



Cooperative Connections

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forge the future
of cooperatives**

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Renville-Sibley Line Crew Activities



Gene Alex

Line Superintendent

The start of Renville-Sibley's 2020 construction season has endured many changes, as you may expect. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way we do our day-to-day business and life in general. However, one thing has stayed the same, our commitment to you as members of Renville-Sibley. Your linemen continue to work through these new standards set forth by the federal and state government to stay protected, while keeping the lights on.

Renville-Sibley linemen use an overhead line patrol app to gather information while patrolling lines during the winter months. Items the linemen look for while patrolling the lines include broken conductors, broken poles, broken insulators, loose wires, tree issues, and leaning poles. The linemen create service orders while line patrolling to track issues that need repair and document issues that are repaired on the spot.

Renville-Sibley also installed an underground inspection app. This app was designed with the same principle as the overhead line patrol app. The linemen open underground cabinets and inspect for bad connections, corrosion, leaks, etc. They also do a thermal test to find any failing equipment. Several service orders were created in conjunction with this project.

Renville-Sibley Co-op deployed a pandemic protocol in mid-March. We isolated one lineman and me while separating the remaining linemen into two crews. One crew was in charge of handling the tree service orders created from line patrol. The other crew changed defective poles. These two projects took us to the beginning of May.

An annual inspection of equipment was completed in April. Federal requirements state that trucks over 26,000 pounds and any trailer in combination with these trucks need DOT inspections.

The crew started working on overhead to underground conversions mid-May in the Sacred Heart area. They then moved to the Gibbon and Fairfax area to begin other projects, including more overhead to underground conversions.

One of our system projects is to connect the Honnor Substation (near North Redwood) with the Henryville Substation (near Bechyn). We have our distribution lines built to both sides of the Minnesota River bridge on Renville County #1 and Redwood County #101. The bridge is currently under construction. We plan to finish the tie line as the bridge is being completed.

We've completed a 4.85-mile project on the Troy to Birch Cooley tie. This tie line will add a contingency option for both substations. This summer's most prominent project will be a new distribution substation provided by our power provider East River Electric. The new Wellington substation is under construction and located north of Fairfax. Renville-Sibley will be building one new distribution line from the new substation. We will also design two existing circuits to distribute energy usage from other substations to the new substation to help with loading and provide contingency for the Cairo and Birch Cooley substations.

There have been a fair number of member-requested service upgrades. Any member thinking about a service upgrade should contact Renville-Sibley as early as possible to allow time to order needed materials. Materials are becoming an issue, depending on the project. The Covid-19 virus has caused some delays. Renville-Sibley will review projects as requested by members and will return a quote as soon as possible. However, we may have some questions during this process. Examples may include how much load you add, whether you are moving or building a new service, who you use for an electrician, etc. The Minnesota electrical inspector is required to visit the site if there are any changes or alterations to the service.

Continued next page



This summer's most prominent project will be a new distribution substation provided by our power provider East River Electric.

Renville-Sibley

Cooperative Connections

(USPS 019-074)

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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 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 collective \$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. 440101

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.

Continued from page 2

STAR Energy is the engineering consultant we use to help design and maintain our system. The implementation of below-ground pole testing is underway and this will be the second year of a 10-year plan to inspect poles at Renville-Sibley. The rejection rate through the first year was 3 percent. We expect to test around 1,250 poles this fall utilizing a Ranger or some form of a 4-wheeled off-road vehicle. The inspector will be in the Olivia and Bird Island areas. Please call the office if you have any questions during this process.

Renville-Sibley has a contracted locating service to locate our underground utilities. Often a member will ask, "Why didn't the lines get marked in my yard?" Renville-Sibley owns the lines from the distribution system to the meter, and the member owns any lines after the meter. Renville-Sibley will help locate member-owned underground lines in the overhead to underground conversion project. However, because the member owns the lines after the meter, it is the member's responsibility to locate them. The member's chosen electrician should do any member-owned locating request. In addition, always call Gopher State One Call (GSOC) at least 48 hours before doing any type of excavation. The GSOC phone number is 1-800-252-1166 or go to www.gopherstateonecall.org.

Have a safe and wonderful harvest season!

Recreational Boating: Stay Safe on the Water

With more than 11 million recreational vessels registered in the U.S., millions of Americans are enjoying time on and in the water.

Each year, roughly 4,000 boating incidents occur, causing more than 2,500 injuries and about \$46 million in property damage. Stay safe by being prepared and using the appropriate equipment, whether enjoying a ride on a motorized boat, paddling a kayak or wakeboarding.

Life jackets are at the core of safe boating, whether using a motorized or non-motorized vessel. The U.S. Coast Guard reports 76 percent of boating deaths in 2017 were due to drowning, and 84 percent of the victims were not wearing a life jacket.

While regulations on life jacket use vary from state to state, the Wear It program of the National Safe Boating Council promotes boating safety by encouraging boaters to wear life jackets any time they are on a boat, motorized or non-motorized.

Good swimmers still need life jackets. When people fall off a boat, they may become disoriented, injured or unconscious. Life jackets can keep victims' heads above water so they can breathe and be rescued more easily. Every child should wear a life jacket at all times when boating.

Choose the right life jacket for the activities you will be doing. Double check to make sure the life jackets are U.S. Coast Guard approved and fit correctly:

- Make sure the jacket is a proper fit for your size and weight
- Make sure the jacket is properly fastened
- Hold your arms straight up over your head, ask a friend to grasp the tops of the arm openings and gently pull up; make sure there is no excess room above the openings and that the jacket does not ride up over your chin or face.

The National Safe Boating Council encourages following these boating safety tips to help minimize risks:

- Take a National Association of Boating Law Administrators safety course
- Be familiar with the boating state laws
- Know the "Rules of the Road"
- When operating a motorized boat, know about carbon monoxide; this odorless, colorless poisonous gas is emitted by all combustion engines and onboard motor generators.

Taggart, Schmidt win Glenn English scholarships

Anneliese Taggart of Vermillion recently landed a \$10,000 scholarship award presented by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

Carter Schmidt of Colman also won a \$1,000 scholarship through the Glenn English Youth Tour Alumni Scholarship program.

Taggart and Schmidt were participants in the 2016 NRECA Washington Youth Tour. Taggart was sponsored by Clay-Union Electric Corp., while Schmidt was sponsored by Sioux Valley Energy.

Taggart was elected by her peers to join the Youth Leadership Council. She participated in a grassroots panel discussion at NRECA's Annual Meeting last year and also helped teach a

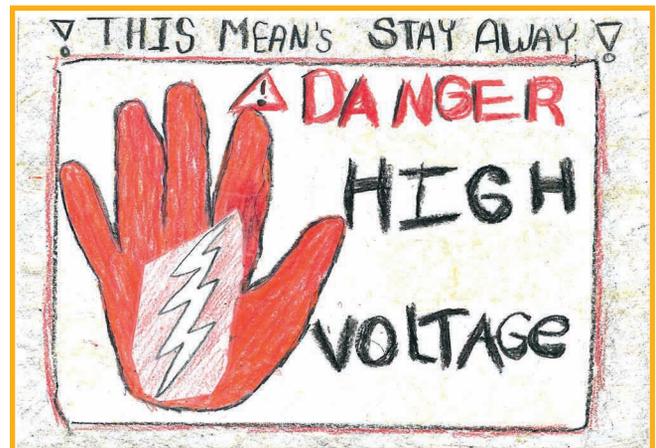
course called "Bridging the Gap" to encourage young adults to vote.

Now in its fifth year, the Glenn English National Cooperative Leadership Foundation has awarded nearly \$100,000 in scholarships to NRECA Youth Tour alumni.

The Glenn English scholarships are one of the few sources of private scholarships for college students. Applicants are required to have completed one year of college as a full-time student.

Glenn English, former CEO of NRECA, spent his career championing the co-op business model and fighting to improve the quality of life for all Americans. A native of Oklahoma, he served 10 terms in Congress.

KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



"Danger! High voltage! This means stay away!"

David Biggins, 10 years old

David Biggins is the son of Jessy and Katie Biggins. They reside in Gregory, S.D., and are members of Rosebud Electric Association.

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.

Goodies from the Garden

Mashed Potatoes with Kale

4 med. potatoes	1/4 c. grated cheese (cheddar or Colby)
2 Tbs. butter	
1 Tbs. milk or cream	1-1/2 c. chopped raw kale, mid-ribs removed

Peel potatoes if desired, cut into chunks, boil until tender, about 15-20 minutes. Drain, mash and add remaining ingredients. Stir until well combined. Serve with sea salt and pepper. *Mary Jessen, Holabird, SD*

Cabbage Salad Bowl

4 cups shredded cabbage	1/2 tsp. salt
1 c. shredded carrots	2 Tbs. sugar
2 Tbs. tarragon vinegar	1/2 c. light raisins
1/4 c. mayonnaise	1/4 c. orange juice

Soak raisins in orange juice while preparing vegetables. Combine cabbage, carrots, sugar and salt in a bowl. Add mayonnaise along with raisins and juice. Toss lightly. Refrigerate until time to serve. Serves 8. *Verna Knapp, Waubay, SD*

Balsamic Vegetable Salad

3 lg. tomatoes, wedged	1/4 c. balsamic vinegar
3 med. cucumbers, peeled, halved and sliced	3 Tbs. water
1/2 c. olive oil	1 envelope Italian dressing mix

In a salad bowl combine tomatoes and cucumbers; in another small bowl whisk oil vinegar, water and dressing mix. Pour over vegetables and toss to coat. Yields: 6 servings. *Jane Barthel, Elkton, SD*

Rhubarb Upside Down Cake

Yellow cake mix	3-4 c. sugar
4-6 c. rhubarb, chopped	1 pint whipping cream

Mix cake mix as directed. Put in a 9x13-inch pan. Mix rhubarb with sugar; pour over cake. Pour whipping cream over mixture and bake at 350 for 30-45 minutes. *Shirley Dreher, Clark, SD*

Zucchini Dish

1/4 c. cooking oil	1/2 med. green, red or yellow pepper cut in thin strips
1 lb. unpeeled thinly sliced zucchini	
1 lg. carrot, coarsely shredded	1/4 tsp. dried basil, crushed
1 lg. onion, chopped	Dash of pepper
3/4 c. chopped celery	1/2 c. taco sauce
1/2 tsp. garlic salt	2 tsps. prepared mustard
	2 medium tomatoes, cut in wedges

Heat cooking oil in a 10-inch skillet. Add sliced zucchini, shredded carrot, chopped onion, chopped celery, pepper strips, garlic salt, basil and pepper. Mix well, cook covered, over medium-high heat 4-5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Combine taco sauce and mustard; stir into vegetables. Add tomato wedges, cook uncovered, 3-5 minutes or till heated through. Makes 4-6 servings. Optional: sprinkle with shredded cheese of your choice. *Rachel Brezczinski, Marshall, MN*

Stuffed Cherry Tomatoes

24-28 cherry tomatoes	1 medium cucumber, peeled and diced
1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened	2 teaspoons minced dill
2 tablespoons mayonnaise	fresh dill, for garnish
3 green onion stalks, diced	

Cut thin slice off top of each tomato. Scoop out pulp. Invert tomatoes on paper towel to drain. In medium bowl, combine cream cheese and mayonnaise until smooth. Stir in cucumber, green onion and dill. Spoon mixture into tomatoes. Top with fresh dill. Refrigerate until ready to serve. www.culinary.net.

Please send your favorite pasta 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 2020. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

Outstanding Capital Credits

Listed below are Renville-Sibley members who were mailed a capital credit check in December of 2019 and have either not cashed the check or the check was returned to our office due to an old address. If you know of a correct address or telephone number for these members, please contact Renville-Sibley Co-op Power at 800-826-2593.

Last Name	First Name
ALARCON	JOSE
BARAJAS	RAMON
BEAGER	TODD
BORTH	REUBEN
BURDICK	DONALD
DAVIS	ROBERT
DECLERCQ	DENNIS
DEVRIES	LARRY
DUGAN	MARILYN
ECKLAND	STEVE
EDWARDS	JOHN
ELSING	TRACY
EVANS JR	LEAMON
EVRIIDGE	CHARLES
HAASE	LINDA
HALE	TIM
HANSON	ERLAND
HEIMERMAN	JAMES
HELMUTH SR	WILLIAM
HILLMANN	TODD
JANSEN	MAUREEN
JENSEN	DERYL
JOHNSTON	MICHAEL L
JONES	DARLENE
KEIPER	DEWAYNE
KOHLER	DARWIN
KORDOVSKY	DAN
MALLON	MIKE
MARK TWAIN CABLEVISION LP	
MARTIN	JERRY
MARXEN	BILL
MORARIE	MARK
NESBURG	DAVID
OLIVIA CANNING CO	
OLSON	ALLEN
POMEROY	RANDY
RADDATZ	MARJORIE
REID	MARY
RENVILLE	RENEE
ROBBINS	RYAN
ROCHA	JORGE
ROEBKE	ALAN
SALINAS JR	ERASTO
SANDERS	JAMES
SCHICKERT	DIANE
SCHMIDT	CHARLES
SCHULTZ	LEE
SCHWEISS FARM INC	
SEEHUSEN	DOUGLAS H A
SMITH	KORY
SWANSON	JIM
SWENSON	BRYAN
THORNE	JAMES
TREVINO	OSCAR
WHITELEY	JAMES J
WOLD	DENNIS

ENERGY STAR Rebates

Renville-Sibley offers rebates to members who purchase the following Energy Star certified appliances for their home: refrigerator, freezer, dishwasher, clothes washer, clothes dryer, dehumidifier, central air-conditioner and room air-conditioner.

To qualify for the rebate, the unit must be currently Energy Star certified. Occasionally, Energy Star changes their qualification of what is certified. Therefore, what was Energy Star certified last year or even last month, may not be currently Energy Star certified due to a change in the requirements.

Renville-Sibley would like to remind members to verify that the appliance they are purchasing is currently Energy Star certified by visiting the Energy Star website www.energystar.gov. Once in the website, click on Find Products tab at the top of the page and then click on the appliance you are interested in purchasing. Next, click on the "Product Finder" on the right hand side and search by the brand of the appliance you are purchasing. Renville-Sibley also uses this web site to verify that the appliance is currently Energy Star certified before issuing the rebate.

This website has a host of other information to assist members in becoming energy efficient. Rebate forms can be found on

Advantages of Energy Star

According to EnergyStar.gov, if every appliance purchased in the United States this year earned the ENERGY STAR, Americans would:

- Prevent greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to the emissions from 225,000 cars.
- Save more than 1.3 billion kWh/year of electricity.
- Save \$425 million in annual energy costs.
- Save more than 28 billion gallons of water per year.*

*Includes ENERGY STAR-certified clothes washer, dishwasher, and refrigerator. Dollars savings reflect savings generated from the reduction of energy and water usage.

Renville-Sibley's website <http://renville-sibley.coop/content/energy-star-rebates>. Rebates must be submitted within 90 days of purchase. Please contact the office if you have any questions on rebates or on Energy Star products.



Renville-Sibley's office will be closed on Monday, September 7th in observance of Labor Day.

2019 Margin Allocated to Membership

Renville-Sibley members receive capital credits

As a member of Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association, you own a portion of the cooperative. One of the many ownership benefits is receiving an allocation of the cooperative's margin. Generally, cooperatives operate at cost. That means the goal of a cooperative is to collect enough revenue and to run and expand the business, without over charging the membership.

Any excess revenue after covering expense, or margin, is allocated back to the membership in the form of capital credits. This allocation is based on the amount of electricity each member consumed during the year. The 2019 allocation information will be located on the August statement. Past members that received electricity from Renville-Sibley in 2019 and no longer have an active service with us will receive their allocation notice in the mail.

Please remember, this allocation is not payable now and does not represent cash, but rather your equity in the cooperative. You cannot apply this amount to your electric bill. Renville-Sibley uses the allocated, but unretired capital credits to improve and expand our electric system and meet our other capital needs. This reduces our need to borrow money and helps us provide reliable electric service to the membership.

When the co-op financial condition permits, the co-op retires, or pays, the capital credits to members in cash. Allocating and retiring margins to members helps distinguish the difference between cooperatives and other utilities. Renville-Sibley is proud to support our communities by putting money back into the local economy—and into the pockets of those we serve.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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www.renville-sibley.coop

1483 1 AB 0.412
ANY MEMBER
12345 ELECTRIC ROAD
ANYWHERE MN 56565



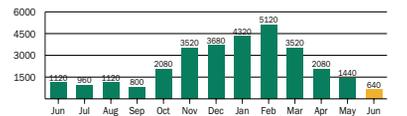
Meter No.	From	To	Days	Previous	Readings	Meter	kWh	Rate	Description
81758445	07/01/2020	07/31/2020	31	314	318	160	640		GENERAL SERVICE
1708410	07/01/2020	07/31/2020	31	93423	93490	1	67		RESISTANCE HEAT

Service Location: 12345 ELECTRIC ROAD		Substation: Emmet
Current Service Detail		
Balance Forward		\$0.00
GENERAL SERVICE		
Customer Charge		\$42.00
Energy Charge	640 kWh @ 0.1202	\$76.93
Water Heater Credit		-\$6.50
RESISTANCE HEAT		
Sub Meter Charge		\$2.50
Total Electric Charges		\$114.93
Minnesota Sales Tax		\$5.93
Operation Round Up		\$0.14
Other Services & Credits		\$6.07
Total Electric, Other Services & Credits		\$121.00
Total Amount Due 09/03/2020		\$121.00
Total Amount Due After 09/03/2020		\$122.82

Map Location: 9876543 Service Location: 12345 ELECTRIC ROAD Substation: Emmet

Meter No.	From	To	Days	Previous	Readings	Meter	kWh	Rate	Description
81758445	07/01/2020	07/31/2020	31	314	318	160	640		GENERAL SERVICE
1708410	07/01/2020	07/31/2020	31	93423	93490	1	67		RESISTANCE HEAT

kWh Usage History



PERIOD ENDING: 06/2019 06/2020
Avg Daily Temp: 70 67
Avg Daily kWh: 37 21

Capital Credit Statement

Category	Unretired Balance	2019 Allocation	TOTAL
Total Patronage for 2019			\$2,596.33
RSCPA	\$2,573.82	\$203.32	\$2,777.14
East River	\$597.30	\$78.79	\$676.09
Basin	\$1,081.86	\$220.58	\$1,302.44
TOTAL	\$4,252.98	\$502.69	\$4,755.67

KEEP

SEND Please do not staple or paperclip.

ANY MEMBER
12345 ELECTRIC ROAD
ANYWHERE MN 56565

Please check here and complete the appropriate section on the reverse side to update your Mailing Address, Phone Numbers, or Email.

RENNVILLE-SIBLEY CO-OP POWER 1

PO BOX 68

DANUBE MN 56230-0068



250720000411000000012100000012282071120197

The best way to ensure you receive this allocation when it is retired is to keep your mailing address up-to-date with the cooperative. A common question regarding the allo-

cation and retirement of capital credits is if this amount should be reported to the IRS. Renville-Sibley recommends members visit with their tax advisor on this matter.

September 2020 | Cooperative Connections

7



Sioux Valley Energy donated food and helped raise more than \$3,000 for booster clubs in Brandon, Hartford and Pipestone, MN.

Local Co-op Events Provide Fun, Food and Festivities for Sports Fans

Ben Dunsmoor

Contributing Writer

In northwest South Dakota, clashes on the football field between rival schools are the main attractions on Friday nights. It is where community members can count on connecting with friends and neighbors. It is also a place where high school sports fans can count on seeing employees from Grand Electric Cooperative cooking up a pre-game meal.

“We see people of all ages at the tailgate parties,” Grand Electric Cooperative Marketing/Tech Specialist Rachel Eggebo said.

The Bison based cooperative began hosting block parties in the summer months nearly 20 years ago to reach out to the community. In 2009, Grand Electric transitioned to serving up brats, hot dogs, and chips before high school football games to reach families that were busy attending school activities. The co-op says it has been a great way to serve the community and show support for local schools.

“It gives us an opportunity to show our membership that we are there for them. Occasionally, it might be the only time we have to communicate with our busy members,” Eggebo said.

Grand Electric is taking a cautious approach to its tailgate parties this year due to concerns surrounding COVID-19. But, if the players are on the field, the co-op is committed to serving up free food at five different games this fall. Grand Electric will make some modifications to the tailgate parties by packaging the food and making it a “grab-and-go” style event for fans.

Grand Electric is not alone in its efforts to partner with local schools and reach out to the community with fun pre-game events. Butte Electric plans to host a tailgate party before the Belle Fourche and Spearfish game this fall. West River Electric holds a tailgating event before the Wall and New Underwood football game and sponsors a basketball tournament in Union Center every November.



Arm wrestling contestants square off during a tailgate party and family fun day hosted by Grand Electric.

Sioux Valley Energy in Colman is also on the tailgating bandwagon. Sioux Valley started hosting events before football games to help its local schools raise money.

“As school funding becomes tighter, booster clubs - and other school organizations run by parents - serve an important purpose,” Sioux Valley Director of Communications and Government Relations Carrie Vugteveen said. “Sioux Valley Energy feels that supporting these efforts helps the co-op live out its guiding principle of ‘commitment to community.’”

Sioux Valley hosted three tailgate parties in 2019 to raise money for booster clubs in Brandon, Hartford, and Pipestone, MN. Sioux Valley bought all the food and asked for a free-will



Lyon-Lincoln Electric Co-op in Tyler, MN, helped to host a tailgate party where the main attraction was the co-op's Tesla electric vehicle.

donation from fans during the meal. The three events raised more than \$3,000 combined for the booster clubs.

FEM Electric Association in Ipswich also partners with local schools to raise money during athletic events. FEM Electric donates 60 cases of bottled water to each school district within its service territory every year. The schools can sell the water in their concession stands and keep all the profits. Each water bottle has an electrical safety message printed on the label which translates into a big win for both the school and the co-op.

The schools can sell the water in their concession stands and keep all the profits.

“We wanted to contribute something to help out the various school programs and at the same time get our safety message out to kids and everyone,” Carol Schaffner with FEM Electric Association said.

Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative in Tyler, MN, hosted a “Tailgating with Tesla” party before the Minnesota and Canby football game last fall. The co-op partnered with a local youth group to host

the event. The co-op bought all the food and the youth group kept all the proceeds from the tailgate party to help pay for a mission trip. It was an opportunity to raise money for a good cause and for Lyon-Lincoln Electric to showcase its Tesla and talk about the benefits of electric vehicles.

“These events are a win-win for the cooperative and the community,” Lyon-Lincoln Electric Manager of Marketing and External Relations Brian Jeremiason said. “The co-op is able to deliver a message to a targeted audience and visit about other topics that community members may have. The community benefits by having a face-to-face opportunity to visit with their co-op.”

Electric co-op participation in school events is widespread across South Dakota. Northern Electric Cooperative in Bath, Dakota Energy in Huron, Charles Mix Electric in Lake Andes, and Central Electric in Mitchell all participate in local homecoming parades. Lacreek Electric in Martin sponsors a t-shirt toss during basketball and football games. Dakota Energy also hosts “co-op night” during local basketball games. And, Central Electric hosts free popcorn nights at high school basketball and football games to promote electrical safety and give back to the school and community.

So, whether it is a tailgate party, a fundraiser, or a t-shirt toss, it is likely that electric co-ops will be supporting their

local schools and communities this fall and winter.

“High school sports are wonderful opportunities to reach out to our communities,” Jeremiason said. “Young and old all attend and we can communicate with families as a unit which can be difficult sometimes with the busy lives most families are living.”



FEM Electric Association donates bottled water with unique labels to raise funds for schools in the co-op's service area.

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, the State High School Rodeo finals and grain bin safety. Be sure to “like” and “subscribe.”



Attention Members Impacted by COVID-19?

Renville-Sibley encourages members to contact the office to make arrangements if they are not able to pay their electric bill in full due to the impact of COVID-19. Renville-Sibley employees will work with members to enter into reasonable payment arrangements based on their individual circumstances.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Clothes dryers make up a large portion of your appliance energy consumption. Clean the lint filter after each cycle, and scrub the filter with a toothbrush once a month to remove film and increase air circulation.



Where's the Number?

Last month Kevin Weiland did not find his member number in the newsletter. The credit will increase \$15 for a value of \$30. Another number has been hidden in this newsletter. If you find your number and call the office by the 3rd of September, you will receive this credit on your electric statement. Good luck in your search!

Outage Report

Affecting 10 members or more:

None

Date: 06-07-20
Time off: 3:07 pm
Time on: 5:01 pm
Substation: Cairo
Cause: Fuse Cutout

Date: 06-10-20
Time off: 7:07 am
Time on: 8:35 am
Substation: Cairo
Cause: Fuse Cutout



Mission Statement

Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association will provide efficient, reliable electric energy and services to enhance the quality of rural living.

FREE Want Ad Service

Members can submit ads for the following categories: Giveaway, For Sale, For Rent and Wanted. Ads should be, or are limited to, no more than 15 words and must be received by the first of the month to be included in the following month's newsletter. Renville-Sibley reserves the right to edit content or exclude ads due to space restrictions. Ads will be run one time only unless resubmitted. Please complete the following information and mail to the Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power, PO Box 68, Danube, MN 56230.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Ad to be placed (limit of 15 words per ad)

Type of ad: Giveaway For Sale For Rent Wanted

For Sale: New clean wool batting for quilts processed by the Woolen Mills. Enough for several quilts. Make offer. Dennis Stoeckman, Olivia, MN 320-523-5438

July Board Meeting Highlights

The July board meeting was held on Monday, July 27 at 8 a.m. via Zoom. All board members were present. Others present were CEO DeeAnne Newville, Gene Alex, Cindy Mertens and Lenae Wordes.

The board reviewed and approved the following items:

- Minutes of the June 27 board meeting
- Operating and disbursement reports for the month of June
- Safety report for July
- Acknowledgement of cooperative paying Operation Round up expenses
- Close the membership list for the rescheduled 82nd annual meeting
- CFC Special Membership meeting voting delegate and alternate
- CoBank Director Candidate
- Policy 105 – Expense Reimbursement for Directors
- Facilities update
- Reports from staff members as to the activities in their department. Items in the reports include:
 - High level Statement of Operations review – YTD through June (unaudited)
 - Organization activities
 - East River update
 - Basin Electric update
 - NRECA update
 - MREA update
 - Linecrew work in progress, equipment update and outage update
 - Accounts receivable
 - Annual meeting

Please contact the Renville-Sibley office if you would like more information regarding the board meeting.

The board reviewed:

- Total new members

Operation Round Up

The next meeting of the Operation Round Up board of trustees is schedule for September 10. Application deadline for this meeting is September 1st. Applications can be found on the website renville-sibley.coop under the Your Co-op tab.

Did You Know?

Before you begin any outdoor project, you should check that your power tools are designed for outdoor use and their cords are free of damage. Never carry a power tool by the cord or use it near water.

Notice:

The August board meeting will be held on Monday, August 31 at 8 am. The September board meeting will be held on Monday, September 28 at 8 am.

Comparative Report

	Current YTD-June 30, 2020	One Year Ago YTD-June 30, 2019	10 Years Ago YTD-June 30, 2010
Average Number of Consumers	1,882	1,882	1,929
kWhs purchased	82,917,981	76,868,849	86,831,407
Cost of purchased power	\$5,148,989.08	\$4,559,016.17	\$3,568,893.71

Thank You

Thank you so much for your donation to our Fairfax Dayz of Thunder weekend again this year. Unfortunately, we were not able to have many of our events this year, but did enjoy a parade. We greatly appreciate your donation and we are looking forward to June 24 - 27, 2021.

Fairfax Dayz of Thunder Committee



South Dakota's Rural Electric Cooperatives are adapting to the expectations of the next generation of co-op members.

NEXT GENERATION

Young adults figure prominently in the future of the rural electric cooperative movement

Billy Gibson

Contributing Writer

It's getting harder and harder to find people who can provide a first-person account of what it was like when electrical power came to their communities.

The nation's rural electric program sprang to life more than 80 years ago when an executive order by President Franklin Roosevelt created the Rural Electric Administration (REA). The REA issued low-cost loans that gave local communities the ability to build out power delivery systems to serve their own farms, homes and businesses.

But relatively few of the members served by those cooperatives today actually witnessed the transformation that took place when thousands of small towns and hamlets across the country began

enjoying the benefits made possible by electrical power.

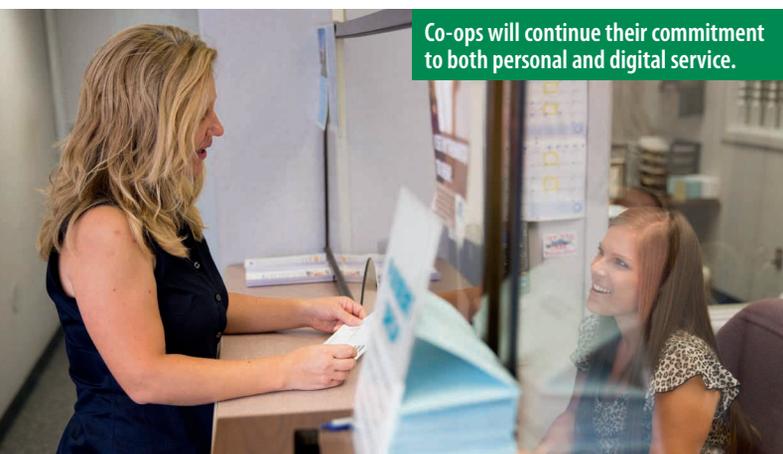
Though many characteristics of electric co-ops have stayed the same – democratic control, focus on quality service, accessibility, commitment to community – other elements have certainly changed over the decades. For instance, some cooperative service areas that were once rural have become suburban as population centers have expanded into spaces that were once sparsely populated farms and fields.

Cooperatives are also taking advantage of modern technology to broaden their menu of services available to members, such as online account management systems, energy audits, pre-pay programs, automated meter reading, renewable power and more.

Yet another change is the generational shift taking place as older board directors, managers, employees and consumers are being replaced with younger folks who have different ideas, different approaches, different plans and different expectations.

In South Dakota, co-op leaders say the changing dynamics present an opportunity to bring innovative ideas and new concepts to the table – all centered around the ongoing mission to deliver power that is safe, reliable, affordable and accessible.

Evan Buckmiller is manager of Kingsbury Electric Cooperative (KEC) based in DeSmet. He is part of a group of younger general managers who have taken the reins at various electric co-ops in the state. He said that over the past decade KEC has seen a 100 percent turnover in personnel and that every current employee



Co-ops will continue their commitment to both personal and digital service.

is under the age of 35. The result is a prevailing mindset that's not averse to searching for new ways to "work smarter."

"Our employees are constantly exploring new avenues to operate more efficiently and effectively," Buckmiller said. "They understand that the money people pay for power doesn't grow on trees. Our members expect value, and it's our job to make sure we're using the latest technology to minimize operating costs while improving service and convenience."

He said one advantage of having a younger work force is a greater acceptance of change, more flexibility and being open to new approaches to addressing issues.

"We've made wise investments in new equipment that we never would have considered in the past," Buckmiller said. "Our employees don't mind trying something new. They don't mind going through the training process. Having grown up in the internet age, they adapt well to learning things like new computer-based applications and software."

Some of those changes include a new barcoding program to track inventory, using iPads for preparing timesheets and taking service orders online.

Jay Spaans, manager of Douglas Electric in Armour, echoed Buckmiller's observations regarding younger employees. Two of his seven staff members are expected to retire in the not-too-distant future. They represent a combined 96 years of service.

"That's a lot of institutional knowledge



Kingsbury Electric Co-op Manager Evan Buckmiller leads a staff of young employees who understand the co-op's mission.

walking out the door, and as a manager you wonder if the next generation will be as dedicated to the co-op as them," Spaans said. "I'm sure that whoever we hire will have grown up with technology and will have new ideas. I see that as a benefit."

When it comes to engaging younger consumers, co-ops across the state maintain social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and others. West River Electric based in Wall, is representative of many South Dakota co-ops that use an array of digital tools to track the organization's member engagement.

Public Relations Manager Robert Raker said diversity and the strategic use of various social media channels is the key to making sure the lines of communication remain open across the age spectrum.

"We use Facebook and our printed newsletter to appeal to our older members," he said. "We use Instagram and Tik Tok to reach our younger members, and we're beginning to deploy LinkedIn to interact with our technology and business accounts."

There's even a specific approach to communicating internally, Raker said.

"We're using Snapchat to communicate with some of our crews in the field because

One advantage of having a younger work force is a greater acceptance of change, more flexibility and being open to new approaches.

we've found that our young linemen prefer to use Snapchat rather than a conventional email account."

Chad Felderman, CEO/General Manager at Dakota Energy in Huron, said it's important for co-ops to balance their approach so that the interests of all age groups are taken into account.

Part of that strategy of fostering connectedness across generations is to get out of the office and meet members at events that attract a cross-section of people.

"In order to interact with all age groups, we have been present at sporting events, parades and event booths. It's more difficult due to the pandemic, but this is our goal," Felderman said. "This has allowed us to engage with members of all ages and creates an overall increase in knowledge of who we are and what services we provide. Utilizing Facebook, the website and text messaging has been a great way to inform members and makes us more visible in our communities."

Matt Klein, General Manager at Union County Electric in Elk Point, said he has noticed the older generation has been receptive to change, albeit at a more measured pace.

"In general, our older members want to come to the office and pay by check and get a receipt, while our younger members are more comfortable paying online, having us withdraw directly from their back account, or setting up recurring charges to their credit card," Klein said. "Now that we offer these other payment options, we are seeing more of the older generation using them. So they are clearly becoming more comfortable with this, but are a bit slower to adopt the change."



Younger members expect their cooperative to provide information through social media platforms.



Co-op members are increasingly capable of managing their appliances from a smart phone or tablet.

CO-OP TECH

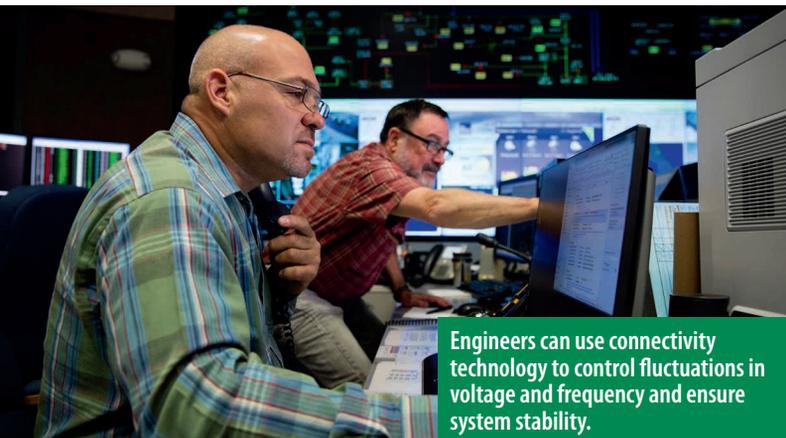
Electric Co-ops Adopt High-Tech to Improve Service

By Billy Gibson

Contributing Writer

The terms “rural” and “technology” may appear to be contradictory concepts.

However, rural electric cooperatives all across the country are adopting advanced scientific techniques and methodologies while leading the charge to discover bold new ways to deliver power that is safe, affordable, reliable and accessible.



Engineers can use connectivity technology to control fluctuations in voltage and frequency and ensure system stability.

For instance, more than 100 cooperatives nationwide are working behind the scenes to build out high-speed broadband networks in their service areas. Many others are involved in developing clean energy sources, implementing automated meter-reading systems, applying state-of-the-art cybersecurity safeguards, adding convenience to the bill-paying process, exploring ways to use energy more efficiently and much more.

South Dakota’s rural electric cooperatives are among the prime-time players in this high-tech game.

H-D Electric Cooperative, which is based in Clear Lake and serves 3,600 meters, recently completed a pilot project in collaboration with the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

The goal of the research program funded by the U.S. Department of Energy was to field test the effectiveness of an automated load management mechanism called GridBallast.

When it comes to properly managing grid-scale electrical power, load control is paramount for both safety and efficiency reasons. Engineers vigilantly monitor and control any differences detected in voltage and frequency along power grids that can stretch for many miles. Excessive fluctuations in voltage and frequency can cause damage to devices all along the grid and present a safety hazard to members.

These fluctuations have always been a chief impediment in the development of renewable energy sources such as wind and solar. Renewable power sources are often described as “intermittent” because of the variation in their productivity. The task of load management is made more challenging when clouds block the sun and the wind changes speed and direction.

GridBallast is a technology that can detect changes in the flow of energy and quickly and automatically adjust the load on the demand side by switching on or off water heaters or other connected devices and circuits in the home. It was a severe and persistent frequency imbalance that led to the historic blackout that occurred throughout the Northeast region in 2003.



H-D Electric CEO and General Manager Matt Hotzler got the co-op involved in a pilot program testing the GridBallast device.

GridBallast, developed in collaboration with Carnegie Mellon University, Eaton and SparkMeter, also has the potential to reduce a system's dependence on its communications network while protecting against cyberattack.

H-D Electric CEO and General Manager Matt Hotzler expressed reservations about how autonomous load control would be received by the co-op's consumers.

He invited 15 H-D Electric members to participate in the pilot program over a span of three months. After the study was concluded, Hotzler reported that the results were promising.

"We didn't see any problems at all," Hotzler said.

Paramount to this load management approach, Hotzler pointed out, is that it opens up a plethora of new possibilities regarding the types of loads that can be

The ability to control demand has been an effective means of managing peak load.

managed in the future.

Hotzler said that the co-op is always eager to explore new ways to promote a more stable system while maintaining affordable rates.

"With our current load management system that we have in place, it is certainly important right now for our rates and our members. I think that's why we have such a good buy-in from our membership," Hotzler said.

Hotzler noted that H-D Electric has 2,150 water heaters on its existing load management program that can be controlled by the co-op's wholesale supplier, East River Electric. H-D Electric is one of 250 other co-ops in 35 states that have similar programs.

That ability to control demand has been an effective means of managing peak load. But as more renewable power sources enter the grid, automated control performed through a device like GridBallast may take on greater importance in years to come.

"As distributed generation starts to come on a bit more, and possibly becomes majority renewable, it probably will have a real role in stabilizing the system," Hotzler said. "The Department of Energy projects that renewable power will be the single largest generation source on the North American grid by 2045. That will require finding new ways to manage the grid."

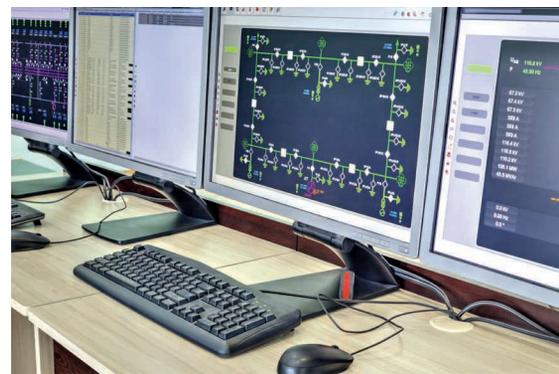


Intermittent sources of electricity will make automated load management more important than ever.

East River Electric has also been involved in another research partnership with NRECA and Dakota State University in Madison. The Connected Home Research Project based at the university's Madison Cyber Labs center was designed to create a "home hub" that would enable smart devices in the home to communicate with the cooperative.

East River Electric is a generation and transmission entity that provides wholesale power to 25 distribution member systems in eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota.

Chris Studer, chief member and public relations officer for East River Electric, said, "While current technologies can help manage electricity usage and benefit consumers, we noticed a gap between the capabilities of those technologies and the needs of our utility network to connect to those technologies. We hope to close that gap through this project."



Studer said cooperative consumers have demonstrated their eagerness to adopt smart-home technology to exercise more control over their energy use, save money and add convenience.

While consumers can use their smartphone devices to adjust thermostats and lighting, many apps designed for this purpose are produced by different companies. Home Hub is an effort to develop an integrated dashboard that would allow these programs to communicate through one centralized source.

East River invested roughly \$14,000 on appliances, cabinets and technology at the lab facility. The research space at Madison Cyber Labs resembles a kitchen equipped with smart products and appliances such as lighting, window coverings, a water heater, security system and a washer and dryer. Plans include adding an electric vehicle charger and smart locks.

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

South Dakota's Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives will not have a booth this year at the state fair due to COVID-19 safety concerns.

August 26-30

Corn Palace Festival, Mitchell, SD, www.cornpalace.com
605-995-8430

August 27

PRCA Xtreme Broncs Finals 7-9:30 p.m., Central States Fair, Rapid City, SD
www.centralstatesfair.com

August 27-30 CANCELED

Annual Steam Threshing Jamboree featuring John Deere, Madison, SD
605-256-3644

August 28-29

Pioneer Museum Excess Sale 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Pioneer Museum, Hot Springs, SD
605-745-4616

August 29-30

Fall River Hot Air Balloon Festival, Municipal Airport, Hwy 79, Hot Springs, SD
605-745-4140

September 3-5

South Dakota State Fair: Perfect Vision of Fun, 1060 3rd St. SW, Huron, SD
800-529-0900
www.sdstatefair.com

September 6

Studebaker and Packard Car and Truck Show, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Custer, SD
605-718-7431



August 29-30

Fall River Hot Air Balloon Festival

September 7

Hidewood Valley Steam Threshing Show, 1 p.m., 47326 183rd Ave., Clear Lake, SD, 605-881-8405

September 12

Central Valley Struttin' Gobblers NWTF Banquet, Dakota Plains Event Center Hartford, SD, 5:30 p.m.
605-941-4297

September 12-13

Fall Harvest Festival, Delmont, SD, 605-928-3792, www.twinriversoldiron.org

September 13

20th Annual Antique Tractor and Car Parade, 1 p.m., Farmer, SD, 605-239-4498

September 19

Health Connect's Human Race, Elmwood Park, Sioux Falls, SD, 8 a.m. 888-761-5437

September 19

Health Connect Fair, Sanford Pentagon, Sioux Falls, SD, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., free lunch, door prizes and flu shots
888-761-5437

September 25-27

Coal Springs Threshing Bee Featuring Massey Harris Tractors, Meadow, SD, 605-788-2229

September 26 CANCELED

10th Annual ROCS Fall Festival, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Springfield, SD, 605-464-7379

September 26

Wheelin' to Wall, Wall Community Center, Wall, SD

October 3 CANCELED

Hobo Marlin's Pumpkin Train 11 a.m., Madison, SD
605-256-3644

October 7-8 CANCELED

Energize! Explore Innovative Rural Communities Conference, Milbank, SD, <https://extension.sdstate.edu>

October 31-November 1

Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Assn. Sioux Falls Classic Gun Show, 3200 W Maple St. Sioux Falls, SD, 605-630-2199

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.