



Nobles Cooperative Electric
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

CURRENT MATTERS

APRIL 2024

KEEP LADDERS AWAY FROM POWER LINES!

Warmer weather makes spring an ideal time for getting outside work done. Trimming trees and cleaning gutters will require getting on a ladder, so be aware of power lines around your home. Maintaining a safe distance from any overhead power line is always a good safety rule.

We are eager to commence construction on our new facility this summer. It is hard to believe the time is here after several years of discussions and long-term planning sessions.

Updates to our current facility have been under discussion for some time, and the decision-making process was not taken lightly. Our priority has always been to serve our members in the best possible way by adapting to evolving technology, security, functionality and personnel requirements to ensure the smooth and safe operation of our cooperative.

The pivotal moment in our decision-making process occurred last year when Community and Economic Development Associates (CEDA) came to discuss childcare shortages. A few months later our location outside Worthington was discussed as a potential solution.

Nobles County, like many other rural Minnesota communities, is currently experiencing a shortage of childcare services.

Recent data from First Children's Finance reveals a deficit of 952 childcare slots within the county. This shortage limits parental choices for suitable childcare and presents challenges for families seeking to enter or remain in the workforce.

Nobles County has applied for grants to support the feasibility of the project, with the aim of converting our current building into accommodations for special family childcare programs. This initiative is intended to assist childcare providers who are unable or unwilling to host childcare programs in their homes.

After those initial meetings with CEDA, our team started thinking about whether it made sense for us as a cooperative to rebuild our current facilities or to renovate our facility in Slayton.

The board decided that with the opportunity to potentially utilize our current facility in a different capacity that it made sense to update the facility in Slayton.

Either way, we would have needed to do something soon.

We will continue to serve all of our members in Nobles and Murray County and again, we want to assure you this decision has been thought out for a long time and is a budgeted project.

Our members are nearly equally spread out between both counties and our lineworkers will still be based at the Worthington and Slayton locations to continue to serve our members promptly and efficiently. Our only change will be that our business offices will be in Slayton and our Worthington location will not have office staff after we move.

We will post project updates on our website.

OFFICE BUILDING TIMELINE

- **March 2016:** Nobles Cooperative Electric (NCE) Board discussed long-term planning and infrastructure.
- **February 2018:** NCE Board specifically discussed building, facility and location.
- **2021:** The board asked staff to examine the viability of a new facilities plan and provide initial assessments on potential building locations, timelines and expenses.
- **2023:** NCE retained an architect and contractor to assess both locations for renovations/expansion and initiated preliminary discussions.
- **2023:** NCE discussed childcare shortage with CEDA.
- **January 23, 2024:** Building plans and preliminary budget approved by the board for the Slayton office, including the decision to keep both warehouse locations.
- **February 20, 2024:** Building plans announced to the public.
- **June 3, 2024:** Break ground on new office facility
- **January 2025:** Expected completion of project

[NOBLESCE.COOP/BUILDING-UPDATES](https://noblesce.coop/building-updates)

IN THE NEWS...

Adam Tromblay, General Manager

2024 LEGISLATIVE SESSION IN ST. PAUL

Recently, we were able to meet with our state legislators at the annual Minnesota Rural Electric Association Legislative Day on March 19. The focus was on addressing concerns related to Minnesota electric cooperatives and how legislation could affect our members. Our main objective remains to ensure the ongoing availability of affordable and dependable power. Key discussions involved clarifying a 1939 tax exemption law for distribution lines in rural areas, streamlining transmission line permitting and improving energy efficiency practices. We stressed the importance of upholding local cooperative autonomy and avoiding unnecessary legislative mandates. The meeting proved useful, highlighting the importance of ongoing communication with our local legislators on pivotal legislative matters today and in the future.



SPRING WORK SAFETY ZONE AWARENESS - LET'S HELP EVERYONE MAKE IT HOME!

When you come across work zones or "Crew at Work" signs, do you slow down? Our line crews face one of the most hazardous jobs dealing with power and battling harsh weather conditions, which further heightens the risk. With larger equipment, as well as challenging visibility during rain or on narrow rural roads, motorists need to be cautious. Despite the risks, our team is dedicated to maintaining a continuous power supply and making sure our members are safe too!

Remember, when passing through work zones or driving near a line crew team, workers are simply doing their jobs, which ultimately benefits everyone. By adhering to (32-33-73) the following guidelines, we can ensure the safety of our workers.

- Be cautious around power lines when operating larger equipment.
- Remember our local farmers are also sharing our roadways this time of year, so be extra vigilant and be aware of your surroundings.
- Stay alert when approaching and entering work zones.
- Avoid speeding or following too closely in and around work zones.
- Stay focused and avoid distractions like phone calls, texting, changing the radio station, eating or drinking.
- Keep your attention on the road, not on the workers' tasks.
- Turn on your headlights to enhance visibility for workers and other drivers.
- Watch out for brake lights or slow-moving vehicles.

We understand that work zones can be frustrating, especially when you're in a hurry. However, road crews and lineworkers work diligently to reduce the impact of roadside activities. Let's show them some consideration and slow down. Safety is a shared goal!

On behalf of our team, thank you for your support of our dedicated lineworkers for what they do each and every day.

YOUTH TOUR AND SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS FOR 2024



Vince VanderKooi, Jocelyn Horn and Isabel Thier

NCE is thrilled to announce the 2024 Youth Tour Contest winners. **Vince VanderKooi**, senior at Worthington High School, has been chosen to represent the cooperative at the 2024 Rural Electric Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., from June 18-23, 2024. Vince, son of Joe and Rita, will join 1,900 high school students from cooperatives nationwide.

Jocelyn Horn, a senior at Adrian High School and daughter of Dan and Monica, was awarded a \$500 scholarship. Another student, **Isabel Thier**, a senior at Adrian High School and daughter of Dave and Ann, received \$150.

The Youth Tour is open to high school freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors residing in or attending school in NCE's service area. Applicants go through a selection process by submitting an application and essay. A panel of three judges evaluates the applications and essays, then interviews the finalists (23-62-2) and selects the lucky winner for this unforgettable trip.

MARCH SURVEY – Thank you for your great responses!

A big thank you to all our members who took the time to complete our name/branding survey last month. It's fantastic to see such a positive response from both our Murray and Nobles County members! The reassuring news is that NCE (516-38-260) is highly respected as a name and business. We will soon discuss the results with our board. **It's wonderful to have such dedicated members who care deeply about our NCE family.** Your input is greatly valued as we strive to serve you better.



Tracey Haberman, Member Services Manager, and Cody Hansen, Line Superintendent, recently participated in the Slayton Farm and Home Show. They had a great time sharing the latest cooperative (3-18-14) news and answering questions about NCE.



Our team recently took part in a lifesaving measures refresher course.

SEE A FAMILIAR NUMBER?

If you find your location number (as it appears on your monthly electric bill) in this issue, you will receive a \$10 credit.

MARCH AUTO PAY WINNER - DAVID JORGENSON

Take a minute to sign up for Auto Pay and you may win a \$25 bill credit. A winner is chosen each month.

DROP BOX IN SLAYTON

TEMPORARILY
UNAVAILABLE
STARTING IN JUNE



During the construction period, the bill drop-off location in Slayton will be **unavailable starting in June**. We will resume services once the contractors deem the work zone safe for outside vehicles.

The drop box in Worthington will continue operating as usual, and the Slayton location will reopen after construction concludes.

Don't forget, you can always mail your bill or (22-66-73) inquire with our team about setting up automatic payments.



Nobles Cooperative
Electric

® Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

OFFICIAL MONTHLY PUBLICATION

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Phone: 507-372-7331,
507-836-6107 or 800-776-0517

WEBSITE

www.noblesce.coop

EMAIL ADDRESS

nce@noblesce.com

OFFICE HOURS

7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Monday through Friday
May 1 - September 30

24-HOUR OUTAGE SERVICE

800-776-0517

GOPHER STATE ONE-CALL

800-252-1166 or 811

ELECTRICAL INSPECTOR

Nobles and Murray County
Luke Pieske
507-316-8664

GENERAL MANAGER

Adam Tromblay

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ronald Schwartau, President - 220-8148*
Lee York, V. President - 879-3497*
Cindy Hokeness, Sec./Treas. - 478-4965*
Jerry Beckering, Director - 227-4074*
Timothy Bickett, Director - 605-670-5294
Gary Clarke, Director - 605-201-1903
Randy Donahue, Director - 360-2660*
*Telephone prefix 507

UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS

April 17, 2024
May 20, 2024

*This cooperative is an equal
opportunity provider and employer*

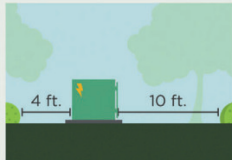
3 Ways to Help Limit Tree Trimming

Did you know electric utilities are required to trim trees and other types of vegetation that grow too close to overhead power lines? We know you love your trees, and we will do everything we can to avoid trimming them. Here's how you can help:

1. Plant trees in the right place. Trees that will be <40 ft. should be planted at least 25 ft. away from power lines (>40ft. should be at least 50 ft. away).



2. Don't block pad-mounted transformers. Plant shrubs at least 10 ft. away from transformer doors and 4 ft. from transformer sides.



3. Report dangerous branches. If you spot a tree or branch that is dangerously close to power lines, please let us know.



Trimming improves safety for all.

Let's work together to enjoy the beauty of trees and reliable electricity.

Country Cupboard

INGREDIENTS

- Dice 6 medium potatoes
- Chop 2 onions
- Slice 1 carrot
- Add 4 chicken bouillon cubes
- Include 1 tablespoon of butter
- Add 4 cups of water
- Mix in 1 can of evaporated milk
- Season with salt and pepper to taste

POTATO SOUP

Submitted by: Sue Davis

DIRECTIONS:

1. Mix all ingredients except for the evaporated milk in a slow cooker.
2. Cook on high for 8 to 10 hours.
3. Add the evaporated milk during the final hour.



Want your recipe featured?

Do you have a delicious **RHUBARB RECIPE** that you're willing to share? Send it to Nobles Cooperative Electric, Attention: Tracey, P.O. Box 788, Worthington, MN 56187. Be sure to include your name, address, telephone number and Nobles Cooperative Electric location number. All entries must be received by April 25. The winning recipe will be featured in the next edition of Current Matters and the lucky winner will receive a \$10 credit toward their electric bill.