

# Current Matters



Nobles Cooperative  
Electric

® Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



February 2021

Vol. 13 Issue 2

## Committed to Co-op Culture for All

Over the years, you've heard us expound on why and how Nobles Cooperative Electric (NCE) is different—because we're a cooperative. Our business model sets us apart from other utilities because we adhere to seven guiding cooperative principles.

Electric (36-20-73) cooperatives, including NCE, have a unique place in our country's history. We democratized the American dream by bringing electricity to rural areas when for-profit electric companies determined the effort too costly. Back then, cities were electrified, and rural areas were not, creating the original rural-urban divide. Newly established electric lines helped power economic opportunity in rural areas. Today, that spirit of equity and inclusion is a vital part of our co-op DNA.

When our electric co-op was founded, each member contributed an equal share in order to gain access to electricity that benefited individual families as well as the larger local community. Each member had an equal vote in co-op matters. That sense of equity and inclusion is still how we operate today. NCE was built by and belongs to the diverse communities and members we serve. Membership is open to

everyone in our service territory, regardless of race, religion, age, disability, gender identity, language, political perspective or socioeconomic status.

By virtue of paying your electric bill each month, you're a member of the co-op, and every member has an equal voice and vote when it comes to co-op governance. This ties back to our guiding principles of equitable economic participation and democratic control of the co-op.

We know members of our community have different needs and perspectives, and we welcome diverse views on all issues under consideration by the (28-57-30) co-op. The more viewpoints we hear, the better we are able to reflect the needs of all corners of our community.

While our top priority is providing safe, reliable and affordable energy, we also want to be a catalyst for good in our community. Because we are your local electric cooperative, co-op revenues stay right here in our community. In turn, we invest in our diverse community base through scholarship programs, charitable giving, educational programs and more. We strive to make long-term decisions that improve and enrich the communities we serve.

## Energy saving tip

Use wool or rubber dryer balls in the clothes dryer to reduce drying time and static. Wool dryer balls can also absorb extra moisture. These are an efficient alternative to dryer sheets, which can create buildup on the dryer's filter and reduce air circulation. If you prefer dryer sheets, scrub the filter once a month to remove buildup.

*Source: energy.gov*

**Last call for Operation Round Up! The deadline is March 1. Download an application today at [www.noblesce.coop/operation-round-0](http://www.noblesce.coop/operation-round-0).**

## Mark your calendar

Feb. 15 ..... Presidents' Day  
Feb. 25 ..... Electric bills due  
Mar. 14 ..... Daylight savings time

## Find your location number and win a \$10 credit

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

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## A message from NCE Board Secretary/Treasurer **Cindy Hokeness**

### Your cooperative, your vote

At NCE, you are more than a customer, you are a member. As a member, you have a voice in the leadership and direction of the cooperative. Your vote is your voice.

It is an exciting time at NCE. As we prepare for our annual meeting, nominators have sought, reviewed and on February 3, 2021, finalized all candidates for the board of directors and nominating committee. Directors represent members' interests in the cooperative, making important decisions on the short-and long-term direction of the cooperative.

As a member of the cooperative, you will be asked to vote, not only on the director candidates but also on the nominators that recruit the candidates for the board of directors each year. This year, three director seats are up for election, including Districts 1, 2 and 7, along with filling a vacancy



in District 6. Nominating committee elections include candidates for Districts 4 and 6.

Members can look for their ballot package in the mail next month. This packet will include the board of director and nominating committee election, along with articles of incorporation and bylaw amendments recommended by the board of directors.

In a separate mailing, you will also receive your annual report containing cooperative (2-18-75) financials, candidates' profiles, 2020 Annual Meeting Minutes and details for our annual meeting conference call scheduled for April 6 at 7 p.m.

In addition to voting on director and nominating positions, this year we are asking members to vote on an updated version of NCE's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws. Like it or not, change happens and our bylaws are in need of an update to better reflect what we do and allow us to take full advantage of the digital options and business tools available in today's world for doing business and communicating with members.

**Thank you for your  
membership and in  
advance for  
participating in the  
democratic process  
at NCE**



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It is important to know that the core concepts of the cooperative are not changing and remain intact. Proposed amendments reflect the changes that have taken place over time. For instance, amendments allow for additional communication methods, options to vote and communicate with you by mail or electronically and simplified requirements for membership.

Other highlights include:

- Removal of outdated language and practices.
- Changes to enable the board to determine the manner, method and location of the annual meeting.
- Clarifying language regarding capital credits to better reflect how capital credits are handled.
- Members who are married have a joint membership, unless NCE has been notified otherwise in writing.
- A quorum (8-29-1) can be represented by electronic or mail-in ballots.

As a member, your participation and input is vital to the success of NCE. We encourage you to make your voice heard by participating in our annual cooperative election and annual meeting.

# Avoid solar energy scams

Solar energy is booming, and the future is brighter than ever. Through the use of rooftop solar panels, many homeowners can now harness the sun's natural rays to produce their own electricity that's environmentally friendly and cost effective.

Unfortunately with the increasing popularity of solar, some businesses are taking advantage of consumers who are interested in generating their own energy through rooftop panels.

While many solar companies are genuine and truly want to help consumers with a successful solar installation, there are the occasional bad apples.

You've likely heard a story or two about solar vendors who promised rooftop panels that would generate enough electricity to power the entire home. Then, after the homeowner has paid thousands of dollars for the installation, the solar panels aren't working, and the vendor is nowhere to be found. Sadly, this story has been the reality for many consumers.

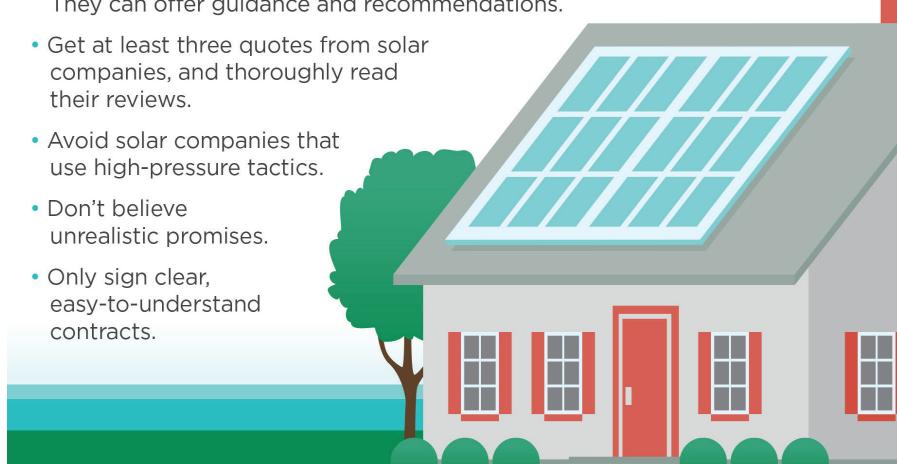
If you're interested in solar panels for your home, consider these tips before installation:

- Talk to an energy advisor at your local electric co-op first. We want you to feel confident about any decisions you make about your home energy use, especially decisions about generating energy at home.

## TIPS FOR AVOIDING SOLAR SCAMS

As the popularity of rooftop solar panels increases, so do solar scams. Here are a few tips to consider before you install a solar PV system for your home.

- Talk to your electric co-op first. They can offer guidance and recommendations.
- Get at least three quotes from solar companies, and thoroughly read their reviews.
- Avoid solar companies that use high-pressure tactics.
- Don't believe unrealistic promises.
- Only sign clear, easy-to-understand contracts.



- Collect at least three quotes from different solar companies to ensure you're getting a competitive deal. As with any major purchase, research is key, so thoroughly read customer reviews for each of the three solar vendors.

- If *(20-7-16)* you speak to a solar vendor and they use high-pressure tactics, like an offer that's only good for 24 hours, run! Any reputable solar company will recognize that you need time to review a proposal and thoroughly weigh your decision.

- You know if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. So, if a solar company is making promises that sound

unachievable and outlandish, they probably are. Remember, if you have any questions, you can always count on your electric co-op for advice.

- Finally, when it's time to review and sign a solar contract, make sure the language is clear and easy to understand. Ensure any prior verbal (or emailed) promises are also included in the contract.

Going solar is a major decision, so you'll want to conduct a good bit of research first. If you're looking for a general starting point, check out the Department of Energy's Homeowner's Guide to Going Solar or NCE's website for more information.

## Statement of nondiscrimination

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all pro-

grams). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint

Form, AD-3027, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call 866-632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: 202-690-7442; or (3) e-mail: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).



# Be Safe

## Stay clear of downed power lines

### NEVER TOUCH A DOWNED POWER LINE.

Always assume it is energized and call 911 immediately.

**POWERFUL STORMS** can damage power lines. If you see a downed power line:

- Stay at least 50 feet away from it and assume it is energized. The ground may also be energized making the entire area extremely dangerous.
- Never touch anything that is touching a downed power line. It is as dangerous as the line itself.
- If a power line falls on your vehicle while you are in it, stay inside your vehicle until help arrives.

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

## Country Cupboard

### Easy Crockpot Soup

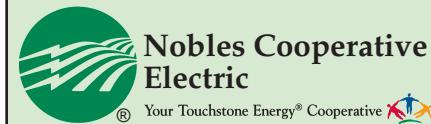
1 - 30 oz. bag shredded hash browns  
2 - 14 oz. cans low sodium chicken broth  
1 can cream of chicken soup  
1/2 c. diced onion

Saute onion, celery and butter in fry pan till cooked. Drain off butter or pat dry with paper towels. Put thawed hashbrowns and chicken broth in crockpot on high for 4 to 5 hours stirring every hour. Add cream of chicken soup, onion and celery. Last, add cream cheese and ham or bacon. Continue to stir often. Put in crockpot on low.

Send your favorite **breakfast recipe** to Nobles Cooperative Electric, ATTN: Tracey, P.O. Box 788, Worthington, MN 56187-0788. Entries must include your name, address, telephone number and NCE location number. All entries must be received by February 25. 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.

**Barb Ruiter**  
Leota

1 c. finely diced celery  
2 T. real butter  
1 - 8 oz. cream cheese  
1 lb. diced ham or 1 lb. lean cooked chopped bacon



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### Website

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### Office hours

7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Monday through Friday

Oct. 1 - April 30

### 24-Hour outage service

800-776-0517

### Gopher State One-Call

800-252-1166 or 811

### Electrical inspectors

Murray County

Randal Maha - 507-274-5261

Nobles County

Scott Preuss - 507-430-3652

### General Manager

Adam Tromblay

### Board of Directors

Ronald Schwartau, President - 734-3052\*

Lee York, V. President - 879-3497\*

Cindy Hokeness, Sec./Treas. - 478-4965\*

Jerry Beckering, Director - 227-4074\*

Gary Clarke, Director - 605-201-1903

Gary Sieve, Director - 926-5455\*

\*Telephone prefix 507

### Next Board Meeting

March 18, 2021

*This cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*

