

Lineworkers receive training in pole-top rescue

In June, the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC) Safety Instructor Brian Lakoduk provided lineworkers with one of the most important training exercises in the electric utility industry – pole-top rescue.

Lineworkers are required by OSHA to perform this annual training, which simulates a lineworker having a medical emergency or an electrical contact injury and becoming unconscious at the top of a pole. The exercise uses a life-size dummy, and lineworkers learn techniques to safely lower the victim (dummy) to the ground.

Every year, Northern Plains Electric Cooperative receives 10 visits from NDAREC's safety services team. During these visits, safety instructors provide training on various safety and industry specific topics. Regularly reviewing what they already know can make the difference between life and death in a critical situation. ■



Journeyman lineworker **Jonathan Tandeski** rescues a dummy as foreman **Randy Thomson** looks on from the bucket.

JULY 2021

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EMPLOYEE NEWS |



Laine Hoyt

Hoyt joins Carrington East crew

Apprentice lineworker Laine Hoyt has been hired at Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) in a full-time position. Hoyt joined foreman Josh Cabler's Carrington East crew in May.

A McHenry native, Hoyt graduated from the lineworker program at Bismarck State College (BSC) in 2018. He previously

worked for a construction company before being hired at NPEC. Hoyt said he is most looking forward to working for his hometown community and being close to home. In his spare time, he enjoys hunting, fishing and spending time with friends.

Welcome to the team, Laine. We are happy to have you! ■



Colton Walters

NPEC hires summer help

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) has hired two temporary apprentice lineworkers for summer help. Colton Walters and Clay LaRocque began working for the cooperative in May to help NPEC through the construction season.

Walters, originally from Cando, is working with his hometown crew under foreman Randy Thomson. Walters, who graduated from the lineworker program at Bismarck State College (BSC) in 2019, worked for a contractor before joining NPEC. In his spare time, he enjoys woodworking projects and 3D printing. He is most looking forward to getting to know the people while working for NPEC.

LaRocque, whose hometown is St. John, joined the Carrington West crew under foreman Shannon Petersen. He previously worked for PS Garage Doors before enrolling

in the lineworker program at BSC, graduating this spring. In his spare time, he enjoys golfing, cooking and spending time with family at the lake. LaRocque is appreciative of the experience he will gain working alongside Petersen's crew.

Northern Plains Electric is happy to have these two on our team! ■



Clay LaRocque

Co-op employees step up to the challenge

Electric cooperatives across the state joined a four-week walking challenge to raise money for a good cause. The Co-op Charge Challenge, a N.D. REC Benefit Trust activity, recruited electric cooperatives to gather teams of four to five staff members to walk for charity.

Twenty-five Northern Plains Electric Cooperative employees made up five of the 31 participating teams. Together, the Northern Plains teams racked up over 6,500,000 steps, equaling about 3,500 miles.

The Co-op Charge Challenge gave a total of \$3,800 in prize money to the winning teams competing for their favorite charity. Three out of the five Northern Plains Electric teams took home \$50 each to their charities of their choice: Carrington Healthy Community Coalition, Cando Arts Council and the Uffda Animal Rescue of Cando. ■

*Uffda Fund board member and adoption coordinator, **Lindsey Masterson**, accepts donation along with her friend, **Hazel**, who is up for adoption.*



Carrington Healthy Communities Coalition President **Michelle Seil** (middle) accepts a donation from Northern Plains employees **Scott Buchholz** and **Justin Kollman**.



Vice President of Cando Arts Council and director of the 2021 Children's Musical, **Kristin Murchie**, accepts a check allocated to sponsor a child in the musical.

NPEC announces safety poster contest winners



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

The contest was open to kindergarten through sixth-grade students. The purpose of the contest is to help bring awareness to the dangers of electricity. Safety always comes first at Northern Plains Electric Cooperative, and we are dedicated to doing our part to help children learn how to be safe around electricity.

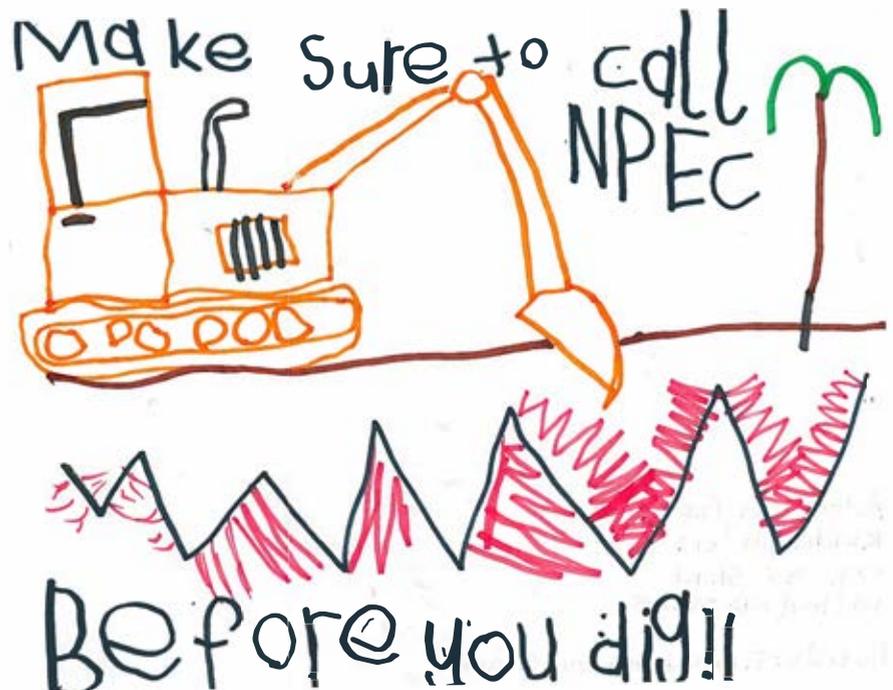
Over 30 children entered their drawings, with a wide variety of scenes showing safety precautions taken at their home or on the farm. The posters were voted on by all 42 employees at Northern Plains. First through third place winners in each category received a cash prize.

We hope the contest made children more aware of their responsibility in practicing safety around electricity.

Thank you to all participants and congratulations to the winners! ■

2021 WINNERS

Kindergarten-first grade



First place: Aiden van Graan, Wolford

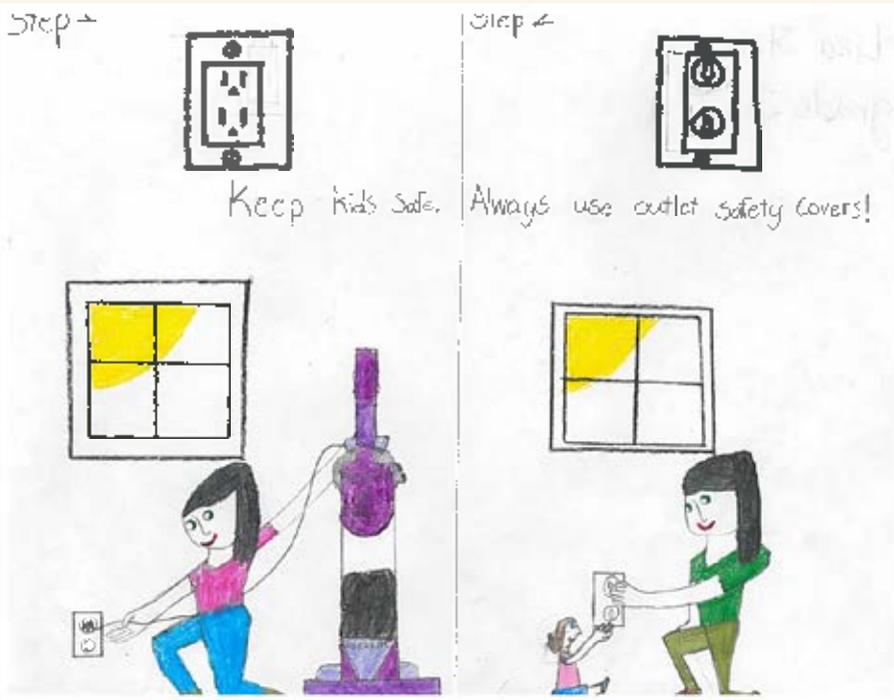


Second place:
Noelle Heinle, Buchanan

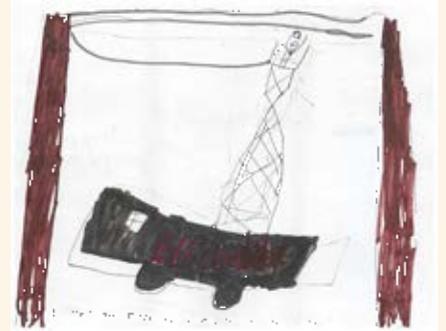


Third place:
Miley Gysbers, Egeland

Second-third grade



First place: Liza Steele, New Rockford



Second place:
Quiny Bercier, Rolla

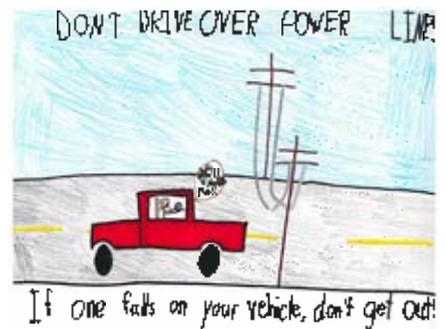


Third place:
Christian Nystrom, Harvey

Fourth-sixth grade



First place: Carter Davis, Belcourt



Second place:
Emmi Odenbach, Buchanan



Third place:
Michelle David, Cando

Know what's below: steps for safe digging

Summer is here, and there's never been a better time to get outside and enjoy the fresh air. Perhaps you're making plans for a new garden or a lawn makeover. However you're planning to revamp your backyard oasis, remember to keep safety in mind for all projects – especially those that require digging near underground utility lines.

Most of us never think about the electric, gas, water and other utility lines buried below the ground, but hitting one of these lines while digging is not the reminder you'll want, trust us! Northern Plains Electric Cooperative reminds all members who are planning a digging project to call 811 at least three business days before you start. Or, you can submit a request online by visiting www.ndonecall.com. Here's how the process works:

After you call 811 or submit your request online, all affected utilities will be notified of your intent to dig. It may take the utilities a few days to get to your request, so please be patient. The affected utilities will send someone to mark the buried lines with paint or flags. Before you break ground, confirm that all the utilities have responded to your request.

By taking this important step before you break ground on your project, you can help protect not only yourself but our community. Disrupting an underground utility line can interrupt service, cause injuries and cost money to repair, so remember to call 811 first and know what's below. ■

5 STEPS FOR SAFE DIGGING

Working on an outdoor project? Careless digging poses a threat to people, pipelines and underground facilities. Always call 8-1-1 first. Here are five easy steps for safe digging:



1. NOTIFY

Call 8-1-1 or make a request online two to three days before your work begins. The operator will notify the utilities affected by your project.

2. WAIT

Wait two to three days for affected utilities to respond to your request. They will send a locator to mark any underground utility lines.

2-3

3. CONFIRM

Confirm that all affected utilities have responded to your request by comparing the marks to the list of utilities the 8-1-1 call center notified.



4. RESPECT

Respect the markers provided by the affected utilities. The markers are your guide for the duration of your project.



5. DIG CAREFULLY

If you can't avoid digging near the markers (within 18-24 inches on all sides, depending on state laws), consider moving your project location.



Source: call811.com

**Always assume
downed lines are
*energized***

- Downed power lines can energize the ground up to **35 feet away**. Even more in wet conditions.
- **Never drive over** downed power lines or through water that is in contact with them.
- **Never try to move** a downed power line.
- If you see a downed line, **call 911**.

**If a vehicle or farm
equipment contacts
a power line or utility
pole, stay away and
call 911.**

- Consider **all lines** to be live and dangerous.
- Stay in place or inside your vehicle unless you see fire or smoke.
- Warn others to stay at least **35 feet away**.
- **Tell others** not to approach vehicle, downed lines, or anything that may be in contact with downed lines.
- **Call 911**

Planning a trip to Medora this summer?



Northern Plains Electric Cooperative is able to offer its members a discount by being a Touchstone Energy member. Simply call 1-800-MEDORA-1 and give the discount code of "Touch 2021" for a 15 percent discount on any of the following during any night of the season:

- Tickets to the Medora Musical
- Pitchfork steak fondue
- Bully Pulpit Golf Course
- Lodging at any of the following:
 - Elkhorn Quarters
 - Badlands Motel
 - Rough Riders Hotel

NPEC directors obtain national recognition certificates



General Manager Seth Syverson (middle) presents board of directors Dave Teigen (left) and Judy Geier certificates through NRECA's continuing education and training programs.

Two board of directors from Northern Plains Electric Cooperative recently received certificates from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) for continuing education and training. Judy Geier of Heaton completed the credentialed cooperative director program (CCD) and Dave Teigen of Rugby earned the board leadership

certificate (BLC).

An ever-changing business environment has imposed new demands on electric cooperative directors, requiring increased knowledge of changes in the electric utility business, new governance skills and a solid knowledge of the cooperative principles and business model. Electric co-ops, including Northern Plains Electric, have

a commitment to work through the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC) and NRECA to sharpen this body of knowledge for the benefit of their electric cooperative consumer-owners.

The NRECA credentialed cooperative director program requires attendance and demonstrated understanding of the basic competencies contained in five core courses: director duties and liabilities; understanding the electric business; board operations and process; strategic planning; and financial decision-making.

The NRECA board leadership certificate recognizes individuals who continue their professional development after becoming a credentialed cooperative director. Directors who have attained the BLC have completed 10 credits in advanced, issues-oriented courses within eight specialty areas: communications, cooperative business model, grassroots, financial, governance, power supply, risk management and technology. ■

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Assistant Secretary/treasurer	Dave Teigen, Rugby
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District 1	Bruce Olsen, Cando
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District 3.....	Judy Geier, Heaton
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