



Cooperative Connections

**Deep freeze
challenges
power grid**

Pages 8-9

**The latest on EVs
in SD**

Pages 12-13

**Co-ops respond
as extreme winter
weather brings up
concerns over power
supply and demand**

Lacreek Electric to hold "Business Meeting" only on April 22, 2021

Due to the continued COVID-19 Pandemic; Lacreek Electric's 73rd Annual Meeting will be a "Business" meeting only on Thursday April 22nd at 1:00PM at the old American Legion Auditorium in Martin, SD; with NO meal and NO prizes. We ask that members practice social distancing at the meeting and masks will be provided as a courtesy. As a reminder, the Capital Credit checks were mailed at the beginning of April.

Directors will be elected from the following zones:

- Zone 2, Brent Ireland;
- Zone 4, Marion Schultz;
- Zone 7, Tom Schlack;
- Zone 9, Donovan Young Man.

All positions are for three-year terms. Candidates must live in the zone they plan to represent. The petitions must be signed by at least 15 members living in the zone the candidate is running in. Petitions were available February 22nd, 2021 and must be filed with the board secretary no later than March 22, 2021.

Lacreek's board of directors currently consists of 13 members representing nine zones.

If you choose to run for a board of director at a non-profit organization such as Lacreek Electric, you have inherently accepted fundamental responsibilities in addition to a commitment of time and accountability to the cooperative on behalf of the members it serves. Keep in mind, the board has ultimate legal responsibility for the cooperative.

A director must act in good faith, in the best interest of Lacreek Electric. A director possesses a fiduciary duty to Lacreek Electric and its members. A director has accountability for the assets and resources of the cooperative. They should never use their position on the board to advance their own private interests. A director should concentrate on the goals and vision of Lacreek Electric.

Article IV - Director Bylaws

SECTION 1. General Powers. The business and affairs of the Cooperative shall be managed by a Board of thirteen (13) directors which shall exercise all of the powers of the Cooperative, except such as are by law, the Articles of Incorporation or these Bylaws conferred upon or reserved to the members.

Section 2. Zones and General Qualifications of Directors. For the purpose of election and qualification of directors, the service area of Lacreek Electric Association, Inc., shall be divided into nine (9) Zones each to have the number of directors indicated:

- **Zone 1** shall consist of territory within the corporate limits of the City of Martin and shall be entitled to two directors.
- **Zone 2** shall consist of territory designated as East Bennett and shall consist of all that portion of Bennett County east of the Range Line between Range 37 and 38 west of the Sixth Principal Meridian with such line extended north and south to the north and south boundaries of Bennett County, respectively, and shall be entitled to one director.
- **Zone 3** shall consist of territory designated as West Bennett, west of the Range Line between Range 37 and 38 west of the Sixth Principal Meridian with such line extended north and south to the north and south boundaries of Bennett County, respectively, and shall be entitled to one director.
- **Zone 4** shall consist of territory designated as East Oglala Lakota County and shall include all of that portion of Oglala Lakota County east of the Range Line between Range 42 and 43, and shall be entitled to two directors.
- **Zone 5** shall consist of all that portion of Jackson County (including the former Washabaugh County) served by the cooperative and shall be entitled to two directors.
- **Zone 6** shall consist of all of the Lacreek area in Todd and Mellette Counties combined, and shall be entitled to one director.
- **Zone 7** shall consist of all the Lacreek area in Cherry County, Nebraska, and shall be entitled to one director.
- **Zone 8** shall be considered as a zone at-large consisting of all of the Lacreek Association territory and be entitled to one director elected from any place in the entire area including any of the zones heretofore defined.
- **Zone 9** shall consist of territory designated as West Oglala Lakota County and shall include all of that portion of Oglala Lakota County, west of the Range Line between Range 42 and 43, and shall be entitled to two directors.

In the event the territory of the Lacreek Electric Association, Inc., should be enlarged in the future, the enlarged portion shall become a part of the Zone numbered from one to nine, excluding eight as above described with the exterior boundary of which it has the greatest distance of its own exterior boundary contiguous.

SECTION 3. Tenure of Office.

- (a) Director shall be elected to serve a three-year term, with director terms staggered in such a manner that no more than five (5) directors are up for election in any one year
- (b) All directors shall serve until the close of the annual meeting in the year in which their successors have been elected and qualified. If an election of directors is or cannot be held, a special meeting shall be held for the purpose within a reasonable time thereafter. Failure of an election for a given year shall allow the incumbents whose directorships would have been voted on to hold over only until the next meeting at which an election shall be conducted.
- (c) In the event that the election results in a tie between two candidates, the winner shall be decided by the flip of a coin. In the event that there is a tie between three candidates, three coins shall be flipped, one by each of the candidates or their representatives, until an odd man shall have been established, and said odd man shall be declared the winner. In the event that more than three candidates are tied, the winner shall be determined by drawing lots in the form of slips of paper to be drawn from a hat, one of which shall be marked to designate a winner.

SECTION 4. Qualifications. No person shall be eligible to become or remain a director or hold any position in the Association who is not a member and bona fide resident of the area served or to be served by the Association, and in the case of a director, a resident of the zone from which elected. No person who is a close relative of an existing director, as the term "close relative" is defined by Section 9, may be elected to serve on the board of directors during the term of such close relative then serving. No person is eligible to become or remain a director who has been convicted of a felony criminal violation under Federal or State law within the 24 months before their election as a director or during their term(s) as a director. No person is eligible to become a director who is or has been an employee of the Association within the prior three years. No person may become a new director of the Association if they refuse to take or if they fail a drug test administered by the same Association's staff that also administers drug testing of the Association's employees.

SECTION 5. Nominations. Directors of the Cooperative shall be nominated by petition, signed by at least fifteen (15) members of the Cooperative, residing in the zone from which the candidate is to be elected, and stating the candidate's name, post office address, and zone which said candidate is to represent. Such petition shall be filed with the Secretary, not more than sixty (60) days no less than thirty (30) days before the day of the annual meeting. Not less than twenty (20) days before the annual meeting, the Secretary shall post at the front door of the principal office of the Cooperative, a list containing the name, post office address and zone of each person so nominated. A true copy of such list shall be posted by the Secretary prior to the commencement of the annual meeting at the site thereof. The Secretary shall mail with the Notice of Meeting, or separately, but at least seven (7) days before the date of the meeting, a statement of the number of directors to be elected and the names, post office addresses, and zone of the candidates.

In the election of directors, each member shall be entitled to cast the number of votes but no cumulatively which correspond to the total number of directors to be elected, but no member may vote for more nominees than the number of directors that are to be elected from or with respect to any particular Zone. Ballots marked in violation of the foregoing restriction with respect to one or more Zones shall be invalid and shall not be counted with respect to such Zone or Zones. Notwithstanding the provisions contained in the Section, failure to comply with any of such provisions shall not affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any action taken by the Board of Directors after the election.

Lacreek Electric

Cooperative Connections

(USPS No. 018-912)

Board of Directors

Clarence Allen – President
Wade Risse – Vice President
Brent Ireland – Secretary
Troy Kuxhaus – Treasurer
Cole Lange – Clifford Lafferty
Scott Larson – Neal Livermont
Tom Schlack – Marion Schultz
Jerry Sharp – Connie Whirlwind Horse
Donovon Young Man

Management Staff

Josh Fanning –
General Manager
Sherry Bakley –
Work Order/Staff Assistant
Tracie Hahn – Office Manager
Anna Haynes –
Finance Manager
Mike Pisha – Operations Manager
Stacey Robinson – Administrative/
Member Service Assistant

Office Personnel

Amy Pisha – Right of Way Specialist
Kasi Harris – Accountant II
Terri Gregg – Member Service/
Billing Specialist
Jessica Cook – Member Service/
Billing Specialist
Ashley Turgeon – Member Service/
Billing Specialist
Lisa Jensen –
Member Service Representative

Operations Personnel

Line Foreman: Jesse Byerley
Journeyman Linemen:
Dane Claussen – Ryan Pettit
Aaron Risse – Lonny Lesmeister –
Jordon Bakley – Garrett Metzinger –
Tyler Brown
Apprentice Linemen:
Kody Hagen – Brad Hahn –
Trace Scott
Journeyman Electrician: Roy Guptill
Warehouse Man: Cody Larson
Maintenance Man: Justin Smokov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

This publication is mailed the 15th of the month prior to the issue date. Layout is at least three weeks prior to mailing. LACREEK ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is published monthly by Lacreek Electric Association, Inc., PO Box 220, Martin, SD 57551 for its members. Families subscribe to Lacreek Electric Cooperative Connections as part of their electric cooperative membership.

Subscription information: Electric cooperative members devote 50 cents from their monthly electric payments for a subscription. Nonmember subscriptions are available for \$12 annually. Periodicals Postage Paid at Martin, SD and at additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Lacreek Electric Cooperative Connections, PO Box 220, Martin, SD 57551; telephone (605) 685-6581; fax (605) 685-6957

Check your mail!

The capital credit checks will be mailed out to the members the first part of April and should be received before the April 22nd Annual Meeting.

No checks will be at the meeting



National Lineworker Appreciation Day is April 12, 2021.

If you see one of our line workers, take the time to thank them for all their hard work.

Lacreek Electric is thankful for their dedication and hard work.

Pictured above, back row, left to right are Roy Guptill, Jordon Bakley, Jesse Byerley, Aaron Risse, Garrett Metzinger, Ryan Pettit, Brad Hahn, Trace Scott and Dane Claussen. Kneeling down, left to right, are Lonny Lesmeister, Tyler Brown and Kody Hagen.

Read Your Heat Meter

April is the last month to read your heat meter to receive credit for this heat season!

Please read your heat meter to receive your heat credit during the heat season which is October through April.

If you would like to have an office-read heat meter, please contact our office at 605-685-6581.

A \$25 charge is required to install this type of meter.



Home Improvements Don't Have to be Expensive

You don't have to replace your air conditioner with a high-efficiency system or make other major improvements to reduce energy consumption. There are low-cost efficiencies anyone can implement to help reduce energy bills.

- **Mind the thermostat.** You might be able to trim your energy bill by carefully managing the temperature in your home. Consider setting your thermostat to 78 degrees when you're running the air conditioner. If that's not cool enough, use fans to help circulate the air to help you feel cooler.
- **Go programmable.** If you don't always remember to adjust your thermostat manually, you could benefit from a programmable model. In the right situation and set correctly, programmable thermostats can save your household \$150 a year. Some models can be managed from your smartphone or other devices.
- **Stop air leaks.** Small gaps around windows, doors, wiring and plumbing penetrations can be major sources of energy loss. This problem can be alleviated with a little weatherstripping and caulk. A \$10 door draft stopper (also known as a "door snake") is a simple way to block gaps underneath exterior doors. Sealing air leaks around your home could shave up to one-fifth off your heating and cooling bills.
- **Manage your windows and window coverings.** Your windows may be letting heat out during the winter and letting heat in during the summer. Window coverings like medium or heavyweight curtains and thermal blinds can help. During the summer, keep window coverings closed to block the sun and keep it from heating conditioned indoor air. On cooler spring days, turn off your air conditioner, open the windows and enjoy the breeze - and lower electricity bills.
- **Look for energy wasters.** There are small steps you can take every day to reduce your energy use. Water heaters should be kept at the warm setting (120 degrees). Wash dishes and clothes on the most economical settings that will do the job, and always wash full loads. Use the microwave instead of the oven when possible. And unplug phone chargers, electronics and small appliances when not in use.

A Note of Appreciation for the Service Co-ops Provide

By Mark Peacock, Dupree

Most of us wake up each day with an agenda and a schedule that ensures we do things in pretty much the same way from the moment we open our eyes to the moment we arrive at wherever it is we spend our day working.

But on those rare occasions when I walk through our warm home and turn on the bathroom light, which in our home has an overhead radiant heat lamp, and start the shower, which releases hot water from the water heater nestled in the basement, I sometimes take a brief pause in my routine.

I pause to feel the heat of the water wash over me...if only for a minute or so, to enjoy and appreciate what a wonderful experience having a hot shower in a well-warmed, well-lit bathroom in a very comfortable home represents. It means I live in a country and in a state and in a county that has invested in the infrastructure and made a commitment to allowing normal, everyday Americans the opportunity to enjoy such a treat in the middle of a South Dakota winter.

And I smile, because we may not get all we want in life, but we may, for a brief moment, feel all the warmth it takes to start off the day in a positive way. Thank you and your energy partners for making my day and the days of thousands of others begin just a little better, a little bit warmer, a little bit brighter, and a whole lot more optimistic.

KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



Stay Indoors During a Storm

Celeste Meyer, 6 years old

Celeste is the daughter of Brice and Sarah Meyer. She is a resident of Trent and a member of Sioux Valley Electric.

Kids, send your drawing with an electrical safety tip to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). If your poster is published, you'll receive a prize. All entries must include your name, age, mailing address and the names of your parents. Colored drawings are encouraged.



Slushes, Punches, Lattes

Fruit Slush

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 6-oz. can orange juice concentrate | 1/3 cup halved maraschino cherries with juice |
| 1 6-oz. can lemonade concentrate | 2 firm bananas, sliced |
| 3 or 4 juice cans water | 2 10-oz. boxes frozen strawberries, thawed |
| 2 20-oz. cans crushed pineapple with juice | |

Stir all ingredients together and freeze in 9 x 13 inch pan or ice cream bucket. Remove from freezer a few minutes before serving. To serve, put scoop of slush in glass and fill glass with 7-Up or Squirt.

Mary Jessen, Holabird

Banana Slush Punch

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|---|---------------------------------|
| 7-8 bananas | concentrate |
| 2 12-oz. cans of orange juice concentrate | 1 46-oz. can of pineapple juice |
| 1 12-oz. can of lemonade | |

Blend bananas with all ingredients above. Bring to boil 6 cups water and 3 cups sugar. Cool. Combine banana mixture with sugar water. Freeze. At the time of serving, mixture should be slushy. Add two 2-liter bottles of Sprite or Fresca to the banana/water mixture and serve.

Julie Hummel, Hawarden, IA

Seasonal Punch

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 12-oz. can frozen orange juice | 4 quarts water |
| 12-oz. can Frozen Lemonade | 3-3/4 cups sugar |
| 4 pkgs. Koolade, any flavor | 2 Liters 7-Up (or Diet 7-Up) |

Mix orange juice, lemonade, Koolade, water and sugar, store in fridge to keep cold. Also refrigerate the 2 liters of 7-Up. Prior to serving - pour in the 2 liter of 7-Up and gently stir to mix. You can use any color Koolade, maybe green for Easter, red for 4th of July, Labor Day and Christmas, and orange for Halloween. Refreshing punch goes well with meals or anytime of day.

Pam Conn, Sioux Falls

Spiced Cocoa Mix

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|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1/4 cup cocoa | 1/2 cup nondairy powdered creamer |
| 1 cup powdered sugar | 3/4 tsp. cinnamon |
| 2 cups nonfat dry milk powder | 1/2 tsp. nutmeg |

Sift powdered sugar and cocoa together. Add remaining ingredients. Mix well. For each serving, use 1/3 cup mix and 3/4 cup boiling water. Stir. May add a teaspoon of coffee crystals, a dollop of whipped cream, or a teaspoon of liquid flavored coffee creamer.

Elaine Rowett, Sturgis

Creamy Hot Chocolate

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1/2 cup dry baking cocoa | 7-1/2 cups water |
| 14-oz. can sweetened condensed milk | 1-1/2 tsp vanilla |
| 1/8 tsp salt | |

Mix cocoa, milk, salt into a crock pot. Add water gradually, stirring into smooth. Cover and cook on high 2 hours, or low 4 hours. Stir in vanilla before serving.

Melissa Roerig, Sioux Falls

Chocolate Latte

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| 1/2 cup hot brewed coffee or 2 shots espresso | 2 teaspoons cocoa nibs |
| 1 Premier Protein 30g High Protein Chocolate Shake | |

In large 14-16-oz. mug, prepare espresso or coffee. Pour chocolate shake on top to combine. Top with cocoa nibs.

www.premierprotein.com

Please send your favorite casserole recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2021. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

Three Options for Home Cooling



Pat Keegan

Collaborative Efficiency

Whatever you choose, make sure it is rated for the size of the space you are cooling.

Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen of Collaborative Efficiency write on energy efficiency topics for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56% of the nation's landscape. For additional energy tips and information on Collaborative Efficiency visit: www.collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips.

Dear Pat and Brad: My wife and I have been in our 1,500 square-foot home with no air conditioning for 10 years now, and we're tired of it! What options should we look into so we can stay cool this summer? – Kyle

Dear Kyle: It's the right time of year to think about how to stay cool this summer. There are a few low- and no-cost cooling strategies, like using ceiling fans to keep air moving, turning off unused electrical devices and appliances, and blocking direct sunlight with window coverings. If you live in a climate with cool summer evenings, you can let cool air in late at night or early in the morning, then seal up the home to keep that air from leaking out.

If that's not enough, you can install air conditioning (A/C). Below are three common options for home cooling, and we've included approximate cost estimates for each. But please be aware that costs are highly variable.

Window Units/Portable Cooling

Window A/C units or portable A/C units are the lowest cost approach. Portable units can be moved from room to room and come equipped with a length of duct to exhaust hot air out a nearby window. Window units are mounted in a window opening and cool one room. The efficiency of portable and window units has improved over the years, but none of them are as efficient as most central A/C units or a mini-split heat pump.

If you live in a hot, dry climate, you could consider an evaporative cooler for your home (sometimes referred to as a swamp cooler). Window units have been around for a while, but now there are portable options available. Evaporative cooling units can be less expensive than traditional A/C, but don't buy one until you do the research to determine how well evaporative cooling works in your local area. Whatever you choose, make sure it is rated for the size of the space you are cooling.

- Cost: \$149 to \$1,000 per new unit (depending on your climate and how many square feet you're trying to cool)

Ductless Mini-Split Heat Pumps

A ductless mini-split heat pump has a compressor outside the home that's connected to air handler units in as many as four rooms. Each room's temperature can be controlled separately. Ductless mini-splits are an especially good choice for homes without forced air ducting systems or with leaky or undersized ductwork. Heat pumps can also be a supplemental source of heat in the winter months.

- Cost: approximately \$3,000 to \$10,000 (including installation)

Central Cooling

If your home has forced air heating ductwork, it can be used for an A/C or heat pump unit. This is a good option if the ductwork is sized properly and doesn't leak, and if ducts are in unheated attics or crawlspaces that are insulated. In some locations in the U.S., contractors can install evaporative cooling as a whole house system.

- Cost: Approximately \$3,000 to \$7,000 (not including repairs to ductwork)

As always, you can save energy and money by purchasing ENERGY STAR®-rated appliances and collecting a few quotes from licensed contractors.

We hope this information on home cooling options will start you on the path to a more comfortable home this summer.

Hit Movie Nomadland Captures the Beauty and Character of South Dakota

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Any day now, I-90 is due for yet another Wall Drug billboard to add to the legendary collection.

The popular tourist attraction was one of several spots in the state of South Dakota featured in the hit film *Nomadland*. And for Wall Drug owner Rick Hustead, that's more than enough to warrant another interstate billboard celebrating the restaurant's role in the award-winning Hollywood hit.

During the three-day stretch in 2018 that the film crew worked in Wall, no one knew the project would gain such high critical acclaim. But since its premier at the Venice Film Festival last September, *Nomadland* has collected numerous awards and loads of recognition from many quarters, beginning with the Golden Lion Award at Venice. In January, the North Dakota Film Society Awards handed *Nomadland* nods for best picture, best director, best actress, best cinematography and best editing.

Hustead was just happy that Wall Drug was picked to be part of the film, and his wife Pat was even happier to meet one of her Hollywood heroes, Frances McDormand. Pat got to spend time getting to know McDormand during the shooting and even accepted a pair of potholders that the Tinseltown star hand-crafted herself.

"There was just a lot of excitement during that time," Hustead remembers. "We tried to do everything we could to accommodate them, everything but shut the store down. They filmed while there were customers in the restaurant and that made it very realistic. But the director, the actors, the crew, they all could not have been more pleasant to work with."

Hustead said that after he was initially approached by producers, he had to keep the project secret so that the restaurant wouldn't be overrun by curious onlookers. The actors integrated into the environment easily by donning Wall Drug uniforms and



Actress Frances McDormand shoots a scene inside Wall Drug for the critically-acclaimed movie *Nomadland*.

paper hats while waiting on customers who often didn't know they were interacting with Hollywood stars.

In the movie, McDormand plays a middle-age woman who faces a drastic change in her life and adopts a nomadic culture, joining the ranks of those who travel from place to place to make a living while meeting lots of interesting people



Filming took place at various sites including Wall, the Badlands, Custer State Park and the Pine Ridge Reservation.

and forging close relationships in the process. As the movie shows, the "nomads" also learn a lot about themselves along the way.

Hustead said the movie's plot also fits in well with reality as he sometimes hires itinerant workers during certain seasons, workers who go on to harvest sugar beets in the fall or sign on with Amazon during the Christmas buying season.

Some of the local citizens even made an

appearance in the film. Carol Ann Hodge and Sue Michaels are two who got past the editing cut and are part of a scene in which McDormand's character encounters the two women in a local park.

Hustead was particularly impressed with director Chloe Zhao. The up-and-coming young director had completed two other movies, *The Rider* and *Songs My Brother Taught Me*, that caught the attention of the Hollywood establishment. Parts of those films were also shot in South Dakota. Zhao lived with the Lakota Sioux on the Pine Ridge Reservation to prepare for *The Rider*, while *Songs My Brother Taught Me* was filmed partially on a South Dakota reservation.

"It was unbelievable for us to have a famous young director here and several known movie stars," Hustead said. "They're very competent, organized, focused and know exactly what they're doing. But at the same time, they were very down to earth and warm and friendly."

Hustead always encourages his staff to play it cool when celebrities occasionally wander off the interstate and into the store. He recalls that Ernest Hemingway once stayed in one of the Wall Drug cabins and invited his parents to join him for dinner.

"We've had famous people come through over the years but we want them to experience Wall Drug like everyone else," he said. "We want to be professional. We want them to have a good time and we give them their space."



A peek inside the Southwest Power Pool control room shows system operators working to make sure power supply always matches demand across 14 states on the grid. Photo provided by SPP.

AN ENERGY EMERGENCY

Why Did February Outages Happen and Could They Happen Again?

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

The national power grid has been hailed as one of the greatest and most complex engineering feats ever achieved. Every second of every day it works to keep electricity flowing freely to homes, schools, farms, hospitals and businesses in every region of the country.

But while it stands as one of mankind's most marvelous inventions, sometimes it's simply no match for Mother Nature.

This electric superhighway was put to the test in mid-February when a bone-chilling air mass swept through large swaths of the country and caused a spike in the demand for power. As the temperatures dropped, millions of Americans attempted to stave off the frigid air by reaching for electric blankets, plugging in space heaters and nudging their thermostats up a few notches. With so many people clamoring to stay warm, the sudden spike in demand for power caused the gatekeepers of the grid to reach their option of last resort: ordering temporary disruptions in service to maintain the delicate balance between demand and supply that's required to keep the network from completely melting down.

The result was several waves of controlled and coordinated rolling blackouts often spanning one hour and isolated incidents of up to three hours for some consumers. The service interruptions impacted nearly one-third of the nation. Industry officials explain that this response to skyrocketing demand was necessary to keep the grid from sustaining extensive damage and causing a repeat of the historic event that occurred in the summer of 2003. The Northeast Blackout extended across the eastern seaboard, through parts of the Midwest and into southern Canada and left approximately 50 million in the dark.

"Controlled outages are necessary to prevent widespread damage to the grid, which could cause a cascade of outages that could potentially be far more devastating," explained Barbara Sugg, CEO of the Southwest Power Pool (SPP). "There's no doubt this would have been a much more significant event if our individual customers and businesses and industries had not all pulled together to reduce the load."

Air Traffic Controllers for the Grid

Sugg describes her organization as an "air traffic controller" for the grid. In fact, the SPP is what's known in the electric utility industry as a Regional Transmission Organization (RTO). It's one of the four quasi-government entities responsible for maintaining the critical balance between supply and demand along the nation's power grid. While RTOs don't create or generate power, they are charged under the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) with the task of making sure the power produced by other utilities flows smoothly across the grid and gets to the places where consumers need it, when they need it.

SPP is the power transmission overseer for 14 states - including South Dakota - and more than 17 million people in the midsection of the U.S. from North Dakota to the Texas Panhandle. Electric co-ops in South Dakota are also part of the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), a federal agency that markets power produced from hydroelectric dams in the Upper Midwest. It operates the larger bulk transmission facilities in 15 central and western states in its geographical footprint.

Most of the time the high-voltage transmission process operates without a hitch, and electric generation can be moved across the grid when there is high demand in one area and excess generation in another. But when foul weather comes into the picture grid operators focus on activating their emergency response plans. Those plans typically include communicating with generators to coordinate arrangements for assuring that an ample supply of power will be available to meet projected demand when the inclement weather strikes.

Lanny Nickell, operations manager for SPP, points out that while arrangements were in place to face the February cold snap, the winter blast turned out to be an unprecedented event for the organization. As the temperatures dropped, SPP initiated the process of contacting power generators and transmitters to warn that the looming storm may cause the system to be severely strained. Six days later, SPP officials went

through a series of three Energy Emergency Alert levels and eventually declared a Level 3 emergency, which required “controlled interruptions of service,” or rolling blackouts. It was the first time in the SPP’s 80 years that a Level 3 emergency was declared.

“Despite our plans, the severe weather coupled with a limited fuel supply hampered our ability to balance our supply with the demand from end-use consumers,” Nickell said. “So, first we had to go out and ask for a voluntary reduction in energy use. Then, we held off as long as we could to make the call to interrupt service in a controlled fashion, but it was necessary to prevent overloading the system and causing an even bigger problem and much longer outages.”

Nickell explained that without an affordable and viable means of storing high-voltage electricity for future use, power is created in one location and consumed in another location in real time. The balance must be maintained even though both supply and consumption change on a second-by-second basis.

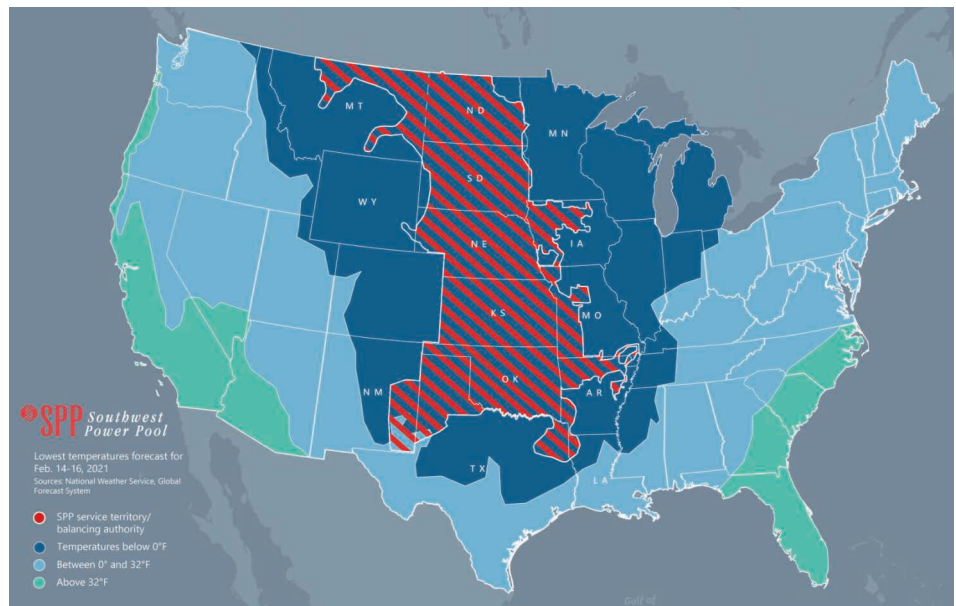
“Once we observe an imbalance, we have to react within seconds to reduce the demand,” Nickell said. “This is why it’s very difficult for us to announce well beforehand when these things will happen because they happen at the speed of light.”

A Smorgasbord of Fuel Sources

Interruptions in service are more than minor inconveniences for many co-op members, especially when severe weather conditions are in play. The February storm and the ensuing service outages triggered wide-ranging discussions about the push toward renewable resources to generate electricity.

Supporters of fossil fuels point out that decades-long efforts to curb coal and natural gas played a part in restricting the kinds of available resources that could have prevented widespread outages. Coal has long been a reliable source of “baseload power” requirements, or the amount of power necessary to provide an adequate supply to meet basic needs without interruption. It’s utilized largely because it can be more easily controlled compared to intermittent sources. Advocates emphasize that wind turbines were frozen in place and solar panels were buried in snow and limited by scarce sunlight during this event.

Renewable fuel source proponents echoed SPP officials in noting that the February storm was an historic occurrence. They contend that renewable power promotes a cleaner environment, decreases energy reliance on other countries, adds jobs to the economy and that innovations in the emerging industry



could be effective in responding to any future storms. Presently, roughly 25 percent of South Dakota’s overall energy supply comes from wind turbines. For electric co-ops, that figure is closer to 20 percent. Proponents of wind also point to issues with natural gas delivery and the inability of some fossil fuel plants to produce electricity through the storm. A combination of high demand, lower-than-normal wind resources and natural gas delivery problems all met at the same time to contribute to the energy emergency.

As for those members of RTOs who receive the call to actually implement controlled outages - particularly transmission and distribution cooperatives - there are very few options available when demand begins to significantly outpace supply on the grid.

Chris Studer is chief member and public relations officer for East River Electric, a co-op that provides transmission and substation services for distribution entities in South Dakota and Minnesota. He said the cooperative’s hands are essentially tied when SPP reaches the point of calling for rolling outages.

“The utilities involved in the SPP are required to carry a surplus of generation resources throughout the year over and above their historic peak demand so they are prepared for extreme circumstances. However, when wind resources and other generation are constrained, there is a limited amount of other generation available to serve the region’s recent record demand for electricity,” he said.

Distribution co-ops find they have even less control when RTOs and power marketing agencies restrict the flow of power, but they still find ways to mitigate the situation. Officials at West River Electric based in Wall, implemented

“Once we observe an imbalance, we have to react within seconds to reduce the demand. This is why it’s very difficult for us to announce well beforehand when these things will happen because they happen at the speed of light.”

- Lanny Nickell, SPP

the co-op’s load management program after receiving the request for reduced demand hoping it would be enough. But it was not, and some of the co-op’s members were subject to a 50-minute unplanned blackout. CEO Dick Johnson said he had never experienced a similar event in his 27 years in the industry. He added that he hopes the emergency situation prompts discussions centered around policy proposals that will prevent future emergencies.

“I think we should have a national conversation that includes large new baseload generation, whether that be hydroelectric, nuclear or carbon capture on coal plants. We must also have a conversation about building necessary electric and gas transmission infrastructure to allow us to get electricity and gas to the places where it is needed when times like this happen. If not, I am afraid it will happen again in the future, only more frequently.”

January 2021 Board Meeting

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Lacreek Electric Association, Inc. was held in the office of the cooperative, located in the Town of Martin, S.D., Jan. 19, 2021, beginning at 1 p.m.

The meeting was then called to order by President Allen and the following directors were present: Tom Schlack, Brent Ireland, Connie Whirlwind Horse, Clifford Lafferty, Scott Larson, Wade Risse, Marion Schultz, Donovan Young Man, Troy Kuxhaus, Neal Livermont and Cole Lange. Attending via WebEx was Jerry Sharp and Office Manager Tracie Hahn. Also present were General Manager Josh Fanning, Administrative/Member Service Assistant Stacey Robinson, Finance Manager Anna Haynes, Work Order/Staff Assistant Sherry Bakley and Line Foreman Jesse Byerley.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Allen.

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve Administrative/Member Service Assistant Stacey Robinson to record the board minutes.

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the December 2020 Board Minutes.

A motion was made, seconded and carried to accept the Operating Report for November that was presented by Finance Manager Anna Haynes.

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the checks and disbursements for December. (Tom, "chairman" Neal and Scott) The December Check Audit Committee will be (Cole "chairman", Cliff and Troy).

A motion was made, seconded and carried to accept the December Analysis of Investments that was presented by Finance Manager Anna Haynes. The board was tasked with ideas on current and future investments to bring to the February board meeting.

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the list of new members, attached hereto.

Stacey reported that the 2021 Directors Conference will be held virtually March 23 and 24.

Jesse reported on work in progress; that the 2019 reject poles are completed and staking of the 2020 reject poles are in progress; on outages during the Christmas timeframe due to snow storms; that NPPD had their 115 line go down on Jan. 14 which serves the Niobrara Sub; however, repairs were made and as of Jan. 18, the line is back too normal and SCADA from the Shannon sub is being upgraded through Rushmore and should be up and running in a couple of weeks.

Jesse gave the safety report.

Wade and Donovan reported on the SDREA Annual Meeting they attended and a motion was made, seconded and carried to appoint

Donovan Young Man to the SDREA board on behalf of Lacreek Electric for a three-year term.

Josh reported on the CFC Rate Study; about the NRECA Legislation Rate Repricing; on the Basin contract Shannon 115 line; that he attended the SDREA Annual meeting; about the 2021-2024 Material Blanket and on upcoming meetings he will be attending.

Discussion was held on the Revenue Deferral Plan Resolution approved at the November 2020 meeting. RUS rewrote the Resolution, which needs another approval for the amended Resolution. A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the Revenue Deferral Plan Resolution with the amendment. 470800101

Discussion was held on the 2021 NRECA PowerXchange (Annual Meeting) being held virtually March 4th, with Josh Fanning being the delegate and no one else planning to attend at this time.

Discussion was held about the Capital Credits which was tabled to have further discussion at the February board meeting.

Josh reported that he met with the Equipment Committee regarding budget items previously approved. The Equipment Committee recommended to the board replacing Truck #1, Truck #7 and a side by side. McKie Ford had the lowest bid for Truck #1 and #7 and 21st Century Equipment, LLC had the lowest bid for a John Deere Side by Side. A motion, was made, seconded and carried to approve the Equipment Committees' recommendations.

Finance Manager Anna Haynes advised the board of the required IRS 990 forms which the board filled out and completed.

Discussion was held on Co-op Day at the Capital on Feb. 16, with the board changing the February meeting to Feb. 15 so it would not interfere with anyone planning to attend Co-op Day. More information will be provided to the board about Co-op Day at a later date.

No further business was brought before the board and the meeting was adjourned.

Next Board Meeting – Feb. 15, 2021 at 1 p.m.

Find Your Account Number:

It's Worth \$110!

A member's account number has been hidden somewhere in this newsletter. If you find your account number, call the office before **April 8** and you will receive a **\$110 credit** on your next month's billing.



ENERGY STAR® Appliances: Do They Really Save You Money?

If you are in the market for a new appliance, you might wonder if buying an ENERGY STAR®-certified version will make a difference in your energy bills.

The short answer is yes – when you compare its estimated energy costs to its less efficient counterpart.

In fact, there are really two costs to consider before buying an appliance: the cost itself and the projected monthly energy costs.

The energy-conscious appliances donning the square-shaped ENERGY STAR logo use 10 to 15 percent less energy and water than standard models, according to Energy.gov. For example, ENERGY STAR clothes washers use about 40 percent less energy than conventional clothes washers while also reducing water bills.

And the longer answer is yes, if you consider the appliance's lifespan.

ENERGY STAR appliances and other products used throughout your home can save you a collec-

tive \$750 over their lifespan, according to Energy.gov. (Besides appliances, there are other ENERGY STAR-certified products, such as lighting and electronics).

While selecting energy-saving designated appliances could have a slightly higher price tag, they don't always. Compare prices and don't assume they cost substantially more than less efficient models.

The biggest bang for your energy-savings buck might be your refrigerator, especially if it is 15 years old or older. By replacing your old fridge with a new ENERGY STAR-certified model, you can save more than \$200 over a 12-year lifespan.

Tip: EnergyStar.gov offers a "Flip Your Fridge" calculator to estimate savings depending on the size and age of your largest kitchen appliance.

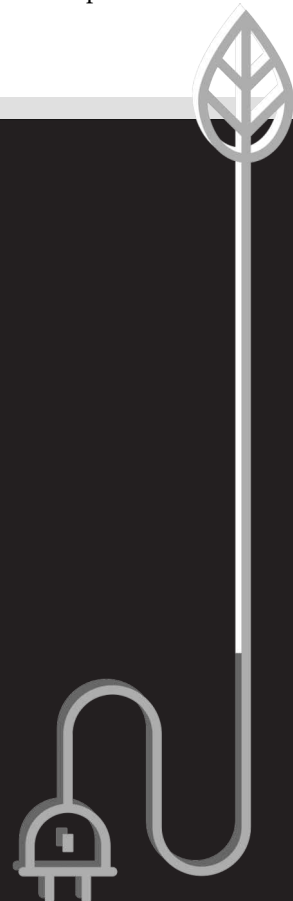
Bottom line? The typical U.S. family spends around \$2,200 a year on home utility bills. Switching to ENERGY STAR products can help lower these costs over time.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Some manufacturers set water heater thermostats at 140 degrees, but most households usually only require them to be set at 120 degrees.

Consider lowering your water heater's temperature to save energy and slow mineral buildup in the heater and pipes.

Source: www.energy.gov





This electric vehicle owned by Sioux Valley Energy is used as a fleet vehicle for the cooperative but also serves to educate members about EV technology and performance.

Electric Vehicles in SD

Electric Co-ops Working to Build Fast Charging Stations

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

General Motors turned a lot of heads earlier this year when the auto industry titan announced its intention to phase out all gas and diesel engines by 2035. GM made sure its message was loud and clear by running ads during the Super Bowl.

Not to be outdone, Ford CEO Jim Farley soon followed suit by announcing the company's plans to invest \$29 billion in the development of autonomous vehicles (AVs) and electric vehicles (EVs) by 2025. And against a backdrop of companies like Tesla and Workhorse seeing triple-digit stock gains, President Joe Biden rolled out plans to turn the entire 650,000-vehicle federal government fleet to all electric.

With a solid upward trend in support of E-mobility and electric vehicles sweeping the globe, electric cooperatives throughout the region are doing their part to provide the power those vehicles will need to carry their passengers from Point A to Point B.

According to Ben Pierson, manager of beneficial electrification at Sioux Valley

Energy, the state's electric cooperatives are facing a chicken-and-egg proposition in deciding whether - and how much - to invest in an industry that's still in its early stages. Pierson has been involved in rallying support for the formation of a DC fast charging network that will make it easy for EV drivers to navigate across and throughout the state. The stations will be placed 75-100 miles apart but will have to be constructed before the demand is fully materialized. He has received interest from groups representing tourism, economic development, transportation and state government.

Pierson has been working with municipal and investor-owned utilities to build out the infrastructure, with an emphasis on making sure there are enough charging stations along I-90 to get travelers from one side of the state to the other with confidence. Stations will also be installed along the I-29 corridor in Brookings and Watertown in Phase 1, with plans to include a station in Vermillion as part of Phase 2. Pierson points out that "range anxiety" is a major obstacle for consumers and early adopters who are considering the purchase of an EV. Presently, EVs

make up less than 1 percent of the total U.S. vehicle fleet while 10 percent of the vehicles sold in Europe last December were pure electric.

A recent study by the Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chicago indicated that EVs are driven about half the distance - an average of 5,300 miles a year - compared to conventional internal combustion engine vehicles. One conclusion taken from the study is that EV owners see those vehicles as complements to their transportation needs instead of a replacement for their conventional cars.

"When industry giants like Ford and GM are making a commitment to electric vehicles, that's a huge indicator that EVs are more than just a passing fad and are something we should invest in," Pierson said. "But like any industry transformation, it can be a frightening proposition for people to experience a paradigm shift like this. With our members in mind, we're committed to staying out ahead of the wave and doing what we can to make sure the power delivery infrastructure is in place when the other pieces and parts of the total picture emerge."

DC Fast Charging Infrastructure Plan



Utilities are in the process of conducting siting plans and ordering equipment needed to install the network of charging stations. In the state Legislature, lawmakers favored a \$50 annual fee on electric vehicles which don't contribute the gas tax revenue that goes toward construction and maintenance of road and highway infrastructure. Presently, there are roughly 400 EVs on South Dakota roadways.

"We're just tremendously excited to be a part of this project," Pierson said. "Our goal is to help our members in any way we can and we want to be there on the ground floor as the industry continues to expand."

Collaborating with Pierson is Robert Raker, manager of public relations at West River Electric. They are working with utilities throughout South Dakota

and Minnesota to build out the DC fast charging infrastructure. The plan is to initially focus on major highways and interstates and then branch out from there.

The way Raker sees it, getting involved in constructing a charging station network is a sound investment in the economic growth and development of cooperative communities. He said cooperatives are leading the way by purchasing EVs of their own as demonstration models for their members and also as part of the cooperative's fleet. West River Electric's Nissan Leaf is used for business purposes throughout the day and is quite the attraction at community events on the weekends. He noted that co-ops have a long history of innovation and progress.

"Many co-ops are formulating plans to

migrate their light-duty service vehicles to EV," Raker said. "Co-ops have always been at the tip of the innovation spear. We were the first to bring power to rural South Dakota and we made sure people had access to power in order to run their farms, homes and appliances...things that would make their lives easier while allowing their communities to prosper."

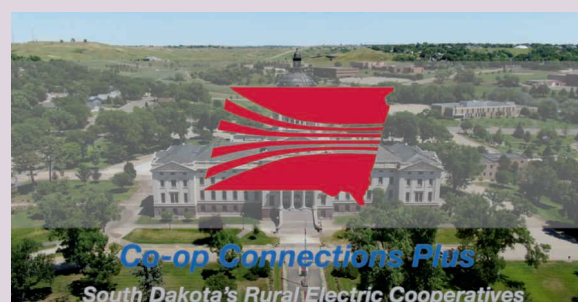
Part of West River's overall EV strategy, Raker said, is to address the issue of whether the escalating number of EVs will increase stress on the electric power grid.

"EVs make the perfect load for co-ops," he said. "They can be charged during off-peak hours so they are not detrimental to the grid. Like it or not, EVs are coming. We can't change the wind so we'll have to adjust our sails."

Visit Co-op Connections Plus

Take a moment to visit our new online companion to *Cooperative Connections*. Co-op Connections Plus is a YouTube channel that features a more in-depth treatment of stories appearing in this publication as well as other subjects of interest to rural South Dakotans.

Search for "Co-op Connections Plus" and you'll find videos on human trafficking, support programs for veterans, grain bin safety, the Co-ops Vote campaign and more. Be sure to "like" and "subscribe."



Bright Futures Virtual Career Fair Showcases Rural, Agri-Business Job Opportunities

Shayla Ebsen

Grow a rewarding and challenging career right here at home. That was the overarching theme of the Bright Futures virtual career fair that was hosted on Feb. 24 by the region's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives. South Dakota and western Minnesota high school and post-secondary students, educational advisers, teachers, and parents from across the region attended the free virtual career event that highlighted rural-based careers and explored industries like finance, precision ag and agricultural trades.

"Our cooperative family is committed to enhancing the communities we serve," said Jennifer Gross, education and outreach coordinator at East River Electric Power Cooperative, one of the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives that hosted the event.

Attendees were able to connect with each other, respond to survey questions, post their own comments and photos, and participate in real-time Q&A sessions with presenters.

"We hosted this unique event to inspire our youth with local stories emphasizing job opportunities, career development, personal fulfillment and financial advancement. There are hidden career gems throughout South Dakota and Minnesota. This event shined a light on all the ways our rural areas offer a bright future!"



The five-hour virtual event featured a blend of keynote speakers and breakout sessions. Attendees were able to connect with each other, respond to survey questions, post their own comments and photos, and participate in real-time Q&A sessions with presenters.

South Dakota Representative Dusty Johnson opened the event with a timely discussion about politics, agriculture and our region's future. Johnson also discussed how decisions made in Washington, D.C., have a big impact on what happens in our region and why it's important for citizens to remain engaged. A few of the many companies featured during the career fair included Farm Credit Services of America, C&B Operations, Raven Industries, Midwest Vet Services, Salem Vet Clinic and Pipestone System. A panel discussion led by East River Electric Business Development Director Mike Jaspers explored opportunities that are on the horizon for the next generation of farmers, ranchers and rural social media influencers. South Dakota Ag and Rural Leadership Foundation CEO Don Norton provided the event's closing remarks.

"The nature of work in rural America is changing. Growing industries such as precision agriculture, livestock development, food processing, manufacturing, energy, communications and more require



different skills, as well as an entrepreneurial spirit," said Gross. "This is truly a great time to be starting your career in our region and our goal was to highlight those awesome opportunities for our next generation of leaders."

Recorded videos from the event will be available free for viewing at yourcoop-power.com/futures. Additionally, the webpage will include information on internships and job opportunities at many of the employers that were featured in the event.

Power Grid Glossary

Learn More About the Power Grid by Knowing These Terms

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Power grids are essential in moving electricity from its source to the places where it's needed, but they are often overlooked and rarely mentioned - that is until a major storm strikes and the juice ceases to flow. Here is a glossary of terms that will help cooperative consumers learn more about how power moves across long distances to their homes and businesses.

BASELOAD POWER PLANT - A large, efficient generating station, typically with a capacity factor of at least 65 percent, that provides dependable power year-round at a low cost. Coal-fired, nuclear, hydro and large natural gas-fired power plants make up most baseload generation, although smaller-scale biomass facilities and geothermal power systems, if properly operated, can also produce baseload power in much smaller quantities.

FOSSIL FUELS - Hydrocarbon-based material such as coal, oil, or natural gas found within the top layer of Earth's crust and used

to produce heat or power; also called conventional fuels. These materials were formed in the ground hundreds of millions of years ago from plant and animal remains.

GRID - A network of interconnected high-voltage transmission lines and power generating facilities that allows utilities and other suppliers to share resources on a regional basis. The North American Electric Reliability Corp. oversees reliability of the electric grid covering the U.S. and most of Canada.

REGIONAL TRANSMISSION ORGANIZATION - A power transmission system operator that coordinates, controls, and monitors a multi-state electric grid. The transfer of electricity between states is considered interstate commerce, and electric grids spanning multiple states are therefore regulated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

PEAK DEMAND - The industry's equivalent of rush-hour traffic, when power costs run the highest. It's the greatest demand placed on an electric system, measured in kilowatts or megawatts; also, the time of day or season of the year when that demand occurs.

PEAK LOAD - The amount of power required by a consumer or utility system during times when electric consumption reaches its highest point; measured in kilowatts or megawatts.

POWER MARKETING ADMINISTRATION - A federal agency within the DOE responsible for marketing hydropower, primarily from multiple-purpose water projects operated by the Bureau of Reclamation, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the International Boundary and Water Commission.

RENEWABLES - Sources of energy generation that are naturally replenishable, including wind, solar, biomass, geothermal, hydro, and hydrokinetic (ocean wave and tidal) power.

ROLLING BLACKOUTS - Controlled power outages designed to lessen the threat of a major cascading outage, caused by short supply and high demand for power affecting major transmission systems. Rolling blackouts are scheduled for predetermined sectors of the transmission grid at timed intervals.

SOUTHWEST POWER POOL - An entity that manages the electric grid and wholesale power market for the central U.S. As a regional transmission organization, the non-profit corporation is mandated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to ensure reliable supplies of power, adequate transmission infrastructure and competitive wholesale electricity prices.

WESTERN AREA POWER ADMINISTRATION - Markets and delivers hydroelectric power and related services within a 15-state region of the central and western U.S. One of four power marketing administrations within the U.S. DOE having the role to market and transmit electricity from multi-use water projects to retail power distribution companies and public authorities.



Sensible Solutions for Our Energy Future

South Dakota's electric cooperatives support reasonable strategies for our energy future that make sense for our members:

- Renewable energy solutions that are both productive and practical
- Rate structures that take affordability into account
- Balanced strategies centered on the best interests of co-op consumers
- Technology-based policies that promote economic development

Note: Please make sure to call ahead to verify the event is still being held.

March 19-20

Sioux Empire Arts & Crafts Show, W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds Expo Building, Sioux Falls, SD 605-332-6000

March 23-24 CANCELED

Shen Yun, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center Fine Arts Theatre, Rapid City, SD 605-394-4115

March 25

A Lakota View of the Dead Hills, Homestake Adams Research and Cultural Center, Deadwood, SD 605-722-4800

March 27

Hill City Community Easter Egg Hunt, Hill City Area Chamber of Commerce, Hill City, SD 605-574-2368

March 27

Lion's Club Easter Egg Hunt, City Park, Groton, SD 605-846-7607

March 27

SD State High School All-State Band Concert, Mitchell Fine Arts Center, Mitchell, SD

April 1-3

ACL Regional #6 Cornhole Tournament, Corn Palace, Mitchell, SD 605-996-5567

April 3

Spring Fling Fun & Glow Egg Hunt, Rush Mountain Adventure Park, Keystone, SD 605-255-4384



April 8

The Wildest Banquet Auction in the Midwest, Sioux Falls Arena/Virtual, Sioux Falls, SD 605-339-1203

April 9-10

Forks, Corks and Kegs Food, Wine and Beer Festival, Main Street, Deadwood, SD 605-578-1876

April 9-18

Four Weddings & An Elvis, Mitchell Area Community Theatre, Mitchell, SD 605-996-9137

April 17

Winefest Renaissance, Boys and Girls Club of Aberdeen Area, Aberdeen, SD 605-225-8714

April 20

All-State Chorus & Orchestra Concert, Denny Sanford PREMIER Center, Sioux Falls, SD

April 22-May 2

Beauty and the Beast, Sioux Empire Community Theatre, Sioux Falls, SD 605-367-6000

April 23-24

Junkin' Market Days, W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds Expo Building, Sioux Falls, SD 605-941-4958

April 30-May 2

Radium Girls, Pierre Players Community Theatre, Pierre, SD 605-224-7826

May 8

Davis Flea Market & Artisan Fair, Main Street, Davis, SD 605-940-0069

May 15

Red Dirt Music Festival featuring Casey Donahew, Ian Munsick and Randy Burghardt Deadwood Mountain Grand, Deadwood, SD 605-559-0386

May 21-23

Annual Sound of Silence Tesla Rally, Downtown, Custer, SD 605-673-2244

May 21-23

State Parks Open House and Free Fishing Weekend, All State Parks and Recreation Areas, SD 605-773-3391

May 22

Frühlingsfest & Spring Market, Main Street, Rapid City, SD 605-716-7979

June 5-6

18th Annual Wessington Springs Foothills Rodeo, Wessington Springs Rodeo Grounds, Wessington Springs, SD 605-770-5720

To have your event listed on this page, send complete information, including date, event, place and contact to your local electric cooperative. Include your name, address and daytime telephone number. Information must be submitted at least eight weeks prior to your event. Please call ahead to confirm date, time and location of event.