

The Nodak Neighbor

November-December 2017

Official Publication of Nodak Electric Cooperative

www.nodakelectric.com

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



The Nodak Neighbor

Official Publication of the
Nodak Electric Cooperative, Inc.

746-4461 or 800-732-4373

www.nodakelectric.com

The Nodak Neighbor (USPS 391-200) is published six times a year, February, April, June, August, October and December for \$1.00 per year by the Nodak Electric Cooperative, Inc., 4000 32nd Ave. S., Grand Forks, N.D. 58201-5944. Periodicals postage paid at Grand Forks, N.D., and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to NODAK ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC., P.O. Box 13000, Grand Forks, N.D. 58208-3000.

Volume 67, No. 6
November-December 2017
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*Is your name on the
Unclaimed
Capital Credits list?
Check out our website*

On the cover: Inspecting a string of Christmas lights, sisters Lola and Georgia Schmaltz, daughters of Nodak members Josh and Anne Schmaltz of Grand Forks, make sure there are no bulbs burned out. *Photo courtesy of Anne Schmaltz.*



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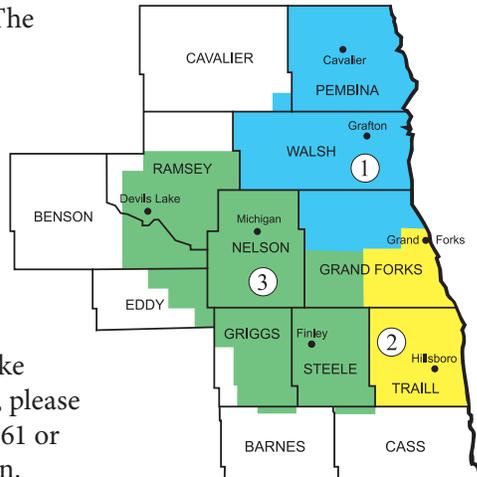
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2018 director elections

Nodak Electric Cooperative, Inc. will hold its 78th annual meeting Thursday, April 12, 2018, 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 Wednesday, Feb. 21, 2018.
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. 26, 2018).



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.

Korynta retires

Nodak Electric would like to thank Glenn Korynta for his 23 years of service.

Glenn started with Nodak in 1994 with the underground crew where he ran the trencher and worked on oil circuit reclosures. He then transferred to the construction crew where he removed overhead lines, hauled cable and repaired transformers.

Glenn looks forward to attending more classic car shows and spending time with friends.

Thank you, Glenn, for your services and commitment to the cooperative.



Glenn Korynta
Electrical Equipment
Operator



Mylo Eimarson
President & CEO

Have a safe and happy holiday

At Nodak Electric, safety is the most important job we have. We have the awesome responsibility to do our best to keep each other safe at work and to educate our members on how to stay safe around electricity at home and work. As the holidays draw near, for many of us that means celebrations with friends and family, travel, decorations, cooking and shopping. All of us at Nodak Electric want you to be safe during the holidays, so here are a few tips to consider as you gear up for the season. We can't guarantee that the hustle and bustle of the season won't leave you with a few frayed nerves, but hopefully these reminders will help you avoid frayed wires.

Inspect your seasonal items

Many of us have treasured holiday mementos that we bring out of storage year after year. The holidays are also a time when we dust off specialized cooking gadgets that allow us to prepare our favorite seasonal treats. These items are often handed down through generations and might lack modern safety features.

Take a few moments to carefully inspect all your holiday items to ensure everything is in safe working order. A few things to look out for include:

- Brittle insulation on wires
- Rodent damage to wires
- Worn switches with the potential to short circuit
- Corroded metal parts
- Broken legs, unstable bases and other tip-over hazards

Extension cords are temporary

When you asked your school teacher for an extension on your homework, it was a one-time thing, right? The same holds true for extension cords. They are designed for temporary use and should never be used as a permanent or long-term solution.

Never bypass safety devices

There are reasons why some devices have fuses, some plugs have three prongs instead of two and one prong is wider than the other on two-prong outlets. When those safety features get in the way of your holiday decor plans, you might be tempted to tamper with those features. Don't do it! If your plugs won't fit together, that means they're not designed to work together. Rather than tampering with a safety feature, find a safe solution.

Don't forget to look up

When working outside with a ladder, be mindful of the location of overhead power lines. Always carry your ladder so that it is parallel to the ground. Before placing your ladder in an upright position, look around to ensure you are a safe distance from any power lines.

Stay away from your service connection

An overhead wire that brings power from a pole to your house can be dangerous if not respected. You should treat this line the same way you'd treat any other power line on our system. Maintain a safe distance – even if that means a small gap in the perfect outline of lights. If you must perform work close

to your service entrance, get the professionals involved so it can be done safely.

Read the fine print

If you take a few minutes to read and understand the limitations of your lights and other electrified holiday decorations, you can save yourself a great deal of work and frustration in the long run. For example, the tag at the end of an extension cord will tell you if it's rated for outdoor use, whether it will remain flexible in cold temperatures and how much energy it can safely handle. Similarly, holiday lights will tell you how many strings can be safely linked together.

Don't forget about the kids... and pets

If you have small children, you've probably spent a great deal of time making sure every square inch of your home is childproof – every cabinet is locked and every outlet is covered. But sometimes the joy of celebrating the holidays with our little ones makes us a little less vigilant about electrical safety. Make sure your holiday decor receives the same level of safety scrutiny you apply to all of the permanent items in your home. Curious and mischievous pets can present similar challenges. Make sure Fluffy isn't nibbling on all those extra wires or using your tree as her personal back scratcher or jungle gym.

From all of us at Nodak, we want to wish you a happy, but more importantly a safe holiday season.

Trip of a lifetime

By Isaac Joerger



Isaac Joerger

Amazing, fantastic, a trip of a lifetime, are the words that describe the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. Along the trip, those words were repeated multiple times. After spending six days in our nation's capital and another half day in Baltimore, how could words like these not escape from our lips. Everything was very hassle-free throughout the whole tour. The people running the tour have had years of experience and took care of every possible problem before it even happened.

Each day was planned out so we were able to tour as many areas as possible. Some of the sights we visited were the Washington Monument, National World War II Memorial, Lincoln Memorial and the Marine Corps War Memorial. We also visited many museums, including the Newseum, which had many newspaper archives and the current date's front pages from newspapers around the world. We visited as many Smithsonian museums as time allowed.

During our half day in Baltimore, we visited the National Aquarium and explored the harbor. Even though we spent

most of our time on foot, there were times when we could sit back and relax with others from our state. This was a very valuable time because we were able to get to know new teens from our state and form lifelong friendships.

The coolest thing that happened on our trip was how tight we became as a group. At the beginning of the trip, most students were shy and didn't really know what to say but by the end we were all wondering why we didn't know each other before.

The trip wasn't all touring; however, there were two nights when we were able to meet new people from other states while enjoying games, dances and snacks. The trip also featured motivational speakers who did an outstanding job and had amazing life stories. One night a speaker talked to our group about how cooperatives are organized and how they play an important role in our economy.

The Electric Cooperative Youth Tour was the trip of a lifetime for me, and I am extremely thankful that I was chosen for this remarkable opportunity through Nodak Electric Cooperative.



Essay Contest Details

- To enter the essay-writing contest, you must currently 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, 2018.** 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

Be prepared for

WINTER'S WRATH

Nodak Electric Cooperative strives to provide you with reliable, uninterrupted service every day of the year, but sometimes Mother Nature creates unavoidable power outages. Nodak Electric wants you to remain safe during severe winter weather, so consider preparing now for the possibility of power outages this winter.

BEFORE A POWER OUTAGE

- Build or restock your emergency preparedness kit, including a flashlight, batteries, cash and first-aid supplies.
- Make sure you have alternative charging methods for your phone or any device that requires power.
- If a storm is predicted, charge cellphones and any battery-powered devices beforehand.
- Know where the manual release lever of your electric garage door opener is located and how to operate it.
- If you rely on anything that is battery-operated or power dependent like a medical device, determine a backup plan.

TO PREVENT AN OVERLOAD

To prevent an overload on the system while power is being restored, take these steps:

- Turn off every inside light except one.
- Turn down your thermostat.
- If the outage lasts more than 60 minutes, turn off your electric water heater.
- Make sure your kitchen range is off, both the surface and the oven.
- Turn off all unnecessary appliances and unplug sensitive electronic equipment.
- When power comes back on, slowly switch your appliances and lights back on and gradually return your thermostat to its normal setting.

STAY AWAY FROM DOWNED POWER LINES

Mother Nature isn't always kind to power lines. Winter winds, snow and ice often prove to be too much for utility poles and power lines. If you see a downed power line or utility pole, contact Nodak Electric immediately.

Do not go near the line or the pole. Just because it's on the ground doesn't mean it's safe to approach.



TO REPORT AN OUTAGE

Because power outages can't be totally eliminated, Nodak Electric offers these steps to follow if an outage occurs:

- Confirm the outage. Check your own fuses and circuit breakers first.
- Check with a neighbor to confirm if he or she is also experiencing an outage before you call the cooperative. This will help your cooperative determine the extent of the outage.
- Call the cooperative. If the outage is widespread, the phone lines may be busy, but keep trying. Your cooperative will send a line crew to find the problem and restore power as quickly as possible.

If you have additional questions about outages, please call Nodak Electric at 701-746-4461.



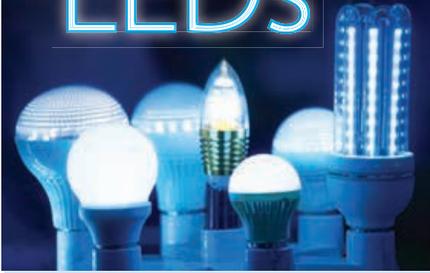
DURING A POWER OUTAGE

- Only use flashlights for emergency lighting. Candles can cause fires.
- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed. Most food requiring refrigeration can be kept safely in a closed refrigerator for several hours. An unopened refrigerator will keep food cold for about four hours. A full freezer will keep the temperature for about 48 hours.
- Put on layers of warm clothing if it is cold outside. Never burn charcoal for heating or cooking indoors. Never use your oven as a source of heat. If the power might be out for a prolonged period, plan to go to another location (the home of a relative or friend or a public facility) that has heat to keep warm.
- Turn off or disconnect appliances and other equipment in case of a momentary power "surge" that can damage computers and other devices. Consider adding surge protectors.



Fun facts about

LEDs



- In 2012, about 49 million LEDs were installed in the United States, saving about \$675 million in annual energy costs.
- Today's LED bulbs can be six to seven times more energy efficient than conventional incandescent lights and can reduce energy use by more than 80 percent.
- Good-quality LED bulbs can last more than 25 times longer than traditional light bulbs. If the bulb is burned 24 hours a day, seven days a week, it would last three years.
- From vehicle brake lights to TVs, LEDs are used for their compact size, ease of maintenance, resistance to breakage and ability to focus light in a single direction.
- LEDs contain no mercury, and a recent U.S. Department of Energy study determined that LEDs have a much smaller environmental impact than incandescent bulbs.
- By 2030, LEDs are expected to account for 75 percent of all lighting sales globally.
- Switching entirely to LED lights over the next 20 years could save \$250 billion in U.S. energy costs.

Source: energy.gov

HOLIDAY



SAFETY TIPS

Homeowners decorate their homes for Christmas earlier and earlier – often before Thanksgiving. If you're ready to start hanging lights, take safety precautions. Nearly three people per hour are treated in hospital emergency rooms for decorating-related injuries during every holiday season, according to the National Safety Council. Here are five ways to keep yourself safe if you have decorating duty this season.

1. Inspect last year's lights before using them again this holiday season. Discard any with frayed or exposed wires, loose connections or broken sockets.
2. Decorate the tree with kids in mind. Place breakable ornaments and those with metal hooks near the top of the tree, where little ones can't reach them.
3. Likewise, some holiday plants, including some varieties of poinsettias, can be harmful to children and pets. Keep them out of your home – or at least out of reach. And keep the number for the Poison Control Center handy: (800) 222-1222.
4. Use sturdy ladders when decorating outdoors. Indoors, climb stepladders instead of using chairs, which aren't designed for someone in a standing position.
5. Don't hide extension cords under rugs or furniture. They can overheat and catch on fire. And when you take the tree down, unplug extension cords. They're not designed for permanent use.

Minnkota projects lower-than-average control hours

In the world of load control, timing is everything.

What are the prices when you are purchasing energy from the energy market? What resources are available during peak load conditions? What are the weather impacts during the cold-weather months?

“Market price volatility is driven by weather and generator outages. These events drive the majority of the control hours,” said Todd Sailer, Minnkota Power Cooperative senior manager of power supply & resource planning.

Sailer said Minnkota, your cooperative’s wholesale energy supplier, estimates 140 hours of dual-heat load control this winter. This compares to the 10-year average of 180 hours and last year’s total of 62 hours.

“The market conditions are very similar to last year and we do expect the temperatures to be a little colder than they were last year,” Sailer said.

During outages and periods of peak electric demand, Minnkota’s first option is to purchase energy from the power market.

“Right now we have some scheduled outages for the first part of December and then again in the spring,” Sailer said. “So we typically do not schedule maintenance in the January and February time frame

when we’re at peak conditions. That’s where the unplanned or forced outages come into play.”

If the timing is not right and affordable power is not available, off-peak loads are temporarily controlled. The savings are passed on to members through the lower off-peak heating rate.

“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.

Minnkota has the ability to control up to 350 megawatts through its demand response system. This includes temporarily controlling storage heating systems, large-capacity water heaters, home vehicle chargers and large industrial consumers with backup generators. Millions of dollars have been saved due to the successful operation of Minnkota’s load management system for nearly 40 years.

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.

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or 1-800-732-4373 for assistance*

YOUR NODAK NEIGHBORS

The power you get from Nodak Electric Cooperative is so reliable that it can be easy to forget that there are dozens of men and women helping to make it happen. Who are these faces behind the kilowatts? We're your neighbors, and it's time we introduced you to some of the folks who keep Nodak running smoothly.

DAN SCHAEFER

Line Superintendent

Job: Manages the operations of the line department, ensuring that crews are safe and that Nodak members have affordable and reliable power

Year started at Nodak: 1983

Hometown: Reynolds, ND

Favorite part about North Dakota: It's not overcrowded

First job: Picking rocks for a neighbor

Hobbies/Interests: Watching University of North Dakota hockey and football games, spending time at the lake with family

Surprising fact: I love to work out and have participated in the Tough Mudder challenge in Minneapolis

Biggest strength: I'm a do-it-yourself "fix it" person

Favorite quote/advice: Make every day count

Guilty pleasure: Widman's chippers

Go-to music: Late '70s and early '80s classic rock

Favorite sports team: Minnesota Vikings

Favorite app on your phone: Fitbit

