Central Electric
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative
May 2018 Vol. 19 No. 1

Cooperative Connections

Energy Upgrades for a Happier Home

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Electricity has improved our quality of life.

What is Yet to Come?

Ken Schlimgen

General Manager

It is early April as I write the month's column for the newsletter. I just made the decision to reschedule your cooperative's Annual Meeting due to the winter storm that blew through our area. The storm left us to enjoy some below normal temperatures for another week before spring arrives. It is a reminder on just how much the weather impacts each of us and our businesses.

April can be known for stormy weather that can inherently include power outages, although we have had very few issues. While Central Electric strives to provide reliable electricity to our members, there are times when Mother Nature has other plans. Most of us can ride out a storm from the comfort and convenience of our homes. However, there is a group of professionals that spring into action when the weather takes a turn for the worst – co-op line workers.

Central Electric employees are responsible for keeping 4,486 miles of lines working across eight counties. Electric power is delivered to your home 24/7, regardless of the weather, holidays or personal considerations. While some of the tools that cooperative employees use have changed over the years, the dedication to the job has not. Working at an electric cooperative is not a glamourous profession. At its essence, it is inherently dangerous, requiring employees to work near high voltage lines in the worst of conditions, at any time of the day or night. When you see one of your cooperative employees, please tell them thanks for delivering such a valuable product to your home.

This product, electricity, has always provided tremendous value. Since your cooperative was established, electricity has improved the quality of life for its member owners. Today our homes, shops and buildings are filled with countless pieces of equipment that use electricity to provide us with comfort, entertainment, security, and income. Through the years, equipment has become more energy efficient. Many of us are actually using less electricity in our homes than we did 10 years ago. I believe Central Electric's energy efficiency incentives and educational programs have helped this trend despite all the digital devices and technologies available to us.

One new technology that I predict will become more mainstream in the near future is plug in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEV).

One new technology that I predict will become more mainstream in the near future is plug in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEV). In my research over the past few months, it appears the drawbacks of a PHEV are gone although we as consumers still have a concern with what we perceive as limited range.

There are 16 models of PHEV's available today, and the auto industry is making huge investments in this technology for the future. PHEV's utilize a combination battery and combustion engine. Depending on the model you choose, the PHEV battery will provide the first 17 - 53 miles of driving, and then the combustion engine takes over. For most of us, our daily driving can be provided from the battery. Prices on PHEV's are dropping and the driving range is increasing.

As a cooperative member, there are three distinct benefits from owning a PHEV. First, the additional sales of electricity from your cooperative help to keep electric rates lower. These additional sales provide additional margins to your cooperative, minimizing future changes in rates.

Second, almost 38% of the electricity delivered by Central Electric comes from renewable resources like hydro and wind. Renewables are likely to increase going into the future. This makes a PHEV much more environmentally friendly than driving a traditional vehicle.

Third, driving a PHEV will save you money. There are several cost calculators on the internet, and many of the auto manufacturers provide this information.

I took a look at what the Hybrid Chrysler Pacifica, the new version of a minivan, would save. According to Chrysler, if you drive 12,000 miles annually, the hybrid option will reduce your annual trips to the fuel pump from 23 to just 11 saving over $400 annually. This includes the cost of electricity for charging the vehicle but does not account for what you avoid both in dollars and calories from a soda and chips each time you fuel up. In addition, purchasing a new Chrysler Pacifica Hybrid qualifies for a $7,500 federal tax credit, lowering your upfront costs.

In closing, I want to remind you that May is National Electrical Safety Month. Please find time to educate yourself and your family on how to be safe around electrical equipment. Knowing how to prevent an accident is invaluable and knowing what to do when an accident happens is priceless. Until next month, Be Safe.

CENTRAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

(USPS 018-963)

CENTRAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is the monthly publication for the members of Central Electric Cooperative, PO Box 850, Mitchell, SD 57301. Families subscribe to Cooperative Connections as part of their electric cooperative membership. Central Electric Cooperative Connections' purpose is to provide reliable, helpful information to electric cooperative members on matters pertaining to their cooperative and living better with electricity. Also available at www.centralec.coop.

Subscription information: Central Electric Cooperative members devote 50 cents from their monthly electric payments for a subscription. Non-member subscriptions are available for $12 annually. Periodicals Postage Paid at Central Electric Cooperative, PO Box 850, Mitchell, SD 57301, and at additional mailing offices.

Postmaster: Please send address changes to Central Electric Cooperative, PO Box 850, Mitchell, SD 57301. Address all other correspondence to: Cooperative Connections, PO Box 850, Mitchell, SD 57301 Telephone: (605)996-7516; Fax: (605) 996-0869; e-mail: cec@centralec.coop; website: www.centralec.coop.

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Mission Statement

Provide Reliable Energy & Services with a Commitment to Safety and Member Satisfaction

Annual Meeting Rescheduled

Due to an early April winter storm, the 18th Annual Meeting has been rescheduled to Thursday, April 19th at the Mitchell Corn Palace. The meal will be served at 6:30 P.M. with the business meeting to follow at 7:30 P.M.

Surplus Vehicle

2006 Chevy Express Cut Away Van - $7,500

Northern truck steel utility box in great shape
185,900 miles
2 wheel drive
6 Liter engine
Receiver hitch
GVWR 9,600 lbs
GVWR-Front 4,100 lbs
No accidents
Regular maintenance

The vehicle will be available for purchase on Thursday, April 26th at 9:00 A.M.

The first buyer with cash can purchase the vehicle. If multiple buyers are present, a lottery will be held to determine the buyer.

To view the vehicle prior to the purchase date, call 605-996-7516 and schedule an appointment with Lincoln.

Fly Drones Safely

Drones are unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) that are increasingly being used recreationally and professionally. As a result, there is an increasing need to ensure these craft are flown safely and within regulations.

Keep drones away from overhead power lines. If a drone flies into a power line, it could cause power outages. It could also result in downed lines, which pose a dangerous electrical safety hazard. The falling debris could also endanger public safety.

Touching a downed line or anything it has fallen on, like a fence or a tree limb, could get you injured or even killed. Stay away and instruct others to do the same. If you come across downed power lines, call 911 to notify emergency personnel and the utility immediately.

Follow federal guidelines for registering your drone or getting business approval, and be aware of and abide by community and state-specific legislation. Also, keep these FAA safety guidelines in mind:

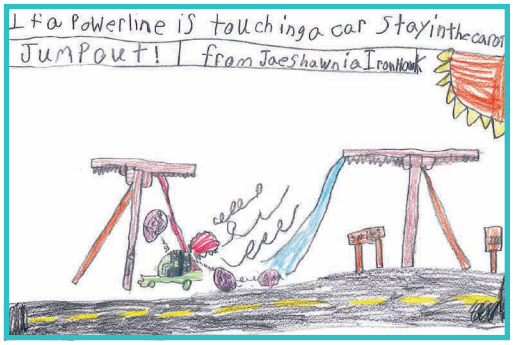
- Before flying the drone, check it for damage. Have a damaged drone repaired before use.
- Never fly drones higher than 400 feet.
- Do not fly the drone beyond your line of sight.
- Do not fly near airports, manned aircraft, stadiums or people.
- Do not fly for commercial purposes, unless specifically authorized by the FAA.
- Do not fly in bad weather conditions, such as low visibility or high winds.
- Never fly your drone recklessly. You could be fined for endangering people or other aircraft.

Source: safeelectricity.org

KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER

"If a power line is touching a car, stay in the car or jump out!"

JaeShawnia Iron Hawk, Second-grader at Dupree Public School



JaeShawnia is the daughter of Lindsey Flying By, Dupree, S.D. She is a member of Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative, Timber Lake, 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.

Comforting Casseroles

Photo courtesy: McCormick

Quesadilla Casserole

1 lb. ground beef
1/2 cup chopped onion
2 (8 oz. each) cans tomato sauce
1 (15 oz.) can black beans, drained and rinsed
1 (8-3/4 oz.) can whole kernel corn, undrained
1 (4-1/2 oz.) can chopped green chiles, undrained
2 tsp. chili powder
1 tsp. ground cumin
1 tsp. garlic, minced
1/2 tsp. oregano leaves
1/2 tsp. crushed red pepper
6 (8-inch) flour tortillas
2 cups shredded Cheddar cheese

Brown beef and onion in large skillet on medium-high heat; drain. Add tomato sauce, beans, corn and green chiles; mix well. Stir in all seasonings. Bring to boil. Reduce heat to low; simmer 5 minutes. Spread 1/2 cup of the beef mixture on bottom of 9x13-inch baking dish sprayed with no stick cooking spray. Top with 3 of the tortillas, overlapping as needed. Layer with 1/2 of the remaining beef mixture and 1/2 of the cheese. Repeat with remaining tortillas, beef mixture and cheese. Bake at 350°F. for 15 minutes or until heated through. Let stand 5 minutes before serving. Makes 8 servings.

Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 391, Total Fat 19g, Sodium 950mg, Cholesterol 63mg, Carbohydrates 31g, Protein 24g, Dietary Fiber 4g

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Ham and Cauliflower Casserole

4 cups chopped fresh cauliflower
1/4 cup butter, cubed
1/3 cup flour
2 cups milk
1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
1/2 cup sour cream
2 cups cubed cooked ham
1 (4 oz.) can mushrooms, drained

Topping:

1 cup soft bread crumbs
1 T. butter, melted

In a large saucepan, cover cauliflower with water. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 5 to 10 minutes or until tender. Meanwhile, in another large saucepan, melt butter; stir in flour until smooth. Gradually add milk. Bring to a boil; cook and stir until thickened. Remove from heat. Stir in cheese and sour cream until melted. Drain cauliflower. In large bowl, combine cauliflower, ham and mushrooms. Add cheese sauce and toss to coat. Transfer to a greased 2-quart baking dish. Combine topping ingredients; sprinkle over casserole. Bake, uncovered, at 350°F. for 40 to 45 minutes.

Rebecca Hauser, Tripp, S.D.

Chicken Crescent Casserole

4 cups cubed cooked chicken or turkey
1 can cream of chicken soup
1 can cream of celery soup
1 (8 oz.) can sliced water chestnuts, drained
1 (4 oz.) can mushroom stems and pieces, drained
2/3 cup mayonnaise
1/2 cup chopped celery
1/2 cup chopped onion
1/2 cup sour cream
1 (8 oz.) can refrigerated crescent rolls
6 oz. shredded Swiss or American cheese
2 to 4 T. butter, melted

In a large saucepan, combine first 9 ingredients. Cook over medium heat until hot and bubbly. Pour into an ungreased 12x8-inch baking dish. Place rolls on top of hot chicken mixture. Combine cheese and butter; spread over rolls. Bake at 350°F. for 20 to 25 minutes or until crust is deep golden brown. ***Variation:*** *Substitute 4 cups of imitation crabmeat for the chicken or turkey and 1 can cream of shrimp soup in place of the cream of chicken soup.*

Mary Crane, Mitchell, S.D.

Jalapeno Tater Tot Casserole

1 (2 lb.) bag tater tots
2 (8 oz.) pkgs. cream cheese, softened
1 cup sour cream
2 cups Mexican Cheddar jack shredded cheese, divided
1 lb. bacon, cooked and crumbled
6 jalapeno peppers, deseeded and diced
6 green onions, thinly sliced

Line a casserole dish with tater tots. Bake at 425°F. for 15 minutes. In a medium bowl, combine cream cheese, sour cream, 1 cup Cheddar jack cheese, bacon (reserve some for topping), diced jalapeno peppers and sliced onions (save a few for the top). Stir to thoroughly combine ingredients. Spread the jalapeno mixture over the tater tots. Top with remaining cup of cheese. Sprinkle with reserved bacon pieces and onion. Bake for 20 minutes. Serves 12.

Sandi Litschewski, Spearfish, S.D.

Please send your favorite dairy, dessert and salad 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 2018. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

Co-op Scholarships

Local students awarded $4,000 toward further education

The scholarships are funded by Basin Electric Power Cooperative and the family of the late Jay Headley of White Lake, SD.

Central Electric Cooperative awarded scholarships in the amount of $4,000 to local students. The scholarships are funded by Basin Electric Power Cooperative of Bismarck, ND and the family of the late Jay Headley of White Lake, SD.

Ashley Henglefelt of Alexandria, SD received a $1,000 Basin Electric Power Cooperative Scholarship. Ashley is the daughter of Don and Jody Henglefelt. She plans to attend Mount Marty College and study Radiologic Technology with a specialty in ultrasound. Her long-term focus includes working at a hospital where she can help people.

Dawson Munger and Nathan Linke were selected as this year's winners of the Jay Headley Memorial Scholarships and will receive a $1,000 scholarship each.

Dawson is the daughter of Marshall and Vanessa Munger of Pukwana, SD. She is currently attending Black Hills State University and majoring in outdoor education with minors in biology and criminal justice. Dawson hopes to become a Conservation Officer for South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks.

Nathan is the son of Henry and Paula Linke of Woonsocket, SD. Nathan plans to attend South Dakota State University for mechanical engineering with minors in aviation and engineering for precision agriculture. Nathan hopes to work for an agriculture related company.


Ashley Henglefelt


Dawson Munger


Kaylin Bohr


Nathan Linke

Basin Electric Power Cooperative also selects 20 scholars from cooperative employee dependents among its 141 member cooperatives.

Kaylin Bohr of Plankinton, SD was selected to receive a $1,000 scholarship among other member cooperatives. Kaylin is the daughter of Lawron and DeEtte Bohr. DeEtte is the Customer Service Supervisor and has worked for Central Electric for 20 years. Kaylin is currently attending the University of South Dakota and pursuing a major in Business Administration and minor in Spanish. Her long-term goals include studying abroad, joining the Peace Corps, and someday owning her own antique store.

About Basin Electric

Basin Electric is a consumer-owned, regional cooperative headquartered in Bismarck, ND. It generates and transmits electricity to 141 member rural electric systems in nine states: Colorado, Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming. These member systems distribute electricity to about 2.9 million consumers.

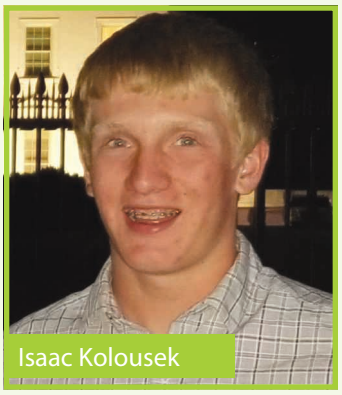

Heather Munsen


Collin Powell


Santana St. John


Caleb Jarding


Shaina Determan


Isaac Kolousek


Anna Schwader


Renee Farmer

Youth Tour Recipients

Area Students Win Trip of a Lifetime to Washington, D.C.

Each year, Central Electric Cooperative sponsors up to eight area high school juniors to attend the National Rural Electric Youth Tour in Washington, D.C in June.

This year's recipients are Heather Munsen of White Lake, daughter of Jim and Diane Munsen; Collin Powell of Chamberlain, son of Todd and Barbara Powell; Santana St. John of Fort Thompson, son of Pedro St. John and Shirley Drapeau; Caleb Jarding of Mitchell, son of John and Nicole Jarding; Shaina Determan of Alexandria, daughter of Gordon and Kay Determan; Isaac Kolousek of Wessington Springs, son of Scott and Amber Kolousek; Anna Schwader of Winfred, daughter of Max and Julie Schwader; and Renee Farmer of Letcher, daughter of Paul and Marci Farmer.

These representatives will join more than 1,500 students from across the country to tour Washington, D.C. They will meet with South Dakota's Congressional Delegation and have the opportunity to watch history come alive as they explore the museums, memorials and monuments.

Central Electric sponsors the trip to support our local youth as tomorrow's leaders and community members. One recipient from each director district may be selected based on an essay submission.

"Thank you for this incredible news and opportunity! I have had many family members and friends attend, and they have said that it was the experience of a lifetime!"

Boosting attic insulation is one way to cut energy bills.

ENERGY UPGRADES FOR A HAPPIER HOME

Boost Your Home's Comfort And Cut Energy Use

Diane Veto Parham

Contributing Writer

Imagine your house is not just the place you sleep, eat and store your stuff, but more like a part of your family, with its own unique needs. Ignore those needs and both you and your home suffer the consequences. But, pay closer attention, and you can find ways to enjoy a more pleasant – and efficient – living environment.

"It's amazing how much comfort you can provide by spending a few dollars," says Brian Sloboda, program manager for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, Arlington, Va., "You're going to increase your quality of life."

Knowing what your house needs is job one. Your heating-and-air system, your appliances, your insulation and even your lightbulbs can affect not only how your home is behaving, but also how much you're paying to keep it all running.

Need some ideas to get started? Here are seven smart ways to invest in a comfortable and energy-efficient house.

1. Get a professional home-energy audit

Cost: About $250 to $650.

Benefit: Making recommended improvements can cut energy use 10 percent to 40 percent.

DIY potential: None; use a certified professional.

A whole-house energy audit will take a few hours and evaluate household energy use, how the heating-and-air system is functioning and whether there's adequate insulation. Using diagnostic tools like a blower door and a thermal imaging camera, an auditor tests for leaks in ductwork and around windows and doors, plus other problems with the home's "envelope" – essentially, the parts of the house that separate its insulated, air-conditioned interior from unconditioned spaces like attics and crawlspaces.

2. Seal your house

Cost: Ranges from a few dollars for weather stripping and caulk to thousands of dollars for whole-house weatherization.

Benefit: Annual energy savings of 10 percent to 20 percent, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

DIY potential: You can do simple tasks; professionals should handle large-scale insulation or ductwork improvements

"Make sure your house is well insulated and well sealed," says Alan Shedd, director of energy solutions for Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives. A handy do-it-yourselfer can tackle simple sealing tasks. Feel for drafts or look for cracks and gaps around windows and doors, around electrical outlets and light fixtures, where pipes and wires penetrate walls, floors or ceilings, around fireplaces and where ceilings meet walls. Basic DIY materials like weather-stripping tape, tubes of caulk and spray foam are available at home-improvement stores.

If you invested in a professional home-energy audit, you know exactly where air is leaking and what repairs are needed. For fixes outside your skill set – for example, adding insulation or repairing leaky ductwork – ask your co-op for a list of certified contractors or visit Building Performance Institute's website.

3. Replace your HVAC system

Cost: Ranges from a few thousand dollars for a single-zone, mini-split system up to tens of thousands to install a geothermal system.

Benefit: Upgrading to ENERGY STAR®-certified heating and cooling equipment can deliver annual energy-bill savings of 10 percent to 30 percent, according to the Department of Energy; geothermal systems can cut energy use for heating and cooling by 25 percent to 50 percent.

DIY potential: You'll need a trained professional to properly size and install a system for your needs.

Heating and cooling account for about half of typical household energy costs. Minimize those expenses by upgrading to a more efficient system when your current unit ages out. Expect an HVAC system to last, on average, about 10 to 12 years.

Air-source heat pumps, which draw heat from the air and move it indoors or outdoors as needed, provide efficient heating and cooling from a single unit. Ground-source (geothermal) heat pumps are the most efficient, albeit more expensive, heating-and-cooling option. Drawing heat from stable ground temperatures rather than fluctuating air temperatures, geothermal heat pumps use about 25 percent to 50 percent less electricity than conventional HVAC systems.

Geothermal is "the gold standard" for peak efficiency in heating and cooling, Shedd says, where the property can accommodate an extensive vertical or horizontal underground-loop system.

For any heating-and-cooling system, proper installation is essential to reap full benefits of energy-efficient performance. A certified HVAC contractor will do a load calculation to determine what size HVAC unit is right for your house and whether any special adjustments are necessary for your location.

4. Modernize major appliances

Cost: Hundreds of dollars for major appliances; zero dollars for unplugging energy hogs that are not in use.

Benefit: Save anywhere from a few dollars up to hundreds of dollars a year.

DIY potential: You'll need a professional to install some appliances, but you can unplug small appliances around the house in minutes.

Among your appliances, the two biggest energy users are water heaters and refrigerators, which are nearly always on duty. After that, you might be surprised by another energy hog: consumer electronics.

"The fastest-growing user of electricity in your house is all the things you plug in," Shedd says.

5. Boost your attic insulation

Cost: National averages range from $1,300 to $2,000, depending on home location, attic size and type of insulation.

Benefit: Reduce your energy bills by keeping heated and cooled air in your living space.

DIY potential: Handy homeowners can add insulation with proper tools, safety gear and precautions, but it's a job best left to professionals.

It's all about the R-value. That's the number assigned to insulating materials based on how well they resist the transfer of heat. Higher numbers mean more resistance to heat flow and more effective insulation. For attics, recommended R-values range from 30 in warmer climates to 60 in colder regions. To learn what's recommended for your climate zone, consult the R-values map at www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=home_sealing.hm_improvement_insulation_table.

Older homes are more likely to lack enough attic insulation for peak efficiency, because "energy-efficiency standards keep going up and getting higher," Shedd says. "Thirty years ago, R-19 was standard practice."

What you spend to upgrade your attic insulation will depend on multiple variables, including the type of insulation – for example, fiberglass or cellulose, batts or loose fill – as well as the size of the attic space and the contractor's labor costs.

6. Switch to efficient light bulbs

Cost: A few dollars per bulb .

Benefit: Save about $50 per year by replacing 15 traditional incandescent bulbs with more efficient energy-saving light bulbs.

DIY potential: You can handle this.

You're going to change your light bulbs sooner or later. When you do, why not invest in bulbs that will save energy and create the lighting environment you want in your home?

When you're shopping, pay attention to lumens – the brightness of the bulb – rather than watts, which indicate how much energy it uses. Packaging often refers to the wattage a new bulb can replace – for example, an energy-saving 800-lumen bulb can replace a 60-watt bulb. Look at the lighting-facts label for details about the bulb's lumens, estimated yearly energy cost and lifespan and the lighting color. ENERGY STAR®-certified bulbs can deliver the brightness you want while using 70 percent to 90 percent less energy.

7. Install smart thermostats

Cost: Products range from about $170 to $250.

Benefit: Manufacturers estimate annual savings of 9 percent to 23 percent on heating and cooling costs.

DIY potential: Video and written instructions can guide you through installation and Wi-Fi set-up.

Early versions of programmable thermostats were hailed as tools that would help homeowners save energy and money and increase home comfort, all by tailoring thermostat settings to daytime, nighttime, weekend and vacation schedules. And they did – but only for those who bothered to manually program them.

Thanks to the internet connection and remote-control options, smart thermostats are ideal for use in electric cooperative load-control programs. Across the country, cooperatives are testing new programs that use this technology to help members save energy and help co-ops reduce demand.

Remember to look up and look out for power lines this planting season.

PLANT THE SEEDS OF SAFETY

Spring planting is upon us, and we'd like to remind you to stay safe.

Overhead power lines can be easily overlooked, and deadly if ignored. While you focus on planting this year's crop, Central Electric urges you to review these important tips.

Together, with the power of prevention, we are re-energizing farm safety.

Awareness doesn't spread as fast as an electrical current, but a little goes a long way.

BE ALERT

Awareness doesn't spread as fast as an electrical current, but a little goes a long way. Remember to look up and look out for power lines this planting season. Follow these Four S's to Stay Safe:

SPOTTER. Get a spotter to be sure you are staying at least 10 feet away from power lines on all sides, keeping in mind that equipment booms, especially on sprayers, can cause clearance issues.

STUDY. Educate yourself on any new equipment you may have purchased recently. New equipment has higher antennas and attachments than ever before. What cleared in previous years may not in your new ride. Know what you're working with.

SAGGING. If you see a power line sagging on your property or a possible clearance issue, contact your electric cooperative for a solution.

SEARCH. Sometimes trees or brush can make power lines difficult to see. Don't just glance up. Really take a minute to search your surroundings when moving equipment.

BE PREPARED

Hitting a power line can be scary. In certain situations, there may be a lot of noise. You've got seconds to understand what's happening and respond appropriately. Do you know what to do if you come in contact with a power line?

STAY PUT. Unless there is a fire, you need to stay calm and stay in the vehicle. Touching the ground and the vehicle at the same time (i.e. stepping out of the equipment) can be deadly. Don't risk becoming a conductor for the electricity to move from the vehicle to the ground through you. Stay put, even if it's loud.

CALL FOR HELP. Call for help from the vehicle if possible. 911 is a good place to start, especially if you don't know your local electric cooperative's number.

If you don't have your phone, try radioing for help. Additionally, chances are that the contact caused a power interruption, and cooperative personnel will find you when patrolling the line.

If someone comes to assist you, they need to stay away from the vehicle until power has been disconnected by the cooperative.

JUMP CLEAR. If there is a fire forcing you to leave, jump clear of the equipment. Jump with your feet together, as far away from the vehicle or equipment as possible. Be sure you are not touching the equipment and the ground at the same time. Then, shuffle (tiny, quick steps) or hop away with your feet together. The ground may be electrically charged in varying points surrounding the vehicle, so shuffling or hopping is very important.

For more information, visit PoweringYourSafety.com and share these tips with everyone on your operation.

YOUNG, PROFESSIONAL, AND RURAL:

South Dakota Leaders Talk of How to Connect

Brenda Kleinjan
brenda.kleinjan@sdrea.coop

Two South Dakotans – one an electric cooperative employee and the other a co-op director – took to the national stage to discuss what it takes to attract and keep young professionals in rural America.

Courtney Deinert, communications manager at Central Electric Cooperative in Mitchell, S.D., and Jamie Lewis, secretary of the board of directors at West River Electric Association in Wall, S.D., were two of four speakers on a panel entitled, "Attracting and Retaining Young Professionals to Rural America." The panel was moderated by Adam Schwartz of the Cooperative Way and was one of the sessions held at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association annual meeting in Nashville, Tenn., Feb. 25-28. Other panelists included a college student from Wisconsin and a Kentucky dairy farmer/lobbyist/trial lawyer.

Just because a high school student isn't interested in becoming a lineman or an accountant doesn't mean they won't play a role in your cooperative someday.

Deinert had a unique story to tell.

As a high school senior, she received a scholarship from her local electric cooperative, Charles Mix Electric Association in Lake Andes. She used the scholarship money to pursue an undergraduate degree in English at the University of South Dakota in Vermillion and her master's degree in adult and higher education.

Courtney Deinert, communications manage at Central Electric Cooperative in Mitchell, S.D., spoke of getting youth invovled in cooperatives.

"I like to think that scholarship has come full circle for my hometown co-op. I work at a neighboring co-op and I get to collaborate between my hometown co-op and my current cooperative on projects," Deinert said.

She said the investment made by her cooperative was important but the co-op's follow up left an impression.

"Just because a high school student isn't interested in becoming a lineman or an accountant doesn't mean they won't play a role in your cooperative someday," she told those gathered.

She stressed the follow up with area youth is important.

"They do want to help. They do want to be involved and they WILL come back to rural America if we help them with that follow up," she said.

In 2013, at 23 years old, Jamie Lewis was elected to the board of directors of West River Electric Association in Wall, S.D.

He is arguably one of the youngest electric cooperative directors in the nation.

"I had just come out of college and an older director approached me and said, 'I have a job for you if you're interested. Run for the West River Electric board,'" Lewis recounted. Lewis graduated from South Dakota State University with a degree in animal science and minors in agribusiness, ag marketing and business. He returned home to work in the family's family ranch and help with the family's insurance business.

"It was a contested election and I was lucky enough to be elected. I was then selected to be board secretary," said Lewis.

He then set his sights on running for a national cooperative board.

"I was later elected to the Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange board of directors," Lewis said. Federated is the insurer of many of America's electric cooperatives.

Lewis noted that his fellow directors are not typically in his age demographic.

"Most of them have kids or grandkids older than me," Lewis said. The age difference can be a benefit," he said. "Sometimes I look at the issues a little different from the others."

"Being part of the co-op allowed me to come back to rural America and be part of that," he said.

The panelists all agreed that being able to be connected via Internet is essential in keeping people in rural America.

"The internet for this generation is what electricity was 80 years ago," Schwartz noted during the panel.

Make, Model, Capacity, Oh My!

Tips for Purchasing New Appliances

By Paul Wesslund

NRECA Contributing Writer

The No. 1 problem for homeowners is trying to determine which of the things actually presents value.

The Sloboda family needed a new refrigerator so Brian volunteered to do the shopping. After all, he's a national expert on electric appliances.

He came home frustrated. There were just too many choices, even for the guy whose job title is program and product line manager for energy utilization, delivery, and energy efficiency at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, Arlington, Va.

"Just buy whatever you want," he told his wife, Sami Jo.

He finally got to use his in-depth knowledge when he looked over the model that Sami Jo brought home.

"Why didn't you get the version that has a camera inside, so you can use your smartphone in the grocery store to see if we need more milk?" he asked.

"Because it costs $500 more," she said.

That, said Brian, was a good reason.

That's the kind of reasoning we're all going to be doing in the coming months and years as we grapple with the newest trend in appliances – connection to the internet.

"The No. 1 problem for homeowners is trying to determine which of the things actually presents value," says Sloboda. For example, when you're on vacation you can use your smartphone to check whether you've left the oven on or the garage door open.

Sounds nice, but is it worth it?

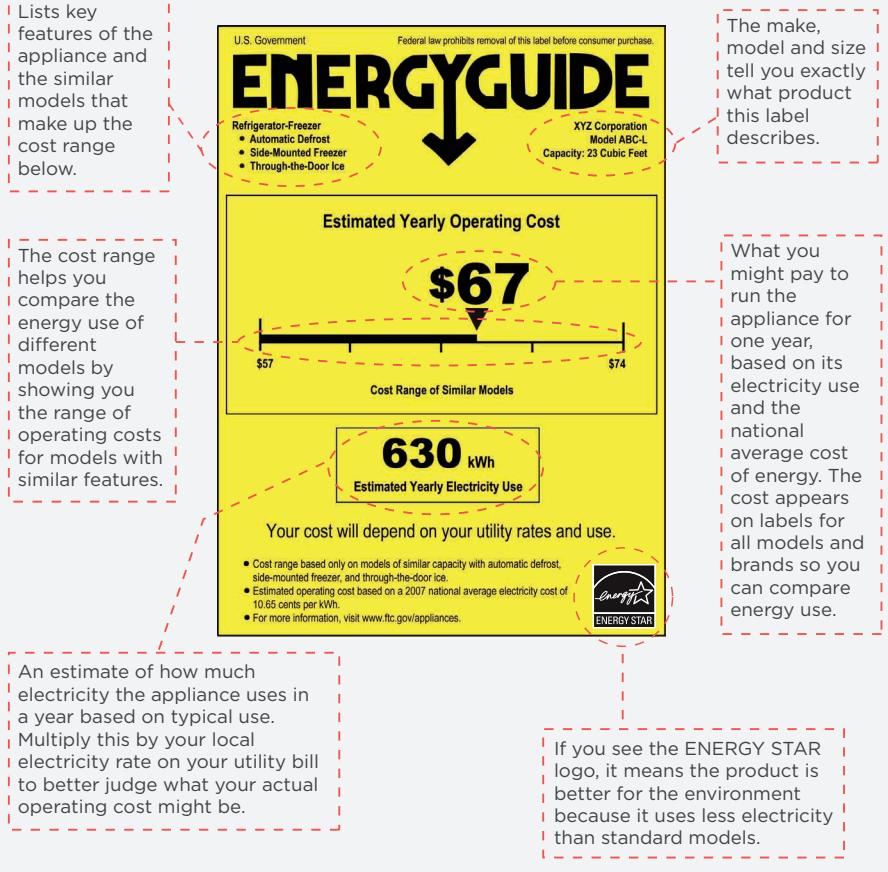
"There's a Crock Pot® app," he says. "Does that have value to you? It might if you use a Crock Pot® a lot."

"There are infinite possibilities," says Sloboda. "They sound nice when you first hear about them, but you have to remember you are paying more for those features."

Web-connected appliances could also offer online diagnostics. There might not be strong everyday reasons for a washing machine to be hooked into cyberspace, but

Understanding the ENERGYGUIDE Label

The ENERGYGUIDE label is a great tool that helps consumers compare the energy use and costs of new appliances. Use the sample below to better understand how to use the information found on the label.



Source: Federal Trade Commission

Home owners have a wide array of choices when it comes time to upgrade major energy-using appliances.

if it broke, the manufacturer could log in to figure out what's wrong. That could help decide the best way to repair or replace the equipment. But is it worth the extra cost?

"It's a good feature," says Sloboda, "but one you're only going to use when the appliance breaks."

If you're longing for lower-tech help in decision-making, look to the yellow and black U.S. Department of Energy's EnergyGuide label on each appliance.

"It's one of the single greatest pieces of information that you can find when you buy an appliance," says Sloboda.

He says the most useful info is the big dollar figure right in the middle of the label, showing what it will cost to use that appliance for a year.

Sloboda cautions that the number doesn't tell you exactly what you will pay because it doesn't use your local utility's kilowatt hour rate. But it's a perfect way to compare appliances because every appliance's label is based on the same national average electric rate.

"You can stand in that aisle looking at all the washing machines and you can scan the entire row and narrow your options down from a dozen," says Sloboda, "down to the three or four that use the least amount of money."

Taking charge of your appliances

Other especially useful parts of the label, he says, include the lower right corner – if you see an ENERGY STAR® logo it means the appliance will use less energy than one without. He also singles out the upper right corner that lists the manufacturer and model number, which you can use for more detailed comparisons with other models.

Sloboda also advises to pay attention to the age of your major energy-using appliances. In addition to dramatic energy efficiency advances over the past several years, motors start degrading in refrigerators and in heating and air conditioning systems. He says to consider upgrading air conditioners and heat pumps older than 10 years and refrigerators older than eight years.

Pay attention to the age of your major energy-using appliances.

The Department of Energy offers a handy way to check whether it's time to replace your refrigerator: visit the EnergyStar.gov website and in the search box, type "flip your fridge calculator." You'll find a link to a page where you can enter your type of refrigerator and its age to calculate how much you'd save buying a new one.

All these options mean more decisions for consumers. But help is on the way.

Sloboda says that electric co-ops are working with two national laboratories to study the most useful ways to connect appliances with the internet and with the utilities that provide the electricity. He says that over the next two years the study will report on how consumers can more easily make decisions on how to use appliances and even how to enhance cybersecurity for the growing number of internet-connected devices in the home.

Sloboda says the aim of the study is "to understand what the value of internet-connected devices is to the consumer. Then the manufacturers can start to build products that the consumer wants."

The study will also look for futuristic-sounding ways that co-op members can sign up for optional utility programs to help homeowners decide how they want to use electricity.

"The appliances would be networked together and they would talk to one another," says Sloboda. "In a very advanced scenario, the home could actually reconfigure the way appliances are being used depending on occupancy of the home at the moment and the weather conditions."

That setup could even let homeowners decide if they are a person who wants to save as much energy and money as possible or if they would rather the house be warmer or cooler.

"They won't have to figure out if they want to set the thermostat back," says Sloboda. "The homeowner would tell the system whether they wanted to maximize comfort or maximize savings, then the home would communicate to the utility. That way it won't be the utility controlling the system, it won't be the appliance manufacturer, but it will be the occupant of the house who is making the decisions."

Paul Wesslund writes on cooperative issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

"Helping with Horsepower"

Funds Help Purchase Lift for SpiritHorse Therapeutic Riding Program

Community members have an opportunity to experience the program during the Expo and Fun Day on Sunday, April 29.

General Manager Ken Schlimgen and Director Butch Morrison present a check to the program staff and volunteers. Left-right: Schlimgen, Morrison, Crystal Young, Shawna Orban, Laura Klock, Shannon Lerew

"Helping with Horsepower" received an Operation Round-Up grant on behalf of Reclamation Ranch and the SpiritHorse Therapeutic Riding Program for $2,300.

Grant funds helped purchase a wheelchair lift to allow people to ride who are physically unable to mount a horse.

Reclamation Ranch, located just south of Mitchell, is the home of Helping with Horsepower and the SpiritHorse Therapeutic Riding Program. The program serves families, groups and individuals with emotional or physical needs through interactions with horses.

"As an Equine Gestalt coach, my horses and I will encourage and support young women and teens seeking an environment to discover, cherish, and grow through 'outside of the box' experiences," says Program Director and Ranch owner Crystal Young.

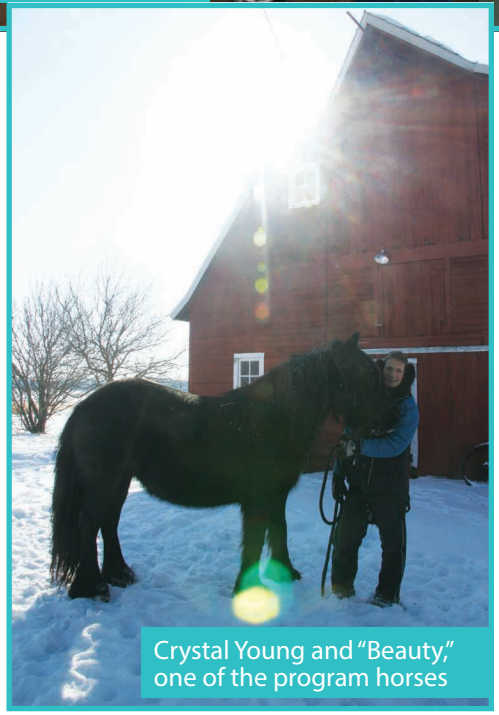
The program began in 2015 and has grown to serve over 200 riders across a 100-mile radius.

And the benefits go beyond the riders. The families of each rider, are encouraged to be part of the riding lessons. Parents are often overcome with tears of joy when they witness firsthand, each milestone and success of their child.

Volunteers looking to help even just one or two hours a week are welcome. No previous experience with horses is necessary.

Riding instructor and board member Shannon Lerew says, "You grow and celebrate every accomplishment with the Team. If you are looking for a volunteer program where you really do make a difference, work with animals and people who need you, as well as come away with an uplifted heart and sense of accomplishment, then I would recommend volunteering."

Community members have an opportunity to experience the program during the Program Expo and Fun Day on Sunday, April 29 from 12:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M. Activities include painting in the Red Barn, vendor tack sale, riding demo, and trail rides. All proceeds will benefit the program.



Crystal Young and "Beauty," one of the program horses

Reclamation Ranch is located at 40787 259th Street, Mitchell, SD. For more information on Reclamation Ranch or the SpiritHorse Therapeutic Riding Program, visit www.reclamation-ranch.com.

Future Linemen Awarded Scholarships

The SDREA Line Superintendents awarded their annual scholarships to students in the Power Line Construction & Maintenance program at Mitchell Technical Institute.

Ten students received awards in March.

Pictured in the back row left to right are Ryan Sherman, Winner; Blake Reuwsaat, Rapid City; Nicholas Hoelzel, Hitchcock; Shane Pardy, Utica; Brock Fischer, Eagle Butte; Jacob Vinson, Sturgis; Chandler Day, Webster; Carson Borer, Castlewood; and McLain Lone, Bristol. Not pictured is Brenden Ecklein, Salem.

Lone received $500, and all other students received $400 each from the Line Superintendents. Borer was selected for the $500 Mark and Kathy Hofer Power Line Scholarship. Mark has served on the Central Electric Board since 1990 and also serves on the SDREA and NRECA boards.

Pictured, front row left to right, are Line Superintendents Rob Vetch, FEM Electric Association; Trever Turner, Union County Electric Co-op; Mark Iyotte, Cherry-Todd Electric Co-op; Bill Brisk, Black Hills Electric Co-op; Jared Terhark, Codington-Clark Electric Co-op; and Jon Christensen, Whetstone Valley Electric Co-op. Not pictured is Mike Kelly, Northern Electric Co-op.

This is the 21st year that the group has awarded scholarships, totaling more than $85,000. In honor of the group's ongoing support, the Line Superintendents were awarded the 2017 Donor Legacy Award from the MTI Foundation in December 2017.

Employee Years of Service

Curt Guindon
May 1 - 41 years

Cody Poppen
May 1 - 10 years

Rodney Weber
May 1 - 6 years

Courtney Deinert
May 1 - 4 years

Dusty Roskens
May 8 - 23 years

Wade Brozik
May 14 - 11 years

Teresa Sprinkel
May 15 -12 years

Dustin Weier
May 16 - 11 years

Donn Koster
May 17 - 19 years

Paul Koch
May 21 - 17 years

Aaron Punt
May 24 - 8 years

Basin Bus Tour

Take advantage of the Basin Electric Bus Tour customized just for you--an electric cooperative member-owner!

What is the BusTour?

The tour gives member-consumers of the cooperative the opportunity to learn how electricity is generated and transmitted to them for their use. It includes tours of hydro and coal-generating plants, a coal mine (weather permitting) and operation centers of your power suppliers.

When is the tour?

The dates for the tour are July 18-20.

A complete itinerary of the tour will be furnished on request and to the trip participants.

How much does the tour cost?

For just $25 a person or $50 per couple, you receive round-trip transportation, two night hotel stay, meals, and touring access.

How do I apply?

Apply for the tour by June 1, 2018. To apply, visit www.centralec.coop or contact our office at 800-477-2892 or 605-996-7516.

April 25-29
Black Hills Film Festival, Hill City, SD, 605-574-9454

April 28-29
Bike Show, Ramkota Convention Center, Aberdeen, SD, 605-290-0908

April 29
Spirit Horse Therapeutic Riding Program Expo & Fun Day, Tack swap, vendors, painting, trail rides and riding demo, Noon to 6 p.m., 40787 259th St., Mitchell, SD, Contact Crystal at 605-630-8137

May 4-6
Naja Shrine Circus, Rapid City, SD, 605-342-3402

May 12
Art and Wine Festival, Rapid City, SD, 605-716-7979

May 13
1880 Train Mother's Day Express, Hill City, SD, 605-574-2222

May 18
Turkey Races, Huron, SD, 605-352-0000

May 18-19
Sioux Empire Film Festival, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-6000

May 18-20
State Parks Open House and Free Fishing Weekend, Pierre, SD, 605-773-3391

May 18-20
Tesla Road Trip Rally, Custer, SD, 605-673-2244

May 19-20, May 26-27
Northeast Area Pari-Mutuel Horse Racing, Aberdeen, SD, 605-715-9580

May 5, 19; June 2, 16; July 7, 21; Aug. 25; and Sept. 8
Lawn Mower (Points) Races, Pukwana, SD, 605-680-1718 or 605-682-9781

Photo courtesy: travelsd.com

May 25-September 30
Legends in Light® Laser Light Show at Crazy Horse Memorial, Crazy Horse, SD, 605-673-4681

May 25-27
South Dakota Kayak Challenge, Yankton, SD, 605-864-9011

May 26-27
Annual SDRA Foothills Rodeo, Wessington Springs, SD, 605-770-4370

June – September Thursdays
Mitchell Farmers Market, 4:30 to 8 p.m., Corn Palace Plaza, Mitchell, SD, Contact Maria Payne at 605-995-8048 or mpayne@cityofmitchell.org (no event Aug. 23)

June 1-2
Howard Headers Cruise Night and Car Show, Registration 10:30 a.m.to Noon, Show Noon to 4 p.m., Cruise 6 p.m., Howard, SD, Gary at 605-203-1086

June 1-3
Fort Sisseton Historical Festival, Lake City, SD, 605-448-5474

June 1-3
Annual Black Hills Quilt Show & Sale, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4115

June 1-3
Wheel Jam, Huron, SD, 605-353-7340

June 1-3
Fish Days, Lake Andes, SD, 605-487-7694

June 2
Kids' Carnival, Rapid City, SD, 605-716-7979

June 2
Annual Casey Tibbs Match of Champions, Fort Pierre, SD, 605-494-1094

June 2-3
Spring Volksmarch at Crazy Horse Memorial, Crazy Horse, SD, 605-673-4681

June 15-16
Czech Days, Tabor, SD, www.taborczechdays.com, taborczechdays@yahoo.com

June 21-23
Senior Games, Mitchell, SD, Contact Howard Bich at 605-491-0635

June 29
Naja Shrine Circus, Wall, SD, 605-342-3402

July 1
Naja Shrine Circus, Lemmon, SD, 605-342-3402

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.