

# Northern Plains announces annual poster contest

**Attention, kids!** Grab your art supplies, as Northern Plains Electric Cooperative sponsors a safety poster contest for children in kindergarten to sixth grade.

The purpose of the safety poster contest is to help make children aware of the dangers of electricity. At Northern Plains Electric, safety always comes first, and we are dedicated to doing our part to teach children how to be safe around electricity. Winners will be announced on our Facebook page and featured in the Northern Plains local pages of *North Dakota Living*.

## **RULES**

- Posters must be on white, 8.5x11-inch paper.
- Posters must depict the theme, "How to stay safe around electricity."
- Print the child's name, school grade, address and parents' names on the back of the poster.
- Only dependents of current Northern Plains members are eligible for this contest.
- Deadline is March 15.

Submit entries to a Northern Plains office (Cando or Carrington) or mail to:

### **Northern Plains Electric**

Attn: Brittnee Wilson  
P.O. Box 608  
Cando, ND 58324

## **ENTRY CATEGORIES**

- Kindergarten to first grade
- Second to third grade
- Fourth to sixth grade

## **PRIZES IN EACH CATEGORY**

- First: \$20
- Second: \$15
- Third: \$10

**FEBRUARY 2023**

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## We love our communities

BY SETH SYVERSON, GENERAL MANAGER

**T**here is a special bond and obligation that ties Northern Plains Electric Cooperative to the communities it serves. With Valentine's Day approaching, we can't think of a better time to express how much we love our communities and serving you, the members of the co-op.

We know when we helped to bring electricity to rural North Dakota many years ago, the quality of life improved for all. Through the years, other issues needed to be tackled, and we have been at the forefront of helping



**Seth Syverson**

to address some of those issues. We want to help meet the long-term needs of our communities to ensure they continue to thrive, because we live here, too, just like you.

While our top priority is to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to you, equally important is our mission to enrich the lives of the members we serve. This focus to benefit the larger community is central to the way we operate as a cooperative. Northern Plains Electric Cooperative knows electricity is a critical need for modern-day life, but it takes more than poles and power lines to make a community.

Over time, our co-op has evolved to meet the changing needs of each community, improving the quality of life for everyone. And that can mean many different things. It can mean programs for North

Dakota's youth, such as education scholarships or the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, in which we take motivated and talented students to Washington, D.C., for a week-long immersion to experience democracy in action. It means organizing food and clothing drives, and Operation Round Up has contributed more than \$900,000 to local families and nonprofit organizations in need. It also means supporting over \$9,500,000 in rural economic development loans to help create and retain employment within our communities.

Over the last couple decades, Operation Round Up and other giving projects have built community parks, fed hungry families, enabled those in need to keep the lights on and so much more – and we couldn't do any of this without you, our members.

We all benefit from these programs, because of you

and your neighbors. You empower Northern Plains Electric Cooperative through your membership and through your participation in and support of these programs.

As a local cooperative, we are proud to power your life and bring good things to our community. We hope you will continue to guide our efforts by sharing your perspective as we plan for the future. The energy landscape is undergoing dramatic change, fueled by evolving technology and consumer desires for more options. While the larger environment in which we operate is constantly changing, one thing remains the same. By working together, I'm certain we can continue to do good things for our community. ■

## NPEC board approves rate adjustment for 2023

**R**ising costs have affected all of the cooperative's members over the past few years and, like you, Northern Plains Electric Cooperative has experienced higher prices for material, equipment and services.

The Northern Plains Electric board of directors approved a small increase to the monthly service availability charge of \$1, which took effect Jan. 1. This increase will help offset the rising costs of material,

such as transformers and underground cable. In addition, large power services will see a slight increase to the demand charge as a pass through from our power supplier.

We continue to make system improvements and utilize technology to work more efficiently, while improving service. The cooperative strives to keep rates affordable for the members and minimize the impact of rising costs to your electric bill. ■



## Plow it safe

**T**his winter has dropped an enormous amount of snow for this time of year. Please take special precautions while moving snow, as there may be underground power facilities, such as transformers and cabinets, below the snow. If there are any questions on location of these facilities, please call 811 to have them marked.

Collisions between snowplows and power equipment can damage plows and vehicles, create electrical shock hazards to the snowplow operators and general public, and cause power outages.

If a cabinet is damaged, call our office to report it at 800-882-2500. If there is a dangerous situation, call 911 first. ■

# HOME APPLIANCES

## THE BIGGEST ENERGY USERS

Your electronics and appliances work hard, keeping you entertained, while making sure your food is fresh and your clothes are clean. You appreciate all that, but you probably don't appreciate the way they add to your monthly energy bills.

### Which devices are the worst energy offenders?

Here we show the estimated annual energy use for some commonly used household appliances and electronics



**OVEN**  
315 KWH

(30 MINUTES A DAY, 180 DAYS A YEAR)



**REFRIGERATOR**  
300 KWH

(24 HOURS A DAY, 365 DAYS A YEAR)



**40" PLUS HD TV**  
100 KWH

(5 HOURS PER DAY, 365 DAYS A YEAR)



**CLOTHES DRYER**  
290 KWH

(1 HOUR PER DAY, TWICE A WEEK)

These are just estimates; your energy use will depend on the size of your household and your habits. Spend a weekend binge-watching your favorite shows, for example, and you might see your energy bills start to rise.

### Reducing Your Energy Use

The following measures will help diminish the energy used by your devices:



#### 1. RUN A FULL LOAD

Wash clothes and dishes only using full loads; partial loads waste energy and water.



#### 3. KEEP YOUR DRYER CLEAN

Clean the lint filter after each dryer load; this will increase air circulation and improve dryer efficiency.



#### 2. PLUG SMARTER

Plug TVs and electronic devices into an advanced power strip. These "smart" strips sense when devices are not being used and shut off power.



#### 4. AIR DRY LAUNDRY

Why not air-dry clean clothes? It will reduce energy costs and it may help to keep clothes looking new.



#### 5. COOK EFFICIENTLY

Use your microwave or toaster oven to heat leftovers or smaller portions. These smaller appliances often heat food more quickly, while using less energy.

Purchasing new appliances or gadgets? Make sure they are ENERGY STAR® certified. ENERGY STAR products use less energy than standard models while still providing the same level of performance.



## Operation Round Up totals \$38,075 in grants for 2022

**A**t its December meeting, the Northern Plains Electric Cooperative Operation Round Up board of directors approved grants totaling \$9,700 to help support worthy causes. A total of \$38,075 in grants was distributed in 2022.

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 began in October 1998, grants totaling \$900,237 have been awarded to 1253 local charitable causes.

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](http://www.nplains.com). The board will meet again in March

to review applications. The application deadline is Feb. 20.

### Grants approved in December include:

- Raymond Freund, Cando, medical expenses
- Fern Mack, Pettibone, medical expenses
- Sylvia Martin, Pettibone, medical expenses
- Peter E. Morin, St. John, house fire
- David Young, Sykeston, medical expenses
- St. Joachim Catholic Church, Rolla, replacement roof/windows
- Rolla Archery Club, equipment costs/ongoing maintenance
- Father's Farm, Wolford, construction costs of new facility
- Harlow Cemetery Board, new flagpole ■

# 2022 solar project data

The 6.56-kilowatt solar system installed at our Carrington office is used primarily as a research project to collect data to present to our members as a reference when considering solar options.

The 16-panel solar system was jointly installed with Dakota Valley Electric Cooperative in May 2015 and has run into some hardware issues. In the early months of 2022, one set of micro-inverters failed on the solar system, which has been impacting its overall production. The cooperatives would normally replace the broken equipment, but the original equipment manufacturer went out of business in 2017. As of today, a direct replacement cannot be found on the open inverter market without replacing the entire panel system, although there is potential of a new manufacturer looking into providing a compatible micro-inverter.

The benefit of using micro-inverters versus one single inverter is one can fail, and the system will still output power. The output is reduced, but the overall system will still work. In our case, with one set of micro-inverters failing out of three, we are currently seeing about a one-third decrease in energy production. When using the single-inverter system, the output is zero if equipment fails.

Before the failed equipment, the cooperatives were

looking at a 20-year return on their \$19,000 investment. This includes \$10,000 in grants received. Any repairs to the system would extend the payback period. If a compatible micro-inverter would become available, we would assume the cost would be in the \$2,500 range.

It is important to understand there are more components to a solar system than just the panels. The maintenance costs over the life of the entire system should be taken into consideration.

## Contact your electric co-op

Before Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) members install any distributed energy resource, such as a solar or wind generation system, they are required to follow these steps first:

1. Contact NPEC for information regarding the cooperative's policies for interconnection before you make the decision to proceed with anything.
2. Complete our application for interconnection of generation systems form and return to us with the fee. NPEC needs to review and approve the equipment our members are contemplating installing BEFORE they purchase anything.

For more information, visit [www.nplains.com](http://www.nplains.com), click on the "Distributed Energy Resource" tab on the homepage or call us at 800-882-2500. ■

## Total Energy Generated [kWh]

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
2022	324	562	709	643	726	862	861
2021	231	590	853	885	997	1063	1036
2020	321	678	868	947	1019	1048	1188
2019	303	190	879	814	958	942	1138
2018	398	593	765	1113	1015	1051	1142
2017	276	538	723	759	905	1016	1208
2016	325	484	831	821	975	1104	991
2015	0	0	0	0	530	961	1065



	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	\$ Saved
	793	739	583	262	237	7298	\$803.00
	923	866	607	378	265	8694	\$957.00
	1012	818	601	445	329	9273	\$1,020.00
	978	710	474	250	190	7825	\$861.00
	1004	757	584	266	257	8945	\$984.00
	1011	760	721	426	332	8675	\$954.00
	1042	730	536	440	248	8527	\$938.00
	1019	861	607	413	232	5689	\$626.00

# Donation drive brings in over 150 items

**N**orthern Plains Electric Cooperative hosted a basic need donation drive in November. Drop-off locations were situated at the Cando and Carrington headquarters and over 150 items were collected at the two locations. The items were

distributed to the Cando Area Food Pantry and the Carrington Daily Bread in December.

We thank all those who donated and helped us make a positive change in our communities. ■



**PLAY TO WIN**  
**\$25 CREDIT**  
**From Northern Plains Electric Cooperative**

Congratulations to our latest winner:  
 Larry Lura from Carrington!  
 Thank you for entering the December bill insert crossword puzzle.

*Regularly check bill inserts for future contests.*

## NORTHERN PLAINS Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

*An equal opportunity provider and employer.*

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

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

**CARRINGTON OFFICE:**  
 1515 West Main  
 Carrington, ND 58421

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

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