

# OUTLOOK

SLOPE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

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## Hospital gets EHR

*Life-saving information is available to whoever treats you in an emergency.*

### INSIDE

- West River Health Services
- Harvest information
- Get ready for winter
- Meet new billing analyst



*Electronic records will give a more complete picture of your health history.*

*‘Better information means better care’*

## **EHR at West River Health Services**

*Pictures and article by Judy Kirschmann*

Previously when you make a visit to the West River Health System, your caregiver would make notations and later dictate and transcribe what needed to be put into your medical records. These files would get larger the more often visits were made to the clinic or hospital. When satellite clinics were opened, the original medical records were kept in Hettinger and a copy sent to the satellite clinic the patient most often used. If you needed to see your doctor at another site, your records could be accessed by computer, but this program was limited in what it could provide. Paper records use a lot of space and caregivers had to read through numerous pages of dictation to find information they needed. To give better service and more efficient care, West River Health Services is transferring to an Electronic Health Record (EHR) system. Dr. Laura Walker explained it this way: “Better information means better care.”

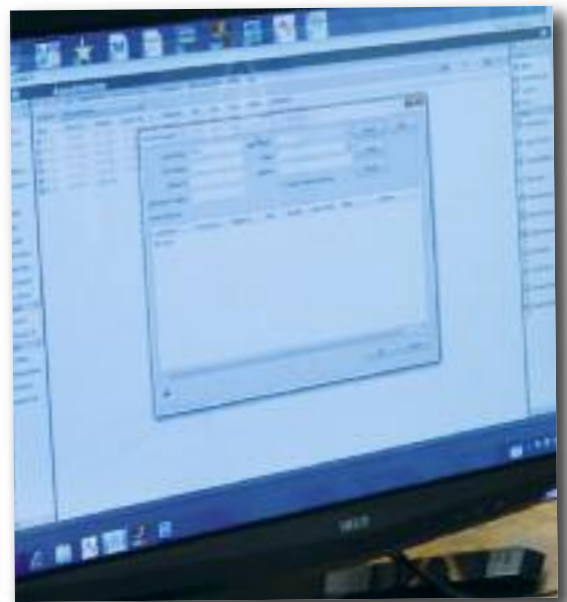
### **HOW YOU BENEFIT**

With EHR caregivers can access your records at any facility. Medical records will be organized and docu-

mented in a systematic way, avoiding unnecessary tests and lab work, and insuring the medications you are currently taking will not interfere with what may be prescribed. Your records will be updated during your visit, and in the future images will be sent to the specialists upon your doctor’s referral. Dr. Houle added, “It is a great tool to have. The system will be able to flag specific information.”

### **TRANSITION**

Transition is not easy, and learning a completely different system and form for conducting business takes advanced planning and programming. The registration, scheduling and billing transferred to EHR in April. The paper chart information was transferred in June, and medical providers and nursing staff started their training. As they “go live” through the summer, Amy, the program support staff, has helped them begin using electronic health records and expects all the records will be electronic by September. West River Health Services believes this system will save time, supplies and costs, and they ask your patience during this transition period.



*Once your electronic record is entered, you don't have to answer the same questions every visit.*



*Your information is safe and secure, and only accessible to the people taking care of you.*



By simply replacing incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulbs, your household can save energy.



# TOGETHER WE SAVE

## Consider better bulbs to save energy

Lighting represents about 20 percent of a home's electricity bill, so switching from incandescent bulbs to compact fluorescent lights (CFLs) which have qualified to meet Energy Star standards is the easiest step you can take to cut energy costs.

And as of 2012, incandescent light bulbs will be phased out in the United States, in favor of a more efficient generation of light bulbs, such as CFLs.

But what makes CFLs so efficient? About 90 percent of the power consumed by a typical incandescent light

bulb is emitted as heat. CFLs, in comparison, produce 75 percent less heat.

Benefits of CFLs go beyond cooler bulbs: A 75-watt incandescent light bulb will burn out after about 40 days of continuous use, whereas a CFL can keep going for a full year; CFLs require one-third less energy than incandescent bulbs, which saves roughly \$30 in energy costs over the bulb's lifetime, according to Energy Star.

As CFL technology advances, new bulb and light quality options will

expand its use to a wider range of applications.

Installation guidelines should be followed to ensure CFLs perform correctly. For

example, not all CFLs perform well on dimmable switches and three-way fixtures, so check the packaging to see if the bulb's ballast design matches your needs. You'll also get more value if you leave CFLs on for 15 minutes or longer; switching them on and off can shorten their life span.



**To learn about the latest ways you can use CFLs to make your home more energy efficient and for other energy-savings ideas, visit [www.togetherwesave.com](http://www.togetherwesave.com).**



Meter in first sequence - 888888



Digital meter reading you report



Digital voltage output

# AMR

## (automated meter reading)

Slope Electric moves forward with transitioning our system to AMR (Automated Meter Reading).

This allows us to retrieve meter readings from our office in the future. If your meter had been changed, you still need to submit a meter reading until the process is complete.

### HOW TO READ YOUR METER

The new meters will display a sequence of three digital outputs which cycle continuously.

- The first display is 888888 signifying the start of the sequence;
- Followed by the five-digit meter reading **you report**;
- Followed by the four-digit voltage output number.

Testing AMR will occur shortly and members will be notified when they can stop reading their meters.

## DRY GRAIN WITH EFFICIENCY

**A** grain-drying system may be the most energy-intensive operation in your cropping system. Any improvements that reduce grain-drying energy needs make a major difference in a farm's total energy use. Here are a few tips from the North Dakota State University Extension Service:

- Planting earlier-maturing varieties and drying corn in the field is generally more energy efficient and economical until mid-October, but by mid- to late-October, mechanical drying is recommended. When deciding to field dry or to use mechanical drying, consider the potential for grain damage while the grain is in the field and harvest efficiency benefits gained by mechanically drying the grain.
- Removing moisture below levels required for storage or marketing increases drying costs. Ensure your moisture meter is accurate by comparing its reading to one at an elevator or another reference.
- Remove broken kernels and weed seeds, since they reduce dryer airflow and drying the material costs money.
- Natural air/low-temperature drying is a slow-drying system but very efficient if designed and operated correctly. Keep the depth of wheat less than 18 feet and corn less than 22 feet to limit the resistance to airflow, enabling efficient airflow delivery. Select the fan type that provides the most airflow per horsepower.
- Level the grain to create more uniform drying, which is more energy efficient and economical.
- The most energy-efficient high-temperature drying uses the maximum drying temperature that will not damage grain. Using vacuum cooling or a heat-recovery system increases the energy efficiency of a continuous-flow heating and cooling dryer by about 20 percent.
- Combination drying uses about half the energy than a high-temperature cross-flow dryer. Combination drying uses a high-temperature dryer to reduce the corn moisture to less than 20 percent and then the grain is transferred hot to a low-temperature/natural air dryer to finish drying.
- Continuous-flow in-bin dryers and mixed-flow dryers may be 10 percent to 20 percent more efficient than a typical high-temperature cross-flow dryer.

### QUESTIONS TO ASK:

- Do you use field drying as much as possible?
- Is your moisture tester accurate?
- Are dryer burners adjusted for maximum efficiency?
- Do you avoid overdrying?
- Do you clean the grain before drying?
- Do you level the grain in a bin drying system?
- Are you using maximum drying temperatures?

# Harvest **SAFELY** this season



**T**he size, power and moving parts of a combine, when coupled with the stress and rush of harvest time, can be a recipe for disaster. That's why good safety procedures are so important during harvest season, according to an agricultural safety specialist at North Dakota State University (NDSU).

The combine is among the most dangerous machines on farms in the region, according to George Maher of the NDSU Extension Service. He notes that Agricultural Injury Surveillance Statistics collected in 1995 show that the combine, grain auger and tractor were the machines most involved in North Dakota agricultural injuries.

"Thinking ahead to establish safety procedures that prevent injuries is essential," Maher says. "Getting into good habits and thinking through potential hazards can prevent disasters during the harvest rush."

## **Maher lists several safety procedures.**

- Set aside time to properly prepare the combine for harvest. Rushed

repairs may lead to injuries.

- Conduct a safety check before taking to the field. Replace all guards and shields that may have been removed. Replace or repair all lights that don't work — especially transport lights, such as headlights and taillights.

- Examine fields for hazards such as erosion washouts and other surprises that can develop during the growing season. Alert other workers to those hazards, too.

- Adjust and service the combine as directed in the operator's manual.

- Always refuel the combine or tractor after it has cooled. Fuel vapors can easily ignite on hot engine and combine parts. Refueling accidents are a major cause of combine fires.

- Grease and check the combine in the morning when your mind is fresh. Put the ignition key in your pocket while you are working on the combine so no one can start it or the tractor while you are working on the machine.

- Check hydraulic leaks carefully. Use a piece of cardboard, wood or sheet metal to detect leaks. Hydraulic

oil under high pressure can easily be injected through the skin and result in serious medical problems.

- Drive the combine only while you are alert and aware of your surroundings. Hours of steady operation can lull you into a hypnotic state. To avoid this dangerous situation, schedule a break for all workers every two to three hours. Change jobs with someone else who can operate the combine for a while.

- Use the safety stops on the header lift cylinders when working under the header. Don't trust hydraulics with your life.

- Keep your distance from other vehicles and machines. Combines need a lot of room to maneuver and have large blind spots. Always be aware of the location of other equipment.

- Move combines from field to field only during daylight. Driving combines on public roads after dark can be very risky. The size of a combine, coupled with its unfamiliar shape and lighting pattern, make it a dangerous hazard on the road after dark.



Dear Slope Electric,  
 We attended your annual meeting in New England this year and enjoyed it very much. It is nice to see and have your staff members. We thank you so much for the delicious meal that was served to us. (Keep on having the roast beef for your supper.) We thank you very much for your service to us.

Sincerely,  
 Larry and Shirley Schafer  
 Slope Electric Cooperative members

## Welcome new employee **LINDA PETERSON, billing analyst**

Slope Electric welcomes Linda Peterson to the employee team. She and her husband, Wesley, live in Elgin and have two sons, Eric and Brian. The commute to work is not a problem. She comments, "I get to sleep in a little longer because I used to go to Bismarck and that was further. I love to drive and I listen to books on CDs."

During nice weather, she will enjoy two of her hobbies, riding her motorcycle to work and taking photographs along the way. She has a map she crosses off all the paved roads she's cycled on in North Dakota. Her other interests include hiking to the river with her dog, Bear, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.



Peterson

## Don't be in the dark about **GENERATOR SAFETY**

Slope Electric Cooperative strives to provide you with reliable, uninterrupted service every day of the year, but sometimes Mother Nature creates unavoidable power outages. Then, many homeowners use portable electric generators until power is restored.

Follow these portable electric generator safety precautions to avoid dangerous situations:

- Do not connect generators directly to household wiring.
- Make sure your generator is properly grounded.
- Keep the generator dry.
- Plug appliances directly into the generator.
- Do not overload the generator.
- Do not operate the generator in enclosed or partially enclosed spaces.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for safe operation and maintenance.

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 BEFORE YOU DIG!**