

# LegenDAIRY in North Dakota

**Inside, read about the van Bedaf family's dairy operation near Carrington.**



# LegenDAIRY in North Dakota

BY BRITTNEE WILSON

**D**airy farming is a family tradition that has been a way of life for many generations. For the van Bedaf family, who operate the Van Bedaf Dairy in Carrington, family and community are key to their operation.

Owners Corné and Conny van Bedaf work closely with their sons, Piet and Dries. Their daughter, Maartje, stays connected to the farm as she uses the family's fresh milk to produce gelato, gouda cheese and cheese curds at Cows and Co. Creamery, just 3 miles down the road.

The family farmed in the Netherlands and Canada before moving to Carrington in 2008. They started with a few hundred cows and have slowly grown the farm to 1,600 milk cows today. They also raise all their heifers on the farm, to round their total to 3,000 cows, heifers

and calves.

The Northern Plains Electric Cooperative members prioritize the well-being of their cows with the goal of providing their consumers with safe and nutritious dairy products. The dairy produces around 145,000 pounds of milk daily. Most of their milk is shipped to Cass-Clay Creamery in Fargo, where it is bottled. Most of their milk goes to grocery stores throughout North Dakota, parts of Minnesota and South Dakota, and a portion is used at Cows and Co. Creamery.

Prior to deciding to relocate to Carrington, the van Bedafs had the opportunity to meet with many community members, who showed support and encouraged them to join the community.

"Since moving to Carrington, the community has

been very welcoming and supportive of our family,” Piet said.

To show their appreciation to the community, the farm hosts an open house during National Dairy Month every other June. They call the free event LegenDAIRY, where they offer guided tours around the dairy, games and activities for kids, free lunch and gelato. The event is open to guests of all ages, and they welcome the community to see their dairy operation and hope to educate them on the importance of dairy.

Another way the dairy provides transparency for consumers is through a YouTube channel, “Piet van Bedaf – ND Dairy Farmer.” Piet started the channel in the fall of 2021 as a way to stay connected after in-person tours were reduced due to the pandemic. Today, he has over 9,500 subscribers.

“I believe it is important to show consumers where milk comes from and what happens on a dairy farm on a daily basis,” Piet said.

He releases a new video every Wednesday and occasionally on a Sunday. He includes many different aspects of the farm, from the care of the cows to the production of the feed the cows eat.

“It is important to be transparent and I try to answer every question that viewers post in the comment section,” he said.

Van Bedaf Dairy has also contributed to the Foster County 4-H by providing a lease program that gives kids a first-hand experience working with dairy cattle. 4-H members have the opportunity to pick a heifer from the dairy to care for, halter break, form a bond with and groom. These heifers will be shown at the Foster County Fair, and some go onto the state fair. The kids are allowed to go to the dairy as often as they want in the

three months leading up to the fair.

Kristin Cabler, whose daughter participates in the lease program said, “This is the best program! The van Bedaf family is so generous and I’ve always been so impressed with the employees at the dairy. They’re always so kind and willing to help the kids learn.”

Piet added they are always excited to offer this opportunity for the kids in the community.

“I hope they will learn and create memories they will remember for a long time,” Piet said.

Corné and Conny van Bedaf have received milk quality excellence awards for each of the 35 years they have been dairy farming. At the 2022 North Dakota State University Harvest Bowl, the couple was honored with the Foster County agriculturists award. ■



The van Bedaf family, left to right, are **Casey and Maartje Murphy, Conny, Corné, Dries, Taryn and Piet van Bedaf.**



## Omlie earns journeyman status

**O**n April 1, Jordan Omlie completed all requirements of the apprenticeship program to earn his journeyman status.

A Lankin native, Omlie graduated from the lineworker program at Bismarck State College in the

spring of 2020. After college, he was hired at Northern Plains Electric Cooperative as an apprentice lineworker with the Cando crew as summer help. Later that fall, he was hired full time. In his spare time, Omlie enjoys hunting and fishing.

Congratulations, Jordan! ■

# Annual poster contest winners announced

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) hosted its fifth annual safety poster contest, asking for members' children to depict "how to stay safe around electricity."

Near 30 children entered their drawings, with a wide variety of scenes showing safety precautions taken at their home or on the farm. The posters were judged by NPEC employees, and winning entries are displayed here.

## Kindergarten-first grade



**First place:**

Laiken Mattson, Carrington



**Second place:**

Bradleigh Weber, New Rockford



**Third place:**

Leo Swanson, Cando

## Second-third grade



**First place:**

Parker Mattson, Carrington



**Second place:**

Isla Reed, Churchs Ferry



**Third place:**

Owen Spatola, Cando

## Fourth-sixth grade



**First place:**

Mya Rider, Cando



**Second place:**

Josh Stegmiller, Jamestown



**Third place:**

Maria Hermanson, Cando



## NPEC offers monthly bill credit

**N**orthern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) members can now save \$12 a year on their bill. Starting in July, NPEC will be offering members a \$1 monthly bill credit to those who go paperless and use autopay with a checking or savings account. Due to increasing paper, printing and postage costs, you can help the cooperative save and, in turn, the cooperative can pass the savings to the members.

### How to enroll

Use your NPEC account number and an email address to make a SmartHub account. One can download the SmartHub app to a mobile device or visit [www.nplains.com](http://www.nplains.com) and click on the SmartHub portal at the top of our homepage.

Need help? View our step-by-step directions on how to enroll through SmartHub or call 800-882-2500. ■

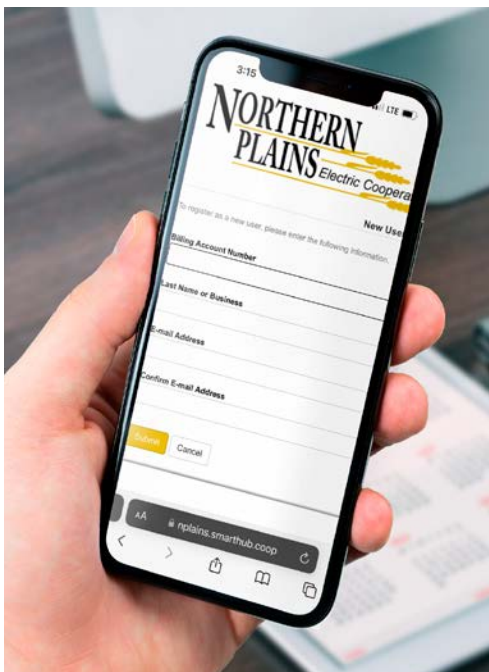
### How to navigate

#### SmartHub Autopay program

- Click on “Billing & Payments” (webpage) or “Bill & Pay” (app) on the menu bar.
- Click on “AutoPay Program.”
- Enter a checking or savings account to receive discount.

#### Paperless

- On the menu bar, click on “My Profile” (webpage) or “More” (app).
- Click on “Update My Paperless Settings” (webpage) or “Settings” (app).
- Click on “Paperless Billing” (app).
- Click the toggle to switch to paperless.



## SIMPLIFY & SAVE

### How to get a \$1 monthly bill credit!

1. Download the SmartHub app or visit [nplains.com](http://nplains.com)
2. Go Paperless
- AND**
3. Enroll in Autopay\*

\*Autopay credit is through a checking or savings account only.



SCAN ME

# SURGE PROTECTION ⚡

Keeping your Electronics and Home Safe

The National Electrical Manufacturers Association estimates that **60-80%** of surges originate from **internal sources** (within a home or business). Keep your valuable electronics **safe** by protecting them from the surges that can **damage or destroy them**.

**!** What is a power surge? A power surge is a sudden and unwanted **increase in voltage** that can damage, degrade or destroy electronic equipment. Surges can occur when large appliances, such as air conditioners, turn on and off. Surges can also originate from lightning.

## LEVELS OF PROTECTION

**GOOD**



### Point-of-Use Surge Protection

**Easy to use**  
- just plug in.



Only protects electronics **plugged into the device**.



Must be **replaced** over time or after a major surge event.

**BEST**

### Whole Home Surge Protection



Must be installed by a **qualified electrician**.



Provides protection for your **entire electrical system** at home, including large appliances, outlets and light switches.

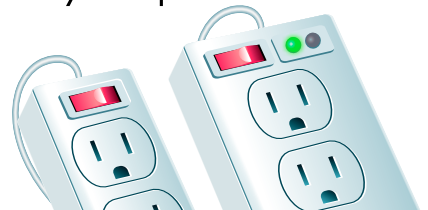


Protects against **larger surges** and provides **longer lasting** surge protection than point-of-use devices.



No surge protection can handle a **direct lightning strike**. **Disconnect** sensitive electronics if you suspect a surge is coming.

Power strips and surge protectors are **not the same**. Not all power strips offer surge protection.

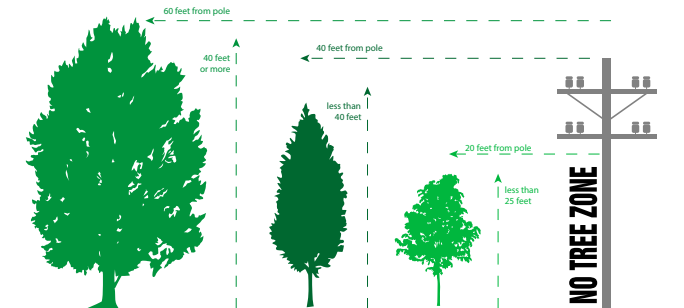


# TREE TRIMMING Cooperative vs. member responsibilities

**N**orthern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) performs constant maintenance on the electrical system to provide safe, reliable electricity to its members. Right-of-way clearing is one of many maintenance activities that helps improve both safety and reliability. This involves tree trimming, removal of underbrush and removal of potential dead and dangerous trees away from power lines.

A properly maintained right-of-way helps reduce or eliminate blinks or extended outages due to trees falling into lines during thunderstorms, high winds or ice/frost events. The cooperative regrets the need to cut trees, but we hope members understand that trees growing too close to power lines are dangerous for the line crews and members who may be working near trees.

In most cases, the cooperative has a 30-foot right-of-way, 15 feet on each side of a power line, in which trees or brush are to be maintained to prevent outages and to allow adequate access for line crews to perform work. The cooperative will work in collaboration with our



members to address concerns with trees.

Members can also help with the right-of-way efforts by being conscientious about where you plant trees on your property. Trees should never be planted directly under overhead power lines. A graphic has been provided displaying a guide for planting trees. Members can also inspect trees carefully to determine if there are signs of decay or dead limbs and prune trees when they are young and regularly thereafter. ■

## Below are common tree questions the cooperative receives from members:

**Q: A member has a tree they want cut down, but has concerns because it is near a high-voltage power line. Will NPEC cut it down for the member?**

A: The cooperative will only consider cutting down trees that threaten the integrity of the electric system within the right-of-way. When a member requests to have a tree trimmed or removed, NPEC will determine if the tree is a danger to cooperative facilities and if it can be taken down safely.

NPEC will not cut down a tree if there is any danger of it falling on a structure or causing any kind of damage to the member's property (buildings, landscaped areas, permanent yard ornaments). NPEC will also not cut down a tree if it is too large or overgrown. If this is the case, we can schedule a time to have the power line dropped or deenergized, free of charge, while your tree contractor performs the work. Cleanup of debris and site restoration is the responsibility of the member.

**Q: The trees in a member's yard are starting to touch the secondary power lines to my home. Will NPEC trim the trees away from the secondary lines?**

A: Yes. NPEC focuses the majority of its efforts on the primary, high-voltage side of the transformer, but if a member calls to have trees trimmed away from secondary power lines, NPEC will perform this work at no charge when a crew is in the area and as time permits. The crews will trim only what is necessary to remove the danger to cooperative facilities. Cleanup of debris and site restoration is the responsibility of the member.

**Q: What happens with the debris for right-of-way clearing activities for large corridors?**

A: Smaller debris is generally spread or piled along the cleared area. If available, a tree grinder may be used to grind smaller tree debris into mulch and left in the right-of-way. ■

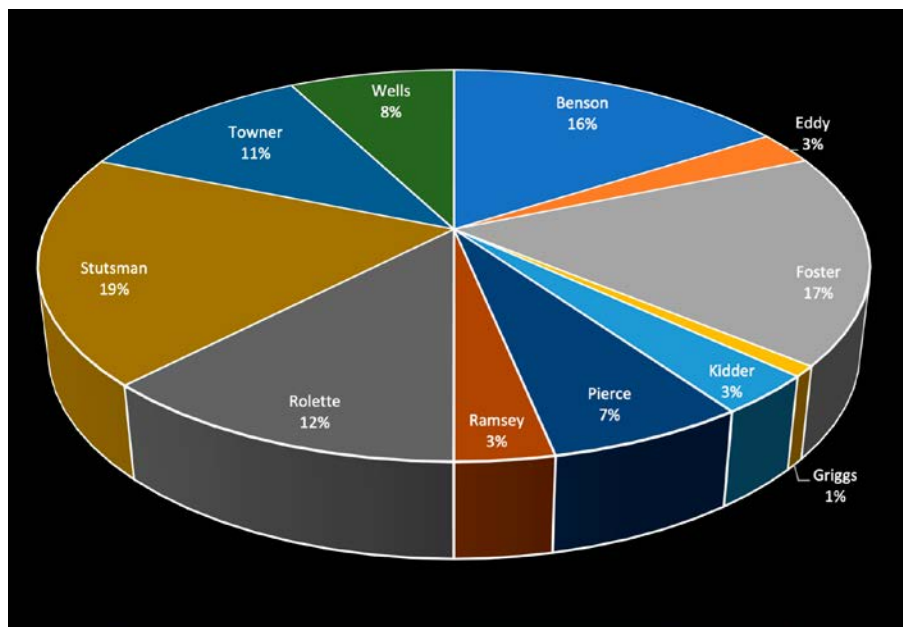
# Northern Plains Electric paid \$333,230 in taxes this year

Eleven counties served by Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) are the beneficiaries of taxes the cooperative pays yearly.

In 2023, NPEC paid \$333,230 in taxes to the 11 counties in our service area. The tax money comes from the electric distribution tax, which taxes how much electricity

we sell. The electric distribution taxes are paid in lieu of property taxes on the cooperative's overhead and underground power lines. The money is distributed to counties based on electricity sales and miles of power line in each county. This ensures each county receives a fair share of the taxes.

In addition, NPEC pays property taxes on the headquarters and outpost buildings it owns in Rolla, Cando, Maddock, Rugby, Carrington, Robinson, Woodworth and Jamestown. ■



### Kilowatt hours

**sold:** 430,287,783

**Miles of power line:** 6,685

### Counties served by NPEC:

Benson, Eddy, Foster, Griggs, Kidder, Pierce, Ramsey, Rolette, Stutsman, Towner and Wells.

# NORTHERN PLAINS

Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

An equal opportunity provider and employer.

**CANDO OFFICE:**  
609 4th Ave.  
Cando, ND 58324

**CARRINGTON OFFICE:**  
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Carrington, ND 58421

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Monday-Friday  
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

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