



Co-op needs your updated contact information

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative members are encouraged to call or email the cooperative and update their contact information.

“Having up-to-date contact information helps us serve our members better,” said General Manager Seth Syverson.

When the co-op must perform maintenance to the system that includes a planned outage, the co-op will send a phone call with an automated message to the affected members to notify them about the timeframe they will be without power.

The co-op also uses this same messaging system to notify members when the co-op will be using contractors who might need to access their property.

These calls sent by the co-op do not show as Northern Plains Electric on the caller ID, but rather as an 1-800-858-xxxx number.

A couple scenarios we have come across include members ignoring the call thinking it’s a scam. If we are unable to leave a message, they miss out on the

important information. Scenario two is when members have switched from using a landline to a cellphone and have not called to notify us.

Please call the co-op at 800-882-2500 to update your contact information or email the information to justask@nplains.com. ■

NOVEMBER 2023

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Danger of attaching items to a utility pole

BY BRITTNEE WILSON

It may seem innocent enough, but putting garage sale signs, birthday party balloons, no hunting signs or other items on a utility pole creates serious safety hazards.

“Staples and nails used to hang signs, as well as the signs themselves, pose danger to lineworkers who must climb poles when restoring power or while performing routine maintenance,” said Operations Manager Josh Cabler.

Even though much of today’s work is performed with the use of a bucket truck, lineworkers still climb poles on occasion.

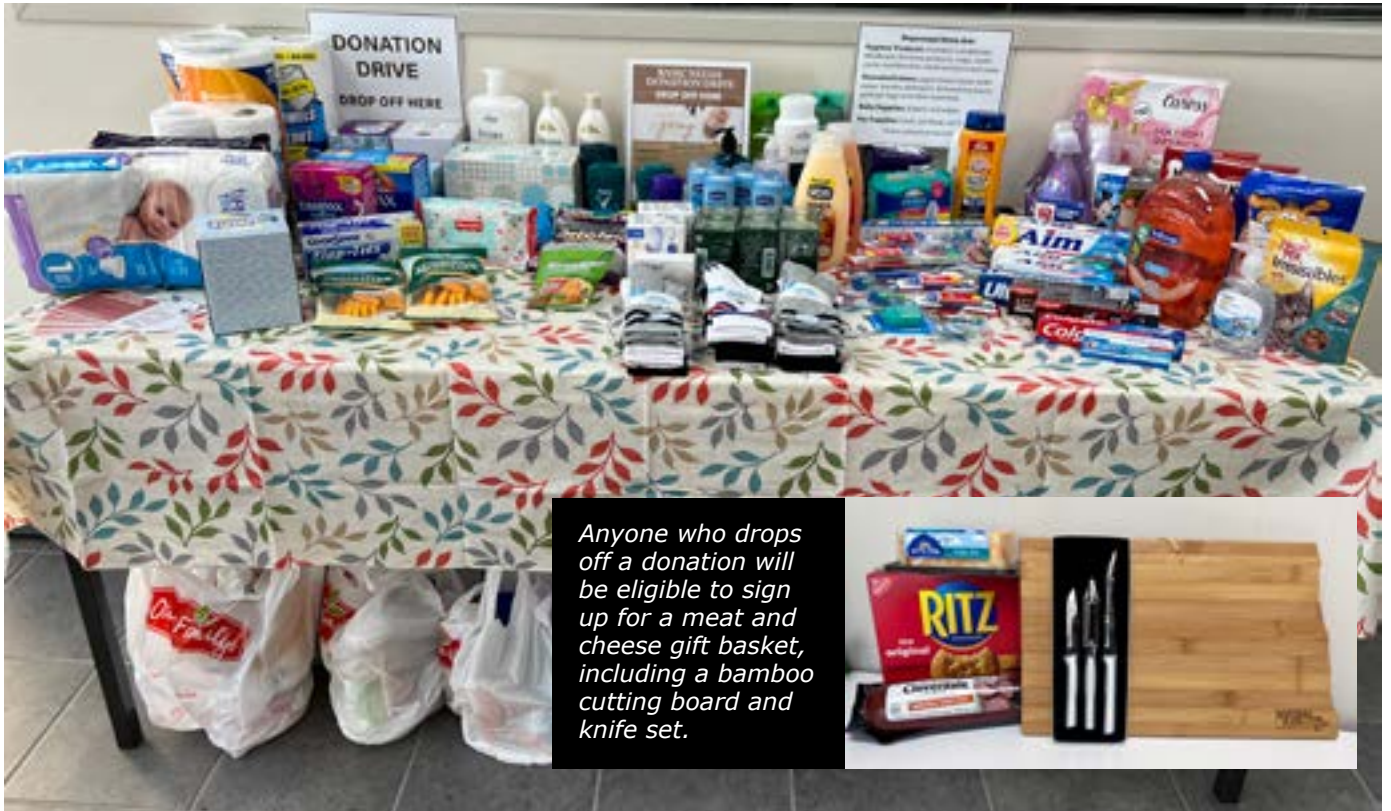
“Our line crews work around the clock in all types of weather conditions. If a lineworker needs to climb a pole to access overhead equipment, these items can become a hazardous obstacle,” Cabler said.

Any piece of metal in a pole can hinder the ability of the lineworkers’ climbing hooks, also known as gaffs, to dig into the pole’s wood. If a gaff kicks out while a lineworker is on the pole, it could increase the risk of a fall with the potential for serious injury or death. The nails and staples left behind can also snag or puncture small holes into a lineworkers’ protective clothing and rubber gloves, putting the lineworkers at risk for electrocution.

As “sign season” is approaching with the upcoming election, we want to remind members not to use utility poles as personal billboards. We appreciate your help in keeping utility poles clear and our lineworkers safe. ■



Support Your Local Businesses on
SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY



Anyone who drops off a donation will be eligible to sign up for a meat and cheese gift basket, including a bamboo cutting board and knife set.

NPEC holds donation drive

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative's (NPEC) basic needs donation drive is back and ready to receive donations! Two drop-off locations are located in the lobby of our offices in Cando and Carrington.

Items requested are hygiene products, such as shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, feminine products, soaps, dental care products and more. Household items are needed, such as paper towels, tissue, toilet paper, laundry detergent, dishwashing liquid, garbage bags

and other essentials. We are also accepting baby diapers and wipes and pet supplies, such as pet food and treats.

Last year, NPEC held the basic needs donation drive in November and collected more than 150 items. The items were distributed to the Cando Area Food Pantry and the Carrington Daily Bread just before the holidays. This year, donations received will be distributed to two different communities served by NPEC. Donations will be accepted through Dec. 1. ■

Halko joins NPEC's Jamestown line crew



Halko

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) has hired journeyman lineworker Leopold Halko to fill out the three-person Jamestown line crew under Foreman Beau Bredahl.

Halko, originally from Jamestown, said he is looking forward to learning a new electrical system and having the ability to

supply reliable power to a community where he grew up as a kid.

Halko graduated from Bismarck State College in 2020 with an associate in applied science and his lineworker certificate. He worked for a line construction company before he joined an electric cooperative in the western part of the state, where he earned his journeyman's certificate.

In his spare time, Halko enjoys hunting, fishing and spending time with his family. ■



Heat control exercise planned for dual heat and storage heat members

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative is announcing a load control exercise for those members with dual heat and off-peak storage heat systems. During the month of December, we plan to exercise load control on all available off-peak heating systems. The control exercise(s) will consist of control periods between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. on one or more days. We plan for no longer than four hours of load control on any day during this test. No exact test dates have been set for the month, as it will depend on the prevailing weather at that time.

The purpose of the control exercises will be twofold. First, it provides valuable off-peak loading data for the cooperative, so we know how much heating load can be controlled. Although we do not plan on controlling off-peak electric heat during the rest of the winter, it may be necessary due to a power generation or transmission line constraint, when we may be called upon to reduce our system load. If an emergency control such as this is called for by our power supplier, we would activate load control of off-peak heating systems without advance notice.

Secondly, it provides the opportunity for you, our dual heat and off-peak storage heat members, to operate your backup heat system to ensure it operates properly and provides adequate backup heat during control periods. This control will alert you as to whether or not your backup system will function adequately

during an off-peak control period. If you experience problems with your backup system during the control exercise, or if you already know your backup heating system needs servicing, please contact your heating or electrical contractor to schedule the work needed. The information below may help you determine the options available to you if you are trying to decide what to do about a nonfunctioning backup heating system.

If you need our assistance before, during or after the control exercise or want to be removed from the off-peak heat rate and switched over to our non-controlled electric heat rate, please call 968-3314, 652-3156 or 800-882-2500 to visit with one of our employees.

We thank you for your cooperation during the control exercise of off-peak heating systems. ■

Pointers to prepare for load control exercise on off-peak heating systems

Ensure you have an adequate supply of fuel oil, propane or natural gas for your backup heating system.

Make sure your floor heat and/or brick storage heaters are preheated for several days so an adequate supply of stored heat is available during the control periods.

Set the thermostats for your backup heating systems so they operate in a comfortable temperature range.



Northern Plains Electric Cooperative board director **Mark Brehm**, left, presents a check to **Randy Thomson**, president of the Cando Park Board.



Northern Plains Electric Cooperative board director **Judy Geier**, right, presents checks to **Brad Tweed**, fire chief of the Sykeston Rural Fire Department. Funds will be used to purchase a grass unit fire truck.



Northern Plains Electric Cooperative General Manager **Seth Syverson**, left, presents a check to Executive Director **Amanda Hegland** for the city of New Rockford.



Left to right, Bowden Rural Fire Department volunteer **Connor Fike**, Northern Plains Electric Cooperative Director **Curtis Wiesz**, Fire Chief **Trevor Larsen** and NPEC General Manager **Seth Syverson** are present during a check presentation.

Rural Development Finance Corporation awards grants

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative is a member of the Rural Development Finance Corporation (RDFC). As a result, communities in our service area were eligible to apply for a grant of up to \$3,000 for community-based projects. RDFC is making these funds available so more people become aware of its large loan program that funds community-based projects and nonprofit entities with low-interest loans.

RDFC has recently granted \$750 to the Sykeston Fire Protection District. The fire department's mission is to prevent the loss of life and property. In addition to responding to fires, the Sykeston Fire Protection District also responds to medical emergencies, motor vehicle accidents, rescue calls and incidents involving hazardous materials. The grant funds will be used

to help pay for the purchases of a newer fire truck/grass unit.

A grant of \$750 went to the Cando Park Board. The Cando Park Board will use the grant funds to make repairs to the pool and replace the deck around the swimming pool.

The city of New Rockford received a grant of \$750 to replace the roof of the historic Brown Memorial Community building. Built in 1935, the building is used as a community gathering space, basketball and volleyball court, a gathering space for the community's youth and more recently is home to New Rockford's newest day care center.

The Bowden Rural Fire Department received a grant of \$750 to update personal protective equipment to ensure the safety of its volunteers. ■

SET THE TABLE FOR SAFETY

Whether testing out a new dish or whipping up a family classic, there's one recipe that should also be included on the menu this holiday season: **safety**. Follow this "Recipe for Kitchen Safety" and help this year's festivities create memories instead of danger.

INGREDIENTS FOR SAFETY

FUNCTIONING SMOKE ALARMS



FUNCTIONING GROUND-FAULT CIRCUIT INTERRUPTERS (GFCIs)



VIGILANCE



DIRECTIONS

- 1 Smoke alarms should be installed in **every bedroom, outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home**. For the best protection, smoke alarms should be interconnected, so they all sound if one sounds.



- 2 Test the batteries in each smoke alarm **every month**, replace them **once a year** and replace the unit every **10 years**.



- 3 GFCIs are electrical safety devices that trip electrical circuits when they detect ground faults, or leakage currents, that could shock or electrocute someone. GFCIs should be installed where **electricity and water may come in contact**, such as the kitchen. GFCIs should also be tested **every month**. Additional instructions for testing can be found at www.esfi.org.



- 4 Prevent fires by making sure your oven and stovetop are **clean and free of grease and dust**. You should also clean the exhaust hood and duct over the stove regularly. Lastly, vacuum the refrigerator coils every **three months** to prevent potentially dangerous dirt build-up.



CLEAN APPLIANCES



KITCHEN TIMER



KITCHEN SAFETY



- 5 **Never leave cooking unattended.** You should not cook if you are sleepy or under the influence of alcohol. Children should also be closely supervised and kept at least **3 feet away** from all cooking appliances.



- 6 It's easy to forget about something that's cooking, especially when you're entertaining guests. **Use a kitchen timer** to make sure your dish doesn't become a fire hazard.



- 7 **Enjoy!** Being proactive about safety will give you peace of mind and allow you to enjoy your time with loved ones.

For more information about cooking and holiday safety, visit www.esfi.org

Members' cents go a long way

At its September meeting, the Northern Plains Electric Cooperative Operation Round Up board of directors approved grants totaling \$9,250 to help support worthy causes.

These charitable grants are made possible through the generosity of Northern Plains Electric Cooperative members who voluntarily elect to have their electric bills rounded up to the next dollar.

Since the program's beginning in October 1998, grants totaling \$926,687 have been awarded to 1,279 local charitable causes.

Grants approved in September include:

- Bruce Schley, Cando, medical expenses
- Randy L. Zupan, Belcourt, medical expenses
- Steven A. Belgarde, Belcourt, medical expenses
- Benson, Eddy, Foster, Griggs, Kidder, Pierce, Rolette, Stutsman, Towner, Wells, Ramsey counties, backpack programs/food banks

If you would like additional information about this worthy program, please contact Northern Plains



Electric Cooperative by calling 800-882-2500 or you may obtain guidelines or download applications at www.nplains.com. The board will meet again in December to review applications. The application deadline is Nov. 20. ■



Attention snowbirds!

SIGN UP FOR SMARTHUB BEFORE HEADING SOUTH

Calling all snowbirds! Before you migrate south for the winter, sign up for SmartHub and leave the worries about your electric bill in North Dakota!

No matter where you choose to spend your winter, you can always manage your Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) account from anywhere you can access the internet. You can use SmartHub to manage your payments, update your contact information, notify customer service of account issues, check your usage

and receive special messages from NPEC.

To sign up for SmartHub, visit www.nplains.com and click on the SmartHub link to register at the top of our homepage. Or you can download the SmartHub app from the app store to access SmartHub from your iPhone or Android phone.

SmartHub is FREE to members. Need help signing up? Call our office at 800-882-2500 for assistance. ■

Need help with your energy bill?



Are you or someone you know having difficulty paying home heating bills? If so, there is a federal program that could help. The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) helps eligible low-income households with home energy assistance.

Eligible households are encouraged to apply for assistance for:

Heating assistance

LIHEAP can pay for a portion of fuel or electricity used to heat your home between Oct. 1 and May 31. The amount of benefit depends on your income, the type and size of your home, and the type of fuel used to heat your home.

Weatherization service

The weatherization program helps low-income families make their homes and apartments energy efficient. Weatherization seals a home to keep warm air in and cold air out during the winter.

Furnace and chimney cleaning

The program can pay a portion of the costs to clean and inspect your furnace and/or chimney.

Emergency assistance

LIHEAP funds are available when there is a home energy emergency that may threaten the life of your family.

Energy cost-reduction devices

Funds are sometimes available to help with installation costs of energy-reducing devices to qualify for lower electric heat rates.

Applications are accepted from Oct. 1 through May 31 of each heating season. For LIHEAP services, call your local human service zone office or the state LIHEAP office at 800-755-2716. ■

NORTHERN PLAINS

Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

An equal opportunity provider and employer.

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Carrington, ND 58421

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