

NEWS *Lines*

TIPS FOR A *Safe* AND *Happy* HOLIDAY SEASON



The holidays are upon us. For many, that means more celebrations with friends and family, travel, decorations, cooking and shopping. North West REC wants you to stay safe during the holidays, so here are a few tips to consider as you gear up for the season.

We can't guarantee that the hustle and bustle of the season won't leave you with a few frayed nerves, but we can certainly help you avoid frayed wires.

INSPECT YOUR SEASON ITEMS

Take a few moments to carefully inspect all your holiday items to ensure everything is in safe, working order. A few things to look for include:

- Chafed, frayed or damaged wires
- Cracked sockets, loose connections
- Be sure to use only lights and other electrical decorations that have been certified such as UL

DON'T OVERLOAD EXTENSION CORDS

Extension cords are designed for temporary use and should never be used as a permanent or long-term solution.

- Don't run cords under rugs, carpet or baseboards. This can create a fire hazard.
- The tag at the end of an extension cord will tell you if it's rated for outdoor use; and similarly, holiday lights will tell you how many strings can be safely linked together.
- Make sure your plugs fit together. Rather than tampering with a safety feature, find a safe solution.

LOOK UP AND LIVE

When working outside with a ladder, be mindful of the location of overhead power lines. Always carry your ladder so that it is parallel to the ground. Before placing your ladder in an upright position, look around to ensure you are a safe distance from any power lines.

- Avoid stringing lights in trees near power lines
- Use only electrical decorations that are certified for outdoor use

We wish you a safe and happy holiday season!

DECEMBER 2017

IN THIS *Issue*

Committee on
Nominations Selected
2

Director Profile
3

Space Heater
Safety
3

Manager's
Report
4-5

Change to
Connections Card
6

Patronage Retirement
6

Energy Efficiency for
the Modern Family
7

Power Quiz
8

Committee ON NOMINATIONS is 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. One director will be elected in each district this year. They 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.

Committee on Nominations

District 1 – Sioux Co.

Jason Davelaar
1981 330th St
Rock Valley, IA 51247
712-470-2128

Seth Haverhals
4011 Chestnut Ave
Hawarden, IA 51023
712-552-1933

Tim Rus
4371 US 75 Ave
Sioux Center, IA 51250
712-395-3556

District 2 – O'Brien Co.

Kevin Mars
5716 420th St
Paullina, IA 51046
712-448-3747

Chad Negus
5328 430th St
Paullina, IA 51046
712-949-3659

District 3 – Plymouth Co.

Craig Anderson
24999 Jade Ave
Merrill, IA 51038
712-938-2493
712-251-1913

Dennis Baldwin
20911 C43
Merrill, IA 51038
712-239-5554

Joel Brown
19301 K22
Le Mars, IA 51031
712-539-0076

Alan Lucken
20568 190th St
Akron, IA 51001
712-568-2709

District 4 – Ida Co.

Jim Holst
604 Burns St
Ida Grove, IA 51445
712-364-3295

Arlo Radke
1231 Marshall Ave
Galva, IA 51020
712-282-4479

Your Current Board of Directors

District 1

Steve Abma, Rock Valley
Del Beyer, Sioux Center
*Jeff Rehder, Hawarden

District 3

Doug Becker, Hinton
Shirley Benson, Remsen
*Steve Brown, Merrill
Scott Feuerhelm, Merrill

District 2

Chad Dau, Paullina
*Tom Wagner, Primghar

District 4

*Virdene Otto, Galva
Dale Ullrich, Arthur

* Director whose term is expiring in 2018

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 special meetings of the Board, or of committees to which assigned by the president.
- 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.

DIRECTOR *Profile* TOM WAGNER

Here's a chance for you to get to know your Board of Directors a little better.

Name: Tom Wagner

Family: Holly (wife), Garrett (sophomore at SDSU), Erin (junior at South O'Brien) and Grant (7th grader at South O'Brien)

Occupation: Farm with brother Jim

Interests: Following my kids activities, music, spending time outdoors and family



What I enjoy about serving as an NWREC Director: I enjoy being involved with economic development projects, NWREC's Operation Round Up, and our partnership with Evertek (NET Broadband) that is bringing internet to more members. But mostly I enjoy being a part of providing excellent electric service to all NWREC member owners. The Rural Electric Cooperative model is a success story that first brought electricity to rural America and continues to improve our communities through economic development, job opportunities and affordable, reliable electricity. None of this would be possible without many good people working together.

Think Safety WHEN USING SPACE HEATERS

Space heaters can be a quick way to heat up a room. However, they can be as dangerous as they are convenient if used improperly. Safe Electricity urges everyone in the home to understand the importance of using space heaters safely.



Here are some precautions to follow when using electric space heaters:

- Purchase only space heaters that have been safety tested and UL approved. Make sure the unit is equipped with an emergency tip-over shut-off feature and heating element guards. Read and follow all of the manufacturer's instructions for operation and care.
- Place heater out of high-traffic areas and on a level, hard, non-flammable floor surface – NOT on carpets, furniture or countertops.
- Remember to keep space heaters at least three feet from flammable items such as draperies, blankets and sofas.
- Do not overload circuits. Never use extension cords or multiple plugs with a space heater, and make sure the unit is not plugged into the same circuit as other electric appliances.
- Never leave space heaters unattended.
- Replace older space heaters with newer, safer models.

MANAGER'S *Report*



Lyle D. Korver

“We are not exempt from powerful natural disasters that can impact the poles, wires and other equipment needed to provide reliable power.”

REDUCING MOTHER NATURE'S IMPACTS

The recent hurricanes that impacted the southern U.S. and Puerto Rico are vivid reminders of the power of storms and the toll they can take on an electric distribution system.

While our state is nestled in the heart of the Midwest – and far away from hurricanes – we are not exempt from powerful natural disasters that can impact the poles, wires and other equipment needed to provide reliable power.

In fact, Iowa has experienced 41 presidentially declared disasters from 1990 to 2017, and 59 disaster declarations total. Iowa's main hazards are those associated with severe weather, including heavy rains and flooding, tornadoes and high winds, blizzards and heavy snow, and ice storms.

While the impacts of some disasters can't be prevented, there are other risks that we can mitigate through proactive methods, such as tree trimming as part of our vegetation management program. As the winter season approaches – and the heavy snow and ice that often accompanies it – vegetation management becomes more important than ever.

Trees may seem harmless on a calm, sunny day, but add a bit of wind or ice on a stormy night and those beautiful structures may threaten your home's electric supply. Many storm outages are related to trees and branches contacting power lines, which is why regular trimming of trees and brush along power lines reduces the number of power interruptions.



Electricity outages can occur when branches break and fall across power lines or when trees tumble onto power lines. When strong winds blow, limbs growing too close to power lines may sway and touch wires. These momentary power disruptions or “blinks” aren't just mild annoyances that leave digital clocks flashing; they also can damage computers, TVs and other sensitive electronic equipment.



Our system wide maintenance program also includes an annual pole inspection. Poles are inspected for their structural integrity to identify any weaknesses. We also have a vegetation inspection and maintenance program.

We can discover, locate and resolve power outages in a more informed, orderly and timely manner thanks to our enhanced Outage Management System. In addition, Automatic Vehicle Location helps determine the geographic location of our trucks, increasing the safety of our personnel by alerting drivers of hazardous areas and improving response times during power outages. These technologies enable us to restore power sooner and more efficiently than ever before in addition to creating a safer working environment.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

As we near the end of another busy year, we want to wish all of our members a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. It has been a successful year for your Cooperative, and we appreciate your patronage and support. As we prepare to celebrate our 80th anniversary next year, we are committed to continuing to provide reliable electric service for our members at the lowest possible cost.



**MOVE OVER
SLOW DOWN**

When you see a stationary utility maintenance vehicle with flashing lights, you need to move over or slow down.

Move over or slow down. It's that simple, and it's a new Iowa law. 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. You can even show your support of this new law by signing a simple pledge to obey the law at www.moveoveriowa.com.

Holiday Greetings!

The board of directors and employees of North West REC would like to wish all the members and their families a very blessed holiday season. We look forward to working with you and for you in 2018!

**Our offices will be closed in observance
of the holidays**

December 25 and January 1

Please call 800-766-2099

in case of an outage or emergency



>> NOTICE <<

Change to Connections Card Discount

Beginning January 1, 2018, the Pizza Ranch discount will change to “Buy one adult buffet at regular price and get the 2nd adult buffet for \$7.99”. This change will take place at Akron, Hawarden, Hull, Le Mars, Orange City, Primghar, Rock Valley, Sheldon and Sioux Center. (Sanborn will remain at \$6.99 for the 2nd buffet.)

Patronage RETIREMENT

The Board of Directors has approved the retirement of patronage this year, and the total amount will be \$1,500,000. This will be the largest retirement your Cooperative has ever made. This will be for the remaining unretired portion of the allocation that was made in 2004 and approximately 50% of the 2005 assignment.

If you were unable to attend the Member Patronage Days and pick up your check, you will receive your check by mail the end of December.

With this \$1,500,000 patronage refund, it brings the total patronage that has been returned to the members during the last 79 years to \$23,077,000! We believe this is a true demonstration of what a Cooperative is all about!

ENERGY EFFICIENCY *for the Modern Family* AND ITS MANY DEVICES



Source: NRECA

If you are struck by the number of screens, remotes, gaming controls, charging stations and cords that have become fixtures in your home, you are not alone. The typical American family is well connected and owns a variety of electronic devices. According to the PEW Research Institute, 95 percent of U.S. families have a cell phone and 77 percent of Americans own a smart phone. Nearly 80 percent of adults own a laptop or desktop computer, while approximately half own tablets.

Consumer electronics coupled with the growing array of smart home appliances and technology have slowly but steadily changed out homes and lifestyles. The increased reliance on our many devices has new implications for home energy use and efficiency.

Using smart technology to manage energy savings

So how can we save energy when we are using more electronic devices than ever before? The answer may lie with some of those same electronic devices that have become indispensable to modern living. In many cases, energy savings is a touchscreen away as more apps enable you to monitor energy use.

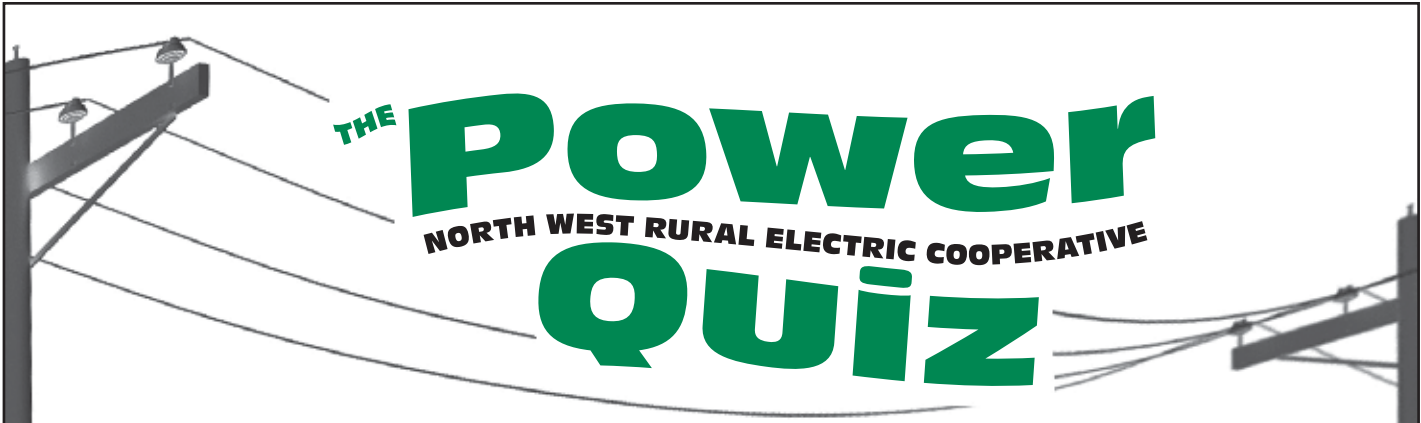
From the convenience of your mobile device, smart technologies can maximize your ability to manage electricity use across several platforms – controlling your thermostat, appliances, water heater, home electronics and other devices.

You can also ensure efficiency by purchasing ENERGY STAR-certified appliances. Many new appliances include smart-technology features such as refrigerators that can tell you when maintenance is required or when a door has been left open. New washers, dryers and dishwashers allow you to program when you want the load to start. This means you can program your task for off-peak energy hours.

“Old school” energy savings for new devices

Of course there are the time-tested “old school” methods of energy efficiency that can be applied to the myriad of household electronic devices and screens. Computers, printers, phones and gaming consoles are notorious “vampire power” users, meaning they drain energy (and money) when not in use. If items can be turned off without disrupting your lifestyle, consider plugging them into a power strip that can be turned on and off or placed on a timer.

While modern life involves greater dependence on technology, your best resource for saving energy and money remains your local electric co-op. Regardless of your level of technical expertise with electronic devices, North West REC can provide guidance on energy savings based on your account information, energy use, local weather patterns and additional factors unique to your community. Contact us at 800-766-2099 if we can help in any way.



THE **Power** NORTH WEST RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE **Quiz**

1. Name a director whose term will expire in 2018: _____
2. Before hanging your holiday lights, name something to check: _____
3. The Pizza Ranch deal on your Connections Card will change to: 2nd buffet for _____.
(except at Sanborn)

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 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 a \$500 bill credit at the end of the year.

NOVEMBER • 2017

POWER QUIZ *Winners*



Kurt Brown, Primghar
Jeff Pilgram, Sioux City
Gary Combs, Westfield
Paul Dekker, Maurice
Steve Felix, Sioux City

Troy Beitelspacher, Le Mars
Cheri Streck, Schleswig
Rodney Pottebaum, Alton
Ken Less (Froggy Bottom), Merrill
Joseph Terrell, Rock Valley



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 Available
for After Hours Payments

Lyle D. Korver

CEO & General Manager

Curt Ahrenholz

*Finance & Office
Services Director*

Lorraine Egdorf

Editor