

FARMERS RETURNING TO THE FIELD URGED TO LOOK UP FOR POWER LINES

Keep large equipment away; learn safety precautions

As many farmers prepare for the spring planting season, North West REC wants you to be safe – raising operator awareness on avoiding equipment contact with overhead power lines and knowing the proper actions to survive if accidental contact with lines is made.

In that case, the proper action is to **JUMP** – not step – with both feet hitting the ground at the same time. Do not allow any part of your body to touch the equipment and the ground at the same time. Continue to shuffle or hop to safety, keeping both feet together as you leave the area.

The increasing size of farm equipment raises the risk of contact at field entries and along end rows, where overhead electric wires may be present. Never assume that because the machinery passed under the lines in one area means it will adequately clear another area.

- Avoid raising the arms of planters or cultivators near power lines.
- Never attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path.
- When performing other farm chores, be careful not to raise any equipment such as ladders, antennas, grain augers, etc. into power lines.

If your vehicle does come in contact with a power line, it's almost always best to stay in the cab and call for help. Warn others who may be nearby to stay away and wait until the electric utility arrives to shut off the power. Stay inside unless there's fire or imminent risk of fire.

Please use caution for a safe spring planting season!



OFFICES CLOSED

Our offices will be closed in observance of Memorial Day on Monday, May 30, 2011.
Please call 1-800-766-2099 in case of outage or emergency.

North West Rural Electric Cooperative

P.O. Box 435 • 1505 Albany Place SE • Orange City, IA 51041-0435

Office Hours:
Monday through Friday
7:30 a.m. till 4:00 p.m.

Orange City office open during noon hour

Ida Grove & Le Mars offices closed 12:00 - 12:30 p.m.

Outside Depository Available for After Hours Payments

Phone:
ORANGE CITY (712) 707-4935
(800) 766-2099

IDA GROVE (712) 364-3341

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NEWS Lines

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USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT RECOGNIZES NORTH WEST REC FOR OUTSTANDING ECONOMIC-DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS IN NORTHWEST IOWA

Bill Menner, USDA Rural Development State Director in Iowa, recognized North West REC for its dedication to economic development in northwest Iowa. Since 1995, North West Rural Electric Cooperative has received \$2.8 million from USDA Rural Development to sustain the cooperative's revolving loan funds.

USDA Rural Development has awarded funding to North West REC through its Rural Economic Development Grant Program. North West REC, which has provided matching funds of \$560,000, has made initial zero-percent interest rate loans totaling \$3,180,000 to nine entities and organizations.

"We are extremely pleased to be assisting North West REC in their efforts to increase opportunities for economic development in northwest Iowa," Menner said. "Helping to enhance the quality of life for rural Americans by stimulating the economy and supporting rural businesses continue to be a top area of emphasis at USDA Rural Development."

Some of the communities and businesses assisted with these initial loans have included Northwest Iowa Community College, Orange City Health System, City of Le Mars for the industrial park, Rock Valley Economic Development Corporation and Galva Holstein School's performing arts center.

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North West REC has then used the revolved funds to assist 26 entities by providing them with additional loan funds. Funding has continued to expand the tax base and has saved 983 and created 183 jobs in northwest Iowa.

"Through partnerships with producers, lenders, rural businesses, rural electric cooperatives and local economic development organizations our agency invested \$165 million last year to provide jobs and economic activity that will help keep rural Iowa vibrant and prosperous in the future," Menner said.

Left to right: Gerald Klemme, Del Beyer, Tom Wagner, Manager Lyle Korver, Curt Ahrenholz, Bill Menner from USDA, Darwin Dirks, Lee Grae and Steve Brown.



NORTH WEST RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE REPRESENTED AT REC DAY ON THE HILL

On March 29, representatives of North West REC were at the State Capitol in Des Moines to participate in the annual Rural Electric Cooperative (REC) Day on the Hill. This event, which is coordinated by the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives headquartered in Des Moines, gives rural electric cooperatives from across the state an opportunity to talk to the House and Senate members about issues of importance to rural electric cooperatives and energy legislation.



North West REC was represented at the event by Darwin Dirks, Rob Driesen, Jeff Rehder and Lyle Korver. Representatives from North West REC and Lyon County REC pictured with Rep. Royd Chambers and Rep. Dwayne Alons in the House Chamber.

LOAN FUNDS NOW AVAILABLE FROM OUR REVOLVING LOAN FUND

North West REC created the Community/Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) to improve the quality of life in rural areas by contributing to long term improvement in the local economy.

The RLF is a local funding source with a goal of providing low interest loans to assist local economic and community development projects. Our priorities include job creation and retention, diversification of the local economy, improving the skills of the rural workforce, and upgrading the public infrastructure to improve the health, safety, and/or medical care of rural residents. This fund is administered by the North West REC Board of Directors.

Eligible applicants include organizations involved in community or economic development projects such as: new or expanding private business, local governments and nonprofit community development organizations.

For more information on eligible and ineligible uses of funds, loan terms, interest rates and other loan requirements, contact the REC office.

This institution is an Equal Opportunity Provider.

NORTH WEST RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE HONORED FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LEADERSHIP

Impacting communities and sustaining economies through local partnerships are at the foundation of Iowa's consumer owned utilities. Iowa Area Development Group (IADG) annually recognizes their electric utility sponsors for outstanding commitment, contribution and participation in business development projects and local community initiatives.

At Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative's annual meeting in Sioux City, two member electric utility systems were recognized for their economic development accomplishments and commitment to their local communities. With the success of these development projects, the rural electric cooperatives and municipal electric systems are making a significant contribution to the quality of life and the economy of Iowa.

North West Rural Electric Cooperative has been instrumental and supportive of numerous development projects in north-west Iowa for many years. North West REC was presented with an Impact Award for community development for their leadership and support of the performing arts center at the Galva-Holstein High School. The cooperative recently secured a \$300,000 USDA award that will assist the construction of the performing arts facility. This was the ninth grant that North West REC has been awarded since 1995 from the USDA under the Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant program (REDLG). The grant funds are added to the Cooperative's revolving loan fund (RLF) along with 20% in matching funds from the Cooperative. Thirty-six loans have been made for community and business development projects in NWREC's four county service area of Ida, O'Brien, Plymouth and Sioux counties over the last 16 years.



Accepting the award from Rand Fisher (right), President of IADG, are Lyle Korver, NWREC General Manager and Joel Orthmann, NWREC Board President.

The Iowa Area Development Group is the marketing and business development office for Iowa's member-owned rural electric cooperatives and select municipal electric utilities. IADG has assisted with over 1,600 successful business expansions and start-up projects. This growth represents capital investment of more than \$5.6 billion and 40,000 jobs for Iowa. The Iowa Area Development Group was established in 1985 to promote and strengthen rural Iowa development opportunities.



3 GREAT DAYS OF EDUCATION AND FUN can be yours on the Energy Trail Tour, sponsored by North West REC and NIPCO. Learn how water and coal are used to make electricity. See mining area returned to productive land. Enjoy the fellowship of other cooperative member-owners in a comfortable motor coach. Lodging, meals and entry fees are included. Sixteen lucky couples from North West REC will be selected at random from those who sign up. You might be one of them, so sign up today!

Your cost: just \$50 per couple!

YES, please enter our names in the drawing for the trip. We understand that if our names are drawn, we will be billed \$50.

Name _____
Spouse's Name _____

Our first and second choice of dates:
July 13-15 1st 2nd _____
July 27-29 1st 2nd (please circle) _____
Aug. 10-14 1st 2nd _____

Address _____
City _____
Phone _____

If we have have not participated in this tour in the past. Clip coupon and return to REC office by June 1, 2011

OPERATION ROUND UP REPORT

Contributions made by North West REC's Operation Round Up Trust in the first quarter of 2011 totaled \$5,000. This brings the total contributions made through Operation Round Up since its inception in June of 1999 to \$244,745.11.

\$4,200 Medical Emergencies – assist families with unusual expenses resulting from serious health problems and accident related injuries or death

\$250 Assist family with losses from home fire

\$400 Relays for Life (four counties) – support American Cancer Society

\$100 S.T.A.R.S. (Sioux City) – support program for handicapped

\$ 50 Side by Side Ministry (Le Mars) – support National Day of Prayer event



Operation Round Up funds are generated through a voluntary rounding up of cooperative members' electric bills to the next nearest dollar, and dollars are used to assist worthy causes and organizations right in your local county area.

If you are currently not participating in Operation Round Up and would like to become a part of this worthwhile program, please call our office for information or fill out the registration form below and return to us. To receive an application for assistance, please call the office at 707-4935 or 800-766-2099.

SIGN UP TODAY!

YES – add my name to the hundreds of North West REC members already contributing to the Operation Round Up Trust. I am not currently signed up to donate but wish to have my monthly electric bill rounded up to the nearest dollar and make a meaningful difference in my community.

Name _____

Address _____

Acct. # _____ Phone # _____

APPLIANCE RECYCLING

Participate in our appliance recycling program and turn your old refrigerator, freezer or window air conditioner in for a \$25 rebate per appliance. Just call the cooperative at 707-4935 or 800-766-2099 to arrange for easy pickup. Appliances must be in working condition to qualify for the recycling program.

RE CARE - CONSUMER CONTRIBUTION FUND

Your Rural Electric Cooperative has always extended a helping hand to those needing it. Now, in response to actions by the Iowa General Assembly, your REC has established RECare, a program of members helping members. RECare will provide funds to be distributed by local community action agencies to help pay winter heating bills and to assist in weatherization of homes of low-income consumers. You may make a one time contribution or you may make a monthly pledge that will be automatically added into your monthly electric bill. You may also make your contribution part of a matching fund, if there is one established. Your contribution is tax deductible. Even a dollar a month pledge will help others!

You care, we care, RECare.

Please return form along with your monthly bill.

CONSUMER AUTHORIZATION FORM

Yes, I want to be a part of members helping members and contribute to RECare.

_____ I will make a one-time contribution to RECare. My check is enclosed.

_____ I will contribute \$_____ per month to RECare.

_____ I understand that this amount will be automatically added to my monthly electric bill.

_____ My gift is a matching fund gift. The matching fund is _____ (an active matching fund must be designated).

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Account Number _____

STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION

“North West Rural Electric Cooperative has filed with the Federal Government a Compliance Assurance in which it assures the Rural Utilities Service that it will comply fully with all requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Rules and Regulations of the Department of Agriculture issued thereunder, to the end that no persons in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination in the conduct of its program and the operation of its facilities. Under this Assurance, this organization is committed not to discriminate against any person on the grounds of race, color, sex or national origin in its policies and practices relating to applications for service or any other policies and practices relating to treatment of beneficiaries and participants including rates, conditions and extensions of service, use of any of its facilities, attendance at and participation in any meetings of

beneficiaries and participants or the exercise of any rights of such beneficiaries and participants in the conduct of the operations of this organization.”

“Any person who believes himself, or any specific class of individuals, to be subjected by this organization to discrimination prohibited by Title VI of the Act and the Rules and Regulations issued thereunder may, by himself or a representative, file with the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250, or the Rural Utilities Service, Washington, D.C. 20250, or this organization, or all, a written complaint. Such complaint must be filed no later than 90 days after the alleged discrimination, or by such later date to which the Secretary of Agriculture or the Rural Utilities Service extends the time for filing. Identity of complainants will be kept confidential except to the extent necessary to carry out the purposes of the Rules and Regulations.”

AN EASIER WAY TO PAY and Receive \$5 Credit for Participating

Save time and money with the **automatic bank draft** and **e-bill payment plan** by having your monthly electric bill deducted from your bank account and receiving your bill electronically. You would no longer receive printed billing statements in the mail.

If you sign up for both of these services, you will receive a **one-time \$5 credit** on your next bill.

Why sign up for the automatic bank draft and e-bill payment plan?

- No more writing a check to North West REC for your electric bill
- Your electric bill will be paid on the due date – no worrying about getting your check to our office on time
- Accurate record keeping from your financial institution showing the direct payment you make to North West REC on your bank statement
- Access to your electric information at all times online – view your billing and payment history with bill details (see box on the next page for more details on how to look up bill)

What if I am already participating in the automatic bank draft payment plan?

- You will need to sign up for e-bill to receive the one-time \$5 credit
- Check the box on the coupon to sign up for e-bill, along with your signature and date

Your financial institution automatically transfers the amount of your monthly electric bill from your account to North West REC each month. The amount transferred will also appear on your monthly bank statement. The amount due will be transferred out of your account on the 8th of each month for payment of your electric bill. You will receive an e-mail notice on the 20th of each month that your monthly electric bill is now ready to be viewed. This will indicate the amount to be withdrawn from your account. Please call 1-800-766-2099 if any questions.

AUTHORIZATION AGREEMENT FOR BANK DRAFT AND E-BILL

Please include a voided check when sending in this form.

I authorize North West REC to initiate withdrawals and, if necessary, debit entries and adjustments for any credit entries in error to my account at the financial institution named below for payment of my monthly electric bills.

I understand that three or more payments in a 12-month period resulting in overdraft of my account may result in termination of the Direct Payment plan. This authorization will remain in effect until North West REC has received written notification from me of its termination in such time and manner as to afford North West REC and my financial institution a reasonable time to act on it.

Financial Institution: _____ Bank ID No.: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Account No.: _____ () Checking () Savings (select one)
 Payments to Begin: _____ and to be made on the 8th day of each month.
 Account Holder Name: _____ Electric Acct. No.: _____
 Email Address: _____

- YES, sign me up for the automatic payment plan and e-bill!
 YES, I am already a bank draft customer and want to sign up for e-bill!

Signature: _____ Date: _____

PRAIRIE WINDS PROGRAM UPDATE

Members of North West REC can support renewable energy through the Prairie Winds program. This program allows individual members to voluntarily contribute to the development of alternate energy production facilities.

Persons who choose to participate in Prairie Winds will pay 20 cents per 100 kilowatt-hour block per month. This is reduced from 50 cents in 2010.

Through this program, members will not be directly purchasing alternate energy, but the extra fee does go to support several wind turbines in the Dakotas, which feed wind-generated electricity into the transmission system that powers North West REC.

If you would like to support the renewable wind energy program, fill out the accompanying form and return it to your cooperative office.



WIND POWER AGREEMENT

Please specify the total number of 100 kilowatt-hour blocks you wish to purchase each month. Remember, each block is an additional \$.20 investment in not only the environment, but in the future of renewable energy.

Number of blocks at \$.20 per month _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email (optional) _____

Signature _____

Date _____

I understand my commitment is for one year and will continue on an annual basis until I notify you in writing to end my participation in the Prairie Winds program.

DISTRICT/ANNUAL MEETINGS HELD

We would like to thank the many members who attended the district meetings in March and annual meeting in April. All four director incumbents who were up for re-election were re-elected. They are:

District 1 - Jeff Rehder, Hawarden

District 2 - Tom Wagner, Primghar

District 3 - Steve Brown, Merrill

District 4 - Charlie Rohlf, Ida Grove

We also want to extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to those members who were not elected but were willing to run for a director position this year. Those members were Allen Jiskoot in District 1, Shelley Tewes in District 2, Steve Bunkers in District 3 and Rick McBride in District 4.

Many other members were involved in the election process this year by serving on the Nominating Committee or as Inspectors of Election. Thank you to each of you for your willingness to help out and to be involved in this very important part of our Cooperative business – the election of directors.