



# Pine to Prairie News

Photo by Rita Tepley

## Large capacity water heaters saved

Last month lawmakers passed and President Obama signed an energy-efficiency bill that will preserve production of large electric water heaters that hundreds of electric cooperatives rely on for demand-response programs.

National Rural Electric Association CEO Jo Ann Emerson praised the lawmakers who shepherded legislation through and thanked co-op leaders who encouraged Congress to “do the right thing.” “This legislation makes a difference to the folks at the end of the power lines, the ones who pay the bills and most importantly, the ones who keep our economy going,” Emerson said.

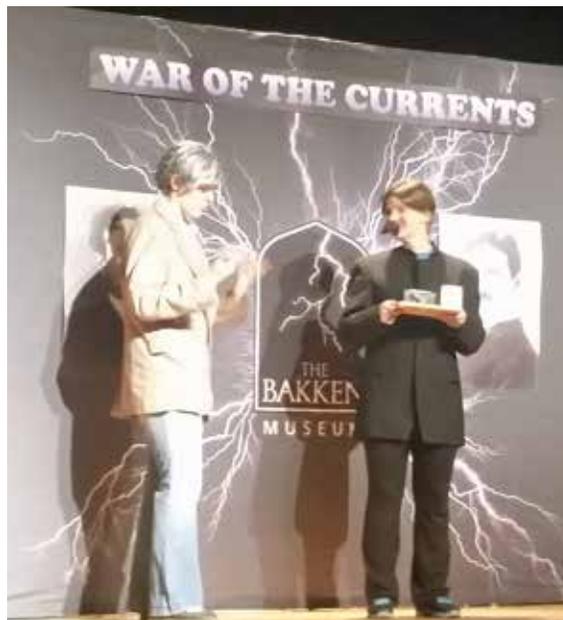
The law will allow the continued manufacture of water heaters above 75 gallons for specific use in demand-response programs. The law supersedes a ban on the production of these water heaters set by the Department of Energy in 2010, which took effect April 16.

More than 250 co-ops in 35 states, including Todd-Wadena, use large-capacity electric water heaters to reduce demand during peak hours by an estimated 500 megawatts. These water heaters can store low-cost, off-peak power as hot water, enabling co-ops to cut their fuel use and optimize operation of the electric grid.

## Learning about electricity *from Edison and Tesla*

Middle school students at Motley-Staples, Verndale, Sebeka and Bertha-Hewitt learned about electricity in a whole new way last month from two well-known authorities on the subject - or, at least very astute

impersonators. Performers from the Bakken Museum in Minneapolis took on the looks and personalities of Thomas Alva Edison and Nikola Tesla to entertain at the four schools while teaching electricity basics and reenacting the inventors’ dispute over direct versus alternating current.



Interactive demonstrations involved both student- and teacher-volunteers, and the show culminated with displays of lightning-like sparks snaking from a 5-foot Tesla Coil and a compact disc, shown here.



Todd-Wadena sponsored the school program as part of its 75-year history celebration.

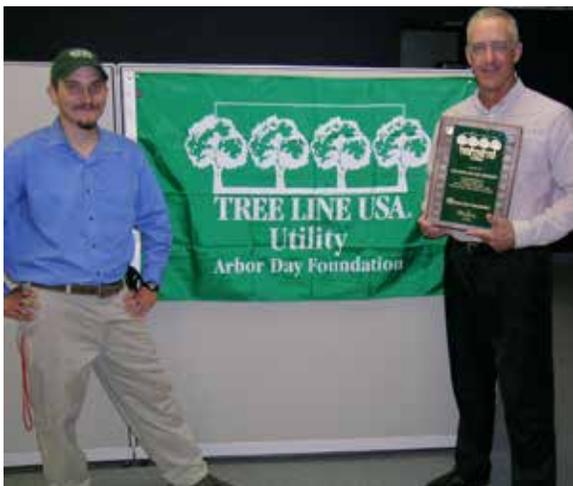


## CEO's Message

### Trees

As shown below, Todd-Wadena recently earned the Tree Line USA designation by the Arbor Day Foundation. This designation recognizes the cooperative's commitment and compliance to these five Tree Line USA core requirements:

1. Proper tree pruning, planting, removal, trenching and tunneling near trees are consistently followed.
2. Employees and contract workers receive annual best practice training.
3. Tree planting and public education programs demonstrate proper tree planting, placement, and pruning while expanding the tree canopy in the community.
4. A formal tree-based energy conservation program is in place, putting special consideration on the value of trees in conserving energy.
5. Sponsorship of annual community Arbor Day events are documented.



Nicholas Rickaby, ACRT Arborist and Todd-Wadena CEO Robin Doege display a Tree Line USA flag and plaque that the cooperative recently earned.

Trees are such a valuable resource. They beautify the landscape, provide shade, reduce pollution and so much more. Participating in the Tree Line USA project keeps us actively promoting proper tree care. It is particularly rewarding to help enhance our communities by donating carefully selected trees and educating the public with Arbor events. (See page 8.)

Of course, the wrong tree in the wrong place can be a hazard to both public safety and electric reliability. Maintaining cleared rights-of-way is a necessary - and expensive - part of our business. ACRT has been a valuable partner for our vegetation management program. We also contract with Carr's Tree Service for tree-trimming and Central Applicators for follow-up herbicide spraying to help prevent regrowth. Again, public and employee safety and electric reliability for members are among our co-op's core values.

Todd-Wadena will soon be spraying in rights-of-way in the following townships: Bullard, Byron, Thomastown, Becker, Staples, Villard, northern Fawn Lake, northern Moran, western Bartlett and southeastern Aldrich.

In addition, mowing will continue in Ward, Turtle Creek, Cushing, Little Elk, Bruce, Hartford, Reynolds, Iona, Parker and Long Prairie townships.



Robin Doege  
President/CEO

## Board Minutes

Highlights from the April 27, 2015, regular board meeting:

- Robin said notifications are being sent to members regarding planned right-of-way spraying. He said he will be posting notice for a communications professional in preparation for Pat Johnson's retirement in the fall. A Great River Energy solar project will be located near the Leaf River substation.
- Lisa Graba-Meech said March sales and revenues were under budget. Year to date, sales are 1% over budget and revenues are 2% under budget. Lisa reviewed the rate study results as prepared by Power System Engineering. A motion passed to approve rate adjustments to Large Power, Irrigation and Large Power Peak Alert rate classes and to raise the Demand Charge for Large Power and Large Power Peak Alert classes. The PCA to affected classes was raised from \$0.00726/kWh to \$0.01120/kWh.
- Tim Pavek reported on new legislation that exempts utility-controlled water heaters from a large capacity water heater ban. Installations of upgraded member meters are scheduled to begin in July. Pat Johnson reviewed the annual meeting and plans for additional 75th anniversary events. An electrical safety/Arbor event at the Verndale School will be held May 22.
- Mike Thorson said Great River Energy's partnership with Headwaters Resources for the sale of flyash results in both revenue and avoided landfill costs. GRE has issued a proposal for 11 MW of solar generation.
- Director appointments were made to the Economic Development, Safety and Policy Committees.

# CapX2020 power line projects celebrated

Electric utility executives, renewable energy supporters, state officials and legislators gathered recently to celebrate the energization of two high-voltage transmission lines. These projects, which span nearly 500 miles, are part of CapX2020, the largest grid expansion in the Upper Midwest in decades. Great River Energy, wholesale power supplier to Todd-Wadena, is one of the 11 CapX2020 utilities and has taken a leadership role since its inception more than 10 years ago.

“CapX2020 represents a vital expansion of electrical transmission capacity for our energy and economic future,” said MN Dept of Commerce Commissioner Michael Rothman. “Modernizing the electrical grid benefits Minnesota residents and businesses, delivering more reliable, efficient power and supporting further development of renewable energy resources.”

On March 26 the CapX2020 utilities energized the Brookings County-Hampton project, a 250-mile, 345-kilovolt transmission line between a substation near Brookings, SD, and the Hampton Substation south of the Twin Cities. One week later, the utilities energized the Fargo-St. Cloud-Monticello project, a 240-mile, 345-kilovolt transmission line between the Bison Substation near Fargo and the Monticello Substation.

These projects have been in the works for more than 10 years. CapX2020 is a joint initiative of 11 transmission-owning utilities in Minnesota and the surrounding region developing five projects that total 800 miles with an investment of more than \$2 billion.

The CapX2020 grid expansion plays an essential role in meeting



**Brad Oachs, Minnesota Power; Will Kaul, Great River Energy, Terry Wolf, Missouri River Energy; Tim Rogelstad, Otter Tail Power; Steve Thompson, CMMPA; Kent Larson and Teresa Mogensen, Xcel Energy, dedicated the Fargo-St. Cloud-Monticello 345 kV project on May 4, 2015.**

customers’ needs. It helps ensure customers will continue to receive reliable, affordable energy well into the future. It also adds outlets for new generation, including renewable energy.

Great River Energy’s Transmission Vice President and CapX2020 Chairman Will Kaul said the projects are becoming the backbone of the region’s electricity grid and that the CapX2020 organization’s vision holds strong.

“These projects are being completed just in time to facilitate the transition in generation resources and address increasing concerns about security and grid reliability,” said Kaul. “It shows just how durable our original vision was.”

While the CapX2020 transmission lines are located in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin, their benefits reach far beyond the Upper Midwest.

They are part of the Midcontinent Independent System Operator, which oversees transmission in 15 states and the Canadian province of Manitoba.

“As our region faces more uncertainty and a tightening of generation resources, projects like this will play a key role in ensuring access to reliable, low-cost energy,” said Priti Patel, regional executive for MISO North Region.

### About CapX2020

CapX2020 is a joint initiative of 11 transmission-owning utilities in Minnesota and the surrounding region formed to upgrade and expand the electric transmission grid to ensure continued reliable and affordable service. The projects included four 345-kilovolt transmission lines in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin, and a 230-kilovolt line in northern Minnesota. For more, visit [capx2020.com](http://capx2020.com).

## Take steps this summer to lower energy costs year-around

Making your home more energy efficient is one of the best investments you can make. Here are a few energy saving measures that can reap major returns on your investments:

- Install a programmable thermostat.
- Switch to low-flow shower heads.
- Plant a tree to shade the house.
- Upgrade appliances like your clothes washer or your refrigerator.
- Replace old windows with energy efficient ones.

Making all of these changes at once could be difficult, but investing

in just one of these measures can yield a significant return on your investment.

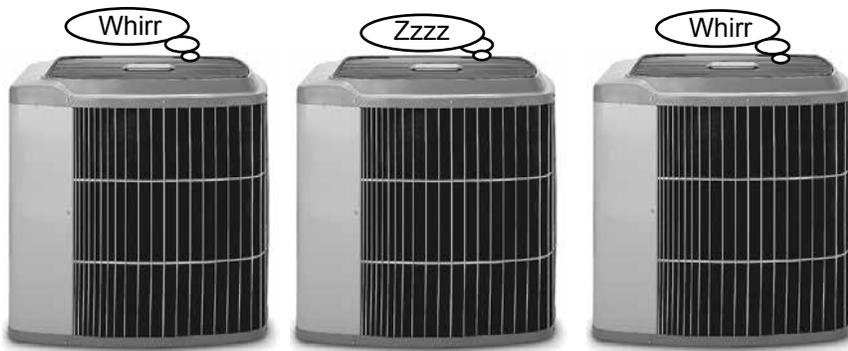
For example, installing a new, energy efficient clothes washer can yield around a 24 percent return on investment. Do your research, and make sure you are purchasing the right size appliances. A small, energy efficient washer will save you money, but if you have a larger family, having to do multiple loads could negate your energy savings.

One of the most important energy efficient improvements to make during the hot summer months is air sealing and insulating. By adding

insulation in attics, floors over crawl spaces and accessible basement rim joints, you can reduce your heating and cooling costs by an average of 15 percent (and it could lower your overall energy costs by an average of 11 percent!).

You can also lower your air conditioner's energy consumption by 5 to 15 percent by cleaning your air ducts. Install energy efficient window treatments to reduce energy costs by around 10 percent. Or, you can simply turn on a ceiling fan, which will allow you to raise your thermostat temperature by four degrees, without impacting your comfort.

## Give your air conditioner and your budget a break!



Air conditioning used wisely can keep you cool without breaking the bank.

On hot days, Todd-Wadena's PowerNap® program uses a receiver to cycle electricity off for about 15 of every 30 minutes. The systems can be controlled up to six hours per day for no more than 200 hours per cooling season.

This practice reduces the peak use of electricity at times when electricity prices are highest, which helps control power

costs for everyone - without causing significant temperature fluctuations.

Joining the PowerNap program requires some electrical wiring by a qualified electrician. If you enroll in the program by July 31, you will receive a \$100 rebate to offset the cost for a contractor's work. For details and to enroll, call the Todd-Wadena office at 218-631-3120 or 800-321-8932.

*NOTE: Central air systems already under off-peak control are not eligible for this offer.*

Take a  
**PowerNap®**  
and get \$8  
credits on your  
summer bills\*!

Enroll by July 31  
and get a  
**\$100 rebate\*!**

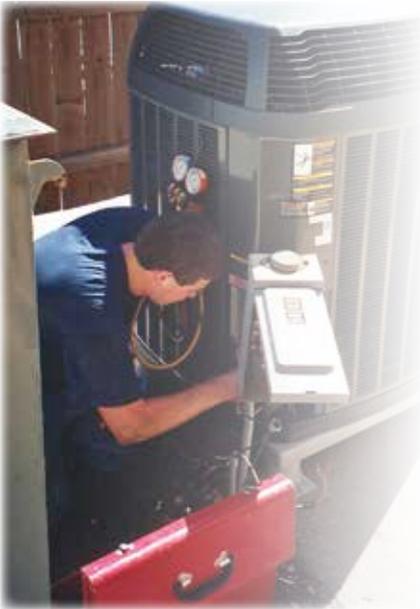
\*Credit applies  
June, July, August.

\*Rebate applies to NEW  
PowerNap installations.

# Get a \$35 rebate to tune up your AC or heat pump

The best way to ensure efficient operation of your cooling system is by having it tuned-up every two years. A tune-up by a service expert can improve your unit's efficiency by as much as 20 percent, extend its life and help protect our environment.

Act now to get a **\$35 Tune-up Rebate!**



### TO QUALIFY:

- Tune-up must be completed where electricity is supplied by Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative.
- The central air conditioner or air-source heat pump must be in operating condition, over three years of age and have not had a tune-up in the last two years.
- Program is for tune-ups only; it does not cover the cost for repairs of the air conditioner or heat pump.
- Systems qualify for the tune-up rebate once every two years.

### HOW TO GET A REBATE:

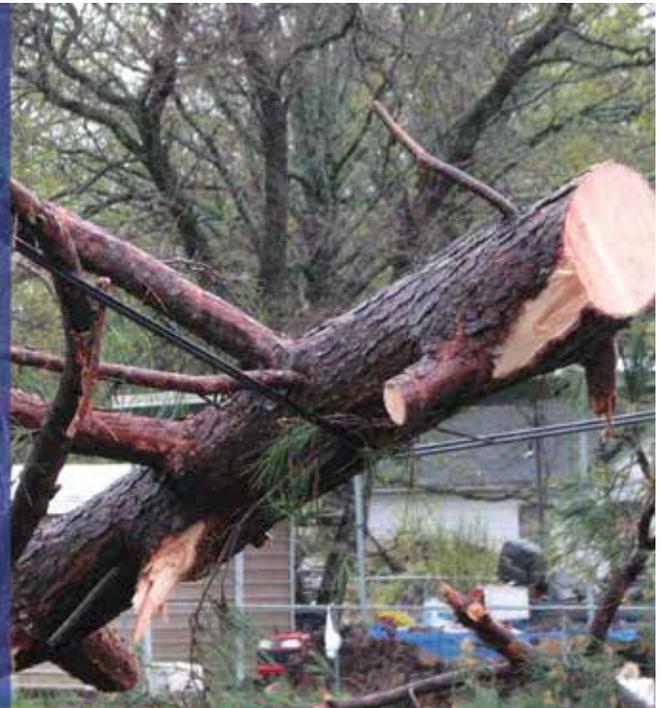
1. Use the coupon below OR call the cooperative OR go to [toddwadena.coop/forms](http://toddwadena.coop/forms) to get a AC Tune-Up Rebate form.
2. Hire the contractor and have your contractor fill out the contractor portion of the coupon.
3. Complete the member portion of coupon and return to Todd-Wadena along with a copy of the contractor invoice.
4. Rebate is available through July 31, 2015. Allow 2-4 weeks for processing.

Tune-up for summer coupon											
<p><b>Member Information</b></p> <p>Member name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City _____ State _____ Zip _____</p> <p>Contact phone number _____</p> <p>Account number _____</p> <p>I certify that a tune-up has been performed at the residence above by a HVAC contractor.</p> <p>Member signature _____</p> <p>Mail to: Mary Williams Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative P.O. Box 431 Wadena MN 56482</p>	<p><b>Contractor Information</b></p> <p>Equipment brand _____</p> <p>Model number _____</p> <p>Serial number _____</p> <p>Approx. age of unit _____ yrs. SEER rating _____</p> <p>I certify that I have completed the following on this unit.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> clean condenser coil</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> check belt, if needed</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> check coolant level</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> lube motor, if needed</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> check coolant pressure</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> visually inspect entire system</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> test all controls</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> blow out drain lines</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> check indoor furnace filter</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> educate homeowner on system operation</td> </tr> </table> <p>Contractor signature _____</p> <p>Contractor company _____</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> clean condenser coil	<input type="checkbox"/> check belt, if needed	<input type="checkbox"/> check coolant level	<input type="checkbox"/> lube motor, if needed	<input type="checkbox"/> check coolant pressure	<input type="checkbox"/> visually inspect entire system	<input type="checkbox"/> test all controls	<input type="checkbox"/> blow out drain lines	<input type="checkbox"/> check indoor furnace filter	<input type="checkbox"/> educate homeowner on system operation
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## Safety Matters!

### Summer Storm Safety Tip

Strong summer storms can create dangerous situations. Always avoid downed power lines - the wire could be live, which could be deadly for those nearby. Quickly report downed power lines to your local electric cooperative.



No one knows electrical safety better than the experts who practice it every single day. The employees of Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative remind you to be aware of hazards that can occur during and after a summer storm.

- Avoid wires and water – When lightning strikes a home during a storm, the electrical charge can surge through pipes and utility wires. That means you can get zapped if you're touching water or any device that's plugged in, whether it's a landline phone or toaster.
- Skip the makeshift shelter – During a storm, it's tempting to take cover under a picnic gazebo or golf cart, but in open-sided structures with no conductors to channel strikes, a bolt's path of least resistance to the ground could be you. On top of that, these structures raise your risk of a lightning strike because of their height. Keep moving toward suitable shelter.
- Portable generators – Take special care with portable generators, which can provide a good source of power, but if improperly installed or operated, can become deadly. Do not connect generators directly to household wiring. Power from generators can back-feed along power lines and electrocute anyone coming in contact with them, including co-op line workers making repairs. It's best to hire a qualified, licensed electrician to install your generator and ensure that it meets local electrical codes.

- Flooded areas – Stay away from downed power lines and avoid walking through flooded areas. Power lines could be submerged and still live with electricity. Report any downed lines you see to [insert co-op/PPD/PUD name] by calling [phone number] immediately.
- Electrical equipment – Never use electrical equipment that is wet - especially outdoor electrical equipment, which could be a potential danger after a summer storm. Water can damage electrical equipment and parts, posing a shock or fire hazard.

- Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative's website contains many resources regarding safety during and after storms. Just click on the Outage Information button on the main page.

You'll find a link to the 'Be Red Cross Ready' Power Outage Checklist and a checklist for emergency preparedness. You can also view short videos about

- Food Safety During an Outage
- How to Prepare an Emergency Kit
- Automatic Garage Doors during an Outage.



### See the source of your electricity 2015 Power Plant Tour is August 19-22

Join a chartered bus trip to central North Dakota in August to see the source of your electric power - from the coal mine, to the power plant, to the DC line that transmits electricity into Minnesota.

In addition to professional tours of the power plant facilities, our group will visit the Knife River Indian village and enjoy an evening tour and hearty appetizers at the newly renovated Heritage Museum in Bismarck.

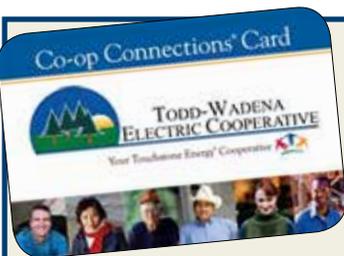
The cost to members is \$150 per person for double occupancy room and \$175 per person for single occupancy, which includes transportation, all tours, the evening meal at the Heritage Museum, and two nights lodging and breakfasts at the Bismarck Holiday Inn Express.

Call the cooperative office for more information and to sign up.  
218-631-3120 or 800-321-8932.



The person in the photo above gives perspective to the size of the tires on the coal-hauling trucks.

The two mammoth draglines at Falkirk Mine uncover the coal below ground. Coal Creek Station is shown in the distance.



### Healthy Savings!

The prescription discount offer through your Co-op Connections Card is now joined by discounts on dental. Best of all, these benefits are free!

To see the list of participating dental clinics and pharmacies, log on to Todd-Wadena's website, [toddwadena.coop](http://toddwadena.coop). Find 'Co-op Connections Card' under the 'Our Services' tab and follow the directions from there. Present your card to the participating office when inquiring about the discount. A number on the back of the card is required.



Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer. If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (PDF), found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

# PINE TO PRAIRIE NEWS

A monthly publication for  
members and friends of



## Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative

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### 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 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 and report any tree branches, twisted wires, broken poles and if your neighbors are also out of power.

Before digging call:  
Gopher State One-Call  
800-252-1166

Printed on recycled paper.



## Lessons about electricity and trees



Trees and electricity. They enhance our world in immeasurable ways and there is much to learn about both. Nicholas Rickaby, a contracted arborist with Todd-Wadena, shared his love and knowledge of trees with Verndale 5th and 6th graders last month. Students learned how to select the right tree for the right place and how to plant and care for them. Meanwhile, Greg Jacobson (left), energy management technician, demonstrated how to keep safe from outdoor electrical hazards.

