

NORTH PLAINS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER



LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD

by Randy Mahannah

The presidential election rolls around every fourth year whether we like it or not. If you're like me, you're ready for all the campaign hoopla to end. Only a small percentage of Americans—those who get out and vote—choose our country's leadership. If everyone voted, we would be truly represented. But I guess that's just wishful thinking.

If you're among those who think, "Why should I vote? What difference could one vote make?" then you'd better think again: Your single vote can and does make a difference! A single vote has repeatedly set the course of American history. Consider:

1800—Thomas Jefferson was elected President by one vote in the House of Representatives after receiving a tie in the Electoral College. That one vote prevented Aaron Burr, later convicted of treason, from becoming President.

1824—John Quincy Adams was elected President by the U.S. House of Representatives over Andrew Jackson when one repre-

sentative from New York changed his vote. The election had been thrown into Congress because no candidate received a majority of votes in the Electoral College.

1845—The U.S. Senate vote to annex Texas was originally tied at

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26-26. Henry Johnson of Louisiana, originally opposed to the resolution, changed his vote; his single vote broke the stalemate and allowed the passage of the annexation resolution under which Texas became a state.

1868—One vote saved President Andrew Johnson from conviction and removal from office. The tally was 35-19, just one vote shy of the two-thirds majority

needed to oust him.

1911—An average of only one vote per precinct passed women's suffrage in California.

1912—One vote per precinct, in one state, elected Woodrow Wilson as President.

1948—Lyndon Baines Johnson, who would go on to become the 36th President of the United States, became a U.S. Senator by a margin of only 87 votes.

1960—John F. Kennedy's margin of victory over Richard Nixon was less than one vote per precinct.

2000—George W. Bush won the presidency by one Electoral College vote.

The bottom line is that the single greatest equalizing factor in American politics is the ballot box. No amount of money in the world matters to a campaign if the candidate does not get the votes to win. And this is exactly why your opinion—and your vote—makes a difference. So exercise your right to vote on November 2. And if you don't vote, don't complain.

Charming Fireplace Can Be Energy Waster

Wood-burning fireplaces are charming and romantic, but they're among the most energy-inefficient devices in a home. Keep yours from sucking the heat out of your home and the money out of your wallet.

- Close the dampers whenever you're not burning a fire. Fireplaces

can exhaust as much as 24,000 cubic feet of air per hour to the outside and bring an equal amount of cold air back into the house. Using one is like keeping a 48-inch window open all winter long.

- Seal the fireplace as tightly as possible. Caulk the hearth.
- Keep a window slightly open in



the room while the fire is burning to prevent a buildup of fumes or gases coming from the wood.

- Find a certified chimney sweep to inspect and clean your chimney every fall. Creosote, a sticky black goo that builds up from incompletely burned wood, can catch fire inside the chimney. A good sweep can recommend repairs to help keep your chimney and fireplace in good working order.

- Never—even to save warmth and heating costs—close a fireplace damper while there are still hot ashes in the fireplace. Heat that cannot escape could cause a low-level explosion that can shoot embers out of the hearth and onto carpets and magazines that may be in the room.



Downed Lines

**LINES
DOWN—
BUT NOT OUT**

Weather and car accidents are the main causes of downed power lines. Always stay away and warn others to stay clear of power lines. Even if they don't hum, spark or "dance," downed lines can be dangerous—they can carry an electric current strong enough to cause serious injury or even death.

Follow these rules:

- If you see a downed power line, move away from the line and anything touching it.
- The proper way to move away from the line is to shuffle away with small steps, keeping your feet together and on the ground at all times to minimize the chance for a human path of electric current.
- If someone is in direct or indirect contact with the downed line, do not touch the person. Call 911 instead.
- Don't try to move a downed power line or anything in contact with the line by using another object such as a broom or stick.
- Don't drive over downed power lines.

North Plains Electric Cooperative

This public service message is brought to you by North Plains Electric Cooperative.



**NORTH PLAINS
ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE
WILL BE CLOSED
THURSDAY AND FRIDAY,
NOVEMBER 25 & 26,
IN OBSERVANCE OF
THANKSGIVING**