

# Current Matters



Nobles Cooperative  
Electric

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

November 2020  
Vol. 12 Issue 11

## Financial assistance available to help with utility bills

As temperatures decline, the cost of heating starts to increase. During the cold weather months, some Nobles Cooperative Electric (NCE) members might experience difficulty in paying their electric bills. We know that COVID-19 has created additional financial hardships, placing an even larger burden on families already struggling to pay their bills.

If you are concerned about how to pay (539-39-115) for heating costs this winter, there are some new resources available to help those in need.

A Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) funded program, known as the COVID-19 Housing Assistance Program (CHAP) allocates \$100 million in Minnesota to cover housing expenses such as rent, mortgage, utilities or other housing-related expenses. Funds are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Eligible utility expenses include gas, electric, water and sewer. Only past due expenses incurred on or after Mar. 1, 2020, and before Dec. 20, 2020, are eligible. To learn more about the CHAP program or to apply for assistance:

- Visit United Way 211, <http://211unitedway.org/> to access the application or find answers to your questions regarding eligibility, or call 800-543-7709.

- General FAQ's, including information on income limits and what is covered: <http://www.mnhousing.gov/sites/np/covid19housingassistanceprogramFAQ>.

The Energy Assistance Program (EAP) is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which helps low-income renters and homeowners pay for home heating costs and furnace repairs. Household income must be at or below 50 percent of the state median income (\$54,357 for a family of four) to qualify for benefits. Applications must be received or postmarked by May 31, 2021.

To learn more about the EAP program or to apply for assistance, visit the Minnesota Department of Commerce Energy Assistance website, <https://mn.gov/commerce/consumers/consumer-assistance/energy-assistance/> for more details and to access the application portal or contact your local EAP service provider.

NCE exists because of you, and we are dedicated to the people and communities we serve. If you are having difficulty paying your electric bill and do not qualify for either of these programs, please contact us to set up a Cold Weather Rule payment plan.

## Energy saving tip

Keep cold air out to save energy. Seal air leaks around pipes and any gaps around chimneys and unfinished spaces behind cupboards and closets.

Source: [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov)

## Mark your calendar

Nov. 25 ..... Electric bills due

Nov. 26 ..... Happy Thanksgiving!

*Our offices will be closed November 26 and 27, but linemen will be on call for outages.*

## 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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**4** Buy one string of lights, get one free



General Manager  
**Adam Tromblay**

Over the years, you've probably heard or read about NCE's concern for our community. This is one of the core principles that sets cooperatives apart from other types of utilities and businesses. We've always taken this mission and responsibility to heart. It's who we are as a co-op.

Over the past few months, like so many of you, we've risen to meet new challenges (20-34-24) and strengthened the safety net for our community, particularly for those who are most vulnerable. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, we've made numerous adjustments to programs and operations to maintain business continuity while staying focused on the bigger mission of helping our members during this turbulent time.

Now, with the holidays fast approaching, these recent events have made me pause and think about the role we play in our community. While our purpose is to provide safe and reliable energy to you, the members we serve, we have a greater mission—to be a catalyst for good.

You're probably aware of our Operation Round Up program, where we take donations from generous members like you who have "rounded up" the amount due on their electric bill to help local or-



## Giving back to our community



## We ♥ our members

ganizations in need. Or you may have heard about our Youth Tour program, where we take our community's brightest young people to Washington, D.C., for a week-long immersion to experience democracy in action.

We also have a strong commitment to safety—not just for our employees, but for our community as well. We visit schools to teach children of all ages how to stay safe around electricity. We hold safety demonstrations at community meetings and other gatherings. We also have the It's All About YOUth program that targets 7th and 8th graders to provide them information about cooperatives, new technology and safety.

You'll also see our employees serving on local boards, coaching youth sports and volunteering at charitable

events. Because when you work at a co-op, you understand how important a strong community is—after all, without you, the co-op wouldn't exist.

We know that our core job is to keep the lights on; but our passion is our community. Because we live and work here too, and we want to make it a better place for all.

If there's anything we can do to help you—whether providing energy-saving advice to help lower your monthly bill or discuss payment plan options during these difficult times—please reach out to us.

Concern for community is the heart (508-37-041) and soul of who we are. And no matter what the future brings, you can count on your electric co-op to care about you.

## Small change. Big difference.

As an NCE member, you have a unique opportunity to support Operation Round Up, a program that provides financial support to organizations within our service territory. All that is required is the “rounding up” of your electric bill.

Organizations that seek funding must complete a grant application. Those applications are reviewed by the Operation Round Up Trust Board. The board

meets twice a year to distribute funds.

Due to the pandemic, the cooperative chose to postpone the spring distribution until the fall in hopes that COVID-19 would have subsided. On October 26, 32 organizations were awarded over \$20,000 in funding.



**Next Operation Round Up application deadline March 2.**

### If you have electric heat, you may be sales tax exempt

If electricity is your primary source of residential heat, the kilowatts used for heating your home are exempt from sales tax. (28-57-28) Primary means 50 percent or more of your heating. The heating season is six months long from November to April.

If you have signed a fuel exemption form in the past, your record is automatically retained. To sign up for exemption, please give our office a call at 507-372-7331, 507-836-6107, 800-776-0517 or fill out a form online.

### Are you sales tax exempt?

If you use electricity for agricultural or industrial purposes, this reminder will interest you. Electricity used in this manner may be exempt from sales tax.

To obtain relief from state sales tax, file for an exemption with our office. Contact the cooperative or find the ST-3 form online.

### November Auto Pay Winner Nick and Sharie Bergman

Take a minute to sign up for Auto Pay and you may win a \$25 credit on your electric bill. A winner is chosen each month. Members who are already saving time and money with Auto Pay will be automatically entered in our monthly contest.

NCE’s Auto Pay Program lets you pay your bills automatically without writing a check. You won’t have to worry about missing a payment and you’ll save time, as well as checks and postage.

Organization	Amount
A.C.E. of SW MN - Murray County	\$ 300
Boy Scout Troop 134 and Cub Scout 134	400
Brewster Senior Dining	1,400
Buffalo Ridge Drug Task Force	500
Chandler Area Quilters	300
Civil Air Patrol	800
Cultural Awareness Organization	700
Fulda Elementary School	1,000
Fulda Pork ‘n the Park Committee	700
Fulda/HLO Girls Basketball Program	600
Junior Achievement of Murray County	450
Lake Sarah Quilters	300
Lake Wilson Fire Department	1,500
Murray County Central Music Boosters, Inc.	1,000
Murray County Daycare Association	975
Murray County Emergency Management	500
Nobles County Historical Society	800
Nobles County Sheriff’s Office (DARE)	300
Rushmore Fire Department	900
Salvation Army Northern Division - HeatShare	1,000
Sillerud WELCA	300
Slayton Fire Department	900
Slayton Public Library	400
Southern MN Assoc. of Conservation District Employees Environmental Fair	1,200
United Way of SW MN	1,500
University of MN Foundation on behalf of Murray County 4-H	900
Worthington Area YMCA	950
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 20,575</b>

# Make your holiday twice as bright.



## Buy one string of energy-saving LED holiday lights, get one FREE!

The holiday season is one of the most energy-intensive times of the year, but that doesn't mean you should keep your twinkling, strobing and glittering decorations packed away. Instead, use up to **90% less electricity** by switching from incandescent to durable, longer lasting LED holiday string lights. And now, we're making it easy to make the switch with a **buy one, get one free offer**—available to the first 200 members. Offer begins November 1, 2020.

Take advantage of this BOGO offer while supplies last!

Give yourself the gift of energy savings at [energywisemnstore.com](http://energywisemnstore.com).

ENERGY WISE  MN



## Country Cupboard

### Pumpkin Cornbread

1 c. flour	1 c. corn meal
1 T. baking powder	2 whole eggs
1 tsp. salt	1 c. pumpkin puree
1/2 tsp. cinnamon	1/4 c. olive oil
1/4 tsp. nutmeg	1 T. molasses
1/2 c. brown sugar	

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Grease 8 x 8 x 2" baking dish. Mix dry ingredients in large bowl. In small bowl beat eggs, pumpkin, oil and (23-62-67SL) molasses. Stir wet ingredients into dry ingredients just until combined, then pour in pan, smooth batter and bake for 30 minutes. These can be made into 12 muffins instead of an 8 x 8" pan.

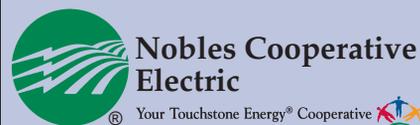
### Pumpkin Torte

Crush 24 graham crackers, mix with 1/3 c. sugar and 1/2 c. butter. Press into 9 x 13" pan. Mix two beaten eggs, 3/4 c. sugar and 8 oz. cream cheese. Pour over crust. Bake 20 minutes at 350 degrees. Cook 2 cups pumpkin, 3 egg yolks, 1/2 c. sugar, 1/2 c. milk, 1/2 tsp. salt and 1 T. cinnamon until mixture thickens. Remove from heat and add one envelope plain gelatin that has been dissolved in 1/4 c. cold water. Cool. Beat three egg whites, adding 1/4 c. sugar. Fold in pumpkin mixture that has been cooled. Pour over cooled baked crust. Top with whipped cream or Cool Whip.

Send your favorite **Christmas** 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 November 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.

Karla Gleis  
Lake Wilson

Betty Wilcoxon  
Slayton



Official monthly publication

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507-836-6107 or 800-776-0517

### Website

[www.noblesce.coop](http://www.noblesce.coop)

### Email address

[nce@noblesce.com](mailto:nce@noblesce.com)

### 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\*  
Bruce Barber, Director - 329-2991\*  
Jerry Beckering, Director - 227-4074\*  
Gary Clarke, Director - 605-201-1903  
Gary Sieve, Director - 926-5455\*  
\*Telephone prefix 507

### Next Board Meeting

December 10, 2020

This cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

