



Todd-Wadena
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Pine to Prairie
www.toddwadena.coop
March 2026

ANNUAL MEETING

SAVE THE DATE APR 16

**We hope that you are able to join us
for this once-a-year event!**

Todd-Wadena Electric
Cooperative Annual Meeting

**Thursday Evening, April 16, 2026
Maslowski Wellness & Research Center**

SCHEDULE 4:00 p.m. Registration / Free Swim / Transmission Trail
4:30 p.m. Bingo
5:30 p.m. Business meeting with meal



Official Notice of Annual Meeting

Please take notice that a regular meeting of the members of Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative will be held at 5:30 p.m., Thursday, April 16th, 2026. The meeting will be held at the *Maslowski Wellness and Research Center* at 17^{5th} Street SW in the City of Wadena, Minnesota, at which time and place the following matters will come before the meeting for consideration:

1. Presentation and consideration of reports of officers and managers.
2. Election of three directors to serve terms of three years. Ballots will be mailed to all members; alternative voting options will include electronic voting and on-site voting at the annual meeting on April 16, 2026. Mailed and electronic ballots will be counted as a vote if properly received by *Survey & Ballot Systems* by 8:00 a.m. CST on April 16, 2026. The Nominating Committee selected the following nominees whose names will appear on the ballot for terms expiring in 2029: *Kristine Spadgenske, Dale Adams, Gene Kern, Steven C. Peterson.*
3. Any other business to properly come before this meeting.

Marie Katterhagen, Secretary

Members who stay through the business meeting will receive the heavy-duty paring knife attendance gift. We look forward to seeing you there!



Reliability and Our Commitment to Vegetation Management

When you become a member of Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative, you're not just signing up for electric service, you're becoming part of a cooperative built on shared responsibility. One of those shared responsibilities is maintaining safe and reliable power through effective vegetation management.

Trees and power lines don't mix well. In fact, trees are one of the leading causes of power outages across our region. Whether it's branches brushing lines during high winds or entire trees coming down during a storm, unmanaged vegetation can quickly interrupt service. That's why TWEC maintains a proactive and consistent tree trimming policy.

Our policy ensures that primary lines outside of residential yards are maintained with a minimum of 20 feet of horizontal clearance on each side of the pole line from the ground up. For overhead primary lines located in members' yards, we maintain a minimum of 10 feet of horizontal clearance on each side and 10 feet below the line. Three-phase power lines located in yards require 15 feet from the outside lines and 10 feet below the neutral line.

Beyond the designated right-of-way, we also identify and address "danger trees". These are trees that are dead, diseased, damaged, or leaning and could contact the line if they fall. Even a single tree outside the immediate corridor can cause outages or blinking lights if it comes down in the wrong direction. If you notice a tree near power lines that appears unsafe or could potentially impact service, please contact TWEC. Our team will evaluate the situation and determine the appropriate next steps. Member awareness is a valuable part of keeping our system safe and reliable.

This ongoing work is part of our vegetation management program, which includes tree pruning, brush removal, mowing, and targeted spraying. Our Arborist, Joe Sworski, coordinates this effort alongside TWEC crews and our vegetation management contractor, Carr's Tree Service. Portions of our system are rotated each year to ensure we eventually cover our entire service territory over time. By staying on schedule, we reduce outages, improve safety, and protect the long-term reliability of your electric service.

This spring and summer, we are spraying vegetation along circuits served by the Staples, Ward, and Hartford substations. Central Applicators has been contracted to perform this work and will notify affected members by mail regarding the timeline. I encourage you to carefully read the notification letter and contact **Central Applicators** if you have questions or concerns. Their logo (*featured to the right*) will appear on the mailing so you can easily identify it.

Vegetation management isn't always the most visible part of what we do, but it is one of the most important. Reliable service doesn't happen by accident. It requires planning, consistency, and cooperation.

Thank you for your understanding and partnership as we continue the work of keeping our right-of-way clear and the power flowing safely to your home or business.



Daniel Carlisle
President/CEO &
General Counsel

LOOK FOR THIS
LOGO IN THE MAIL



Daniel Carlisle
President/CEO & General Counsel



SCAN TO LEARN MORE!



Your Voice Matters in Energy Policy

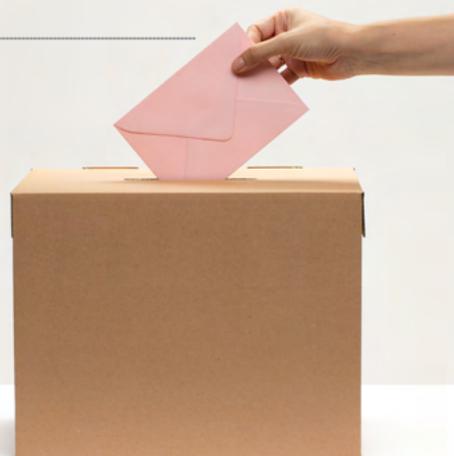
Todd Wadena Electric Cooperative is one of 50 electric co-ops serving rural Minnesota. Together through our statewide organization, MREA, and our national organization, NRECA, we're working to ensure cooperative voices are heard at the Capitol this legislative session.

Join us in advocating for reliable, affordable energy for all Minnesotans by signing up for **Voices for Cooperative Power (VCP)**. This grassroots network helps make sure the needs of rural communities are represented in state and national policy decisions.

Learn more and sign up at voicesforcooperativepower.com/minnesota

2026 Director Candidate Voting Options

Cooperatives are *democratic entities*, owned by those they serve and governed by elected representatives. In fact, one of the seven cooperative principles is *Democratic Member Control*. In order to underscore this principle, we offer multiple ways to cast your vote. This year you can vote for up to **three candidates**, who will each serve a three-year term ending in 2029.

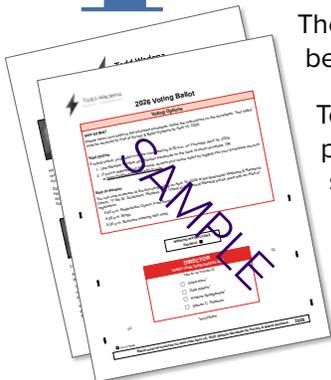


1 VOTE BY MAIL

Election ballots were mailed to all Todd-Wadena members on or around March 10th. The ballots look like the sample to the left.

The order of candidate names will be rotated among ballots.

To vote by mail, complete your ballot, place ballot in secret envelope, and seal. Place secret ballot envelope in the white, pre-paid return envelope, and mail. The ballots will be mailed directly to our election company, SBS, to tabulate. **Your ballot must be received by April 16th, 2026.**



NOTICE CONCERNING MAILING ENVELOPES

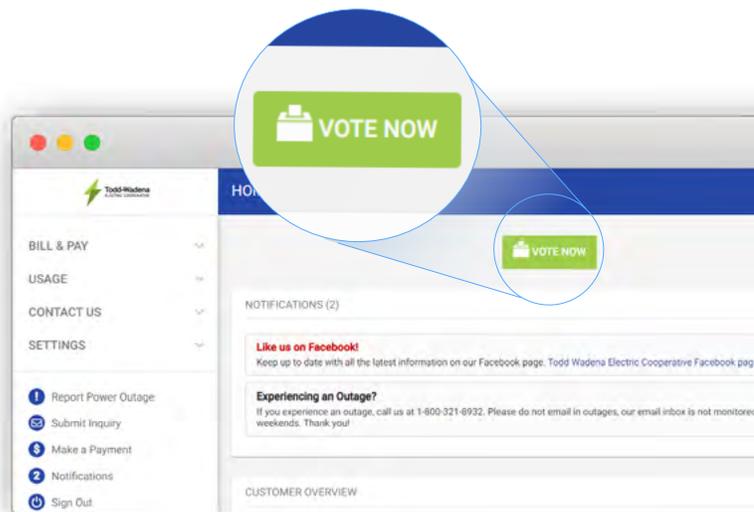
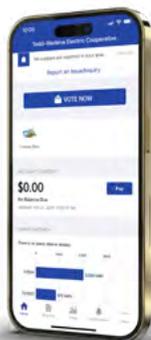
There are two envelopes to be returned with each ballot. One is the **pre-addressed, postage-paid envelope**, and the other is the **secret ballot envelope**. It is very important that the ballot is first placed into the secret ballot envelope, and then that envelope is placed into the pre-addressed envelope to be mailed. **If the ballots are not in a secret ballot envelope they cannot be counted as a valid vote.**

2 VOTE ONLINE

Online voting must be completed by **8:00 a.m. on Thursday, April 16th, 2026.**

There will be instructions with the ballot you received in the mail (or via email) on how you can vote online using **DirectVote**. You do **not** need a SmartHub account in order to vote this way. Once you've authenticated through the DirectVote page, follow the instructions to cast your vote.

OR If you're a registered user on **SmartHub**, access your online ballot by logging into SmartHub at **toddwadena.smarthub.coop** and click the **VOTE NOW** button, or open the SmartHub app and vote there.



3 VOTE IN-PERSON AT THE ANNUAL MEETING

Vote in-person at the Annual Meeting on **Thursday, April 16th, 2026** at the *Maslowski Wellness & Research Center*.

Registration opens at 4:00 p.m., with the business meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m. **Voting at the Annual Meeting will be done with an iPad at registration.**

Election results will be announced at the close of the Annual Meeting on April 16th and printed in the May issue of *Pine to Prairie News*.

2026 Board Candidates

KRISTINE SPADGENSKE



Kristine and her husband, Mark, live eight miles west of Menahga where they dairy farm in a partnership with Mark's brother, Mike. They milk 350 cows and farm 1,000 acres. Kristine and Mark have four children, Ryan (wife Jen), Kate (husband Benny), Adam, and Seth.

Kristine has been the clerk for Runeberg Township for the last 20 years. She currently serves as

Director on DFA Co-op Central Area Council, and serves as Corporate Board Director; Director on the Minnesota Division Board, where she serves as Chair; and Corporate Board Director for Midwest Dairy. Her family actively attends Relayt Church.

Kristine and Mark have been members of Todd-Wadena since 1994. "I have always been impressed with customer service, management of lines to decrease outages, cost savings programs, as well as lower rates compared to other cooperatives in the area. I value the cooperative model where members have a real voice in how decisions are made. It is vitally important that we maintain a strong cooperative for future generations," said Kristine.

Kristine has served on the Todd-Wadena Board since 2019, when she was appointed to fill a vacancy. It has been a privilege representing the members while working with a great Board and fantastic employees. In December of 2021, Kristine completed her Credentialed Cooperative Director training. She says, "I believe the more information and knowledge I can gain about the utility world allows me to make better decisions for our members."

DALE ADAMS



Dale and his wife, Susan, enjoy life in the country on a farm south of Aldrich. Dale has been self-employed as an electrical contractor since 1977, but is now moving on to other adventures including several rental properties in the Staples area.

Dale was elected to the Todd-Wadena board in 1996 and currently serves as Treasurer. In 2012, he was appointed to represent TWEC on the STAR Energy Services Board.

He is also Treasurer and Trustee for the Church of Christ in Staples. After serving 25 years on the Bartlett Township board, he continues to serve the township as an election judge.

He feels a challenge for the Cooperative is the ability to maintain reliability when there is a push to move to all renewable energy, along with the Minnesota law requiring generation to be carbon free by 2040. Wind and solar output varies and, at times, is not producing much on our coldest winter days when the demand is highest.

Dale has been involved with electricity most of his life, from troubleshooting electrical problems to wiring buildings. He said, "My time on the Board at TWEC has given me insight into the power supply side of the industry. It is enjoyable to serve on the board of a cooperative that has such dedicated and knowledgeable employees working for the benefit of our members. I would be happy to continue to represent you on the Board."

TWEC Board Minutes: Highlights from the January 28th, 2026, regular board meeting.

- As part of TWEC's strategic plan to increase legislative efforts, CEO Dan Carlisle shared ideas from the CEO Close-Up conference on opportunities and ways employees can support political actions, taking a non-partisan approach.
- The board and management team discussed the recent MISO emergency event, extreme cold weather, and related outages.
- Board Member Mike Thorson gave the Great River Energy (GRE) report, noting how they ended the year \$75 million ahead of budget. Due to upcoming transmission and turbine projects requiring a large investment, GRE is not refunding any margins in 2025; rather, they are using the margins to maintain equity.
- Operations Manager Tyler Fisher gave a recap of 2025: crews installed 109 new services, replaced 204 poles, completed 66 service upgrades, reconstructed 6 miles of overhead 3-phase, and converted 1.5 miles from overhead to underground. In vegetation management, over 22 miles of tree trimming was completed and TWEC crews addressed 182 tree service orders.
- Lisa Graba-Meech, CFO, presented the December and year-end financials to the board. Monthly kWh sales were 13 percent over budget, year-end 3 percent under budget. Energy revenue was

GENE KERN



Gene Kern is a lifelong resident of the Bluegrass area in Wadena County where he and his wife of 40 years, Jan, continue to reside on their farm. They have two children, Sarah and Adam, and five grandchildren.

Gene graduated from Sebeka High School and

from the University of Minnesota with a degree in Agricultural Education. After 25 years of dairy farming, Gene now raises beef and hay. He is also a substitute teacher and has spent the past several summers working for the Minnesota Department of Agriculture with the Invasive Species Programs. Gene is a Trustee at St. Hubert's Catholic Church in Bluegrass.

A Todd-Wadena director since 1996, Gene currently serves on Todd-Wadena's Economic Development Committee and has taken the classes necessary to be a fully-accredited electric cooperative director.

"Energy issues impact each of us," Gene said, "and electric cooperative directors are challenged to keep current with research and development of future energy technologies. My goal is to help ensure that Todd-Wadena continues to provide safe, efficient, reliable energy at the lowest possible rates."

He also feels it is important to stay current on political mandates and keep good relationships with local and state politicians. "We must work with our elected officials, and keep them informed about the issues that affect central Minnesota," Gene said.

STEVEN C. PETERSON



Steve has lived in Todd County his entire life. He graduated from Bertha-Hewitt and attended Wadena Area Technical Institute, completing the 11-month class of telephone central office. He worked on the family farm, along with other short-term employments before landing a position at First National Bank in Bertha. There, he primarily learned their insurance agency business which he ended up managing and then purchasing. Along with the agency, he became the

IRA/HSA Administrator and Security Officer for the Bertha office and the other nine Star Bank offices. He retired first from the insurance agency and then the bank in January 2024.

Outside of the bank, Steve did various things at the Bertha-Hewitt School. Activities he was involved with include officiating football, boys and girls basketball, softball, and baseball. He was also recruited to announce for the indoor marching band concert for over 20 years. Currently, Steve does the public address announcements for football.

Steve served on the Bertha Volunteer Ambulance Service for 24 years. He was elected to the Hewitt City Council for six years and served as mayor for two. He also served on the Hewitt Fire Department for 27 years, serving as Fire Chief for 11 of those years. In 2016, he joined the Bertha Clinic Advisory Committee and is still an active member.

Steve joined the Hewitt Lions as a charter member where he served multiple terms as treasurer and president. He is currently a member of two 501 (c) (3) nonprofits, the Bertha Area Sportsman Club, of which he is president, and the Ringnecks Forevermore as a director.

Steve has always been interested in learning new things. He believes the chance to be on the board of a very successful cooperative would be a great opportunity to learn more and contribute from his past varied experience whenever possible.

11 percent over budget, year-end 0.8 percent under budget. December's purchased power expense was 14 percent over budget, year-end 0.5 percent under budget. TIER is 3.04 and Equity is 41.57.

- *The board approved the 2026 Membership and Dues and the 2026 Budget as presented.*
- *Member & Energy Services Manager Allison Frederickson shared department highlights from 2025. TWEC paid back rebates to members of \$85,000 and has over 8,000 services enrolled in a load management program. The Operation Round Up Trust awarded over \$20,000 to community organizations.*

- *The Nominating Committee met in January and officially nominated Gene Kern, Dale Adams, Kristine Spadgenske, and Steven C. Peterson to run in the 2026 Board of Directors election for three positions.*
- *Graba-Meech discussed Finance Department projects completed in 2025, including setting up Banking Positive Pay, WAPA changes and new contracts signed, HR items, work order training for employees, and applying for a capital equipment sales tax refund.*
- *Director of Corporate Services, IT, & Cybersecurity Abby Harrison gave a recap of the IT and cybersecurity measures that were put in place in 2025.*

2026 Member Services Programs & Rebates

Water Heating

Peak Shave Water Heating	\$450* for 85 gallon Marathon \$550* for 105 gallon Marathon Non-Marathon- \$400 cash rebate (<i>must be at least 85 gal</i>)	\$8/month credit after 36 months for new construction or gas switching. \$8/month credit after 60 months. *New program enrollment only.
Electric Thermal Storage (ETS) Water Heater Program	\$450* for 85 gallon Marathon \$550* for 105 gallon Marathon Non-Marathon- \$400 cash rebate (<i>must be at least 85 gal</i>)	Low 4.5¢ kWh rate (plus \$2/mo meter fee). Must enroll in the ETS Water Heater Storage program. *New program enrollment only.
Existing Controlled Replacement	\$100/heater	Must provide receipt. Total gallons must equal at least 85 gallons.

HVAC

Load Management Dual Fuel Rebate (<i>For electric heating systems: boiler, furnace, baseboard heat, plenum heater, ETS Room Storage</i>)	\$35/kW	\$500 Max Rebate is for electric heating systems only. Must be enrolled for the Dual Fuel Program to receive rebate.
Quality Installed Air Source Heat Pump (<i>QI contractor required for rebate</i>)	\$750 \$1,000	≤5-ton, ≥14.3 SEER2 & ≥7.5 HSPF2 ≤5-ton, ≥ 2026 CEE Tier 1
Ground Source Heat Pump	\$400/ton	Must be Energy Star rated
Storage Heat	\$50/kW	Up to 10 kW/\$500
Ductless ASHP (<i>rebate not to exceed 50% of purchase price</i>)	\$150 \$250 \$750 \$1,000	≤1-ton ≥14.3 SEER2 & ≥7.5 HSPF2; ≤1-ton 2026 CEE Tier 1; >1-ton ≥14.3 SEER2 & ≥7.5 HSPF2; >1-ton 2026 CEE Tier 1;
Quality Installed Central Air Conditioning Unit (<i>QI contractor required for rebate</i>)	\$50	≥15.2 SEER2
Cooling System Tune Up	\$25	Documentation by contractor
ECM Furnace Blower Motor with or without AC (<i>replacement only</i>)	\$25	
Wi-Fi Thermostat	\$25	Must be Wi-Fi smart thermostat

Electric Appliances

Freezer/Refrigerator (<i>with recycling</i>)	\$70 rebate	Must be Energy Star rated
Clothes Dryer	\$10 rebate	
Dehumidifier	\$10 rebate	
Washing Machine	\$10 rebate	
Dishwasher	\$10 rebate	

Lighting

LED Bulbs	\$2/bulb	Rebate cannot exceed 50% of purchase price.
LED Yard Light Rebate	\$20/fixture	Minimum 50 watt LED

Electric Vehicles (EVs)

ChargeWise	\$500	Rebate is to be used towards installation of electric vehicle charger. Must enroll in an electric vehicle charging rate.
-------------------	-------	---

Battery Powered Yard Tools

Lawn Mower/Snow Blower	\$50	Rebate is not to exceed 50% of purchase price. Battery powered yard tools must be purchased at a participating local retailer. Limit of two yard tools per year, per member.
Edger, Trimmers, Chainsaw, Pole Saw, or Leaf Blower	\$25	

Power Cost Adjustment on March Bills

The Power Cost Adjustment (PCA) on this month's bill reflects higher wholesale power costs passed through from Great River Energy (GRE). An extended period of unusually cold weather in January drove electricity use higher across the Midwest, creating very high demand on the regional electric grid. This led to significantly higher electricity prices in the wholesale market.

Great River Energy and other utilities throughout the region were able to ensure the system remained safe and dependable during the cold stretch. Sufficient generation and system capacity were available to meet the need.

Because the recent adjustment from GRE was tied to energy costs rather than demand, the cooperative applied the PCA across all rate classes so the costs are shared more fairly among members.

PCA Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Power Cost Adjustment (PCA)?

The Power Cost Adjustment is a per-kWh charge that reflects monthly changes in the cost of generating and delivering electricity. Fuel prices, weather, system load, and the regional generation mix can all affect power costs. Because your energy rate is fixed while wholesale power costs vary, the PCA adjusts for that difference each month. The PCA may appear as a charge, a credit, or zero.

Why is there a PCA on my bill?

As a not-for-profit cooperative, we only collect what is needed to operate the electric system. The PCA allows wholesale power cost changes to pass through without frequently adjusting base rates.

Does everyone receive a PCA?

Yes. This PCA will apply to all rate classes. Previously, it applied only to general service, large power, and three-phase rates only. Interruptible rates were excluded because they reduced demand, but the PCA now reflects *energy costs*, not *demand*, so applying it to all rates ensures fairness. The PCA is calculated the same way as your energy charge: the PCA rate (per kWh) multiplied by the number of kWh used. Members with more than one service or rate (such as General Service and Dual Heat) may see multiple PCA line items tied to each service's usage.

Safety Demonstrations Spark Curiosity Across Our Schools

Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative spent January and February on the road sharing electrical safety demonstrations with local students. In total, our team visited five schools and community groups, reaching more than **275 students** with hands-on demonstrations and real world safety tips.

Students learned why pad mounted transformer boxes should never be used as play equipment, what to do if they're ever involved in a vehicle accident with a utility pole, and how to stay safe around electricity in their everyday lives. Along the way, a few may have even discovered a spark of interest in future linework careers.



Annual Cogeneration Notification to Membership

In compliance with Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative adopted rules relating to cogeneration and small power production, Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative is obligated to interconnect with and purchase electricity from cogenerators and small power producers who satisfy the conditions as a Qualifying Facility. Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative is obligated to provide information free of charge to all interested members upon request regarding rates and interconnection requirements. All interconnections require an application and approval to become a qualifying facility. Any dispute over interconnections, sales, and purchases is subject to resolution by the Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative Board. Interested members should contact *Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 431, Wadena, MN 56482* or call (218) 631-3120.

Use the NOVA Power Portal to find more documentation on interconnection, as well as apply. More information is available at www.toddwadena.coop/cogeneration.

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

Website: www.toddwadena.coop

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:

Bob Kent (612) 528-5326

Wadena County:

Brandon Disselbrett (218) 580-8614

District 10 (Todd & Wadena Counties):

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
www.instagram.com/twec coop

Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative

P.O. Box 431

Wadena, MN 56482

Printed on recycled paper.

PRSR STD
U.S. Postage

PAID
DPC

Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative's office will be closed on April 3rd for Good Friday. Happy Easter!

March 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@toddwadena.coop with the subject line "Reader's Contest". Be sure to include your name and TWEC service address. Entries must be received by **April 15th**.

1. The 2026 Annual Meeting will take place on _____, April 16th at the Maslowski Wellness & Research Center in Wadena.
2. Vote in the Director Elections by _____, online, or in person at the Annual Meeting.
3. TWEC offers rebates on water heating, HVAC, electric appliances, lighting, EVs, and battery powered _____.

Name:

Your TWEC Account Number:

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

Mike Collins of Wadena was the January Reader's Contest winner.