Todd-Wadena
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Pine to Prairie
www.toddwadena.coop
December 2025

Happy Holidays

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Tom Brichacek, Vice Chair
Dale Adams, Treasurer
Marie Katterhagen, Secretary
Mike Thorson
Gene Keru
Kristine Spadgenske

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Lisa Reed Krump
Jamie Line
Kevin Lupkes
Jason Ohrmundt
Jason Orlando
Mike Orlando
Kristen Paurus
Lori Redetzke
Heidi Smith
David Snyder
Lori Tymberg
Trent Walter
Luke Wilhelmi
Mary Williams

Holiday Open House

Friday, December 19th
9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in
TWEC Lobby

Holiday cheer is just a stop away! Visit our lobby on Friday, December 19th, 9 a.m.–2 p.m., to enjoy a cookie, sip something warm, and pick up your 2026 photo calendar—our way of saying thanks and spreading joy.

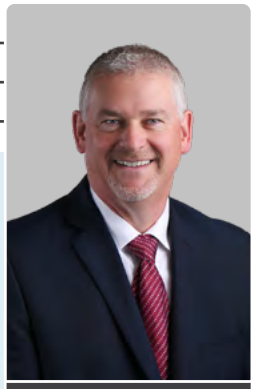
MEMBERS MEALS 4 MEMBERS MEALS 4

At Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative (TWEC), we do more than deliver energy. One way we do that is through our **Meals 4 Members** program. Thanks to generous donations, we're able to provide home-delivered food baskets to members who could use a helping hand. We invite you to support this effort by donating unexpired, non-perishable food items or monetary donations now through April.

If you are in need of assistance, you can request a one-time Meals 4 Members home delivery basket by scanning the QR code, visiting ***toddwadena.coop/meals4members***, or calling Kallie at (218) 632-3216. Deliveries will take place mid-January through April.

Please note: Deliveries are organized by area to ensure we serve members efficiently. We will contact you the week when we will be delivering to your home.

Planning for the Future: A Clear Roadmap for the Cooperative We Will Need Tomorrow



Daniel Carlisle
President/CEO & General Counsel

As we close out 2025 and look ahead to a new year, our focus turns toward the future of the cooperative. At Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative, planning ahead is essential for ensuring we continue providing safe, reliable, and affordable service to our members. The energy industry is changing rapidly, and the expectations of our communities continue to grow. To stay ahead of these changes, your Board of Directors and cooperative staff have been engaged in several long-term planning efforts, each designed to strengthen our operations and guide our work in the years ahead.

Long-Term Load Forecast

One of the foundational tools in our planning process is our long-term load forecast. This forecast examines expected energy demand across our service territory based on:

- Beneficial electrification trends
- Electric vehicle adoption
- Housing and population growth
- Commercial and agricultural development
- Member behavior and technology changes

Understanding where load is headed helps us plan for future infrastructure needs, prioritize investments, and ensure our system is prepared to meet the demands of tomorrow.

Long-Term Financial Forecast

In addition to understanding future energy usage, the Board and staff have developed a long-range financial forecast to look ahead at how the cooperative's financial needs may evolve. This includes:

- Anticipated power supply cost changes
- Capital investment needs
- Inflationary pressures
- Borrowing strategies
- Rate stability considerations

This forecast helps us make responsible, data-informed decisions so we can continue providing affordable service while maintaining the financial strength of the cooperative.

Four-Year Work Plan

Our four-year work plan serves as a detailed operational roadmap, outlining the specific construction, maintenance, and infrastructure projects needed to support reliability across our system. This plan identifies:

- Line replacements and sectionalizing improvements
- Substation and distribution line upgrades
- System maintenance priorities
- Equipment and technology investments
- Safety and reliability enhancements

The work plan ensures our resources are focused on the right projects at the right time, balancing reliability needs with cost efficiency.

Five-Year Strategic Plan

The Board of Directors also met in May to create the cooperative's five-year strategic plan, which defines the high-level goals guiding our Board and staff. These are the long-term priorities that shape our direction and reflect what we need to invest in to serve members well into the future.

The Board has identified six core strategic goals for the next five years:

1) **Explore New Technologies**
   Evaluate emerging tools, software, automation, and beneficial electrification technologies that can improve reliability and member service.
2) **Vegetation Management Rotation**
   Maintain a predictable, funded, long-term vegetation management cycle to reduce outages and enhance system performance.
3) **Rate Design**
   Continue refining cost-based, equitable rate structures that reflect today's power supply costs and future load growth.
4) **Power Supply**
   Explore whether there are additional or alternative power supply options that could reduce costs for our members. Strengthen education efforts to help members understand how power supply works, what drives wholesale costs, and how TWEC's decisions impact long-term affordability and reliability.
5) **Shaping Legislative & Regulatory Policy**
   Advocate for policies that protect cooperative members and ensure rural voices are represented at the state and federal levels.
6) **Member Events & Engagement**
   Strengthen communication and expand opportunities for members to connect, learn, and stay involved with their cooperative.

Each of these planning efforts—load forecasting, financial forecasting, operational work planning, and strategic goal setting—plays a unique role in shaping the future of your cooperative. Taken together, they give us a clear, thoughtful roadmap for the years ahead.

Your Board of Directors is committed to transparency and long-view decision-making. We want you, our members, to know that the cooperative's future is guided by data, planning, and the cooperative principles that have grounded us for 85 years.

Thank you for your continued trust and support as we work to build a stronger, more resilient energy future for the communities we serve.

Daniel Carlisle
President/CEO & General Counsel

Interested in Being a Director?

TWEC's Board of Directors plays a vital role in guiding the success of our cooperative. These dedicated leaders meet monthly to discuss important issues and make decisions on behalf of the membership, while also attending conferences and reviewing reports to stay informed on the policies and challenges that shape our future.

Their responsibilities range from setting rates and understanding power supply to strategic planning, financial decision-making, and risk management. They also promote the cooperative business model, consider political and environmental impacts, and work hard to meet member expectations.

If you are interested in serving as a director candidate, please reach out to a member of the nominating committee. The committee will meet on **Wednesday, January 14th** to bring forward nominations for the 2026 Board of Directors Election.

2026 Nominating Committee

Name	City	Phone Number
Jerome Miller	Sebeka	(218) 837-5690
Wally Wiese	Verndale	(218) 639-6348
Ray Gildow	Staples	(218) 821-8848
Annette Adamietz	Verndale	(218) 445-5190
Samantha Krause	Staples	(507) 766-0238
Heather Gilreath	Nimrod/Sebeka	(218) 841-0309
Lloyd Lanz	Wadena	(218) 639-1806
Dan Skogen	Hewitt	(218) 639-3405

You may also contact us at (218) 631-3120 or (800) 321-8932 or by email *Kallie Baxter* at ***kbaxter@toddwadena.coop***.

Capital Credits On Statement

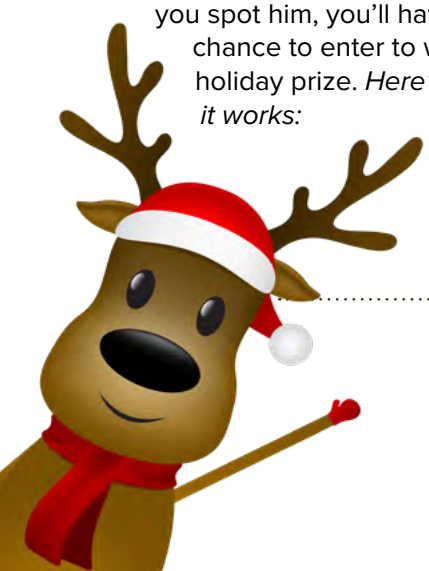
In 2025, the Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative (TWEC) Board of Directors approved a capital credit retirement that totals **$625,500.** TWEC is retiring *$535,000* to members active in ***2009***; and Great River Energy, our wholesale energy provider, is retiring *$90,500* of capital credits that will be refunded to TWEC members who had patronage in ***2003***.

Members who had patronage in 2009 or 2003: if you were a member of TWEC during these years, you may have received capital credits. These capital credits have been applied as an ***energy credit*** on your December bill.

Rudolph's Reindeer Roundup

Join Rudolph's Reindeer Roundup! Rudolph has gone exploring across our website; we need your help to track him down! He's hiding on three different pages. Each time you spot him, you'll have a chance to enter to win a holiday prize. *Here's how it works:*

- Search TWEC's website and **keep your eyes peeled** for Rudolph.
- When you find him, **click on his image** to open the entry form.
- Submit your **name and TWEC service address** to be entered into the drawing.
- **Find all three** Rudolphs to triple your chances of winning!



Let the hunt begin—and may your holiday spirit guide you to victory!

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

2026 Youth Tour: A Life-Changing Opportunity! **JUNE 15-20, 2026**

Do you know a sophomore or junior who deserves an unforgettable experience? Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative is selecting one local high school student to represent our community on the *2026 NRECA Youth Tour* in Washington, D.C.

This all-expense-paid trip sends students to our nation's capital along with about 40 other teens from Minnesota and nearly 1,800 from across the country. It's an incredible opportunity for a young person you care about to learn how cooperatives work, meet with congressional leaders, explore world-class museums, and build friendships and memories they'll carry for life.

Encourage the young person in your family to apply. This could be their trip of a lifetime!

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

-Heidi Zimmerman
(Youth Tour winner in 2024)

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, 2026.**
- Visit ***www.toddwadena.coop*** to apply!
- Students with the top applications and essays will be invited back for an interview. An interview committee determines the winner, basing the decision on written and verbal responses during the brief interviews. Interviews will held February 16th-18th, 2026.

Apply Now for Our 2026 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 2026 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.

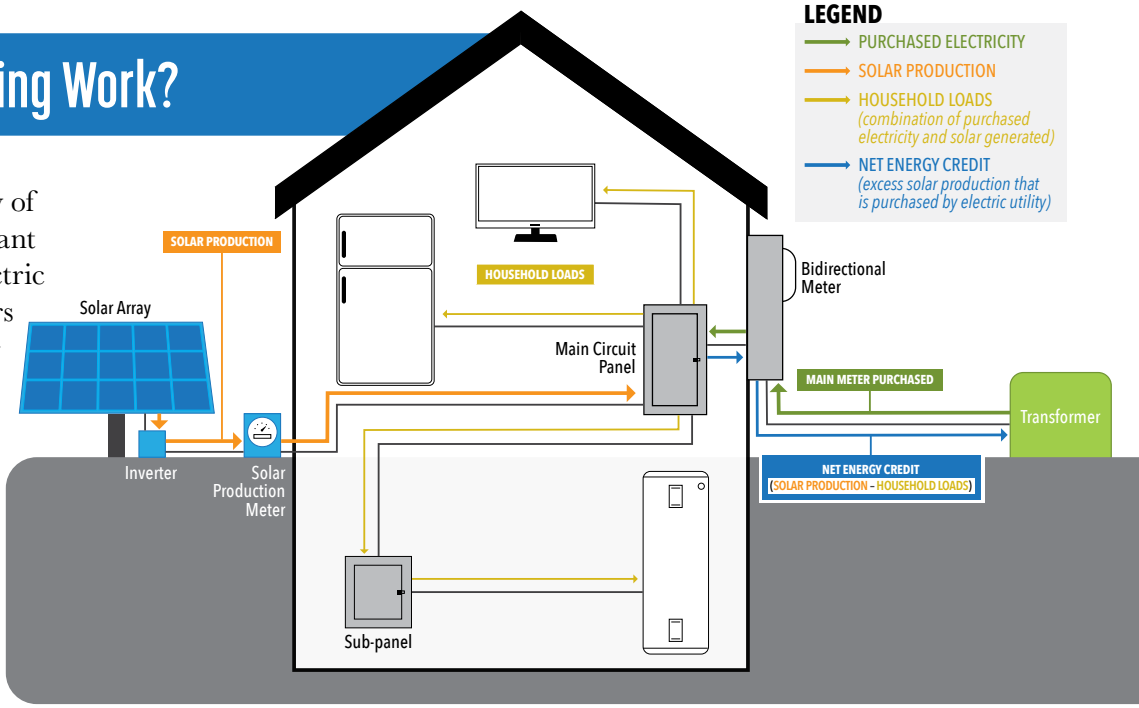
Scan the QR code to the right to visit our website for the fillable application and list of requirements and procedures. Scholarship applications must be postmarked by *February 10th, 2026* and *must be typed*.

How Does Net Metering Work?

With the increasing popularity of residential solar systems, we want to help our Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative (TWEC) members learn more about owning your own solar system and how net metering works.

Net metering *(available to systems sized under 40 kW)* is a billing mechanism that offers those with solar systems the opportunity to receive a credit for every kWh that flows back to the grid. It is a popular option with members who choose to install a residential solar system.

The size of the system is what determines if your solar system will supplement your energy bill or completely cover it. If you are looking into building a residential solar system, please reach out to us! We can send your specific energy consumption to the installer to ensure you install the correct system size to meet your needs.



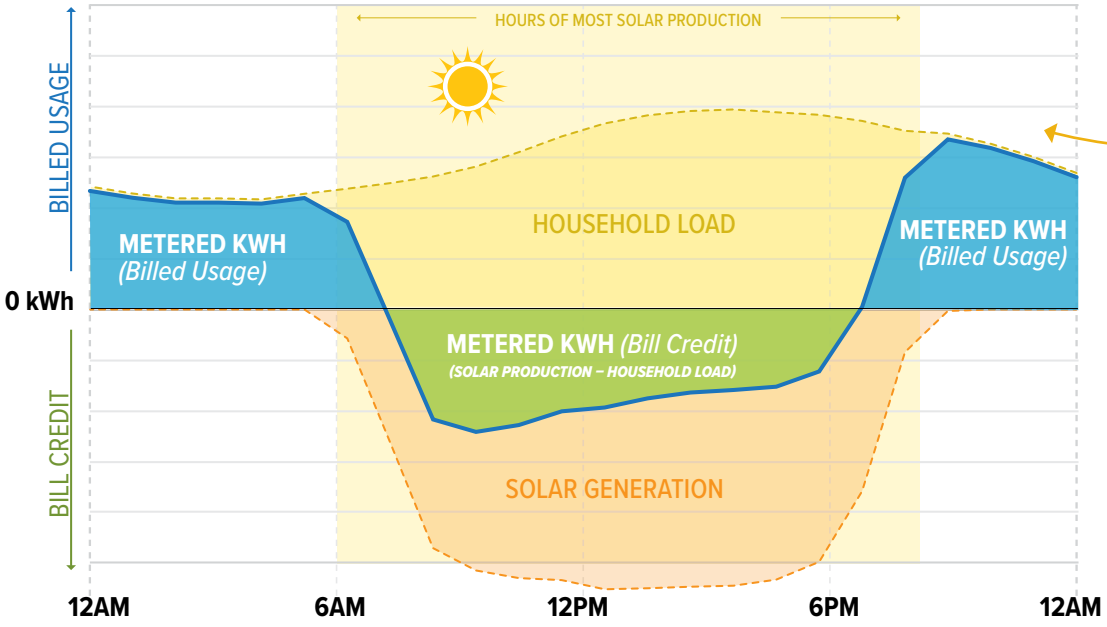
Net metering is made possible by bidirectional meters provided by TWEC. These specialized meters read the energy used by the home, which is energy flowing forward. Bidirectional meters also read excess energy flowing back to the grid from the source of production (solar), which is energy flowing backwards.

A common misconception is that you will not see an energy charge if you build a solar system large enough to cover your home's entire energy bill. In actuality, members will always see an energy charge even if their bill has a positive credit.

Why is this the case? A solar system is only producing energy when the sun is shining. In the graph to the left, you can see how there is both usage and production during daylight hours. The net production is larger than the use, so no energy flows forwards, only backwards. During these hours, the home is making excess production that is flowing back to the grid resulting in an energy credit.

However, during the early morning and evening hours there is no generation due to the lack of sunlight. During these periods, electrons from the grid are utilized to power the home. Even if the production is large enough to create an overall credit on a member's bill, there will still be a line item on the bill where energy was used and not covered by any production.

NET METERING EXAMPLE: DAILY USAGE/GENERATION



SCAN TO WATCH THE TRAILER!

SAVE THE DATE FEBRUARY 14
MEMBER APPRECIATION MOVIE

GRE Board Approves 2026 Budget and Rates

Great River Energy's wholesale electric rate to increase.

The Great River Energy Board of Directors approved Great River Energy's 2026 budget and rates November 6th, setting the stage for a 4.5% increase for TWEC.

The generation and transmission cooperative is budgeting revenue and expenses of approximately $1.1 billion in 2026. As a not-for-profit cooperative, Great River Energy collects only enough revenue to cover its costs as well as a margin to operate the business.

Great River Energy operates, maintains, and plans power supply and transmission facilities to ensure a reliable, affordable, and environmentally responsible supply of wholesale electricity to its 26 member-owner cooperatives located throughout Minnesota and parts of Wisconsin.

At the same time, the cooperative makes investments in the best interests of its member-owners over the long term. The cooperative is in the early stages of significant regional transmission investments to ensure reliable electric service.

"The strategic decisions we have made in recent years have resulted in improved service to our membership and stable wholesale electric rates," said Great River Energy Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Michelle Strobel.

Great River Energy is Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative's wholesale power provider.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

To maximize your fireplace's efficiency, always keep the damper closed when the fireplace is not in use. An open damper is like an open window, allowing warm indoor air to escape and cold air to enter. Consider installing a fireplace insert, which improves heat output by circulating warm air into the room rather than letting it escape up the chimney. Also, burn only seasoned hardwood to ensure a hotter, cleaner burn. Regularly clean and inspect your chimney to maintain safe and efficient operation.

Source:
www.energy.gov

TWEC Board Minutes

Highlights from the October 24th, 2025, regular board meeting:

- *The management team discussed updates and goals pertaining to new technology, vegetation management rotation, 10 percent option and power supply, and member events.*
- *Board Chair Miles Kuschel attended the October Great River Energy (GRE) Board meeting as the 'guest director' and gave the GRE report this month. GRE staff presented the 2026 budget, with a preliminary increase of 2.9 percent and shared that they do not plan on retiring any patronage capital in 2026.*
- *Lisa Graba-Meech, CFO, presented the September financials to the board. Monthly kWh sales were 10 percent under budget. Energy revenue was 6 percent under budget. September's purchased power expense was 17 percent under budget. TIER is 1.74 and Equity is 41.32.*
- *The board approved a capital credit retirement of the following: TWEC $535,000 and GRE $90,500.*
- *A motion was approved to update Board Policy 118.D Financial Review to be written the same as listed in the Operation Round Up Bylaws.*
- *Operations Manager Tyler Fisher shared highlights from the recent Utility Expo he attended with two other Operations employees.*
- *The board approved the 2024 Form 990 and 990T.*
- *Director of Corporate Services, IT, & Cybersecurity Abby Harrison noted that all 2025 IT projects are complete, including the Office 365 Outlook conversion.*
- *The Operation Round Up Board awarded three grants for a total of $5,700.*

2026 Vegetation Management

Vegetation management is vital to the safe and reliable operation of the electric distribution system at Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative (TWEC). What does this mean for property owners and our members? In order to deliver your electricity in the safest, most reliable, and most cost-effective way, we must work together to keep vegetation growing near power lines trimmed to minimize outages and maintain safe clearances.

In 2026, TWEC, along with Carr's Tree Service, will be performing vegetation management in the Sebeka, Verndale, Wadena, and Bluffton areas. Property owners will receive a *Notice of Vegetation Management* letter in early 2026. A representative from the Cooperative will then be sent out to visually inspect the overhead power lines and determine where and what type of vegetation management activity is required. Then, a crew from either TWEC or Carr's Tree Service will be scheduled to complete the work.

NOTE: If you are outside of the Sebeka, Verndale, Wadena, and Bluffton areas, but notice a tree growing up into the lines or touching the lines–please give us a call. We will inspect the tree and the area surrounding it. With your assistance, we can help mitigate outages caused by vegetation growth. Thank you for your help!

Minnesota Law Offers Shut Off Protection for Military Personnel

When a household member has been ordered into active duty, for deployment or for a change of duty station, some members may find it hard to pay their utility bills. Minnesota Statute 325E.028 protects these military personnel from shut-off if they cannot pay their utility bills in full if such residential member:

1) If your household income is below the state median household income or you are receiving energy assistance, **and** you have entered into a satisfactory payment plan with TWEC and remain current with payments under that plan.

2) If your household income is above the state median household income **and** you have entered into a plan with TWEC, establishing a reasonable payment schedule that considers the financial resources of your household, and you remain current with payments under that plan.

HOW TO APPLY

Contact TWEC for an application and to establish an acceptable payment arrangement.

Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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

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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

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Our offices will be closed on these dates:

- **December 16th** we will close at 11:30 a.m for an all-employee meeting
- **December 24th-25th** for Christmas
- **January 1st** for New Years Day
- **January 19th** for all-employee training

December 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 **January 15th**.

1. We are collecting unexpired, non-perishable food items and monetary donations for our Meals 4 _____ program in our lobby.
2. The NRECA _____ Tour is an all-expenses paid trip to Washington, D.C. Encourage a student to apply today!
3. The Board and staff have developed a _____ financial forecast for the co-op.

Name: **Your TWEC Account Number:**

Curtis Hegseth of Clarissa was the October Reader's Contest winner.