



# It pays to be a co-op member!

**\$550,000 of capital credits refunded to Northern Plains members**

**For more information on capital credits, call 800-882-2500.**

**A**t its August meeting, the Northern Plains Electric Cooperative board of directors approved the retirement of more than \$550,000 in capital credits. The capital credits are paid to members who earned patronage by doing business with the cooperative in 2006. Unless the member participated in one of the cooperative's early payment capital credit buyout programs, a check is in the mail!

The amount of the check depends on a member's "patronage," or how much electricity the member purchased in those years. In addition, to date, the co-op has also made early retirements of \$200,789 to member estates and former members who requested an early buyout at the time they left the system.

## How do capital credits work?

As a nonprofit organization, Northern Plains Electric's mission is to provide service to member-owners at cost, while also maintaining the co-op's financial strength. If the co-op earns revenues in excess of its expenditures, it returns those profits to members. Those profits are called capital credits.

Capital credits are the most significant source of equity for most electric cooperatives. This equity is used to help

meet the expenses of the co-op, such as paying for new equipment and repaying debt. Capital credits help keep rates at a competitive level by reducing the amount of funds that must be borrowed. ■

If you cease to purchase energy from Northern Plains Electric, please keep us informed of your forwarding address. This will enable us to forward payments when the capital credits are refunded in years to come.

**OCTOBER 2021**

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## NPEC to celebrate National Co-op Month with member giveaway

October is Co-op Month, a month focused to celebrate how awesome cooperatives are and to highlight how they benefit their members and their surrounding communities. In celebration, for the second year, Northern Plains Electric Cooperative will benefit 10 locally owned businesses and 10 community members through a giveaway of 10 gift certificates in the amount of \$50 each.

Many small businesses are still facing the effects of the pandemic. Community members may be struggling as well due to the shutdowns, reduction in work hours or loss of jobs. A “concern for community” is one of the cooperative principles Northern Plains Electric follows. By supporting our local small businesses, we are bringing the power of caring to the communities we serve.

To be eligible to win, entrees must be 18 years of age or older and a member of Northern Plains Electric Cooperative. Northern Plains employees, trustees, contractors and members of their households are ineligible.

To enter, members must 1) fill out the entry form located below. 2) Return the form with their October payment or mail to NPEC, P.O. BOX 608, Cando, ND 58324 by entry deadline Oct. 20, 2021.

Each dollar spent at local, independent businesses returns three times more money to the local economy than shopping at a chain or mega online retailer. Local businesses are the heart and soul of our communities and we are incredibly lucky to have vibrant, diverse, and resilient small businesses in our area. ■



### Co-ops Local Giveaway Contest

Chance to win a gift certificate to a local business!

Mail in the completed form with your October payment or send to:

**Northern Plains Electric Cooperative**  
**PO BOX 608**  
**Cando, ND 58324**

Entry deadline: October 20, 2021

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**NPEC ACCOUNT #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**PHONE NUMBER:** \_\_\_\_\_

\*Winners will be published in the NPEC center pages of North Dakota Living magazine.



Northern Plains Vice President **Curtis Wiesz** (center) presents the donation of \$7,500 to the Fessenden Fire Protection District. The department will use the money to purchase SCBA units (self-contained breathing apparatus). Accepting the donation is the department's president, **Don Muscha**, (right) and Secretary/Treasurer **Neal Hayford**.



Northern Plains board director **Curt Hanson** (right) presents a \$7,500 check to members of the Woodworth Fire Department. The department will use the funds to update its turnout gear and radios. Representatives, left to right, are: **Steve Hochhalter**, **Steve Scarbrough**, **Jamie Clark** and **Jason Struxness**.



Northern Plains board member **Curt Hanson** presents a check to **Shelly Ziesch** (left) of the Pettibone Rural Fire Department. The department will use the \$7,500 in grants toward the purchase of a grass/brush fire unit.



Northern Plains board director **Randy Simon** (left) presents \$7,500 in grants to Little Bobcats Daycare in Maddock. Accepting the donation is the day care director, **Lacey Bergrud**, along with her son. The day care will use the funds for startup costs.

## Northern Plains and partners award grants totaling \$30,000

**N**orthern Plains Electric Cooperative recently teamed with CoBank and Basin Electric Power Cooperative to donate \$30,000 to nonprofit organizations who contribute to the communities that Northern Plains Electric serves.

At its July board meeting, Northern Plains Electric board of directors approved a donation of \$10,000 to be split among four nonprofit organizations in the service

area. The Pettibone Rural Fire Department, Fessenden Fire Protection District, Woodworth Fire Department and Little Bobcats Daycare in Maddock were awarded \$2,500 each.

By teaming with CoBank and Basin Electric Power, Northern Plains helped the nonprofits receive matching donations resulting in a total of \$7,500 for each organization.



CoBank, a cooperative lending institution headquartered in Denver, Colo., makes these funds available through their Sharing Success matching grant program. The program was designed to celebrate the vital role that cooperatives play in individual communities across the country.

Basin Electric Power Cooperative is a wholesale electric generation and transmission cooperative

headquartered in Bismarck that provides electricity to electric cooperatives in nine states, including Northern Plains Electric.

Northern Plains Electric cooperative is thankful to have partners like CoBank and Basin Electric Power Cooperative who contribute to the communities we serve. ■

## TAKE THE CHILL OUT OF YOUR ENERGY BILL



**As jackets and mittens leave the closets this fall, be ready to cut the chill and your energy bill with these money-saving tips for autumn:**

- Set your thermostat no higher than 68 degrees when you are home and lower the temperature when you go to bed or when you are not at home. This saves money and keeps you warm.
- During the day, open shades and curtains to allow solar heating. Close them at night to retain the day's heat.
- Bundle up your home. Weatherize your home by caulking and weather-stripping all doors and windows. Also use locks on your windows to make them tighter and draft-resistant.

Reducing air leaks could cut 10 percent from an average household's monthly energy bill. The most common places where air escapes homes are: floors, walls, ceilings, ducts, fireplaces, plumbing penetrations, doors, windows, fans, vents and electrical outlets.

- Have your heating system serviced by a professional once a year.
- Check furnace filters. Be sure to clean or replace your heating and cooling system's air filter. At a minimum, change the filter every three months; a dirty filter clogs the system, making the system work harder to keep you warm.
- Insulate or increase the amount of insulation in your attic, basement and outside walls. Also cover through-the-wall air conditioners to prevent cold air from leaking into your home.
- Don't block your radiators or heating vents with furniture or draperies. Keep your radiators, registers and baseboard heaters free of dirt and dust. Close vents and doors in unused rooms.
- Close the fireplace damper when not in use.
- Turn your water heater down to 120 degrees to save money on your energy bill.

**Want more ways to save? Take the home energy savings tour and see how little changes add up to big savings at [www.TogetherWeSave.com](http://www.TogetherWeSave.com). ■**



**JUNE 19 TO 24, 2022**



# WASHINGTON, D.C.

## AN ALL-EXPENSE-PAID TRIP TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

- To enter the essay-writing contest, you must be a sophomore or junior in high school.
- You and your parents or guardian's primary service must be served by Northern Plains Electric Cooperative.
- If you have any questions, please contact Brittnee Wilson, Northern Plains Electric, at 701-968-3314 during regular business hours.
- The deadline is Dec. 10, 2021. You can email entries to [brittneew@nplains.com](mailto:brittneew@nplains.com) or mail a hard copy to: Northern Plains Electric, Youth Tour Essay Contest, PO Box 608, Cando, ND 58324-0608.

### TOP 3 REASONS TO ENTER THE ESSAY-WRITING CONTEST

1. All-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., compliments of Northern Plains Electric Cooperative
2. A whole week to visit unforgettable historic monuments, museums and the U.S. Capitol
3. A learning experience you'll never forget

## ESSAY QUESTION:

*If you were asked to help promote your cooperative's annual membership meeting, what ideas do you have for increasing attendance among young member-owners and students? Please provide specific examples for unique communications strategies, scheduling and special activities for member-owners and their families.*



CHECK OUT THE ESSAY CONTEST GUIDELINES AT  
<https://nplains.com/youth-tour>



# Rural Development Finance Corporation awards grants in Northern Plains' service area



Rural Development  
Finance Corporation  
*GROWING COMMUNITIES*

**N**orthern 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 \$2,000 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 nonprofits entities with low-interest loans.

RDFC has recently granted \$1,000 to the Woodward Quick Response Unit. The grant funds will be used to purchase equipment for the EMS squad (oxygen and mask/regulators, blood pressure cuffs) and safety gear, such as reflector vests and jackets, gloves, masks and face shields.

Another \$1,000 grant went to the Woodward Café. The grant funds will be put toward the purchase and installation of a new furnace and bathroom renovations. ■



Northern Plains board director **Curt Hanson** (left) presents a \$1,000 check to representatives of the Woodward Quick Response Unit. Left to right are: **Jason Struxness, Steve Scarbrough, Pam Mahutga, Marshall Ziesch and Steve Hochhalter.**



Representatives of the Woodward Café accept a check of \$1,000 from Northern Plains Director Curt Hanson (right). Left to right are: **Steve Hochhalter, Marshall Ziesch, Joady Wagner, Pam Mahutga and Jamie Clark.**



# Doug Beck retires

BY BRITTNEE WILSON

**N**orthern Plains Electric Cooperative congratulates Doug Beck on his retirement after working for the cooperative for 40 years.

Fresh from college, Beck began his career with Baker Electric Cooperative in 1981 as an apprentice lineworker. First hired as summertime help on the Rugby crew, Beck transferred to Cando to work with the construction crew before he was hired full time in 1983. He earned his journeyman certification in 1984 and spent most his career working with the underground crew for Cando.

As Beck can attest, a lineworker's job is different daily. The schedule may be to do line patrol or plow services, but when the call comes to repair an outage, they answer.

One cannot control Mother Nature and part of a lineworker's job is to restore power, even in the worst of weather conditions. Storm work may not be at the top of every lineworker's list of duties, but it was for Beck.

"I actually enjoyed the sleet storms," he said. In fact, one of his most memorable storms was his first one.

Because "cooperation of cooperatives" is one of the seven principles co-ops live by, a handful of Baker Electric lineworkers, including Beck, were sent to help an electric cooperative in South Dakota that was rocked by a large storm. Beck and the crew spent 10 days, working 15-hours a day, restoring power to their members. Helping other co-ops and the "transmission guys" was also one of Beck's favorite things about his job.

"I enjoyed getting together with the other linemen in different areas and watching how they put up their line," Beck commented.

Although Beck cannot recall the date of that storm or the name of the cooperative they helped, he did remember the feelings of excitement, the camaraderie and eagerness to learn from others.

In the electrical lineworker field, there is a strong camaraderie among workers. An unspoken connection. And that's what Beck said he will miss the most – "the people" he has gotten to know through the years.

Beck was not only an asset to the cooperative, but





Baker Electric Cooperative employees who also volunteered on the Cando Fire Department in 1988. **Doug Beck** is kneeling third from the left.

also to his community. He was a volunteer fireman for the Cando Fire Department almost as long as his time spent with Baker Electric/Northern Plains. He even held the role of fire chief for 11 years.

Whether it was with the guys on the fire department or with the apprentices on the line, Beck was a respectable teacher with strong patience. He had a wealth of knowledge that will be truly missed.

Beck's colleague on the Cando line, Keaten Mikkelsen, described Beck as "the best leader for young guys."

"He was really good at explaining things and especially good at training us on machinery. He is easy to get along with and super smart with job planning," Mikkelsen said.

In retirement, Beck has plans of fishing, golfing,

running UTVs and spending more time with his family, which includes his wife, Gina, three children and four grandchildren.

We wish Doug a happy retirement and thank him for his service and experience for the last 40 years! ■



**Doug Beck** (right) works alongside **Keaten Mikkelsen** in 2019.

**NORTHERN  
PLAINS** Electric Cooperative

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**CANDO OFFICE:**

609 4th Ave.  
Cando, ND 58324

**CARRINGTON OFFICE:**

1515 West Main  
Carrington, ND 58421

**OFFICE HOURS:**

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

www.nplains.com  
justask@nplains.com  
800-882-2500

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