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LIVE LINES

Woodbury County Rural Electric Cooperative

May 2025

Scholarship Winners for 2025

Woodbury County REC, Moline and Basin Electric Power Cooperative, Bismarck, North Dakota, are pleased to announce the winners of the educational scholarships for 2025.

The winner of the Basin Electric \$1,000 scholarship is Ms. Sidney Krosch daughter of Scott and Sonya Krosch, Kingsley. Ms. Krosch will be a freshman at South Dakota State University pursuing a career to become an radiologist.

Three other outstanding applicants will each receive a \$500 scholarship from Woodbury County REC. Those three winners are: Clint Heger, son of Jason and Stephanie, Sioux City; Kael Hamann, son of Lance and Jana, Correctionville; Ava Paulsen, daughter of Karl and Alesha, Moline.

Mr. Heger will be attending The University of Northern Iowa obtaining a bachelor's in Kinesiology and a Doctorate in Physical Therapy. Mr. Hamann's future plans is to major in Exercise Science with an minor in Ag Business at Moringside University. Ms. Paulsen is planning on attending the University of Northern Iowa and pursue an career in Early Childhood Education.



Sidney Krosch



Clint Heger



Kael Hamann



Ava Paulsen

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ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Routine maintenance is important to keep your refrigerator running efficiently. Lint and dirt should be cleaned from the refrigerator coils every six months to a year, and more often if there are pets in the home.

When coils are coated with lint, dust or pet hair, your refrigerator works harder than it's designed to, which can prevent the appliance from cooling properly and efficiently. The additional work can increase the energy costs of the refrigerator by as much as 35% and shorten the life of the appliance.

Source: energy.gov

The Recipe Corner

Blonde Brownies

2/3 cup melted butter
2 cups brown sugar
2 eggs
2 cups flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips
1 cup chopped walnuts (optional)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray a 9 x13 – inch pan with cooking spray. Combine butter and sugar, beat until creamy. Add eggs and vanilla, beat well. Combine flour, baking powder and salt. Stir it into egg mixture. Add chocolate chips and nuts, batter will be stiff. Pour into pan. If desired, sprinkle more nuts and chocolate chips on top. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes, until a toothpick inserted into center comes out with moist crumbs. Let cool and cut into squares. Serves 24.

Before Your Water Heater Fails Do Research

Most people don't think much about water heaters. It's easy to take hot showers, clean dishes and freshly laundered linens for granted. The lonely water heater tucked away in the basement, or a utility closet is out of sight and out of mind. But it's equally important to be confident that your water heater will keep the water hot until you need it.

The life expectancy of an average water heater is 10-15 years for electric and 8-12 years for gas. Prepare now so you know your options. The coop sells 50, 85 and 105 gallon electric Marathon water heaters.

Whether you need a water heater for a new construction or to replace an electric or gas model, call Woodbury County REC for details on the coops water heaters and Switch Makes Cents program (712-873-3125).



Fueling Generator Safely

Fuel your knowledge before powering up a generator

Before you grab your portable generator to use it for backup power, there are important lifesaving safety steps you should know. It is best to familiarize yourself with how to use a generator properly before needing one.

Before using a portable generator, be sure to do the following:

- Check carbon monoxide (CO) detectors. Protect yourself and those you love by making sure there are battery-operated CO testers in your home that are working properly and have fresh batteries.
- Read the instructions. Many people are tempted to skip this step, but incorrectly using a generator can cause CO poisoning, which is often deadly. These are instructions you should take the time to read.
- Know how to use one properly. Operate generators at least 20 feet from doors and windows and never use one in any type of enclosed structure, such as a garage, shed or tent. If your RV has a generator, be sure to operate it safely to avoid CO poisoning.
- Keep it dry. If it is wet outside, place the portable generator on a tarp. If it is raining or snowing, position it under a portable canopy (but not under a carport).
- Keep utility workers and others safe. Never plug a portable generator into a wall outlet. Never use a permanent generator without throwing the transfer switch. Doing either of these things can cause dangerous backfeed into the power grid.
- Make sure the transfer switch is endorsed by a reputable testing laboratory, such as UL, and that the installation meets all applicable electrical codes.
- Plug items directly into a portable generator and use heavy-duty extension cords that are in good working condition and are the correct gauge. The lower the gauge number and the thicker the cord, the more electricity it can safely carry; refer to the owner's manual for specifics. Do not plug one extension cord into another.
- Let the generator cool down before refueling. Also, store fuel safely.
- Keep it well maintained and have it inspected regularly.



Safety Starts With Awareness

By Kent Amundson

As the days get longer and the weather warms up, we naturally spend more time outdoors –working in the fields, tackling home projects or simply enjoying the fresh air. May is National Electrical Safety Month, and it's a timely reminder that no matter where you are, safety should always come first. At Woodbury County REC, we care about the well-being of our member-consumers and the communities we serve, and we're committed to sharing important safety information to help protect you and your loved ones.

Farming with awareness

If you're preparing for or already in the heart of planting season, please remember to look up before raising equipment. Always maintain a 10-foot clearance from power lines. Take a few moments to study the location of overhead lines, poles and guy wires on your property, and make sure everyone working with or around equipment is aware of them, too. If you observe low-hanging lines, please contact Woodbury County REC.



Plan your route between fields and on public roads to avoid overhead lines. If your equipment comes in contact with a power line, don't exit the equipment unless there's an immediate danger like fire. Staying in the cab and calling 911 or Woodbury County REC can prevent a tragic accident – stepping out could make you a path for electricity. If you must exit due to immediate danger, jump clear of the equipment with both feet together, making sure not to touch the equipment and the ground at the same time, and then shuffle or hop away without lifting your feet to avoid electrical shock.

When thunder roars, go indoors

Thunderstorms can roll in quickly during the spring and summer months. Lightning can strike miles ahead of a storm, so if you hear thunder, take cover immediately. The general rule is to wait at least 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder before going back outside. To stay informed, sign up for free county alerts at www.alert.iowa.gov.

Dig safely and call 811 first

Warmer months are also prime time for outdoor projects, from installing fences to planting trees. Before any digging begins, you must contact Iowa One Call at 811 at least two business days in advance. This free service will identify underground utilities to help you avoid hitting buried lines, which could cause outages, injuries or worse.

Keep our crews safe

Our lineworkers and field personnel often work near roadways to restore power, upgrade equipment or perform routine maintenance. When you see one of our trucks on the shoulder with flashing lights, please remember Iowa's Move Over Slow Down law. It requires motorists to move over a lane or slow down significantly if changing lanes isn't possible. This law protects utility workers, emergency responders and maintenance crews who are working just feet away from passing traffic. Giving our crews space helps ensure they return home safely to their families.

Teach safety to the youngest members of your family

With summer break around the corner, kids will play outside more often. Now's the perfect time to teach them how to stay safe around electricity. Remind children never to climb trees near power lines or play near electrical equipment like substations or green transformer boxes. Encourage them to keep kites, drones and other toys far away from overhead lines and to come to you or another adult if they see something that doesn't look safe.

At Woodbury County REC, we're proud to power your homes, farms and businesses, and we're equally committed to helping keep your family safe. Thank you for doing your part to promote safety all year!

Kent Amundson is the general manager/CEO of Woodbury County REC.

Help Prevent Copper Theft

Thieves sometimes think of it as a crime that won't hurt anybody. The truth is that tampering with electrical equipment or attempting to steal copper can harm many people.

Those who steal copper (or power) are not only risking their own lives but also the safety and well-being of others. Common targets for copper theft include farm equipment, air conditioners, vacant buildings, construction sites and electric utility properties, including substations and power poles.

How homeowners can help

- If you notice anything unusual with electric facilities, such as an open substation gate, open equipment, hanging wire and so on, contact your electric utility immediately.
- For empty homes, install lighting systems that operate using a timer to make the property a less likely target. For all homes, install motion-sensor lights on the outside of the house to deter possible thieves.
- Store tools and wire cutters in a secure location, and never leave them out while away.

How businesses can help

- Report suspicious activity.
- Eliminate or secure all external access to buildings and roofs.
- Remove items that allow for easy access to buildings, such as ladders, scaffolds, trees, dumpsters and accumulated materials, such as pallet piles.
- Install security cameras and alarm systems. The location and the type of object will determine what kind of surveillance is needed. For example, for heating and cooling units, there are alarms that are triggered if the unit stops working.
- In areas that contain valuable objects such as air conditioners, install fences and lighting fixtures around them. The amount of copper in most commercial air conditioners is never worth a great amount, but the real cost is paid by the owner of the unit.
- Most copper theft takes place during nights or weekends. Hiring staff or security personnel to monitor your facility during these periods can greatly reduce the chances of a serious loss.

Copper theft can affect more than the person stealing; in fact, it can cost a life. Detecting and reporting illegal activity could help save a life.



RECare Consumer Contribution Plan

Your Rural Electric Cooperative has always extended a helping hand to those in need. In response to actions by the Iowa General Assembly, your REC has established RECare, a program of members helping members. RECare will provide funds to be distributed by local community action agencies to help pay winter heating bills and to assist in weatherization of homes of low-income consumers of this Cooperative. You may make a one time contribution or you may make a monthly pledge that will be automatically added onto your monthly electric bill. Even one dollar a month pledge will help.

Consumer Authorization Form

Yes, I want to be a part of members helping members and contribute to **RECare**.

I will make a one-time contribution to **RECare**. My check is enclosed.

I will contribute \$ _____ per month to **RECare**. I understand that this amount will be automatically added to my monthly electric bill.

My gift is a matching fund gift. The matching fund is _____.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Please Mail To: **RECare**

Woodbury County Rural Electric Cooperative

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