

The Nodak Neighbor

November-December 2021

Official Publication of Nodak Electric Cooperative
www.nodakelectric.com

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Grow the company,
grow the community

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Save the Date
82nd Annual Meeting

April 12, 2022
Alerus Center
Meal: 5 p.m. | Meeting: 6 p.m.

On the cover: Nodak member CoJACK Snack & Pack has found new ways to increase production and give back. Over the course of 2021, they have doubled the amount of fundraisers supported compared to the previous year. Colorado Jack popcorn can be found regionally in stores, but it has recently expanded to even more retailers across the country.

GREAT REBATES

*Add comfort and energy efficiency to your home
with help from Nodak Electric Cooperative!*

Rebates are available to help you upgrade your heating and cooling system, water heater and chargers for electric vehicles. Nodak Electric offers these rebates to encourage load development, load retention and wise use of energy.

Electric heating

Heating Systems	Rebate
Plenum heaters, baseboard, electric furnace and hanging unit heater	\$25/kW
Cable floor heat, electric boiler and brick storage unit	\$45/kW
Mini-split or air-source heat pump	\$150/ton
Ground-source heat pump	\$250/ton



Water heaters

Electric Water Heaters	Rebate
55 gallon or less	\$125
56-99 gallon	\$200
100 gallon or greater	\$300
Additional rebate for new building construction	\$100
Additional rebate for conversion from existing natural gas or propane to an electric water heater	\$250



Electric vehicle chargers

Electric Vehicle Chargers	Rebate
Electric vehicle (EV)	\$50/kW
Commercial – forklifts, Zambonis, etc.	\$50/kW



All systems must be new equipment and controlled on Nodak's off-peak program.
A check will be issued to participating members after a visit from a Nodak technician.

**Please call our Energy Services team at 701-746-4461 or 800-732-4373
if you have any questions about off-peak or the rebate program.**

JUNE 19-24, 2022
WASHINGTON, D.C.
AN ALL-EXPENSE-PAID TRIP TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

North Dakota Electric Cooperative
YOUTH TOUR

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

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 parent(s) or guardian(s) 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.

Perspective

Heating and energy saving tips



Mylo Einarson
President & CEO

Small space heaters are meant to do exactly as their name says – heat a small space. But unfortunately, many people use portable space heaters to heat their entire home, which can really take a toll on your energy bills. The truth is, whether you should use space heaters really depends on your home's efficiency and energy needs.

If you're using a space heater to compensate for problems in your home, like inadequate insulation, drafty windows and exterior doors, or an inefficient heating system, space heaters are not a practical solution. Your best bet is to improve the overall efficiency of your home. If you're on a tight budget, caulking and weather stripping around windows and exterior doors is a low-cost, easy way to save energy. Depending on the size of your home, adding insulation can be a great next step. Taking these proactive energy-saving steps rather than relying on space heaters for supplemental heat can reduce your heating and cooling bills for years to come.

Maybe your home is energy efficient, but you're cold-natured and want a specific room to be cozier than the rest. In this case, a space heater may work for your needs. A good comparison is ceiling fans – we use ceiling fans in the summer to cool people, not rooms. A space heater can be used in a similar way during winter months. But, use a space heater in small spaces that you're occupying and, if possible, try to shut off other rooms to contain the warmth provided by the space heater. If you decide to use a space heater to heat a small area in your

home, make sure the heater is properly sized for the space.

A word about safety: The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates more than 25,000 residential fires are caused by the use of space heaters every year, resulting in more than 300 deaths. If you need to use a space heater, buy a newer model that includes the most current safety features and make sure it has the Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) label. Choose a thermostatically controlled heater to avoid energy waste and overheating and place the heater on a level surface away from foot traffic when in use.

As an alternative, consider changing your furnace to an electric off-peak system. It's one of the best energy values for home heating. The cost of electricity from Nodak Electric has been stable for a number of years and will remain stable this winter. With the cost of propane and natural gas rising, off-peak electric heating is an even better value today.

In closing, this holiday season we want to say thank you to all our veterans and men and women who serve in the U.S. armed forces. It's said that we are all warmed by fires we did not build and drink from wells we did not dig. Many of our fires and wells have been in large part provided by our servicemen and women. The freedom we live under is due to the sacrifices of these brave men and women and we can't thank them enough.

Giving thanks is also an important part of this holiday season and we would be remiss if we didn't express how thankful we are for our members. Because of your connection and involvement in your electric cooperative, we are able to make our communities better places and enhance the lives of those we serve. Thank you all for what you do for Nodak Electric.

Finally, from all of us at Nodak, we want to wish you Happy Holidays. May they be merry and bright!

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year
from all of us at Nodak Electric!

Nodak's offices will be closed for the following days:
Thursday and Friday, Dec. 23 and 24
Friday, Dec. 31

Grow the company, grow the community

Nodak member CoJACK Snack & Pack finds new ways to increase production and give back



Business has been poppin' this year for one of Nodak Electric Cooperative's commercial members in Devils Lake. Farm-family-owned CoJACK Snack & Pack is one part bean processing and packaging company and one part Colorado Jack popcorn plant – but it's 100% on the grow.

"Sales have been going great," said Chace Austvold, head of CoJACK marketing and sales and daughter of CoJACK founder Brian Engstrom.

Colorado Jack popcorn can be found regionally in stores like Hornbacher's and Simonson Station Stores, but it has recently expanded to even more retailers across the country, including all Hy-Vee gas stations. Austvold is especially excited about a new partnership with the Fargodome, which is now selling their raw and packaged popcorn. "If you make it to a Bison game or Fargodome event, be on the lookout for a custom Colorado Jack popcorn cart!" she said.

Popcorn is just one piece of the multifaceted undertaking that is

CoJACK Snack & Pack. The company also takes raw product from local farmers, cleans it, packages it and ships it out on their behalf. The process creates a value-added ag ecosystem right in the heart of the nation's top state for dry edible beans.

"Almost 100% of the pinto beans are from local farmers," Engstrom explained as he walked through a warehouse stacked high and far with raw black beans, peas, lentils and more. "Some things are coming from western North Dakota and Montana. But within a couple hundred miles of here – that's where nearly all of our product comes from."

Since purchasing the 120,000-square-foot CoJACK facility in March 2019, the family has continued to push forward in terms of efficiency and production. Engstrom is currently setting up equipment for an additional packaging and production line on the Colorado Jack side of the building that will allow them to produce their popular Caramel popcorn at the same time

as their savory varieties (such as Sea Salt & Butter and White Cheddar & Jalapeño).

All that production takes power. Before the conveyors started rolling in 2019, Engstrom called on Nodak Electric Cooperative to help him get transformer capacity back to the operation days of the past, when the building was used as a pasta factory. With much of the packaging lines, heat lamps and even forklifts powered with electricity, CoJACK's co-op had a role to play in the venture.

"Because we are in a very large agricultural-based area, I think it's always great when our members can take a product from the farm to the shelf," said Nodak engineering manager Steve Breidenbach. "The entrepreneurial efforts of the family are spectacular."

Companies like CoJACK are a growing necessity for North Dakota communities like Devils Lake. Not only is the business boosting the ag industry and supplying great jobs, but it's diversifying the local economy and bringing in money from outside of the state. In 2020,

CoJACK was given the Governor's Choice Award for Economic Development. "The whole project embodies rural economic development. So many times it's out-of-state projects coming to North Dakota, taking our local economic development dollars, failing and then two years later, they're gone," said Brad Barth, executive director of Forward Devils Lake Corporation. "Here you have local owners that risked significant dollars, found other partners, and in less than a year have nearly 30 employees in a highly automated packaging facility – that's a pretty cool thing."

It's not only the local community benefiting from CoJACK. The company is using its Colorado Jack popcorn as the center of a program to help organizations fundraise, from school groups to sports teams. Austvold says over the course of 2021, they have doubled the amount of fundraisers supported compared to the previous year. She adds that the opportunity isn't simply for students – any organization wanting to raise money can participate.

Throughout October, Colorado Jack offered a special popcorn pack to mark Breast Cancer Awareness Month and support breast cancer research. Fifty percent of the proceeds of the POP into Action packs will be donated to the Breast Cancer Research Foundation.

"Our organization, as well as many others, have been affected by breast cancer in some way. We wanted to show support to our employees and others when creating this pack," Austvold said. "Our company is built on the principles of giving back. We make it a priority in our day-to-day businesses. For me, it's about creating awareness

to the needs in the community and encouraging others to help give back in any way possible."

CoJACK Snack & Pack also works closely with Lake Region Corporation (LRC), a nonprofit community-based organization dedicated to providing vocational, residential and support services for those with disabilities. CoJACK currently has three lucky LRC assistants who help keep the plant clean, and they soon plan to have LRC help with processing and packaging orders from the four online channels they use to sell Colorado Jack popcorn: the online store, Amazon, HSN and Feast and Field.

The family received the LRC Partner of the Year award this year, and they can't wait to see that partnership grow along with the company.

"We are shipping 15-20 small orders a day, and that number does not include our small-case orders for customers that we drop ship to," Austvold explained. "So we are busy and definitely need the help!"



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Focusing on Reliability

Nodak Electric Cooperative uses multiple methods such as annual maintenance programs, automated technologies and strategic initiatives to enhance reliability, reduce labor time for our crews and lessen outage times.

Oil Circuit Reclosures (OCRs)

Oil circuit reclosers (OCRs) act like a circuit breaker, protecting distribution lines in the case of a temporary fault or short. The OCR opens to halt the fault and closes again immediately, causing a small “blink” in electricity. If the line anomaly continues, the OCR will shut off (remain open), resulting in an outage.



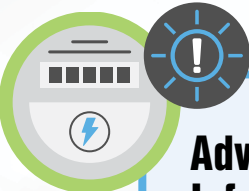
Winter Maintenance

In January, line crews will begin driving around our service territory to inspect overhead lines and look for potential hazards that could be dangerous or affect reliability. Some of these hazards include cracked, broken and leaning poles, trees hanging dangerously close to power lines, frayed wires and blown arrestors.



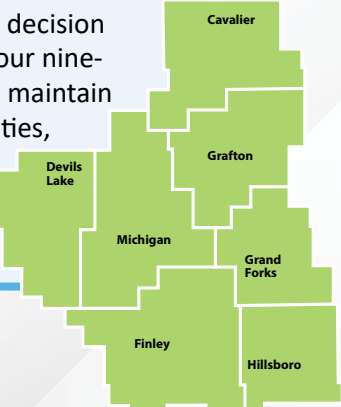
Summer Maintenance

In the summer months, line crews and local contractors perform pole inspections, vegetation management and preventive right-of-way trimming.



Seven Service Centers

Nodak Electric Cooperative has seven local service centers. It was a deliberate decision to have these centers throughout our nine-county service territory in order to maintain a local presence in these communities, while also working to reduce the time it takes for our lineworkers to respond and restore electricity.



Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI)

In addition to meter readings, Nodak Electric Cooperative’s AMI system provides real-time data that helps us detect faults and other potential problems on the electric grid. This system supports increased reliability for you, our member-owners.

NOTICE TO OFF-PEAK MEMBERS

The off-peak program is designed to reduce electric load during peak demand times and pass energy savings on to participating members by controlling electric home heating and water heating equipment.

If during the heating season you experience a control event that seems excessively long or have no hot water, please be sure to give us a call first to determine if further help is needed.

To know if load is being controlled, visit our website at www.nodakelectric.com, click on “Energy Information” from the homepage and then the link “Load Management Status.” When viewing the Last Switching Status graph, cells that are the color green indicating “on” means there is no load control activity, and red cells with “off” indicate load is being controlled.

If you have any questions, please call 1-800-732-4373 or 701-746-4461.

How does Nodak’s \$0.062/kWh off-peak heating rate compare to alternative fuel sources?

Fuel Type	Furnace Efficiency	Fuel Price	Unit of Measure
Propane	95%	\$1.58	gallon
	80%	\$1.33	gallon
Natural Gas	95%	\$1.73	ccf (for mcf x 10)
	80%	\$1.45	ccf (for mcf x 10)
Fuel Oil	70%	\$1.78	gallon
	60%	\$1.53	gallon



ICE ON POWER LINES IS A WEIGHTY SUBJECT



When it comes to getting electricity across power lines and into homes, ice can be a force to be reckoned with.



ICE ON DISTRIBUTION LINES

Ice can quickly lead to broken power poles and other pole equipment. Ice can also make falling tree branches 30x heavier and much more likely to break power lines.

ON A 300-FOOT SPAN OF 1-INCH-THICK POWER LINES

- 1/2 inch of ice adds 281 pounds of weight
- 1 inch of ice adds 749 pounds of weight
- 2 inches of ice adds 2,248 pounds of weight

WHEN ICE MELTS

Melting ice can cause power outages. If ice on the bottom (neutral) line melts before the lines above, it can cause the lines to touch.

OTHER ICE FACTS

- Damage can begin when ice exceeds 1/4 of an inch
- 1/2 inch of ice can cause a line to sag up to 12 inches
- Pressure can also be caused by a broken tree limb
- Both ice and melting ice can cause power outages



Source: Jerri Imgarten-Whitley and Victory Electric Cooperative

Pride of Dakota hosts holiday showcase

The 2021 Pride of Dakota holiday showcase was held recently at the Alerus Center in Grand Forks, N.D. The showcase drew in over 110 vendors for the two-day event offering North Dakota-made products.

Pride of Dakota was created in 1985 by former Commissioner of Agriculture Kent Jones who asked a small group of North Dakota businesses and the Department of Agriculture's marketing staff to develop an identifiable state brand that would designate products as "made in North Dakota."

Pride of Dakota was officially launched the same year with a roster of about 20 companies. Today, more than 500 member companies –

ranging in size from large companies with more than 100 employees to "mom-and-pop" operations – participate in the program. Members include food and beverage companies, manufacturers, publishers, artisans, gift manufacturers and service providers.

Pride of Dakota hosts holiday showcases for manufacturers and service providers. Associate members, such as commodity groups, government agencies, educational institutions and retailers, also support the program. Pride of Dakota's goal is to provide local business owners the business development resources and marketing opportunities they need to be successful.

Source: prideofdakota.nd.gov

Have you heard
about ShopND?
Shop local. Shop North
Dakota. **ShopND.com**



Vendors from across the state gather to promote their products.