



# Pine to Prairie News

## Thank You to All Our Dairy Farmers!

June is Dairy month and we want to take this opportunity to thank our dairy farmers, from the largest operations to the smallest. We recognize that this has been a challenging time for many, and in spite of that, our dairy farmers continue to press on. There's no option to pause for a week or two from milking cows. We want to honor our dairy farmers who work hard 365 days a year to provide us with safe, nutritious dairy products.

*Thank you*

## National Dairy Month

Start the summer with nutrient-rich dairy foods! Dairy products such as milk contain *nine essential nutrients* which can help manage weight as well as reduce the risk of high blood pressure and osteoporosis. These are just a couple of reasons to celebrate dairy, not just in June, but all year long!



## Headquarters Building Progress



# Coal Creek Closure

Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative's wholesale power provider, Great River Energy (GRE), recently announced plans to transform its portfolio of power supply resources in the coming years. One element of this includes the retirement of the 1,151-megawatt Coal Creek Station power plant in the second half of 2022.

As part of the plan to increase economic efficiencies, GRE plans to phase out remaining coal resources, add significant renewable energy, and explore critical grid-scale battery technology. Each of these steps is an important part of GRE's plan to significantly reduce member-owner wholesale power costs, while taking advantage of cost-competitive renewables and reliable access to market energy.

Although the decision to close Coal Creek Station will have a dramatic impact on the North Dakota communities that rely upon it for employment and economic benefits, the decision ultimately came down to what was in the long-term best interest of GRE's member-owner cooperatives such as Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative. To continue to pay for the plant's losses each year, when there was a practical alternative available, ultimately led to the decision to close Coal Creek.

Despite what you might read or hear from some news sources, GRE did put a lot of thought into this decision and has made every effort to be transparent, honest, and fair with the communities in North Dakota that are affected the most. This includes voluntarily making payments to these communities for several years after the plant closes, to relieve some of the immediate impact of lost tax revenue.

Great River Energy's portfolio changes will significantly reduce its power supply costs. The new power supply plan takes into consideration affordability, reliability, and environmental stewardship – three necessary components to ensure GRE's member-owner electric cooperatives, like Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative, are well positioned for the future.

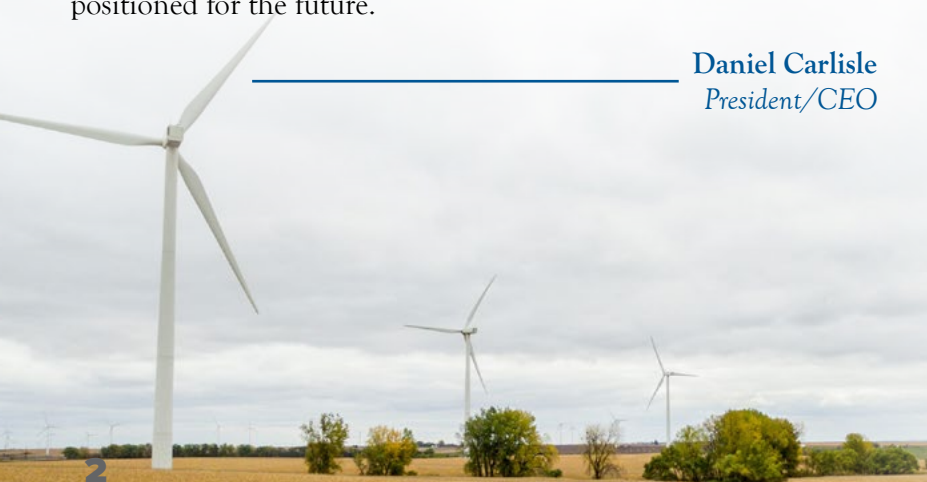


**Daniel Carlisle**  
President/CEO

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President/CEO

### Highlights from the April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020, regular board meeting:

- TWEC's board approved the continuing resolutions and MREA By-law changes.
- CEO Dan Carlisle reported on the review conducted by Federated Insurance that consisted of a three-year loss summary.
- A short update on the headquarters building project was provided. Footings are being poured and the crew is approximately a week ahead of schedule.
- TWEC decided to self-serve its electricity needs for the new HQ building and property. The Building Committee was authorized to purchase a generator.
- Lisa Graba-Meech, CFO, presented the March financials to the board. Monthly kWh sales were 6.6 percent under budget. Energy revenue was 6 percent under budget. March's purchased power expense was 16 percent under budget. Tier is 2.56 and Equity is 43.89.
- TWEC held a Bifurcated Annual Meeting that was streamed live for members on Tuesday, April 28, 2020. The second half of the meeting will be scheduled and held as soon as it is safe to do so.
- The Board reviewed and approved the delegates and alternates for various cooperative committees. Dale Adams was appointed to the STAR Energy Board.
- Member Services Manager Allison Uselman shared updates on the collaboration between TWEC, WCTA, and CTC; the status of implementing prepaid metering; spring irrigation control; and a plan to elect individuals for the Nominating Committee.
- Operations Manager Todd Miller discussed safety procedures in place for the operations crew and his intent of running split crews, as well as starting the maintenance crew on tree trimming.
- Board Member Mike Thorson presented the Great River Energy (GRE) report. GRE held its annual meeting on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020. Three new board members were appointed and officers were reelected. GRE's board recently approved \$3 million in COVID-19 relief dollars for member-owners. The funds will be released in a three-month process; TWEC has received its first round of relief of \$13,000.
- Board Member Dale Adams attended the STAR Energy Board meeting remotely in April. The 2019 audit was reviewed. STAR Energy continues to show slow and steady growth.



## How to Save Energy While Working From Home

You may be working from home and wondering about increased electricity costs. The good news is there are ways to keep your electricity bill under control. Here are a few tips for saving energy as you work from home.

**Work smarter, not longer hours** Perhaps the most direct way to save electricity while working from home is to cut down on screen time when not actually working. With fewer office distractions, you can hone your workday and cut time spent on social media sites or surfing the web.

### Take advantage of natural light

During the day, it's easy to forget to turn off lights in rooms not in use. Open blinds in your home office or wherever you're working, even if it doesn't get direct sunlight. Natural light is known to boost mood and productivity.



**Set your computer for energy savings** Most computers have built-in settings for saving energy. They can automatically lower power consumption if you stop using it temporarily. Checking your "sleep" settings can save just a bit more on your electricity bill.

**Minimize your gadgets** Unplug everything you're not using, including not just office equipment but everyday devices on standby that are sapping "vampire" or "phantom" energy. What you save in the kitchen or living room may help just a little to offset increased office equipment use.

**Any lighting you must use, use wisely** A desk lamp is usually more efficient than whole room lighting; avoid using both at the same time. If you're still using incandescent light bulbs, it's probably time to replace them with LEDs. *You can get up to 50% off LED bulbs at our EnergyWise store this month (see details on page 5)!*

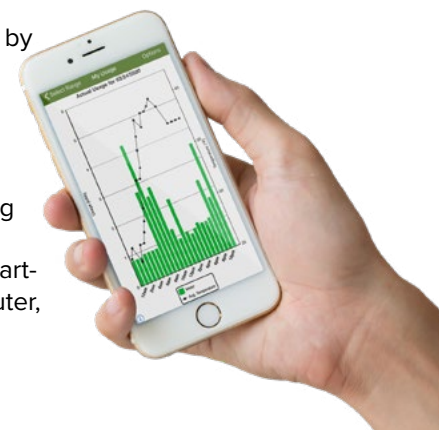
## Tips to Help You Monitor Your Energy Usage

Monitor your usage with SmartHub, TWEC's free tool for account management. SmartHub can help you take control of your account and gives you the chance to focus on smart energy choices for your household.

You can schedule payments, set up alerts, recurring payments, and view billing history. Additionally, you can see your current bill, along with statements from the previous month or even the previous summer, if you want to com-

pare costs. You can view your actual usage by the hour, day, month, or year and see how your usage is trending over time, which allows you to take steps to lower your bill.

Access SmartHub by going to our website, [www.toddwadena.coop](http://www.toddwadena.coop), or by downloading the app on your mobile device through the *App Store* or *Google Play Marketplace*. SmartHub can be easily accessed on your computer, phone, or tablet.



## Now Accepting Photo Submissions for Our 2021 Calendar

Photos are now being accepted from members for the Cooperative's 2021 calendar. We are looking for scenic photos (wildlife or landscape) that represent the four seasons of Minnesota.

From the entries received, we'll select 13 photos – one for each month of the year plus one for the cover. Members whose photos are included in the calendar will receive a \$20 credit on their TWEC account.\*

\*Must have an active TWEC account to participate.



### Contest Rules

- 1) Submit your digital photos (up to 5 per member) to [kvandeventer@toddwadena.coop](mailto:kvandeventer@toddwadena.coop) by September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Be sure to send the photographer's name, TWEC service address, and phone number with the photo.
- 2) Photos must depict a Minnesota scene (wildlife or landscape) with a horizontal view. Representations of all four seasons are needed. Color photos are preferred. Extra consideration will be given to photos within the TWEC service area.
- 3) **IMPORTANT:** Photos must be high quality (300 dpi or higher) for an 8 x 10 inch landscape production.
- 4) Winning photos may be used in future cooperative publications.

# Why Should You Buy an Electric Vehicle?

Our electric vehicle (EV) rates make the decision to get an EV as easy as **1, 2, 3!**



## Environmental Benefits

EVs have better environmental attributes than traditional vehicles (even considering the production and disposal of the battery) because of their higher efficiency, lower energy consumption, and lack of tailpipe emissions. Utilities like TWEC and its wholesale power provider, Great River Energy, are producing energy from many renewable sources, including hydro and wind. As the source of electricity gets greener, so does the vehicle.



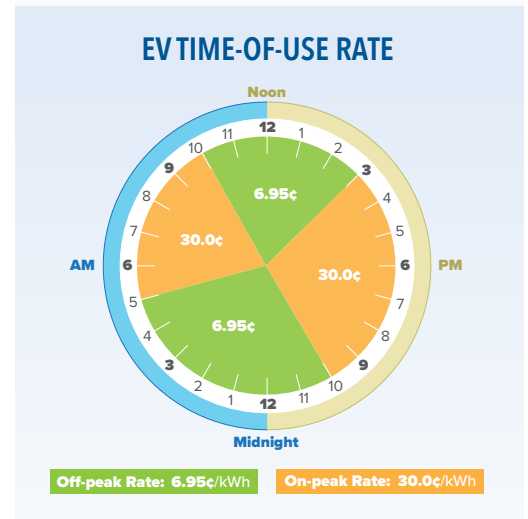
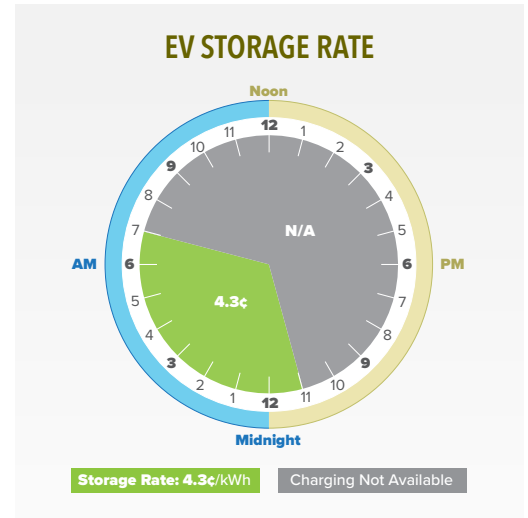
## Economic Savings

EVs are less expensive to own and operate than a traditional gas-powered vehicle over the long-term. While they can sometimes cost more to purchase, the federal government offers consumers a tax credit of up to \$7,500 to put toward the purchase of most new EVs. A typical EV can travel about 43 miles on \$1 worth of electricity. Also, EVs have fewer moving parts to break down which means they're more reliable than their gasoline-powered counterparts. Very little maintenance is required beyond changing windshield wipers and tires—no more oil changes!



## Convenience

Charge from the convenience of your home with our low EV rates and special rebates on chargers. There are two rate options: a storage rate, which allows charging only during certain hours, and a time-of-use rate, which has different rates depending on the time you charge your vehicle. You can also receive a rebate for up to \$800 to offset the cost to install an EV charger controlled on an off-peak rate.



**PLUG IN.  
CHARGE UP.  
SAVE BIG.**

**Save \$800 on Your Purchase of an EV Charger**

We're making purchasing an electric vehicle (EV) charger easier than ever! If you're one of the first 200 people to purchase an EV charger from our online store, you'll receive an \$800 discount at the time of purchase.

**Don't delay! Visit [energywisemnstore.com](https://energywisemnstore.com) today.**

# Air Source Heat Pump Rebates



Air Source Heat Pump	Promo Rebate
≥ 8.2 HSPF	\$1,000
≥ 9.0 HSPF	\$2,000



Ductless/Mini Split Air Source Heat Pump	Regular Rebate	Promo Rebate
Delivered fuels	\$300	\$450*
Electric heat	\$500	\$750*
*Minimum HSPF ≥ 9.0		

- Rebates only apply to new systems purchased and QI installed (visit [www.toddwadana.coop](http://www.toddwadana.coop) to find a QI installer in your area)
- ASHP must be Energy Star Rated
- All rebate paperwork must be submitted by July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020

- Must be Energy Star Rated
- For new systems purchased and installed during rebate time frame
- All rebate paperwork must be submitted by July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020

Air source heat pumps provide **home cooling and supplemental heating**, using **72% less electricity** than conventional air conditioners and furnaces.

*Promotion runs May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 through July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020.*

ENERGY WISE  MN

Visit [energywisemnstore.com](http://energywisemnstore.com) to shop energy-efficient products.



## ENJOY BRIGHT SAVINGS!

Shop 50% off standard LED bulbs, June 1 – July 31, 2020.

Shop now at [energywisemnstore.com](http://energywisemnstore.com).

ENERGY WISE  MN

## The Dreaded Vampire Loads By Tom Tate

Perhaps you are familiar with an undesirable aspect of the electronic revolution: *vampire loads*. Vampire loads come from devices that use electricity even when they appear to be off. The primary culprits are chargers, set-top television boxes, instant-on televisions, and gaming systems. There are others, but these four represent the major offenders.

Let's look at how these vampire loads occur and why they are approaching 10 percent of average household electric use according to the Environmental Protection Agency.

Chargers take the 120 VAC (volts alternating current) power at the outlet and reduce it down to the voltage required by the connected device, usually 5 to 12 VDC (volts direct current). Obviously, when your device is charging, the charger is using electricity, but you might be surprised to learn that chargers are still using small amounts of energy even when they're not connected to a device.

Television set-top boxes also consume energy when they appear to be inactive. Anytime the set-top box's lights are on, it is using power. Like chargers, they use more when the television is on, but they are always working—even when the TV is off. This is especially true for those devices with a DVR function that records your favorite TV shows.

The instant-on television is another culprit. The intention of the "instant-on" feature is instant gratification for the viewer, meaning no waiting for the TV to start up. Unfortunately, for that convenience, the TV must be on at nearly full power. So, in this mode, it can be a real energy drain.

The typical gaming console can use as much energy as a regular refrigerator even when it's not being used. Games on the console are frequently updated, which requires a lot of electricity.

Here are a few suggestions to change how you handle these energy-sucking electronics.

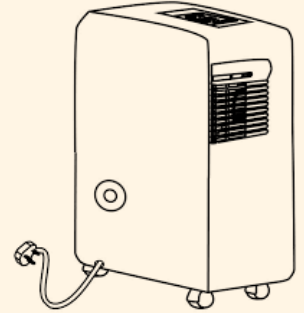
- 👍 Unplug chargers when not in use.
- 👍 Invest in smart power strips. These look like normal power strips but have a twist; one of the outlets is the "master" that receives power all the time. The others are off. When the device connected to the master outlet turns on, the rest of the outlets receive power too. Ingenious and perfect for entertainment set ups. Have the television in the master outlet and when you turn it on, the set-top box, speakers, streaming devices, etc. will turn on too. They are also ideal for PCs and their peripherals.
- 👍 Turn off the instant-on function on your TV. Turn off set-top boxes that do not contain the DVR functionality or use a smart power strip.
- 👍 Disable automatic updates in gaming consoles and turn the console completely off when you finish using it.
- 👍 When replacing any device or appliance, look for an Energy Star rated product.

Vampire loads are a real problem that will only continue to grow as the digital age advances. But you can fight the vampires with vigilance and application of the recommendations above.

## The Cost of Running Your Dehumidifier

Dehumidifiers reduce humidity levels, and can help reduce allergens in your home. Many people plug in the dehumidifier and run it until it needs to be emptied. Keep in mind that running a dehumidifier 24/7 will increase your energy bill.

You can figure out how much it costs to run your dehumidifier by using the equation below.



To calculate our usage we used this formula:

$$\text{Watts}/1,000 \times \text{Hours} = \text{kWh usage}$$

Our dehumidifier used 745 watts.

$$(745\text{w}/1,000) \times 24 \text{ hours a day} \times 11.5 \text{ cents/kWh} = \$2.05$$

$$\$2.05 \times 30 \text{ days} = \$61.50$$

If you run the dehumidifier for 30 days, that would add an additional \$61.50 to your bill. Many people will run the dehumidifier during late spring, summer, and early fall. Dehumidifiers may be a need for some households. Todd Wadena offers a \$25 rebate for members who purchase an Energy Star rated dehumidifier.



### Go Paperless and Get Five Bucks!

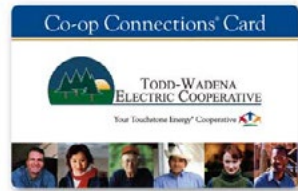
Sign up for paperless via SmartHub and receive a one-time credit of \$5.00 to your account!



New paperless enrollment only. Offer ends December 31st, 2020.

## Reel in the Savings!

Reel in the savings with your Co-op Connections Card! This program is yet another way we're looking out for our members. There is a growing number of local businesses that offer discounts when you present your Todd-Wadena Co-op Connections Card.



### BROWERVILLE

**Konetzko's Meat Market** // 516 Main St. S.  
\$2 off \$20 purchase of meat sticks OR \$2 off 1 lb. purchase of beef jerky. *One discount per visit. Offers cannot be combined. Not valid with any other offers.*

**Pro Ag Farmer's Co-op** // 501 Railroad Ave.  
10% off pet food and bird seed.

### LONG PRAIRIE

**Thorson's Farm Market** // Highway 71  
10% off any purchase.

### MENAHA

**Jan's Hair Attitude** // 17 Birch Ave. SE  
20% off a haircut.

**The Jewel of the Northwoods Bed and Breakfast**  
39050 Twin Lakes Rd. // Stay two nights, get one free.

**Wild Walleye Eatery** // 16 Main St. E  
Free fresh cut fries with purchase of any burger.

### SEBEKA

**Hub 71 Restaurant** // 3 U.S. Highway 71 S.  
Get a FREE drink of choice with any entrée.

**Hub 71 Convenience** // 3 U.S. Highway 71 S.  
Buy one ice cream cone and get the second for ½ off.  
One offer per visit, per customer.

### STAPLES

**Ace Hardware** // 210 2nd Ave. NE  
10% off any item \$30 or less.

**Japke Decorating, Carpet & Gifts** // 877 2nd Ave. NW  
10% off one item per visit on clothes or gifts.

**LMH Embroidery & Screen Printing** // 508 2nd Ave. NE  
20% off any one regular priced in-stock item (excludes letter jackets).

**True Value** // 205 Warner Rd. NE  
10% off any item \$50 or less.

### WADENA

**1776 Clothing Company** // 102 Jefferson St. S.  
10% off total purchase of regular priced items.

**Everything Under the Sun** // 13 Aldrich Ave. SE  
10% off all regular priced items.

**The Gores Company** // 508 S. Jefferson  
Free market analysis.

**Hometown Crafts** // 111 S. Jefferson  
10% off regular priced merchandise. Not valid with other coupons.

**Lyle's Shoes** // 118 Jefferson St.  
10% off one regular priced in-stock item.

**Over the Rainbow Floral and Gifts** // 123 1st St. SW  
10% off one regular priced gift shop gift item (does not include flowers or wire services). Not valid with any other coupons or specials.

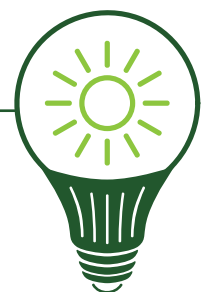
**Pizza Ranch** // 106 S. Jefferson St.  
\$1 off adult buffet.

**Wadena Eye Clinic** // 222 1st St. SE  
15% off all regular priced spectacle glasses for work or play, including safety and sportswear.

**Whitetail Run Golf Course** // 13379 Leaf River Rd.  
Get one 18-hole green fee FREE with purchase of one 18-hole green fee and power cart.

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Home cooling makes up a large portion of your energy bills. Try to keep the difference between the temperature of your thermostat setting and the outside temperature to a minimum. The smaller the difference, the more energy you will save.



Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

# Pine to Prairie News

A monthly publication for  
members and friends of



TODD-WADENA  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

[www.toddwadana.coop](http://www.toddwadana.coop)

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P.O. Box 431  
Wadena, MN 56482

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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Daniel Carlisle, President/CEO

## **LOCAL ELECTRICAL INSPECTORS**

**Todd County:**

Troy Bak (320) 760-1017

**Wadena County:**

Gary Zacharias (218) 631-1392

**District 5 (Todd County):**

Mark Hunter (320) 616-5574

**District 6 (Wadena County):**

Sheldon Monson (218) 689-3260



### **If your electric power goes out:**

First, make sure the problem is not on your side. (Members may be billed for service calls if the problem is caused by their own equipment.) Check fuses and circuit breakers in your home and by the meter pole. (Call us for help, if necessary.)

Second, check with your neighbors to see if they have power. Then call Todd-Wadena to report the problem. Give your name and account number. Then report any tree branches, twisted wires, broken poles, and whether or not your neighbors are also out of power.

### **Before digging call:**

Gopher State One-Call  
811 or (800) 252-1166

Find us on  

[www.facebook.com/toddwadanaelectriccooperative](http://www.facebook.com/toddwadanaelectriccooperative)  
[www.instagram.com/twec.coop](http://www.instagram.com/twec.coop)

## Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative

P.O. Box 431

Wadena, MN 56482

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**PAID**  
DPC

## June Reader's Contest

ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY JUNE 25<sup>TH</sup>, 2020.

For your chance to be entered in a drawing to win a **\$10 credit** on your bill, correctly answer the questions and include with your TWEC bill. Mail to TWEC, P.O. Box 431, Wadena, MN 56482. Or email the answers to [kvandeventer@toddwadana.coop](mailto:kvandeventer@toddwadana.coop) with the subject line "Reader's Contest". Be sure to include your name and TWEC service address.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ are now being accepted from members for the Cooperative's 2021 calendar.
2. Very little maintenance is required for EVs, meaning no more \_\_\_\_\_ changes.
3. Shop \_\_\_\_\_% off standard LED bulbs, June 1<sup>st</sup>-July 31<sup>st</sup> at [www.energywisemnstore.com](http://www.energywisemnstore.com).

Name:

Your TWEC Service Address:

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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*Charles Johnson of Wadena is the May Reader's Contest winner.*

