



## New technology, new ways to serve you

As technology changes the world around us, today's electric grid provides Nobles Cooperative Electric (NCE) members with more benefits than ever before.

The electric "grid" consists of the poles, wires, transformers, switches, fuses and other components that make up local power lines and transmission lines. That said, the electric grid is vastly more sophisticated than it used to be. Two things that have changed the grid over time are:

- **Communications technology.** Today's electric grid extends well beyond poles and (22-65-5) wires. In addition to transmitting electricity, the grid now moves data that is used to precisely monitor and measure the flow of electricity. The rapid movement of information allows cooperatives to respond to the needs of the grid to avoid unexpected outages and high energy prices.

- **Interest in new generation sources.** More and more electric cooperative members want access to electricity generated by wind and solar power. Advanced grid technologies enable the two-way flow of information and energy, which can allow cooperative members to do things that are otherwise not possible, such as sell excess power into

the electric system from solar panels on their home.

These changes and more provide cooperative members with new benefits as the grid becomes increasingly:

- **Empowering.** New technologies provide information that can help you make smart decisions about your energy use and save money.

- **Reliable.** New technologies provide automated operations, which help electric cooperatives pinpoint outages and restore power faster when the lights go out. These technologies also allow system operators to remotely check on the health of equipment to avoid outages altogether, and control the flow of electricity to route it around problem areas.

- **Resilient and flexible.** New technologies make the grid more flexible, enabling the use of renewable energy sources. Being able to supply power from multiple locations provides a variety of sources where power can be delivered to members.

- **Environmentally friendly.** Having cleaner energy - like wind and solar power in the mix helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants. Advanced technologies also allow cooperative members to use electricity when it is most efficient.

## Energy saving tip

Look for LED products and fixtures for outdoor use, such as pathway, step and porch lights. Many include features like automatic daylight shut-off and motion sensors. You can also find solar-powered lighting for outdoor spaces.

*Source: energy.gov*

## Spot your location number in *Current Matters*

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

## Mark your calendar

July 25 ..... Electric bills due



**2** Agricultural producers energy audit

**3** NCE's Member Corner answers your questions

**4** Farmfest coupon



**Agricultural producer**

is defined as: "An individual or entity directly engaged in the production of agricultural products, including crops; livestock; forestry products; hydroponics; nursery stock; or aquaculture, whereby 50% or greater of their gross income is derived from those products."

**Energy management program for agricultural producers**

Agricultural producers are the focus of a new energy audit program that is now available to members.

Qualified participants will receive one-on-one assistance in identifying and prioritizing energy efficiency opportunities to ultimately come away from the experience with an energy management plan to implement.

We understand that each operation is unique and requires personalized assistance. This program will take the guesswork out of where you should spend your time, money and efforts when it comes to energy management.

Audit outcomes will provide information ranging from simple, no-cost operational changes that can save you money to an analysis of your energy use, which equipment (28-22-55) is using the most energy and what can be done to decrease your energy costs.

NCE is able to offer this opportunity with assistance from its wholesale power provider Great River Energy, which was recently awarded a \$100,000 grant from the United States Department of Agriculture's Rural Energy for America Program (USDA-REAP) to conduct these audits. Program participants will only need to pay



**Energy Audits Point the Way to Savings**

Conducting an energy audit of your home is a great way to identify opportunities for energy savings. Below are five areas an auditor will typically cover.

- **Leaks and Losses:** Damaged, missing or improperly installed insulation can increase energy use year-round. Knowing where and how to check can identify problems.
- **Comfort Costs:** A visual inspection of your thermostat, water heater, heating and air conditioning equipment and ductwork, can identify performance problems.
- **Assessing Appliances:** The age, condition, location and use patterns for washers, dryers, refrigerators, and other major appliances can impact their efficiency levels.
- **Learning Lighting:** A quick discussion about lighting options with an energy auditor can take the guesswork out of choosing the best bulbs and fixtures.
- **Activity Adjustments:** Knowing how and when you use energy can help you save money. Shifting the time of day you use energy to do things (like laundry and cooking) to cooler, less humid hours can ease the load on HVAC systems.

**Discover energy saving possibilities with a Home Energy Audit for \$100**



Call us at 800-776-0517 to schedule your Energy Audit  
Includes 10 installed LED light bulbs.



25 percent of the cost of their agricultural audit, with the other 75 percent being covered through grant funding. Average audit costs are approximately \$2,500 but can vary based on operation size.

**You will be provided with:**

- Objective and practical ways to save money
- Simple, no-cost operational changes that can save money
- An energy audit tailored to your operation

- Analysis of your energy use
- 75% of the audit paid for you

**How does it work?**

- Call 800-441-8525 to verify eligibility and cost
- Experts conduct a site visit and complete an energy audit that includes in-depth analysis and recommendations
- If you choose to implement energy efficiency upgrades as a result of the audit, rebates may be available.

**June's Auto Pay Winner is Raymond Ebbers!** Take a minute to sign up for Auto Pay and you may win a \$25 bill credit. A winner is chosen each month.



## Shining light on energy savings

When it comes to lighting, the potential for energy efficiency is just too great to ignore. Around the home, changing bulbs can change your electric bills and the monthly savings can add up quickly.

“Lighting efficiency upgrades have long been the poster child of energy efficiency,” said Alan Shedd, director of energy solutions for Touchstone Energy Cooperatives. That’s because consumers regularly use dozens of bulbs in fixtures out of necessity and convenience. According to the U.S. (539-37-154) Department of Energy’s Energy Information Administration, nearly 130 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity are consumed by residential lighting each year, representing about 9 percent of all home energy use.

As light emitting diode (LED) design options increase, prices are coming down and more consumers see LEDs as an alternative to carbon filament incandescent bulbs first popularized by Thomas Edison in the 1880s.

“The economics make sense,” said Shedd. “When LED lamp products were \$20, it was a tough sell. Now for a couple of bucks you can get a lamp that saves energy and lasts 10 times longer.”

To get an idea of your potential for energy savings, complete a home inventory. Don’t just count fixtures – count bulbs, checking wattage and whether they are dimmable, three-way or require special bases. Also note the type of bulb now in use: incandescent, halogen, compact florescent lights or straight or circular florescent tubes.

There’s a good chance your total bulb count for the average single-family home will be between 50 and 75, including hallways, garages and storage areas.

In 2009, 58 percent of U.S. households had at least one energy-efficient

bulb indoors. By the spring of 2016, 86 percent of all households used at least one CFL or LED bulb and nearly 20 percent of all households had completely abandoned incandescent bulb use.

In recent years, manufacturers have focused more research on lighting efficiency, energy efficiency and cycle longevity. This has led to major increases in the projected hours of use and lower failure rates.

Many consumers don’t like the lighting quality offered by compact florescent light bulbs, which can also be prone to failure due to heat build-up when used in closed lighting fixtures.

While LED lighting was initially expensive and limited to warm white or a few color temperatures and designs, market acceptance and continued research have forced prices down and led to an expanded variety of products.

Cool white, soft white, dimmable, three-way, decorative and color are now among the options, with LEDs taking up an increasing share of shelf space in the lighting sections of hardware, discount and home improvement stores.

“The wide range of products is the biggest challenge – (19-23-44) used to be a lamp was a lamp – you pretty much knew what you were getting,” said Touchstone Energy’s Shedd. “Now, the shelves are packed with a dizzying array of choices.”

According to Shedd, once a consumer knows that lumens are a measurement of the amount of light given off by a bulb, they understand that the lower the lumens, the dimmer the light.

The energy savings and life expectancy of a LED is incrementally better, too great to ignore.

## Member Corner

*What type of bulb should I use and where?*

### Save Energy with LEDs

LED lights last up to 30 times longer than incandescents, reducing the need to replace bulbs in high or hard-to-reach places. Below are LED lighting suggestions for your home.



#### Living Room Lamps

Table or floor three-way lamps using LED bulbs provide 620, 1,600 or 2,150 lumens of soft white light and deliver up to 25,000 hours of light.



#### Kitchen

Dimmable recessed LED conversion lights add a warm glow of up to 1,200 lumens for kitchen workspaces and add far less heat to your kitchen. Each bulb could last 10 years.



#### Bedrooms and Hallways

Long-life LEDs are ideal for ceiling fixtures. A 9-watt LED produces the same 800 lumens of light as a 60-watt incandescent, and uses about 80 percent less energy.



#### Bathrooms

Omnidirectional LED globe bulbs are designed to provide a warm glow ideal for bathrooms. A 6-watt bulb produces 450 lumens and lasts up to 15,000 hours.



#### Outdoors

A 6-watt, 500 lumen LED bulb can replace a 40-watt incandescent bulb. Designed to last up to 30,000 hours, it could be a one-time switch.

Visit us, along with other  
Touchstone Energy Cooperatives, at Farmfest 2018 and  
enter for chance to win one of six grill giveaways!

FARMFEST 2018 • AUGUST 7- AUGUST 9 • REDWOOD FALLS, MN

Bring this coupon to Booth #2301

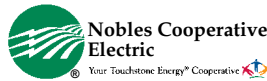
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*You must be a member of the participating electric cooperative to be eligible to win.*



## 2018 Preliminary Schedule

### Tuesday, August 7

- 8:15 a.m. National Anthem
- 10:30 a.m. U.S. Senate Candidate Forum
- 11:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Pig Races
- 12:00 p.m. Linder Farm Network Noon Show
- 1:00 p.m. Kids' Pedal Pull
- 1:15 p.m. Congressional Candidate's Forum on Agriculture and Rural Issues

### Wednesday, August 8

- 8:00 a.m. Minnesota Farm Bureau Pancake Breakfast
- 9:00 a.m. Grain and Livestock Market Update
- 10:30 a.m. Minnesota Governor Candidate Forum
- 11:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Pig Races
- 12:00 p.m. Linder Farm Network Noon Show
- 1:00 p.m. Kids' Pedal Pull
- 1:15 p.m. Protecting Minnesota Water Resources
- 3:00 p.m. Biodiesel Program

### Thursday, August 9

- 9:00 a.m. Resources for Farm Families in Challenging Times
- 10:30 a.m. U.S. Senate Candidate Forum
- 11:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Pig Races
- 12:00 p.m. Linder Farm Network Noon Show
- 1:00 p.m. Kids' Pedal Pull
- 1:15 p.m. University of Minnesota Farm Family of the Year Recognition Program



## Country Cupboard Grilled Fish

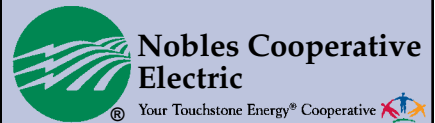
Kathy Henderschiedt  
Worthington

**Option 1:** Heat grill to 385 degrees. (501-37-005) Cover grill surface with aluminum foil. Lightly sprinkle with olive oil or melted butter. Place fish fillets on foil, cover with thinly sliced onions and tomatoes, season with your favorite seasoning. Grill until fish is white and flaky.

**Option 2:** Heat grill to 385 degrees. Cover grill surface with aluminum foil. Lightly sprinkle with olive oil or melted butter. Place fish fillets on foil, season with lemon pepper. Grill until fish is white and flaky.

**Grilled Salmon:** Combine 1/4 c. Italian salad dressing (oil based), 1 T. freshly squeezed lemon juice and 1/2 tsp. dill weed. Add the salmon fillets and marinate overnight in the refrigerator, turn occasionally. Heat grill to 425 degrees. You can cover the grill surface with a grilling mat lightly coated with olive oil or use aluminum foil. Once marinated, place salmon on the grill for 8 minutes and flip over for another 8 minutes. Salmon should be slightly pink in the middle with a small amount of juice. Remove and let stand for 5 minutes, salmon will continue to cook.

Send your favorite **brunch** 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 July 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.



## Official monthly publication

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Monday through Friday

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800-776-0517

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800-252-1166 or 811

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\*Telephone prefix 507

### Next Board Meeting

July 20, 2018

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

