

Connections

October 2023

For the member-owners of Federated Rural Electric



Volume 27, Issue 10

October is National Co-op Month! Electric co-ops grow for the communities we serve

October is National Co-op Month and your co-op is joining cooperatives across the U.S. to celebrate. Co-ops come in all shapes and sizes, but they each have a common goal — provide goods or services for the members of the cooperative.

Electric co-ops exist to serve their member-owners. Our priority is to provide affordable, reliable energy to our local communities. Because we are led by you, the members we serve, we can evolve to meet your needs. For example, members wanted more information on outage reports in our last major survey. We responded by providing our outage text notification service. Sign up by providing us your cell phone number using the Page 5 coupon. Call us during business hours or e-mail billing@federatedrea.coop.

This October, as we celebrate Co-op Month, we're focusing on the ways "Co-ops Grow" for their members.

Co-ops grow communities

Co-ops help communities grow by promoting economic empowerment, fostering community engagement and supporting the unique needs of co-op members. This includes bringing faster fiber broadband service to the unserved rural areas. "Concern for Community" is one of our core principles — and being community-focused is essential to everything we do.

Co-ops grow together

Co-ops are all about cooperation — not competition. That's why electric co-ops work together to share lessons learned, successful strategies and better ways to serve

our members, which includes sharing this *Connections* newsletter with Brown County REA members. We help our neighboring cooperatives restore power to their members after major storms, as you never know when our co-op will be in the same situation. Other examples of electric cooperatives working together includes the creation of Heartland Security by 13 electric co-ops and CTV formed by four neighboring co-ops. We're better when we grow together!

Co-ops grow tomorrow's leaders

Electric co-ops serve as fertile ground for growing tomorrow's leaders through a variety of youth engagement programs. Whether through school hotline safety demonstrations, participating at the local career fair, sponsoring our 4-H members at the county fair and high school scholarships, we're involved.

Plus, each year we sponsor the electric cooperative Youth Tour program sending a local youth to Washington, D.C. We're committed to providing opportunities for local youth to learn and thrive in our community and beyond.

Co-ops grow for you

At your local electric cooperative your satisfaction is our number one goal. It's why we were formed many years ago to fulfill a uniquely local purpose. We've come a long way since then; your needs continue to evolve. That's why we'll never stop growing for you! ☺



Your electric cooperative has "tree"mendous growth — even after 88 years of service! Federated now offers outage text notifications, broadband internet service and continues to enrich the lives of local youth.

At A Glance



No tricks...just treats from co-op's rebate program

Claim your October treats! Fill out a rebate form if you purchased a new Energy Star freezer or refrigerator and have receipt for recycling the old unit to receive \$50 bill credit. Find the form on our website or call to request it. Plus, Energy Star dehumidifier earns a \$25 rebate. ☺

Spooked by energy costs? Treat yourself to energy efficiency!

This spooky season we're sharing a few energy-saving tricks so you can treat yourself to lower energy bills. Add these five treats to your bag of tricks to summon the spirit of energy efficiency.

Shoot down drafts with caulk gun

Get rid of goosebumps by eliminating ghostly drafts. The winter chill is just around the corner; now is the time to seal air leaks around your home. Apply caulk and weatherstripping around drafty windows and doors to make your home more comfortable and lower energy use.

Shine with LEDs & scare off the boogeyman



Illuminate your lair with energy efficient lighting. LED bulbs use 75 percent less energy and last 25 times longer than incandescent light bulbs. Make the switch to reduce energy used for lighting. Remember to use LEDs when it's time to decorate for the upcoming holiday season too. LED light strings offer an average of 88 percent energy savings, as compared to traditional incandescent light strings.

Smart thermostat avoids being chilled to the bones



Conjure instant savings with a Smart thermostat. One of the easiest ways to save energy is through thermostat control, since home heating and cooling account for a large portion of monthly energy use. Smart thermostats can help you manage heating and cooling costs by learning your daily routine and adjusting the temperature settings accordingly. You can control a Smart thermostat from anywhere (through your smart phone), which allows you to prevent unnecessary energy consumption while you're away. Sorcery! For a bonus treat take advantage of your electric cooperative's \$25 Smart thermostat rebate; find the form on the co-op's website.

The Frankenstein old water heater needs to be ousted

Quit adding parts to your old beast of a water heater that's 25-plus years old. Upgrade to a new energy-efficient one that features inches of foam insulation to keep your hot water's heat in the water versus disappearing into your dark dungeon.

Turn to your local electric co-op for your next water heater. It features a lifetime warranty against leaks for the original owner with a larger tank for plenty of hot water. Plus, it is made in the USA! Your electric cooperative sells the water heater below retail pricing as it helps the cooperative save money when a radio control is installed on it. The radio control talks to the water heater on the hot days of spring and summer and cold mornings or evenings of fall and winter. The radio control shuts off the power during the peak so the cooperative and you do not need to buy power on the open market at higher prices.

Stir up countertop cauldron cash



Cooler weather summons our favorite soup recipes. Small countertop appliances, like slow cookers, use less energy than cooking meals on the stovetop. Grab your book of spells (or recipes) and start stirring up savings in the kitchen.

By looking around our homes many opportunities arise to save energy. This spooky season check your home and unlock a different kind of magic — the kind that brings energy savings. ☺

Sharp steam oven cooks the competition with many ways to make meals fast & easy

A new cook has entered the kitchen! Introducing the Sharp superheated steam countertop oven. It's the size of microwave, but is more powerful, offering more ways to cook.

This unit combines superheated steam and conventional, radiant heat to save time, energy and money. Temperatures up to 485 degrees use superheated steam to cook food both crispy and browned, while remaining juicy and tender. It's easy to fill the front-loading tank with water for 60 minutes of steam cooking. Just plug it into a 120-volt outlet.

While regular steam is 212 degree Fahrenheit, the superheated steam goes up to 485 degrees. The instant-on feature and smaller cooking body heats up quickly and keeps food closer to the heating elements. Be amazed with the five cooking modes:


- broil/grill
- pizza
- toast
- bake/reheat
- warm.

Create sheet pan meals on the crisper pan (12.5" by 12.5") or use the broiling pan. It is large enough to cook a 12" pizza or nine pieces of toast at once. Food up to 4"



"Fast food" is at your fingertips with the Sharp superheated steam countertop oven. No preheating nor defrosting are needed!

tall can be cooked inside. Yes, a cookbook is included.

The unit is 9.3" tall by 19.7" wide and 19.3" deep. The unit can be bought on Walmart.com for \$199. If you are interested in a larger version, three wall-oven models exist. Review those prices and sizes at www.SharpUSA.com. 

Safety

Never do the power line limbo dance!

"How low can you go?" We know of these lyrics associated with the limbo dance where you bend backwards to boogie under a horizontal pole.

In terms of fall harvest safety your electric cooperative encourages you to take it slow and low — as low as you can go! It's a matter of life and death.


- Lower your auger before moving it around the farm yard from bin to bin or to another bin site. The few minutes could be a lifesaver by avoiding overhead power lines and an electrocution accident.

- Lower the auger on the grain cart, combine and yes, even feed trucks. Being in a hurry with the forgotten auger sticking out, while doing end rows, can damage a pole and the auger even more.

- Look up and look out for the guy wires and the overhead power lines too as you enter or exit a field with your newer, larger combine.



How low can you go with an auger? Take it down low — every single time! Don't risk entanglement, electrocution or death with power lines using your auger, whether on a feed truck, combine or grain auger.

Just remember to take it slow and low as you go about harvest when near the power lines in the yard and fields. 

Federated Focus

Upgrade to LED shop bulb



Now that darkness arrives so much earlier, extend your work with an LED light bulb in the garage, machine shed or shop area.

These LED bulbs sold at Federated already have the rebate built into the pricing. The 22-watt LED replaces a 150-watt incandescent, 40-watt compact fluorescent or 100 watt-HID bulb. Price: \$39.50, plus tax. Stop by our lobby to buy one or several, while the supply lasts at this pricing!

Water heater haunting you?



Spooked by how old your water heater has become? Upgrade to an energy-efficient, USA-made, lifetime-warranty against leaks for the original

owner! Avoid the October tricks of a leaky water heater that becomes a gushing geyser! Treat yourself to a worry-free hot shower by calling Federated today to schedule your water heater with free installation for \$589, plus tax.

Even Pay amounts adjusted

Federated members on the Even Pay program will see adjustments to their Even Pay amounts. Every six months Federated reviews the average payment to make sure it is keeping up with the actual usage. If there's a credit, the amount is adjusted down; if there's a deficit, the average amount is increased. Members can expect an increase in their Even Pay amount due to a hotter summer than last year, plus the rate increase that took effect April 1, 2023. ☺



Scott Reimer

Manager's Message

Update your contact info for EGO snowblower entry

Welcome to fall everyone! Recently you all received a form asking for your updated contact information. We haven't done this in awhile and well, it's time. The stick is for you to provide us with complete, confidential, updated information; the carrot is entry into drawings with the grand prize being the EGO two-stage snowblower valued around \$1,500. We encourage everyone to participate fully to be part of the drawing. Use coupon on Page 5.

Demand line added to residential bills; no demand charge listed for now

Starting with the October billing for the residential class rate "A," you will see a new line item on your bill — monthly peak demand. We are starting to track peak demand with the possibility of adding a residential seasonal demand charge to the rate. This is an easily defined topic and simply: electric demand is a measure of the average rate where your home or business consumes electricity in a defined time interval, usually 15-minute increments. In general, the more electrical devices you operate at one time, the higher your electrical demand. Over the years, we track expenses where wholesale power costs are the largest component of our bill. One thing we have noticed is that during certain times of the year, our demand costs are higher sometimes, leading to an under collection of costs. Typically, when it's really hot outside or really cold outside we see this. Summer seems to be the main culprit. Starting in June and usually through September, demand costs are high, which are driven by, you guessed it, air conditioning. As we take a look at our rates for 2024, we see that smaller incremental increases are necessary. This seasonal demand component could be part of that. To give you an idea just how much this might impact you, let's for now assume that a seasonal demand rate of \$3 per kilowatt (kW) per month was in place. If your home generated a peak demand of 20 kW, you would have an additional \$60 charge on your bill for that three- to four-month period. The idea is to allow the co-op to be made whole when peak demand is higher than normal. We will keep you well informed as to what decision is made going forward.

Our 10-year financial forecast is the nexus for all we do financially and we try and follow it the best we can. It considers power supply costs, expenses, such as work plan activity, labor and materials, plus factors in the correct margin to make this all possible. Just as many of you see, Federated has seen costs for just about everything on the rise with no relief in sight. Yet, the goal remains the same for us — to serve you with reliable, affordable and safe electricity.

Martin County was denied broadband grant

On the broadband front I am sorry to say that we were not selected for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) ReConnect grant for Martin County. It appears that one of the large internet service providers contested our project, seeing us as a threat to their monopoly. USDA accepted the challenge. We are not stopping and are still committed to providing fiber to the homes of our entire membership. The staff here at Federated is diligently putting together a plan for just that. Corporate delays to getting you the service you expect to flourish in rural Minnesota are simply intolerable; we will use rural ingenuity. We are currently working on two projects: one in Northrop and the other in Jackson County. Our commitment to you is "fiber to the premise is coming to you soon".

Be safe this fall during harvest

With fall harvest upon us we make the plea again that if you "see something say something"! I am referring to our facilities, specifically those that may interfere with your operations or in some way create an unsafe situation.

We are blessed to have such a wonderful membership; we wake up everyday hoping we can somehow make life a little better for you. You all know that we are available to talk anytime and look forward to hearing from you as needed. ☺

Remembering Federated faces from former years

Two long-time fixtures at Federated passed away in August. We remember them for the time they served Federated members.



Cordell Kolander

Cordell Kolander, Lakefield, died August 18, 2023, at the age of 82. He served as a Federated District 1 director from January 1987 to December 2006. In his retirement newsletter story Kolander commented that the merger of wholesale power provider Cooperative Power with United Power to become Great River Energy was challenging. Other big milestones during his tenure were the additions of subsidiaries, Heartland Security and Carr's Tree Service, along with the wind energy and ethanol plants.

Next, Donald Schlager, Welcome, died August 26,



Donald Schlager

2023, at the age of 85. He worked for 37½ years at Federated. Six months were spent at the Jackson location before switching to the Welcome warehouse. Schlager took correspondence courses to become a lineman, earning \$1.78 an hour in 1964. Schlager became a journeyman lineman in 1975 and the Welcome line foreman in 1989 before retiring in 2001. "I've always told the guys your work is like your signature," Schlager said. "When you look at a new line you built, if it stands straight, it's like putting your name on it. Being a lineman takes a certain type of mentality and I'm proud of it."

Federated tips the hard hats to these two co-op supporters for their cooperative dedication. ☺

Use life support equipment?

For family members with a medical condition electricity is a lifeline for their medical equipment. Your local electric co-op likes to know about any members who are on life-support equipment: • Oxygen concentrators • Respirators • Home dialysis • Other life-threatening conditions.

Yes, I'm on life support equipment OR

Remove from co-op's life support list

Name _____

Address _____

City/state/zip _____

Phone number _____

Your account number (found on electric bill) _____

Type of life support equipment or medical condition: _____

Battery backup? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, how long do the batteries last? _____

Is there a generator onsite for backup electricity? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Return this coupon to Federated with your next bill payment. Otherwise, mail to Federated, ATTN: Janet, PO Box 69, Jackson MN 56143-0069. Thanks! (10/2023) ☺

Help us serve you better!

Update contact info on your co-op account to win EGO snowblower

\$1,500 value or 3 \$50 bill credits



The EGO two-stage self-propelled snowblower features 24-inch width and 20-inch intake and throws snow 50 feet. It runs on two 56-volt ARC Lithium batteries, which can be charged in 120 minutes. These batteries clear an 18-car driveway with 8 inches of snow.

Update your electric account info and you could come out a big winner!

If you already updated your info from the September *Connections* or the green October 5 bill insert, you do not need to do it again. Only one entry per member. ☺

Update your cell phone, land line and e-mail with Federated for a chance to win. This info will NOT be shared outside of the co-op. We will do a drawing for this EGO snowblower (value \$1,500) and three \$50 bill credits. **Fill out and return this info by November 1.**

Electric account # (s) _____

Name _____

☐ Yes, sign me up for outage text notices on cell phone numbers listed below.

☐ No, I don't want outage text notices, but update my cell phone numbers on my account.

Cell phone _____

Cell phone _____

Cell phone _____

☐ Yes, I still use my land line

☐ No, remove my land line

Land line phone # _____

E-mail address _____

☐ Yes, sign me up for electronic bill statements.

☐ Yes, sign me up for the bill payment reminders.

☐ Yes, I'd like to sign up for Auto Pay. Mail me the enrollment form.

Return this insert with your bill payment; drop off at our office or drop box by November 1, 2023. Otherwise, scan and e-mail it to billing@federatedrea.coop.

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Let us a lend a hand for energy savings: Smart thermostat rebate



Install a Smart thermostat. Use your cell phone then to adjust the temperature whether you are home or away. Your electric co-op offers a \$25 rebate. Find the form on our website or call to request it. ☎️

Peeking around for some new pecan recipes? Crack out your favs

Get cracking! Shell out some of your favorite pecan recipes, whether for pie, bars, rolls, cookies, tarts or other family favorites. Share your pecan recipes with us. Mail your favorite recipes to Editor, Federated Rural Electric, PO Box 69, Jackson MN 56143-0069 or e-mail to christoffer@federatedrea.coop by October 26. Add your name and phone number. Thanks for sharing with us! 📧

Carrot Casserole by Sandy Kalfs, Okabena

16 carrots, sliced 1/8 to 1/4" thick (8 c.)	1/2 tsp. dry mustard
1/4 c. margarine	1/4 tsp. celery salt
1/4 c. flour	1/8 tsp. pepper
2 T. minced, dried onion	2 c. milk
1 tsp. salt	8 oz. sharp cheddar cheese, thinly sliced
	1/4 c. dry bread crumbs

Grease a two-quart rectangular baking dish; set aside. In a large saucepan cook the carrots in a small amount of boiling water, covered, for seven to 10 minutes or until tender; drain. Meanwhile, in a medium saucepan melt the margarine. Stir in the flour, onion, salt, mustard, celery salt and pepper. Add milk. Cook over medium heat stirring constantly until mixture is thickened and bubbly. Remove from heat. Place half of the carrots in the prepared pan. Layer half of the cheese slices over the carrots. Repeat with remaining carrots and cheese. Pour the sauce over all. Sprinkle with bread crumbs. Bake in a 350° oven for 20 to 25 minutes or until heated through. Makes 10 servings. 📧

Zucchini Carrot Cake by Denice Evers, Springfield

2 eggs	1 tsp. cinnamon
1 c. sugar	1/2 tsp. salt
2/3 c. oil	1 c. grated carrots
1 1/4 c. flour	1 c. grated zucchini, squeezed & tightly packed
1 tsp. baking powder	1/2 c. chopped nuts, optional
1 tsp. baking soda	

Beat eggs with sugar until frothy. Gradually beat in oil. Add dry ingredients. Beat at high speed for four minutes. Stir in carrots, zucchini and nuts. Pour into a 9x13" pan that has been greased and floured. Bake at 350° for about 35 minutes or until the top springs back when lightly touched.

Frosting: 4 oz. cream cheese 3 T. of butter
1 tsp. vanilla 2 c. powdered sugar

In a small mixing bowl blend the cream cheese with the butter. Add the sugar and vanilla; beat until smooth. Spread evenly over the cooled cake. 📧

Carrot Cake

by Joann Wink, Fairmont

2 1/2 c. flour	
2 tsp. baking soda	
1 tsp. pumpkin pie spice	
1 tsp. cinnamon	
1 1/2 c. sugar	1 1/4 c. oil
4 eggs	1 1/2 tsp. vanilla
3 carrots, shredded	
1 can crushed pineapple, not drained	
1 c. walnuts, chopped	
1/2 c. golden raisins	

Beat sugar, oil, eggs and vanilla. Stir in flour, soda, pumpkin spice and cinnamon. Stir in carrots, pineapple with juice, nuts and raisins. Bake in a 9x13" pan at 350° for 40 minutes.

Frosting:

8 oz. cream cheese	
4 T. butter	1 tsp. clear vanilla
3 c. powdered sugar	

Beat cream cheese, butter and vanilla. Add powdered sugar. Frost. 📧

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**October is National
Co-op Month.**

#PowerOn



Local, fast internet!

**I'm a Federated
Broadband
customer &
Federated director**



"We have used Federated Broadband and previously Back40 Wireless since they started for many reasons," stated David A. Hansen, Federated Board president and director for District 3. "We like the local ownership and service so any issues are dealt with quickly and completely. Besides internet, we recently expanded our usage to a streaming TV package with Federated Broadband. We also use internet service for online meetings, the WhatsApp for long-distance and international phone calls, along with being connected for business and family on social media. We are so thankful for this local service provider who is committed to providing good, personal service." ☺



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Businesses: ask about our larger data plans



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The Board of Directors generally meets the last business day of the month at 8 a.m. at the Jackson office. Regular board meetings are open to the membership. Members interested in discussing business items should contact the general manager or president three days before the meeting.

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