

# Current Matters

Committed to improving the quality of life of our members

July 2010  
Vol. 2 Issue 7



**Nobles Cooperative  
Electric**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



## Members are our source of power and direction We work for you to keep rates low

Electricity is a unique commodity. It must be produced at the same time it is consumed and cannot be stored. Nobles Cooperative Electric (NCE) must be ready to meet your needs at any moment.

Our rates are based on two main components, the actual cost of the wholesale power that generates electricity and the cost for us to get that power to you.

No matter how much energy you use, it still costs NCE the same amount to provide and maintain our infrastructure. These costs (the monthly service charge) include poles, transformers, wires, meters, equipment, employees, maintenance, etc.

The cost of the actual electricity purchased for you is recovered in the kilowatt-hour charge. Each residential member pays the same amount for each kilowatt-hour they use.

Behind the scenes, what you probably don't know is NCE pays our wholesale power provider (Great River Energy) energy charges during different periods of time. For instance, Monday through Friday

between the hours of 10 a.m. and 8 p.m., the price NCE pays for power is 24 percent more than during the off-peak times of 12 a.m. to 10 a.m. and 8 p.m. to 12 a.m.

Summertime is naturally a period when energy use is at its peak. Critical peaks can occur when the demand for energy and market prices significantly increase. Your cooperative pays 57 percent more during the critical peak hours over standard peak hours.

As you can see, conserving energy between the hours of 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. and shifting your use to off-peak hours helps the cooperative control the cost of power. Make it a habit to run your dishwasher or major appliances after 8 p.m.

NCE purchases wholesale power based on the number of kilowatt-hours used. By reducing the amount of power our members use during peak times, NCE can save over \$210,000 a year. Load management is our silent partner in holding down the cost of power. Members participating in the water heating, air conditioning,

*Continued on page 2*

## Energy saving tip

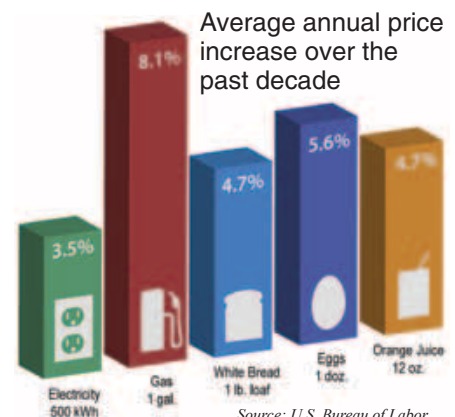
Heat from sunlight coming through windows and hitting the roof can increase air conditioner use significantly. Use shade trees and shrubs in landscaping design to reduce cooling costs. Block heat in the summer—but let it through in the winter—with deciduous trees, which will lose their leaves in the winter.

*Source: U.S. Dept. of Energy*

## Mark your calendar

August 1 ..... Read your meter  
August 10 ..... Electric bills due

## Electricity remains a good value



*Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; NRECA*



Manager's message



Safety is a fundamental value at NCE



Your cooperative wins two national awards



# We work for you to keep your rates affordable

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generator or dual fuel load management programs actually forget they are participating because there are no noticeable changes in availability or comfort. In exchange for members voluntary participation, participants receive rebates and discounted rates as incentives.

Your cooperative's load management programs have played a significant role in keeping rates low. NCE currently does not charge you by time of use. We charge you the same amount for electricity no matter when you use it.

When reducing the energy consumed during peak times, we not only save hundreds of thousands of dollars, but we forestall the need to build new, expensive generation facilities and transmission equipment.

One of the biggest advantages of being served by a cooperative is that we work only for you. We provide you with reliable, economical service. Any money in excess is allocated and returned to our members in patronage capital credits. Capital credits represent your investment in the cooperative and all its assets, because you are the owner. You are our source of power and we work only for your best interests.



**A word from your General Manager**  
by *Richard 'Rick' Burud*

## Board to recommend Article & Bylaw revisions

How good are you at cleaning up or updating? Well, your board of directors and your cooperative attorney, Andy Hagemann, are in the process of reviewing your Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws. It is their intent to update them to current practices, recommending revisions to you, as a member, to vote on. Some of the areas to be updated include:

- a. Nominating Committee members elected versus being appointed
- b. Voting by mail provision
- c. Redistricting to have equal members per district
- d. Clarifying duties and responsibilities
- e. Eligibilities for positions
- f. Joint memberships
- g. Voting privileges
- h. Removal of directors

This will allow us to publish the recommended changes prior to next year's Annual Meeting where a complete review and vote is expected.

## Rates stable for 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter

In reviewing the average rate paid per member, our cooperative had good news for the first quarter. Your rates are very stable. Yes, amid increased wholesale power and operating expenses, what you paid per kilowatt-hour has been relatively the same. With your help in acting on peak alerts and your participation in our cost-saving programs, we can work together to minimize rate increases.

## AMR deployment

Automatic meter reading (AMR) is in its initial deployment stages. We'll be changing large power (demand meters) and seasonal accounts to AMR during the balance of the year. If all works well, you'll see full deployment to all locations next year.



## We're going to win Twins —we're going to score

**Touchstone Energy® Co-op Night**  
**Saturday, October 2, 2010**

**Twins vs. Toronto Blue Jays**

Visit Target Field and watch your Minnesota Twins take on the Toronto Blue Jays. Tickets are available in Home Plate View for only \$24. Just remit your payment and coupon to Minnesota Twins, Attn: Luis Breazeale, 1 Twins Way, Minneapolis, MN 55403 or fax to 612-659-4030.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

# of tickets @ \$24 = \_\_\_\_\_

Handling = + \$5 \_\_\_\_\_

Total = \_\_\_\_\_

Check enclosed payable to the Twins

Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration date \_\_\_\_\_

Circle one: Visa Mastercard

Discover American Express





## Jeremy Boogerd becomes Journeyman Lineman

Employee safety and training are fundamental values for NCE. Jeremy Boogerd successfully completed training as an electric lineman. Over the last four years, Boogerd has completed the Merchant Job Training & Safety Program (MJTS) which includes 576 hours of academic and 7,500 hours on-the-job training for apprentice linemen to advance to journeyman lineman status.

It is a commitment in hard work and time that the new apprentice must be willing to make. It is also a strong commitment from NCE's journeyman linemen to provide the support and strong leadership needed to graduate quality and safety conscious linemen. The crews share in the growth and development of the apprentices, teaching and training constantly.

The MJTS Program is administered to utility line personnel throughout the world and is comprised of 16 key competency topics required for utility journeyman lineman personnel. In order to complete the program, Jeremy needed to complete each instructional topic, pass each section test and take a comprehensive examination that tests knowledge over all four years. Successful completion of the MJTS Program, concurrent with a structured on-the-job training program, demonstrates that he has the knowledge and experience necessary to become a journeyman lineman.



*Electric line crews work with energized lines everyday. Safety training is part of NCE's fundamental safety culture. On June 1, our linemen under the leadership of Minnesota Rural Electric Association's Loss Control Specialist Al Czezok, trained in the areas of May Day, bucket and pole-top rescue.*

## Do you use life support equipment? Help us update our life support listing

For family members, friends or neighbors with a medical condition, electricity is their lifeline for their medical equipment.

Please notify NCE if you are a member on life support equipment, such as:

- respirators
- oxygen concentrators
- home dialysis
- bi-pap or c-pap machines

NCE maintains this list for two reasons. First, in case of planned power outages where crews work on the lines, the cooperative will try to inform these members before the outage. Secondly, during an unplanned outage, priority is given to restore power to these members on life-support devices.

If you haven't notified NCE of your condition, please complete the coupon and return it with your electric payment.

Yes, I'm on life support equipment.

Please remove me from the life support list.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Location #: \_\_\_\_\_

Life support equipment or medical condition: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Battery backup?  Yes  No

Is there a generator on site for backup electricity?  Yes  No

Please attach a document stating you are on life support equipment from a qualified medical professional.

## Your cooperative received two national awards

NCE received recognition in the 2010 "Spotlight on Excellence" national awards program, sponsored by the Council of Rural Electric Communicators and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). We received an Award of Excellence (equivalent to first place) for our "Lighten Up—Compact Fluorescent Light Bulb School Fundraising Program, along with an Award of Merit (second place) for our new newsletter *Current Matters*.



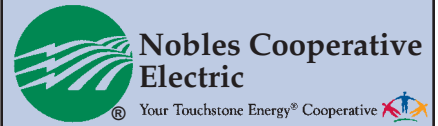
"The judges noted the emphasis on being good stewards of each cooperative's resources, while still doing the vital job of communicating with members," said Maggie Tilley, administrator of Spotlight on Excellence. "In difficult economic times, this has been especially challenging, yet, cooperative communicators rose to the occasion."

The annual Spotlight awards competition recognizes the top-rated communication and marketing efforts by electric cooperatives and related or-

ganizations. Participants in the awards competition competed with electric cooperatives of similar sizes in 19 categories. Electric cooperative communicators and marketing professionals submitted more than 804 entries in the Spotlight on Excellence program, now in its 22<sup>nd</sup> year. Faculty members from the University of Missouri – Columbia and the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill judged the entries.

The Council of Rural Electric Communicators was organized in 1982 and seeks to advance the recognition, education and professionalism of electric cooperative communicators and their affiliated organizations. It is a volunteer association working on behalf of more than 4,000 electric cooperative communicators across the United States.

NRECA, the service organization representing the national interests of cooperative electric utilities, coordinates the Council's activities. Other national organizations supporting the work of the Council are National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation, National Cooperative Services Corporation, National Rural Telecommunications Cooperative and Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange.



### Official monthly publication

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Henry Hanson, Director - 483-2417  
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## Country Cupboard Blueberry Jell-O Salad

1 (6 oz.) box black cherry Jell-O  
1 (16 oz.) can crushed pineapple, drained  
1 (16 oz.) container sour cream  
1 c. chopped toasted pecans

Prepare Jell-O according to package instructions; refrigerate until partially set, about 1 1/2 hours. Add blueberries and pineapple; stir well. Pour into a 13x9 inch glass dish. Refrigerate 6 hours or overnight to set.

Combine sugar, sour cream and cream cheese. Mix to spreading consistency. Spread over set Jell-O; sprinkle toasted pecans on top. Refrigerate until ready to serve. Serves 10 to 12.

Send your favorite **recipe with pudding** to Nobles Cooperative Electric, ATTN: Tracey, P.O. Box 788, Worthington, MN 56187-0788. Entries must include your name, address, telephone number and NCE's location number. All entries must be received by July 15. The winning recipe will be featured in the next edition of *Current Matters* and the winner will receive a **\$10 credit** on their electric bill.

## Picnic Fare Recipe

2 c. fresh blueberries  
1/2 c. sugar  
1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese,  
softened