



NEWS *Lines*

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



DECEMBER 2023

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13 Employees Reach Service Milestones



Pictured left to right is Jon Heiliger, Sheila Van Beek, Derrick Haak, James Vondrack, Alex Junger, Gina Christoffel, Ken Miller, Lyle Korver, and Curt Ahrenholz. Not pictured: Brandon Bonnema, Luke Lathrop, Doug White, and Derald Philips.

North West REC is thankful for the many years of hard work and dedication these employees have given. Congratulations to the following individuals on reaching service milestones this year:

Jonathan Heiliger - 5 years
Journeyman Lineman - Le Mars

Brandon Bonnema - 10 years
Journeyman Lineman - Orange City

Gina Christoffel - 10 years
Customer Service Representative

James Vondrak - 10 years
IT Director

Alex Jungers - 15 years
Journeyman Lineman - Orange City

Luke Lathrop - 15 years
Journeyman Lineman - Orange City

Ken Miller - 15 years
Metering & Load Management Technician

Derrick Haak - 20 years
Assistant Operations Director

Sheila Van Beek - 30 years
Operations Coordinator

Doug White - 30 years
Lead Lineman - Ida Grove

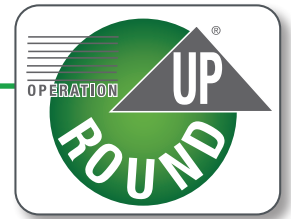
Curt Ahrenholz - 40 years
Finance & Office Services Director

Lyle Korver - 45 years
CEO & General Manager

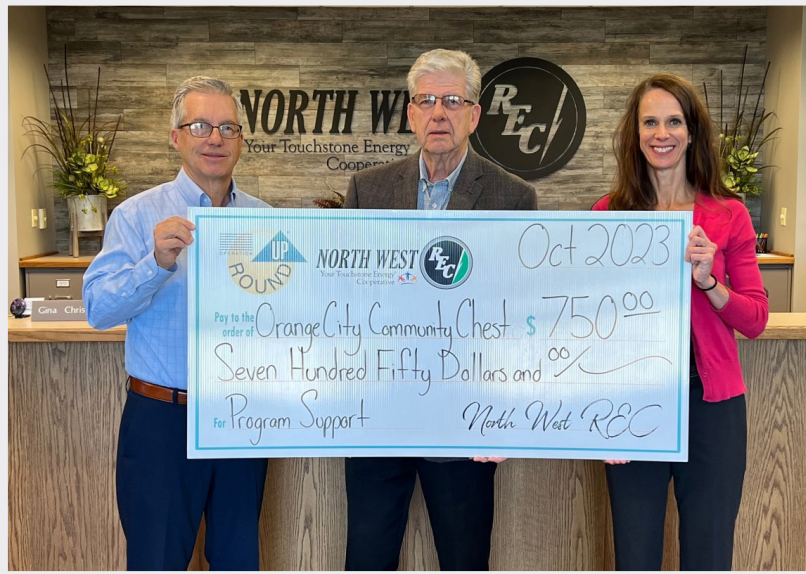
Derald Philips - 45 years
Safety & Loss Control Director



Operation Round-Up Update



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.



This month one of the charitable organizations we were able to present a check to for program support was Orange City Community Chest

If you are currently not participating in Operation Round Up and would like to become a part of this worthwhile program or to receive an application of assistance, please call the office at 800-766-2099.

Pictured left to right is Lyle Korver, North West REC CEO/General Manager; Fred Krommendyk, Vice-President of the Community Chest; and Renee Wynia, North West REC Executive Assistant.

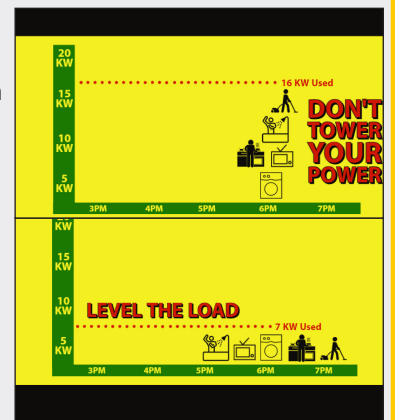


ARE YOU SWITCH SMART?

Because NWREC is member owned, when the cooperative saves money, our customers save money. Using energy wisely and avoiding peak demand times means total costs to the cooperative remain low.

The cooperative levels out our load by sending a signal to all the switches to interrupt power during periods of peak demand. You can do your part to level the load by spacing out the time in which you use some of your electrical appliances instead of running them all at the same time. Remember don't tower your power, level the load!

NWREC purchases power from our generation and transmission cooperative based on peak demand of our members. "Peak demand" is the time of day when the demand and price of electricity is the highest.



THINKING ABOUT SOLAR? DON'T MISS THE RED FLAGS!

"YOU WON'T HAVE AN ELECTRIC BILL!"

If a salesperson says, "You won't have an electric bill!" It's a **RED FLAG!** Owing distributed generation can help offset your kilowatt-hour needs, but the fees to be connected to the grid remain. We can help you understand rate structures and special load control rates as well as how you will be compensated for excess energy you don't use. We're here to help, *please call us to get the facts about solar and our policies.* Smart energy solutions start with smart energy decisions! Let's avoid misunderstandings, **talk to us BEFORE you sign on the dotted line.** Work with your local energy experts at North West REC.

Committee on Nominations are Selected

The Board of Directors has selected the Committee on Nominations, and they will be meeting in January to select nominees for election to the Board of Directors of North West REC. There will only be a director election in district 3 this year. This seat will be voted on and elected at the Annual Meeting of the Cooperative.

Contact one of the nominating committee members in your district if you have any interest in running for the Board of Directors or you know of any member that would be interested. For your information, please review the director qualifications listed below.

Your Current Board of Directors

District 1

Steve Abma, Rock Valley
Dave Bosma, Hospers
Jeff Rehder, Hawarden

District 3

Doug Becker, Hinton
Shirley Schroeder, Le Mars
Steve Brown, Merrill
Scott Feuerhelm, Merrill*

District 2

Daniel Van Beek, Paullina
Tom Wagner, Primghar

District 4

Dan Hoffman, Ida Grove
Dale Ullrich, Arthur

*Director whose term is up for re-election in 2024



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

Committee on Nominations

District 3 Plymouth County - Contact a committee member if interested in running for the board.

Gregg Roepke

38724 C70
Kingsley, IA 51028
712-540-5971
groepke@hotmail.com

Janel Johnson

12418 K22
Ireton, IA 51027
712-539-3115
bwjohnson06@gmail.com

Adam Schmidt

17743 Jade Ave
Le Mars, IA 51031
712-540-2588
adam.a.schmidt@gmail.com

Director Qualifications:

The Cooperative's bylaws establish that a director must be a member, individually, and a bona-fide resident of the district from which they are elected to represent.

To do a competent job, a director is expected to:

- Attend all regular monthly board meetings. The Board holds daytime meetings usually scheduled for the last Thursday of each month. Meetings last approximately six hours.
- Attend the annual meeting of the Cooperative.
- Attend meetings of related organizations such as Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative, Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation, Federated Insurance, and others, when necessary.
- Read and be familiar with information, data and reports received from cooperative management, national, state and other local associations.
- Establish and maintain contact with members of the Cooperative in his or her locale.
- Work in harmony with the other members of the Board and employees for the good of all members of the Cooperative.
- Attend special meetings of the Board, or of committees to which assigned by the president.



Lyle D. Korver

MANAGER'S *Report*

Reliable Power for Today — and Tomorrow

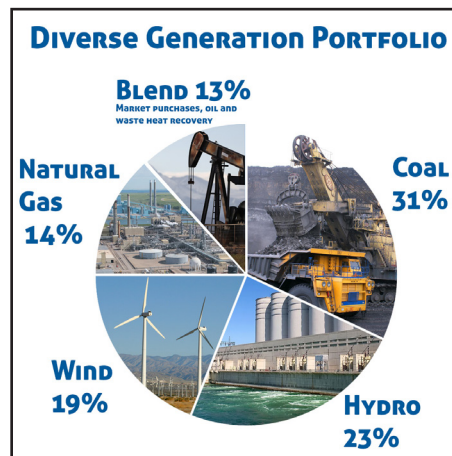
Ring in a new year sparks a sense of renewed hope and optimism about the future. As the CEO/General Manager of North West REC, for me, it's a time to reflect on where we are and where we're going. At the heart of this reflection, I think about ways we can better serve you, the members of the cooperative.

Our team at North West REC is always looking ahead, exploring ways to innovate and utilize new technologies to improve our services. As our nation increasingly relies on electricity to power the economy, keeping the lights on has never been more important. We're committed to powering—and empowering—our community at a cost local families and businesses can afford.

So how are we working to ensure reliable and affordable power while adapting to a changing energy landscape and our community's evolving needs?

One critical component of reliable power is the mix of energy resources used to generate the electricity that keeps the lights on across northwest Iowa. You may not realize it, but North West REC doesn't generate electricity. Instead, we purchase it from our energy provider, NIPCO and from there, we distribute it to homes and businesses throughout our community. Our current energy

resource mix is made up of 31% coal, 23% hydro, 19% wind, 14% natural gas, 11% purchases from the market and 2% oil.



We're increasingly using more electricity generated from renewable energy sources, but we still depend on a diverse energy mix to ensure reliable power that's available to our members whenever they need it. It's important to keep in mind that the renewable energy sources are intermittent and we continue to need baseload generation. We support an "all of the above" energy strategy.

In addition to having a reliable energy mix, North West REC is using technology to enhance our local grid, limit service disruptions and improve outage response times.

Advanced metering technology, also known as AMI, enables two-way communication between the

co-op and consumers. In the event of a power outage, AMI helps pinpoint the exact location of the outage and can even analyze damaged or tampered meters. AMI helps North West REC save money with real-time data, and ultimately improves power reliability for our entire community.

Proactive tree trimming is another way we limit service disruptions. Scheduled trimming keeps power lines clear from overgrown limbs that are likely to fall. Our crews typically do this in the winter and it is important to improving our service reliability for our members.

One of the best methods for improving our services to you is monitoring trends and leading practices from other electric co-ops in Iowa and across the country. Learning from other co-ops is one of the many benefits of the cooperative business model because for us, it's about cooperation, not competition.

As we turn our focus to 2024, North West REC will continue working to provide the reliable, affordable electricity you expect and deserve—for today and tomorrow.

I also want to use this opportunity to thank all of our members for your loyalty and support again this past year, and I want to wish you and your families a Merry Christmas and Happy and healthy New Year.

Fight the Winter Chill and Save Energy

We all have our favorite season. Some people love crisp, cool weather and bundling up under a favorite blanket, while others prefer the warm temperatures summer brings and all the fun outdoor activities that go with it. But there's one thing we can all agree on: high winter bills are never fun. North West REC is here to help you find ways to manage your home energy use and keep winter bills in check.

Here are five tips to help increase your home's energy efficiency this winter:

1. Mind the thermostat. We recommend setting your thermostat to 68 degrees (or lower) when you're home. When you're sleeping or away for an extended period of time, try setting it between 58 and 62 degrees; there's no need to heat your home when you're away or sleeping and less active.



2. Button up your home. The Department of Energy estimates that air leaks account for 24% to 40% of the energy used for heating and cooling a home. Caulking and weather stripping around windows and doors is another simple, cost-effective way to increase comfort and save energy. If you can feel drafts while standing near a window or door, it likely needs to be sealed.

3. Use window coverings wisely. Open blinds, drapes or other window coverings during the day to allow natural sunlight in to warm your home. Close them at night to keep the cold, drafty air out. If you feel cold air around windows, consider hanging curtains or drapes in a thicker material; heavier window coverings can make a significant difference in blocking cold outdoor air.

4. Consider your approach to appliance use. When combined, appliances and electronics account for a significant chunk of our home energy use, so assess how efficiently you're using them. Look for electronic devices that consume energy even when they're not in use, like phone chargers or game consoles.

5. Think outside the box. If you're still feeling chilly at home, think of other ways to warm up—beyond dialing up the thermostat. Add layers of clothing, wear thick socks and bundle up under blankets. You can even add layers to your home! If you have hard-surface flooring, consider purchasing an area rug to block cold air that leaks in through the floor.



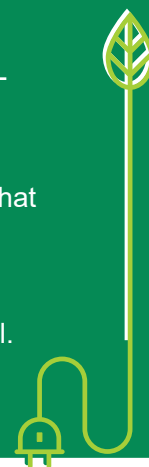
Winter months often bring some of the highest energy bills of the year. By being proactive about saving energy, you can increase the comfort of your home and reduce monthly bills. Visit our website at www.nwrec.coop for additional energy-saving tips.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Get smart with a better way to heat and cool your home! Smart thermostats are Wi-Fi enabled and automatically adjust heating and cooling temperature settings in your home for optimal performance. Smart thermostats learn your temperature preferences and establish a schedule that adjusts to energy-saving settings when you're asleep or away.

For maximum energy savings, look for smart thermostat models with the ENERGY STAR® label.

Source: Dept. of Energy



Scholarships Available



North West REC and Basin Electric Power Cooperative will be sponsoring several scholarships to dependents of members of North West REC in 2024. Last year we awarded \$33,000 in scholarships to 75 students!

There will be two \$1,000 scholarship winners from each of the four districts of North West REC

(Ida, O'Brien, Plymouth, and Sioux). The selection process for the \$1,000 scholarship winners will be based on a combination of SAT/ACT scores, overall grade-point average, work experience, participation in school and community activities, a personal statement of career goals, and a written reference or appraisal by a third party.

Scholarship applicants, who are not awarded a \$1,000 scholarship award, will be asked to watch an educational video on North West REC and the cooperative model and then complete a questionnaire. This will then enter applicants into a random drawing for a \$500 or \$250 scholarship. All applicants will receive at least a \$250 scholarship. Details of this video and questionnaire will be communicated at a later date.

North West REC members may qualify if their dependent meets the following criteria:

- Must be a U.S. citizen.
- Are current North West REC members.
- Must be a senior in high school in our service territory for the 2023-2024 school year and planning to enroll in a full-time undergraduate or graduate course of study at an accredited two-year or four-year college, university, or vocational/technical school.
- Submit an application as provided by North West REC.
- Return all completed forms no later than Friday, February 16, 2024.

You can apply online by visiting our website at www.nwrec.coop or you can e-mail the scholarship committee at scholarship@nwrec.coop and they will send you an application. If you have any questions, please call us at 712-707-4935 or 800-766-2099. All entries for the scholarship must be returned to the REC no later than Friday, February 16, 2024!

Director Profile

Tom Wagner

Family: Wife - Holly, works at South O'Brien Schools; Son - Garrett, works at Agrivision in Paullina and farms; Daughter - Erin, works at Agrivision in Pacific Junction, IA in HR; Son - Grant, is a student at South Dakota State University in Brookings.

Occupation: Tom farms with his brother Jim, nephew Michael, and son Garrett

Interests: Tom enjoys following SDSU athletics and music programs, and spending time with family and friends.

What he enjoys about serving as an NWREC Director:
"Reliable and affordable electricity is important to NWREC's member-owners and I enjoy being part of the process of delivering that. There are also many good employees and directors involved with Rural Electric Coops, which makes the job fulfilling."





North West REC \ Basin Electric Power Cooperative 2024 Scholarship Application



Scholarship applicants must be a U.S. citizen, a dependent of a current North West REC member, a **senior** in high school in our service area for the 2023-2024 school year and planning to enroll in an accredited two-year or four-year college, university, or vocational/technical school. Please complete the form below; completeness and neatness ensure your application will be evaluated appropriately.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email Address: _____

Father's Name: _____ Mother's Name: _____

Parents/guardians must be active members of North West REC or have a current electric account with North West REC. In order to verify, please provide account number from a North West REC electric bill (you may need to get this from your parents/guardians 😊): _____

Please put the name and address of the high school which you will graduate from this spring.

High School: _____

Address: _____

Please put the name and address of the accredited school you plan to attend in the fall.

School\College: _____ College Town\City: _____

Major course of study: _____

Signatures

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Scholarship Submittal Requirements:

1. Complete this form by typing or printing - your name should be on all attachments.
2. Recent academic transcript from high school.
3. Copy of your college entrance examination (ACT and/or SAT) scores.
4. Please make a list of all your high school honors, school activities, community involvement, and employment history. Then compose a short essay on how these experiences have shaped your character and future career goals.
5. One letter of reference from a teacher, counselor, or employer.
6. Mail your complete application packet to:

North West REC
Attn: Scholarship Committee
P.O. Box 435
Orange City, IA 51041

Scholarship applicants, who are not awarded a \$1,000 scholarship award, will be asked to watch an educational video on North West REC and the cooperative model and then complete a questionnaire. This will then enter applicants into a random drawing for a \$500 or \$250 scholarship. Details of this video and questionnaire will be communicated at a later date.

DEADLINE: Friday, February 16, 2024

THE POWER QUIZ

NORTH WEST REC

1. Name an employee who reached a service milestone this year:
2. What is the deadline for High School Seniors to apply for scholarships?
3. Which director is up for election in 2024?

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 January 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* OCTOBER 2023

Hibma Heritage Farm - Maurice
 Dee Brown - Sioux City
 Justin Wissink - Hull
 Wanda Gagnon - Merrill
 Clayton Rensink - Hospers

Vernon Harrington - Le Mars
 Dudley McDowell - Sheldon
 Doug Lacey - Sioux City
 Wayne Kruse - Le Mars
 Michael Thompson - Hospers



ARE YOU SWITCH SMART?

What is one way you can help level the load?

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 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 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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