



NEWS *Lines*

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

MAY 2020

IN THIS *Issue*

Water Heater
Warranty Explained

2

Operation
Round Up Report

3

Manager's Report

4-5

Prairie Winds
Program Update

6

Revolving
Loan Fund

6

Statement of
Non-Discrimination

7

RECare - Consumer
Contribution Fund

7

Power Quiz

8

COVID-19 Update

Board Approves \$1.6 Million Patronage Retirement

As I am writing this article, I have been reflecting on how quickly things can change in our lives. During these challenging times, please know that your Cooperative continues to implement and carry out plans and procedures to help our members and employees deal with the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak.

We are pleased to announce to the members that the Board of Directors has approved an early retirement of deferred patronage dividends to our members in May. This would typically have been scheduled for December, but this was one way the Board and management felt that we could provide some assistance to our members as many of you face financial challenges relating to the COVID-19 situation.

Q & **A** relating to this retirement:



Q What is the amount?

A A total of **\$1,638,000** in patronage will be retired.

Q How will the funds be distributed to the members?

A It will be distributed as a bill credit on the electric bills dated May 20. (If a member was on the line during a portion of 2019 or 2018 and have since moved off of our line, they will receive a check for their share of the patronage retirement.)

Q What year of business will this be based on?

A We will be using a Last In, First Out (LIFO) method, so it will be based on the amount of electricity each member purchased in 2019, with a small portion based on 2018. Historically we have used a First In, First Out method (FIFO). We are on a 12-year retirement cycle, so had we used the FIFO method, it would have been based on the 2008 allocation. We will likely go back to a FIFO method in the future, but due to the unusual circumstances at the current time, the Board believes this is a good change to provide some assistance to our current members.

(Manager's Report continued on page 4)

Water Heater Warranty Explained

Many of our members have purchased Marathon water heaters from us. Here are a few warranty facts when purchasing the water heater for your home (residential):

- The tank has a lifetime warranty if owned by the original purchaser.
- The parts (elements, thermostats, valves) are under warranty for six years.

If you are not the original purchaser of the water heater and are uncertain of your warranty, please contact our office as there are different warranties depending on the year it was purchased.

If the tank does leak under warranty and you need a replacement, we will need the original silver sticker off the water heater to send to the company to receive the replacement unit.

- Marathon water heaters are sold only to our members and have to be installed on our lines.
- You must have a load management switch installed to receive the rebate.

The rebate is taken off the cost of the water heater – member cost:

50 gallon	\$550
85 gallon	\$400
105 gallon	\$550
Hog Bldg (50 gallon only)	Full Price – contact office for that price
New Home with all electric heat.	FREE 85 gallon (primary heat & electric backup)

Please contact one of our member service advisors if you have questions or need to purchase a water heater.



Call Us If...



**YOU ARE PLANNING TO BUILD
A NEW HOUSE OR REMODEL**

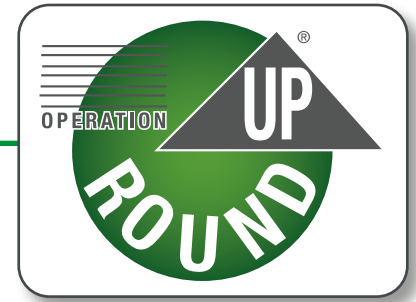


**MOVE OVER
SLOW DOWN**

MOVE OVER OR SLOW DOWN

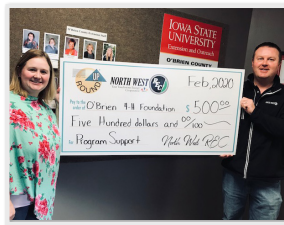
It's that simple, and it's the law in Iowa. By following these two rules of the road, you can help save lives and avoid receiving a traffic ticket – or even losing your driver's license. It's necessary to move over or slow down when approaching stationary emergency, maintenance, and utility vehicles with flashing lights activated.

OPERATION *Round Up* REPORT



Disbursements made from North West REC's Operation Round Up Trust in the first quarter of 2020 totaled \$12,800. This brings the total disbursements made from Operation Round Up since its inception in June of 1999 to \$494,595. Many people have been helped thanks to our members.

- \$4,300 Medical Emergencies – assist families with unusual expenses resulting from serious health problems and accident related injuries
- \$3,400 American Heart Association, CAASA (Center Against Abuse & Sexual Assault), American Cancer Society, Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, Habitat for Humanity, Hospice of Siouxland, Family Crisis Center – program support
- \$1,100 Zestos Inc, Then Feed Just One, and Hunger Free Kids of Sioux County – program support for the hungry and needy
- \$1,700 Valero Benefit for Children, S.T.A.R.S., Boy Scouts of America, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Siouxland – program support for children's programs, children with disabilities, or disadvantaged children
- \$2,000 County 4-H Foundations – program support
- \$ 300 Community Development Projects – community support for events/projects



Pictured from left to right: Sioux County 4-H, O'Brien County 4-H, Plymouth County 4-H, and Ida County 4-H. North West REC's operation round up made a donation to the 4-H foundation in each of the four counties.

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 fill out the registration form below and return to us. To receive an application for assistance, please call the office at 707-4935 or 800-766-2099.

Sign Up Today!

YES – add my name to the hundreds of North West REC members already contributing to the Operation Round Up Trust. I am not currently signed up to donate, but wish to have my monthly electric bill rounded up to the nearest dollar and make a meaningful difference in my community.

Name _____

Address _____

Account # _____ Phone # _____



Lyle D. Korver

MANAGER'S *Report*

"The total amount of the scholarships awarded was a record \$27,250."

COVID-19 Update (continued)

In light of the COVID-19 outbreak and to ensure the health and safety of our members and employees, we have taken the following steps in recent weeks:

- Our offices have been closed, with some of our office employees working from home on a rotating basis.
- We are encouraging members to use various payment options that are available instead of paying at the office – these include drop boxes at all of our facilities, mail, and on-line payment options.
- Our line crews have been split into two groups and have been working staggered start and ending times to maintain good social distancing practices.
- Our member service employees have been taking their work pickups home and working remotely.
- Our Board Meeting was held by Zoom video conference.
- Our District Meetings were cancelled and we held our Annual Meeting at our Le Mars Service Center with just a few Nominating/Inspectors of Election Committee members, directors and staff in attendance.
- We have taken many other preventative steps and are following the guidance from the President and Governor.
- Important note: During this time, we are still open for business, taking phone calls and our outage restoration time should be the same as it typically is.



Thank you for your understanding during these challenging times. We assure you that your co-op plans and prepares for disaster and emergency situations such as this, and we have a process in place to ensure that we can continue to provide reliable and safe electric service for our members.

We also want to assure our members that your Cooperative is financially strong and will be able to work through this difficult time without any immediate need to adjust rates.

ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

We held the Annual Meeting on the evening of Thursday, April 2 with attendance restricted to our Nominating/Inspectors of Election Committee members, a few directors and staff. Here are a few highlights:

- Scott Feuerhelm was re-elected to the District 3 board position.
- The proposed Amendment to the Articles of Incorporation that eliminates director term limits was approved with a 73.35% favorable vote of the members. 1,092 mail ballots were returned and there were 801 “yes” votes. In order to pass, it required 66-2/3%.
- President Rehder and Manager Korver reported on 2019’s operations, gave a COVID-19 update, presented a governance update and a brief financial report. They reported that 2019 was a very successful year for NWREC and the Cooperative continues to be in a very strong financial position.
- It was announced that 63 students have been selected to receive college scholarships for the 2020/21 school year. The total amount of the scholarships awarded was a record \$27,250.



(Scott Feuerhelm)



We also announced that we plan to hold outdoor Member Appreciation events in late August and early September in all four districts. The dates and specifics will be shared in an upcoming newsletter.

Stay healthy and safe!

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 8-10	1st	2nd	(please circle)
July 22-24	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 May 22, 2020.

Energy Trail Tour 2020

North West REC 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 REC.

Twelve lucky couples from NWREC will be selected at random from those who sign up.

Prairie Winds PROGRAM UPDATE



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.

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 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, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and 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.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter 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

(2) Fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) E-mail: program.intake@usda.gov

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

RECare - CONSUMER CONTRIBUTION FUND

Your Rural Electric Cooperative has always extended a helping hand to those needing it. Now, 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 NORTH WEST RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE QUIZ

1. Who was elected to the board of directors in District 3? _____
2. How many students were selected to receive college scholarships for 2020/2021? _____
3. Name an organization who received an Operation Round Up donation: _____.

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 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.

Winners



FEBRUARY

Dennis Oldenkamp – Sheldon
 Galen Fick – Boyden
 Kurt Brown – Primghar
 Marjorie Lucken – Akron
 Greg Mills – Hartley
 Fred Gaalswyk – Rock Valley
 Norma Kovarna – Hinton
 Richard Grosshauser – Paullina
 Irwin De Boer – Sioux Center
 Lucille Mason – Ida Grove

MARCH

Sandra Lacey – Danbury
 Dennis Jalas – Sutherland
 Peter Statema – Ireton
 Dan Hurt – Alton
 Delores Vondrak – Sioux City
 Bill Schlichte – Le Mars
 Don Riemenschneider – Kingsley
 Robert Ott – Mapleton
 Rebecca Lampman – Arthur
 Kevin Weber – Ida Grove

Winners



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

Emily Vander Velde
 Editor