



Happy Holidays

Cookies & Coffee at the Co-op

When: Friday, December 20th
from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Where: The Lobby at Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative

Stop by our office anytime on Friday, December 20th from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and grab a cookie and a coffee or hot chocolate! Happy Holidays!



TWEC Announces Implementation of Power Cost Adjustment (PCA) for 2025

At Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative (TWEC) our mission is to deliver reliable and affordable electricity to our members. However, with upcoming power cost increases from our wholesale suppliers, Great River Energy (GRE) and Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), the TWEC Board of Directors approved the implementation of a Power Cost Adjustment (PCA) during the November board meeting. The PCA will take effect on January 1, 2025, and will first appear on February billing statements for members with general service, three-phase, and large power accounts.

While TWEC has worked diligently to absorb as much of the increased costs as possible by keeping controllable expenses tight, these unavoidable increases cannot be fully absorbed without compromising our financial stability.

Capital Credits Retired

In 2024, the Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative (TWEC) Board of Directors approved a capital credit retirement that totals **\$534,000**. TWEC is retiring \$298,000 to members active in 2009; and Great River Energy, our wholesale energy provider, is retiring \$236,000 of capital credits that will be refunded to TWEC members who had patronage from 1997-2003.

Active members: if you were a member of TWEC during the years listed above, your capital credits were applied to your account as an **energy credit** on your December bill.

(Power Cost Adjustment is continued on page 3)

Upcoming Rate Changes and Investments in Reliable Energy

Both of Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative's (TWEC) wholesale power suppliers, Great River Energy (GRE) and Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), have announced rate increases for 2025. These adjustments reflect strategic investments aimed at improving grid reliability, supporting mandated renewable energy, and ensuring financial stability.

Great River Energy (GRE)

Great River Energy, TWEC's primary wholesale power provider, is budgeting approximately \$1.1 billion in revenue and expenses for 2025. This budget supports GRE's operational needs and funds critical investments in the electric grid. One major initiative involves the buildout of high-voltage transmission lines to reduce congestion and create pathways for increased integration of state mandated renewable energy sources. These investments are vital for delivering a reliable and sustainable energy future.

GRE's Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, Michelle Strobel, explained, "We are entering a period of capital investment, but the end result will be a stronger grid and more reliable electric service. These investments are strategic and will result in lower costs over the long term."

As part of this strategy, GRE is increasing its 2025 wholesale rate by an average of 5.7% compared to the 2024 budgeted rate. This increase will strengthen GRE's financial position, enabling it to secure favorable funding terms and interest rates. Importantly, GRE operates as a not-for-profit cooperative, meaning all margins collected are ultimately returned to its members, including TWEC, over time as patronage.

While rate adjustments are always a challenge, it's worth noting that GRE's rates remain competitive compared to neighboring utilities and are well below the weighted regional cost of wholesale electricity.

Western Area Power Administration (WAPA)

Similarly, WAPA has announced rate changes for 2025. As a federal power provider, WAPA's rates are influenced by the costs of maintaining its hydroelectric facilities and transmission

systems. These changes are part of WAPA's commitment to providing reliable, affordable electricity to rural communities while maintaining its infrastructure.

What This Means for TWEC Members

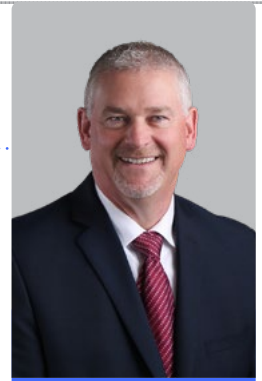
These rate adjustments from GRE and WAPA will have a direct impact on TWEC's wholesale power costs, which make up a significant portion of our operating expenses. We are currently evaluating the extent of these changes and are working to minimize the impact on members.

At TWEC, we remain committed to providing you with safe, reliable, and affordable electricity. Our focus is on managing costs efficiently while ensuring that we have the infrastructure and resources to meet your energy needs now and in the future.

Looking Ahead

These investments by GRE and WAPA represent efforts to create a more robust and sustainable energy system. While rate increases are never welcome, they are necessary to maintain and enhance the reliability of the electric grid and support the transition to the mandated renewable energy sources.

We appreciate your understanding and patience as we navigate these changes. TWEC's mission remains unchanged: to serve our members with dedication to safe, affordable, and reliable service.



Daniel Carlisle
President/CEO &
General Counsel

Daniel Carlisle
President/CEO & General Counsel

Power Cost Adjustment

(Continued from front page)

How the PCA Works

The PCA will be calculated based on your monthly kilowatt-hour (kWh) usage, meaning the dollar amount may fluctuate from month to month depending on your energy consumption. There are two components to the PCA:

1) Annual Rate Increases from GRE and WAPA:

This portion of the PCA ensures that TWEC can cover the annual cost increases from our power suppliers.

- 2) **Monthly PCA from GRE:** This portion may be either a credit or a charge, depending on GRE's power purchase expenses and their need to pass on a monthly PCA. This dynamic adjustment reflects fluctuations in the cost of wholesale power on a month-by-month basis.

Why is the PCA Necessary?

The PCA allows TWEC to respond to changes in the cost of power supply without adjusting base rates, ensuring fairness and flexibility. By tying the PCA to actual usage and supplier costs, we can better align the cooperative's power expenses with revenue while maintaining financial stability for the cooperative.

More Information Coming in January

Members are encouraged to look for additional details about the PCA in the January edition of *Pine to Prairie*. The newsletter will include further explanations of how the PCA is calculated, examples of what members might expect on their bills. We'll also address frequently asked questions to ensure you have the information you need to understand this adjustment.

We understand that any additional charge can be a concern, and we are committed to transparency and member education. For more information about the rate increases from GRE and WAPA, please refer to this month's CEO Column or contact us directly with any questions.

Thank you for your understanding as we navigate these challenges while continuing to uphold our commitment to serving you.

Get Your 2025 Calendars!



It's that time of the year again! Our 2025 calendars are available, but going fast. Stop by to pick up a calendar at our office or at one of our pick up locations throughout the service territory (*locations listed below*). Limited quantities are available at each location.

Pick Up Locations

Browerville

Pro-Ag Farmers' Co-op // 501 Railroad Ave.

Long Prairie

Long Prairie Chamber of Commerce/Great River Regional Library's Foyer // 43 3rd St. N.

Menahga

A Clean Plate Local & Organic Grocery
13 Birch Ave. SE

Staples

Hubbard's Hardware // 205 Warner Road NE

Wadena

Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative
550 Ash Avenue NE (Hwy. 10)

Note: Our offices will be closed on the following dates.

📅 **December 17th** (11:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.)
for an employee meeting

📅 **December 24th-25th**
for Christmas

📅 **January 1st**
for New Year's Day

📅 **January 20th** for MLK Jr. Day

2025 NRECA Youth Tour **JUNE 16-21, 2025**

One local sophomore or junior will win a trip of a lifetime to explore Washington, D.C. for the *2025 NRECA Youth Tour*. Each year, Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative holds a contest to select one high school student to attend the NRECA Youth Tour.

The trip to Washington, D.C. is an all-expense-paid trip to see our nation's capital. The winner will travel with approximately 40 other Minnesota teens, and join 1,900 students from across the nation. Participants will learn about cooperatives, visit with their congressional representatives, tour some of the most famous museums in the world, and make memories and friends that will last a lifetime.

What is Youth Tour?

- ✓ An all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., paid for by Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative.
- ✓ A week of visiting historic monuments, touring world class museums, learning about cooperatives, and meeting with elected officials.
- ✓ Develop life-long friendships with other students from across the state and country!

Who is Eligible?

- ✓ Applicants must be a sophomore or junior in high school.
- ✓ Their parent(s)' or guardians' primary residence must receive electric service from Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative.

How to Apply

- ✓ Applicants must fill out the online application by 4:30 p.m. on February 10, 2025.
- ✓ Visit www.toddwadena.coop to apply!



"I absolutely loved it. The Youth Tour trip is truly that of a lifetime."

-Heidi Zimmerman
2024 Youth Tour Representative



MEALS 4 MEMBERS

Our desire is to serve Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative (TWEC) members in need. One way we do that is through our *Meals 4 Members* program. Donations are gathered and then distributed directly to members who can use assistance. Please donate **unexpired/non-perishable food items** now through April.



If you are in need, please fill out a one-time *Meals 4 Members* home delivery request form by visiting toddwadena.coop/meals4members, scanning the QR code to the left, or by calling Kallie at (218) 632-3216. Deliveries for *Meals 4 Members* home delivery baskets will be on a weekly basis through April.



2025 Scholarships



Scholarships are made available with unclaimed capital credits. After a period of seven years, Minnesota law allows cooperatives to use unclaimed capital credits for charitable or educational purposes.

Each year, Todd-Wadena is able to use the unclaimed capital credits to offer student scholarships in our service area. This year, we are offering up to four \$1,000 scholarships to graduating high school seniors, and up to two \$1,000 scholarships to adult students.

Graduating Senior Scholarship

Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative will award up to (4) \$1,000 scholarships to local 2025 graduating seniors for their first year as a (freshman) college student.

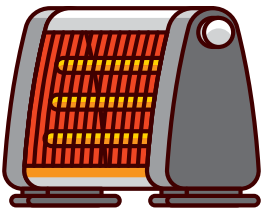
Power Up Adult Student Scholarship

Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative will award up to (2) \$1,000 Power Up Adult Scholarships to adult students who are headed to college for the first time, returning to complete an interrupted education, or looking to return to college to improve their career opportunities.



Scan the QR code to the left to visit our website for the fillable application and list of requirements and procedures. Scholarship applications must be postmarked by **February 10th, 2025** and **must be typed**.

Using Your Space Heater Wisely



Electric space heaters can be a convenient heating supplement when used periodically to take the chill off a blustery day. However, they become increasingly ineffective for heating as the space gets larger. They can also be much more expensive to operate long-term as they are not eligible for lower, off-peak kWh pricing.

To estimate the cost of running a space heater we used the following formula:

$$\text{Watts}/1,000 \times \text{Hours} \times \text{kWh rate} = \text{Usage Cost}$$

We wanted to know the cost of usage for one hour on high and our usage came to 1.5 kWh. When multiplied by TWEC's 11.672¢ rate per kilowatt-hour, we found it costs 17.5¢ per hour to run our heater on high.

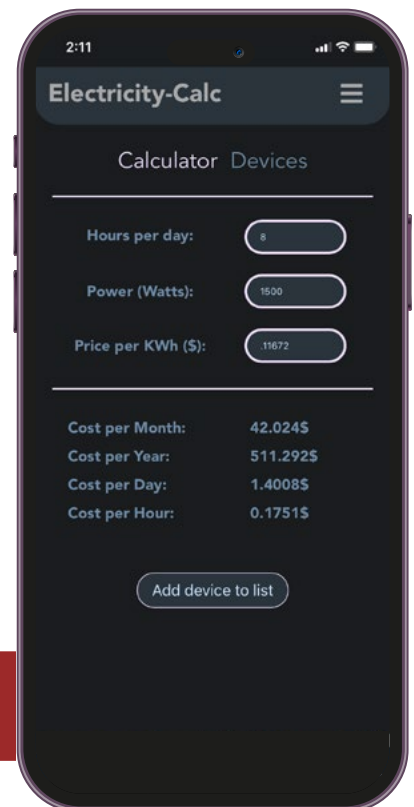
DAILY	$(1,500 \text{ watts}/1,000) \times 8 \text{ hours a day} \times 11.672\text{¢ per kWh} = \mathbf{\$1.40}$
MONTHLY	$\$1.40 \times 30 \text{ days} = \mathbf{\$42}$

Now we can see what impact a space heater is having on our monthly bill. In this example, a space heater that uses *1,500 watts* and operates just *8 hours* each day at *11.672¢* per kilowatt-hour costs *\$1.40* per day to operate. And if you run it for 30 days, that would add **\$42.00** to your monthly bill!

If math isn't your thing, you can download the *Electricity-Cost Calculator* from your mobile device's app store.



Electricity-Cost Calculator
Electricity costs at a glance



'Tis the Season to Electrify Your Gifts Under the Tree!

Brighten the holidays with gifts that spark joy—*literally!* From gadgets that make mornings easier to tech that grows food even at night, this collection is a festive nod to all things electric. Perfect for techies, tinkerers, or anyone who appreciates a gift with a little buzz, these picks will leave your loved ones glowing with excitement. For your convenience, we've included a QR code for each product. **Plug in, power up, and let's make this season *shockingly* unforgettable!**



CHEFMAN ELECTRIC KETTLE // \$24

This electric kettle with tea infuser is compact and efficient with safety built in mind. The LED lights illuminate during heating, providing clear visibility of the water warming process and when it is turned off after the water has boiled. This cordless version makes it easy to serve your holiday friends and family anywhere!



ELECTRIC HEATED LUNCH BOX // \$21

Take your paper bag lunch to the next level this year with an electric heated lunch box. No more cold sandwiches, this is a great option for those who work on the road or do not have access to a microwave to heat up their meals. It features options for 12V car use, 24V truck use, and 110V home/office use. Just plug it in to your vehicle or outlet and you could be having your savory stew hot to eat in under 30 minutes. *This product has been tested by our Load Management Technician, Bob.*



PETKIT AUTOMATIC PET FEEDER WITH CAMERA // \$139

Check in on your furry friend throughout the day with this automatic pet feeder and camera, which offers two-way audio.



ELECTRIC MUG WARMER // \$22

This mug warmer will keep your coffee or tea at the perfect drinking temperature. It offers different temperature settings and has an automatic shut-off safety feature.



CLICK & GROW INDOOR HERB GARDEN // \$99

Get year-round fresh herbs from the comfort of your own home. This kit comes with plant pots and seeds.



ELECTRIC TRIKE // \$139

This e-trike comes with a 24V lithium-ion battery and introduces your tot to the exciting world of electric powered bikes! Don't worry the max speeds range from 3 to 6 mph.



WI-FI PHOTO FRAME // \$70

Send photos to your photo frame from anywhere in the world! Have a loved one in a care center who lives far away? You can send updated photos of your family from anywhere and customize how your photos appear on the screen.



KASA OUTDOOR SMART PLUG // \$17

This outdoor rated smartplug is perfect for all of your holiday lights and seasonal décor. Want to plug in that 50-foot inflatable snowman? Save energy only inflating that snowman during a small part of your evening. If you are going to be away for a longer period of time, you can adjust the automatic on and off whenever and wherever from their app. It also works with Alexa or Google Home.



What Does it Mean to Be a Director?



TWEC’s Board of Directors is essential to the success of the co-op. Directors attend monthly meetings to discuss issues and make decisions on behalf of the members. They attend conferences and read many reports/papers to understand the policies for which they are responsible and the issues with which they grapple.

Their responsibilities include mitigating risk, setting rates, understanding power supply, strategic planning, financial decision making, promoting the cooperative business model, gaining insights on political and environmental impacts, and meeting member expectations. If you are interested in becoming a director candidate, please scan the QR code to the right to view the members of the *Nominating Committee*.



Members interested in becoming a director candidate may also contact the Cooperative office by emailing Kallie Baxter at kbaxter@toddwadana.coop or by calling (218) 631-3120.

TWEC Board Minutes

Highlights from the October 31st, 2024, regular board meeting:

- CEO Dan Carlisle shared that Great River Energy (GRE) was a recipient of \$15 million of grid resilience funding. He also gave an update from WAPA.
- The board approved several policy updates.
- Lisa Graba-Meech, CFO, presented the September financials to the board. Monthly kWh sales were 11 percent over budget. Energy revenue was 6 percent over budget. September’s purchased power expense was 8 percent over budget. Tier is 2.05 and Equity is 40.9.
- The board approved a motion to reduce capital credit retirements by \$300,000, resulting in a total 2024 capital credit retirement equal to \$534,000 (GRE retirement: \$236,000; TWEC retirement: \$298,000).
- Member & Energy Services Manager Allison Frederickson noted how TWEC plans to participate in Wadena’s parade of lights, serve as a toy drop off location for the Empty Stocking Program, and once again roll out its Meals 4 Members program this winter.
- Operations Manager Tyler Fisher reported how new construction continues to be down for the year, outages continue to be caused by vegetation, and crews are working on rebuilding the old copper distribution lines. The cooperative continues discussions with MnDOT on the relocation of distribution lines along the Highway 10 corridor.
- Director of Corporate Services, IT, & Cybersecurity Abby Harrison gave the Annual Cybersecurity Report. She spoke about the ever-changing aspects to cyber, including an increase in attacks, AI, and legislative matters.
- TWEC’s Operation Round Up Board awarded nearly \$8,000 to area organizations.

Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative’s Mission, Vision, and Values

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

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

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(800) 321-8932

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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

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December Reader's Contest

1. One local sophomore or _____ could win a trip to the 2025 NRECA Youth Tour.
2. Join us for Cookies at the Co-op on _____ December 20th in our lobby.
3. Space _____ can also be much more expensive to operate long-term as they are not eligible for lower, off-peak kWh pricing.

Name:

Your TWEC Account Number:

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For your chance to be entered in a drawing to win a \$10 credit on your bill, correctly answer the questions and include with your TWEC bill. Mail to TWEC, P.O. Box 431, Wadena, MN 56482. Or email the answers to mbrservices@toddwadena.coop with the subject line "Reader's Contest". Be sure to include your name and TWEC service address. Entries must be received by December 25th.

Rick Anderson of Staples was the winner of our November Reader's Contest.