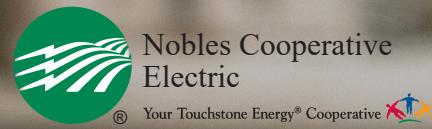


Current Matters



December 2020
Vol. 12 Issue 12

Four ways Santa saves energy in his workshop

The holiday season is finally upon us, and Santa and his elves have been especially busy as they gear up for their biggest night of the year.

It's no secret that Santa is known for running an efficient workshop—how else could he make all those toys in time for Christmas Eve? Rumor has it that one way Santa ensures an efficient workspace is through energy-saving measures.

Here are four ways Santa saves energy in his workshop.

1. Santa leaves his decorations up year-round, so by using LED holiday light strands, he's able to save on his monthly energy bills. LED holiday strands (II-9-8) can last up to 40 seasons, which make them a great option for any festive home.

2. Santa requires several power tools to make a year's worth of new toys. That's why he insists on using cordless power tools with the ENERGY STAR® rating. According to energystar.gov, if all power tools in the U.S. used ENERGY STAR®-rated battery chargers, 2 billion kWh hours

of electricity could be saved—that's equivalent to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 1.7 million tons!

3. Mrs. Claus loves to keep warm by the fire in the evenings, and Santa knows one of the best tricks to ensure fireplace efficiency. While a fireplace can keep a small area of your home cozy and warm, it can also pull heated air from the room through the chimney. That's why Santa always closes the fireplace flue when a fire isn't burning.

4. Santa also saves energy by using power strips. Power strips are ideal for workshops, craft nooks, game rooms and other spaces in your home. With one simple switch, you can conveniently control several devices and electronics that are plugged into the power strip.

This holiday season, let's take a page from Santa's book and remember to save energy when possible. With these four tips, you'll be well on your way to savings (and hopefully, Santa's "nice" list!).

Energy saving tip

Energy bills can increase during winter for a variety of reasons, like houseguests, more time spent at home, and shorter days and longer nights. Small actions, like turning down your thermostat, replacing old bulbs with LEDs and washing clothes in cold water can help you save.

Mark your calendar

Dec. 25 Merry Christmas!
Electric bills due

Jan. 1 Happy New Year!
Our office will be closed Dec. 25 and Jan. 1; however, 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.

Santa is making the most of energy savings, you can too!

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Plug in gift ideas for safety all year round

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Congratulations Aaron and Cindy!



**General Manager
*Adam Tromblay***

The holiday season is always a time that I look forward to each year. The season is filled with family, friends and festivities. I always look forward to the days and nights spent with (31-31-45) my parents, siblings and the cousins I grew up with in Iowa.

Although this year may be different with less hustle and bustle, don't lose track of your family traditions. Choose a few to hold onto and don't be afraid to start new ones. I've already started watching Hallmark, Lifetime and Netflix Christmas movies well before Thanksgiving, and I plan to watch past the New Year.

Here are a few things to consider this holiday season:

- Even though you may have a smaller meal on the table, consider Zoom or FaceTime to connect with your family and friends.
- They may be a bit cheesy, but try (221-34-50) watching a Hallmark Christmas movie or two, they may bring a tear, but they will also bring a smile to your face.
- When stocking up for your Christmas meal, buy an extra bag of groceries and drop it off at your local food shelter.

Employees recognized for years of service



Aaron Buysesse
Journey Lineworker
5 years



Jake Sell
Journey Lineworker
5 years



Dusty Sykora
Journey Lineworker
5 years



Rick Leebens
Line Foreman
30 years

- Many local churches are helping those in need, consider buying a Christmas gift for someone less fortunate.

- According to research, the holiday spirit really does brighten our mood. Don't forget to put up your Christmas tree, lights and play holiday music.

- Surprise someone (neighbor, colleague) with a thoughtful gift out of the blue.

- Christmas shop early for both food and gifts to avoid the Christmas rush.

- Be sure to shop local as much as possible.

- If you know anyone that may feel isolated or alone, reach out to them.

- Make a secret family recipe with your family.

In looking back at this last year, I would like to thank all of the essential workers. There are no words to express the respect we have for you during this difficult time. It

hasn't been an easy year for any of us, but I am grateful and appreciative to all of the communities and members we serve.

Although coronavirus may cancel some holiday festivities, it will never cancel holiday cheer. Nobles Cooperative Electric (NCE) is so thankful for you, our members. We truly work each and every day keeping your best interests at heart.





Plug into presents that pay off year-round safety

During the holiday season, many of us turn our attention to gift giving, and while the shiny, trendy and pricey may make a big splash when the unwrapping's done, practical gifts can leave lasting impressions. What's more, they can really make a difference by enhancing safety and improving security.

This month, we're offering a few practical gift ideas that can make a real difference in helping to reduce safety risks year-round.

Smoke Detectors: Most of us have at least one in our homes, but experts say that's not enough. The National Fire Protection Association recommends that a working smoke detector be installed in every bedroom, on every level of a home, and in hallways outside of sleeping areas. And, if smoke detectors are more than 10 years-old, they should be replaced.



Carbon Monoxide Alarms: Carbon monoxide, or CO, is a colorless, odorless gas created by incomplete combustion of fuels like gasoline, wood, natural gas, propane, oil, coal or methane. The gas is highly toxic, so having CO detectors outside of sleeping areas and on every level of a home improves overall safety. Local fire departments in the United States respond to about 80,000 non-fire CO incidents each year. The National Fire Protection Association also recommends that fuel-

burning heating equipment and cooking appliances be professionally inspected once a year to reduce the risks of malfunction and detect structural problems early.

Extension Cords:

They are not all created equal, are subject to wear, have specific use guidelines, and are never recommended for permanent use. Brittle and cracked plastic can indicate heat damage, and exposed wires or frayed connections increase risks of shocks, shorts or fires. According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, (15-17-53) an extension cord that's warm or hot to the touch is a good indication that it's not designed to safely do the job. Consider giving an assortment of extension cords designed for indoor or outdoor use, and before you buy, look for the label of a nationally recognized testing laboratory like Underwriters Laboratories (UL), CSA-International (CSA) or Intertek (ETL).



Arc Fault Circuit Interrupters: Arcing and sparking are among indications that a home's electrical wiring needs service. Arc Fault Circuit Interrupters (AFCIs) can help address electrical fire hazards before they occur. Properly installed by a licensed electrician, AFCIs can often replace circuit breakers in an existing electri-

cal panel box. The Consumer Product Safety Commission recommends that the work be completed by a qualified electrician because the installation involves working inside the electrical panel box, which carries current even when main circuit breakers are turned off.

Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters:

While AFCIs are designed to help prevent electrical fire hazards, Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCIs) are designed to help prevent shocks. Older homes may have just one, typically in an area where electric outlets are relatively close to a water source. But over the years, the National Electric Code has been (539-38-070) amended to require their use for outdoor outlets, in attics and crawl spaces, bathrooms, garages, kitchens, crawl spaces, and near laundry or utility sinks and around wet bars. GFCI outlets should be tested regularly, and that means as often as once a month. Although they can last 15 to 25 years, some will malfunction in five years or less. While they can continue to carry current, once they lose their ability to mitigate shocks by immediately closing off current, they should be replaced. A licensed electrician can do the job quickly and professionally.

Any of these gift ideas will offer peace of mind for the giver and the receiver, and they'll reduce risks throughout the holidays and improve safety for years to come.

Complaint process for Iowa members

If you have a concern or complaint regarding NCE, the complaint should be addressed to Adam Tromblay, General Manager, Nobles Cooperative Electric, P.O. Box 788, Worthington, MN 56187-0788, phone 507-372-7331, 507-836-6107 or 800-776-0517. If your complaint is related to services of NCE, rather than its rates, and NCE does not resolve your complaint, you may request assistance from the Utilities Division, Department of Commerce, Lucas State Office Buildings, Des Moines, IA 50319, phone 515-281-5979.

December Auto Pay Winner: Troy Danneman

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.

Aaron Buysse becomes Journey Lineworker



All the hard work paid off! Aaron completed his four-year apprentice program.

A journey lineworker completes a lengthy and challenging apprenticeship program. After hours of bookwork and on-the-job training, not to mention tests, Aaron has become certified to work with equipment of all electric voltages.

Graduating to a journey lineworker is not just a promotion, it also includes serious new responsibilities that put the safety of others in their hands. Safety is always the number one priority each and every day at NCE.

Congratulations, Aaron!

Hokeness earns Board Leadership Certificate



Recently, NCE Director Cindy Hokeness earned her Board Leadership Certificate (BLC) after completing her Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) certificate in 2015.

Directors undergo training at the cooperative and are encouraged to stay informed about our ever-changing industry and seek additional skills needed to perform at the best of their ability. Their participation in the CCD and BLC programs through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association only makes our cooperative better. Director Hokeness enhanced her skills in the co-operative business model, governance, finance, communications, technology and risk management.

Country Cupboard

Snow Salad

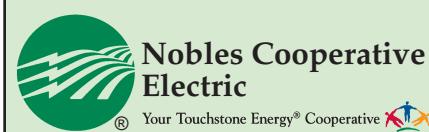
1 envelope Knox gelatin
1/4 c. cold water
1 c. boiling water
2/3 c. sugar
1 tsp. vanilla

1 - 8 oz. sour cream
1 - 8 oz. Cool Whip
1 pkg. strawberry Junket
1 c. strawberries

Mix gelatin and cold water. Add boiling water, sugar and vanilla. Cool, then add sour cream and Cool Whip. Mix and put in a mold or a 9" pan. Use two recipes for a 9 x 13" pan. Cook Junket mix according to directions and add strawberries; pour on top of salad. It is a pretty Christmas salad.

Send your **favorite family 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 December 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.

Harriet Kooiman
Leota



Official monthly publication

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nce@noblesce.com

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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

January 12, 2020

This cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

