



Cooperative Connections

**Volunteers
Answering
the Call**

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Unique Source
of Power**

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25 Years at Renville-Sibley



Gene Alex

Line Superintendent

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Phone: 320-826-2593 or

Toll Free 800-826-2593

At the annual meeting in March, I received a clock in recognition of my 25 years of service to Renville-Sibley Co-op Power. A lot of changes have taken place over those 25 years including changes in processes, employees and equipment. I will review some significant highlights during those years.

When I started, the linemen did not have cell phones. This meant that members called the linemen directly when there was an outage. If the lineman wanted to be outside the house, he had to have someone in the house to answer the phone. Some of the linemen had outside ringers installed so they could hear the phone ring outside. If the lineman was out on a call, a family member would have to be home to act as dispatch to answer the phone and take messages in case there were additional outages reported. Approximately one to two years after I started, we changed to pagers and a call center (Cooperative Response Center or CRC). This freed up the linemen some, but when they received a page, they needed to be near a phone to contact CRC. A few years after that, we changed from pagers to cell phones. Now the lineman on call takes a cell phone home with him each night. CRC calls that phone when there is a power outage.

Another technological upgrade is our meters. We used to have self-read dial meters and each member had to report their usage each month. Now the meters are automatically read, which is a convenience for our members and allows for more accurate billing.

In addition to the changes in technology, there have been many changes in equipment. Twenty-five years ago, we used hand wrenches to tighten connections on the top of the poles. Today's battery-powered tools are much better ergonomically for the linemen. Some of the work done today can be done in a quarter of the time it would have taken 25 years ago due to the improved equipment. An example of this is trimming and cutting trees. This work used to be done from



Renville-Sibley

Cooperative Connections

(USPS 019-074)

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January through April. Now a brush cutter attached to a skid loader allows one person in two hours to do the work that used to take four people eight hours each to complete. This equipment is also better for our linemen with less chance of injury. Just like personal vehicles, REA trucks have become more advanced and complex. Unfortunately, this makes them more expensive and harder to fix when they break down.

Advancements in underground cable have made a significant impact on our industry. In the mid-1990s, we stopped putting in unprotected cable and started using jacketed cable which is more reliable. The benefits of underground cable include less tree cutting, fewer outages and less maintenance than overhead line. Like phone companies, electric cooperatives have less and less overhead line.

As long as we have substations and overhead lines, storms will continue to cause outages for our members. Shortly after I started in 1992, there were two tornadoes which caused a loss of more than 100 poles. In 1996, I was part of a Renville Sibley crew that helped Agralite Cooperative (office is located in Benson) for eight days due to ice storm damage. In 1997, the “ice storm of the century” caused significant outages in the Fargo area. I was part of a crew that helped the Cass County co-op for about 12 days. In 2005, an ice storm hit the Wheaton area served by Traverse Electric. Fellow employee Shawn Beckler and I assisted that cooperative with restoring power to their members for eight days. I’ve helped Lyon-Lincoln Electric, based out of Tyler, Minn., restore power to their members following a storm in 1996 and 2008. Other unforgettable storms in the more recent past affecting Renville-Sibley members was the windstorm in 2008 where we lost 35 to 40 poles and the 2011 tornado near Danube. Like it or not, storms happen and cooperatives help each other restore power to the membership as quickly and safely as possible.

Over the years, I have also had the privilege of working with many great people who have taught me a lot about the industry. Thinking back, there have been so many employees at our cooperative and other cooperatives that I have gotten to know. Some of them were linemen who I have worked beside and others are office employees. A couple of my greatest memories include working with Runestone REA linemen in that Traverse storm and splicing an overhead line together in negative 80 below windchill.

While there have been many changes and advancements over the years, the danger of line work still exists today. A power line with 7,200 volts is still as powerful and dangerous as it was 25 years ago. Safety continues to be my No. 1 priority for our crews and our members.

Update Your Contact Information

In the utility business, we know rough weather will occur and sometimes power outages simply can't be avoided. There are steps you can take to ensure your electricity is restored as quickly and safely as possible. One step is by keeping your contact information up to date. Not only does this help us when notifying you of planned outages for repairs and maintenance, it also assists in a quicker response when calling in a power outage after hours. After hour calls go to Cooperative Response Center (CRC). Your account information automatically shows if the phone number you are calling from is tied to your account in our software system. If we don't have the correct phone number linked to your home address, it can make your call to CRC a little more time consuming as they search for your account. Another step to a speedy response when calling in your power outage is to have your account number available.

Your contact information and account number is located on your electric statement. Please review your contact information and let us know if this information needs to be updated. You can update the information on your return stub or by calling our office at 800-826-2593.

October is Fire Prevention Month

The U.S. Fire Administration reports that fires kill more than 4,000 Americans each year and approximately injure 20,000 more. U.S. fire departments respond to nearly 2 million fires each year, with three-quarters of them occurring in residences.

A home is often referred to as a safe haven. This month, make sure your home is protected from (and your family is prepared for) a fire. Here are 10 simple tips to help you avoid fires and reduce the risk of injury should one occur:

- **Smoke Alarms** – Smoke alarms are widely available and inexpensive. Install a smoke alarm on every level of your home and test it monthly.
- **Prevent Electrical Fires** – Don't overload circuits or extension cords. Cords and wires should never be placed under rugs or in high traffic areas. Avoid loose electrical connections by checking the fit of the plug in the wall outlet. If the plug loosely fits, inspect the outlet right away. A poor connection between the plug and the outlet can cause overheating and can start a fire in minutes.
- **Keep Plugs Safe** – Unplug all appliances when not in use. Follow the manufacturer's safety precautions and use your senses to spot any potential disasters. If a plug is overheating, smells strange, shorts out or sparks – the appliance should be shut off immediately, then replaced or repaired.
- **Alternate Heaters** – Make sure there is ample space around any portable heating unit. Anything that could catch fire should be at least three feet away. Inspect your chimney annually and use fire screens to help keep any fires in the fireplace.
- **Fire Safety Sprinklers** – When combined with working smoke alarms, home fire sprinklers greatly increase your chance of surviving a fire.
- **Create An Escape Route** – Create and practice your escape plan with your family from every room in the house. Practice staying low to the floor and checking for hot doors using the back of your hand.
- **Position Appliances Carefully** – Try to keep TV sets, kitchen and other appliances away from windows with curtains. If there is a wiring problem, curtains can spread a fire quickly. Additionally, keeping your appliances away from water sources (like rain coming in from windows) can help prevent wiring damage which can lead to a fire.
- **Clean Dryer Vents** – Clothes dryers often start fires in residential areas. Clean the lint filter every time you start a load of clothes to dry or after the drying cycle is complete. Make sure your exhaust duct is made of metal tubing and not plastic or foil. Clean the exhaust duct with a good quality dryer vent brush to prevent blockage and check for lint build up behind the dryer at least twice a year.
- **Be Careful Around the Holidays** – If you fill your home with lights during the holiday season, keep them away from anything that can easily catch fire. Check all of your lights prior to stringing them up and dispose of anything with frayed or exposed wires.
- **Conduct Regular Inspections** – Check all of your electronic equipment and wiring at least once a month.

Following these simple tips could potentially save your life or the life of a loved one. Pass this list on to your friends and family and make this fire prevention month count!

Source: quickenloans.com



October is National
Co-op Month.



KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



"Be careful of snow cavities over electrical boxes."

Avery Bauman, 10 years old

Avery is the daughter of Pete and Bridget Bauman, Watertown, S.D. They are members of Codington-Clark Electric Cooperative, Watertown.

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.

Perfect Pasta

Angel Hair Pasta with Italian Sausage and Herbs

1 lb. angel hair pasta	1 tsp. McCormick Gourmet™ Parsley, Flat Leaf
1 lb. sweet Italian sausage, casing removed	1/2 tsp. McCormick Gourmet™ Organic Garlic Powder
2 T. olive oil	1/2 tsp. McCormick Gourmet™ Organic Fennel Seed
1-1/2 cups chopped red onion	1/2 tsp. Sicilian sea salt
8 oz. mushrooms, quartered	1/2 cup grated Romano cheese
1 tsp. McCormick Gourmet™ Organic Basil	
1 tsp. McCormick Gourmet™ Organic Italian Seasoning	

Cook pasta as directed on package. Drain well. Meanwhile, break up sausage in large skillet. Cook on medium-high heat 5 to 6 minutes. Remove sausage; drain fat. Rinse skillet and wipe clean. Heat oil in same skillet on medium heat. Add onions, mushrooms and seasonings; cook and stir 5 minutes. Add cooked sausage; cook and stir 5 minutes longer. Place pasta in large serving bowl. Add sausage mixture and cheese; toss to coat well. Serve with additional cheese, if desired. Makes 12 (1 cup) servings.

Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 281, Total Fat 13g, Cholesterol 26mg, Sodium 374mg, Protein 10g, Carbohydrates 31g, Dietary Fiber 2g

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Taco Pasta Salad

1-1/2 lbs. ground beef, cooked and drained	1 pint grape tomatoes, sliced in half
4 T. taco seasoning	3 cups shredded lettuce
1 lb. rotini, cooked, drained and rinsed with cold water	2 cups shredded cheese
1/2 small onion, minced (optional)	1 bottle Catalina dressing
	1 bag nacho cheese tortilla chips, crushed

Stir together hamburger and taco seasoning. In a large bowl, combine hamburger, pasta, onions, tomatoes, lettuce and cheese. Mix in dressing. Stir in chips. Serve immediately.

Dawn Leibel, Glencross, SD

Smoky BBQ Chicken Salad

1 box Betty Crocker™ Suddenly Salad® Ranch and Bacon Pasta Salad Mix	1/4 cup barbecue sauce
1/2 cup frozen corn	1 cup cherry or grape tomatoes, halved
1/4 cup mayonnaise	12 butter lettuce leaves, optional
2 cups shredded rotisserie chicken	1/4 cup chopped green onions

Empty pasta mix into a 3-quart saucepan 2/3 full of boiling water. Gently boil uncovered 12 minutes, stirring occasionally, adding corn during last 2 minutes of cooking. Drain pasta and corn; rinse with cold water. Shake to drain well. In large bowl, stir together seasoning mix, mayonnaise and barbecue sauce. Stir in pasta, corn, chicken and tomatoes. Line serving plate with lettuce leaves. Top with salad mixture; sprinkle with green onions. Serve immediately or cover and refrigerate 1 hour to chill.

Jean Osterman, Wheaton, MN

Cheating Cheeseburger Macaroni

1-1/2 lbs. ground beef	1 can cheddar cheese soup
1/4 cup chopped onion	1 cup water
1/2 pkg. baby carrots, finely chopped	1/4 cup sour cream, optional
1 can cream of chicken soup	2 cups macaroni, cooked and drained

Cook ground beef and onion; drain. Add carrots and cook while macaroni is cooking. Mix soups, water and sour cream; add to hamburger. Simmer over medium heat for a few minutes. Stir in pasta. Serve immediately.

Becki Hauser, Tripp, SD

Please send your favorite slow cooker, holiday or soup 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 2019.

All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

Last Call for Alaska



Lenae Wordes

lwordes@renville-sibley.coop

The sign-up meeting for the Alaska tour was held on Tuesday, Sept. 17, at the Danube Community Center. If you are interested in taking this trip and did not attend the meeting, please contact me by Oct. 1. After this date, the trip will be opened up to friends and family of Renville-Sibley members as well. It will be those that pay the deposit will be registered first until the trip is full. Initially, the date was left open to Oct. 18 for Renville-Sibley members to register. However, our travel company has been getting several direct inquiries for this trip and asked us to shorten the time frame. Members now have until Oct. 1

to sign-up and friends and family of Renville-Sibley members have until Oct. 18. After Oct. 18, the travel company will fill the tour. Please contact me at 800-826-2593 if you have any questions.

Comparative Report

	Current July 31, 2019	One Year Ago July 31, 2018	10 Years Ago July 31, 2009
Average # of Consumers	1,882	1,882	1,945
kWhs purchased	85,734,692	105,149,113	88,760,127
Cost of purchased power	\$5,037,103.96	\$6,225,242.39	\$3,345,409.73

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Heating requires more energy than any other system in your home, typically making up about 42% of your energy bill. With proper equipment maintenance and upgrades like additional insulation and air sealing, you can save about 30% on your energy bill.

Source: *energy.gov*



Thank you...

Danube Fun Days is an event run completely by volunteers and is only possible through the generous donations of community members and businesses. We would not be able to do it without you, so from the bottom of our hearts, thank you!

Danube Area Action Committee

Thanks so much for your generous donation and for being a sponsor of our Fairfax Dayz of Thunder events in June. We appreciate your support and we are looking forward to 2020!

The Fairfax Dayz of Thunder Committee

Thank you for the door prizes from the county fair. My favorite is the magic snake.

Joel Kadlec

Thank you for the account credit for the fair drawing. Very nice surprise and much appreciated.

Russ Nere

Outage Report

affecting 10 members or more

Date: 8-8-19
Time off: 9 a.m.
Time on: 11:57 a.m.
Substation: Emmet
Cause: Scheduled outage

Date: 8-8-19
Time off: 10:59 a.m.
Time on: 12:30 p.m.
Substation: Emmet
Cause: Scheduled outage

Date: 8-12-19
Time off: 4:17 p.m.
Time on: 5:04 p.m.
Substation: Kingman
Cause: Underground line hit

Please contact Renville-Sibley's office for more details about these power outages.

Mission Statement

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





Members wait in line for the FREE gate pass and coupons to the Pork Producers and Dairy Association booth.

Farmfest and Family-a-Fair

The week of Aug. 5 was busy. Farmfest was held on Aug. 6-8 and the Renville County Fair was Aug. 7-9.

Members who attended Farmfest and brought their coupon from the newsletter had the chance to win one of three prizes (leaf blower, lawn mower and trimmer). Renville-Sibley member Benedict Grosam was the lucky winner of the leaf blower. On Wednesday morning of Farmfest, there were three electric vehicles (Bolt, Tesla and Leaf) for attendees to visit. Several people took time to visit and ask questions about these vehicles. 393402

It was beautiful weather to attend Renville-Sibley's Family-a-Fair night on Thursday, Aug. 8. More than 540 members and guests were given the chance to enter the fair FREE that evening compliments of the cooperative. Russ Nere was the winner of the \$50 energy credit and Joel Kadlec, son of Dave and Beth Kadlec, was the winner of a bag of school supplies, snacks and a few games.





Renville-Sibley Co-op Power Association Journeyman Lineman Clint Olson is a member of the Olivia Area Technical Rescue Team. Olson is in the center front holding the dalmation dog.

HELPING OUT AT NEW HEIGHTS AND TIGHT SPACES

Co-op Employees Among Local Emergency Responders

Brenda Kleinjan

editor@sdrea.coop

As the chief of the Olivia, Minn., Area Technical Response Team, Renville-Sibley Co-op Power Association journeyman lineman Clint Olson combines some of his experience with the Danube, Minn.-based cooperative with his 15 years as a member of the Olivia Fire Department.

Olson joined the OFD after being asked repeatedly by then-members of the volunteer fire department.

“To be honest, the main reason for joining the OFD was so I wouldn’t be bugged anymore by past firemen asking me to join every time I saw them in public. Looking back, I am glad I did,” Olson said.

Olson was tapped to lead the newly formed rescue team which was established in January 2019. The team is specialized in high-angle and low-angle (confined space) rescues.

The team is made up of firemen all from different towns in



Many rural and small town fire departments throughout the Dakotas and western Minnesota rely on volunteers to fill the ranks of the much-needed service.

Renville County, Minn. The county is home of several large ag industries, such as the Southern Minnesota Sugar Beet Cooperative and several large seed plants along with large bin set ups.

“We saw a need for the Technical Response Team years ago and never could spark enough interest from the other towns in the county for funding. Finally, Olivia stepped up and funded the start up,” said Olson. “We firemen have trained in the past with some high-angle rescue trainings but knew it wasn’t proper and knew it’s a need being in a rural community.”

Right after the team was established, the first call came in of a conscious victim who fell 40 feet down into a concrete seed bin.

“There was no access from the bottom. After assessing the situation, we were able to get the victim up using ropes and mechanical advantage systems which consists of pulleys and anchor points through a small four foot by four foot access door. From there, we were able to rig a rope system on the catwalk outside in order to lower the victim to the ground 75 feet below,” Olson said.

“Looking back, this is the first rescue like this in our area and we are glad we had the

training and equipment to complete the task,” Olson said.

There are multiple regular trainings and extra trainings that go along with the fire department and the Olivia Area Technical

“Being in a smaller agriculture and rural community, fire departments in our area are struggling to fill positions, whether its lack of interest or time.”

rescue team, Olson said. The fire department trains twice a month while the OATRT team trains once a month.

Olson notes there is a need for more volunteers in fire departments and ambulance crews.

“Being in a smaller agriculture and rural community, fire departments in our area, are struggling to fill positions, whether its lack of interest or time,” Olson said.

To try to maximize departments’ effectiveness, departments have been training with our surrounding departments and assisting in mutual aid calls.

“I highly recommend if you can join a local EMS in your community the benefits are self-rewarding. The knowledge you learn can be beneficial for you to share with your coworkers also no matter what field you are in.”

The knowledge base that co-op linemen bring to a volunteer fire department can be beneficial, Olson noted, especially when it comes to electrical hazard recognition.

“Multiple trainings have been done internally with our department on what action to take if a live wire is involved and also know where the disconnects are located and types of disconnects need to be opened in order to isolate before the utility company arrives,” Olson said.

Olson is one of three employees of Renville-Sibley who are members of their fire department or technical team. Fellow journeymen linemen Brayden Fischer and Brandon Ochs are volunteer firefighters

“I describe it has a brotherhood similar as a brotherhood at your electric cooperative,” Olson said.



RSCPA Journeyman Lineman Brayden Fischer is in the back row, fourth from right, while Journeyman Lineman Clint Olson is second from the left in the first row. Not pictured is Journeyman Lineman Brandon Ochs.

August Board Meeting Highlights

The August board meeting was held on Monday, Aug. 26, at 8 a.m. All board members were present. Others present were CEO DeeAnne Newville, Gene Allex and Lenae Wordes.

The board reviewed and approved the following items:

- Minutes of the July board meeting
- Operating and disbursement reports for the month of July
- Capital credits to an estate
- Safety report for August
- RESCO annual meeting voting delegate
- CFC District 6 voting delegates
- Federated Rural Electric voting delegate
- Mid-West Electric Consumers Association voting delegate
- CoBank nominating committee vote

The board reviewed:

- Total new members for the month of July
- Reports from staff members as to the activities in their department. Items in the reports include:
 - High level Statement of Operations review – YTD through July (unaudited)
 - Organization activities
 - East River update
 - Basin Electric update
 - NRECA Update
 - MREA Update
 - Line crew work in progress, equipment update and outage update
 - Accounts receivable
 - Alaska tour
 - Farmfest
 - Family-a-Fair night

Notice:

The September board meeting will be held on Monday, Sept. 30, at 8 a.m.

The October board meeting will be held on Monday, Oct. 28, at 8 a.m.

Where's the Number?

Last month, Mathiowetz Farming did not find his member number in the newsletter. The credit will continue to grow for a value of \$20.



Another number has been hidden in this newsletter. If you find your number and call the office by Oct. 3, you will receive this credit on your electric statement. Good luck in your search!

For Sale

For Sale: Drop leaf table, Formica top, 25-inches by 40-inches (folded), four, nine-inch leaves, dark color, good condition – \$40

Dennis or Karen Stoeckman,
Olivia, MN
320-523-5438

For Sale: New Holland 1465 haybine, New Holland 69 small square baler in good condition. Call for price.

Bob Gummert,
Renville, MN
320-329-3383

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



A “Controlled” Burn Can Quickly Turn Chaotic

A “controlled burn” can quickly become an uncontrolled one, so take precautions before burning on your land or in a ditch. Controlled burns are used for various reasons, including vegetation and weed management.

If the area you choose to burn is near a utility pole or if it spreads more quickly and farther than you thought it might, your controlled burn could get expensive.

Fire damage to a power pole is usually evident by blackening and scorch marks, but even slight discoloration can cause serious problems. In some cases, the pole can look like it has little damage on the outside, all the while burning from the inside out.

In all cases, the result is the same: the utility pole is compromised and will most likely need to be replaced, compliments of the person who started the burn. The fees passed on to the person who caused it are substantial – usually in the thousands of dollars.

The damage could also cause a power outage or other serious service issues including energized lines falling near or on the ground, creating a potentially deadly situation.

To inquire about controlled burns (aka prescribed fire) near power lines, contact Gene Alex at 800-826-2593. For more information about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

So what can you do to prevent burn-related damage to a power pole?

- Plan your burn before you begin.
- Check the forecast for weather conditions, such as wind direction and speed, as well as humidity (as a general rule, relative humidity should be 40 percent or higher).
- If there are power poles in the planned burning area, clear all vegetation and weeds at least four feet around the base of the pole.
- Wet the base of the pole with water before beginning your burn.
- If your fire gets out of control, gets too close to a power pole or if the pole catches on fire, call 9-1-1 and Renville-Sibley Co-op Power Association at 800-826-2593. Once a fire breaks out, NEVER spray water near the pole, power lines or any other utility equipment. Electricity and water do not mix and you could cause a short circuit that could cause serious injury or death.

Your Unique Source of Power

Paul Wesslund

NRECA

Electric cooperatives belong to the people they serve – that would be you and your neighbors.

You have a unique story to tell about yourself because you are part of an electric cooperative community. But if you're like a lot of electric co-op members, you might not feel you know enough to tell that story well. So, here's some help.

About one in 10 Americans receives their power the way you do, from an electric co-op. Electric co-ops belong to the people they serve – that would be you and your neighbors. Electric co-ops were first developed in the 1930s because city utilities, owned by investors wanting to make a profit, ignored rural America – they didn't think there was enough money to be earned there. So, people in rural communities met with each other and formed their own local electric co-ops.

October is National Co-op Month, the time of year when cooperatives across the country celebrate the many ways co-ops are unique and more importantly, the members they serve. This year, we're focusing on our ties to the local community. Your co-op was built by the community, for the community, so let's take a look at what that means for you, the members of the co-op.

Your co-op is here to stay. Since the co-op belongs to the members it serves with safe, reliable, affordable energy, it's not going to move out of the country, or even across the state. It's staying right where it is.

Your co-op knows you. No two co-ops are alike. Across the country, there are more than 900 electric co-ops. Because each of those co-ops belongs to the people who live there, the co-op listens to the community they are a part of. Whether it's



October is National Co-op Month.



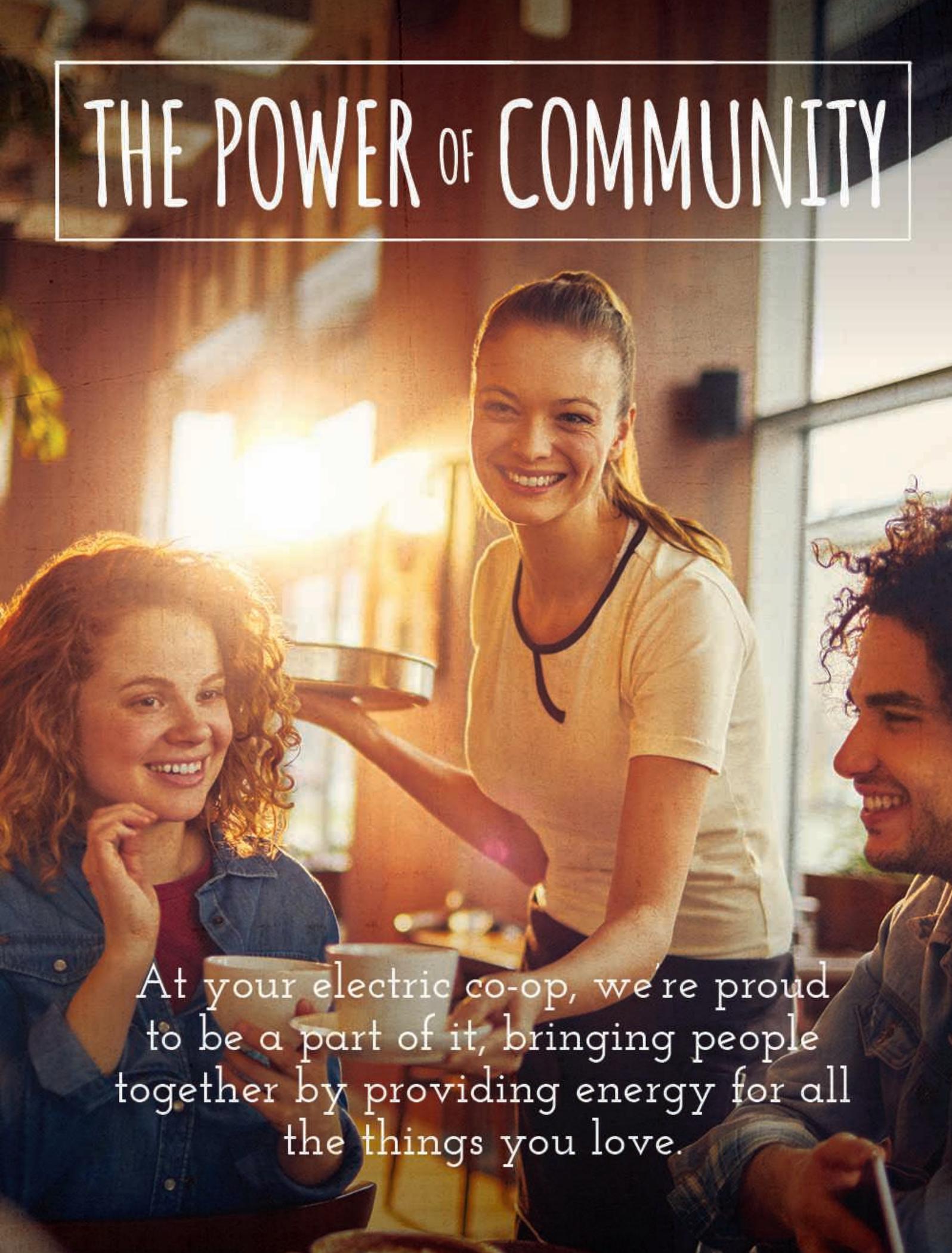
Co-op lines are shaped by you, the members we serve, right here in our local community.

working with the latest energy efficiency technologies or keeping the electric grid safe and secure, your electric co-op can offer solutions that make the most sense locally.

Your co-op cares about your community. The co-op's top priority is to power the community. It is not owned by far-away, or even nearby, investors looking only for a good return on their money. Your co-op also partners with local organizations on community events, fundraisers, youth programs and more. We're your friends and neighbors. By investing in the local community, your electric co-op supports economic development and prosperity for all, right here at home.

And these are just a few ways you and your electric co-op are one of a kind.

THE POWER OF COMMUNITY

A warm, golden-lit scene in a cafe. A woman in a white t-shirt with a dark neckline is smiling and serving coffee. She is holding a tray with a white cup and saucer. To her left, a woman with curly hair in a denim jacket is smiling and holding a white cup. To her right, a man with curly hair in a denim jacket is smiling. The background is softly blurred, showing a window and some cafe decor.

At your electric co-op, we're proud to be a part of it, bringing people together by providing energy for all the things you love.

Utility Payment Arrangements for Military Service Personnel.

Section 1. (325E.028)

Subdivision 1. Restriction on disconnection; payment schedules.

- a) A municipal utility, cooperative electric association or public utility must not disconnect the utility service of residential customer if a member of the household has been issued orders into active duty, deployment, or change in duty station if such a residential customer:
- 1) has a household income below the state median household income or is receiving energy assistance and enters into an agreement with the municipal utility, cooperative electric association, or public utility under which the residential customer pays ten percent of the customer's gross monthly income toward the customer's bill and the residential customer remains reasonably current with those payments; or
 - 2) has a household income above the state median household income and enters into an agreement with the municipal utility, cooperative electric association, or public utility establishing a reasonable payment schedule that considers the financial resources of the household and the residential customer remains reasonably current with payment under the payment schedule.
- b) For purposes of this subdivision, "household income" means household income measure after the date of the orders specified in paragraph (a).

Subdivision 2. Annual notice to all customers; inability to pay forms.

- a) A municipal utility, cooperative electric association, or public utility must notify all residential customers annually of the provisions of this section.
- b) A municipal utility, cooperative electric association, or public utility must provide a form to a residential customer to request the protections of this section upon the residential customer's request.

Subdivision 4. Income verification. Verification of income may be conducted by the local energy assistance provider or the municipal utility, cooperative electric association, or public utility unless the customer is automatically eligible for protection against disconnects as a recipient of any form of public assistance, including energy assistance that uses income eligibility in an amount at or below the income eligibility in subdivision 1, clause (1).

Subdivision 5. Appeal process.

- a) the municipal utility, cooperative electric association, or public utility shall provide the residential customer with a commission-approved written notice of the right to appeal to the commission or other appropriated governing body when the utility and residential customer are unable to agree on the establishment, reasonableness, or modification of a payment schedule, or on the reasonable timeliness of the payments under a payment schedule, provided for by this section. Any appeal must be made within seven working days after the residential customer's receipt of personally served notice, or within ten working days after the utility has deposited first class mail notice in the United States mail.
- b) The utility shall not disconnect service while a payment schedule is pending appeal, or until any appeal involving payment schedules has been determined by the commission.

Subdivision 6. Endorsement. This section may be enforced pursuant to chapter 216B.

216B.097 Cold Weather Rule; Cooperative.

Subdivision 1. Application; notice to residential customer.

- a) A cooperative electric association must not disconnect and must reconnect the utility service of a residential customer during the period between Oct. 15 and April 15 if the disconnection affects the primary heat source for the residential unit and all of the following conditions are met:
- 1) The household income of the customer is at or below 50 percent of the state median household income. A cooperative electric association utility may (i) verify income on forms it provides or (ii) obtain verification of income from the local energy assistance provider. A customer is deemed to meet the income requirements of this clause if the customer receives any form of public assistance, including energy assistance, that uses an income eligibility threshold set at or below 50 percent of the state median household income.
 - 2) A customer enters into and makes reasonably timely payments under a payment agreement that considers the financial resources of the household.
 - 3) A customer receives referrals to energy assistance, weatherization, conservation, or other programs likely to reduce the customer's energy bills.
- b) A cooperative electric association must, between August 15 and Oct. 15 each year, notify all residential customers of the provisions of this section.

Subdivision 2. Notice to residential customer facing disconnection.

Before disconnecting service to a residential customer during the period between Oct. 15 and April 15, a cooperative electric association must provide the following information to a customer:

- 1) a notice of proposed disconnection;
- 2) a statement explaining the customer's rights and responsibilities;
- 3) a list of local energy assistance providers;
- 4) forms on which to declare inability to pay; and
- 5) a statement explaining available time payment plans and other opportunities to secure continued utility service.

Subdivision 3. Restrictions if disconnection necessary.

- a) If a residential customer must be involuntarily disconnected between Oct. 15 and April 15 for failure to comply with subdivision 1, the disconnection must not occur:
- 1) on a Friday, unless the customer declines to enter into a payment agreement offered that day in person or via personal contact by telephone by a cooperative electric association;
 - 2) on a weekend, holiday, or the day before a holiday;
 - 3) when utility offices are closed; or
 - 4) after the close of business on a day when disconnection is permitted, unless a field representative of a cooperative electric association who is authorized to enter into a payment agreement, accept payment, and continue service, offers a payment agreement to the customer. Further, the disconnection must not occur until at

least 20 days after the notice required in Subd. 2 has been mailed to the customer or 15 days after the notice has been personally delivered to the customer.

b) If a customer does not respond to a disconnection notice, the customer must not be disconnected until the utility investigates whether the residential unit is actually occupied. If the unit is found to be occupied, the utility must immediately inform the occupant of the provisions of this section. If the unit is unoccupied, the utility must give seven days' written notice of the proposed disconnection to the local energy assistance provider before making a disconnection.

c) If, prior to disconnection, a customer appeals a notice of involuntary disconnection, as provided by the utility's established appeal procedure, the utility must not disconnect until the appeal is resolved.

Subdivision 4. Application to service limiters.

For the purposes of this section, "disconnection" includes a service or load limiter or any device that limits or interrupts electric service in any way.



RENVILLE-SIBLEY
CO-OP POWER

Choose Renewable Energy for Your Home or Business

You can easily purchase renewable energy from your local electric cooperative, Renville-Sibley Co-op Power. Renville-Sibley has Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) available for purchase to offset your current usage with 25%, 50%, 75% and 100% renewable energy options. The price of the RECs will be added to your current electric bill.

The electricity you receive will still be the same reliable, affordable energy you have always received from Renville-Sibley Co-op Power but, by participating in this program, you will be supporting current and future renewable projects in our area.

Your home or business will be joining hundreds of other people from across the nation who are supporting renewable energy. By purchasing RECs, your business could add value to your products or services, promote future regional renewable projects and showcase your support for renewable energy sources.

FAQ's

<p>What is a Renewable Energy Credit (REC)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,000 kWh (kilowatt hours) produced by a renewable energy source equals 1 REC • RECs are also called Green Tags • RECs represent the valuable renewable attributes of wind energy <p>Where do the RECs come from?</p> <p>The RECs come from several wind farms in the region that supply renewable energy to Renville-Sibley Co-op Power. These include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Dakota: PrairieWinds 1, Wilton 1 & 2, Baldwin Wind Project and Minot Wind Project • South Dakota: Crow Lake Wind, the Chamberlain turbines, Day County Wind Farm and South Dakota Wind Project 	<p>How much does it cost?</p> <p>To participate a rate adder per kWh will be added to your bill:</p> <p>\$0.001 /kWh for 100% renewable \$0.00075 /kWh for 75% renewable \$0.00050 /kWh for 50% renewable \$0.00025 /kWh for 25% renewable</p> <p>For example, if your monthly usage is 1,200 kWh and you would like to participate at the 100% renewable level, you would pay an additional \$1.20 for the month.</p> <p>Do I need to purchase any special equipment?</p> <p>No. Renville-Sibley will continue to fulfill all your electric needs and you can enjoy the benefits of renewable energy.</p>
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1.800.826.2593
renville-sibley@renville-sibley.coop

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811
Know what's Below.
Call before you dig.
Common Ground Alliance







ALWAYS CALL BEFORE YOU DIG

September 18-22

Sanford International Golf Tournament, Sioux Falls, SD, 877-748-3376

September 19-21

St. Joseph's Indian School Powwow, Chamberlain, SD, 605-234-3452

September 20-22

German-Russian Schmeckfest, Eureka, SD, 605-284-2332

September 21

Annual Watertown Radio Chili Cook-off, Watertown, SD, 605-882-6269

September 21

AgriCulture on the Square, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. MDT, Free, Main Street Square, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-1722

September 21-22

North Country Fiber Fair, Watertown, SD, 605-956-7909

September 21-22

Northern Plains Indian Art Market, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-856-8193

September 21-22

Pioneer Power and Toy Show, Menno, SD, www.pioneeracres.com

September 25-28

Black Hills Plein Air Paint-Out, Hill City, SD, 605-645-7196

September 26-28

Buffalo Roundup Arts Festival, Opens at 10 a.m., Game Lodge grounds, Custer State Park, Custer, SD, 605-255-4541

September 26-29

South Dakota Film Festival, Aberdeen, SD, 605-725-2697



September 27

56th Annual Buffalo Roundup, 6:15 a.m., Buffalo corrals, Custer State Park, Custer, SD, 605-255-4515

September 27-28

Corn Palace Challenge Bulls and Broncs PRCA Extreme, Mitchell, SD, 605-995-8430

September 27-29

SiouxperCon, Sioux Falls, SD, www.siouxpercon.com

September 28

Wheelin' to Wall, Wall, SD, 605-685-3882

September 28

Living History Fall Festival, Groton, SD, 605-715-7117

September 29

Fall Volksmarch at Crazy Horse Memorial, Crazy Horse, SD, 605-673-4681

October 3-6

South Dakota Festival of Books, Brookings, SD, 605-688-6113

October 5

Harvest Festival, Chamberlain, SD, 605-234-4416

October 5

Prairie Village Hobo Marlin Pumpkin Train, Madison, SD, 605-256-3644

October 11-13

Black Hills Powwow, Rapid City, SD, 605-341-0925

October 11-13

Black Hills Horse Expo, Rapid City, SD

October 19

4th Annual Fall Festival, East Pierre Landscape and Garden Center, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Pierre, SD, 605-224-8832

October 19-January 5

Pheasant Hunting Season, Statewide, Pierre, SD, 605-223-7660

October 25-27

Autumn Festival, An Arts and Crafts Affair, Sioux Falls, SD, 402-331-2889

October 31-November 2

Ringneck Festival and Bird Dog Challenge, Huron, SD, 605-352-0000

November 9

Sisseton Area Merchants and Crafters 22nd Annual Holiday Extravaganza, Sisseton, SD, 605-698-7425

November 15-December 18

Black Hills Christmas Tree Permit Season, Custer, SD, 605-673-9200

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.