

Spaces and places for veterans



The American Legion Fred C. Wagner Post 235 now has a new home in Rolla. Plus see how veterans are receiving support in Belcourt. Learn more inside.

NOVEMBER 2025

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Season of giving
- Grants help communities
- How demand shapes your bill



Veterans Village is a place to call home. The 23,849-square-foot housing facility in Belcourt will soon be available for both Native and non-Native veterans in the community who use rental assistance.

Spaces and places for veterans

Rolla and Belcourt rally to provide support

Rolla and Belcourt may be small communities, but their support for veterans is larger than life. Both towns are proving what can be accomplished when people come together to honor those who served.

Rolla rebuilds

In Rolla, the community was shaken in 2022, when a fire destroyed the American Legion Fred C. Wagner Post 235 building. For decades, the Legion building had been more than just a gathering place for veterans. It was also Rolla's unofficial community center. Without it, both the Legion and the community lost a hub for celebrations, meetings and memorials.

Dennis Berg, a Vietnam War veteran and Legion member since 1977, led the effort to rebuild.

"Without the building, the Legion would struggle to exist," Berg said. While the Legion building is first and foremost a place to provide support from one veteran to another, it is also a space for the community, he emphasized.

"If a building was needed that had a kitchen with a bar, this was the building that was used in town," he said.

The Rolla Legion has deep roots, after being founded in the 1920s by World War I veterans. Today, with more than 70 members, it continues to provide an honor guard for funerals, organize ceremonies on Veterans Day,

Memorial Day and the Fourth of July, and place flags on veterans' graves in six cemeteries across Rolette and Towner counties.

Rebuilding, however, came with a steep price – more than \$600,000. Insurance covered \$191,000, leaving a \$400,000 gap. Berg tirelessly made calls across the state seeking help, and the community answered. Local businesses, residents and organizations stepped forward.

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) contributed through its Operation Round Up program, which collects small member donations from rounding up their utility bills for community causes. NPEC also connected Berg with the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives Rural Development Center, which assisted the Legion in submitting a grant application to an anonymous donor group that resulted in a \$118,301 grant.

"That grant put us over the hump. We are so grateful," Berg said.

With funding and countless hours of volunteer labor, the Legion building began to rise again. This summer, after nearly three years of determination, the 75x50-foot structure is nearly complete. Though a few finishing touches remain, the Legion has already welcomed the community back by hosting a few fundraising events.

"The community helped us, and now we would like to give back to the community," Berg said.



Three years after a fire destroyed the Rolla American Legion building, veterans were able to gather under one roof once again.

Belcourt builds a village

Just 6 miles down the road in Belcourt, veterans are also finding new support through the Turtle Mountain Housing Authority's (TMHA) Veterans Village. The nearly \$9 million project, now in its final construction phase, will soon open its doors to provide much-needed housing for low-income veterans, both Native American and non-Native.

The Veterans Village, served by NPEC, features 20 apartments with a mix of one- and two-bedroom units, including two fully handicap accessible units. Accessibility was an important aspect of the design, as well as providing common community spaces for veterans to receive services and gather for community meals, fellowship or other activities. This includes office space for the Turtle Mountain Veterans of Foreign Wars/Auxiliary Post 4516 and American Legion Lilley-Dionne Post 262, two telehealth conference rooms, public restrooms, a full kitchen and a community lounge/open meeting room.

The idea for the Veterans Village grew out of a gap in available housing, said TMHA Executive Director

Becky Olander.

"This all started because we had these VASH vouchers that we couldn't utilize," she explained, referring to the HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program, which helps homeless veterans secure housing and supportive services.

TMHA has been helping approximate 20 veterans with VASH vouchers for the last 10 years. The Veterans Village is a step in the right direction to help with the lack of housing in the Belcourt area.

"It's not just the veterans, but our whole community needs housing," Olander said.

Funding for the Veterans Village came from multiple sources, including a \$250,000 grant from the Home Depot Foundation, with the majority of financing supported by private investors.

"It's great to see that people feel the same as we do at TMHA," Olander said.

Together, Rolla and Belcourt are showing how communities can honor veterans not only with words, but with action by building places where they are supported, remembered and celebrated. ■

Kollman promoted

Congratulations to Justin Kollman, who was promoted to manager of operations at Northern Plains Electric Cooperative in September.

Kollman, who was hired in 2012, has been the cooperative's dispatcher and safety coordinator. In his new role as operations manager, Kollman is responsible for the electric distribution operations, construction and maintenance activities, as well as instilling a culture of

safety. This position plays a vital role to oversee line crews and contractors, while ensuring a safe and reliable operation of the electric distribution system.

"I am confident Justin will thrive in his new role and continue to contribute greatly to the cooperative's success," said General Manager Seth Syverson.

In his spare time, Kollman enjoys spending time with family, going to the lake, hunting, fishing and working out. ■





The season of giving

As the holiday season approaches and the air turns crisp, we're reminded this truly is the season of giving. It's a time for gratitude, generosity and looking out for one another. At Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC), that's something we take to heart year-round.

You've probably heard us talk about our concern for community. It's not just a nice phrase. It's one of the core principles that makes electric cooperatives like ours different from other utilities. We're not just here to keep the lights on, although we're always working hard to do that. We're here to make life better for the people we serve – our members, our neighbors and our friends.

Over the years, we've faced challenges together, and our co-op family has stepped up every time. We've come together to support those in need, to keep our community strong and to build something better for the future. That spirit of generosity is never more evident than during the holiday season.

That is why we facilitate a donation drive every November. This year, we are asking members to consider a donation of new socks, winter hats and gloves/mittens to be distributed to local food pantries in our area. Programs like these only exist due to the generosity of NPEC members.

Our Operation Round Up program is another example. Because of members who round up their electric bills to the nearest dollar, we're able to provide help to nonprofits in our communities and local families in need who are struggling to make ends meet. Every little bit adds up, and it makes a big difference.

We're also proud to support local students through the Youth Tour program, where we send some of our community's brightest young people to Washington, D.C., to see democracy in action and dream big about their futures. Investing in tomorrow's leaders equates to giving in the most meaningful way.

And because we care deeply about safety, we also spend time visiting schools throughout the communities we serve, holding demonstrations and teaching folks of all ages how to stay safe around electricity. We believe knowledge is a gift, too, and we love sharing it.

You'll also find our team out in the community beyond work, coaching youth sports, volunteering at local events, serving on nonprofit boards and partnering with area organizations to keep our local economy strong. Because when you're part of a co-op, giving back isn't a requirement, it's just what you do.

While the holiday season is a festive time, we understand these can be tough times for many. If you need advice on saving energy to reduce your energy bills, want to explore payment plan options or simply have questions, please don't hesitate to reach out. We're here to help, not just during the holiday season, but all year long.

At NPEC, we believe concern for community is more than a value. It's the heart of who we are. And during this season of giving, we're especially grateful to be part of such caring, generous communities.

From all of us at NPEC, we wish you and your loved ones a joyful, safe and bright holiday season. ■

Members' cents go a long way

At its September meeting, the Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) Operation Round Up board of directors approved grants totaling \$10,950 to help support worthy causes. These charitable grants are made possible through the generosity of NPEC members who voluntarily elect to have their electric bills rounded up to the next dollar.

Grants approved in September include:

- Buchanan Cemetery, storm restoration
- BIO Girls, Jamestown, 2026 camp
- North Star School, student European performances
- Preservation Sykeston, school building repair
- Towner County Fairgrounds, pavilion project
- American Legion Post 0123, Maddock, enclosed trailer project
- Dakota Children's Advocacy Center, Jamestown, backyard retreat project
- Amber Smith, Cando, medical expenses
- Emiliano Ramos, Cando, medical expenses
- Valerie Eli, Binford, medical expenses
- 11 backpack programs: Leeds Public School, Hungry Free Food Pantry (New Rockford), Carrington Daily Bread, Griggs County Central, Kidder County Food Pantry, Rugby Schools, Mt. Pleasant School (Rolla), Community Action (Jamestown), Cando Area Food



Pantry, Fessenden-Bowdon School and Devils Lake schools.

If you would like additional information about this worthy program, please contact NPEC by calling 800-882-2500 or you may obtain guidelines or download applications at nplains.com. The board will meet again in December to review applications. The application deadline is Nov. 20. ■

SPREAD THE WARMTH THIS WINTER

SOCKS+ DONATION DRIVE

ACCEPTING NEW:
Socks, Hats, Gloves & Mittens
For Adults & Children



Northern Plains Electric Cooperative is excited to announce our annual donation drive, where we come together as a community to make a positive impact for those in need.



November 3rd - 28th

Drop-off Locations:

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative:

- Cando - 609 4th Ave
- Carrington - 1515 West Main



As winter nears, use generators safely

Electric generators certainly make life easier during an extended outage. However, it's critical for proper safety precautions to be taken to prevent accidents that could affect you, a family member, neighbor or cooperative lineworkers.

Our line crews take necessary precautions before they work on downed power lines. But even with all the safety measures, our workers' lives remain in your hands.

Most important is the transfer switch that disconnects the farm or home from the power line and connects it to the generator. It must be a double-throw transfer switch, which prevents the generator from feeding electricity back into the power line.

Transfer switches isolate utility power and generator power to prevent backfeeding, which can be deadly. This protects you, your neighbors and repair crews from electricity backfeeding onto power lines. This can seriously injure anyone near those lines, especially co-op

crews working to restore power.

Transfer switches also protect the home from electrical fires caused by short circuits and improper connections. Transfer switches should only be installed by a qualified electrician.

Generators can be temporarily or permanently installed.

A standby generator is wired directly into a house by a qualified electrician and should include a transfer switch.

For the safety of everyone, never connect a generator directly to your home's wiring unless your home has been wired for generator use and a transfer safety switch has been installed by a professional.

Portable generators do not permanently attach to the home and can power only the appliances plugged into the generator, so consider essential electrical needs when choosing. To avoid backfeeding into the utility electrical system, the portable generator should never be plugged directly into the home. ■

Is your generator ready?

If your electric generator has been in storage since last winter, now is the time to make sure it is still operating properly – before an outage occurs.

Test your generator now to make sure it is working, then operate it at intervals throughout the year. Regularly running your generator will also keep you

familiar with the operating procedures.

The fuel should be fresh, battery charged, electrical connections good, filters clean and cooling system well maintained. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions on engine maintenance.

Understanding how energy demand and purchasing shapes your bill

When you open your monthly energy bill, do you ever wonder what all the numbers really mean? If so, you're not alone. And the answer often comes down to demand.

Before Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) can deliver electricity to your home, electricity first has to be produced. That job belongs to our generation and transmission cooperative, Basin Electric Power Cooperative. Basin Electric generates electricity and sends it across high-voltage transmission lines to substations. From there, the voltage is reduced, and the electricity travels over distribution lines until it finally reaches your home.

While you receive your bill from NPEC, we don't actually generate the power. We do ensure enough electricity is available for our members when they need it most. And that's where consumption and demand come in.

- Consumption is the total amount of electricity you use, measured in kilowatt-hours (kWh).
- Demand is about how fast you use it, measured in kilowatts (KW).

Think of it this way: A single 100-watt lightbulb left on for 10 hours uses 1 kWh. Now, imagine turning on 10 of those bulbs all at once for one hour. The total consumption is the same, but the demand is much higher, because all that electricity was needed at the same time.

Why does this matter? Because NPEC purchases power from Basin Electric based on the demand of all our members. When demand spikes in the early mornings when families are preparing for the day or evenings when families are cooking, doing laundry and watching TV, the cost of providing electricity increases. This is known as peak demand, and it affects the cooperative's

operating costs.

That's why electricity costs can vary from season to season or year to year. Even though electricity is a complex business, you can count on your cooperative to meet the necessary demand, but also manage demand responsibly to provide safe, reliable and affordable electricity to you and your family.

What you can do to help manage demand

Every member plays a role in controlling peak demand. Small changes in when and how you use electricity can make a big difference for the entire community. Here are a few simple steps you can take:

- **Pre-cool or pre-heat.** Adjust your thermostat before peak hours so your home stays comfortable without working your system as hard during high-demand times.
- **Cook smart.** Try using smaller appliances like microwaves, toaster ovens or slow cookers during peak demand hours.
- **Shift appliance use.** Run your dishwasher, washer and dryer later in the evening or in the early morning hours instead of during the busiest hours, which are typically 7-9 a.m. and 4-9 p.m.
- **Unplug what's not in use.** Electronics and chargers draw power even when they're off. Unplugging them helps cut unnecessary demand.

By making small adjustments, you're not just lowering your own bill, but helping your cooperative keep electricity affordable for everyone. That's the power of working together. ■

HOW ELECTRICITY REACHES YOU



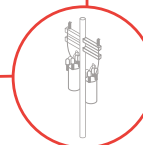
Generation

Electricity is produced at a generation facility either by renewable or non-renewable energy sources.



Transmission Lines and Substations

After the electricity is generated, it travels through high-voltage transmission power lines to electric substations, where the voltage is lowered.



Distribution Lines

Once the voltage is lowered, the electricity travels over distribution power lines, which ultimately deliver the electricity to our homes and businesses.

Energy assistance available to those who qualify

Are you or someone you know having difficulty paying home heating bills? If so, a federal program could help. The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) helps eligible low-income households with home energy assistance. Eligible households are encouraged to apply for assistance for:

HEATING ASSISTANCE

LIHEAP can pay for a portion of fuel or electricity used to heat your home between Oct. 1 and May 31. The amount of benefit depends on your income, the type and size of your home, and the type of fuel used to heat your home.

WEATHERIZATION SERVICE

The weatherization program helps low-income families make their homes and apartments energy efficient. Weatherization seals a home to keep warm air in and cold air out during the winter.

FURNACE AND CHIMNEY CLEANING

The program can pay (up to a certain amount for the service) to clean and inspect your furnace and/or chimney.

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

LIHEAP funds are available when there is a home energy emergency that may threaten the life of your family.

ENERGY COST-REDUCTION DEVICES

Funds are sometimes available to help with installation costs of energy-reducing devices to qualify for lower electric heat rates.

Applications are accepted Oct. 1 to May 31 of each heating season. For LIHEAP services, call your local county social services office or contact Energy Assistance Program, N.D. Department of Human Services, at 800-755-2716. ■



**NORTHERN
PLAINS** *Electric Cooperative*

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

BOARD & MANAGEMENT:

President	Tracy Boe, Mylo
Vice president	Curtis Wiesz, Heaton
Secretary/treasurer	Randall Simon, Oberon
Assistant secretary/treasurer	Dave Teigen, Rugby
District 1	Mark Brehm, Cando
District 1	Bruce Olsen, Cando
District 3	Lori Carlson, Jamestown
District 3	Judy Geier, Heaton
District 3	Jacob Ryun, Woodworth
General Manager	Seth Syverson
Manager of Engineering	Chris Pierson
IT Manager	Chris Mertz
Business Manager	Cheryl Belle
Northern Notes Editor	Brittnee Wilson