

Meals 4 Members

DELIVERING MORE THAN JUST ELECTRICITY!

We are collecting food items for *Meals 4 Members*. Your donation will help Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative (TWEC) members in need. **Please donate unexpired goods or non-perishable food items now through April 9th.**

If you are in need, or if you know of a member in need, please fill out a one-time Meals 4 Members home delivery request



form located on our website, www.toddwadena.coop, under *Upcoming Events*, or by calling Allison at (218) 632-3217 or Kallie at (218) 632-3216.

Dan Carlisle, TWEC's President/CEO will be delivering Meals 4 Members home delivery baskets on a weekly basis through **April 9th**. Sign up or call if you or another member is in need.

**Available to Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative members. Requests will be added to a delivery list.*

Coffee With the CEO

Are you interested in learning more about what's going on at Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative? Do you have any questions or topics you'd like to discuss?



Dan Carlisle, Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative's CEO, invites members to join him for a "*Coffee With the CEO*" event on **Tuesday, March 9th**. The casual coffee hour is planned from 6:30-7:30 a.m. at the Cooperative.

Additional Coffee With the CEO events at TWEC are scheduled for **April 6th, May 4th, and June 8th** – all from 6:30-7:30 a.m.



PLEASE REVIEW PROPOSED CHANGES TO BYLAWS ON PAGE 3



Election Integrity

As a member of Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative, each of you has a significant role to play in helping direct the future of the cooperative. One of the many ways our members can get involved in the cooperative is by participating in the democratic process of electing our board of directors. TWEC's board is made up of cooperative members, elected by fellow members at the Annual Meeting.

Election integrity is extremely important to all of us at Todd-Wadena. To conduct a secure and fair election, the cooperative partners with Survey & Ballot Systems (SBS) for our election process. SBS acts as a trusted third party helping to ensure elections are fair, transparent, efficient, and effective.

Here is an overview of the services SBS provides for TWEC:

- **Election Security:** SBS is *SOC II Type 2 Compliant*. All security related policies, procedures, and plans follow strict auditable steps and are reviewed on a scheduled basis.
- **System Architecture and Firewall Protection:** SBS security architecture and firewall protection exceed recommended security practices. All data processed and stored by SBS is encrypted end-to-end, both in transit and at rest. Firewalls are monitored and maintained, to protect election data at all times.
- **Data Center Provider:** SBS partners with a premier third-party data center, *Flexential*, for private cloud data services. Flexential's Minnesota location is in Chaska, Minnesota but is part of a larger 40 data center network for purposes of colocation and disaster recovery.
- **Voter Security:** The first step in ensuring voter security in an election is ensuring secure transfer of the voter (member) database to SBS personnel for the ballots. SBS utilizes a secure file portal, which is encrypted end-to-end using *TLS Encryption Version 1.2*.
- **Physical Security:** All ballots will be secured by a three-tiered security vault. SBS offices are enhanced with physical and electronic security.
1) All visitors are required to sign in and present credentials. **2)** Visitors do not have access to the production area unless escorted by an SBS employee. **3)** Within the production facility, project documents, including ballots, will be stored in a locked vault at SBS with limited access by authorized SBS staff while in process or during production.

By utilizing the election services provided by SBS, Todd-Wadena is making sure the cooperative's election process is both transparent and secure. We encourage you to take part in voting for TWEC's Board of Directors and the proposed Bylaw amendments at the upcoming Annual Meeting on April 20th, 2021.



Daniel Carlisle
President/CEO & General Counsel

Board Minutes

Highlights from the December 18th, 2020, regular board meeting:

- CEO Dan Carlisle reviewed the 2021 RE-PAC and ACRE voluntary donation requests and updated the Board on a few in-house matters.
- Carlisle then followed up on TWEC's Bylaw amendment discussion. A resolution was presented that would add language to article I, modify language to article III, and add a new article IX. The changes will be prepared on the 2021 ballot, in conjunction with the 2021 Annual Meeting. The Board approved the resolution as written.
- Lisa Graba-Meech, CFO, presented the November financials to the Board. Monthly kWh sales were 4 percent under budget. Energy revenue was 2 percent under budget. November's purchased power expense was 5 percent over budget. Tier is 2.93 and Equity is 45.63.
- Board members approved TWEC's 2021 Budget as presented.
- The 2021 organizational memberships were approved.
- The Board approved a margin refund based on actual 2020 year-end margins; with the final refund amount being determined at the January board meeting to be applied to members' February bill.
- Operations Manager Todd Miller talked about the new 2020 collector app being used for inventory. The app has allowed the process to be streamlined, with the team finishing inventory in almost half the time.
- Board Member Mike Thorson gave the financial report for Great River Energy (GRE). The November financials were not favorable as the weather was milder than expected, resulting in margins being below budget. Year-end margin projections are still very favorable. The GRE Board approved a \$2.5 million bill credit for members; \$2.5 million in additional COVID-19 relief funds; \$8.3 million designated to pay off prepayments; with the remainder of the excess margin used for demo expenses at Elk River Station.
- Board Chair Miles Kuschel shared some expected trends for the future. He anticipates a substantial push for electric vehicles and a continued focus on renewable energy.
- Board Member Dale Adams gave the STAR Energy report noting how STAR Energy will end 2020 in a strong financial position.

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

➔ 2021 Proposed Bylaw Changes



Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative (TWEC) Bylaws are the rules by which the Cooperative is operated. The Bylaws and all amendments are adopted and approved by members at TWEC's Annual Meeting. At various times, the membership has voted to amend the Bylaws to keep up with changes the Cooperative is experiencing. You may remember

the last Bylaw change in 2013 when the membership approved electronic voting!

The TWEC Board of Directors, representing your interests at the Cooperative, is unanimously recommending a series of amendments. The following proposed Bylaw amendments will be voted on by members at TWEC's Annual Meeting on April 20th. If approved, these changes will become effective on April 20th, 2021.

We are confident these proposed changes will result in better privacy for our members, a more practical time period for TWEC staff and members to complete the petition process, and a more efficient way to address conflict by implementing an arbitration process.

If you have questions or comments, please call us at (218) 631-3120. Staff will be happy to discuss the proposed changes further.

The following is a summary of the three bylaw changes recommended by the board of directors:

Article I, Section 5 - The intent behind adding this new section to the Bylaws is to allow the Cooperative to better protect its members' information by clarifying and restricting the circumstances under which the Cooperative may disclose such information.

Article III, Section 4 - The intent of the amendment to this Bylaw provision is to allow adequate time for proper ballot preparation in advance of printing and administrative deadlines imposed by our election administrator.

Article IX, Section 1 - The intent of adding this new section to the Bylaws is to implement the arbitration process for dispute resolution with members. It is expected that arbitration will provide a fair, expedient, and cost-effective means of resolving disputes between the Cooperative and its members.

WANTED: DIRECTOR NOMINEES

Are you interested in serving the Cooperative?

The Cooperative's Board of Directors is comprised of members like YOU!

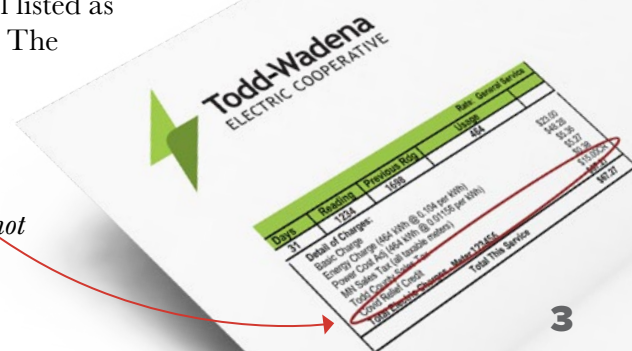
If you are interested in serving on the TWEC Board of Directors, contact Kallie at (218) 631-3120 for more information by **February 18th**.

The 2021 Annual Meeting will be held virtually on April 20th.

COVID-19 Relief Credit

The Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative Board of Directors approved a \$400,000 COVID-19 Relief Credit to active members for 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Co-op had unusual financial savings for the year. Savings were generated from the *Paycheck Protection Plan* loan forgiveness, COVID relief credits from our wholesale power supplier Great River Energy, and decreased contracted services along with cancelled activities. These savings provided additional net margins which the board approved refunding back to our members.

The refund will appear on active members' January's energy bill listed as a Covid-19 Relief Credit. The Relief Credit amount is based on the energy that an active member purchased in 2020. *Refunds under \$3.00 will not be credited to accounts.*



How Much Heat Did You Need?

When we need to measure how much energy was required to heat a specific location relative to weather over a period of time, we use Heating Degree Days (HDD). HDD are a measure of **how much** (in degrees), and for **how long** (in days), the outside air temperature was below a certain level. The base temperature of a building is generally the temperature below which that building needs to be heated. The base temperature generally used in the U.S. is 65 degrees.

Essentially, the energy consumption of a building can be calculated by measuring the difference between the desired indoor temperature and the outdoor temperature. As we are talking specifically about heating degree days, we are looking at days when the outside temperature is colder.

WADENA, MINNESOTA HAD THE FOLLOWING HEATING DEGREE DAYS AS REPORTED WEEKLY:

STATION: WADENA AIRPORT

HEATING DEGREE DAYS EXAMPLE:

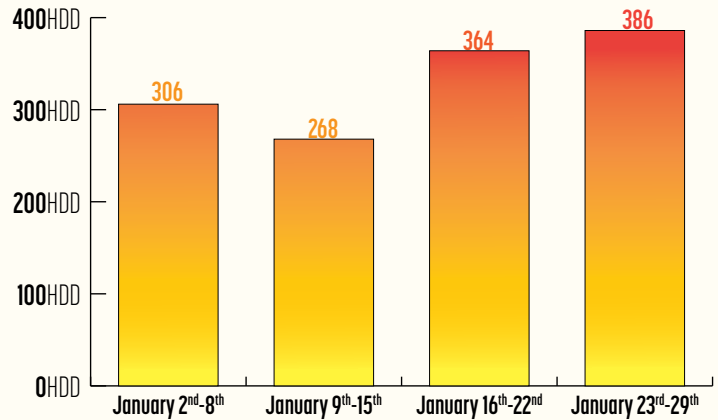
A day with an average temperature of 5 degrees would be considered as a 60 heating degree day.

$$65^{\circ} (\text{base temp.}) - 5^{\circ} (\text{average temp.}) = 60 \text{ HDD}$$

Another day with an average temperature of 0 degrees would be considered as a 65 heating degree day.

$$65^{\circ} (\text{base temp.}) - 0^{\circ} (\text{average temp.}) = 65 \text{ HDD}$$

Heating degree days are then quantified and reported for a day, week, month, or year.



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 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.

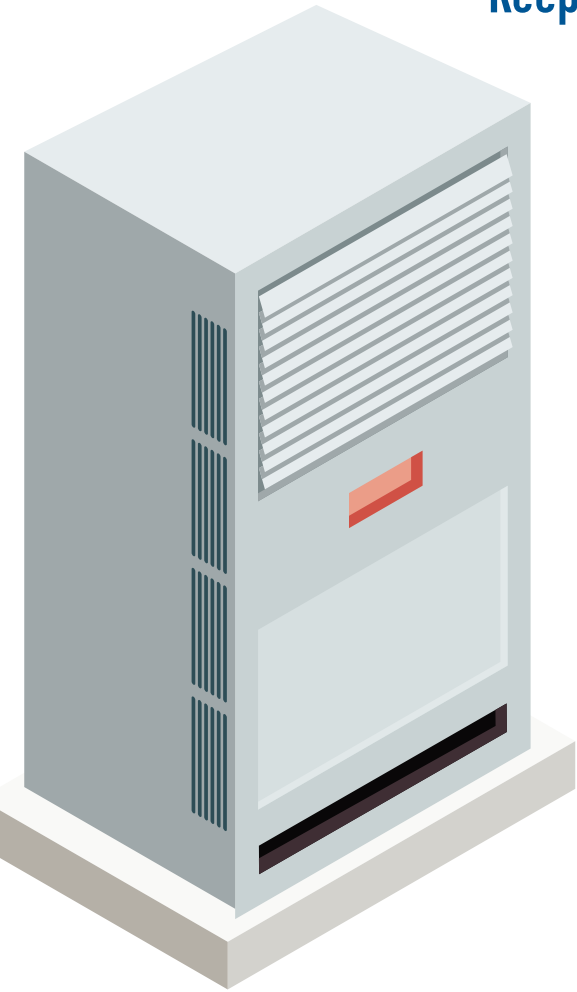
Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Use wool or rubber dryer balls in the clothes dryer to reduce drying time and static.

Wool dryer balls can also absorb extra moisture. These are an efficient alternative to dryer sheets, which can create buildup on the dryer's filter and reduce air circulation. If you prefer dryer sheets, scrub the filter once a month to remove buildup.

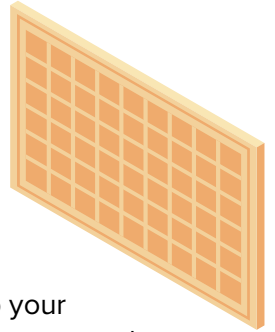
Source: www.energy.gov

Keep Your HVAC System Ticking like a Well-Oiled Machine



After our homes and vehicles, our heating and cooling systems are some of the more expensive things many of us own. Yet, unlike our vehicles, we often don't think about them until something breaks. They're usually in a closet, or the basement, quietly working to keep us comfortable. As long as they continue working, we ignore them. But regular maintenance allows your furnace and A/C to work more efficiently and last longer. Here are some simple steps you can take to keep your system in good shape.

1. Check and change or clean the filter. If your system moves air around your house, it has an air filter. Much like changing the oil in your car, your air filter is meant to be checked and replaced regularly — like changing the oil in your car, except much easier, faster, and cheaper to do. Not only does it filter dust, pollen, pet hair, and other particles out of the air you breathe, it also keeps those things from gumming up your equipment. If your filter is coated with dust and grime, your system won't be able to deliver the air flow you need. In addition, all that extra work to push air wastes energy without delivering comfort. Lastly, running without enough air flow will ultimately damage your equipment. Fortunately, changing a filter is easy to do!



2. Have a professional come do a checkup. It's a good idea to have a contractor come take a look at your heating and cooling equipment regularly—just like a checkup on your car. The best time to do so is fall or spring, when it isn't very hot or cold. Often contractors are less busy during these times of year and can schedule a visit when it's convenient for you.

3. Should you think about replacement? If your A/C or furnace are more than 10 years old, thinking ahead about a replacement is a good idea. Replacing it with a newer, more efficient model can help you save, and if you do it before it breaks down, you can schedule it at your convenience.

For more information on keeping your home comfortable and energy efficient, check out the ENERGY STAR website at www.energystar.gov.

\$5

Go Paperless & Get Five

\$5

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, 2021.*



Longevity Awards—Ending in 2020



Todd Miller

Operations/Line Superintendent



Jason Orlando

Crew Chief

Retirement

Congratulations to Al Malone on his retirement. Al started at TWEC in February 2008 as a Right-of-Way Crew Chief. Al cleared and maintained TWEC rights-of-way. Al's last day was Tuesday, January 5th. Enjoy retirement!



ECO Act Remains a Top Legislative Priority in 2021

In 2007, Minnesota's Conservation Improvement Program (CIP) was established, creating goals for all utilities – including electric cooperatives – to reduce their annual electricity sales by 1.5% and to spend at least 1.5% of revenues to achieve this goal. Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative is proud that we've consistently met or exceeded these goals.

When CIP started, select energy efficient purchases were incentivized including Energy Star rated appliances and LED lighting. Some of these items were just making their entry into the marketplace, and it was a win-win to encourage co-op member-owners to use these new products. Thanks in part to CIP, we've reached a point of saturation with many of the energy efficiency incentives introduced more than a decade ago and the electric power industry is the only segment of the economy that has exceeded its carbon reduction goals.

While CIP has been beneficial, it has become outdated, lacks an emphasis on innovation, and doesn't support many advancements that have positive environmental impacts. To modernize the program, Minnesota's electric cooperatives, along with other industry partners, drafted the Energy Conservation and Optimization (ECO) Act. This bill emphasizes total energy efficiency across many sectors – energy, transportation, agriculture, and others – to encourage

diverse improvements. Under the ECO Act, the goal to reduce electricity use by 1.5% annually will remain intact. However, a portion of this may be achieved with efficient electrification programs such as incentivizing EVs. The 1.5% spending requirement would be eliminated unless the reduction in electricity use is not met.

Todd-Wadena supports this bill because we believe it provides more long-term, sustainable benefits for our members. The benefits include:

- ✦ Allowing Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative more flexibility to meet our annual energy savings goals by enabling us to count EV incentives, electric storage water heaters, and air source heat pumps toward part of the goal.
- ✦ Helping the environment by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and fostering a more resilient grid.
- ✦ Encouraging innovation by supporting continuously advancing technologies.
- ✦ Reducing consumers' total energy bills by eliminating the mandated 1.5% spending requirements while providing better tools for reducing carbon.

If you want to join us in advocating for this legislative change, contact your Minnesota political leaders.

Last Chance to Apply for 2021 Scholarships



Graduating High School Senior Scholarship

Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative (TWEC) will award up to **three \$1,000 scholarships** to 2021 graduating high school seniors for their first year (freshman) as a college student.

Adults Power Up Non-Traditional Scholarship

In addition, TWEC will award up to **one \$1,000 Power Up Non-Traditional Scholarship** to an adult student who is either headed to college for the first time, returning to complete an interrupted education, or looking to return to college to improve his or her career opportunities.

Apply now! Applications are available on our website at www.toddwadena.coop.

Please submit your application and attachments to: *Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative, Attn: Scholarship Program, P.O. Box 431, Wadena, MN 56482.* Applications must be postmarked on or by **February 24th**.



Save the Date!

Our Annual Meeting is taking place on **Tuesday, April 20th, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.**

This year, the meeting will be fully virtual. We'll be providing more details soon, but make sure to mark your calendars!

THANK YOU to all of our local health care workers. We appreciate all that you do! We know this past year has been challenging and we want to say *thank you* for your dedication.



Pine to Prairie News

A monthly publication for
members and friends of



Todd-Wadena
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

www.toddwadena.coop

Office Hours: 8:00am - 4:30pm
Monday - Friday

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

Email: todd-wad@toddwadena.coop

Address: 550 Ash Avenue NE
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:

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
www.instagram.com/twec.coop

Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative

P.O. Box 431

Wadena, MN 56482

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Our Lobby is Open!

Todd-Wadena
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE



Our lobby is now open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Masks are required and we ask that all visitors practice social distancing in the lobby.

READER'S CONTEST

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@toddwadena.coop with the subject line "Reader's Contest". Be sure to include your name and TWEC service address. Entries must be received by February 25th.

1. Heating _____ Days are a measure of how much, and for how long, the outside air temperature was below a certain level.
2. Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative _____ must be postmarked on or by February 24th, 2021.
3. The 2021 Annual Meeting will take place _____ on April 20th, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.

Name:

Your TWEC Service Address:

| | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
|----------------------|----------------------|



John Trout of Wadena was the winner of our January Reader's Contest.