



## Director Candidates Selected

The 2022 Nominating Committee met on January 20<sup>th</sup> to select candidates for the 2022 director elections. Two seats on the Todd-Wadena Board of Directors will expire at the Annual Meeting on April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

The Committee nominated **Marie Katterhagen** and **Mike Thorson** (incumbents), as well as **Judy Richer**, **Staci Stoerzinger\***, and **John Wolak\***.

Next month's newsletter, the March *Pine to Prairie*, will have profiles of each candidate (profiles will also be in the ballot packets that all members receive).

*\*John Wolak and Staci Stoerzinger have withdrawn their names from consideration.*

## How to Vote

In March, ballot packets with voting instructions will be mailed to members from *Survey and Ballot Systems* based out of Eden Prairie. *Survey and Ballot Systems* will also receive, scan, and tabulate ballots that members complete and return using the pre-addressed, pre-stamped envelopes provided. *Survey and Ballot Systems* will tabulate alternative options that include **electronic voting** and **on-site voting** at the Annual Meeting on April 19<sup>th</sup>.

## 2022 Annual Meeting is April 19<sup>th</sup>

Save the date for our 2022 Annual Meeting! The meeting will be **Tuesday, April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022** at the Maslowski Wellness & Research Center in Wadena, MN. Bring the entire family! Children will be able to enjoy free swimming before and during the business meeting. A meal will follow the business meeting.

### SCHEDULE

- 3:30 p.m.** Registration Opens
- 4:00 p.m.** Energy Resource Mix Deep Dive Session  
    >> Free Swim
- 4:30 p.m.** Bingo
- 5:30 p.m.** Business Meeting with meal to follow



Maslowski Wellness & Research Center, 17 5<sup>th</sup> St. SW, Wadena, MN

## Meals **4** Members

Our *Meals 4 Members* program is continuing to collect and distribute food donations to members who can use assistance. Please donate **unexpired goods** or **non-perishable food items** now through April. Monetary donations are also welcome.

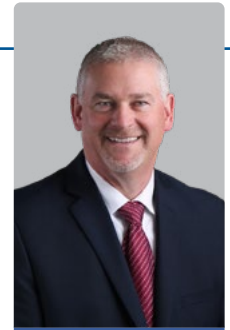
If you are in need, please fill out a one-time *Meals 4 Members* home delivery request form by visiting our website, [www.toddwadena.coop](http://www.toddwadena.coop), or by calling or Kallie at (218) 632-3216.



Note: *Meals 4 Members* is available for TWEC members. Requests will be added to a delivery list.



Last year, Great River Energy (GRE) announced its plans, along with member-owners and stakeholders, to close Coal Creek Station. As many of you know, plans have evolved in many ways since that first decision was made. Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative's Board of Directors and staff are committed to working with GRE to achieve the best outcome – with a priority of continuing to provide affordable and reliable energy to our members. On January 6<sup>th</sup>, another milestone occurred in the journey of Coal Creek. Please see the announcement from GRE below.



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

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

## Key Approvals Advance Great River Energy Portfolio Transition

Recent actions by energy regulators in St. Paul and Washington, D.C., have moved Great River Energy further along in the transition of its power supply portfolio. Approvals by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission will help facilitate Great River Energy's sale of Coal Creek Station and its high-voltage direct-current (HVDC) transmission system to Rainbow Energy Center and Nexus Line, respectively.

The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission on Jan. 6 approved the transfer from Great River Energy to Nexus Line of the construction permit for the Minnesota portion of the HVDC system that spans between central North Dakota and the Twin Cities. The Commission is expected to issue a final order confirming its approval in the near future.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission on Dec. 30 issued an order effective on Jan. 1 approving an amended generator interconnection agreement between Great River Energy and the region's grid operator that changes Coal Creek Station's point of interconnection on

the electric grid from the Coal Creek Station Substation to the Dickinson Substation adjacent to the Minnesota terminus of the HVDC system. Great River Energy's rights under the amended generator interconnection agreement will be transferred to Rainbow Energy Center at the closing of the sale.

The sale is a major component of Great River Energy's power supply strategy. The cooperative shut down two uneconomic power plants and plans to more than double its renewable energy resources. The utility will also convert its last remaining coal resource to be fueled primarily with natural gas and install a 1-megawatt (MW), multi-day battery demonstration system.

"We are on track to reduce our carbon emissions by more than 80%, while taking advantage of federal incentives for renewables to keep costs competitive. We also maintain a strong fleet of dual fuel peaking plants for reliability," said Great River Energy Vice President and Chief Power Supply Officer Jon Brekke.

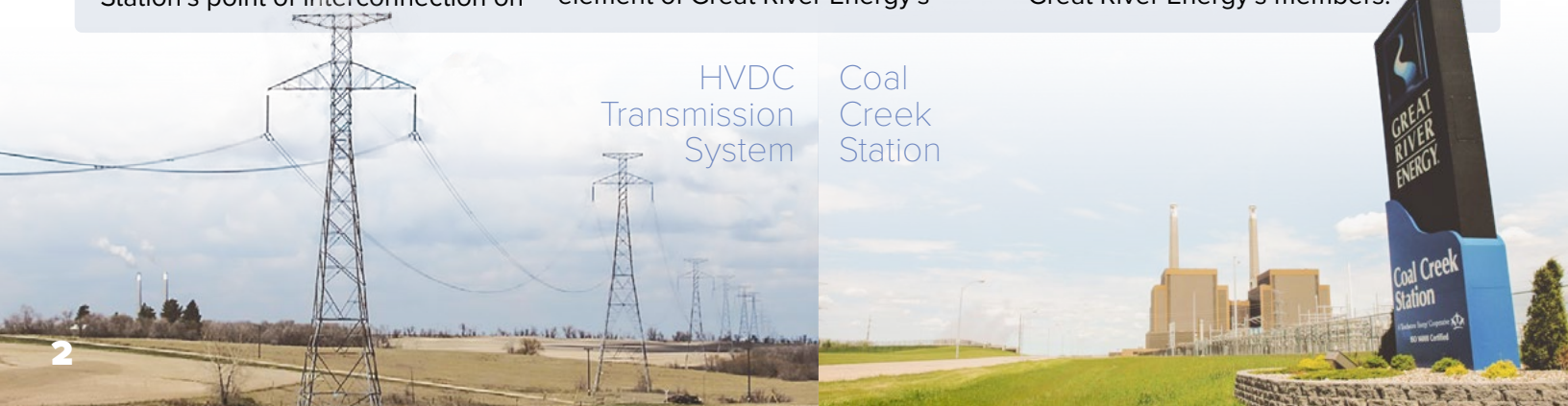
Included in the sale, and also a key element of Great River Energy's

power supply strategy, is an arrangement for Rainbow Energy Center and Nexus Line to provide Great River Energy with the right to interconnect to the HVDC system and transmit on it 400 MW of wind energy that would be delivered in Minnesota. Great River Energy expects to enter into a long-term power purchase agreement for a 400 MW wind energy facility expected to be online by the end of 2025.

"Access to transmission has emerged as one of the primary constraints to renewable energy development," said Great River Energy Vice President and Chief Transmission Officer Priti Patel. "This transaction opens a new pathway for Minnesota to receive renewable energy while ensuring continued reliability and energy sufficiency."

Great River Energy will continue to operate and maintain the HVDC system under a 20-year contract with Nexus Line.

Closing of the transaction to sell Coal Creek Station and the HVDC system is expected no earlier than May 1<sup>st</sup> and is subject to the approval of Great River Energy's members.



HVDC  
Transmission  
System

Coal  
Creek  
Station



## Last Chance for 2022 Scholarships

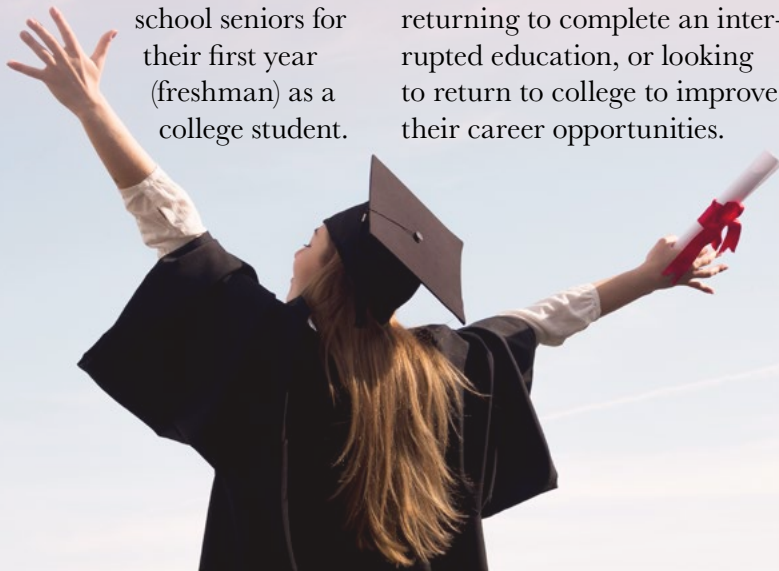
Application deadline is February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Find more info and application at [www.toddwadena.coop](http://www.toddwadena.coop).

### GRADUATING HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR SCHOLARSHIP

Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative will award up to four \$1,000 Scholarships to 2022 graduating high school seniors for their first year (freshman) as a college student.

### POWER UP ADULT SCHOLARSHIP

Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative will award up to two \$1,000 Power Up Adult Scholarships to adult students headed to college for the first time, returning to complete an interrupted education, or looking to return to college to improve their career opportunities.



## Watch Out for Utility Scams

Many utility scams are making their way around again. We want to remind our members that Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative will **never demand immediate payment.**



We also **do not accept** the following payment methods:

- ✦ Bitcoin
- ✦ Prepaid cards
- ✦ Third-party payment apps

If you receive a call demanding payment immediately, especially via one of the payment options above — hang up and call us directly at (800) 321-8932 or (218) 631-3120 to verify your account status and to report the scam.

## Board Minutes

**Highlights from the December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021, regular board meeting:**

- CEO Dan Carlisle shared some highlights from a variety of meetings he attended over the past month. He concluded his report by giving an update and status report on the 2021 Strategic Goals.
- Lisa Graba-Meech, CFO, presented the November financials to the board. Monthly kWh sales were 5 percent under budget. Energy revenue was 2 percent under budget. November's purchased power expense was 2 percent under budget. TIER is 1.29 and Equity is 42.83.
- The board approved TWEC's 2022 Budget and 10-Year Forecast with the conditions that the MES Department EV budget item be explored between purchase and lease options, and that the CEO be given the ability to create the .8 FTE position in the best interest of the cooperative.
- The 2022 Membership Fees & Dues were approved.
- Member and Energy Services Manager Allison Uselman highlighted the changes and timeline for the ECO Act. The biggest difference is that there is no longer a dollar amount requirement, only the 1.5% of energy savings to reach the ECO goals.
- Operations Manager Todd Miller attended the MN Safety Council meeting at the beginning of December. He noted how he plans to implement "AAR" with his team. This stands for "After Action Review" which allows and encourages each individual who worked on a project to answer four specific questions related to the job.
- Directors signed and approved the audit engagement letter with Brady Martz.
- Board Member Mike Thorson gave the Great River Energy (GRE) report. Year-to-date, GRE is showing very strong margins.
- Board Chair Miles Kuschel provided a legislative update and discussed the \$1.2 trillion infrastructure bill.

# What are Heating and Cooling Degree Days?

What are heating and cooling degree days and how can they be useful to you as a Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative member? *Degree days* are units of measurement used to indicate how warm or cool a location is at any point. The most common use of degree days is for tracking energy use.

The temperature of 65° is used as the baseline for calculating degree days because it is assumed that at 65° a person can be reasonably comfortable without any additional heating or cooling. The daily temperature for a specific location is compared to the baseline, and the difference is the *heating/cooling degree days*.

To calculate a heating degree day (HDD), subtract the average temperature for the day from 65. For temperatures below 0°, remember that subtracting a *negative* number is the same as *adding* a positive number (so 65° minus -5° = 70 HDD). To calculate a cooling degree day (CDD), simply subtract 65 from the daily average temperature.

Heating and cooling degree days are a local, geographic measurement. They are an effective way to generally assess how much energy (or demand) is required to heat or cool a building in a specific location, as well as understand changes in usage.

## How Can Heating and Cooling Degree Days Be Used?

Below is a graph showing January's data for our local region (Wadena, MN). The heating degree days (HDD), temperature, and dual fuel electric usage (or load curve) are shown together for the period of January 1<sup>st</sup>-31<sup>st</sup>. Notice how on days that the temperature is low, the heating degree days and electric usage are higher.

If you notice an increase on your energy bill/usage, check the heating degree day data for your location at [www.degreedays.net](http://www.degreedays.net). A high HDD over the billing

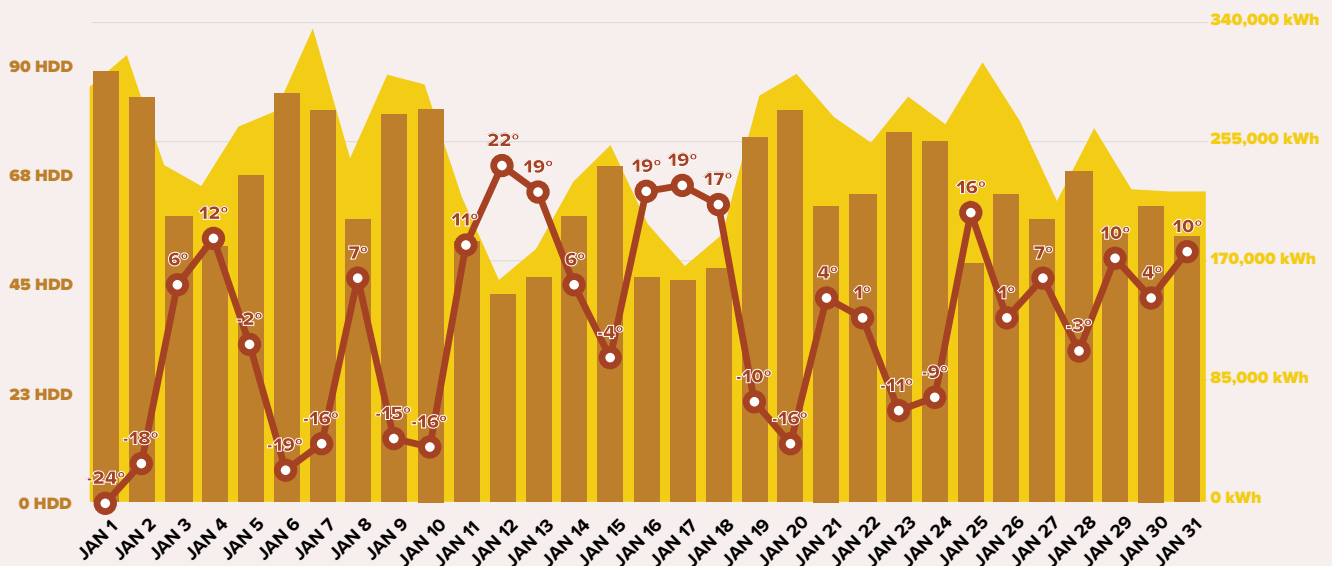
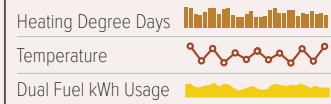
period could explain the increase in energy usage. If the HDD has not increased or has even decreased, then other factors should be reviewed. There could be a human factor, mechanical issue, or even a building issue. Finding the root cause of any unexpected increase to your electric bill could save you time and money in the future.

Heating and cooling degree days can also help you see trends in your household energy usage and assist in energy budgeting.

### January 2022

Heating Degree Days  
with Temperature  
and Dual Fuel kWh Usage

#### LEGEND



Data for Wadena, MN

# ECO Act and Beneficial Electrification

Beginning in 2007, the Conservation Improvement Program (CIP) provided energy savings requirements for all Minnesota utilities. Under CIP, utilities were required to realize energy savings each year equal to at least 1.5% of annual electricity sales and also to spend at least 1.5% of gross operating revenues on programs. Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative (TWEC) achieved these savings goals through member programs and rebates that highlighted energy-efficiency items such as Energy Star appliances and LED lighting.

Since 2007, the energy industry has changed significantly which is why stakeholders (including Minnesota co-ops) came together to devise the ECO Act. The Act, which passed in 2021, was formed to help incentivize technologies that have great efficiency while also reducing emissions. The ECO Act removes the 1.5% spending requirement as long as the utility reaches its energy savings goal.

Beneficial electrification plays a significant role in the ECO Act. Beneficial electrification is a term for replacing direct fossil fuel use (propane, heating oil, gasoline) with electricity in a way that reduces overall emissions and energy costs. There are many opportunities for beneficial electrification, including switching to an electric vehicle or an electric heating system or water heater – as long as the end-user and the environment both benefit.

The ECO Act will be a win-win. Through beneficial electrification programs, TWEC's members will be able to save money through energy-efficient technologies, as well as program rates or rebates. As TWEC and Great River Energy's portfolio continues to evolve, including more clean energy, the electricity powering these technologies is cleaner. This will not only save our members money, but also have a lower impact on the environment.



## You'll Love **AUTOPAY**

Switch today, and receive a one-time \$10 energy credit!

NEW AUTOPAY ENROLLMENT ONLY.  
PROMOTION RUNS FEBRUARY 8<sup>TH</sup>–MARCH 7<sup>TH</sup>, 2022.

## Battery Powered Tool Rebates

### Snow Blower

\$100 (Pre-tax purchase price of \$200- \$500)

\$200 (Pre-tax purchase price of \$501+)

*Must purchase at a participating local retailer. Limit of two yard tools per member, per year. Rebate is not to exceed 50% of purchase price. Purchased tools must be battery powered. Rebate program is subject to change or be canceled without notice. Call the cooperative to verify rebate program status and availability of rebates.*





## Years of Service Awards



5 Years

**Brady Erickson**

*Journeyman  
Lineworker*



5 Years

**Lisa Reed Krump**

*Purchasing Agent*



10 Years

**Trent Walter**

*Mechanic*



15 Years

**Lori Tumberg**

*Accounting  
Assistant*



15 Years

**Kristen Paurus**

*Accountant*

## Are Portable Space Heaters Efficient for My Home?

Small space heaters are meant to do exactly as their name says: heat a small space. But unfortunately, many people use portable space heaters to heat their entire home, which can really take a toll on your energy bills.

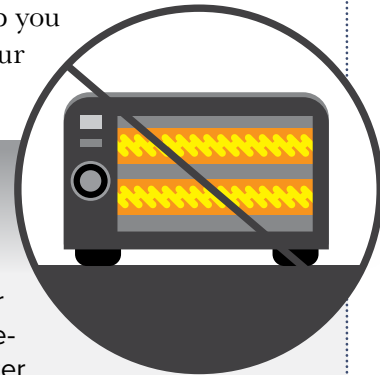
If you're using a space heater to compensate for problems in your home, like inadequate insulation, drafty windows and exterior doors, or an inefficient heating system, space heaters are not a practical solution. Your best bet is to improve the overall

efficiency of your home. If you're on a tight budget, caulking and weather stripping around windows and exterior doors is a low-cost, easy way to save energy.

Perhaps your home is energy efficient but you're cold-natured and want a specific room to be cozier than the rest. In this case, a space heater may work for your needs. Only use a space heater in small spaces that you're occupying and, if possible, try to shut off other rooms to contain the warmth provided by the space heater.

Consider alternative ways to stay warm like extra layers of clothing or UL-approved electric blankets. If you have hardwood or tile floors, lay down area rugs to provide additional insulation and maintain warmth.

If you're looking for alternative ways to save energy and increase comfort in your home, contact TWEC at (800) 321-8932 or (218) 631-3120. We're here to help you manage your energy use.



## TIPS TO DITCH THE SPACE HEATER



Space heaters are energy hogs, and older models can be extremely dangerous. This winter, ditch the space heater and try these alternative solutions to stay cozy.

- Use an electric blanket to keep warm during the night.
- Caulk and weatherstrip around all windows and doors to prevent heat loss.
- Consider adding insulation to your attic and around duct work.

## Keep Vents and Air Inlets Clear of Snow and Ice



We are encouraging all Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative members to keep furnace exhaust vents, air intake hoods, and chimneys clear of snow and ice to keep the heat on and prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.

Homeowners with high-efficiency furnaces and other vented combustion appliances may have air intake and exhaust vents that exit the home through an *exterior sidewall* rather than a *chimney*. Water heaters, clothes dryers, and air-to-air heat exchangers may have similar sidewall vents. If the vents are covered by snowfalls or drifts, it may prevent the fresh air intake needed to operate the appliance.

Some furnaces will shut off automatically if intakes or exhausts are smothered by snow and ice. However, for those that continue to run, carbon monoxide can build up in the home and cause a dangerous situation. CO is a colorless, odorless gas that can be lethal.

Please take the following safety measures to prevent the dangerous backdrafting of CO and to help

keep your combustion appliances operating safely:

- Make sure CO detectors are working throughout the house. Minnesota law requires CO alarms in every single-family and multifamily dwelling.
- Keep vents clear and free of snow and ice. Check them regularly.

Minnesota building code requires that intake and exhaust vents be not less than 12 inches above ground to prevent clogging. Also, buildup of snow and ice on gas and electric meters can cause them to malfunction—utilities recommend keeping them clear.

A well-functioning, older, less-efficient furnace that vents through the chimney will usually create exhaust temperatures that are hot enough to melt any snow that might collect on the chimney. But it's a good idea to check chimneys and rooftop vents (such as on mobile homes) to make sure they are not snow clogged. If you suspect a problem, clear the snow if it can be done safely or hire a snow removal professional.

### Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

About 30% of a home's heating energy is lost through inefficient windows. Caulk and weatherstrip all windows to seal air leaks.

When running your home heating system, lock all operable windows to ensure the tightest seal possible.

Source: [www.energy.gov](http://www.energy.gov)



**Todd-Wadena**  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

**Mission Statement //**  
To be a trusted partner providing safe, reliable, and affordable energy options to our members.

**Vision Statement //**  
To improve the quality of life for our members and embrace beneficial opportunities in a changing industry.

**Values //**  
Service • Safety • Fiscal Responsibility • Integrity • Communicate & Educate • Commitment to Community

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

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

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## 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

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[www.facebook.com/toddwadanaelectriccooperative](http://www.facebook.com/toddwadanaelectriccooperative)  
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## Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative

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

1. The 2022 Annual Meeting will be held on April \_\_\_\_\_, 2022 at the Maslowski Wellness and Research Center in Wadena.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Days are units of measurement used to indicate how warm or cool a location is at any point.
3. Switch to AutoPay and receive a one-time \$\_\_\_\_\_ energy credit.

Name:

Your TWEC Account Number:

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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**Kurt Bergquist of Menahga was the winner of our January Reader's Contest.**