



*Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) Dispatcher and Safety Coordinator **Justin Kollman**, center, accepts the Certificate of Safety Achievement on the behalf of NPEC from NDAREC safety instructors, **Brian Lakoduk**, left, and **Mike Koenig**.*

Co-op recognized for safety achievement

The North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC) held an awards ceremony Jan. 9 to recognize one individual and 11 North Dakota electric cooperatives for safety achievements in 2024.

Among those cooperatives, Northern Plains Electric Cooperative was the recipient of a Certificate of Safety Achievement. This award recognizes successful participants of the Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program, a national safety program that encourages electric cooperatives to achieve and maintain high safety standards for the protection of employees and the community.

“North Dakota’s electric cooperatives are deeply committed to protecting their crews, members and the communities they serve. Powering the lives of 250,000 North Dakotans comes with inherent risks. Even a minor misstep can lead to a severe injury or fatality. Through rigorous training and safety compliance, this

year’s award recipients have demonstrated a culture of safety and mitigated these risks. We are proud to celebrate their outstanding safety achievements,” says NDAREC Executive Vice President and General Manager Josh Kramer. ■

MARCH 2025

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SAVE THE DATE

Annual Membership Meeting
June 9 | Jamestown
Farmers Union headquarters

More details to follow

Top 5 reasons to attend your annual meeting

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative's (NPEC) annual meeting will be held on June 9 at Jamestown's Farmers Union headquarters. Here are five reasons you should attend:

- 1. Find out what's new.** NPEC wants our members to know what's happening at their cooperative. The annual meeting allows us to reflect on the past year's accomplishments, discuss the challenges and opportunities we face, and share the cooperative's priorities for the coming years.
- 2. Make your voice heard.** As a cooperative member, your voice matters. NPEC's annual meeting provides opportunities for members to ask questions and share ideas that may spark change. As a member of our community, your perspective is valuable, and we invite you to share it.
- 3. Vote for directors.** NPEC is democratically controlled by the members we serve, which means they have a say in who governs the cooperative. By voting in the annual director election, members

determine the leaders who will make important decisions about the future of the cooperative and your local energy needs.

- 4. May the odds be ever in your favor!** Members who attend this year's meeting will receive a door prize and be eligible to win cash! Scholarship opportunities will be offered for member dependents through a luck-of-the-draw format. For a chance to win, all you have to do is attend!

- 5. Who says there's no such thing as a free meal?** Join us before the meeting for a hot meal and gelato from Cows & Co. Creamery.

Attending NPEC's annual meeting is a great way to get involved, stay informed and connect with your cooperative community. Whether it's discovering what's new, participating in leadership decisions or simply enjoying a free meal, the annual meeting offers something for everyone. And with exciting prizes up for grabs, this is an event you won't want to miss!

For more information, visit www.nplains.com. ■

Interested in running for the board of directors?

Director petitions due by April 1

The nine board members who serve on the Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) board of directors set policies and make decisions that guide the cooperative into the future. With the annual meeting just a few short months away, now is the time for members to start thinking about whether they have the time and desire to serve their electric cooperative.

The board meets on the fourth Monday of each month to make decisions regarding budget, policy, rates and other co-op business. Meetings alternate between the Carrington and Cando offices and typically last a good share of the day. In addition to monthly meetings, we offer specialized training opportunities through our statewide association to help board members make informed decisions. Directors are compensated for their time.

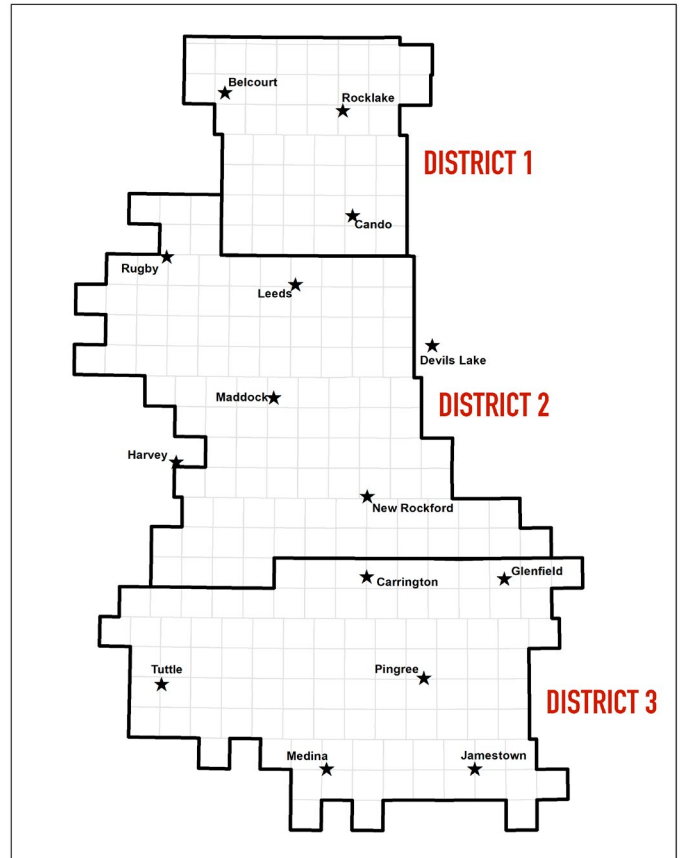
While you don't need to be an expert in electricity or business, you do need to have a passion for the community and a willingness to actively serve and learn.

Incumbent directors Mark Brehm (District 1), David Teigen (District 2) and Curtis Hanson (District 3) are eligible to run again.

To run for director, members must:

1. Receive NPEC electric service at your primary residential abode, and you may only run in the district in which you reside.
2. Obtain a petition from our offices in either Carrington or Cando or call for one to be mailed.

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative service territory



3. Obtain at least 15 signatures from NPEC members. For a joint membership, either the husband or wife may sign a petition, but not both.
4. Petitions must be filed at our office by the close of business (4:30 p.m.) Tuesday, April 1.
5. Attend the annual meeting on June 9 in Jamestown. For more information, call 800-882-2500 or email justask@nplains.com. ■

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

March is an ideal time to service your home cooling system, ensuring it runs efficiently when the heat of summer arrives. Routine maintenance, like cleaning or replacing filters, checking refrigerant levels and inspecting parts, can improve your system's energy efficiency and lower your energy bills. By addressing potential issues early, you can avoid costly emergency repairs and extend the lifespan of your unit. Scheduling service in the spring helps you beat the peak-season rush, giving you faster access to qualified technicians. A well-maintained cooling system can save energy and keep your home comfortable all summer long.





What teens need to know about electricity

BY BRITTNEE WILSON

It is a parent's job to protect and educate their children on the dangers of the world, including electricity. When parents baby proof their home, one of the first things they do is install covers over the electrical outlets, knowing uncovered outlets increase the risk of electric shock, especially for curious toddlers.

As children get older, they begin to understand what they are allowed to touch and what they must leave alone, so the outlet covers come off. As children continue to grow, they tend to spend less time at home, attending school, sports and activities. Parents have less precious time to continue the education of electrical

safety that would pertain to a certain age or stage of life. Teenagers should all know not to stick their finger into an electrical outlet, but do they know what to do in case of an electrical fire?

Electricity is in every facet of our lives, and it's easy at times to forget just how dangerous it can be. Everyday electrical appliances and gadgets can be dangerous if not treated with respect. Please review the following safety tips, and when the time is right, relay this information to your teenager. It could save a life; all it takes is one careless mistake.

Water and electricity

Whether it is during their morning routine or relaxing with their friends, teens can potentially put themselves at risk without realizing it. Electricity and water can be a lethal combination.

- **DON'T** use or touch anything electrical plugged into an outlet while having wet hands. Jumping out of the shower to change the song or answer a text can wait until one is completely dry.
- **DON'T** use hair dryers, straighteners or curling irons while standing on the wet bathroom floor.
- **DON'T** reach for an appliance that is still plugged in and has fallen into a wet sink or tub. If you are dry, pull the plug or turn off the power at the main breaker first.
- **DON'T** use plugged-in devices, such as a tablet, cellphone or speaker, near water, including pools, hot tubs or bathtubs. If you are swimming and feel odd sensations in your body, such as tingling or zaps, get out immediately. If in a lake, swim away from the dock or other source of electricity. Sometimes, electrical currents can leak into the water and cause electric shock drowning.

Teen drivers

Take the time to review with your teen driver what one should do in case of an accident with electrical equipment. It could involve a downed power line, a pad-mounted transformer, utility pole or other electrical equipment.

- **DON'T** get out of the car. Fallen power lines are difficult to see and could still be live. Call 911 and wait for help to arrive.

- Only get out if there is immediate danger like a fire. If that is the case, make a clean exit from the vehicle by jumping out without touching the car, land on both feet simultaneously. Then hop with your feet together as far as you can. If there is damaged power equipment, the ground and anything else the lines touch could have electrical current running through it.

Proper charging

- **DON'T** charge any device, such as a cellphone or tablet, on soft surfaces, such as a blanket, pillow or bedding. The device can overheat, causing bedding to catch on fire or burns to the skin.
- **DON'T** use generic or incompatible charging equipment. A short in the charging cord can cause electric shock when you are using the device. Replace charging equipment with brand name/matching items. They may cost more, but they are less likely to malfunction.

Lastly, **DO** show your teens how to turn off the power to the entire house at the main breaker or fuse box in case of an emergency, such as someone being shocked or an appliance catching fire or falling into water. Explain water should never be used to put out an electrical fire. Instead, a fire extinguisher rated for electrical fires or baking soda should be used to smother the flames. ■

NPEC welcomes Chris Pierson



Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) welcomed Chris Pierson as the manager of engineering in January. Pierson proceeds former manager, Ashten Dewald, who changed career paths in December 2024.

With over 17 years of experience and an electrical engineering background, Pierson previously worked with Eaton Energy Automation Solutions as an engineer for electric utility products.

"I am excited for this new opportunity, and I am looking forward to solving new problems," Pierson says.

Originally from Hastings, Minn., and a North Dakota State University graduate, Pierson lives in Carrington with his wife, Teresa, and their two children, Nick and Chloe. In his spare time, he enjoys attending family activities, hunting, camping and 3D printing. ■



Avoid those

SCAMS!

Crooks use clever schemes to defraud millions of people every year. They often combine new technology with old tricks to get people to send money or to share personal information.

Immediately hang up if you receive a call demanding immediate payment of a utility bill to avoid disconnection or shutoff. This is a scam.

You may receive a call from a scammer claiming to be representing Northern Plains Electric Cooperative, stating you need to pay your bill by sharing a credit card number or other information immediately or your power will be disconnected. This is not a scenario your actual electric cooperative will ever follow.

Never be fooled by a phony caller ID. Never return a call to the callback phone number provided by an unknown caller. Never provide payment or personal information to a caller you do not know.

Northern Plains Electric will never call and ask for your credit card number, personal banking information or Social Security number over the phone. If you are unsure about a call or are asked for personal information from a caller, hang up. Then call Northern Plains Electric using the phone number from your utility bill or the cooperative's website to get the proper information about the status of your account and payment options.

A few simple precautions can help prevent scam artists from being successful. The North Dakota attorney general's office shares other information you need to know:

1. Scam artists pretend to be people we want to trust, like government officials, law enforcement, bank staff, utilities or even family members.
 - Never give out personal information (such as your address, date of birth, Social Security number, bank or credit card information) or send money in response to an unexpected contact, no matter how urgent it may seem.
2. Don't trust your caller ID. It may not be who you think it is.
 - Readily available technology makes it easy to create a fake name and number to display on caller ID or as the "sender" of a text message. If someone calls asking for money or personal information, hang up. If you think the caller might be telling the truth, call back to a number you know is genuine.
3. If you are asked to send or wire money, or to buy prepaid cash cards, stop! Your utility company won't ask you to pay that way.
 - A legitimate government agency or business will never ask you to wire money, buy prepaid cards (including prepaid gift cards) or deposit money into another person's account.
 - Scammers sometimes offer fake refunds or state you have overpaid so they can obtain your credit card information. Again, do not share credit card information.
4. Hang up, every time. Don't reply to the text or open the email. ■

Simplify with smart



SMART MANAGEMENT. SMART LIFE. SMARTHUB.

In a complicated world, Northern Plains Electric Cooperative offers an app to make your life simpler.

By downloading and using the SmartHub app, you can pay your bill from anywhere, stay informed and take control of your electricity usage.

Let's take a look at some of the features in SmartHub.

BILLINGS AND PAYMENTS

You can view your bill and make payments no matter where you are by using SmartHub. No more dealing with postage, envelopes or mailing your bill.

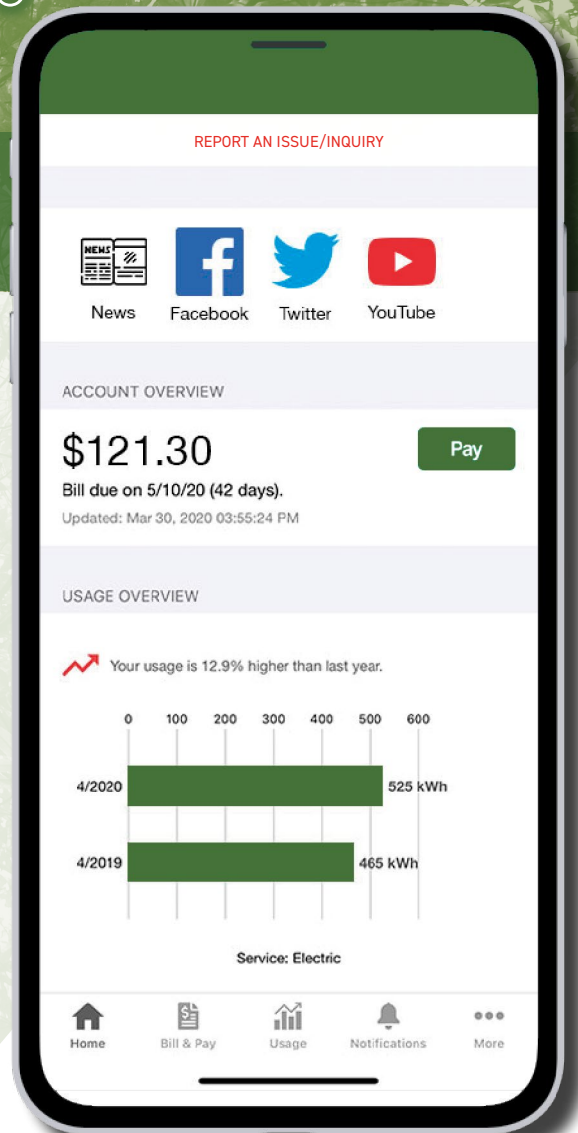
Or use the automatic payment feature, giving you one less bill to worry about.

PAPERLESS BILLING

Reduce waste and help save the planet, one bill at a time. And those savings help your cooperative reduce operational costs, which could save you money, too.

USAGE AND MONITORING

Through SmartHub, you can track your usage and compare trends from previous bills. See which electric services are using more energy on your account. You can avoid surprises about your bill by being in control and making decisions that can reduce your electricity use. ■



www.smarthubapp.com

Last call for poster contest



Attention kids! Grab your art supplies, as Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) sponsors a safety poster contest for children in kindergarten through sixth grade. The purpose of the safety poster contest is to help make children aware of the dangers of electricity. At NPEC, 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 NPEC local pages of *North Dakota Living*.

- Only dependents of current NPEC members are eligible for this contest.
- Deadline is March 15. Submit entries to an NPEC office (Cando or Carrington) or mail to:

**Northern Plains Electric
Attn: Poster Contest
P.O. Box 608
Cando, ND 58324**

ENTRY CATEGORIES

- Kindergarten and first grade
- Second and third grade
- Fourth, fifth and sixth grade

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.

PRIZES IN EACH CATEGORY

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



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

An equal opportunity provider and employer.

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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