



NEWS *Lines*

PUBLISHED MONTHLY FOR THE MEMBER-OWNERS OF NORTH WEST RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

SEPTEMBER 2026

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**Our offices will
be closed Monday,
September 7
in observance of
Labor Day.**

We're Looking For Students Interested In Public Service And Leadership

Students who attend our Zoom sessions in October will have a chance to win AirPods and a \$1,000 college scholarship!

Guided by our cooperative commitment to community, North West REC has a long history of supporting students in the communities we serve through scholarships and leadership opportunities. We've also been sending deserving high school students to our nation's capital every summer for years as part of the national Electric Cooperative Youth Tour program.

Iowa's electric cooperatives are pleased to once again offer a virtual opportunity for rural students to learn more about advocacy, leadership and electric cooperatives with a two-part webinar series in October. The Iowa Youth Leadership Academy is open to any high school student in our service area and they are invited to register at IowaYouthTour.com.

"This program is perfect for rural Iowa students who have a passion for public service, advocacy or leadership," remarked Lyle Korver, NWREC CEO/General Manager. "We want to raise students' awareness of how local electric co-ops power people's lives and empower communities. We also want to talk about exciting career paths that are available in smaller communities and help them advocate for issues they care about."

Once students register online for the Iowa Youth Leadership Academy, they can attend the webinars from their own computer or mobile device. Each Zoom session will last around 45-60 minutes and focus on a specific topic:

- Sunday, October 4, 7:00 p.m. - Why Cooperatives Matter and How to Effectively Advocate
- Sunday, October 18, 7:00 p.m. - Being a Leader

At the end of each live session, one attendee will be selected at random to win a \$500 scholarship; students who attend both sessions will be entered into a bonus drawing for a \$1,000 college scholarship. All students who register online at IowaYouthTour.com receive a special box of co-op goodies in the mail.

During the Zoom sessions, students will be inspired by our lineup of speakers and presenters. Participants will learn how to advocate for issues that are important to them and build leadership skills from a dynamic speaker. Attendees will also hear about Iowa Youth Tour. Students with an interest in government and public service are encouraged to apply for this weeklong trip to Washington, D.C. The 2027 Youth Tour is slated for June 16-22 next summer.

Learn more at www.IowaYouthTour.com or contact North West REC at 712-707-4935 or nwrec@nwrec.
coop for more information.



Prepare Your Home for Cooler Weather

As summer winds down and cooler temperatures begin to arrive, September is the perfect time to make sure your heating system is ready for the months ahead. A little preventative maintenance now can improve comfort, lower energy costs and help prevent unexpected breakdowns this winter.

Schedule a Heating System Tune-Up. Before cold weather arrives, have your furnace or heat pump inspected by a qualified HVAC professional. An annual tune-up helps identify worn parts, improve efficiency and ensure your system is operating safely. If you have a gas, propane or oil furnace, be sure the inspection includes checking for proper ventilation and potential carbon monoxide hazards.

Replace Your Air Filter. A clean air filter helps your heating system operate efficiently and improves indoor air quality. Check your filter monthly and replace or clean it every one to three months, or more often if you have pets, allergies or a particularly dusty home.

Check Airflow. Walk through your home and make sure vents and registers are clean and not blocked by furniture, rugs or curtains. Keeping vents open allows your heating system to distribute warm air more evenly throughout your home.

Seal Out Drafts. Inspect windows and doors for drafts, and seal gaps with weather stripping or caulk. Also check insulation in your attic, basement or crawl space. Proper insulation helps keep warm air inside and reduces the workload on your heating system.

Prepare Outdoor Equipment. If your home has a heat pump, remove leaves, grass clippings and other debris from around the outdoor unit. Trim shrubs to maintain at least two feet of clearance and keep the unit free of snow and ice during the winter. Also check that furnace intake and exhaust pipes remain clear of leaves, debris and, later in the season, snow.



Adjust Your Thermostat. If you have a programmable or smart thermostat, review your settings before heating season begins. Lowering the temperature while you're asleep or away from home can reduce energy use without sacrificing comfort.

Planning for a Replacement? If your heating system is more than 10 years old, it may be time to start planning for an upgrade. Newer high-efficiency furnaces and heat pumps can provide greater comfort while reducing energy use. Before purchasing new equipment, be sure to check Northwest REC's available energy efficiency rebates. Rebates on qualifying heating and cooling equipment can help lower your upfront costs while improving your home's energy performance.



ARE YOU SWITCH SMART?

Load management is one of the easiest ways for members to become active members in their cooperative and save money on their electric bills. Not only does having a load management switch help qualify you for the interruptible all electric heat rate, it also qualifies you to purchase a Marathon water heater from us at a rebated price! You can save between \$300 and \$500, depending on which size you purchase, by installing a switch on your water heater. An even bigger bonus, if you are building a new home with all electric heat and have a load management switch installed, you can receive \$1,000 rebate on an 85 or 100 gallon water heater!

Local Teens Attend National Tour Program

Morgan Knapp and Elijah Oetken recently participated in the National Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., sponsored by North West REC. They joined 34 other student delegates from Iowa for the trip in June.

For more than six decades, electric cooperatives have sponsored high school students for Youth Tour, a leadership development program that helps young people discover their voice, build confidence and expand their understanding of civic engagement. While in Washington, D.C., students met with elected officials, explored historic landmarks and even operated their own student-led snack cooperative, gaining hands-on experience in teamwork, responsibility and leadership.

The Electric Cooperative Youth Tour is a collaborative effort supported by locally owned electric cooperatives like North West REC, statewide trade associations, and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

In addition to touring the nation’s capital, 2,100 students from across the country gathered for National Youth Day, hosted by NRECA, where they heard from inspiring speakers and public figures. This year’s program featured Mike Schlappi, a 4-time paralympic medalist and 2-time world wheelchair basketball



champion, who shared a powerful message about perseverance and leadership: “Just because you can’t stand up doesn’t mean you can’t stand out.”

Since 1958, Iowa’s electric cooperatives have sponsored students through Youth Tour with opportunities to meet members of their U.S. congressional delegation, participate in leadership and advocacy sessions, and explore our nation’s capital.

For more information about how to apply for North West REC’s 2027 Youth Tour program, contact our office at 712-707-4935 or nwrec@nwrec.coop or visit www.iowaYouthTour.com. You can also find “Iowa Youth Tour” on Facebook or Instagram to see highlights from the 2026 trip.

Pricing Information On Security Lights

Security lights and maintenance are available to our members at the prices below. We are no longer able to service HPS or mercury vapor lights as we are no longer able to get parts for them. If your old light has an issue, you will need to upgrade to a LED light if you would like us to fix it.

Security Light Service Work

- LED - maintenance\$90
- - (Will retrofit mercury vapor or HPS lights to LEDs when maintenance is necessary)\$200
- Move security light to new pole\$250
- Move security light and pole\$250
- Remove security light from pole or disconnect light\$250

Sell security light to member - includes installation

- LED security light (will not install on anything but a pole)\$250
- Replace a HPS light with an LED light\$200

LED lights have a 5-year warranty, but if we find something wrong on the members side causing an issue with the light not to work, we will charge a \$90 service call fee. Warranty does not cover light struck by lightning.

Poles

- Setting a pole for member (We will not set poles for gateposts, basketball hoops, etc.)\$250
- Sell any size used pole to member\$200



Lyle D. Korver

MANAGER'S *Report*

Update On First Half of 2026

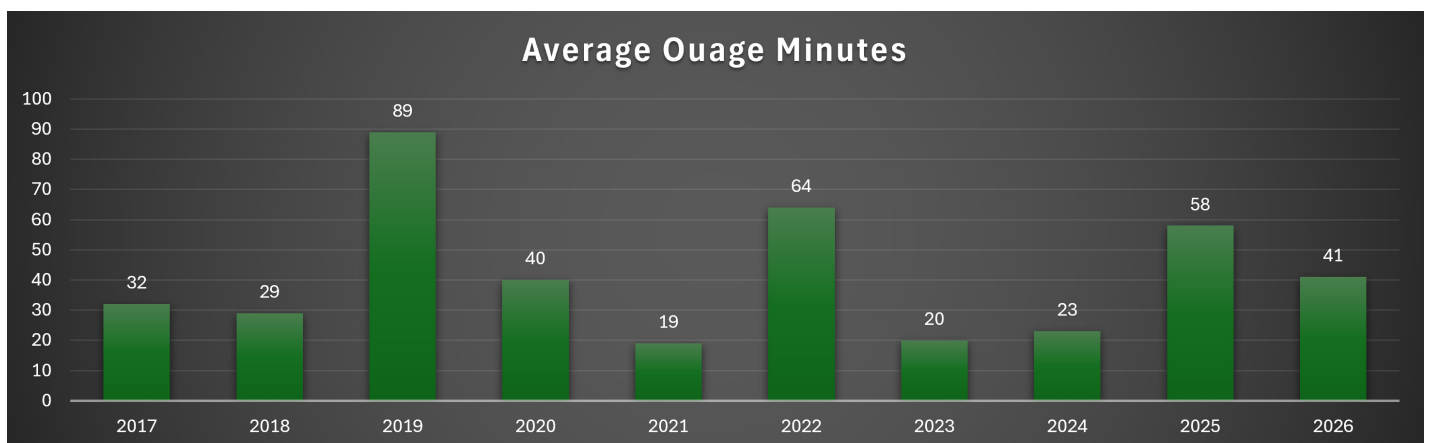
It's hard to believe but we are already into the second half of 2026. Your Cooperative is having a good start to the year, and I wanted to share a few highlights relating to safety, service reliability, and growth.

Safety – Safety continues to be our number one priority, and I'm pleased to share that it has been a safe start to the year. Our employees have worked safely, and we have now operated for almost four years without a lost time accident.

We have also had a safe year out on our lines with no serious public incidents involving our electric lines. We encourage everyone to continue to make safety a high priority.

Service Reliability: Providing reliable electric service for our members is also a high priority. We are pleased to report that service reliability for our members so far this year has been very good. One of the keys is that we have been fortunate to avoid any serious storms. We are also seeing the benefits of the system improvements that North West REC (NWREC) has been making to our distribution system and the transmission improvements NIPCO has been making on their system in recent years.

For the first six months of 2026, we averaged 41 minutes of average outage time per member. Our goal on an annual basis is to stay below 90 minutes of average outage minutes for our members. We are at a very good pace to potentially be below this for the year. This graph highlights the average outage minutes for the first half of the year for the last 10 years.



Our line crews have been busy this year with building and installing new overhead and underground lines throughout our four county service area. They have also been replacing some older line that has been identified as line that needs to be replaced due to its age or potentially some failing underground. We have over 3,700 miles of line on our system and some of this line is over 50 years old, so it is very important that we continue to have good plans for replacement and maintenance in order to maintain excellent service reliability for our members.

Maintenance is also an important part of our efforts to provide reliable service. We have hired a pole testing contractor again this year and they will be testing almost 4,000 poles. They also treat poles that are still in good condition to try to extend the life of the poles.

Economic Development and Growth:

We continue to be very active with our economic development programs and the Cooperative and our members have seen tremendous benefits of this over the years. It enables us to increase our kWh sales and to spread our fixed costs over the higher sales level.

2026 is shaping up to be a good year of growth. We are adding a number of new services for commercial, industrial, housing and value added ag projects. Our members and the Cooperative will benefit from this new load for many years to come.

We are fortunate to have a very progressive service area and loyal membership. Thank you for your ongoing support of the Cooperative. The directors and employees are committed to working hard together to provide all of our members with safe, reliable and affordable electric service.



Iowa Co-op Members Experience Energy Trail Tour



More than 120 electric cooperative member-owners from western and north-central Iowa

participated in this year's Energy Trail Tour, a three-day educational experience exploring how electricity is generated and delivered. The 2026 tours, departing from NIPCO's headquarters in Le Mars in late June and July, took participants through the Dakotas to visit key facilities operated by Basin Electric Power Cooperative and Western Area Power Administration (WAPA). 2026 marks the 37th anniversary of the Energy Trail Tour as a three-day experience offered to members of the NIPCO and Corn Belt Power Cooperative systems.

Along the route, members explored a diverse energy mix, from hydroelectric generation at Big Bend Dam in Fort Thompson, South Dakota, to coal-based generation at Antelope Valley Station, and lignite coal production at the Freedom Mine near Beulah, North Dakota. They also learned about wind energy and the production of synthetic natural gas and valuable byproducts at the Great Plains Synfuels Plant in Beulah.

Beyond the technical learning, the tour reinforced the cooperative difference—highlighting the history, principles, and community focus that set electric cooperatives apart from other utilities.

Participants also enjoyed educational and entertaining stops that showcased non-energy points of interest throughout the Dakotas.

Sponsored by Iowa generation and transmission power cooperatives Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative and Corn Belt Power Cooperative, the Energy Trail Tour connects members with the people, resources, and partnerships that power their homes, farms, businesses, and communities, offering a firsthand look at what it takes to keep the lights on. Interested in participating next year? Contact our office to find out how you can learn more about the 2027 Energy Trail Tour.



Tour #1 Above, Left to Right: Lyle Neutz & Gabriel Gonzales, Mike & Nancy Thompson, Cheryl & Darrell Bethke, Keith & Janice Swenson.



Tour #2 Above, Left to Right: Sydney & Andrew Schreiber, Karna & Bill Schiltz, Jeanie Marquardt & Steve Staab, Susie & Mike Jungers.



Tour #3 Above, Left to Right: Chris & Angie Beeck, Allen & Cindy Bousema, Jean & Keith Wilbert, Brenda & Mark Van Roekel.



MOVE OVER
SLOW DOWN

MOVE OVER OR SLOW DOWN

It's that simple, and it's the law in Iowa. By following these two rules of the road, you can help save lives and avoid receiving a traffic ticket – or even losing your driver's license. It's necessary to move over or slow down when approaching stationary emergency, maintenance, and utility vehicles with flashing lights activated.

Understanding Your Electric Bill

Although September marks the beginning of fall, hot weather often continues across northwest Iowa. Air conditioners may still be running regularly, and many members may wonder why their electric bill is higher than expected and what factors are all contributing to the total cost.

At North West REC, we believe understanding your electric bill is an important part of being an informed member. While the total amount due may seem like a single number, it actually reflects several different costs associated with delivering reliable electricity to your home or business.

The largest factor is often the amount of energy you use. Electricity is measured in kilowatt-hours (kWh), and the more energy your household consumes, the higher your bill will be. During the summer, air conditioning is typically the largest driver of increased energy use.

When temperatures climb into the 90s or higher, our cooling systems run longer and more frequently, consuming significantly more electricity than they do during milder weather.

Another major factor is the cost of generating or purchasing electricity. Like many electric cooperatives, North West REC purchases wholesale electricity through our generation and transmission cooperative, NIPCO, which supplies power from a diverse portfolio of generation resources, including Basin Electric Power Cooperative. The cost of producing electricity can fluctuate based on fuel prices, maintenance expenses, market conditions and the mix of energy resources used to generate power. Changes in wholesale power costs influence the price of electricity delivered to members.

Transmission costs also play a role. Before electricity reaches your home, it must travel across a network of high-voltage transmission lines that connect power plants to local distribution systems. Transmission equipment requires ongoing maintenance and upgrades to ensure reliability, especially as electricity demand continues to grow.

Closer to home, North West REC maintains the local electric distribution system—utility poles, power

lines, transformers, substations and other essential equipment that safely delivers power to members. A portion of the cost of maintaining this equipment is recovered through the monthly service charge. This is a flat monthly fee all members pay, regardless of how much electricity they use. This fixed fee ensures all members pay a fair share of the basic, operational costs required to keep the power grid reliable and ready to serve your home or business. Whether a member uses a little electricity or a lot, we must maintain infrastructure and have crews, equipment and resources available to provide electricity around the clock.

Summer temperatures can also influence costs in less obvious ways. When the demand for electricity is high across a region, wholesale power prices can increase. Utilities, generation providers and regional grid

operators must ensure enough electricity is available to meet peak demand, and those costs can be reflected throughout the electric system.

The good news is that simple steps to lower energy use can make a meaningful difference. Setting your thermostat a few degrees higher when you're away, replacing dirty HVAC filters, using ceiling fans, sealing

air leaks and delaying the use of major appliances such as clothes dryers, dishwashers and ovens until the evening when possible can help reduce energy consumption and reduce strain on the local grid during peak demand.

North West REC is committed to safely and efficiently providing reliable, affordable electricity while being transparent about the factors that influence energy costs. We understand every dollar matters, and we are committed to making smart investments that keep the lights on and support the communities we serve.

If you ever have questions about your electric bill or co-op programs designed to help you save, please reach out. We're here to help you make informed decisions that work for your household.

Thank you for allowing North West REC to serve you.



THE POWER QUIZ

NORTH WEST REC

1. What grade do you need to be in to attend Iowa Youth Leadership Academy?
2. What does a new LED security light cost?
3. Name one of the stops on the Energy Trail Tour:

Name _____ Acct. # _____

Find the answers within the content of this newsletter, our website or Facebook posts and you could win a prize of \$10 off your electric bill. Send your answers to powerquiz@nwrec.coop or you can send your written answers to North West REC, PO Box 435, Orange City, IA 51041. You may mail your entry along with your electric bill payment, but remember the deadline is October 2. Each month, ten names will be randomly drawn from all correct entries for a \$10 bill credit. Members who answer the questions correctly and participate at least three times throughout the year will be eligible for 2 - \$250 bill credits, through a random drawing, at the end of the year.

POWER QUIZ *Winners*

JULY 2026

Mary Eisma - Ireton
 Alan Grigsby - Hinton
 Nancy Jansen - Orange City
 Marvin Wynia - Maurice
 James Dykstra - Maurice

Doug Schoenrock - Le Mars
 Michael Roeder - Maurice
 Leroy Kreykes - Rock Valley
 Robert Godbersen - Arthur
 Peggy East - Hinton



ARE YOU SWITCH SMART?

What can you buy from NWREC at a rebated price if you have a switch installed?

Answer: _____

Name _____ Acct. # _____

What do you know about the Switch Makes Cents program? Find the answers within the content of this newsletter, our website or Facebook posts and you could win a prize. Send your answers to switchsmart@nwrec.coop, fill out the question form online, or send your written answers to North West REC, PO Box 435, Orange City, IA 51041. You may mail your entry along with your electric bill payment, but remember the deadline is October 2. Each month, one name will be randomly drawn from all correct entries for a \$25 bill credit.

North West Rural Electric Cooperative

P.O. Box 435
 1505 Albany Place SE
 Orange City, IA 51041-0435

OFFICE HOURS:
 Monday through Friday
 7:30 a.m. till 4:00 p.m.

Orange City office open
 during noon hour

Le Mars office
 open 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
 Tuesday through Thursday

Ida Grove office
 open 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
 Wednesdays

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Lyle D. Korver
 CEO & General Manager

Curt Ahrenholz
 Finance & Office
 Services Director

Emily Vander Velde
 Editor



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