

Wishing our members a merry Christmas!

Holiday hours:

Closing at 2:30 p.m. Dec. 24 and 31

Closed Dec. 25 and Jan. 1



**Starting Jan. 2,
regular business hours will be:
8 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday-Friday**

DECEMBER 2025

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Watt's under the tree?

Unwrapping hidden energy costs of season's hottest gifts

The stockings are hung, the lights are twinkling and the gifts under the tree are waiting to be unwrapped. But how many watts are hiding beneath the festive paper? Here's a cheerful audit of 2025's most popular gifts and how they'll stack up on your electric bill.

1. Gaming consoles

The latest gaming consoles are topping wishlists again this year. While they're more energy-efficient than earlier models, they can draw up to 200 watts while gaming!

Pro tip: Use the console's "energy saver" setting and power it down when not in use. Over a year, these simple habits can save enough electricity to keep your Christmas lights twinkling for weeks.

2. Smartphones and tablets

Smartphones and tablets are surprisingly efficient. Using a standard charger, you can power your smartphone with as little as 5 watts. That's less than a penny's worth of electricity! The bigger drain? Leaving chargers plugged in with no device attached. Unplug and save energy.

3. Smart home gadgets

Convenient? Absolutely. But these devices sip power constantly, even when they're not in use. Using a smart speaker as an example, a single speaker uses about 2 watts in standby mode. Use smart plugs to cut the juice when it's not in use.

4. Big-screen TVs

Holiday movie marathons are tradition, but they come with a price. A 65-inch 4K TV can draw more than 250 watts. Switching to "eco mode" lowers energy use and gives the picture a softer, warmer glow, which is perfect for Christmas viewing!

5. Robot vacuums

Robot vacuums are the elves of modern households, sweeping up cookie crumbs and pine needles alike. While they're more efficient than traditional vacuums, they're not free to run. A single cleaning cycle can use between 30 and 100 watts, and that adds up if it roams daily. Schedule wisely and empty the bin often to keep floors tidy and energy costs low.

By making a few smart choices, like unplugging idle chargers, scheduling smart devices and using eco settings, you can keep your holidays merry and your electric bill bright. ■

What's a watt?

A watt measures the rate at which an appliance or device uses electricity at a specific moment. For example, a 60-watt lightbulb uses 60 watts of power when it's on, while a 1,000-watt microwave uses 1,000 watts in the same amount of time.

Think of it like water flowing from a faucet. A 60-watt lightbulb would be a gentle trickle, but a 1,000-watt microwave would be a faucet on full blast. The longer it runs, the more the bucket fills. In the same way, watts running over time add up to kilowatt-hours, which is the measurement you see on your electric bill.



SNOWBLOWER SAFETY

When pushing a heavy snowblower, be safe with these tips from the National Safety Council:

- If the blower jams, turn it off.
- Keep your hands away from the moving parts.
- Be aware of the carbon monoxide risk of running a snowblower in an enclosed space.
- Add fuel outdoors before starting the snowblower and never add fuel while it is running.
- Never leave a snowblower unattended when it is running.

BE SAFE while clearing snow

When winter blankets the state in snow, North Dakotans use shovels, snowblowers or snowplows to clear the white stuff from driveways and other areas around homes, farmyards or businesses.

This winter, Northern Plains Electric Cooperative urges you to be safe during snow-clearing chores.

FIRST, be aware of where electrical equipment is located. Avoid plowing into pad-mounted transformers, cabinets, poles and guy wires while moving snow. Mark electrical equipment near driveways and sidewalks with flags or posts to avoid hitting the equipment with a plow when the snow gets deep.

THEN, please keep equipment clear of snow and accessible for lineworkers. Shovel by hand around power equipment to avoid contact. In the event of an outage, clearing snow around utility equipment

will make it easier for lineworkers to restore power. The National Electrical Code requires at least a 10-foot clearance in front of power equipment and 3 feet on the sides and back for lineworkers to be able to access the area during an emergency.

WHILE ground-level equipment is important to avoid, remember to look up, too. Be aware of overhead power lines, especially when removing snow from your roof or piling snow in an area. Pile snow away from power lines where equipment may come into contact with the lines or where children might play.

IF you see a downed power line, do not touch it. Always assume fallen power lines are energized. Call Northern Plains Electric Cooperative to report a downed line or other damaged equipment immediately. ■

APPLY TODAY



**\$2,500 TOTAL IN
SCHOLARSHIPS
AVAILABLE**

2026 SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

*Sponsored by
Basin Electric Power Cooperative.
Northern Plains Electric Cooperative
offers two \$1,250 scholarships
for the 2026-2027 school year.*



WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

High school seniors or college freshman enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time course of study at an accredited, two-year or four-year college, university, vocational or technical school in the fall of 2026. Student's guardian or parent must be a member of Northern Plains Electric.

HOW TO APPLY?

Applications are available for download on our website. Use the QR code below or visit www.nplains.com/scholarship. You can also call 800-882-2500 or send an email to justask@nplains.com to request a printed copy.

**DOWNLOAD
APPLICATION**



Deadline: Jan. 31, 2026

A completed application is required.

In memory of Todd Hafner

It is with profound sadness we share the unexpected passing of our colleague and friend, Todd Hafner.

Todd was an invaluable part of our Northern Plains Electric Cooperative family since 2008, serving as our senior IT technician. He expanded his specialty to journeyman meterman through an apprenticeship program at Bismarck State College.

For 17 years, he was the go-to expert for meter-related questions, the trusted problem solver and a steady hand we could always count on. His generosity, good spirit and unwavering dedication to his co-workers and our members will never be forgotten.

Beyond his work, Todd loved the outdoors, spending time at the lake, music, and most of all, being with his family, whom he cherished greatly.

One of Todd's proudest accomplishments was being a part of two local bands. He was a master at the lead guitar, which he accompanied with a warm, sweet voice. Even after his band days had past, he enjoyed serenading those around the campfire.

Todd's loss is deeply felt across our cooperative. Our thoughts and hearts are with his family, friends and all who had the privilege of knowing him.

With heavy hearts,
Northern Plains Electric Cooperative ■



Do you have money waiting for you?



The following people have 2025 capital credit checks returned to Northern Plains Electric Cooperative due to no forwarding address. Please notify us if you have a current address for any of the following people or if you are entitled to the capital credits in the case of an estate. Please call 800-882-2500 and ask for Tami.

Alberts, Allen A..... St. Michael
Aleksieienko, Kostiantyn..... Carrington
Allery, Audie..... Belcourt
Anderson, Jared..... Cando
Anderson, Mary L..... Ypsilanti
Azure, Debra..... Belcourt
Baker, Connie..... Dunseith
Baker, Donna..... Saint Michael
Bakken, Glenn L..... Devils Lake
Barnick, Patrick..... Jamestown
Baumgartner, Eugene..... Belcourt
Bercier, Frances..... Union, Mo.
Bercier, Jackie..... Belcourt
Bercier, Paula J..... Belcourt
Berg, Harland..... Minot
Bigtrack, Lynette estate..... Fort Totten
Blake, Marlyn..... Devils Lake
Blue, Victoria C..... Grand Forks
Boppre, Shannon..... Belcourt
Brown, Kelly J..... Tokio
Buffalo City Karting..... Jamestown
Chase, Steve..... Minnewaukan
Daniels, Maren..... Bismarck
Dauphinais, Tonya..... Browning, Mont.
Davis, Lyle..... Rolla
Davis, Michael D..... Wimbledon
Decoteau, Donald D..... Belcourt
Degenstein, Jason..... Dewey, Ariz.
Dubois, Mark A. Jr..... Belcourt
Duchscher, John Sr..... Rugby
Eidfjord Lutheran Church..... Hannaford
Eissingner, Sandra..... Fargo
Feather, Shirlene..... Fort Totten
Fleetwood, Deborah..... Belcourt
Fossen, Hildur..... Heimdal
Garner, Robert..... Cleveland
Gefroh, Joyce..... Surrey
Gourneau Lilly, Terri Ann..... Belcourt
Grab, Joyce M..... Robbinsdale, MN
Gruebele, Lawrence W..... Bismarck
Hall, Brad..... Cando
Haman, Ed..... New Rockford
Held, Lucille..... Spokane, Wash.
Herndon, Richard..... Spring Valley, Calif.
Hennings, Helen..... Jamestown

Holbrook, Hazel..... Hartshorn, Mo.
Houle, Tina..... Trenton
Hunter, Shelby..... Belcourt
Jacobson, Sandra L..... Rugby
Jeannotte, Victoria..... Belcourt
Jetty, Renee..... Devils Lake
Johnson, Norman S..... Galt, Calif.
Keefe, Kevin..... Hawley, Minn.
Kills Plenty, Irvin Sr..... Fort Totten
Kollman, Keith..... Jamestown
Kirkeby, Lori..... Carrington
Koenig, Jacob G..... Jamestown
Laducer, Monica estate..... Belcourt
Laducer, Mikayah..... Gilbert, Ariz.
Laducer, Shonda..... Bemidji, Minn.
Laducer, Theresa..... Rolla
Lafromboise, Freyja..... Fargo
Larson, Lowell B..... Minot
Lattergrass, Brenda..... Belcourt
Lien, Kenneth..... Bismarck
Linstadt, Seth..... Jamestown
Littlewind, Donelda A..... Fort Totten
Longie, Candace..... Trenton
Maier, Karen estate..... Moorhead, Minn.
Marion, Renee M..... Belcourt
Martinson, Julie..... Minot
Matthews, Glen..... Fergus Falls, Minn.
McKay, Clinton..... Fort Totten
Misek, Kevin..... Finley
Montriel, Raymond F. Jr..... Belcourt
Nadeau, Jamie..... Belcourt
Nass, Mavis..... Rhame
Noyes, Ronnie..... Port Orchard, Wash.
Olson, Dorothy M..... Rocklake
Parisien, Kassie..... Belcourt
Parker, Renee..... Rolla
Parslow, Rodney..... Leeds
Paulson, Mark..... Starkweather
Perleberg, William L..... Jamestown
Pierson, Wilma..... Fargo
Poitra, Doranna..... Rolla
Poitra, Flavia..... Rolla
Poitra, Tammie..... Belcourt
Redday, Chantell..... Fargo
Rippel, Jason..... Grand Forks

Rodriguez-Gaytan, Javier Cando
 Rogers, Steven Sidney, Mont.
 Sacred Heart Church Hansboro
 Schlafman, Kaylee Binford
 Slater, Delane estate Kent, Wash.
 Smith, Cindy Leeds
 Stadum, Gary Esmond
 Stutsman, John E. Jr. White Bear Lake, Minn.
 Suckut, Linda Carrington
 Sullivan, David Fargo
 Thomas, Lorey Fort Totten
 Thomas, Winifred Oberon
 Vallie, Lynda K. Rolla
 Volk, Kelly Oakes
 Vondall, Leo J. Belcourt
 Walker, Timothy J. Jamestown
 Walking eagle, Carletta Fort Totten
 Waste Management Bismarck
 Weigel, Harold Minot

White, Maria Fort Totten
 White, Marsha Fort Totten
 Whitetail, Merle D. Fort Totten
 Whitley, Leatrice estate Shakopee, Minn.
 Wilkie, Susan Belcourt
 Woods, Anne Fort Totten
 Yantes, Kenneth Devils Lake
 Yellowbird, Jennifer Grand Forks
 Yoder, Reuben Fessenden
 Yoder, Wendell Cando

**To learn more about
capital credits, visit
or scan the QR code.**



WHAT ARE CAPITAL CREDITS?

Did you know electric cooperatives return money to their members in the form of capital credits? While you may like receiving those capital credit checks from your local cooperative, you may not be sure exactly why you receive them. It's simple, really.

Capital credits reflect each member's ownership

in the cooperative. Electric cooperatives do not earn profits. Instead, any margins or remaining revenue after all expenses have been paid are returned to the cooperative's members in proportion to their electrical usage.

How are capital credits returned to you, the member?



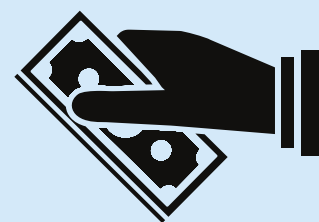
STEP 1: ALLOCATION

Your electric cooperative tracks how much electricity you purchase throughout a year. An allocation determines your share of the cooperative's margin in a particular year. Each member's portion is referred to as a "capital credit allocation."



STEP 2: RETIREMENT

Once capital credits are allocated, they are retained by the co-op for a certain time. Capital credits are the most significant source of equity for the cooperative. Equity is used to help meet the expenses of the co-op, such as paying for new equipment to serve members and repaying debt. Capital credits help keep rates at an affordable level by reducing the amount of funds that must be borrowed to grow and maintain a cooperative's existing electric system.



STEP 3: PAYMENT

Upon completion of the rotation period, the board of directors will review the cooperative's financial health and can declare a retirement (your cash payment), then a portion of your capital credits are returned to you.

Traveling this winter?

If you are traveling to a warmer climate for an extended time this winter, we encourage you to update your mailing address on file with us. This will ensure your monthly electric bill and *North Dakota Living* are delivered to you in timely manner. Address updates can be made by calling the office at 800-882-2500, emailing justask@nplains.com or through our SmartHub app.

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 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. ■



Congratulations to Roger K. Schaffer of Cleveland!

Roger is our latest winner of a \$25 bill credit for playing the October bill insert word search contest. Members can regularly check bill inserts for future contests.



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

An equal opportunity provider and employer.

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