



# NEWS *Lines*

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

MAY 2022

## IN THIS *Issue*

Pole Maintenance Program 2

Security Light Program Changes 2

Operation Round Up Report 3

Manager's Report 4-5

Prairie Winds Program 6

Revolving Loan Fund 6

Statement of Non-Discrimination 7

RECare - Consumer Contribution Fund 7

Power Quiz 8

Are you Switch Smart? 8

## Electric co-ops advocate for rural Iowa during REC Day on the Hill

Nearly 200 employees and elected directors from Iowa's locally owned rural electric cooperatives (RECs) came to the Iowa State Capitol on March 22 to advocate for important issues during the annual "REC Day on the Hill" event. "Our advocacy day on the hill is an important opportunity to personally touch base with our elected officials and share a local perspective on issues that impact rural Iowa and rural economic development," remarked Roger Solomonson, board president of IAEC.



*Pictured (l-r): Rob Driesen, Lyle Korver, Senator Taylor, James Vondrak, and Ken Miller*

Specifically, advocates talked to legislators about a digital sales tax inequity that Iowa's electric cooperatives hope to resolve before the 2022 Legislative Session ends. The inequity stems from an unintentional error made in 2018 legislation that requires Iowa electric co-ops to pay a new 6% sales and use tax on digital goods and services, even though investor-owned utilities are exempt. Since the law went into effect in 2019, the IAEC estimates that Iowa electric co-ops have collectively paid \$300,000 or more annually in taxes, resulting in roughly \$1 million of unintentional taxes paid by rural Iowans through their energy bills.

We thanked House members for supporting legislation to fix this error through HF 2520 and encouraged senators to take up the issue. Following our advocacy event, the Senate passed SF 2372 which is a larger legislative package that addresses various policy issues, including language similar to the House File that would bring an end to this rural energy tax. Iowa's electric co-ops deeply appreciate the work of the House and the Senate on this issue and urge them to come to an agreement about which bill to send to the Governor for her consideration to restore tax equity for co-op member-consumers throughout rural Iowa. Learn more about this issue at [www.iaruralpower.org/advocacy](http://www.iaruralpower.org/advocacy).

Advocates also educated legislators on the benefits of the cooperative business model, including local ownership, cost-based rates and democratic governance. Additionally, several electric cooperatives displayed booths in the rotunda which provided information on topics including economic development, electric vehicles, digital metering advancements, investments in technology, lineman safety innovations and vegetation management work.

# Pole Maintenance Program

You probably don't pay much attention to the utility poles found throughout North West REC's service territory, but did you know these tall structures are the backbone of our distribution network?

Strong, sturdy utility poles ensure a reliable electric system, which is why we routinely inspect the thousands of poles found on our lines. Throughout the year, our crews check poles for decay caused by exposure to the elements. They know which poles are oldest and conduct inspections through a rotational process. Typically, a standard wooden distribution pole is expected to last more than 50 years.

Occasionally, poles need to be replaced for other reasons besides decay and old age. Weather disasters, power line relocation, and car crashes are potential causes for immediate replacement. When possible, North West REC communicates when and where pole replacements will take place so that you stay informed of where crews will be working.

One of the key ongoing maintenance programs we do annually, in order to try to improve our service reliability, is pole testing and treating. Each year we test and treat approximately 3,000 poles.

Poles that are rejected due to excessive rotting conditions are replaced. The other poles are treated with a pole treatment which significantly extends the life of the pole. The very low 2% or lower rejection rate we typically have each year is a strong indication of the strength of the Cooperative's system.

This spring you will see contractors working in Sioux and Plymouth counties. Please contact our office if you have any questions about the work they are doing.



# Security Light Program to Change

Security Lights and maintenance are available to our members at the prices below.

## Security Light Service Work

- High Pressure Sodium (HPS) - maintenance ..... \$50

**As of July 1st, or until we run out of parts, we will no longer provide maintenance for the old style HPS security lights, due to the parts no longer being available. Members will have to upgrade to a LED light if they want it fixed.**

- LED - maintenance ..... \$80
- will retrofit mercury vapor or HPS lights to LEDs when maintenance is necessary ..... \$190
- Move security light to new pole ..... \$100
- Move security light and pole ..... \$175
- Remove security light from pole or disconnect light ..... \$100

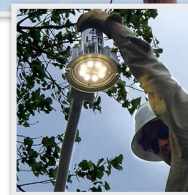
## Sell security light to member - includes installation

- LED security light (will not install on anything but a pole) ..... \$225
- Replace a HPS light with an LED light ..... \$190

LED lights have a 5-year warranty, but if we find something wrong on the members side causing an issue with the light not to work, we will charge a \$50 service call fee.

## Poles

- Setting a pole for member (Will not set poles for basketball hoops, gateposts, etc) ..... \$175
- Sell any size used pole to member ..... \$125



# Line Extension Policy - Price Changes

Price changes are due to an increase in material costs : **Effective June 1**

- Overhead Single Phase Line: ..... now \$5.00 per foot
- Underground Single Phase Line: ..... now \$6.00 per foot
- Underground Three Phase Line: ..... now \$12.00 per foot

# Operation Round-Up Update



Disbursements made from North West REC's Operation Round Up Trust in the first quarter of 2022 totaled \$12,650. This brings the total disbursements made from Operation Round Up since its inception in June of 1999 to \$607,845. Many people have been helped thanks to our generous members.

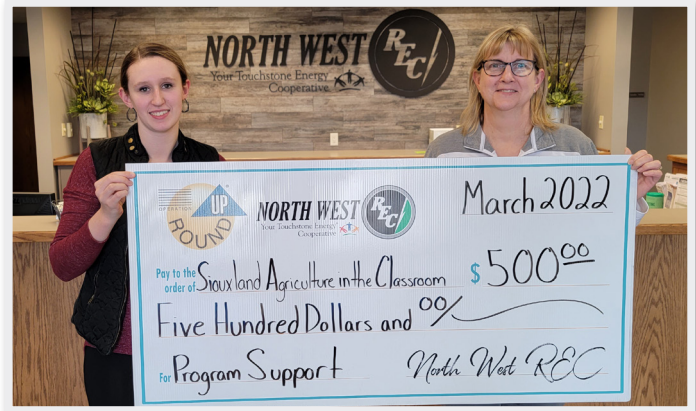
- \$3,000.....Medical Emergencies – assist families with unusual expenses resulting from serious health problems and accident related injuries
- \$7,650 .....American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Siouxland, Center Against Abuse and Sexual Assault (CAASA), Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, Family Crisis Center, Girl Scouts of Greater Iowa, Hospice of Siouxland, Hunger Free Kids of Sioux County, Mid-America Council - Boy Scouts of America, Siouxland Ag in the Classroom, Siouxland Habitat for Humanity, S.T.A.R.S., Then Feed Just One, Zestos Inc - program support
- \$2,000.....County 4-H Foundations – community support for events/projects

Operation Round Up funds are generated through a voluntary rounding up of cooperative members' electric bills to the next nearest dollar. The money is used to assist worthy causes and organizations right in your local county.

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 information or sign up on our website. To receive an application for assistance, please call the office at 712-707-4935 or 800-766-2099.



(L-R) Pictured is NWREC employee Derald Philips presenting the check to a Floyd Valley Hospital employee.



(L-R) Pictured is NWREC employee Emily Vander Velde presenting the check to a Shirley Schroeder for Siouxland Agriculture in the Classroom.

YES, please enter our names in the drawing for the trip. We understand that if our names are drawn, we will be billed \$100.

Our first and second choice of dates:

July 20-22	1st	2nd	(please circle)
August 3-5	1st	2nd	

I/we  have  have not participated in this tour in the past.

First Person \_\_\_\_\_

Second Person \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

*Clip this coupon and return to cooperative by June 1, 2022.*

## Energy Trail Tour

North West Rural Electric Cooperative and Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative invite you to join us for one of two Energy Trail Tours being offered this summer. This 3-day adventure will allow you to view, first-hand, how your power providers convert energy from water, wind, and coal into electricity. View coal being mined and see how those mines are, then, returned to productive farm and native grass lands. Learn how the energy industry is evolving to become more dependent on renewable power generation and glimpse into the future of carbon capture technology. Enjoy the fellowship of other cooperative member-owners on a comfortable motor coach journey to North Dakota's Energy Loop. \$100 per couple covers your lodging, meals and entry fees. The remainder of your tour costs are covered by North West Rural Electric Cooperative.

12 lucky couples from North West REC will be selected at random from those who sign up.



Lyle D. Korver

# MANAGER'S *Report*

"I want to thank all of our members who participated, your ongoing support of North West REC is important to our success."

## ANNUAL MEETING UPDATE

As a member owned electric cooperative, one of the most important events that North West REC holds each year is our Annual Meeting. This provides a great opportunity to report to the members on the past years financial and operating results. It also gives our members the opportunity to participate by voting on director elections and any other business that needs to be acted on.



D-1 Jeff Rehder



D-2 Tom Wagner



D-3 Steve Brown



D-4 Dan Hoffman

The format has changed over the years, and especially the last three years due to COVID, but the importance of the meeting remains the same. This years' meeting was a hybrid format with both an in-person and an on-line option.

Here are a few highlights of the meeting:

- Our four incumbent directors who were on the ballot were re-elected: Jeff Rehder in District 1, Tom Wagner in District 2, Steve Brown in District 3 and Dan Hoffman in District 4.
- Scholarship winners were announced. 75 students throughout our four-county service area will receive \$31,000 in college scholarships for the 2022/23 school year. Congratulations to all the winners!
- During a Q & A panel discussion, Jeff Rehder, NWREC President; Tom Wagner, NIPCO/Basin Director; Lyle Korver, NWREC Manager; and Matt Washburn, NIPCO Executive VP and General Manager, answered some of the most frequently asked questions from our members. We want to thank all the members who sent in their question cards along with their ballot.
- The meeting was recorded, and it has been added to our website for all members to view.
- \$4,000 in door prizes were awarded to members from a random drawing from the on-line and in-person registrations and from the returned ballot envelopes.



I want to thank all of our members who participated, your ongoing support of North West REC is significantly important to our success.

# Board Approves New EV Rebate and Rate

One of the topics that was the most frequently asked about on the question cards submitted by our members related to electric vehicles (EV). We shared that we support an “all of the above” strategy when it comes to transportation. We are big supporters of ethanol and continue to believe that it has a very important future and role to play. However, as an electric utility, we feel we also have a responsibility to prepare for more EV adoption and to help educate our members on the feasibility and operation requirements of owning an EV.



To help educate ourselves and our members about EV's, we purchased a Chevrolet Bolt three years ago. We have learned a lot about EV charging and how they operate. One of the key things we have learned about

charging is that it will be very important to have our members charge their EV's during “off peak” times. As a result, we will strongly encourage the installation of a load management switch to ensure that charging is kept off peak.

- **Does NWREC offer a rebate on EV's?**

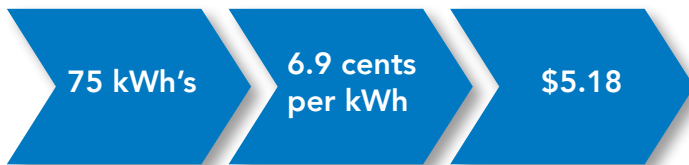
We are offering a **\$1,000 rebate** on a Level 2 charger. If you purchase a new EV, you will want to hook up a 240 volt Level 2 charger in your garage. This will cover most of the cost of purchasing the charger and having it installed. In order to qualify for the rebate, you must agree to have a load management switch installed to ensure that charging doesn't occur during our peak times.

- **Will the Cooperative have an EV charging rate?**

Yes, the Board of Directors recently approved a new EV charging rate of **6.9 cents per kWh**. This rate also includes a \$5 monthly facility charge to cover the extra associated expenses such as metering, transformer upgrade, etc. Just as with the rebate, in order to qualify for this rate, a load management switch needs to be installed.

- **What will it cost to charge my EV?**

It takes approximately 75 kWh's to fully charge the Chevy Bolt if the battery is completely drained.



You would be able to drive an average of 200 miles on a full charge. Larger vehicles, such as the half-ton pickups, will obviously require more kWh's to fully charge the battery. But as you can see, EV's can be quite economical to drive.

We are happy to share what we have learned with any of our members who are considering the purchase of an EV.

**We also want to emphasize again that when it comes to biofuels and EV's, we are of the belief that we can and should do both.**

# Prairie Winds Program

Members of North West REC can support renewable energy through the Prairie Winds program. This program allows individual members to voluntarily contribute to the development of alternate energy production facilities.

Persons who choose to participate in Prairie Winds will pay 20 cents per 100 kilowatt-hour block per month.

Through this program, members will not be directly purchasing alternate energy, but the extra fee does go to support several wind turbines in the Dakotas, which feed wind-generated electricity into the transmission system that powers North West REC.

If you would like to support the renewable wind energy program, fill out the form below and return it to your cooperative office.



## WIND POWER AGREEMENT

Please specify the total number of 100 kilowatt-hour blocks you wish to purchase each month. Remember, each block is an additional \$.20 investment in not only the environment, but in the future of renewable energy.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Number of blocks at \$.20 per month \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

E-mail (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

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

*I understand my commitment is for one year and will continue on an annual basis until I notify you in writing to end my participation in the Prairie Winds program.*



## ARE YOU SWITCH SMART?

Switch Makes Cents is a load management program that has been offered to members since 1985. With technology continuing to change and our current equipment becoming obsolete, it is important that we prepare for the next generation load management system. Our member service department will be replacing 7,000 load management switches and nearly 15,000 meters in the next few years. Members will be receiving a call to schedule a time to change out their equipment. We will make every effort to schedule times that are convenient for members when we need to change out equipment that is in the members basement or another area not freely accessible. We appreciate the cooperation we always receive from our members with these projects. Having up-to-date and reliable equipment in place better helps us serve you, our members.

# Revolving Loan Fund

North West REC created the Community/Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) to improve the quality of life in rural areas by contributing to long term improvement in the local economy.

The RLF is a local funding source with a goal of providing low interest loans to assist local economic and community development projects. Our priorities include job creation and retention, diversification of the local economy, improving the skills of the rural workforce, and upgrading the public infrastructure to improve the health, safety, and/or medical care of rural residents. This fund is administered by the North West REC Board of Directors.

Eligible applicants include organizations involved in community or economic development projects such as: new or expanding private business, local governments, and nonprofit community development organizations.

For more information on eligible and ineligible uses of funds, loan terms, interest rates and other loan requirements, contact the REC office at 712-707-4935 or 800-766-2099.

This institution is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.

# Statement of Nondiscrimination

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, USDA, its Mission Areas, agencies, staff, offices, employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Program information may be made available in language other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language) should contact the responsible Mission Area, agency, or staff office; the USDA TARGET Center at (202)720-2600 (voice and TTY); or the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a complainant should complete a Form, AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, which can be obtained online at <https://www.ocio.usda.gov/document/ad-3027>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name,

address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of the alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

- (1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary  
for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
- (2) Fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) Email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

North West REC is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

*Sign up for*  
**smart choices** 

Each month North West REC hides a code in our *Smart Choices* news stories. Find the code below in the *Smart Choices* article, complete the prize entry registration form and submit for a chance to win! We are giving away a one-time \$25 bill credit in May.

ALC55248MAY



**Don't receive Smart Choices?**  
Subscribe by scanning the QR code with your mobile device or visit our website:  
[www.nwrec.coop/smart-choices-sign-up](http://www.nwrec.coop/smart-choices-sign-up)

# RECare - Consumer Contribution Fund

Your Rural Electric Cooperative has always extended a helping hand to those in need. In response to actions by the Iowa General Assembly, your REC has established RECare,



a program of members helping members. RECare will provide funds to be distributed by local community action agencies to help pay winter heating bills and to assist in weatherization of homes of low-income consumers. You may make a one time contribution or you may make a monthly pledge that will be automatically added into your monthly electric bill. You may also make your contribution part of a matching fund, if there is one established. Your contribution is tax deductible. Even a dollar a month pledge will help others!

*You care, we care, RECare.*

Please return form along with your monthly bill.

## CONSUMER AUTHORIZATION FORM

Yes, I want to be a part of members helping members and contribute to RECare.

- I will make a one-time contribution to RECare. My check is enclosed.
- I will contribute \$\_\_\_\_\_ per month to RECare. I understand that this amount will be automatically added to my monthly electric bill.
- My gift is a matching fund gift.  
The matching fund is \_\_\_\_\_  
(an active matching fund must be designated).

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Account Number \_\_\_\_\_

# THE POWER QUIZ

## NORTH WEST REC

1. As of June 1st what is the only type of security light we will service?
2. How much money has been donated since Operation Round-Up started?
3. How many students received scholarships this year?

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 June 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*

Ardith Evenson - Archer  
 Cindy Hansen - Alton  
 Duane Bajema - Sioux Center  
 Bruce Spence - Sioux City  
 Dennis Jalas - Sutherland  
 Alan Grigsby - Hinton  
 Terry Fitzgerald - Le Mars  
 Lyle Wittrock - Holstein  
 Steve Bunkers - Remsen  
 Darin Green - Boyden

### FEBRUARY & MARCH 2022

Brad Roepke - Kingsley  
 Donald Wunschel - Ida Grove  
 Verlyn Scheerhoorn - Sanborn  
 Wilbur Wittrock - Battle Creek  
 Lamont Hageman - Le Mars  
 Sandra Lacey - Danbury  
 Lauren Glasser - Orange City  
 Irwin De Boer - Sioux Center  
 Duane Popken - Le Mars  
 Leisha Kragel - Schleswig



## ARE YOU SWITCH SMART?

How many switches will our member service department change out in the next few years?

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 June 30. 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 in 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

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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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