credit**. **To sign up for SmartHub please register at [www.nwrec.coop](http://www.nwrec.coop). You can also sign up for bank draft online once you register for an account. This credit is for new sign-ups only.**

## Why sign up for the automatic bank draft and SmartHub e-bill option?

- No more writing a check to North West REC for your electric bill.
- Your electric bill will be paid on the due date - no worrying about getting your check to our office on time.
- Accurate record keeping from your financial institution showing the direct payment you make to NWREC on your bank statement.
- Access to your electric information at all times online - view your billing and payment history with bill details.
- Easy sign up for SmartHub e-billing at [www.nwrec.coop](http://www.nwrec.coop).



Your financial institution automatically transfers the amount of your monthly electric bill from your account to North West REC each month. The amount transferred will also appear on your monthly bank statement. The amount due will be transferred out of your account on the 8th of each month for payment of your electric bill. You will receive an e-mail notice on the 20th of each month that your monthly electric bill is now ready to be viewed. This will indicate the amount to be withdrawn from your account. Please call 1-800-766-2099 if you have any questions or check [www.nwrec.coop](http://www.nwrec.coop) for more information.

## AUTHORIZATION AGREEMENT FOR BANK DRAFT AND SMARTHUB E-BILL

I authorize North West REC to initiate withdrawals, and if necessary, debit entries and adjustments for any credit entries in error to my account at the financial institution named below for payment of my monthly electric bills. You can sign up at [www.nwrec.coop](http://www.nwrec.coop).

I understand that three or more payments in a 12-month period resulting in overdraft of my account may result in termination of the Direct Payment plan. This authorization will remain in effect until North West REC has received written notification from me of its termination in such a time and manner as to afford North West REC and my financial institution a reasonable time to act on it.

Financial Institution: \_\_\_\_\_ Bank ID No.: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Account No.: \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) Checking or ( ) Savings (select one)

Payments to Begin: \_\_\_\_\_ and to be made on the 8th day of each month.

Account Holder Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Electric Acct. No. \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

To sign up for SmartHub e-bill please register at [www.nwrec.coop](http://www.nwrec.coop). You may also sign up for bank draft online once you register for an account.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE INCLUDE A VOIDED CHECK WHEN SENDING IN THIS FORM**



Lyle D. Korver

# MANAGER'S *Report*

"We set high goals for the reliability and affordability of the power we provide to you."

## RELIABILITY IS OUR DAILY PRIORITY

We know that our member-owners' satisfaction with North West REC (NWREC) is directly related to the reliability and affordability of the services we provide. The cornerstone of our business model is providing service that meets or exceeds your expectations, which is why reliability is one of our top priorities. In fact, reliability is one of the four key pillars of our overall mission to provide power that is safe, *reliable*, affordable and environmentally responsible.



Recently, your board of directors and co-op staff filed our annual reliability report with the Iowa Utilities Board for the 2019 calendar year. Each year, maintaining a reliable system takes hundreds of hours of planning, maintenance, inspections and system upgrades. Equally important is our commitment to balancing reliability and affordability with member expectations, which requires a mindset of continuous improvement and looking ahead to anticipate your future needs.

Reliability isn't something that happens by chance. Throughout the year, our distribution and transmission infrastructure – which includes such things as poles, wires, transformers and substations – is subject to many perils. On any given day, ice storms, high winds, tornadoes, squirrels and birds, and even errant drivers, can interrupt electric service and cause a power outage. We are constantly preparing for the things we can control on our system, such as planned and routine maintenance outages, and for unexpected outages that are often beyond our control. We set high goals for the reliability and affordability of the power we provide to you.

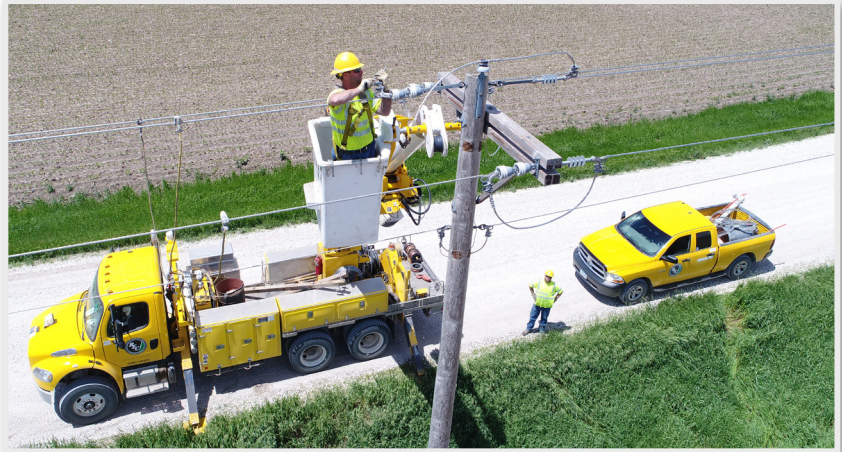
Our annual reporting falls into two categories – the **Reliability Plan** and the **Reliability Report**. The **Reliability Plan** is designed to address what your cooperative is doing to prevent outages on your system, such as tree trimming, animal contact reduction programs and lightning outage mitigation programs. The Reliability Plan also includes an inspection and maintenance plan, details about how we track and monitor interruptions, and how your cooperative plans to communicate its plan with our member-owners.

The **Reliability Report** is designed to show past performance by reporting on three core measures: The System Average Interruption Duration Index (SAIDI), the Customer Average Interruption Duration Index (CAIDI) and the

System Average Interruption Frequency Index (SAIFI). We include the three indices for each of the past five years and they are calculated both including major events and excluding major events.

Now that we have crunched the numbers and analyzed the data, how did we do? We're pleased to report that NWREC's overall reliability rate for 2019 was 99.989%. We had an average of 123 average outage minutes per member for the year. This was higher than the previous two years, but that was due to the flooding that occurred in March and the ice storm in April, 2019.

As we look at our results, we're proud that we've performed well because we know that you count on us to provide reliable and affordable electric service to your homes and businesses. However, our goal is to continue to improve. We're already planning for your future needs, anticipating the service expectations our members will continue to have. You'll see our crews and contractors in action as we work throughout our four county service area and across the 3,800 miles of line we maintain to continue to make new system improvements and to provide you with extremely reliable service. That is what our members expect and deserve, and it's what we have worked hard at delivering for the past 82 years. We pledge to continue to make that our priority going forward.



## BOARD ROOM SUMMARY – APRIL/MAY

The following is a brief summary of the discussions and decisions from the April and May board meetings. Due to COVID-19, these meetings were held by Zoom video conference:

- Approval of new memberships.
- Received monthly safety, operations, and financial reports from staff.
- Manager Korver provided COVID-19 updates
  - A summary report was provided of the Annual Meeting that was held on April 6 at the Le Mars Service Center, with just a few directors, Nominating Committee members and staff in attendance due to COVID-19.
  - Discussion was held regarding the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). It has not been clear whether REC's were eligible. Following a lengthy discussion, the Board voted to not make an application to this program.
  - An update was given on the \$1.6 million early retirement of patronage that was distributed as a credit on the May 20 electric bills.
  - Heard that the Youth Tour and Energy Trail tours have been cancelled this summer.
- The Board approved the acceptance of the low bid for site preparation work for the Primghar service center.
- Manager Korver updated the Board on the sales reductions we have experienced, largely due to ethanol plant shutdowns for a few weeks.
- A new generator rate was approved for hog buildings that have automatic standby generators and agree to be on the load management program.
- Manager Korver shared a report on economic development projects that staff has been working on.
- Heard reports from Director Wagner on the recent NIPCO and Basin Board Meetings.
- Approved Operation Round-Up donations to several charitable organizations and medical emergency situations. The total donations through this fund have now exceeded \$500,000 in the last 21 years!
- Received a grassroots report from Manager Korver. He reported on the recent conference calls held with Sen. Grassley and Sen. Ernst when we had the opportunity to share our concerns about the economic disruptions and challenges many of our members are facing from the COVID-19 pandemic.

# 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.



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

## It Pays to Read

We want to congratulate David and Renae Vander Schaaf of Alton for sending in their stunning landscape photo that was used on the June cover of *Living with Energy in Iowa Magazine*.

If you share an Iowa rural landscape photo with the magazine and they decide to use it on the cover, they will give you \$100.

We also want to congratulate Matt Bakker of Rock Valley for winning a weather radio in the "Editor's Choice Contest" from *Living with Energy in Iowa* magazine in May.

For your chance to win, go to [www.livingwithenergyiniowa.com/editors-choice-contest](http://www.livingwithenergyiniowa.com/editors-choice-contest) and complete the entry form.

Also be sure to check out the monthly recipe section in the magazine this month. Jackie Netheron's Grilled Turkey Burgers made it in the June Issue. Congrats Jackie Netheron of Ida Grove!

Submit your recipes to [recipes@livingwithenergyiniowa.com](mailto:recipes@livingwithenergyiniowa.com) for a chance to be featured in a future month's issue and you could win a \$25 credit on your electric bill if your recipe gets published.



### Grilled Turkey Burgers

- 20 ounces ground turkey
- 1/4 cup non-fat Greek yogurt
- 2 tablespoons mushrooms, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled and finely minced
- 1 green onion, finely chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon seasoned salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons parsley or cilantro, finely chopped
- Optional toppings: pepper jack cheese, lettuce, tomato, avocado, red onion, ranch dressing

Mix the first 8 ingredients together until thoroughly blended. Divide into 4 equal balls (roughly 1/3 pound each) and form into patties 3/4-inch thick and 4-5 inches in diameter. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes. Preheat grill to 400 degrees F (medium high). It should be at this heat at least 5 minutes prior to grilling to preheat the grates. Grill the burgers until the bottom cooks through and juices start to pool on top of the patties, about 5 minutes. Flip and cook until the patties reach an internal temperature of 165 degrees F, about 3-5 minutes. If desired, top with a slice of pepper jack cheese in the last minute or two. Remove and rest on a raised rack and toast buns on the grill. Assemble the burgers with additional optional items: lettuce, tomato, avocado, red onion and some ranch dressing.



# COVID-19 *Update*

Continued from the Manager's report

I think we would all agree that it has been a challenging first half of the year as we have dealt with the impact of COVID-19 on our lives and businesses. We hope that you and your family have stayed healthy through this time. I'm pleased to report that as of the middle of June, we have not had any positive tests for any of our employees or their families. I want to use this opportunity to thank our members for the strong support we have received as we have worked through these challenges together. Your loyalty, flexibility, and understanding is greatly appreciated by all of the directors and employees of North West REC.

As of Monday, June 8, we opened our offices again and it has been great to welcome our members back. These have certainly been unprecedented times these past few months when we have had the offices closed, employees on staggered work shifts, and all the other changes we have had to make to our operation. We are very thankful for the support we have received from the members.

*We are delighted to be back serving you and staying safe together. If you visit the office, please follow the safety guidelines posted inside.*

One of the biggest impacts we have seen on our operation is reduced kilowatt-hour sales. Some of this was weather related during the first three months of the year as we enjoyed a fairly mild winter. However, we have had reduced sales to many of our commercial, industrial, and value-added ag loads the last three months, and we believe a lot of this can be attributed to the impacts of COVID-19 on these businesses. A big factor was the shutdown of the ethanol plants that we serve for several weeks. Through the first five months of this year, our sales are down 10.5%.

The good news is that it looks like sales are starting to recover in June. The temperatures have been warm, and all four of the ethanol plant loads that we serve, are running again. Even though sales are down, our margins are actually running a little bit better than budget. We have avoided serious storm damage in the first half of the year, and with the good weather we enjoyed this spring, a higher percentage of our employee time has been devoted to construction projects instead of maintenance projects and this helps to improve our overall margins. We hope all of our members continue to stay healthy and safe.



**PLEASE STAY 6 FEET APART**  
Markings are inside our lobby.



**COVER YOUR COUGH AND SNEEZE**

Cover your mouth and nose  
with a tissue or your sleeve.



**FEELING SICK?**

Please do not enter our  
building. Please call us at (712)  
707-4935 if you need assistance.



**USE HAND SANITIZER OFTEN**

Please use hand sanitizer  
upon entering.



**MASKS ARE ENCOURAGED**

Masks or face coverings are  
encouraged. Employees are  
wearing these to protect you if  
physical distance cannot be met.

# THE POWER QUIZ

NORTH WEST RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

1. What is the date of one of the four Member Appreciation Days this fall? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Name one way it Pays To Read Living with Energy in Iowa: \_\_\_\_\_
3. What are the two types of appliances you can recycle? \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Account. # \_\_\_\_\_

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 August 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*

MAY 2020



Ron Lorenzen - Westfield  
 Zelda Christensen - Archer  
 Dennis Dekker - Sioux Center  
 Roger Schmid - Kingsley  
 Tim Ymker - Orange City

Gilbert Rus - Rock Valley  
 Kyle Rozeboom - Hull  
 Dale Zenk - Merrill  
 Alex Crosgrove - Le Mars  
 Kevin Farley - 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 Box Available  
 For After Hours Payments

**Lyle D. Korver**  
 CEO & General Manager

**Curt Ahrenholz**  
 Finance & Office  
 Services Director

**Emily Vander Velde**  
 Editor

Find us on  
 Instagram &  
 Facebook!

