



# Cooperative Connections

**Oh,  
Christmas  
Tree! Cutting  
Your Own**

Page 8

**Keeping  
Good Cheer:  
Holiday Safety**

Page 12

# Star of the County

## Renville County Sheriff's Office, Renville County Walk in the Park Partner for Cancer Awareness

Renville County Walk in the Park and the Renville County Sheriff's Office have joined forces and launched a new "Star of the County" Program. Starting this month, you'll have the opportunity to "sponsor" a Sheriff's Office squad car in honor of a cancer survivor or in memory of a loved one who has passed away due to cancer. With a \$100 donation to Renville County Walk in the Park, for an entire month, your sponsored squad car will have its traditional gold Sheriff's stars on each side exchanged with appropriately-colored stars and associated cancer awareness ribbons.

Each month, different cancers will be spotlighted and will be eligible for squad car sponsorship on each of the county sheriff patrol cars and social media platforms. In addition to raising much-needed funding for cancer research and for Renville County residents currently undergoing cancer treatment, the goal is that our county residents become aware of all the different types of cancer and become familiar with the signs and symptoms related to each.

"The Renville County Sheriff's Office is so proud to partner with Renville County Walk in the Park on this new "Star of the County" campaign," said Renville County Sheriff Scott Hable. "Our hope is that these unique markings on our squad cars will turn some heads, inspire some conversations and, most importantly, raise awareness about this evil disease that has touched so many lives."

November is designated as pancreatic cancer, lung cancer, stomach cancer and carcinoid cancer awareness month. The stickers on the patrol cars are sure to get noticed everywhere they go for the entire month. "We are excited about this new program that will certainly build awareness, will honor our loved ones who are living with cancer and remember those who have succumbed to cancer," said Sara Maher, Executive Director of RC Hospital Foundation and Co-Chair of the Walk in the Park.

To become a "Star of Renville County" squad car sponsor,



Renville County Sheriff Scott Hable applies a new cancer Pancreatic Cancer awareness sticker on his squad car for November.



contact Sara Maher at 320-523-3526 or mahers@rchospital.com The cost is \$100 per month per squad car. That tax-deductible donation provides two large cancer awareness stickers on one patrol car and a similar, smaller sticker for the donor or donor's vehicle. All proceeds will go to Renville County Walk in the Park for Research, Community and Hope.



## Mark your Calendar:

**Christmas Open House will be held on Thursday, Dec. 5, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Those who attend can register to win a \$50 energy credit.**

**Danube Upholstery will have their open house that day as well. Be sure to stop there while in town.**

# Renville-Sibley

## Cooperative Connections

(USPS 019-074)

### Board of Directors

Roger Manthei – Chair  
Wayland Zaske – Vice Chair  
Alan Neyers – Secretary/Treasurer  
Gary Eekhoff  
Matt Haubrich  
Whitey Hinderman  
Philip Nestande  
Gary Peterson  
Helen Ruebel

### Renville-Sibley Employees

Gene Alex – Line Superintendent  
Brian Athmann – Journeyman Lineman  
Shawn Beckler – Crew Chief  
Mike Benson – Journeyman Lineman  
Brad Braulick – Crew Chief  
Nick Bruns – Systems Coordinator  
Anthony Carruth – Journeyman Lineman  
Amy Ervin – Consumer Accounts Representative  
Brayden Fischer – Journeyman Lineman  
Cindy Mertens – Administrative Services Manager  
DeeAnne Newville – CEO  
Brandon Ochs – Journeyman Lineman  
Clint Olson – Journeyman Lineman  
Kathy Ridl – Office Assistant  
Lenae Wordes – Communications Manager

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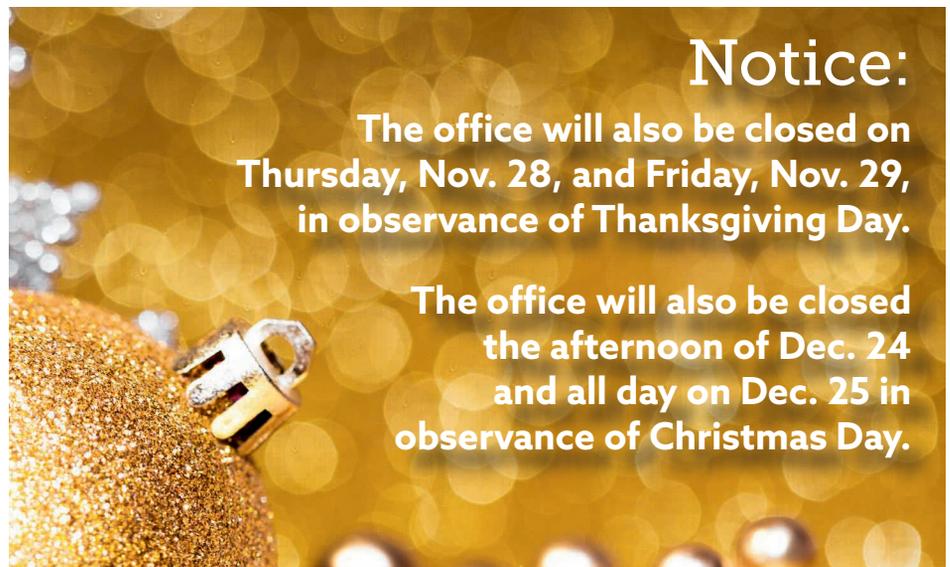
Web site: [www.renville-sibley.coop](http://www.renville-sibley.coop)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

## Co-op Seeks Members for Nominating Committee

Renville-Sibley is looking for members who would like to serve on the cooperative's nominating committees. Nominating Committees (one for each director district) will be meeting in December or January and will be looking for candidates to run for the board of directors. Candidates chosen by the Nominating Committee will be put on the ballot. A member may also appear on the ballot by petition of 10 or more members residing in such district. The candidates for each district will be voted for at the annual meeting. Ballots will be mailed in March. Members may cast their ballot at the annual meeting or by mail. If mailed, it must be received by the date of the annual meeting.

If you would like to be on one of the nominating committees, if you would like to be considered as a candidate or if you know of someone that you would like to be considered as a candidate, please let us know by calling Lenae at 800-826-2593.



RECIPES NEEDED FOR THE

# COUNTRY COOKIN'

cookbook

Your recipe could be featured in the 36<sup>th</sup> volume of East River Electric's Country Cookin' cookbook! Help us create another great cookbook by submitting your favorite recipes.

**Submit recipes via email to [kstone@eastriver.coop](mailto:kstone@eastriver.coop), fax to 605-256-8057, or contact your local cooperative for more information. Submission deadline is Monday, January 27, 2020.**

## Electrical Safety Tips for the Holidays

The holiday season is here and Christmas is just weeks away. While it's certainly the best time of the year to spend time with family and friends before the New Year, it's also important that you think about keeping your friends and family safe around all the electricity you'll likely be using. Here are a few essential electrical safety tips for the holidays.

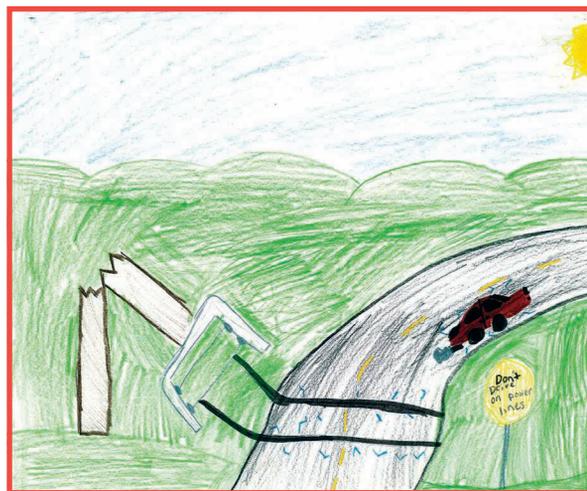
- Before you use any electrical decorations, you should inspect them for damage. Look for damaged sockets, cracked sockets, loose connections and bare or loose wires. All of these things could cause a fire or a serious shock.
- Once you've confirmed that all your electrical decorations aren't damaged, you should count how many outlets you have in your home and where they're located. You should plan out your displays based on the number of outlets and their location. When putting up the displays, be sure to follow the care and manufacturer's use instructions that came with the electrical decorations. Be sure to use the extension cords with the right amperage rating to match the amperage needs of your electrical products.
- When you're installing outdoor decorations, you should be very careful when you're decorating near any power lines. You and your equipment should be at least 10 feet from any power lines.
- Don't overload your home's electrical outlets. Every year, many homeowners end up overloading the electrical outlets in their home because they go overboard when it comes to decorating. Faulty wires and overloaded electrical outlets are the most common causes of fire during the holidays. You should only plug a single high-wattage appliance into every outlet. This will help you prevent overloading the outlets in your home.
- You should never connect more than three strands of incandescent lights. Connecting more than three strings can cause a fire or trip circuit breakers. You should think about buying LED lights, which are cooler than incandescent lights and use less energy. Be sure that the spotlights that you use to illuminate decorations are far from flammable items, protected from weather, and are well-ventilated. Make sure that you always unplug your decorations before you replace the fuses or bulbs. Turn off the outdoor and indoor electrical decorations before you go to sleep or leave home.
- Be sure that any electrical decorations and extension cords were made to be useable outdoors. Keep all light strings and extension cords away from water and snow. When decorating outdoors, you should use fiberglass or wooden ladders rather than metal ladders. You should plug outdoor decorations and electric lights into circuits protected by circuit interrupters. You should buy portable outdoor GFCIs if the circuits aren't GFCI protected.

As you can see, there are many things that you can do to keep your family and friends safe during the holidays.

Source: [www.protectamerica.com](http://www.protectamerica.com)



## KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



**"Don't drive on power lines."**

**Anna Engelbrecht, 9 years old**

Anna is the grand-daughter of Alan and JoAnn Engelbrecht, Brandon, S.D. They are members of Sioux Valley Energy, Colman, S.D.

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.

# Holiday Favorites

## Fanny Farmer Fudge

- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 4-1/2 cups sugar                  | 1 cup butter (use butter, not margarine) |
| 1 (12 oz.) can evaporated milk    | 2 tsp. vanilla                           |
| 2 cups semi-sweet chocolate chips | 1-1/2 cups chopped walnuts (optional)    |
| 2 cups milk chocolate chips       |  |

Mix sugar and milk together; bring to rolling boil. Boil for 6 minutes. Remove from heat; add chocolate chips and butter. Beat with electric mixer until very creamy. Add vanilla and stir well. Add nuts if desired. Pour into a 9x13-inch pan (glass works best) sprayed with cooking spray. Refrigerate at least 4 hours before cutting. Store in airtight container. Will keep for months in refrigerator and still be smooth and creamy.

**Nancy Stenson, Fort Pierre, SD**

## Andes Mint Cookies

- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 2-1/2 cups flour                   | 2 large eggs                            |
| 3/4 cup cocoa powder               | 1 tsp. vanilla extract                  |
| 1 tsp. baking soda                 | 1 tsp. peppermint extract               |
| 2 sticks and 2 T. butter, softened | 1 cup chocolate chips                   |
| 1 cup granulated sugar             | 1 cup mint chips or chopped Andes mints |
| 1 cup brown sugar                  |   |

Sift flour, cocoa powder and baking soda in a medium bowl and set aside. Using a hand mixer, cream together butter and both sugars until fluffy. Add eggs, vanilla and peppermint extracts, mixing well. Add dry mixture to butter mixture and mix well. Stir in chocolate and mint chips. Roll dough into 1-1/2-inch balls. Place on prepared baking sheet and with 2 fingers, press down to about 1-inch thick. Bake at 350°F. for 15 to 18 minutes or until no longer glossy.

**Cortney Reedy, Tea, SD**

## Vanilla Pecan Pie

- |                                       |                              |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 refrigerated pie crust              | Vanilla Extract, divided     |
| 1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, softened | 1/2 cup light corn syrup     |
| 3 eggs, divided                       | 3 T. butter, melted          |
| 3/4 cup sugar, divided                | 1/4 tsp. salt                |
| 4 tsp. McCormick® Pure                | 2 cups pecan pieces, toasted |

Prepare crust as directed on package for one-crust pie using 9-inch deep dish pie plate. Beat cream cheese, 1 egg, 1/4 cup sugar and 2 tsp. vanilla in large bowl with electric mixer on medium speed until well blended and smooth. Spread evenly on bottom of crust. Bake at 350°F. for 15 minutes. Beat remaining 2 eggs and sugar in large bowl with wire whisk until smooth. Add corn syrup, butter, remaining vanilla and salt; stir until well blended. Sprinkle pecans evenly over cream cheese layer. Slowly pour corn syrup mixture over nuts. Bake 35 to 40 minutes or until just set in center. Makes 10 servings.

*Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 506, Total Fat 34g, Fiber 2g, Protein 7g, Cholesterol 96mg, Sodium 307mg, Carbohydrates 43g*

**Pictured, Cooperative Connections**

## Filled Graham Crackers

- |                                 |                |
|---------------------------------|----------------|
| 1 lb. box honey graham crackers | 1/3 cup milk   |
| 1 cup brown sugar               | 1 egg, beaten  |
| 1/2 cup butter or margarine     | 1 tsp. vanilla |

Line up 22 (unbroken) graham crackers on a sheet of waxed paper. Place remaining crackers in a zip-lock bag and crush fine with a rolling pin. Combine brown sugar, butter, milk and egg. Bring to a boil then cook an additional 7 minutes. Remove from heat; add crushed crackers and vanilla. When mixture has cooled a little, spread filling on 11 of the crackers and top with the other 11. Leave uncovered to keep them crisp or cover for softer crackers.

**Mardelle Brown, Redfield, SD**

Please send your favorite soup, brunch or seafood recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in June 2020. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

# Are You Interested in a New Adventure?

Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association is beginning to plan for the 82nd annual meeting of the membership that will be held March 26, 2020, at the Island Ballroom in Bird Island, Minn. Three (3) directors will be elected during that time, each for a three-year term.

The First District, consisting of the townships of Cornish, Severance and Moltke in Sibley County; the townships of Ridgely and West Newton in Nicollet County; and the townships of Cairo, Wellington, Martinsburg, Camp, Bandon and Palmyra in Renville County is represented by Alan Neyers, Whitey Hinderman and Philip Nestande. Philip Nestande's term will expire in 2020.

The Second District, consisting of the townships of Honner and Delhi in Redwood County; and the townships of Beaver Falls, Flora, Henryville, Birch Cooley, Norfolk, Melville, Bird Island and Kingman in Renville County is represented by Helen Ruebel, Wayland Zaske and Matt Haubrich. Matt Haubrich's term will expire in 2020.

The Third District, consisting of the townships of Roseland and Holland in Kandiyohi County; Rheiderland Township in Chippewa County; and the townships of Troy, Winfield, Emmet, Crooks, Sacred Heart, Hawk Creek, Ericson and Wang in Renville County is represented by Gary Eekhoff, Gary Peterson and Roger Manthei. Roger Manthei's term will expire in 2020.

Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association Director Districts



## As stated in the Renville-Sibley bylaws, the following is the Qualifications and Tenure for the position of Director:

- Each director shall be a member of the Cooperative and shall be elected by the members within their respective district at the annual meeting of the members for a term of three years. No member shall be eligible to become or remain a director or to hold any position of trust in the Cooperative who is not a bona fide resident in the area served by the Cooperative, or who is in any way employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise or a business selling electric energy or supplies to the Cooperative, or a business primarily engaged in selling electrical or space heating/cooling appliances, fixtures, or supplies to the members. When a membership is held jointly by two or more persons, including husband and wife, only one of such joint tenants may be elected a director, provided, however, that neither one shall be eligible to become a director, unless all shall meet the qualifications herein set forth.

## Director qualifications required for service to the cooperative shall include:

- A. Must be an individual and must be at least 18 years of age.
- B. Must be competent and able to execute a contract.
- C. Must not have been convicted of a felony or gross misdemeanor during the preceding 5 years prior to becoming a director for the Cooperative or during the period while serving as a director.
- D. Must have a high school diploma or equivalent.
- E. Must make a reasonable effort to become and remain knowledgeable about special issues regarding electric cooperatives by attending training, workshops and seminars.
- F. Must attend at least three-fourths (3/4) of all monthly scheduled board meetings during any twelve (12) month period.

Upon becoming a candidate for and/or to remain a Director, an individual must

complete an annual conflict of interest disclosure form, approved by the Board of Directors. All Directors and/or Director candidates must comply with or meet the following conflict of interest qualifications:

- A. Shall not be a close relative of an existing Director, employee, agent or representative of the Cooperative other than an existing Director who will cease being a Director upon the candidate assuming office;
- B. Within 5 years immediately prior to becoming a Director, shall not have been a Cooperative Officer, employee, agent or representative of the Cooperative or any subsidiary or affiliated company;
- C. Shall not be employed by, materially affiliated with, nor share a material financial interest with any current Director;
- D. Shall not be engaged in any business, nor employed by, nor materially affiliated with, nor have a material financial interest in any individual or entity that:
  1. Is regularly, directly, and substantially competing with the Cooperative or any other entity that the Cooperative controls or in which the Cooperative owns a majority interest (Cooperative Subsidiary).
  2. Is regularly selling goods and services to the Cooperative or the Cooperative Subsidiary.
  3. Possesses a substantial conflict of interest with the Cooperative or the Cooperative subsidiary.
- E. A former Director is ineligible for employment by the Cooperative for five years following the end of the tenure as a Director.

## As a Director, the member agrees to:

- Abide by, promote and uphold the Articles of Incorporation and By-laws, both of which can be found on our website, and Policies of Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association.
- Attend regular and special Board meetings of the Cooperative.
- Attend, when appointed, committee meeting of the Cooperative.

If anyone should decide to seek candidacy for the board of directors, there are many rewards to be enjoyed when elected. A director has the opportunity to demonstrate their leadership quality and increase

their knowledge within the cooperative business environment and the electric industry. As a director, this person could play a significant role in the future development of Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association.

A director also has a very important responsibility which is to uphold and abide by the bylaws of the cooperative. Directors are to act as the trustees for the assets of the cooperative and are assigned the duties of formulating, approving and reviewing the policies that provide guidelines for the cooperative.

The board is responsible for sending representatives to the affiliated association meetings that often include voting requirements. They include East River Electric Power Cooperative, Minnesota Rural Electric Association, Basin Electric Power Cooperative, National Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation, CoBank, Cooperative Network and the National Rural Electric Association.

Directors attend seminars and meetings of several organizations to learn about the industry. Directors are asked to lobby and remain informed on legislative issues that could impact this industry and/or the cooperative way of doing business. The Board meets monthly and reviews financial reports, work plans, annual audits, planning documents and evaluates the cooperative operations while approving budgets and purchases.

Most of all, a director should be available to visit with their constituents and have a genuine spirit of helping others at all times.

Board meetings are typically held on the last Monday of every month, beginning at 9:00 a.m. in December, January and February and beginning at 8:00 a.m. the rest of the year. The estimated time needed to be committed annually is approximately 30 days which includes monthly meetings and committee assignments. Directors are compensated per diem for their time as well as all personal expenses.

If you are interested in becoming a candidate for the Renville-Sibley Board of Directors, contact the Renville-Sibley office at 1-800-826-2593 before Dec. 13 for further information.

## Scholar of the Month

Congratulations to Trista Smith from Cedar Mountain High School for being selected as the October Scholar of the Month. She was nominated because she is a leader in both academics and athletics, participating in NHS, volleyball and on the Blood Drive Committee. She also works at the Cougar Cub Child Daycare. One way Trista demonstrates integrity is by including students who are different than her in her activities. Renville-Sibley Co-op Power salutes Trista as the October Touchstone Energy Scholar of the month.



Trista Smith

More information on the Scholar of the Month program can be found on our website [www.renville-sibley.coop](http://www.renville-sibley.coop) under the Customer Service tab.

## Reporting Power Outages

The weather can be challenging at times for our members as well as Renville-Sibley. While the cooperative hopes it will never happen, Mother Nature can cause damage to our power lines resulting in a power outage. If you experience a power outage, please contact the office at 320-826-2593 or 800-826-2593. During business hours, your cooperative will do our best to answer as many calls as our phone system allows. If the number of calls coming into the office is overwhelming, the calls will be transferred to Cooperative Response Center (CRC) in Austin, Minn. After hours, all calls are transferred to CRC. Depending on the extent of the storm and the volume of calls coming into CRC, you may reach a live operator, or you may go into their automated system. It is helpful to your cooperative and CRC to have your phone number correct in Renville-Sibley's database when reporting an outage. Members are asked to review the phone numbers printed on the billing statement for accuracy and notify the cooperative if a change should be made to this contact information.

You also have the option to send a text message to report an outage. To sign-up for this feature, please visit our website [www.renville-sibley.coop](http://www.renville-sibley.coop) and click on Outage Reporting at the top of the page. You will be asked a series of questions to get this service set-up. Contact the office if you have any problems.

Remember, during times of large power outages, tune in to the following radio stations for updates on the status of the power outage: KLGR, KOLV, Q102, KWLM and KDJS.

**During large power outages, tune in for updates:**  
**KLGR**  
**KOLV**  
**Q102**  
**KWLM**  
**KDJS.**

Comparative Report			
	Current Sept. 30, 2019	One Year Ago Sept. 30, 2018	10 Years Ago Sept. 30, 2009
Average Number of Consumers	1,882	1,882	1,941
kWhs purchased	104,907,378	130,848,493	112,399,457
Cost of purchased power	\$6,061,800.72	\$7,807,396.39	\$4,276,606.30



Riverview Christmas Tree Farm is located near Canton, S.D., near the Big Sioux River.

# OH, CHRISTMAS TREE

## Cut-Your-Own Tree Opportunities

**Brenda Kleinjan**

[editor@sdrea.coop](mailto:editor@sdrea.coop)

Traditions can be an important part of the holidays and for many, nothing matches the aroma and feel of a fresh-cut Christmas tree.

Many have taken advantage of the cut-your-own tradition at the Black Hills National Forest. But for those not wanting to trek across the Rushmore State to the Black Hills, Christmas tree farms closer to home have been part of holidays.

In eastern South Dakota, families have been cutting their own trees at the Riverview Christmas Tree Farm at Canton, S.D., since 1989.

The tree farm is a family business that was opened in 1989 by Bill and Darlene Keizer. The business is now operated by the Todd and Shari Gannon family.

Families search the acres of trees looking for the perfect tree for their family. Five tree varieties ranging in sizes from six to 10 feet provide families several options. The tree farm provides the saw for cutting the tree and a tractor/trailer brings the family and their tree back to the farm's lodge to enjoy hot drinks and holiday treats.

The farm is open four weekends in November and December. In 2019, the farm will be open Saturdays (Nov. 23, Nov. 30, Dec. 7 and Dec. 14) from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sundays (Nov. 24, Dec. 1, Dec. 8 and Dec. 15) from Noon to 5 p.m. as well as Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 28 (2:30 p.m. to 5 p.m.) and Black Friday, Nov. 29 (10 a.m. to 5 p.m.)



Photo by SD Tourism

Visitors to the tree farm can enjoy the beautiful scenery, shopping for holiday crafts and Christmas wreaths. They can also pet the animals in the pen and see Santa!

## Riverview Christmas Tree Farm Tree Varieties

- Fraser Fir
- Balsam Fir
- Canaan Fir
- White Pine
- Black Hills Spruce

Riverview Christmas Tree Farm features cut-your-own trees, ranging from six to nine feet tall, sell for \$9 to \$11 per foot, depending on the variety. Pre-cut trees, ranging from six to 10 feet tall sell for \$7 to \$8 per foot.

Learn more about Riverview Christmas Tree Farm at <http://www.riverviewtreefarm.com/>

## Tips for Trees Cut at Black Hills National Forest

### Cutting Guidelines

- The maximum tree height is 20 feet.
- Cut the stump within six inches of the ground.
- Cut and scatter the limbs and other unused parts of the tree so they lie within a foot of the ground.

### Setting Up Your Tree

- Keep your tree as fresh as possible.
- Store your tree upright in a bucket of water in the garage or basement until you are ready to move it indoors.
- In the house, keep the tree well watered at all times.
- Keep the tree away from fireplaces, stoves or heating vents.

### Kinds of trees available:

- **Ponderosa pine** is noted for its full shape and long graceful needles. It grows almost everywhere in the Black Hills.
- **Spruce** is very popular as a holiday tree. It grows at higher elevations and on wetter, north-facing slopes and drainage bottoms. Spruce has a classic tapered form and its short needles allow for easy stringing of lights and ornaments.
- **Juniper** is a shorter tree found at lower elevations in the southern and western parts of the Black Hills. Many people like its full shape and bluish-green coloring.

# Cut Your Own Fresh Christmas Tree This Year From the Black Hills National Forest

Christmas tree tags will be available Nov. 12 to Dec. 24, 2019, at Forest Service offices in western South Dakota and northeast Wyoming.

The Black Hills National Forest will also continue the Fourth-Grade Free Christmas Tree Program again this holiday season.

Fourth-graders are eligible for a FREE Christmas tree permit through the Every Kid Outdoors initiative. Every Kid Outdoors is a nationwide call to action to build the next generation of conservationists. All fourth graders are eligible to receive a fourth-grade pass that allows free access to federal lands and waters across the country for a full year.

In order for students to receive a free Christmas tree permit, they must present a valid fourth grade pass or paper voucher printed from the Every Kid Outdoors website: <https://everykidoutdoors.gov>. To obtain the voucher, visit the website, click on the "Get your pass" button and follow the instructions. Print out the paper voucher and bring it with you to a district office or the supervisor's office on the Black Hills National Forest.

White spruce, ponderosa pine and western juniper are available and can be cut in many parts of the National Forest.

Each permit is accompanied by a handout with guidance about appropriate tree removal. Trees may not be cut in developed recreation sites, Forest Service administrative sites, active timber sales, the Black Hills Experimental Forest near Rochford, the Black Elk Wilderness, the Beaver Park area near Sturgis or within Spearfish Canyon.

Individual permits cost \$10, up to a maximum of five permits are allowed per individual and the maximum allowable height of cut trees is 20 feet. Permits require that you cut the entire tree, leaving no more than six inches of stump and that you cut unused branches so they lay flat on the ground.

The adhesive permit tag must be attached before a tree is removed from the cutting area; a citation can be issued for possession of a cut-but-untagged tree, even if a tag is available in person or in your vehicle.

Trees should be placed in water as soon as possible to help keep needles fresh. Once indoors, trees should be placed away from stoves, heaters or heating ducts. After Christmas, used trees should be disposed of properly as yard waste. Do not dump used trees on national forest land.

There are no refunds for uncut trees or unused permits. Please note that Forest Service offices will be closed on Thanksgiving Day. Dec. 24 is the last day permits will be sold at Forest Service offices. Private vendors may sell tags until Dec. 24.

Tags are available by mail from the Forest Supervisor's Office, 1019 North 5th Street, Custer, SD, 57730. Enclose a check or money order in the amount of \$10 for each tree permit, up to a maximum of five trees per individual as well as a self-addressed stamped envelope. The Forest Service will mail tags and cutting instructions.

# October Board Meeting Highlights

The October board meeting was held on Monday, Oct. 28, at 8 a.m. All board members were present except Alan Neyers. Others present were CEO DeeAnne Newville, Gene Alex and Lenae Wordes.

## The board reviewed and approved the following items:

- Minutes of the September board meeting
- Operating and disbursement reports for the month of September
- Capital credits to estates
- Safety report for October
- MREA Annual Certification of voting delegates
- Capital credit retirement
- 990 Report

## The board reviewed:

- Total new members for the month of September
- Reports from staff members as to the activities in their department. Items in the reports include:
  - High level Statement of Operations review – YTD through September (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
    - Christmas Open House
    - Co-ops in the Classroom

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

## Notice:

**The November board meeting will be held on Monday, Nov. 25, at 8 a.m.**  
**The December board meeting will be held on Thursday, Dec. 19, at 9 a.m.**

## 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

## Where's the Number?

Last month, Dave Fank 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 Dec. 4, you will receive this credit on your electric statement. Good luck in your search!



## Operation Round Up® Board to Meet

The Operation Round Up® Board of Trustees will meet on Tuesday, Dec. 10. Applications received in our office by Dec. 1 will be reviewed at this meeting.

## Outage Report

affecting 10 members or more

Date:	10-5-19
Time off:	7:19 a.m.
Time on:	8:50 a.m.
Substation:	Birch Cooley
Cause:	Lightning

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

## RSCPA Mission Statement

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



## Is your home's OLD WIRING a problem?

Learn more:  Safe  
Electricity.org



# Don't Let Old Electrical Wiring Pose a Problem

People who love older homes usually get drawn in by their grandeur. They see a Victorian home in the historic district and fall in love with its stately staircase and intricate architectural features. Once they sign on the dotted line, they painstakingly restore woodwork, make sure windows are in working order and tend to other repairs. One of the top priorities on their “To Do” list should be to get the electrical system inspected by a qualified electrician. 706700

Just because the wiring in a home is old doesn't automatically mean there's a problem, but there could be. According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), many older homes that still have outdated wiring can't handle the electrical load of today's modern appliances. That's not good because old, outdated wiring could pose a fire hazard.

As electrical components age or become overloaded, the system can overheat and wear out insulation. This can lead to arcs (electrical discharge) and short circuits – the two main causes of home electrical wiring fires, according to the CPSC. In addition, old rubber wire insulation can become brittle and easily flake, leaving wires exposed.

Older wiring called knob and tube can be found in homes build around 1950 or earlier. If your electrical system was not thoroughly inspected when you bought it or if it was inspected but it has been several years, have it inspected by an electrician to make

sure it is safe and that it adequately meets the electrical needs of your home.

If your house was built between 1965 and 1973, it could be dangerous for another reason. Aluminum is great for cans, but not for wiring since it can overheat. Unfortunately, it was used in 2 million homes that were built during that time period.

Regardless of the age of your home, be sure to get any potentially dangerous wiring issues checked out by a professional, especially if:

- Your circuit breaker keeps tripping or fuses blow often.
- You notice unusual power draws or dimming or flickering lights.
- You see discolored (dark colored) outlets or switch plates or they are warm to the touch.
- You notice unusual odors like a burning smell but can't find a source.
- Your outlets only allow you to plug in a two-pronged plug (and not a three-pronged plug), which means they are not grounded.
- You don't have ground-fault circuit interrupters near faucets or other sources of water in your home.
- Your house was built more than 40 years ago.

For more information about electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

# Keeping Good Cheer

## Holiday Safety and Crime Protection

### National Neighborhood Watch

<https://nnw.org/holiday-safety>

The jolly man in red is the only visitor that's supposed to be entering homes stealthily this Christmas, shimmying down chimneys and stealing bites of cookies washed down with gulps of milk.

But, for too many, St. Nick isn't the only unexpected holiday visitor. Porch pirates are stealing holiday joy and other criminals are itching to find untended digital portals into homes.

A 2017 study titled "Package Theft Report: Porch Pirates, Purchase Habits and privacy" by Schorr.com found that nearly 1 in 3 Americans say they have experienced package theft. A separate study by [www.insurancequotes.com](http://www.insurancequotes.com) found that around 25.9 million Americans have had a package delivered during the holiday shopping season stolen, up from 23.5 million reported porch thefts in 2015.

## General Holiday Safety and Crime Prevention Tips

*Courtesy of the Knoxville, Tenn., Police Department*

### At Home

- Make sure all doors and windows have secondary locks (window pins, deadbolts, dowels, etc.) and use them!
- Don't hide spare keys in mailboxes or planters or under doormats.
- Ensure that dark areas and entrances have outdoor lights that are turned on after dark or are activated by sensors.
- Keep trees and shrubbery trimmed so they do not conceal doors and windows. Remember, overgrown foliage can provide a hiding place for criminals.
- Place gifts where they can't be seen from the outside.



Packages left on doorsteps can attract holiday thieves.

- Consider safe deposit boxes for coin and stamp collections, seldom-worn jewelry, stock bonds, etc.
- Be sure to mail cards, checks or gift certificates from the Post Office or at a blue U.S. Postal Service collection box.
- Lock your vehicle and remove all the valuables. Yes, even in your driveway.

### Strangers at Your Door

- Use caution anytime there is a stranger at your door.
- Be suspicious of unexpected sales calls or deliveries. Ask for identification.
- Be aware of scams that criminals commit to take advantage of people's generosity during the holidays.

## Avoid Porch Theft:

### Five tips to Protect Your Packages

- Network with Neighbors
- Have Packages Delivered to Work
- Leave Specific Drop-off Instructions
- Use a Smart Lock
- Install Security Cameras

## Keeping Your Devices Secure

- **Use Security Software.** Install anti-virus software, anti-spyware software and a firewall. Set your preference to update these protections often. Installing these types of programs will help protect against intrusions and infections that can compromise your computer files and passwords. These programs install security patches for your operating system and other software programs.
- **Avoid Phishing Emails.** Don't open files, click on links or download programs sent by strangers. Opening a file from someone you don't know could expose your system to a computer virus or spyware that captures your passwords or other information you type.
- **Be Wise about Wi-Fi.** Before you send personal information over your laptop or smartphone on a public wireless network in a coffee shop, library, airport, hotel or other public place, see if your information will be protected. If you use an encrypted website, it protects only the information you send to and from that site. If you use a secure wireless network, all the information you send on that network is protected.
- **Lock Up Your Laptop.** Keep financial information on your laptop only when necessary. Don't use an automatic login feature that saves your user name and password and always log off when you're finished. That way, if your laptop is stolen, it will be harder for a thief to get at your personal information.
- **Read Privacy Policies.** Yes, they can be long and complex, but they tell you how the site maintains accuracy, access, security and control of the personal information it collects; how it uses the information and whether it provides information to third parties. If you don't see or understand a site's privacy policy, consider doing business elsewhere.



Outdoor decorations can also be targets of holiday grinch.

- Investigate charities before making donations. Ask how the funds will be used.

### Leaving for the Holidays

- Ask a trusted friend, neighbor or Neighborhood Watch member to watch your home.
- Use timers for lights and radios while you're away.
- Remember to make arrangements for mail and newspapers.

### After the Holidays

- Don't advertise expensive toys, electronics or other gifts received by the boxes left for garbage collections. Compress large boxes and place them in black garbage bags for pick-up.
- Add new items to your home inventory. Take photos or video of all items of value in your home and list each item's make, model, serial number and other information.
- Engrave new items to help identify them in the event they are stolen.

### What to do if you've become a victim of a porch pirate

- Check with your delivery company to make sure your package was actually delivered.
- Know exactly what's in the missing box.
- If you see the thief, pay attention to

## Six Ways to Grinch-Proof Your Holiday Light Displays

- **Shut down at night**
- **Set up surveillance**
- **Crime-proof your yard**
- **Consider bringing in valuable items at night**
- **Stay connected**
- **Report, report, report**

what his or her vehicle looks like and its license plate number. Second to that, get the thief's physical description – gender, approximate height and weight and what they're wearing – so you can tell an officer.

- Call 911 and ask for an officer to come to your home.
- If you have a security camera on your home, get a copy of the video to police. Ask your neighbors if their cameras captured the thief in action.

Source: National Neighborhood Watch, A Division of the National Sheriffs' Association

The Minnesota Commerce Department has been alerted to a new mail scam targeting seniors.

# CONSUMER ALERT

## Department of Commerce Alerted to New Publishers Clearing House Lottery Scam

### Minnesota Department of Commerce

[consumer.protection@state.mn.us](mailto:consumer.protection@state.mn.us)

The Minnesota Department of Commerce has been alerted to a new mail scam targeting seniors across Minnesota.

Minnesotans are receiving letters in the mail mimicking the branding of Publishers Clearing House, announcing they have won the “100 Million Dollars Super Cash Giveaway Promotion.” The letter includes an enclosed check of approximately \$6,000 to cover “insurance and attorney fees.” Recipients are instructed to contact the “Claims Manager” before cashing the check to receive further information on the prize. Recipients are also instructed to not discuss their win with third parties, “as required by Federal and State laws.”

The Department of Commerce discovered that when the “Claims Manager” is called, the recipient answers the call with, “Publishers Clearing House, how may I help you?” The caller is instructed to cash the check and then wire money to the scammer as soon as possible in order to process their multi-million dollar winnings. The original check then bounces, and the recipient has lost the money they wired and incurs returned check charges.

The scam is particularly sophisticated, due to the convincing Publishers Clearing House branding and the professionalism of the call centers that field the calls. Even so, Minnesotans can stay in control by remembering these tips:

- Do not wire money or send a money order, gift card or cashier’s check. It is almost impossible to recover these funds if you have been scammed.
- Be wary of urgent requests. Do not fall for a pitch that encourages you to “act now” or creates a false sense of urgency.
- If a deal sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Avoid investments that are pitched as having no risk or offering

unrealistic returns. Always be cautious of lottery scams.

- Never rely on information you receive in a letter or email. Look up contact information yourself and call Publishers Clearing House, or whatever company sent you the letter, directly if you have any questions.

“If you suspect that you have received this scam, or any financial scam, please contact the Department of Commerce,” said Commerce Commissioner Steve Kelley. “Hearing from Minnesotans helps us investigate fraud, gather evidence to share with our federal partners and stop scammers from finding new victims.”

One Minnesotan who alerted the Department of Commerce to the scam is Donna Osmundson of Adams, Minnesota.

“When I received the letter in the mail, it looked too good to be true,” said Donna. “The Department of Commerce confirmed for me that it is scam. I am glad I notified the Department, so they can help educate people that these types of scams are out there, and they can help seniors know what to look for.”

“We have not yet received reports of victims in Minnesota who have fell for this specific scam, but we are aware of victims in other states. We have seen victims of other lottery scams who have lost substantial amounts of money and it is almost guaranteed that there are victims of this Publishers Clearing House scam who have not reported their loss to the Department,” said Marty Fleischhacker, senior fraud ombudsman at Commerce. “All signs point to this scam being widespread, so please, contact Commerce if you have received it.”

If you have questions or if you believe you may have been the victim of a scam or fraud, please contact the Commerce Department’s Consumer Services Center by email at [consumer.protection@state.mn.us](mailto:consumer.protection@state.mn.us) or by phone at 651-539-1600 or 800-657-3602 (Greater Minnesota). Commerce staff will maintain your confidentiality.



## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



**Laundry Tip:** Dry towels and heavier cottons separately from lighter clothing. You'll spend less time drying the lighter-weight items.

*Source: energy.gov*

## CELEBRATE THE SEASON AND SAVINGS

*Enjoying the holidays doesn't have to mean extra energy costs. For energy-saving tips, contact your local electric cooperative. And here's to a happy holiday for you and your loved ones!*

## RE-ENERGIZING EFFICIENCY



## CALL OR CLICK BEFORE YOU DIG

*Call 811 or visit call811.com at least two to three business days before you start digging. Professional locators will mark underground utility lines so you can work safely—and save you from possible injury or property damage.*

*Together we're*

## RE-ENERGIZING SAFETY

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**October 19-January 5**

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

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**November 15-December 18**

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

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**November 22-23**

Holiday Arts Christmas Craft Show, Masonic Hall, Mitchell, SD, 605-359-2049

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**November 22-January 5**

Winter Wonderland, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-275-6060

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**November 23-24**

Winterfest: A Winter Arts Festival, Aberdeen, SD, 605-226-1557

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**November 26-December 26**

Christmas at the Capitol, Pierre, SD, 605-773-3178

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**November 29**

Annual Holiday Open House, Cultural Heritage Center, Pierre, SD, 605-773-3458

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**November 29-30**

1880 Train Holiday Express, Hill City, SD, 605-574-2222

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**November 30**

Holiday Celebration and Winter Market, Rapid City, SD, 605-716-7979

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**December 6-7, 12-14, 19-21**

Strawbale Winery Twilight Flights, Renner, SD, 605-543-5071

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**December 7**

Christmas in the Village Craft Fair, Community Center, Oacoma, SD, Contact Leslie at 605-730-1076

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**December 14: Frontier Christmas,  
Lake City, SD, 605-448-5474**

Photo courtesy: travelouthakota.com

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**December 7**

Holidazzle Light Parade, Spearfish, SD, 605-717-9294

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**December 7**

Rapid City Garden Club's 58th Annual Wreath & Centerpiece Sale, Canyon Lake Activity Center, Rapid City, SD, 605-343-0710

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**December 7-8**

Living Christmas Tree, Civic Arena, Aberdeen, SD, 605-229-6349

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**December 7-8, 14-15,  
21-24 and 27-28**

1880 Train Holiday Express, Hill City, SD, 605-574-2222

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**December 14-15**

Black Hills Cowboy Christmas, Lead, SD, 605-584-2067

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**December 15-March 31**

South Dakota snowmobile trails season, Lead, SD, 605-584-3896

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**December 31**

Make-A-Wish New Year's Eve Benefit and Dance, Ramkota Hotel & Convention Center, Doors Open at 7 p.m., Aberdeen, SD, 605-370-4588

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**January 7-9**

Dakota Farm Show, Vermillion, SD, 800-873-1411

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**January 16-17**

Media One Funski, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-339-0000

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**January 24-25**

Pro Snocross Races, Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

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**January 25**

31st Annual Living History Fair 2020, A trade fair with historic arts, crafts, displays, museums and clubs representing times of A.D. 1000 to A.D.1890, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Lake Area Technical Institute, Watertown SD, 605-693-4589 or christy@cchsmuseum.org

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**January 31-February 9**

Annual Black Hills Stock Show & Rodeo, Rapid City, SD, 605-355-3861

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**March 14**

28 Below Fatbike Race, Ride and Tour, Lead, SD, 605-641-4963

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**March 20-21, 27-28**

Annual Schmeckfest, Freeman, SD, 605-925-4237

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**March 28**

Annual Ag Day at the Washington Pavilion, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-6000

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.