

The Nodak Neighbor

September-October 2021
Official Publication of Nodak Electric Cooperative
www.nodakelectric.com

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Remembering
service and sacrifice

page 4

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of your energy bill page 6

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*Nodak's offices will be closed
for the following holidays:*

Veterans Day
Thursday, Nov. 11

Thanksgiving
Thursday & Friday, Nov. 25-26



On the cover: Grand Forks Veterans
Memorial Park



Pole Top and Bucket Rescue Training

Yearly, Nodak Electric Cooperative lineworkers spend a day preparing for something they hope will never happen. The annual pole top rescue training helps prepare each lineworker to rescue an injured or stranded crew member atop a utility pole. Training requires both skill and safety awareness and must be completed in as little time as possible. Lineworkers are also required to obtain certification in bucket truck rescue. They practice operating the bucket controls from the ground, safely lowering the bucket. In the event of a real emergency, they would pull the injured victim out of the bucket and administer first aid and CPR.

Pictured are Devils Lake crew foreman Cory McKelvey (front) and Grand Forks lead lineman Jared Stadstad during this year's pole top rescue training.

YIELD A SAFE HARVEST



BE AWARE OF THE LOCATION OF ALL
POWER LINES AND POLES BEFORE
MOVING LARGE EQUIPMENT.



KEEP EVERY PART OF YOUR
MACHINERY 10 FEET AWAY FROM
POWER LINES IN EVERY DIRECTION.



ALWAYS LOWER AN AUGER
BEFORE MOVING IT – EVEN IF
IT'S ONLY A FEW FEET.



Mylo Einarson
President & CEO

Reflecting on cooperative principles

ACE Hardware, State Farm, American Crystal Sugar, Land O'Lakes, and Nodak Electric all share something in common - we're all cooperatives.

We may be in different industries, but we all share a passion for serving our members and helping our communities to thrive. In fact, all cooperatives adhere to the same set of seven principles that reflect our core values of honesty, transparency, equity, inclusiveness, and service to the greater community good. October is National Co-op Month, so this is the perfect time to reflect on these principles that have stood the test of time, but also provide a framework for the future. Let's take a look at the cooperative principles.

Voluntary and Open Membership

Just like all co-ops, Nodak was created out of necessity - to meet a need that would have been otherwise unmet in our community. So, in 1940 a group of neighbors banded together and organized our electric co-op so everyone in our community could benefit. For a modest membership fee to the co-op, any farmer could get electricity brought to his farm. Neighbors came together to tackle a problem that they all had but couldn't solve alone. They worked together for the benefit of the whole community, and the newly established electric lines helped power economic opportunity in our community.

Democratic Member Control

Our co-op is well suited to meet the needs of our members because we are locally governed. Each member gets a voice and a vote in how the co-op is run, and each voice and vote are equal. Nodak's leadership team and employees are from right here. Our board of directors, which helps set long-term priorities for the co-op, also lives locally on co-op lines. These board members have been elected by neighbors just like you. We know our members have a valuable perspective, and that's why we are continually seeking your input and encourage you to weigh in on

important co-op issues and participate in co-op elections.

Members' Economic Participation

As a utility, our mission is to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to our members. But as a co-op, we are also motivated by service to the community, rather than profits. Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of Nodak Electric. At least part of that capital remains the common property of the cooperative. Because we are guided by seven cooperative principles, it's not just about dollars - it's about opportunity for all and being fair when engaging with our members. The cooperative way is a values-based business model.

Autonomy and Independence

The fourth principle, Autonomy and Independence, means that the co-op operates in an autonomous way that is solely directed and guided by its members, reflecting the values and needs of our local community. This means the co-op is not being influenced by leaders or shareholders several states away. Instead, the co-op is led by the local members it serves.

Education and Training

The fifth principle, Education and Training, focuses on enhancing the knowledge of co-op employees and board members, which enables them to contribute to the development of the co-op.

By investing in continuous learning for our employees and board members, our co-op is making a commitment not just to individual professional and personal growth, but to the future of the co-op and the high quality of service our members expect and deserve. It's a win-win situation.

We also strive to inform our members (that's you!) and the public about the mission and operations of the co-op. In fact, that's why you receive this magazine, so we can share the latest co-op news and updates, as well as energy efficiency and safety tips.

Cooperation Among Cooperatives

Cooperation Among Cooperatives is the sixth principle and fosters the way that co-ops work together to address bigger challenges. While this principle applies to all types of cooperatives, it is especially relevant in the energy industry. In our case, we put this principle in action after major storms and disasters that cause widespread power outages. When this happens, we call on nearby co-ops to come to our aid and assist with restoration efforts, and we of course extend the same help to them when they need us. I can't think of a better example of cooperation among cooperatives.

Concern for Community

The seventh principle, Concern for Community, is essential to who we are as cooperatives. We serve our community not only by being an essential service, but by helping to power our local economy. Whether through economic development, volunteerism or donations to local causes, we invest in our community because it's our home too.

I think you'll find that most cooperatives bring good people together to make good things happen in the community. We hope you feel that way about us - your local electric co-op.



Remembering service and sacrifice

NEW VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK IN GRAND FORKS PAYS TRIBUTE TO ARMED FORCES

When Al Palmer looks over the new Veterans Memorial Park in Grand Forks, each display has a story to tell, a person to remember and a sacrifice that should never be forgotten.

A retired Air Force General, Palmer takes the opportunity not only to reflect on his 38-year military career, but also on the service provided by his father, father-in-law, uncle and other family members whose names appear on individual blocks in the park.

"It provides an opportunity to go and spend time with your loved ones," Palmer said. "It's nice to know you can go there, look at their names, and remember them for their service and sacrifice."

More than 1,000 people gathered and hundreds more watched online as the park was dedicated and officially opened on the 20th anniversary of 9/11. Palmer chaired a committee that drove the 6.2-acre space from dream into a reality.

Project ideas had been in the works for more than a decade, but gained traction in 2017 when the committee, in true military fashion, set a regimented schedule for meetings and developed a board of director structure. With a strong team assembled, they agreed there would be no salaries or per diems – every dollar would go to the park, which is located at the intersection of 24th Avenue South and 34th Street.

Over 1,200 businesses and organizations were contacted to support the \$2.5 million project. The first major breakthrough came from the Engelstad Foundation, which provided \$250,000. Donations flooded in from there, ranging from a few dollars to tens of thousands.

Nodak Electric Cooperative supported the project through a \$1,000 donation, while its wholesale

power provider, Minnkota Power Cooperative, contributed \$2,000.

"As cooperatives, we're committed to the communities we serve," said Mylo Einarson, Nodak Electric president and CEO. "It is important for our local communities to have a place where we can properly recognize our military service members and veterans for their commitment and sacrifice. Veterans Memorial Park is an important reminder of everything they've done for our country."

The centerpiece of the park is a 40-foot-long, 6-foot-high Memorial Wall made of granite. The wall is laser-etched with 156 images explaining the role of American veterans from the first wars to the present day. A nearby touchscreen kiosk is available to provide more information on each image and its significance.

Granite benches and large pillars recognizing each military branch surround the Memorial Wall. At night, the display is illuminated and the images on the wall shine brightly through the darkness. Other attractions include a Northrop Grumman Global Hawk and a General Atomics Reaper, while a B-52 model should be installed in late fall or early spring.

Palmer is quick to deflect credit for the completion of the project and

recognizes numerous individuals for their unique roles. Those same individuals decided to name the park's Visitor Center after Palmer.

"I broke down and cried," Palmer said. "My grandkids can come here and see that and remember their grandfather. It's very, very personal."

Following the dedication, the Veterans Memorial Park committee will disband and officially turn operations over to the Grand Forks Park District. Palmer said the project leaders will still be active in advocating for the park and raising funds for future additions. His biggest goal is to get an F-16 to display on site.

"I don't know of anyone in the Upper Midwest who has something like this," Palmer said. "It's a destination center for Grand Forks. And there is still room for us to grow."



BE CYBER SMART

October is National Cybersecurity Awareness Month ▶▶▶▶

At a time when we are more connected than ever, being “cyber smart” is of the utmost importance. This year has already seen more than a fair share of cyberattacks and breaches, including the high-profile attacks on the Colonial Pipeline and other critical infrastructure. Furthermore, as has been underlined by these recent breaches, cyberattacks are becoming more sophisticated with more evolved bad actors cropping up each day. Luckily, there are several steps that we can take on a daily basis to mitigate risks and stay one step ahead of wrongdoers.



HERE ARE A FEW QUICK TIPS: ▶▶▶▶▶

Enable multi-factor authentication

Multi-factor authentication (MFA) adds that necessary second check to verify your identity when logging in to one of your accounts. By requiring multiple methods of authentication, your account is further protected from being compromised, even if a bad actor hijacks your password. In this way, MFA makes it more difficult for password cracking tools to enable attackers to break into accounts.



Use strong passphrases/ password manager

This may seem obvious, but all too often securing strong passphrases/password managers is overlooked. People spending more time online during the pandemic has certainly contributed to more bad actors prowling for accounts to attack. Using long, complex and unique passwords is a good way to stop your account from being hacked, and an easy way of keeping track and remembering your passwords is by using a password manager.



Perform software updates

When a device prompts that it's time to update the software, it may be tempting to simply click postpone and ignore the message. However, having the latest security software, web browser and operating system on devices is one of the best defenses against online threats. So, don't wait - update.



Do your research before downloading

Common sense is a crucial part of maintaining good online hygiene, and an intuitive step to stay safe online is to do some research before downloading anything new to your device, such as apps. Before downloading, make sure to check who created the app, what the user reviews say and if there are any articles published online about the app's privacy and security features.



Check your security settings

Be diligent to double check your privacy and security settings and be aware of who can access your documents. This extends from Google Docs to Zoom calls and beyond. For meetings on Zoom, for example, create passwords so only those invited to the session can attend, and restrict who can share their screen or files with the rest of the attendees.



MAKE A HABIT OF PRACTICING ONLINE SAFETY ▶▶▶▶▶

Being cyber smart and maintaining stellar online hygiene is the best way to protect yourself and others from cyberattacks. No single tip is foolproof, but taken together they can make a real difference in safeguarding your online presence. Following these tips is also easy and free. By taking preventive measures and making a habit of practicing online safety, you can decrease your odds of being hacked exponentially – and prevent lost time and money, as well as annoyance.



TAKE THE CHILL OUT OF YOUR ENERGY BILL

As jackets and mittens leave the closets this fall, be ready to cut the chill and your energy bill with these money-saving tips for autumn:

- Set your thermostat no higher than 68 degrees when you are home and lower the temperature when you go to bed or when you are not at home. This saves money and keeps you warm.
- During the day, open shades and curtains to allow solar heating. Close them at night to retain the day's heat.
- Bundle up your home. Weatherize your home by caulking and weather stripping all doors and windows. Also use locks on your windows to make them tighter and draft resistant.

Reducing air leaks could cut 10% from an average household's monthly energy bill. The most common places where air escapes homes are: floors, walls, ceilings, ducts, fireplaces, plumbing penetrations, doors, windows, fans, vents and electrical outlets.

- Have your heating system serviced by a professional once a year.
- Check furnace filters. Be sure to clean or replace your heating and cooling system's air filter. At a minimum, change the filter every three months; a dirty filter clogs the system, making the system work harder to keep you warm.
- Insulate or increase the amount of insulation in your attic, basement and outside walls. Also cover through-the-wall air conditioners to prevent cold air from leaking into your home.
- Don't block your radiators or heating vents with furniture or draperies. Keep your radiators, registers and baseboard heaters free of dirt and dust. Close vents and doors in unused rooms.
- Close the fireplace damper when not in use.
- Turn your water heater down to 120 degrees to save money on your energy bill.

Want more ways to save? Take the home energy savings tour and see how little changes add up to big savings at www.TogetherWeSave.com. ■

Tune your furnace for fall

You can save energy this fall and winter by having your furnace serviced. Electric, gas and propane furnaces can go approximately three to five years between service calls and longer, if you change the filters regularly. Oil furnaces need to be serviced once a year, because they get dirty and need annual adjustment.

Changing filters regularly is one of the key maintenance tasks to keep any type of furnace running efficiently. Make sure you know where your furnace's filter is located and what size it is. Inspect it periodically, and replace it when it is dirty. How frequently you need to change the filter depends on the amount of dirt in the house and around the furnace and also how much time the furnace runs.

Duct air leakage is one of the largest energy-wasters in your heating system. Heating contractors can check your ducts for air leakage and seal the largest leaks. Contractors start by sealing the larger joints near the furnace, and then work out toward the branch ducts as access allows. Believe it or not, duct tape is not a good choice for sealing ducts because its adhesive usually fails after a short time. Duct mastic, available in cans or buckets, is an effective and permanent material for sealing air leaks in ducts. ■

Electric off-peak heat rates begin Oct. 1

Members with subtractive or separately metered off-peak electric heating systems will be charged the applicable off-peak rate for energy usage beginning Oct. 1. The off-peak rates will continue to be charged for energy usage through May 31, 2022. Current off-peak rates are \$0.062/kWh for long-term and \$0.077/kWh for short-term controlled systems. It is a good idea to inspect, clean and test your heating system before cold weather arrives. Please check to make sure all of your electric heat circuit breakers are on prior to Oct. 1.

Daily cycling of electric storage heat to begin in late October

Members heating with electric thermal storage, such as thermal storage room units, thermal storage furnaces or slab/in-floor heating, should turn on their heating system prior to Oct. 15 to allow a heat reservoir to build up before daily cycling of loads begins. The actual date cycling begins varies each season. Thermal storage heating is controlled each day from 7 a.m. to noon and 5 p.m. to 11 p.m.



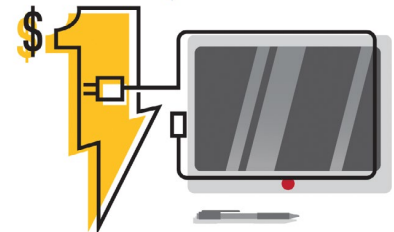
ENERGY EFFICIENCY: TIP OF THE MONTH

Old, uninsulated and improperly installed exterior doors can waste energy and money.

Shut the door on wasted energy by weather stripping and sealing all exterior doors. If you have an old exterior door, consider replacing it with a newer, energy efficient model.

Source: energy.gov

What can you get for \$1?



600 hours of tablet use

You may feel guilty about the time you spend on your tablet, but you don't have to feel guilty about the power price. It only costs \$1 in electricity to use your device for around 600 hours. That's a lot of movie watching, article reading or video chatting for just a buck!

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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

JUNE 19-24, 2022

WASHINGTON, D.C.

AN ALL-EXPENSE-PAID TRIP TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

ESSAY QUESTION:

If you were asked to help promote your cooperative's annual membership meeting, what ideas do you have for increasing attendance among young member-owners and students?

Please provide specific examples for unique communications strategies, scheduling and special activities for member-owners and their families.

- 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.
- If you have any questions, please contact Gretchen Schmaltz, Nodak Electric, at 701-746-4461 during regular business hours.
- The deadline is Dec. 10, 2021. You can email entries to Gretchen Schmaltz at gschmaltz@nodakelectric.com or mail a hard copy to: Youth Tour Essay Contest, 4000 32nd Ave. S., PO Box 13000, Grand Forks, ND 58208-3000.



CHECK OUT THE ESSAY CONTEST GUIDELINES AT
<https://ndyouthtour.com/>