

The Nodak Neighbor

November-December 2016

Official Publication of Nodak Electric Cooperative

www.nodakelectric.com

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner



**High School Sophomores
and Juniors**

Apply today for 2017 Youth Tour

Application deadline is Jan. 31, 2017

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**Infinity
Renewable
Energy Program**

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Official Publication of the
Nodak Electric Cooperative, Inc.

746-4461 or 800-732-4373

www.nodakelectric.com

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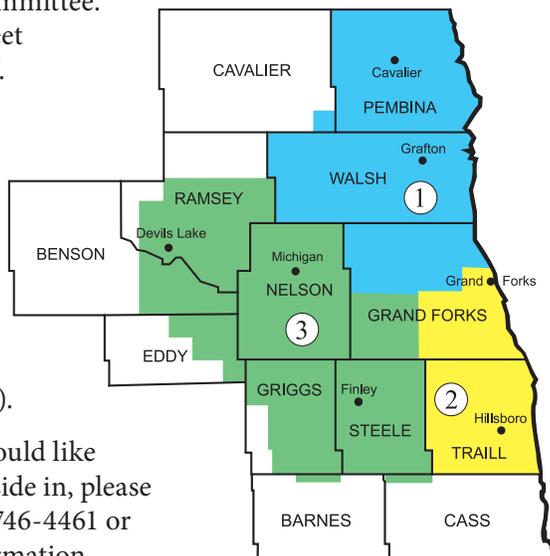
Editor Blaine Rekken

2017 director elections

Nodak Electric Cooperative, Inc. will hold its 77th annual meeting Thursday, April 6, 2017, at the Alerus Center in Grand Forks, N.D. Election for three positions will be held at the annual meeting.

Members who desire to serve as a member of the Nodak Board of Directors may be nominated in one of two ways:

1. By the Nominating Committee. The committee will meet Thursday, Feb. 16, 2017.
2. By a petition signed by 15 members of Nodak in good standing. The petition must be submitted to Nodak's office 45 days prior to the annual meeting (Monday, Feb. 20, 2017).



If you are interested, or would like to know which district you reside in, please contact Nodak's office at 701-746-4461 or 1-800-732-4373 for more information.

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Snowbirds

If you are planning to leave your home for an extended period of time this winter, remember to call Nodak Electric to make billing arrangements while you are away. Nodak offers automatic checking or credit/debit card payments and online payment options.



**Check us out
on Facebook!**

www.facebook.com/nodakelectriccooperative

Nodak Electric urges parents to keep their children safe by recognizing and removing the hazards that the holiday months bring.

- ❄ Don't use space heaters in rooms where children are unsupervised.
- ❄ Lights or garland hung or strung across a wall or window may be low enough for a small child to grab and they can also pose a strangulation hazard.
- ❄ Keep young children away from cords altogether, since a child can choke on as little as 12 inches of cord.
- ❄ Don't allow your children to use electrical toys near water and make sure they know that water and electricity never mix.
- ❄ Instead of traditional candles, try using battery-operated candles so you can avoid the hazards associated with open flames.
- ❄ Cover any unused outlets on extension cords with plastic caps to prevent children from coming in contact with the live circuit.

Source: Electrical Safety Foundation International



Mylo Einarson
President & CEO

Infinity Renewable Energy program

Your cooperative purchases 100 percent of its wholesale power from Minnkota Power Cooperative, our generation and transmission cooperative. As you are probably aware, the power we purchase from Minnkota comes from several different resources. The lion's share – about 60 percent – comes from coal and the other roughly 40 percent comes from renewable sources such as wind. Over the years, we've advocated an "all-of-the-above approach" when it comes to energy production and use, meaning that we believe we should use all of North Dakota's bountiful resources to serve the energy needs of our membership. In part, that's why today we have a generation mix that includes coal, wind, hydro and other small generation sources.

So, you could say that because of the generation mix we purchase, through the normal course of doing business with Nodak, you already receive roughly 40 percent of your power from renewable sources; however, that is a bit of an oversimplification. Actually, all of the energy produced by Minnkota is placed on the high-voltage transmission system and is essentially mixed together and sold to Minnkota's 11 member cooperatives, with the balance being sold into the wholesale markets. Once the energy is placed on the grid and all blended together, you can't really be sure where the renewable energy is delivered, or where the fossil fuel-based energy is delivered.

To address this issue, the Midwest Renewable Energy Tracking System (M-RETs) was created and each kilowatt-hour of energy produced from a renewable source in the region is given a Renewable Energy Credit, or REC. An REC is a verification that electricity was generated from an eligible renewable resource before it was introduced into the electric grid. These RECs are then bought and sold or traded among those

who want to be considered the end user of that renewable energy, and the REC is then retired when the energy is used. M-RETs tracks each of these RECs to ensure they are only used once.

Someone's desire to have RECs retired on their behalf can come from a wide variety of interests. Some power companies have a mandate to sell a certain portion of their electricity from renewable sources, yet may not have enough of their own renewable generation to comply. Some companies are making products that they have a desire to market in a manner indicating they were produced with less environmental impacts. Federal government buildings are under a presidential direction to seek more renewable energy. And finally, some homeowners have a desire to utilize more renewable products due to their position on environmental impacts. Whatever the reason may be, through the purchase and retirement of RECs renewable energy goals can be attained.

To that end, we are introducing the Infinity Renewable Energy program.

Nodak members who wish to purchase renewable energy for their home or business now have the option to do so by participating in our Infinity Renewable Energy program. Options to purchase 100 kilowatt-hour blocks of renewable energy, or 100 percent of your monthly energy needs, are available to those who wish to have RECs retired on their behalf. Participation in the program only takes a phone call and has no long-term commitments. On page 5, you'll find a complete description of the program features and cost. If this is something you're interested in, please call us and we will help ensure that the energy you use is recognized as coming from a renewable source.

In closing, I want to recognize that this publication will reach you during the holiday season, and I want to express our heartfelt thank you for your patronage and support this past year. We also want to remind all of you to think safety with your holiday lighting and decorating so we may all have a "merry and bright" holiday season. Happy holidays.

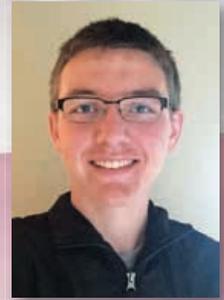
Season's Greetings

from all of us at Nodak Electric!

**Nodak's offices will be closed for Christmas
Friday and Monday, Dec. 23rd & 26th**



Trip of a lifetime



Britton Bina

It's not often that writing a two-page essay leads to the trip of a lifetime.

But for Britton Bina, the extra effort won him an all-expense-paid week in Washington, D.C. The junior at Park River Area High School was one of 1,700 students from around the country selected to participate in the 2016 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour held June 11-17.

Bina had the opportunity to learn more about electric cooperatives, visit famous historical monuments and get to know fellow students from cooperatives across the country. The action-packed tour included visits to the Smithsonian, the National Archives, Arlington National Cemetery, the WW I, Vietnam and Korean War Veterans Memorials as well as the Jefferson and Lincoln Memorials and the Washington Monuments.

In addition to sightseeing, Bina and other North Dakotans on the tour had the chance to meet and ask questions of the North Dakota delegation.

Nodak Electric Cooperative sponsored Bina, whose parents, Cameron and Estelle, are Nodak members. Bina's winning essay was in response to this topic: Pick one of the four Touchstone Energy® core values – innovation, integrity, accountability

and commitment to community – and describe how you see this in action at Nodak Electric Cooperative.

Bina wrote about Nodak's commitment to serving its members no matter the circumstances. He highlighted the efforts to bring power out to farms in the 1940s and the significant work necessary to restore electric service during storms.

"Through rough times, the merging of companies and the harshest of weather, Nodak has and will continue to give people electricity when they need it," Bina wrote.

He also highlighted when the lights came on for the first time for his great grandfather.

"Since my great grandfather flipped that switch many years ago, many amazing lights have shone bright, all because Nodak has the commitment to keep them shining bright," Bina's essay concluded.

The Youth Tour program continues to foster the grassroots spirit of the rural electric cooperatives by demonstrating to our youth how our government works and what the electric cooperative business model is all about. Since 1964, the nation's electric cooperatives have sponsored about 50,000 high school students on education sessions in Washington, D.C. Nodak will be looking to sponsor another deserving student for the 2017 Youth Tour to be held June 10-16. For more information, check our website, Facebook page and upcoming issues of *The Nodak Neighbor*. The essay deadline is Jan. 31, 2017.

Write an essay

for an opportunity at an all-expense-paid trip of a lifetime to

WASHINGTON, D.C.

JUNE 10-16, 2017

Essay Contest Details

- To enter the essay-writing contest, you must be a sophomore or junior in high school.
- You and your parents or guardian must be served by Nodak Electric Cooperative.
- **Deadline is Jan. 31, 2017.** Emailed entries should be directed to gschmaltz@nodakelectric.com, and hard-copy entries mailed to: Youth Tour Essay Contest, Nodak Electric Cooperative, 4000 32nd Ave. S., PO Box 13000, Grand Forks, ND 58208-3000.
- If you have a question, contact Gretchen Schmaltz, Nodak Electric, at the address listed above, or call 701-746-4461 during regular business hours.

Check out the essay contest guidelines at www.ndyouthtour.com and www.youthtour.coop

Introducing the Infinity Renewable Energy Program

Beginning Jan. 1, 2017, Nodak Electric Cooperative, Inc. will offer its members the option of purchasing up to 100 percent of their electricity from renewable sources. The Infinity program originally began in 2002 to support the development of the first two commercial-scale wind turbines in North Dakota history. Today, wind has taken on a much larger share of the energy mix available to Nodak members through wind farm projects such as Langdon, Ashtabula and a new addition, Oliver III, to be commissioned in 2017. Because of these projects, Nodak is able to offer renewable energy to members who desire an alternative energy source and do not want the hassle of owning, operating and maintaining a renewable energy system of their own.

How does the program work?

By enrolling in the program, you choose a designated number of 100 kilowatt-hours (kWh) blocks of energy or 100 percent of your monthly electricity usage to come from renewable sources. Nodak will allocate the appropriate amount of renewable energy through the program and indicate your purchases on your monthly bill.

Will the renewable energy be delivered directly to my home?

While it is not possible to direct where the electrons are specifically delivered on the electric grid, it is possible to ensure that the renewable energy you have purchased is from a resource connected to Nodak's electric system. The record of that purchase and the proof that it was reserved for you is done through a renewable energy credit (REC).

What is a REC?

A REC is verification that electricity was generated from an eligible renewable energy resource and was integrated into the electric grid. All wind RECs purchased through the Infinity program are certified by the Midwest Renewable Energy Tracking System (M-RETS). This certification ensures that RECs are only used once. When you determine the amount of renewable energy you would like to purchase, an equivalent number of RECs will be retired on your behalf.

No equipment, contracts or hassle

Signing up takes a matter of minutes and all information is automatically incorporated into your billing statement.

Do I need to install any equipment to participate?

No additional equipment is required. Energy will still be transmitted on Nodak's distribution system and delivered to your meter.

What types of energy can I choose from?

Currently, the program focuses on wind energy, but options may be available to purchase from other renewable sources, including solar.

Are there additional costs for participation in the Infinity program?

Yes. Additional costs are incurred to purchase renewable energy and to specifically designate how this energy is credited and used. The current price for residential participants is \$0.003 per kWh. Commercial and industrial participants may qualify for market-based pricing that is adjusted quarterly.

Do I need to sign a contract? How will I be billed?

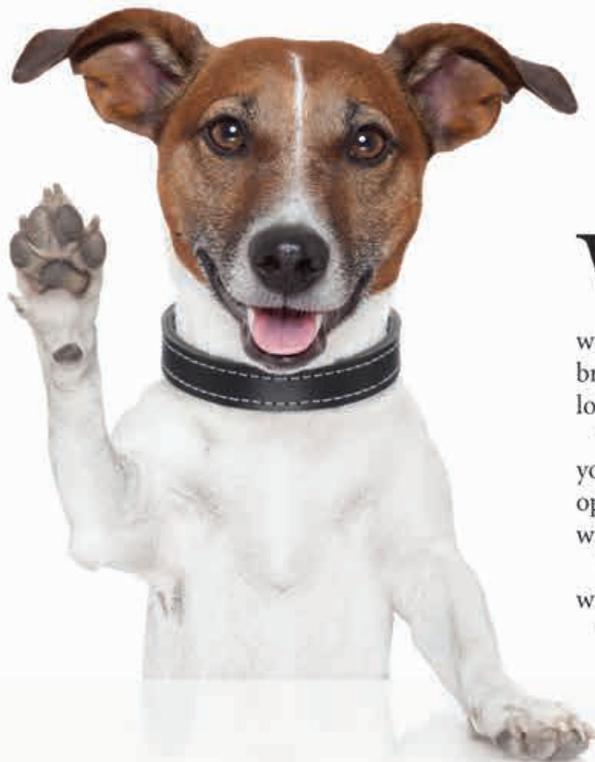
You do not need to commit to a contract and participating members may opt-out at the end of any month. The only requirement is that you must be a member of Nodak.

The Infinity program has a designated electric rate that will be included on your monthly bill.

How to I sign up for the program?

Call Nodak and ask to speak with Gretchen or Blaine for information on how to enroll.





Goodbye, watts. Hello, lumens.

With more energy-efficient light bulbs available, there's also a new way to shop for lighting.

Choose your next light bulb based on the brightness you want. Lumens tell you the brightness of a bulb. More lumens mean brighter light. When replacing a 60-watt traditional incandescent bulb, look for a new bulb that gives you about 800 lumens.

The lighting facts label on the bulb's packaging helps you understand your purchase. The label includes the lumens of the bulb, the estimated operating cost and life and the color of the light, from warm/yellow, to white to cool/blue.

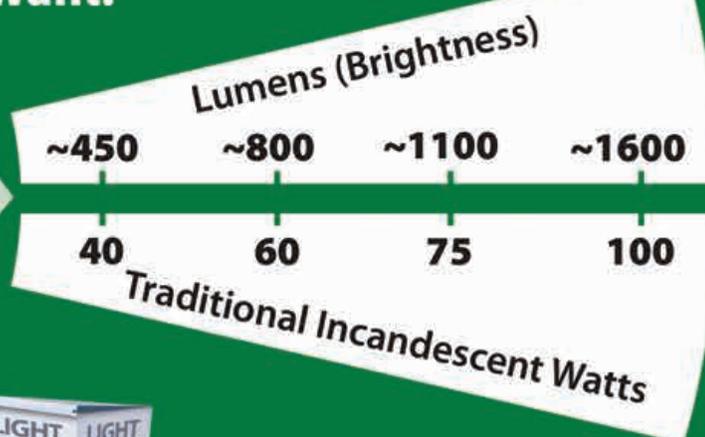
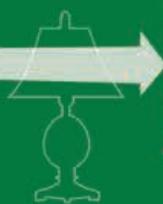
The brightness, or lumen levels, of the lights in your home may vary widely, so here's a rule of thumb:

- To replace a 100-watt incandescent bulb, look for a bulb that gives you about 1,600 lumens. If you want something dimmer, go for less lumens; if you prefer brighter light, look for more lumens.
- Replace a 75-watt bulb with an energy-saving bulb that gives you about 1,100 lumens.
- Replace a 60-watt bulb with an energy-saving bulb that gives you about 800 lumens.
- Replace a 40-watt bulb with an energy-saving bulb that gives you about 450 lumens.

LUMENS: THE NEW WAY TO SHOP FOR LIGHT

Choose Your Next Light Bulb
for the Brightness You Want.

Lighting Facts Per Bulb	
Brightness	800 lumens
Estimated Yearly Energy Cost	\$1.57
<small>Based on 3 hrs/day, 11¢/kWh Cost depends on rates and use</small>	
Life	9 years
<small>Based on 3 hrs/day</small>	
Light Appearance	
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> Warm Cool </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;"> 2700 K </div>	
Energy Used	13 watts



For the greatest savings,
choose ENERGY STAR® light bulbs.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
ENERGY

Average number of load control hours expected this winter

Though a number of factors could raise or lower the number, Minnkota Power Cooperative, your cooperative's wholesale energy supplier, estimates 190 hours of dual-heat load control this winter. This compares to the 10-year average of 210 hours and last year's total of 16 hours.

The low number of control hours in 2015-16 show what extreme temperatures – in this case above normal – can do to the estimate. Minnkota was predicting 250 hours at this time last year for the 2015-16 season.

Minnkota should hit that 190 hours mark or lower if the region has normal weather conditions, a soft energy market continues and forced outages at the Milton R. Young Station are infrequent.

“Really it's the market volatility, it's the weather and the forced outages that drive your control,” said Todd Sailer, Minnkota senior manager of energy supply. “Those three things drive if you're going to be up in the 190, 200 range or if you are below 100.”

The longest scheduled outage at the Young Station is just four days in winter 2016-17, which helped to keep this year's forecast lower than the 2015-16 projections.

During outages and periods of peak electric demand, Minnkota's first option is to purchase power from the power market. If affordable power is not available, off-peak loads are temporarily controlled. The savings are passed on to retail consumers through the lower off-peak heating rate.

“Our projections show that affordable power will be available for purchase throughout most of the winter to meet our members' needs,” Sailer said. “Weather and the outages are going to be major factors in how many hours we actually end up with.”

“We've been fortunate in the last couple of years in that when we've had forced outages, the markets were low. If we had that during 20 below temperatures in the region and there was hardly any wind, that's a different

scenario. You could have more than 50 hours in a week.”

Sailer said when there is a combination of low wind generation, unseasonal weather conditions and generator outages in the region, Minnkota will see higher energy market prices and will need to control.

“Controlling load during these periods protects consumers from the volatility of the market and prevents the need to build new power plants just to serve peak loads,” Sailer said.

An off-peak system consists of an electric heating source as its primary component. A supplemental heating source must operate several hundred hours or more during the winter season. Sailer said members with a well-maintained backup heating system should not notice a difference in comfort level when their off-peak heating system is controlled.

“The ability to manage costs and plan for the heating season is one of the many benefits of the off-peak electric heating program,” Sailer said.

Millions of dollars have been saved due to the successful operation of Minnkota's load management system over the past 38 years.

Electric heating rebates available

Great incentives are available for the installation of qualifying electric heating equipment. Cooperative members will receive \$20 per kilowatt (kW) installed with a maximum rebate of \$600 through at least the end of 2017. The system must be the primary heating source in the building and on the off-peak program with a qualified backup heating source. The system must be hard-wired; plug-in systems are not eligible.

Some restrictions apply. Please contact Nodak Electric's member services department for more information.



Meet your Hillsboro crew

(from left) Tyler Gronbeck, lineman; Wade Haman, lineman;
and Mel Nagel, district crew foreman.

