

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

Let's Go Fly a Kite

**Brookings Kite Festival
Creates Excitement**

Pages 8-9

Cooperative Metering

Pages 12-13

Photo Credit: Visit Brookings



The Next Big Thing – Electric Demand



Ken Schlimgen
General Manager

Thank you to everyone who attended this year's district meetings. Attendance was very similar to previous years, and I hope the exchange of information was educational and appreciated. One topic we spent a great deal of time discussing was electric demand and how it impacts your cooperative.

Electric "demand" refers to the rate at which you use electricity, measured in kilowatts (kW).

Similar to how a speedometer measures your vehicle's speed, an electric meter measures the speed at which you use electricity in a specified period of time. Higher demand requires larger infrastructure to deliver electricity when needed. Think of it as the "size of the pipe" delivering electricity — a bigger pipe costs more but can deliver more power instantly.

Understanding the difference between immediate electricity needs and total usage over time is important. Imagine filling a swimming pool. You could use a fire hose and fill it in minutes or a garden hose and fill it in hours. Both deliver the same amount of water, but the speed is different, requiring different infrastructure investments.

Demand charges for commercial and industrial members have long been part of our cooperative's history. To meet both instantaneous and long-term needs, commercial accounts are subject to an energy charge (total electricity used over time) and a demand charge (speed of power delivery).

Central Electric residential and small farm members have yet to see demand charges on their monthly statements. This is because the cooperative lacked efficient technology to measure demand, and residential electricity usage patterns were relatively similar. Typically, we wake up, take a hot shower, go to work, come home, turn on the lights, cook dinner, watch TV, wash laundry and go to bed. With similar usage patterns, energy and demand charges were combined into one price per kWh. These customers have always been paying for demand despite it not being itemized on the monthly electric bill.

For the past 15 years, your cooperative has had the technology to measure demand on every meter. Starting in July, your cooperative will include demand information on all electric bills. There will be no charges for demand on residential and small farm accounts initially. For now, our hope is this information will educate our members about their impact on the electric system. Like many cooperatives nationwide, we are considering phasing in residential demand charges in the future.

Demand charges allow your cooperative to more fairly cover infrastructure costs and encourage members to reduce system strain through load shifting and peak management. Our long-term goal is to reduce the cooperative's infrastructure investments and keep everyone's electric costs low. By understanding and managing electric demand, we can work together to keep our electricity reliable, affordable and sustainable.

Find more information about electric demand on page 15 and by visiting www.centralelec.coop/demand. Until next month, stay safe!

Knowledge is power, so we want to give you more information on how your electric demand impacts the system and power costs for all members. Therefore, billing statements will now show your demand. Visit www.centralelec.coop/demand or scan the QR code below to watch a short video that explains demand:



www.centralelec.coop/demand

**CENTRAL ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE
CONNECTIONS**

(USPS 018-963)

Board of Directors

Aurora County - Duane Wolbrink, President
 Brule County - Bradee Pazour
 Buffalo County - Donita Loudner, SDREA Director
 Davison County - Jeff Gustafson
 Hanson County - Mark Hofer - Secretary & NRECA Director
 Jerauld County - Mark Reindl, Treasurer
 Miner County - Robert Banks - Director
 Sanborn County - Todd VanWalleghen, Vice President
 Director-At-Large - Merl Bechen

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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@centralelec.coop; website: www.centralelec.coop.

Contact Us

Office Hours: Monday - Friday 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
 Phone: 1-800-477-2892 or 1-605-996-7516

Our Mission

Provide reliable energy and services with a commitment to safety and member satisfaction.

Non-Discrimination Statement:

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at www.usda.gov/oascr/how-to-file-a-program-discrimination-complaint and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov. Central Electric Cooperative, Inc. is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

Board Meeting Summary

The board of directors met on April 15, 2024, at Central Electric Cooperative's headquarters for the regular board meeting. They reviewed reports by management including details on operations, member services, communications, service department and financials.

BOARD REPORT

General Manager Schlimgen updated the board of directors on the East River Electric Managers Advisory Committee, Basin Electric activities, SDREA Managers Meeting, Rural Electric Economic Development fund activities and other management priorities.

Cooperative Finance Corporation Regional Vice President Kristin Dolan presented to the board of directors the 2022 Key Ratio Trend Analysis (KRTA). Key topics discussed were equity management, liquidity, plant growth, and large loads. Discussion followed.

Director Hofer reported on the S.D. Wind Energy Association.

Director Loudner reported on the S.D. Rural Electric Association.

Director Wolbrink reported on East River Electric happenings.

BOARD ACTION

The board considered or acted upon the following:

- A motion was made and seconded to authorize the board president and secretary to execute a labor-only non-site-specific contract with High Line Construction on behalf of Central Electric Cooperative. Motion carried.
- A motion was made and seconded to accept the 2023 audit report. Motion carried.
- A motion was made and seconded to adopt revisions to Policy 872 – Large Commercial POET Biorefining. Motion carried.
- A motion was made and seconded to authorize the general manager, board president and board secretary to complete and sign RUS Form 675. Motion carried.
- A motion was made and seconded to accept the building committee's recommendation and to authorize the general manager to execute an architectural design and engineering contract with Puetz Design + Build for a new Howard outpost facility. Motion carried.
- A motion was made and seconded to accept the first quarter general manager and director expenses. Motion carried.
- A motion was made and seconded to approve the first quarter 2024 invoices for legal services. Motion carried.

There being no further business, President Wolbrink adjourned the meeting. The next board meeting was scheduled for May 20, 2024.

FINANCIAL REPORT	YEAR TO DATE APRIL 2024	YEAR TO DATE APRIL 2023
Kilowatt Hour (kWh) Sales	25,091,357 kWh	25,977,631 kWh
Electric Revenues	\$ 13,042,754	\$ 12,016,017
Total Cost of Service	\$ 13,006,180	\$ 11,597,278
Operating Margins	\$ 36,573	\$ 418,739

Fireworks Safety

Summer is synonymous with barbecues, parades and fireworks. The National Safety Council advises everyone to enjoy fireworks at public displays conducted by professionals, and not to use any fireworks at home. They may be legal but they are not safe.

Every year, thousands of people are injured badly enough to require medical treatment after fireworks-related incidents, with many of the injuries to children and young adults. While the majority of these incidents are due to amateurs attempting to use professional-grade, homemade or other illegal fireworks or explosives, less powerful devices like small firecrackers and sparklers can also cause significant injury.

Additionally, fireworks start an average of 19,000 fires each year.

Fireworks Safety Tips: If You Choose to Use Legal Fireworks

If consumer fireworks are legal to buy where you live and you choose to use them, be sure to follow the following safety tips:

- Never allow young children to handle fireworks
- Older children should use them only under close adult supervision
- Never use fireworks while impaired by drugs or alcohol
- Anyone using fireworks or standing nearby should wear protective eyewear
- Never hold lighted fireworks in your hands
- Never light them indoors
- Only use them away from people, houses and flammable material
- Never point or throw fireworks at another person
- Only light one device at a time and maintain a safe distance after lighting
- Never ignite devices in a container
- Do not try to re-light or handle malfunctioning fireworks
- Soak both spent and unused fireworks in water for a few hours before discarding
- Keep a bucket of water nearby to fully extinguish fireworks that don't go off or in case of fire
- Never use illegal fireworks

Better yet, grab a blanket and a patch of lawn, kick back and let the experts handle the fireworks show.

Sparklers Are Dangerous

Every year, young children can be found along parade routes and at festivals with sparklers in hand, but sparklers are a lot more dangerous than most people think.

Sparklers burn at about 2,000 degrees – hot enough to melt some metals. Sparklers can quickly ignite clothing, and children have received severe burns from dropping sparklers on their feet. According to the National Fire Protection Association, sparklers alone account for more than 25% of emergency room visits for fireworks injuries. For children under five years of age, sparklers accounted for nearly half of the total estimated injuries.

Consider using safer alternatives, such as glow sticks, confetti poppers or colored streamers.

Source: National Safety Council



**“Let’s Go Fly a Kite Up to
the Highest Heights.”**

Eldon Femrite, Age 12

Eldon Femrite warns readers to not fly kites by power lines this summer. Eldon’s parents are Jody and Rosemary Femrite, members of Codington-Clark Electric.

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

DELICIOUS Desserts

NO CHURN ICE CREAM

Ingredients:

2 cups heavy cream
14 oz. sweetened condensed milk
Other mix-ins as desired

Method

In a mixing bowl, whip heavy cream until stiff peaks form.

Mix in sweetened condensed milk and any flavors/mix-ins you like (strawberries, Oreos, lemon, vanilla extract, etc.).

Pour into loaf pan and freeze until solid (2+ hours).

Kayla Beaner
Centerville, S.D.

CINNAMON PECAN PIE

Ingredients:

1 refrigerated pie crust, (from 14.1-oz. pkg.)
3 eggs, lightly beaten
1 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
1 cup light corn syrup
2 tbsps. butter, melted
1 tsp. cinnamon extract
1 1/2 cups pecan pieces

Method

Preheat oven to 350°F. Prepare pie crust as directed on package for one-crust pie using 9-inch pie plate.

Mix eggs, sugar, corn syrup, butter and cinnamon flavor in large bowl until well blended. Stir in pecans.

Pour into crust. Bake 50 to 55 minutes or until knife inserted halfway between center and edge comes out clean. Cool completely on wire rack.

McCormick.com

RHUBARB PIE

Ingredients:

Crust

1-2 cups flour
1/2 stick butter or margarine
1/4 cup water

Pie

3 tbsps. butter or margarine
1 cup sugar
3 eggs, separated
2 tbsps. flour
1/2 tsp. salt
2 1/2 cups cut rhubarb
Smucker's caramel sundae syrup

Method

Crust: Add ingredients and knead to complete pie crust. Amounts will vary due to humidity. Knead dough into pie pan and poke holes into the bottom as needed. You may make creative edges as you wish, however it is not necessary.

Pie: Soften butter or margarine and stir together with the sugar, egg yolks, flour, and salt. Beat egg whites until stiff. Add rhubarb and fold in the egg whites. Add the filling to the 8-inch, unbaked pie crust. You may add a drizzle of Smucker's sundae syrup for additional flavoring before baking. Bake in oven set at 400 until golden brown. You may also add more caramel syrup to pie after baking for ultimate effect.

Lisa Kummer Soukup
Tea, S.D.

Please send your favorite recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2024. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

Employee Years of Service



DuWayne

17 years on July 5



Heather

5 years on July 16



Evan

5 years on July 23



Tim

6 years on Aug. 6



Patrick

9 years on Aug. 17



Craig

6 years on Aug. 27



Visit Us at Dakotafest and Sioux Empire Fair



The region's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives attend agricultural outreach events including Dakotafest and the Sioux Empire Fair. This gives us an opportunity to have in-depth conversations with members about energy use at your home and on the farm.

Dakotafest will be held in Mitchell, Aug. 20-22. The air-conditioned Touchstone Energy building is booth number 216 on 2nd Street across from the SDSU Extension tent. Members are encouraged to stop by to cool down and have a snack.

The 41st Annual Ag Appreciation Day will be held Wednesday, Aug. 7, at the Sioux Empire Fair in Sioux Falls. A complimentary lunch (pork sandwich, chips and a drink) will be served from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Member ag producers are welcome to attend.

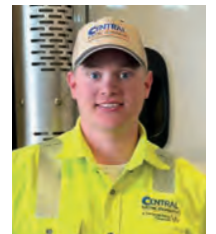
Temporary Utility Workers Hired

Each year, Central Electric hires temporary utility workers to assist crews during the busy construction season. The cooperative is excited to have these guys on board to help achieve our goals.

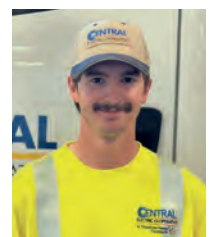
Brady [redacted] originally from Watertown, served four years in the U.S. Marines before studying powerline construction and maintenance. He is a 2024 graduate of Mitchell Technical College (MTC).

Chase [redacted] from Mitchell previously worked 1000 hours at Northern Electric after graduating from MTC in 2021. This is his third 1000-hour stint at Central Electric.

We appreciate the efforts of our seasonal workers. They help the cooperative complete necessary projects in a timely manner as they learn about safety and the skills of the trade.



Brady



Chase



Proactive Maintenance Enhances Safety, Reliability



Brian Bultje
Manager of Operations

Safety doesn't just happen by chance. It is the result of adequate training, preparation and sometimes a little elbow grease. Regular inspection and maintenance practices help ensure the safe and effective operation of cooperative vehicles. Bucket trucks and digger trucks are essential for operations because they enable lineworkers to maintain and repair power infrastructure efficiently. The

trucks are cleaned and professionally inspected to keep our frontline workers safe. This is all part of our effort to safely and reliably serve you.

Enhanced Safety

Safety is key for electric cooperatives and lineworkers. Working with electricity at heights poses inherent risks, making regular inspections of bucket trucks and digger trucks essential. Identifying hazards, such as worn components or hydraulic leaks, through inspections significantly reduces the risk of accidents. By adhering to inspection and maintenance protocols, cooperatives demonstrate their commitment to safety and professionalism.

Extended Vehicle Life

Proactive maintenance is key to extending the lifespan of utility vehicles while minimizing downtime. Electric cooperatives rely on bucket trucks and digger trucks for essential tasks such as power line maintenance and repairs. Regular maintenance tasks, including lubrication, fluid checks and component inspections, identify potential issues early, preventing costly breakdowns and ensuring the reliability of the cooperative's fleet.

Enhanced Reliability

The reliability of utility vehicles is critical for electric cooperatives, particularly during emergencies such as power outages caused by severe weather events. Well-maintained bucket trucks and digger trucks reduce the likelihood of unexpected breakdowns, ensuring that lineworkers can respond promptly to restore power for affected members.

As I said, safety doesn't just happen by chance. Investing in the upkeep of our fleet strengthens the cooperative's operational efficiency and underscores our commitment to serving the membership with the highest standards of safety and reliability. Proactive maintenance, such as cleaning and inspections, helps Central Electric achieve safety, extended vehicle life and enhanced reliability.



Lineworkers Al [REDACTED] (right), Tim [REDACTED] (center) and Davis [REDACTED] (back) wash and wax the boom and bucket to prepare for annual maintenance inspections.



[REDACTED] washes the boom while [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] inspect hydraulic hoses and components.

KITE FESTIVAL



Photo Credit: Visit Brookings

Let's Go Fly a Kite

Shannon Marvel

shannon.marvel@sdrea.coop

The sky becomes more of an art canvas during the Brookings Kite Festival. For the last 25 years, kite fliers from across the country gather to let their art take flight at the festival.

One of those artists is Mike Gee of North Dakota.

“We go down there to Brookings and really like the kite flying field there. It’s just nice to come down and fly kites with friends who also enjoy flying kites,” Gee said.

Gee flies what’s called “show kites”, which are big, inflatable kites that can span 20 feet across the sky.

There are other kites flown during the festival, including soft kites, stick kites and sport kites.

A sport kite is one that is attached to two or four lines. Often they’ll be flown in teams and perform maneuvers in the sky.

“If you talk about crazy kites, there’s a wide variety. There are so many different creative people building things in creative ways,” Gee said. “It is definitely an art. It’s what you put on the canvas that makes it special.”

The kites are typically made with nylon, sail making cloth that doesn’t stretch.

“You can’t just go to the fabric store and buy tent fabric. We have a couple different weights of fabrics we use. And you need that tail on there to keep the kite stable,” Gee said.

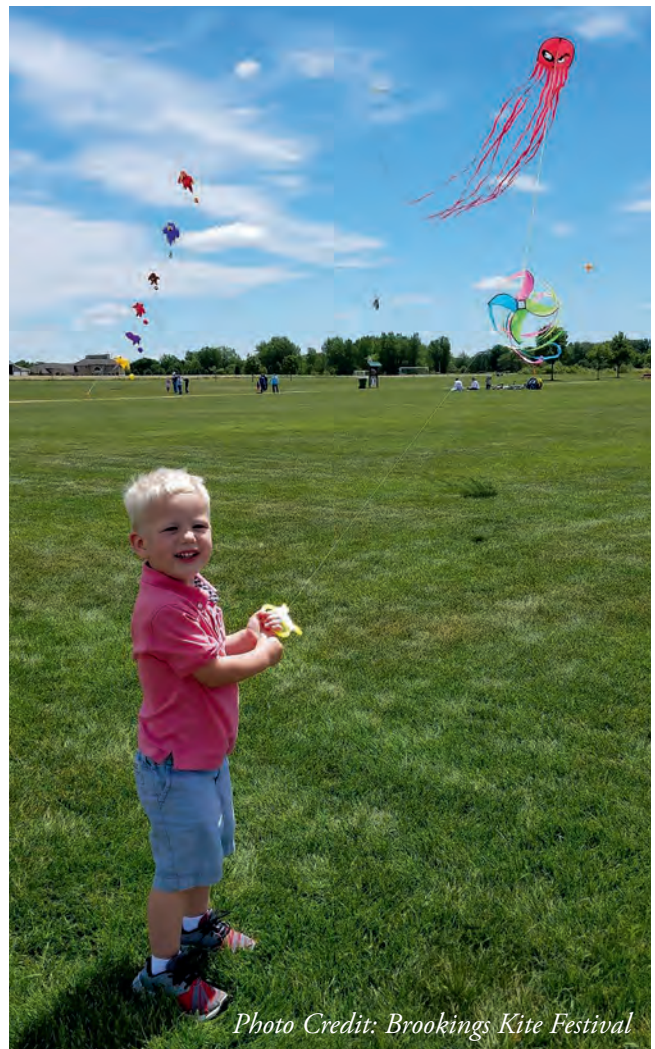


Photo Credit: Brookings Kite Festival



Photo Credit: Brookings Register

Sally Damm Norby, of the Brookings Optimists Club, said the festival got its start when Lynn Versher, former director of the South Dakota Art Museum, approached Optimist member Bill Flynn about creating a joint effort to bring big kites to Brookings.

“This volunteer organization aims to make a positive impact on the lives of youth and communities. The Brookings club’s primary focus is on advancing the opportunities and programs for youth events that are encouraging with exceptional supportive outcomes. The Brookings Optimist Kite Festival offers a comprehensive learning experience that incorporates expressions of culture, science, creativity, civic involvement, and is

environmentally friendly,” Norby said.

Youth are encouraged to come down and learn how to make a kite of their own, with professional guidance.

Gee said he encourages visitors to come up to kite fliers to ask questions or strike up a conversation.

“One thing I really like about kite flying is it seems like no matter who you talk to on the field, someone can relate to an experience of flying a kite,” Gee said. “When we start flying kites, it brings back memories of when other folks were kids flying kites. It’s kind of emotional for some people.”

This year’s event will take place on June 22-23 at the Fishback Soccer Park in Brookings.

Gee said this location is a safe spot to fly kites, and well away from any electrical line hazards.

“If you’ve flown kites long enough, you have a story about power lines. When you hit a line, you call the power company, and they advise you of what to do. The best thing to do is avoid those wires. I always think, ‘If my line breaks, which way is my kite going to go and what’s over there,’” Gee said.

Gee encourages visitors to come down to the Brookings Kite Festival with their lawn chairs and blankets and stay for more than just a half hour.

“The thing is when the wind changes direction or speed, the kites change. There’s just so much going on throughout the day. You’ve really got to sit back and pay attention,” Gee said.



Photo Credit: Visit Brookings

Director-At-Large Petitions Due Aug. 1

Merl Bechen of rural Mitchell is currently serving as your director-at-large. Bechen is eligible for reelection at the Annual Meeting on the evening of Sept. 10.

Members with an interest in serving as the cooperative's director-at-large may take out a nominating petition at Central Electric Cooperative's Betts Road office west of Mitchell on or after July 12, 2024.

To be considered for the director-at-large position, the completed petition must be returned by 4:30 p.m. central time on Thursday, Aug. 1, with at least ten signatures of Central Electric Cooperative members.

To learn more about director qualifications, please read the board member eligibility guidelines below. Interested parties may also contact General Manager Ken Schlimgen at 605-996-7516.



Board Member Eligibility Guidelines

Are you considering running for the director-at-large position on the Central Electric Cooperative Board of Directors? Director nominating petitions are available starting July 12 and due back with ten member signatures by Aug. 1.

Serving on the board of directors for an electric cooperative involves committing yourself to the following standards and guidelines:

- Be a cooperative member in good standing.
- Be willing and able to commit to 25 or more working days per year to fulfill their duties.
- Attend at least 10 out of 12 regular board meetings each year (usually held the third Monday each month).

- Pass a background check that indicates no felonies within the last five years.
- Permanently reside in the district.
- Have your primary residence served by Central Electric Cooperative or meet corporate qualifications.
- Not be a close relative of an existing director unless the director will cease serving within one year.
- Not be a close relative of an existing cooperative officer, employee, agent or representative.
- Not be employed by or materially affiliated with another director.
- Not be affiliated with an individual or entity directly and substantially competing with the cooperative.
- Not sell goods or services

- in substantial quantity to the cooperative or its members.
- Obtain director certification from National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.
- Comply with other reasonable qualifications determined by the board.

This is a general snapshot of director eligibility guidelines. A full list of director eligibility requirements is available in the cooperative's bylaws which can be viewed at [online at centralec.coop/cooperative-bylaws](http://centralec.coop/cooperative-bylaws).

Please contact General Manager Ken Schlimgen at 605-996-7516 if you have director eligibility questions.

Pennies Power Community Projects



Howard School District recently received a grant for community garden trees. Pictured with the Howard 5th grade class are Operation Round-Up Trustee Tami Moore, far left, and Central Electric Directors Merl Bechen and Bob Banks, far right.

Through Operation Round-Up, participating cooperative members round up their monthly electric bill to the next whole dollar. Several Central Electric employees also contribute to the fund through payroll. Member and employee contributions are pooled together to support local causes through the grant program.

Since the fund was established in 2015, nearly \$200,000 in grants have been awarded across eight counties.

These are pictures from recently completed projects that received support from Operation Round-Up.

To learn more about grant qualifications and the application process, please visit www.centralec.coop and click on member programs, or call 605-996-7516.



Friends of Sanborn County 4-H received a grant for new tables. From left: Central Electric Sales and Project Manager Lincoln Feistner, General Manager Ken Schlimgen, Board Vice President Todd VanWalleghen and Operation Round-Up Trustee Dawna VanOverschelde presented them with the check.



J&B 4-H Shooting Sports received a grant for safety equipment and supplies. Back row: Aaron Roesler, Operation Round-Up Trustee Amber Kolousek, Central Electric Director Mark Reindl and Central Electric General Manager Ken Schlimgen.



The Miner County Historical Society received a grant for kitchen improvements. From left: Miner County Historical Society Board Members Michele Neises, Christy Stock, Chloe Andenas, Operation Round-Up Trustee Tami Moore, and Central Electric Directors Bob Banks and Merl Bechen.



Friends of Miner County 4-H Leaders received a grant for campground improvements. Director Bob Banks and Operation Round-Up Trustee Tami Moore (far left) presented them with the check.



Hearts and Hammers of South Dakota received a grant for home rehabilitation supplies. Pictured from left: Central Electric Director Bob Banks, Director Merl Bechen, Operation Round-Up Trustee Tami Moore and Mary Leary and Mark Struwe with Hearts and Hammers of South Dakota.

Thanks to our members for making these grants possible! Your participation in Operation Round-Up has a lasting impact in local communities.

COOPERATIVE METERING

Roger Lawien

More than 40 cooperative linemen and metering specialists gathered in Pierre for South Dakota Rural Electric's Meter School. This two-day gathering offers the opportunity to enhance skills, build a community of professionals, and learn the nuances of metering. As our need for more energy continues to grow, so does how we properly meter consumption.

Modern electric meters do much more than keep track of the electricity we consume. Correct electric metering is also essential for grid reliability and stability. Accurate measurements aid your cooperative in identifying and addressing issues such as voltage fluctuations or load imbalances promptly.

This proactive approach enhances the resilience of the electrical grid, reducing the likelihood of outages and ensuring a continuous and reliable power supply. At its core, accurate metering ensures fair and precise billing, preventing financial disputes and establishing trust between cooperatives and members.

From an economic standpoint, correct electric metering plays a pivotal role in resource allocation allowing member owned cooperatives to better understand consumption patterns, enabling them to optimize energy distribution and invest strategically in infrastructure development. This, in turn, leads to more efficient operations, cost savings, and improved overall service quality.

Precise metering supports energy conservation.

Members can sign into their account online, view consumption. Armed with accurate usage data they are empowered to make informed decisions about their energy consumption. This encourages responsible energy usage practices, reducing waste and lowering overall demand.

Metering guru and instructor John Pollard said it best. "These training schools are important. Metering is a craft handed down from generation to generation. With the advances of solid-state metering, these students are the supreme candidates to lead us into the future."

Your electric cooperative is your partner in getting it done!



2023 SDREA Meter School Instructors Photo by Roger Lawien

What is a Smart Meter?

A smart meter is a common term for Automated Metering Infrastructure, or AMI. These are connected devices that transmit information back to the electric utility's meter data management system and the information collected is used primarily for billing and outage response purposes. Smart meters started to be installed about 25 years ago. Individual utilities have different aged systems, but all electric cooperatives in South Dakota have two-way communication with every meter in the system.

What advantages do Smart Meters bring?

Before smart meters were installed, customers were required to read their own analog meter and report their monthly usage for billing purposes, or a utility employee would physically travel to every home, farm or business in their large service territories to read usage data. Smart Meters take the burden off customers and employees, saving time and money for all consumers. In some cases, the aggregated energy usage information from their home can be visible to the customer via the Internet or a phone application.

- Smart Meters can be used to pinpoint exact locations of power outages more quickly by transmitting an “out of power” notification, meaning a faster response time to outages.
- Smart Meters allow information to be shared with individual consumers about their energy usage – allowing them to find energy efficiency opportunities or potential problems in their home.
- Smart Meters improve electric service reliability and power quality. Information obtained from the automated meters often identifies problems that can be repaired before they cause an outage.
- Information can be used by engineers to more effectively and appropriately size lines and transformers, saving the cooperative and members money.

What information does a Smart Meter record?

Automated meters record an electronic kilowatt-hour (kWh) reading, the date and time of energy usage, the overall peak demand of the electric account, if the meter has been tampered with, and the number of times the meter has experienced a loss of power.

Security of information

Electric cooperatives do not sell or share consumer data. Cooperatives abide by all laws regarding the privacy, protection and disclosure of personal information. The meters and associated communications systems are equipped with security features to prevent unauthorized access.

Are there potential health impacts from a smart meter?

Research conducted by the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI), the Utilities Telecom Council (UTC) and other similar groups have shown no health impacts from automated meters. The radio frequencies emitted by digital meters are well below the maximum recommended in federal guidelines. A digital meter equipped to send and receive data has an RF density hundreds of times lower than the RF density of a cell phone, and the meters are installed on the outside of homes or buildings.

Central Electric Honored with Two NRECA Spotlight on Excellence Awards

Your cooperative strives to keep members engaged and informed, and we were recognized for our efforts with two Spotlight on Excellence Awards from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). Central Electric was honored for **Best External News Publication** for the Cooperative Connections Magazine and **Best External Event** for the First Responder Training Program.

The Spotlight on Excellence Awards Program has been recognizing outstanding co-op employees and projects for more than 35 years. The awards are highly competitive and they honor the best public relations and marketing efforts by electric cooperatives across the country.

More than 800 entries were submitted nationwide across multiple categories,

with only 24 awards being given in Central Electric's class (distribution cooperatives with 1-22,999 meters). Faculty members from the University of Missouri Columbia and accomplished professionals in the fields of marketing, digital communications and newspapers judged the entries.

Manager of Communications Tara Miller is the Cooperative Connections Magazine editor, and several employees contribute content on a regular basis. Manager of Operations Brian Bultje and Line Superintendent Dusty Roskens lead the annual First Responder Training with help from others in the Operations Department.

Congratulations to all employees involved with these ongoing member engagement efforts.



Youth enjoyed themselves and received educational materials in Buffalo County.



Director Mark Hofer addresses the crowd at the Hanson County meeting.



Director Jeff Gustafson addresses the crowd at the Davison County meeting.



Local kids jumped in the "frunk" of the Ford Lightning electric pickup in Brule County.

District Meetings Connect Members with Their Co-op

We extend special thanks to all cooperative members who attended their local district meetings in late May and early June.

The meetings in Davison County and Hanson County included director elections. Jeff Gustafson of Ethan was unopposed and will continue to represent Davison County for three more years. Mark Hofer of Spencer was unopposed and will continue to represent Hanson County for three more years.

Member input is imperative to help ensure a bright future for the cooperative. If you couldn't attend, we hope to see you there next year.

What is "Demand" on My Bill?

Current Service Detail		
Facility Charge		63.45
Energy (kWh) Charges	900 kWh @ 0.121	108.90
	300 kWh @ 0.096	28.80
	361 kWh @ 0.087	31.41
Demand	14,806 kW @ 0.00	0.00
	Total Electric Charges	232.56
Sales Tax		9.77
	Total Current Charges	242.33

Demand is the rate at which electricity is used. In other words, it is the amount of electricity required to power all of your plugged-in appliances, lighting, heating or air conditioning at the exact same time.

Most residential and general service members are not currently charged for electric demand, but roughly half of Central Electric's power cost is based on our members' demand.

Knowledge is power, so we want to give you more information on how your electric demand impacts the system and power costs for all members. Therefore, billing statements will now show your demand. Visit www.centralec.coop/demand or scan the QR code below to watch a short video that explains demand:



www.centralec.coop/demand

You could play a significant role in controlling the cooperative's wholesale power costs. Members can help manage our demand by participating in the load management program. If we work together, we can better manage power costs for everyone.

What Is Demand?

The amount of electricity required in to run your lights and plugged-in electronic appliances at the same time.



When Is Demand High?

Demand is typically highest across Basin Electric's footprint from 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.



Why Does It Matter?

Approximately half of Central Electric's power cost is based on our members' demand. If we work together, we can better manage power costs.



Can I Control My Demand?

Yes. Avoid running several electronic appliances at the same time, and shift energy usage to off-peak hours to minimize your demand.



What Is Load Management?

The cooperative's load management program helps lower energy use during peak times to save on our wholesale power bill. To learn more, contact Central Electric.



CENTRAL
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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REGISTER TO WIN!

Bring this coupon and mailing label to the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives booth at Dakotafest or the South Dakota State Fair to win a prize!

Your Phone Number: _____

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Aug. 24
2024 McCrossan Boys Ranch Xtreme Event Rodeo
McCrossan Boys Ranch Campus
Sioux Falls, SD
605-339-1203

JUNE 21-23
Scavenger's Journey
Yard sales, farmer's markets & specialty shops
Wall to Wagner
www.scavengersjourney.com

JUNE 22
Alexandria Car Show
Sponsored by Alexandria Fire District
Find us on Facebook
Alexandria, SD

JUNE 28-30
Donnie Days
Stickney, SD

JULY 4
Rock the Bluffs Fireworks
10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Chamberlain, SD
695-234-4416

JULY 5
Wingen's Garage 90th Anniversary Celebration
Epiphany, SD

JULY 5-6
21st Annual Foothills Rodeo
Wessington Springs, SD

JULY 14-18
Dakota 600
8 -11 a.m.
Black Hills National Forest
Rapid City, SD
605-645-1756
dakota600.com

JULY 18-21
Corn Palace Stampede Rodeo
Mitchell, SD

JULY 19
Zucchini Fest
5 p.m.
Main Street
Bristol, SD
605-590-0000

JULY 19-20
Storybook Land Festival
4-8:30 p.m. on Friday
10 a.m.-4 p.m. on Saturday
Storybook Land in Wylie Park
Aberdeen, SD
605-626-7015

JULY 20
1st Annual John Zens Memorial Parade
Epiphany, SD

JULY 19-20
Cookin' on Kampeska
All day
Admission \$10
Stokes-Thomas Lake City Park
on Lake Kampeska
Watertown, SD
605-886-5814

AUG. 4-6
Davison County Achievement Days
Davison County Fairgrounds
Mitchell, SD

AUG. 7
Ag Appreciation Day
Sioux Empire Fair
Sioux Falls, SD

AUG. 20-22
Dakotafest
Mitchell, SD

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.

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