

“Retain youthful looks.”

Electric stove ad, Northern States Power Company, 1938

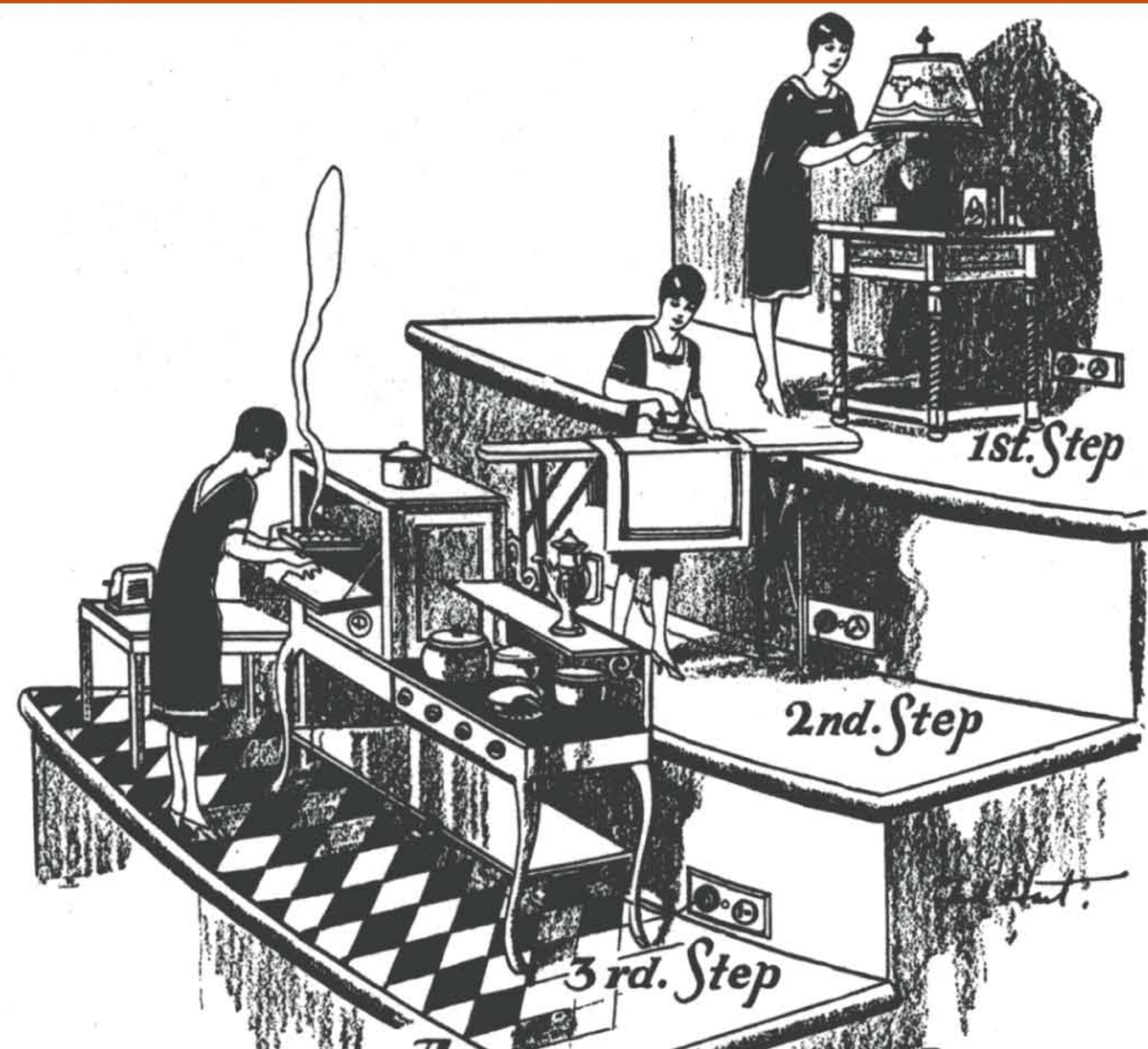
When Thomas Edison first wired a home in 1882, he envisioned that electricity would reduce the need for household labor by powering both lights and motors.

Although electrified homes became more common in urban areas in the early 1900s, the big push to electrify homes—targeted at women—didn’t come until after WWI.

Electric appliances were initially advertised as time-saving, but studies showed that electricity had little effect on the time women spent on housework.

“I went door-to-door in Cloquet with a percolator and a flat toaster. I’d serve toast and coffee as a demonstration, and the customer could buy the package on contract and pay though their monthly electric bill.

A “domestic advisor” for Minnesota Power and Light, 1930s



1st. Step
2nd. Step
3rd. Step

*And now that you know what the Third Step is—
What are you going to do about it?*

No THIRD STEP

*Will you deliberately deprive yourself of the remarkable labor saving devices now at your beck and call?
Will you deliberately, and knowingly, waste time by doing things around your home that can be done easier, quicker, and better by electricity?
Will you deliberately waste your time and your health in doing things that electricity is now doing in thousands upon thousands of homes in shorter time and at less expense?*

Your Answer, of Course, Is “No!”

Sooner or later every Minneapolis home will become completely electrified. It is just a question of time.


And because the *third step* of the Residential Electric Rate makes it practical, economical, and serviceable, it is a duty you owe yourself to apply it in every way that you can. So why not look into it today? There never was a time in the history of the world—not even in the palaces of the queens of the Roman Empire or the Egyptian dynasties—when women had the conveniences at their command that they have today.

For at this very moment, the Minneapolis housewife whose home is wired for electricity can summon to her service, silent servants who will do everything she demands, without quibbling, at a moment’s notice.

And the *third step* of the Residential Electric Rate makes all this possible; for the *third step* of the Residential Electric Rate is designed to bring within the reach of every home the conveniences, the comforts, and the pleasures demanded by the woman who regards her health and her time as two of the most important things in her life.

The *third step* of the Residential Electric Rate, as you know, permits you to use all of the electricity you want at less than 3c per kilowatt-hour, after you have used a normal amount of electricity for your particular sized house.

\$5 down and \$5 a month will place a Sweeper Vac Electric Cleaner in your home and give you another opportunity to enjoy the savings of the Third Step.



Advertisement, Northern States Power Company, 1928

Courtesy Smithsonian Institute and Public Utilities Advertising Association



Ever and again, amid the current talk of system, comes up a vision dear to the housewife—practical conveniences in the home, the same as a man has in business. For home-keeping is the most important business.

The Premier means true economy through wise expenditure. A little time with it every day accomplishes more and wears less.

The housewife with a Premier has leisure for her children, her books, her amusements, and her friends. And her home is cleanliness itself.

The “proof of a pudding is in the eating.” The Premier is willing to sell itself on what it can show you it can do. If you can’t visit us, we will arrange for the demonstration in your own home. Moderate prices. Convenient terms.

SAY MERRY CHRISTMAS ELECTRICALLY.

The PREMIER is sold by these representative stores:

Anderson Electric Co., 2246 Como Ave. West.	Muska Electric Co., 1169 1/2 W. 7th St.
Electric Appliance Co., 18 W. 6th St.	Ohmann & Lorenz, 433 Goff Ave.
Mannheimer Bros. Truax & Swanson, University and Raymond Aves.	Premier Service Co., 84 E. 6th University Electric Co., 439 University Ave.

Northwestern Electric Equipment Co., Distributor

Advertisement, St. Paul Pioneer Press, December 12, 1920

Any woman who saw the electric bulb which lights the interior [of the big gas range displayed at the St. Paul Gas Light Co.], the sigh which greets the ultimate would come. The bride may serve her beloved his favorite breakfast, pancakes, without absenting herself from his side or filling her sitting room with smoke if someone gives her the new electric griddle. If he prefers toast, she can have a toaster which automatically turns the slices, saving her from scorched finger tips. Electricity seems to be woman’s particular servitor, for aside from all the devices by which it saves her labor, there is a set, comprising hair dryer, curler, and waver, guaranteed to help her be beautiful to Edison, a suffragist.

Anonymous shopper, excerpt from “What a Christmas Shopper Saw on Sixth Street,” St. Paul Pioneer Press, December 12, 1915