



## 2023 Annual Meeting a Success

With over 275 members and guests in attendance, Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative (TWEC) celebrated the 2023 Annual Meeting at Wadena's Maslowski Wellness and Research Center on Tuesday, April 18<sup>th</sup>.

In the board of director elections, Nominating Committee Chair, Wally Weise announced that incumbents Dale Adams, Kristine Spadgenske, and Gene Kern were re-elected for three-year terms. An organizational meeting of the Board was held immediately following the Annual Meeting, resulting in the following officers re-elected: Miles

Kuschel as Chair, Tom Brichacek as Vice Chair, Marie Katterhagen as Secretary, and Dale Adams was selected as Treasurer.

Dan Carlisle, TWEC President/CEO reported on the Cooperative's financial status, gave a short recap of 2022 rebates given back to members, and discussed the major storm events that happened in the past year. Carlisle also highlighted the many different educational and



(2023 Annual Meeting is continued on page 3)



## Storm season is right around the corner... **Sign Up for Outage Notifications**

Did you know you can receive text message notifications of outages that concern your Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative account? To sign up, visit [www.toddwadena.coop/outages](http://www.toddwadena.coop/outages) and click on the *Sign Up for Outage Notifications* button. You will then be asked for your account number. Select either *Residential* or *Business* and fill in the requested information. You will now receive notifications of any outages that affect your account, as well as power restoration notices.



**Please note: If you experience an outage, please continue to call (800) 321-8932 to report it.**

*The best way to notify us of an outage is to call. Do NOT email outages as the inbox is NOT monitored after hours or on the weekends.*

# Air Source Heat Pumps

There is a season for everything and, thankfully, I think winter is finally going to let go of its season and let spring come. As the weather warms up, people start to think about keeping cool instead of keeping warm – and TWEC is here to help!

For the past several years, Todd-Wadena has offered an air source heat pump (ASHP) rebate promotion each summer. This is a great time to save additional dollars when installing a highly efficient system. Not only are ASHPs up to 300% efficient with cooling, but they can be used for heating as well. In northern Minnesota, we typically only use our cooling systems a few months out of the year. If you are going to replace your cooling system, why not get something that can heat most of the year as well? (*See comparison of air conditioners and ASHPs on page 3.*) Many cold climate ASHPs can heat your home well below zero degrees. You can also save money on your usage if you decide to enroll your unit in the cooperative's load management program.

There is also legislation in place federally, and being formed in MN, that could help you save even more money. Federally, as part of the Inflation Reduction Act, there will be rebate and tax incentive dollars available in late 2023 for upgrading electric services and for the installation of appliances such as ASHPs. Visit [www.rewiringamerica.com](http://www.rewiringamerica.com) to review what might be available to you— in addition to TWEC rebates.

Closer to home, there is currently an Omnibus Bill in Minnesota that has passed the House and is on the way to the Senate. Funding in this bill would support grant programs for pre-weatherization, residential electric panel upgrades, electric school buses, air ventilation improvements in schools, and solar energy systems on schools and public buildings. Rebates would also be available for people who purchase electric vehicles, air source heat pumps, and energy storage systems.

When the federal dollars become available, and if the MN Omnibus Bill passes, there may be some great opportunities for TWEC members to save a lot of money while upgrading their equipment to more efficient systems. If you are interested in purchasing an air source heat pump, call our office to learn more about our rebate promotion and load management program. We are here to help you save money and energy!

**Daniel Carlisle**  
President/CEO & General Counsel



## Board Minutes

**Highlights from the March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023, regular board meeting:**

- CEO Dan Carlisle reported how the All-Requirement Great River Energy (GRE) members have approved the amendment of the GRE Purchase Power Agreement regarding the 5% self-generation option. GRE, on behalf of all, will submit final paperwork for the amendment to Rural Utilities Service for approval.
- Carlisle touched briefly on TWEC's annual meeting, a diversity policy, and the upcoming CEO conference.
- Board Member Mike Thorson gave the GRE report. February's margins were under budget; however, GRE is still ahead of budget year-to-date. GRE continues to watch and advocate on behalf of its members regarding the 2040 Carbon Free legislation.
- Lisa Graba-Meech, CFO, presented the February financials to the board. Monthly kWh sales were 7 percent under budget. Energy revenue was 6 percent under budget. February's purchased power expense was 3 percent over budget. Tier is 0.67 and Equity is 40.16.
- Matt Laughlin, with Brady Martz, presented the 2022 Audited Financials for TWEC and the Community Trust (Operation Round Up). The 2022 Audited Financials were accepted as presented.
- Member & Energy Services Manager Allison Frederickson shared updates on the status of the OneOk project and the recent contractor and irrigator meetings.
- Operations Manager Tyler Fisher noted how the department has been working with vendors/contractors to line up capital projects approved in the 2023 budget so work can begin as soon as the weather permits.
- Board Chair Miles Kuschel reviewed some legislative matters, discussing a number of bills that were on the floor and how they could affect the cooperative.



# 2023 Annual Meeting a Success (Continued from page 1)



member appreciation events that were held throughout the year. Carlisle then addressed some of the members’ concerns regarding the challenges that the Cooperative is facing. He spoke about the push for renewables, both residential and commercial, and how they are mandated

to interconnect with the grid. The Cooperative also has the opportunity to utilize a Self-Generation renewable option and has been researching this topic – only with the intention of moving forward if it can save the members money. Minnesota’s legislation and mandates are also posing some challenges for the electrical industry, with over 400 bills that were introduced and may impact the Cooperative. The shift to carbon free by 2040 and the dependence on natural gas are creating a shift, as well as putting pressure on the transmission grid. He posed a question to the membership: is the expectation of reliable and affordable electricity for Todd-Wadena Electric members still attainable?

David Saggau, President and CEO of Great River Energy (GRE) was the guest speaker. His presentation included GRE’s rate forecast and the current generation portfolio. Saggau also confirmed the answer to Carlisle’s question, that yes, it is plausible that the expectation of reliable and affordable electricity for TWEC members is still attainable.

Ally Pavek, a senior at Wadena-Deer Creek High School, gave a short presentation on her Youth Tour trip to Washington, D.C. provided by Todd-Wadena. The 2023 scholarship recipients were also invited and were presented a certificate by Todd-Wadena.

In his chairman’s message, Miles Kuschel reflected on the past year—two major storm events in May and early June where staff and lineworkers spent hundreds of hours working diligently to restore power as safely and efficiently as possible. Kuschel also highlighted the completion of the new Leaf River Substation and construction of new line to handle the future needs of the members. Kuschel emphasized the importance of Todd-Wadena’s Vegetation Management plan and why it is so important to mitigate power outages. He also reflected on recent legislation bills and energy policies with the recent Carbon Free Bill.

Following the meeting, members and guests were treated to a delicious meal which consisted of smoked pork chops, baked potatoes, and mixed veggies catered by The BBQ Smokehouse. Twenty-nine members left with door prizes, which included cash, gas gift cards, and energy credits.



Air Conditioner	VS	Air Source Heat Pump
Cooling during warm summer days.	← CAN I USE IT YEAR-ROUND? →	Heating and cooling through every season.
Absorbs inside heat and expels it from your home, then creates chilled air to push back into your home.	← IS IT VERSATILE? →	Works like an air conditioner in the summer, but offers the <b>versatility</b> of the reverse process to heat your home in the winter.
Wall units <b>lack efficiency</b> , as they only provide spot cooling and air can leak through window seals. Central air units are comparable to ASHPs in summer.	← IS IT EFFICIENT? →	<b>Super energy efficient</b> , as the unit moves both cooled and heated air throughout the home. ASHPs are up to 300% more efficient.
Smaller upfront cost, but does not offer heating. No installation rebates offered.	← CAN I SAVE MONEY? →	<b>Rebates</b> available for unit installation. <b>Sustained savings</b> through energy efficiency.

Limited Time!  
Promotion Runs  
May 1<sup>st</sup>–July 31<sup>st</sup>,  
2023

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THESE

# HOT PROMO REBATES

WHEN YOU INSTALL A QUALIFYING,  
ENERGY-SAVING AIR SOURCE HEAT PUMP!

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

Ducted Air Source Heat Pump	Regular Rebate	Promo Rebate
≥ 8.2 HSPF*	\$500	\$1,000
≥ 9.0 HSPF*	\$700	\$1,300

\*Ducted Air Source Heat Pump must be installed by a quality installer to qualify for TWEC rebate. A list of QI installers can be found at [www.toddwadena.coop](http://www.toddwadena.coop).

Ductless/Mini Split Air Source Heat Pump	Regular Rebate	Promo Rebate
HSPF ≥ 8.2**	\$300	\$600

\*\*Must be Energy Star rated

Rebate amounts and programs are subject to change without notice. **Promotion runs May 1, 2023-July 31, 2023.**



## DRIVE-THROUGH CO-OP STRONG LUNCH

THURSDAY  
**JULY 20**

Serving lunch from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Memorial Forest Park & Campground  
South of Menahga on Highway 71

TODD-WADENA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH WEST CENTRAL TELEPHONE ASSOCIATION AND LAKES COMMUNITY COOPERATIVE



## Operation Round Up Deadline

Make sure your organization applies for an Operation Round Up grant by the **deadline of May 15<sup>th</sup>**! For more details and a fillable application, visit our website at [www.toddwadena.coop](http://www.toddwadena.coop).



# Notice Concerning Load Control Units

TWEC has begun changing out the receivers that initiate load control for all of our residential programs. Currently, most of our members have a Comverge unit on the outside of their home that will be changed out with an Aclara demand response unit (DRU). As we have begun this process, we are finding many homes where either the wiring is not up to code or the receiver has been bypassed. If one of our technicians finds this situation at a TWEC member home, they will be supplying the member with a letter that will explain what needs to be fixed. By fixing the issue, the Aclara DRU will be able to control the equipment enrolled in the program.

It is a requirement that during our peak energy times, when a load control event is initiated, that the electric heat and/or water heating load enrolled in the program is controlled or shut-off. These programs save our members money with a lower kilowatt hour (kwh) price because we are initiating control events when energy market prices are high or capacity is in question, so control is of the highest importance.

In order to remain enrolled in TWEC's load management programs and continue to receive incentives, each member must comply to ensure the accuracy of the Aclara equipment. Failure to do so, will result in removal of program's rate/incentive. Thank you.

# Load Control Hour Change

Our ETS water heating strategy will be changing to a summer schedule and will start shedding load (controlling) at 9 a.m. in summer (rather than 6 a.m. as in winter). The charging time will now be 10 p.m. to 9 a.m. starting on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023.

*Please note that the control times for all load management programs (except irrigation) are not absolute, as there is a ramping window for both shed and restore times. This allows for smoothing the impact of load control. Control schedules at individual receivers will be staggered by up to 30 minutes.*

MAY IS NATIONAL ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH

## A Safe, Happy House

Four Easy Ways to Boost Electrical Safety at Home



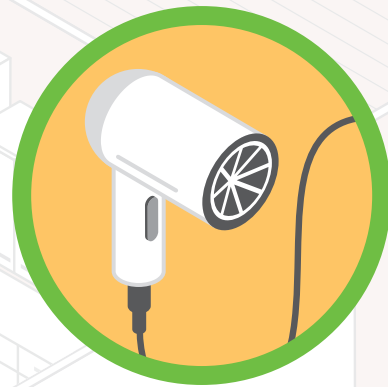
**DO**

ensure you're using the correct wattage in all light fixtures.



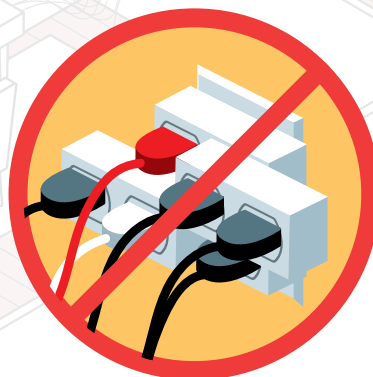
**DON'T**

place flammable items, like potholders, napkins, or dish towels near the stove while cooking.



**DO**

keep electrical devices away from water to prevent electric shock.



**DON'T**

overload electrical outlets with more devices than the circuit can handle.



## Electricity: The Value of Comfort

Oftentimes the word “value” is related to “cost.” For example, as the local electric cooperative, we remind our members regularly that electricity remains one of the best values you get for your dollar.

But there is more to the word *value* than an assigned price, and the value of electricity extends beyond its cost.

Electricity provides certain creature comforts — things that simply make life more pleasant — we come to depend upon. For some, this means being able to count on an electric kettle to quickly heat up water for a morning cup of tea. For others, it could be time spent with their children playing video games, baking a batch of cookies, or stringing up twinkle lights on the porch to make it feel cozier.

With a charged cellphone, we can easily connect and catch-up with friends through a video call. We can store leftovers from a family get-together in our refrigerator to enjoy another day or pull out a meal from the deep freezer to thaw for dinner.

Warmth during Minnesota winters can be priceless. Many households depend on the comfort of home



heating provided by an air source heat pump (ASHP) to make it through the state’s extended cold snaps. This appliance also works double-duty to provide efficient cooling during summers just by efficiently transferring heat outside.

A hot shower as part of a typical morning routine, too, is a comfort valued by most. Houses outfitted with an electric water heater receive clean, safe, hot water on demand.

Beyond providing comfort to you and your family, these appliances are extremely efficient and take advantage of electricity’s main value: lower costs. ASHPs use 72% less electricity than conventional air conditioners and furnaces; ETS water heaters draw electricity during times of low demand — such as overnight — when it’s less expensive.

Todd-Wadena Electrical Cooperative is committed to providing its members with all the comforts electricity offers in a safe, reliable, and affordable manner.

Visit [energywisemn.com](http://energywisemn.com) to learn more about how electricity can power comfort in your home.

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

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## Youth Tour Participant Selected

**Isabel Birkholtz** • Daughter of Traci Birkholtz and Dan Birkholtz • Junior at Staples-Motley High School

**Why are you excited for this trip?** *I am excited for this trip because it is giving me an opportunity to go somewhere I've never been before. I love to travel and have always wanted to see Washington, D.C.*

**What are you most excited to do?** *I am most excited to see all the monuments in D.C., as well as meet new people. I also am super excited to get the opportunity to meet with legislators and talk with them!*

**Background:** Each year, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association and Minnesota Rural Electric Association send cooperative-sponsored students to the nation’s capital city, Washington, D.C. for a week of leadership and educational training, historical perspectives, tours of city sites, and experiences in the heart of the federal government.

## 2023 Scholarship Winners

Congratulations to our 2023 scholarship recipients! Each of these students will receive \$1,000 to be used towards the 2023-2024 school year!



**Blake Knudson**, Staples-Motley High School • *Son of Bobbi & Thomas Knudson* • Plans to attend Minnesota State University Moorhead and major in Computer Science



**Alex Treinen**, Menahga High School • *Son of David & Tracey Treinen* • Plans to attend Valley City State University and major in Conservation Law/Wildlife Biology



**Elisa Knoll**, Bertha-Hewitt High School • *Daughter of Jason & Karen Knoll* • Plans to attend the University of Mary and major in Nursing



**Lance Anderson**, Wadena-Deer Creek High School • *Son of Bryce & Melissa Anderson* • Plans to attend Minnesota State University Moorhead and major in Engineering AS



**Landon Mertens**, Staples-Motley High School • *Son of Nick & Darcy Mertens* • Plans to attend Central Lakes College and major in Business Management



**Luke Bates**, Staples-Motley High School • *Son of Brian & Lori Bates* • Plans to attend the University of North Dakota and major in Commercial Aviation

### Unclaimed Capital Credits

We're looking for these past members! Please contact the office if your name is on this list, or if you know someone on the list.

Boughton, Gary | Dent, MN  
 Cuffel, Edwin | Clear Lake, MN  
 Dukowitz, Diane | Baxter, MN  
 Eidmann, Brett | Int'l Falls, MN  
 Great Plains Tower | Fargo, ND  
 Guzman, Marlene | Pillager, MN  
 Hallikainen, Ellen | Park Rapids, MN  
 Huss, Michelle | Prior Lake, MN

Johnson, Ivan | Long Prairie, MN  
 Kern, Duane | Luck, WI  
 McNamara, Shirley | Staples, MN  
 Niemi, Craig | Motley, MN  
 Peterson, Dianne | Roberts, WI  
 Stromme, Sharon | Chokio, MN  
 Wolseth, Judith/Ronald | Maple Lake, MN  
 Stephan, Steven/Rhonda | Pequot Lakes, MN

Please note that we will be closed **Monday, May 29<sup>th</sup>** in observance of **Memorial Day.**





# Pine to Prairie News

A monthly publication for members & friends of



**Todd-Wadena**  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

**Office Hours:** 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Monday - Friday

**Telephone:** (218) 631-3120 or  
(800) 321-8932

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P.O. Box 431  
Wadena, MN 56482

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Miles Kuschel, Chair  
Tom Brichacek, Vice Chair  
Marie Katterhagen, Secretary  
Dale Adams, Treasurer  
Michael Thorson, Director  
Gene Kern, Director  
Kristine Spadgenske, Director

Daniel Carlisle, President/CEO &  
General Counsel

## **LOCAL ELECTRICAL INSPECTORS**

Todd County:

Troy Bak (320) 760-1017

Wadena County:

Adam Sorensen (320) 304-3927

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/toddwadenaelectriccooperative](http://www.facebook.com/toddwadenaelectriccooperative)  
[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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DPC

## Summer Office Hours



Our summer office hours will be 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, starting Memorial Day and going through Labor Day.

# May Reader's Contest

1. Air Source Heat Pumps use up to \_\_\_\_\_% less energy than conventional air conditioners and furnaces.
2. Drive-through \_\_\_\_\_ Strong Lunch will take place on Thursday, July 20<sup>th</sup> in Menahga.
3. Don't \_\_\_\_\_ electrical outlets with more devices than the circuit can handle.

Name:

Your TWEC Account Number:

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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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 [mbrservices@toddwadena.coop](mailto:mbrservices@toddwadena.coop) with the subject line "Reader's Contest". Be sure to include your name and TWEC service address. Entries must be received by May 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Dorothy Knapper of Cushing was the winner of our April Reader's Contest.**