

Cooperative Connections

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Love Your
Electric Co-op**

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We Love Our Community



John Lee, CEO

jlee@butteelectric.com

We want to help meet the long-term needs of our communities to ensure they continue to thrive - because just like you, we live here, too.

“To move forward, you have to give back.”

This quote from Oprah Winfrey reflects the special bond and obligation that ties Butte Electric to the communities we serve. With Valentine’s Day approaching, we can’t think of a better time to express how much we love our communities and serving you, the members of the co-op.

We know when we helped to bring electricity to rural Butte, Meade and Lawrence counties many years ago, the quality of life improved for all. Through the years, other issues needed to be tackled and we have been at the forefront of helping to address some of those issues. We want to help meet the long-term needs of our communities to ensure they continue to thrive – because just like you, we live here, too.

While our top priority is to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to you, equally important is our mission to enrich the lives of the consumer-members (that’s you!) that we serve. This focus to benefit the larger community is central to the way we operate as a cooperative. Butte Electric knows that electricity is a critical need for modern-day life, but it takes more than poles and power lines to make a community.

Over time, our co-op has evolved to meet the changing needs of our communities, thereby improving the quality of life for everyone. And that can mean many different things. It can mean programs for South Dakota’s youth, such as education scholarships or the electric cooperative Youth Tour, where we take our community’s brightest young people to Washington, D.C., for a week long immersion to experience democracy in action. It means partnering with organizations like the Belle Fourche School District for financing on their Careers in Technical Education building to help develop local youth by giving them useful skills and trades to help them succeed in an ever-changing world.

Over the last almost eight decades, our community-focused programs and other giving projects have helped build fire stations, equip community fairgrounds, fed hungry families, enabled those in need to keep the lights on and so much more – and we couldn’t do any of this without you, our members.

We all benefit from these programs because of you and your neighbors. You empower Butte Electric through your membership and through your participation in and support of these programs.

As a local business, we are proud to power your life and bring good things to our community. We hope you will continue to guide our efforts by sharing your perspective as we plan for the future. The energy landscape is undergoing dramatic change fueled by evolving technology and consumer desires for more options. While the larger environment in which we operate is constantly changing, one thing remains the same. By working together, I’m certain that we can continue to do good things for our community.

Join the FUN!
#YTDCSD2020
June 18-25, 2020
(Best of all, it's free thanks to your local electric cooperative!)

Fly with 40+ S.D. teens and meet 1,800 from across the nation during this fast-paced week!

YOUTH TOUR

Ask Us How to Apply!

Butte Electric

Cooperative Connections

(ISSN 1531-1031)

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BUTTE ELECTRIC BEACON COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is published monthly by Butte Electric Cooperative, Inc., PO Box 137, 109 S. Dartmouth, Newell, SD 57760 for its members. Families subscribe to Butte Electric Beacon Cooperative Connections as part of their electric cooperative membership. Butte Electric Beacon Cooperative Connections' purpose is to provide reliable, helpful information to electric cooperative members on matters pertaining to rural electrification and better rural living.

Subscription information: Electric cooperative members devote 50 cents from their monthly electric payments for a subscription. Nonmember subscriptions are available for \$12 annually. Periodicals Postage Paid at Post Office, Newell, SD 57760 and at additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Butte Electric Beacon, PO Box 137, Newell S.D. 57760 TELEPHONE (605) 456-2494; TOLL FREE 1-800-928-8839; FAX (605) 456-2496; E-MAIL butte@butteelectric.com

Need \$1,000 for College?

Butte Electric will award a \$1,000 college scholarship to assist area students whose parents are a member-owner of the cooperative. The scholarship is for the 2020-2021 academic year and can be used at a variety of accredited, post-high school educational institutions.

The award is part of the Rural Electric Cooperative Scholarship Program funded by Butte Electric's power supply partner, Basin Electric Power Cooperative. Basin Electric operates the coal-fired plants in North Dakota that generate part of the electricity used by Butte member-owners.

To show commitment to the youth in our co-op communities, each of the 124 member cooperatives of Basin Electric will award a \$1,000 scholarship to a dependent of a consumer.

The scholarships must be used for educational costs and applicants must be enrolled in or entering higher education in the fall of the school year for which any scholarship is awarded. If the recipient is not enrolled as a full-time student during the fall semester after receiving the scholarship, they will forfeit the monetary award. The scholarships are a one-time award only. The award will be sent directly to the accredited post-high school institute that is indicated on the application.

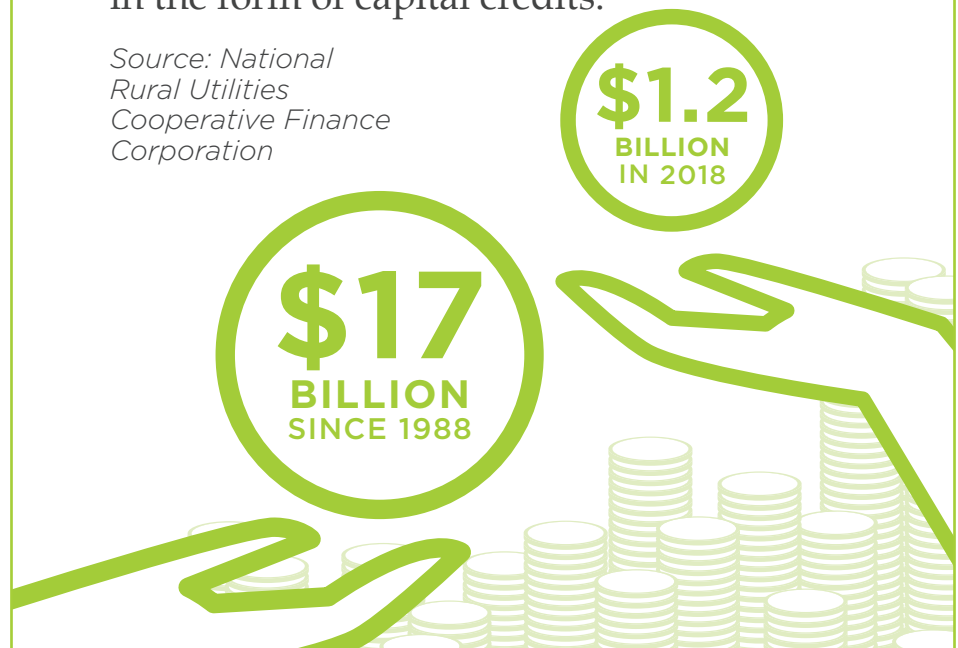
Contact Angie at 605-456-2494 for more information on applying for the scholarship.

Did You Know?

Electric cooperatives have retired \$17 billion to members since 1988 – \$1.2 billion in 2018 alone.

Because electric co-ops operate at cost, any excess revenues (called margins) are allocated and retired to members in the form of capital credits.

Source: National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation



Space Heater Safety

Heating equipment is the second leading cause of home fires in the United States. More than 65,000 home fires are attributed to heating equipment each year. These fires result in hundreds of deaths, thousands of injuries and millions of dollars in property damage.

Portable electric space heaters can be a convenient source of supplemental heat for your home in cold weather. Unfortunately, they can pose significant fire and electric shock hazards if not used properly. Fire and electrical hazards can be caused by space heaters without adequate safety features, space heaters placed near combustibles, or space heaters that are improperly plugged in.



Safety should always be a top consideration when using space heaters. Here are some tips for keeping your home safe and warm when it's cold outside:

- Make sure your space heater has the label showing that it is listed by a recognized testing laboratory.
- Before using any space heater, read the manufacturer's instructions and warning labels carefully.
- Inspect heaters for cracked or broken plugs or loose connections before each use. If frayed, worn or damaged, do not use the heater.
- Never leave a space heater unattended. Turn it off when you're leaving a room or going to sleep, and don't let pets or children play too close to a space heater.
- Space heaters are only meant to provide supplemental heat and should never be used to warm bedding, cook food, dry clothing or thaw pipes.
- Install smoke alarms on every floor of your home and outside all sleeping areas and test them once a month.
- Proper placement of space heaters is critical. Heaters must be kept at least three feet away from anything that can burn, including papers, clothing and rugs.
- Locate space heaters out of high traffic areas and doorways where they may pose a tripping hazard.
- Plug space heaters directly into a wall outlet. Do not use an extension cord or power strip, which could overheat and result in a fire. Do not plug any other electrical devices into the same outlet as the heater.
- Place space heaters on level, flat surfaces. Never place heaters on cabinets, tables, furniture, or carpet, which can overheat and start a fire.
- Always unplug and safely store the heater when it is not in use.

Source: esfi.org

Getting Involved

The state legislatures of both Minnesota and South Dakota convened in early January. Need to contact your legislator while in Pierre or Saint Paul? Here's how:



Contacting Members of South Dakota's Legislature:

Go to <http://sdlegislature.gov/> From there, you can search your senator or representatives, see the committees which they are assigned and send them an email. Need to reach them by phone? You can call and leave a message with the Senate at 605-773-3821 or with the House of Representatives at 605-773-3851. You can also send a fax to 605-773-6806.

Contacting Minnesota Legislators:

For contact information on Minnesota house members, visit:

<https://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/members>

For contact information on Minnesota senators, visit:

<http://www.senate.leg.state.mn.us/members>

KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



"Don't let anything get near your extension cords!"

Sierra Staufacker, 9 years old

Sierra is the daughter of Cory and Staci Staufacker, Balaton, Minn. They are members of Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Tyler, Minn.

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.

Bountiful Brunch

Pineapple-Zucchini Bread

3 eggs	3 cups flour
2 cups sugar	1 tsp. salt
2 tsp. vanilla	1 tsp. soda
1 cup oil	1 cup crushed pineapple, drained
2 cups peeled and grated zucchini	

Beat eggs, sugar, vanilla and oil. Mix in zucchini and dry ingredients; stir well. Fold in pineapple. Bake at 350°F for 1 hour. Makes 2 loaves.

Geraldine Dahlin, Beresford, SD

Apple Pie Breakfast Bake

2 cans refrigerated French bread	1 (14 oz.) can sweetened condensed milk
1 cup butter, melted	1 tsp. apple pie spice
1 (21 oz.) can apple pie filling	1 tsp. vanilla

Bake loaves as directed on can; cool 20 minutes. Cut 1-1/2 loaves into 1/2-inch cubes to equal 7-1/2 cups. Reserve remaining 1/2 loaf for another use. Increase oven temperature to 375°F. In a 9x13-inch glass baking dish, evenly layer melted butter, apple pie filling and bread cubes. In a medium bowl, stir together milk, apple pie spice and vanilla. Pour over bread, pushing bread down to absorb liquid. Bake 25 to 30 minutes or until deep golden brown and bubbly. Cool 15 minutes. Serve warm with maple syrup. (Note: You may also use day-old French bread cut into 1/2-inch cubes.)

Jean Osterman, Wheaton, MN

Breakfast Casserole

1 (8 oz.) can crescent rolls	1-1/2 cups shredded cheese
1 (16 oz.) pkg. bulk sausage, cooked and drained	8 eggs, lightly beaten
Diced onion, green pepper and mushrooms, optional	1/2 cup milk
16 to 32 oz. hash brown potatoes, depending on number of servings desired	1 pkg. country-style gravy mix, prepared according to package directions

Press crescent rolls in a lightly greased 9x13-inch pan. Spread with sausage crumbles and veggies. Layer hash browns on top. Sprinkle with cheese. Combine eggs with milk; pour over all. Spread on gravy. Bake at 325°F for 1 hour or until cooked through in the middle.

Kim Jost, Agar, SD

Grilled Fruit with Cinnamon Oatmeal Crumble

6 T. butter, softened, divided	2 ripe peaches, halved and pitted
2 T. light brown sugar	2 ripe plums, halved and pitted
1 tsp. cinnamon, ground	
3/4 cup quick-cooking oats	

Mix butter, brown sugar and cinnamon in a medium bowl. Reserve 2 T.; set aside. Add oats to remaining butter mixture, stirring until well blended. Brush fruit with reserved butter mixture. Place cut-side down on grill over medium heat. Tent with foil or close grill lid. Grill 2 minutes or until grill marks appear. Turn fruit cut-side up; spoon oat mixture evenly on top of each piece. Return foil tent or close lid. Grill 3 minutes longer or until fruit is tender and topping is crisp. Serve topped with whipped cream or ice cream, if desired. Cooking over a campfire? Place grill grate over top of campfire. Grill fruit as directed, rearranging hot coals as needed to maintain even direct heat. Makes 4 servings

Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 290, Total Fat 18g, Fiber 3g, Cholesterol 45mg, Sodium 137mg, Carbohydrates 29g, Protein 3g

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Omelet in a Bag

2 large eggs	Green pepper, diced
Ham or bacon pieces	Mushrooms, chopped
Onion, chopped	Grated cheese
Tomato, diced	

Give each guest a quart-size Ziploc freezer bag and have them write their name on the bag with a permanent marker. Crack 2 eggs into each bag (not more than 2). Shake to combine them. Put out a variety of ingredients and let each guest choose what they want in their omelet. Shake the bag. Zip the bag after making sure to get all the air out. Bring a large kettle of water to a full rolling boil. Place the bags into the water. When the water begins to boil again, boil for exactly 14 minutes. You can usually cook 6 to 8 omelets at a time. For more, make another kettle of boiling water. Open bags and the omelet will roll out easily. Serve with fresh fruit and coffee cake.

Roxanna Streckfuss, Mansfield, SD

Please send your favorite seafood, appetizer and beverage 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.

Your Seven-Step Efficiency Upgrade Checklist



Pat Keegan

Collaborative Efficiency

Making your home more energy efficient can be done by taking one step at a time, or you can take it on all at once as a larger project.

This column was co-written by Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen of Collaborative Efficiency. For more information, please visit: www.collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips.

Dear Pat and Brad: I used to live in a newer, energy efficient home, but I recently moved into an older home that's definitely not as efficient. I want to make some upgrades, but I'm not sure how much work to do or what steps I should take. Can you offer any advice? – Katie

Dear Katie: Making your home more energy efficient can be done by taking one step at a time or you can take it on all at once as a larger project. Either way, it's helpful to have a plan in place before you dive in so you don't end up doing unnecessary work or repeating steps along the way.

Here's a seven-step checklist we've compiled to help you get organized.

Step 1: Set goals and constraints. Start by setting your primary goal. Are you mainly looking to save money on your home's energy bills, make it more comfortable, increase the resale value or help the environment? Then, set a deadline for when you need the project completed. This may affect whether you do some of the work yourself and which contractor you choose.

Last but not least, set your budget. How much is it worth to you to live in an energy efficient home? One way to look at this is to review your annual energy bills. If they're around \$2,000 per year, you might ask yourself how much you'd be willing to spend if you could cut that expense in half. Maybe you'd be willing to spend \$10,000 to save \$1,000 each year? That would be a 10 percent rate of return on your investment. Or, if your home is drafty and cold, how much are you willing to spend to make it more comfortable?

Step 2: Educate yourself. This step is crucial so you can weigh the costs and benefits of each potential improvement. There are many helpful lists of small and large energy efficiency upgrades available online. There are also some great resources like the Department of Energy, ENERGY STAR® and *Consumer Reports*. Your electric co-op may have a home energy advisor on staff or available literature that can help.

Step 3: Schedule an energy audit. An energy audit will help you prioritize so you can spend your money on the measures that will bring you the most benefit. And an energy auditor can help in other ways. My neighbors hired a contractor to do some major energy efficiency upgrades. They asked an energy auditor to take a look at the work before they paid for it and the auditor found it wasn't even close to the level agreed to in the contract. It took three or four return visits for the contractor to get the work up to the promised level of efficiency. So, the energy auditor saved the day!

Step 4: Plan your projects. Now that you have set your budget and priorities and have a sense of the work and costs involved, make a list of the items you want to include in your energy efficiency upgrades.

Step 5: Are there tasks you can take on yourself? Some work, like caulking windows or adding weather stripping to doors, can easily be done by the homeowner, especially with the help of online tutorials. Other work, like insulating an attic, can be dangerous and may require special equipment or know-how.

Step 6: Identify and select contractors. This can be challenging. You want a contractor who really knows how to do energy efficiency work. And you may need two or more contractors, such as one for your heating system and another for insulation. Maybe you'd like to find one who can do air sealing or duct sealing. In some rural areas, contractors may not specialize in the efficiency measures you are interested in. Are they willing to learn what they don't know?

Be sure to get several quotes if possible, as well as references from past clients. Create and sign a contract with guaranteed work and completion dates, with payments due only as work is completed and inspected.

Step 7: Oversee the work. The quality of the work makes a big difference in the amount of energy savings and added comfort you desire. Keep an eye on the project and don't be afraid to ask questions – lots of questions. Remember, it's your home and you're the one paying the bills!

Congress Passes RURAL Act, SECURE Act and Cadillac Tax Repeal

The integrated campaign shaped by NRECA to carry the voice of electric cooperatives was heard in Congress! As one of the year's final legislative actions, the House and Senate passed –and the President signed – the RURAL Act and other major electric co-op priorities as a part of the 2020 spending package.

NRECA CEO Jim Matheson said the legislation “preserves the electric cooperative business model, protects co-op members from unfair electric rate increases and provides certainty to co-ops that leverage federal and state grants to meet the needs of the communities they serve.” He thanked Sens. Rob Portman (R-Ohio) and Tina Smith (D-Minn.) and Reps. Terri Sewell (D-Ala.) and Adrian Smith (R-Neb.) for leading the RURAL Act through Congress.

Louis Finkel, NRECA senior vice president of Government Relations, credited the strategic advocacy campaign by electric co-op leaders and NRECA for passing the legislation that protects electric co-ops' tax-exempt status when they receive federal and state grants for disaster relief, broadband deployment and economic development.

“None of this would have been possible without the tireless commitment of our membership to work together in carrying our message to Congress and the steadfast collaboration and leadership from our NRECA team,” said Finkel.

The effort included co-op leaders going to Capitol Hill, co-ops sharing stories on local impacts, grassroots messages and NRECA media and ads directly targeting lawmakers.

In addition to the inclusion of the RURAL Act, the final spending package includes several other electric co-op priorities.

- **SECURE Act:** The landmark SECURE Act (H.R. 1994), legislation to reform and promote retirement saving, will save co-ops in NRECA's Retirement Security (RS) Plan more than \$30 million per year in Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation insurance premiums. This premium reduction will help reduce the cost pressure on participating employers by offsetting to some extent future RS Plan cost increases that could be necessary. It also provides relief from IRS regulations for co-ops in the RS Plan, or in their own defined-benefit plans, that continue to provide benefits after being “closed” to new employees.
- **Cadillac Tax Repeal:** Eliminating the 40 percent Cadillac Tax on employer health plans will help protect health care benefits for all co-op employees, whether their co-op participates in NRECA's Group Benefits Trust or other providers. NRECA, a founding member of the leading coalition for the Cadillac Tax repeal, stressed that taxing any part of co-op employees' health care benefits would result in less comprehensive health coverage for families, and at a higher cost for many.
- **Parking Lot Tax Repeal:** The parking lot tax repeal helps an estimated one-third of tax-exempt electric co-ops. The law treated parking lots at tax-exempt businesses and organizations as employer-paid qualified transportation and parking benefits covered under a corporate tax on “unrelated taxable business income.” In addition to the tax, compliance costs were a burden for co-ops.



BIG Idea Wins

High school students with big business ideas competed for \$30,000 in cash and scholarships during the BIG Idea Competition Dec. 11 at Northern State University in Aberdeen, S.D.

Korbin Leddy of Milbank High School took first place with Korbin's Steak Express which aims to sell convenient meat grill packs to customers, such as active camping families for example. His prizes include a \$1,000 cash prize, a \$2,000 scholarship to NSU, a \$2,000 scholarship to Presentation College and a \$2,500 scholarship to the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology.

The 2019 BIG Idea Competition had 276 entries involving more than 389 students from 29 schools.

Second place went to The Urban Garden, by Megan Nash of Northwestern High School, which aims to provide the urban population with fresh, quality fruit through hydroponic and vertical farming techniques. Jordan Edwards and Paige Evans of Aberdeen Central High School also placed second with Smart Rides, which aims to help parents transport their children to and from school or extra-curricular activities while providing the children with a snack along the way. Second place prizes include \$500 cash and \$1,000 scholarships to Presentation College, NSU and SDSM&T.

Other finalists included Wild Yarrow Design by Elizabeth Wright from Rapid City Stevens High School, Hoffman Manure Hauling by Miles Hoffman from Leola High School, Vandy's Lawn Care by Paul VanDover from Milbank High School, CattleHome Fencing by Jessie Lux and Kodi Retzer from Eureka High School and New Home by Quentin Eck from Brookings High School. Each received \$100 cash and \$1,000 scholarships at Presentation College, NSU and SDSM&T.

Four category awards were given, with the winners in each receiving a \$500 cash prize and \$500 NSU scholarship.

- **Marketing Design winner:** Leeper Farms Custom Work by Phoenix Leeper of West Central High School.
- **Food Animal Agriculture Category winner:** Large Animal Immunization Robot (L.A.I.RA) by Liberty Thompson and Payton DeGroot, Brookings High School.
- **Wellness Category winner:** Romulus and Remus by Paul Wehrung of Spearfish.
- **Agriculture Innovation winner:** Feather-Lite Mix by Jacey Orthaus of Florence High School.

ENERGIZING COMMUNITIES

We're led by members like you. Which means we're not out to make money. Instead, we're building communities by listening to your needs. We're shaped by the people we serve.

REASONS TO LOVE YOUR ELECTRIC CO-OP

Delivering More than Just Electricity

Brenda Kleinjan

editor@sdrea.coop

From reliable energy to community involvement, there are a lot of reasons why co-op members love their electric cooperatives.

Co-Ops Are Local, Community-Focused Organizations

Co-ops have a rich history of serving their members and are facing the future with innovative ideas to help their members and grow their local communities.

Local people helping out. From billing clerks to line workers and every job in between, the people working at your local electric cooperative are the ones you'll see in your communities. They are serving on volunteer fire departments and as first responders, serving on school boards and county commissions, as ushers at church and as youth sports coaches.

Sioux Valley Energy employees get final instructions before embarking on their meal delivery routes.



Some cooperatives have launched employee community service days where local communities or organizations benefit from a day of service, whether it be a town clean up, restoring a rural cemetery, delivering meals to shut-ins or helping others in need.

Keeping Members Informed

Whether it's through this magazine, which reaches members each month or through social media channels like Facebook and Twitter or mobile apps like SmartHub, cooperatives continually strive to inform their member-owners about events and issues that matter. From a quick post or tweet about why the power may have blinked or celebrating the achievements of area youth, co-ops are communicating with their members and connecting them to their community. As storms approach, co-ops offer helpful tips for preparing for inclement weather and how to deal with the aftermath of storms.

Helping Members Save Money

Co-op demand response and load management programs have helped members save money for decades. And now, with interactive tools like SmartHub, an increasing number of co-op members are accessing information about their home's energy use right from their mobile device or computer. Several co-ops offer energy audits and other ways to reduce energy use.

Appliance rebates, loans for heating and cooling equipment and reduced rates for some energy use

are offered by some co-ops in the state. Check with yours to find out what programs could benefit you.

Diversifying Energy Resources

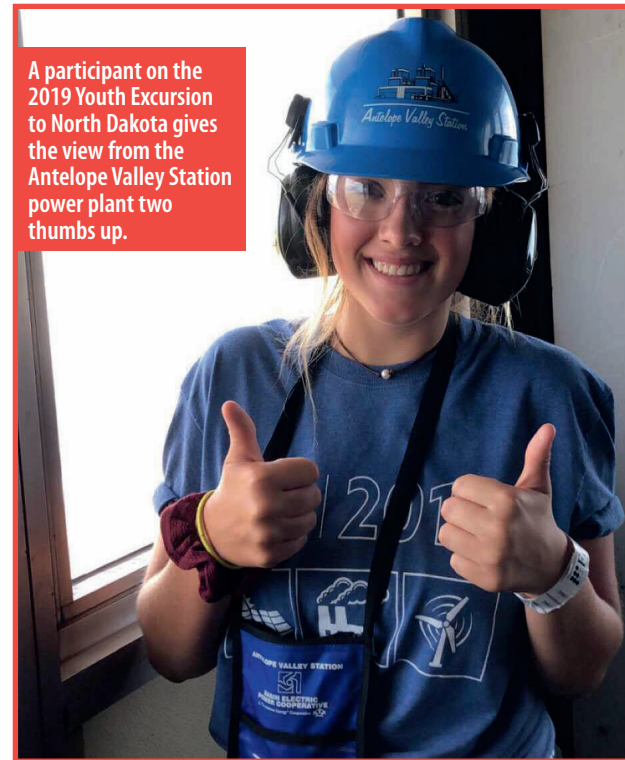
Cooperatives have a history of using an all-of-the-above approach to meeting members' energy needs. The first utility-scale wind project in South Dakota was built by co-ops and several co-ops have solar demonstration projects to help members learn about solar grid interconnection and other aspects of the resource.

Investing in Youth

When it comes to looking to the future, co-ops have the youth in their communities in mind. Each year, co-ops invest more than \$100,000 in scholarships for students pursuing further education at colleges or

technical schools. Dozens of students have the opportunity to go to Washington, D.C., for the annual rural electric youth tour, courtesy of their local electric cooperative. Several co-ops in the state send students on the four-day Youth Excursion to North Dakota each summer to explore energy careers and cooperatives. And throughout the school year, Co-ops in the Classroom and other safety demonstrations visit schools across the region to help younger students learn about using electricity wisely and how so be safe around it.

A participant on the 2019 Youth Excursion to North Dakota gives the view from the Antelope Valley Station power plant two thumbs up.



Co-op member service personnel receive training on blower door tests which can be a useful tool in a home energy audit.



Four Tips for Winter Safety



Abby Berry

NRECA

It's no surprise that winter months bring increased potential for fire risks and electrical safety hazards. This makes sense because during the coldest months, consumers are using additional electrical devices and appliances, like space heaters, electric blankets and portable generators.

The National Fire Protection Association estimates that 47,700 home fires occur each year in the U.S. due to electrical failure or malfunction. These fires result in 418 deaths, 1,570 injuries and \$1.4 billion in property damage annually. This

winter, safeguard your loved ones and your home with these electrical safety tips from the Electrical Safety Foundation International.

- **Don't overload outlets.** Overloaded outlets are a major cause of residential fires. Avoid using extension cords or multi-outlet converters for appliance connections – they should be plugged directly into a wall outlet. If you're relying heavily on extension cords in general, you may need additional outlets to address your needs. Contact a qualified electrician to inspect your home and add new outlets.

- **Never leave space heaters unattended.** If you're using a space heater, turn it off before leaving the room. Make sure heaters are placed at least three feet away from flammable items. It should also be noted that space heaters take a toll on your energy bills. If you're using them throughout your home, it may be time to upgrade your home heating system.

- **Inspect heating pads and electric blankets.** These items cause nearly 500 fires every year. Electric blankets that are more than 10 years old create additional risks for a fire hazard. Inspect your electric blankets and heating pads – look for dark, charred or frayed spots, and make sure the electrical cord is not damaged. Do not place any items on top of a heating pad or electric blanket, and never fold them when in use.

- **Use portable generators safely.** Unfortunately, winter storms can cause prolonged power outages, which means many consumers will use portable generators to power their homes. Never connect a standby generator into your home's electrical system. For portable generators, plug appliances directly into the outlet provided on the generator. Start the generator first, before you plug in appliances. Run it in a well-ventilated area outside your home. The carbon monoxide it generates is deadly, so keep it away from your garage, doors, windows and vents.

BUILD YOUR NEST

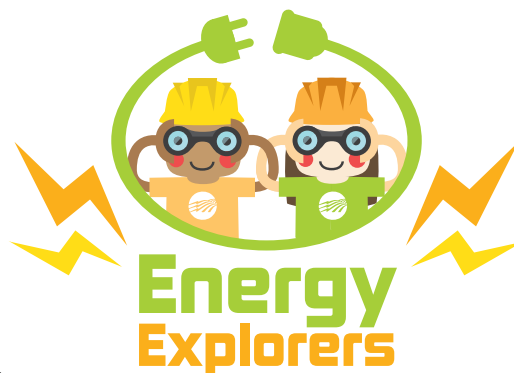
Nest® Home Products are available at Butte Electric!

Special discounted prices available for members!

Stop in to the Spearfish Service Center to see which Nest products are the right fit for your home and family!

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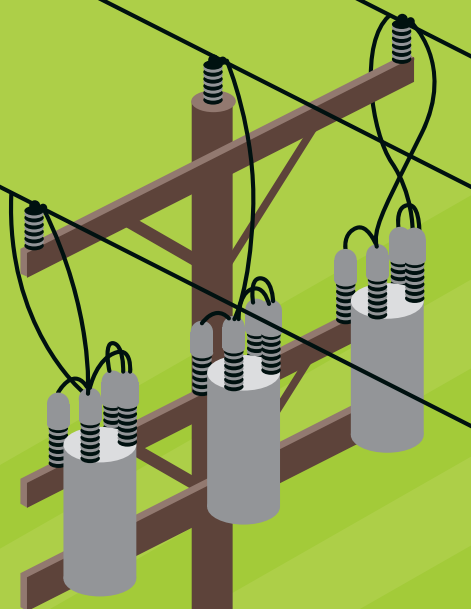
ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT WORD SCRAMBLE



Electric co-ops use a variety of equipment to make sure you and your family receive reliable electricity. Can you unscramble the equipment terms below?

Use the provided clues for help, and double check your work in the answer key below.

1. **ORNSTAMREFR** _____
These can look like large metal cans on top of utility poles or big green boxes on the ground. They are used to reduce the voltage of electricity, making it safe for use in your home.
2. **OERPW NSLIE** _____
These can hang overhead or be placed underground. They carry electricity from where it's generated to homes and businesses in your community.
3. **OUTASBSNTI** _____
This is an electrical facility that contains equipment for controlling the flow of electricity.
4. **RCTLECIE ERMTE** _____
These devices are typically found outside the home and measure the amount of electricity you use.
5. **CBUTKE KTURC** _____
Lineworkers use these types of vehicles to reach power lines and poles when making repairs and updates to the electrical system.



Answer Key: 1. TRANSFORMER 2. POWER LINES 3. SUBSTATION
4. ELECTRIC METER 5. BUCKET TRUCK

Nemo 500 Outhouse Races

NAJA Shrine
Transportation
Fund for Kids
Benefits from
Outdoor Event

Brenda Kleinjan

editor@sdrea.coop

**We called it the
Nemo 500 because
it sounded good.**

When one thinks of racing, cars, horses or motorcycles likely come to mind. But, in the Black Hills community of Nemo, outhouses – equipped with wheels, skis or both – are the vehicle of choice.

While each outhouse must be equipped with a seat with one hole, there are additional basic requirements in this competition designed to raise funds for the NAJA Shrine Kids Transportation Fund.

First, each outhouse will have a rider. And during the race, that rider will trade places with a teammate.

“There always has to be someone on the throne,” said Ervin “Red” Alspaw, a Shriner with the Oasis of Deadwood and one of the contacts for the race.

The outhouse must be at least five feet tall and the door (if there is one) has to stay open during the race.

The outhouse must have four walls and a roof and the team’s name must be on each of the walls.

“It’s a hoot,” said Alspaw.

Money raised at the event helps Shriners cover the transportation expenses of some 630 children in western South Dakota who seek care at Shriners Hospitals



A team prepares to race their outhouse in the 2017 competition.

nationwide.

“We called it the Nemo 500 because it sounded good,” said Troy Saye, race organizer and owner of the Nemo Guest Ranch where the event is held.

“We stepped it off a few years ago and it’s actually about 970 feet. You start at the restaurant and at midway everyone runs around the outhouse, retrieving a colored roll of toilet paper which must be placed in the correct order on a plunger.

Alliterations, euphemisms and creativity may make for memorable team names, but speed is the name of the game as the fastest team to complete the



Kids compete in the scoop shovel races.

The Rules

OUTHOUSE RACE RULES and STRUCTURE

- 1) Outhouse can only be human powered. No electric-, solar- or gas-powered assistance. The outhouse must have four walls, roof, doorway and seat with at least one hole. It may have a door, but the door must remain securely open during the race.
- 2) The outhouse must be a minimum of nine square feet at the base and a maximum overall width not to exceed six feet (including grasping or pushing devices). A minimum height of five feet from the floor to the highest point of the roof.
- 3) Any number and size of wheels or skis may be used.
- 4) Any device for pushing or pulling the outhouse may be used except ropes. All pushing or pulling devices must be secured solid.
- 5) Outhouses may be built from any material but glass and must be structurally sound.
- 6) Each entry must have an outhouse name that is to be displayed on each side of the structure. Sponsors' names may be displayed anywhere on the outside.
- 7) There will be three age divisions. (Age divisions will be determined by average team ages. Add all team members' ages and divide by the number of team members.)
 - Division 1: Ages 12 to 25
 - Division 2: Ages 26 to 45
 - Division 3: Ages 46 and over

Good to know:

Teams consist of two to five people, one of which must ride inside the outhouse.

Safety gear including helmets are required for all members and ice cleats are recommended.

Outhouse passengers must be 12 years old or older. Handles or seatbelts are required for the outhouse passengers.

Teams' dress is to reflect the theme of their entry.

Teams make a mandatory pit stop at mid race for a fire-drill. Each member must run around the outhouse three times and the rider must switch places with one of the pushers. Each team member will be required to place a color-coded roll of toilet paper on a color-coded plunger in order of color scheme provided at race time. The race will be timed from start to finish, the objective is to get the lowest time to win.



The costumed Sesame Streak team poses with their People's Choice outhouse trophy after the 2016 race.

race is the winner.

Winners in each of the age divisions get an outhouse trophy hand-made by Troy and Willie Saye.

The Sayes created the event after a 2006 visit from Willie's cousin, shortly after they bought the Nemo Guest Ranch.

"He said he had to get home for an outhouse race. We didn't know what it was," said Troy. The couple researched the event and found that several other

states held races. They developed their rules for the Nemo event. Early races were held just for fun or to raise money for different organizations. The race has been a benefit for the NAJA Shrine Kids Transportation Fund for the last eight or nine years.

The creative names don't stop at the race team names. It takes a certain fortitude to dip a spoon into some of the entries in the chili cook-off contest where cooks serve up three gallons of chili with names like "Presidential Poopers Chili" and "Dave's Chunky Pork and Beef Chili."

Kids can compete in the Scoop Shovel Races, but competitors must provide their own scoop shovel.

If you're going, check-in for the three divisions is at 10 a.m. and race time is 1 p.m. Preregister your team by Feb. 1 to receive a T-shirt.

If you have a team but don't have

an outhouse to race in, contact the Nemo Guest Ranch to see if theirs is available.

Advice for first-time attendees? Arrive early, dress warm and be prepared for

a bit of a walk (late-comers have had to park a half-mile away from the event.)

Attendance at the event varies with the weather, Saye said. Crowds range from 1,000 people up to 2,400 people when the race time temperature was 53 degrees.

"You have got to see it to really enjoy it," said Saye.

"When we first started, we never imagined it would take off the way it did," said Saye.

Interested? Visit nemo500.com for more information or contact the Nemo Guest Ranch at 605-578-2708.

When we first started, we never imagined it would take off the way it did.



Kianna Knutson and Shane Binger left their 2018 wedding reception with a sparkler send off.

YOUTH TOUR SPARKS

Participants Make Lifetime Connections

Brenda Kleinjan

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The annual Rural Electric Youth Tour is billed as a trip-of-a-lifetime, which it is for the thousands of teenagers who have participated since it began in 1963. But for a certain few, the weeklong trip filled with congressional visits, sight-seeing and co-op educational opportunities was more life altering than they possibly dreamed.

Kianna and Shane, 2011

Kianna Knutson and Shane Binger participated in the 2011 trip. Kianna, from Philip, S.D., represented West Central Electric Cooperative in Murdo, S.D., while Shane, from Tulare, S.D., represented Northern Electric Cooperative in Bath, S.D.

During the week of travel, the two would talk some and share experiences. A visit to the Pentagon Memorial was particularly memorable for the two.

“For me, we hit it off right away on the tour,” said Kianna.

“But we went our separate ways. Whenever I’d head west, I’d try to stop in Philip and see her,” said Shane. “We kept in touch until we got to SDSU together.”

They started dating while attending South Dakota State University in Brookings, S.D. Shane graduated in December 2015 and Kianna in May 2016 and the two married in September 2018. They live in Redfield, S.D., and Kianna works in Aberdeen while Shane works in Tulare.

“The Youth Tour was one of my most favorite trips,” said Kianna. “It was a great way to meet people and make friends. It turned out one of them stuck for life.”

A sign at the Bingers’ wedding reception highlights the sparks that started with their 2011 Youth Tour.



For Shane, an additional outcome of the trip was that it sparked an interest in politics.

“It was an opportunity to see congress-people as actual people. That drove me to go back and intern with Sen. John Thune in 2015,” said Shane.

Riley and Kailee, 2009

Riley Schwader and Kailee Koester attended the 2009 Youth Tour together. Riley, of Winifred, S.D, represented Central Electric Cooperative in Mitchell, S.D., while Kailee of Redfield, represented Northern Electric.

They married in June 2014 on the heels of that year’s Youth Tour, which Riley’s sister participated (as did Kianna Knutson’s sister.)

The Schwaders live in Howard where they raise their two sons and where Kailee teaches fourth grade. The family was recently featured in a “ReEnergizing Rural” commercial talking about the Co-ops in the Classroom project.

Doug and Roberta, 1973

Roberta Johnson, a 4-Her from Parker, S.D., chosen to represent Turner County and Doug Stuebner, a 4-Her from Olivet, S.D., selected to represent Hutchinson County, met on the 1973 Youth Tour as the delegates for Turner-Hutchinson Electric Cooperative (now Southeastern Electric Cooperative), based in Marion, S.D.

“We started dating on Thursday, Oct. 18, 1973, when he asked me to go to the Hobo Week street dance at SDSU,” said Roberta, noting that Doug often wondered how she could remember the date. “I told him it was easy to remember because it was two days before her sister got married.”

Things clicked for the two and they made plans to marry.

“If I hadn’t been the South Dakota Pork Queen, we probably would have been married in December of 1975. But I needed to be single to compete at the national level, so Doug was willing to wait until the national competition was held in March of 1976. When someone else was crowned the national pork queen, Doug and I moved forward with our wedding

The Youth Tour was one of my most favorite trips.

plans and were married on Father’s Day, June 20, 1976. Even without the title of pork queen, I could still educate others about the nutritional value and versatility of pork when I became involved with the Porkettes.”

The two graduated from SDSU with majors in ag education and home economics education and were preparing to head to Marietta, Minn., when an opportunity to take over his grandparents’ farm came up.

“Entering farming had been a long-range goal, but when the farming opportunity arrived earlier than expected, we accepted. So, once again, Turner-Hutchinson Electric influenced our lives since they provided the electricity for our home and farming operation. We continued farming until June of 2006 when Doug had surgery for brain cancer. Initially, we were told the life expectancy for this type of treatable, but not curable, cancer was 18 months to two years. But by God’s grace and through hundreds of prayers, he has outlived that life expectancy by 11 years,” said Roberta.

The two moved into Menno in 2008 where Roberta continues teaching high school family and consumer sciences and middle school social studies.

Ethan and Vanessa, 2012

Ethan Ryberg of Buffalo Lake, Minn., was selected to represent McLeod Co-op Power in Glencoe, Minn., on the 2012 Youth Tour, the same year that Vanessa Peterson of Rosholt, S.D., was selected to represent Traverse Electric Cooperative in Wheaton, Minn. The two traveled with the Minnesota Youth Tour delegation that year.

While the two lived three hours apart, they began dating that fall and in 2013, they attended North Dakota State University in Fargo, N.D., together, majoring in pharmacy.

After their 2019 graduation, they have settled in the Bemidji area where they both work.

Electric cooperatives in South Dakota and Minnesota are once again taking applications for the annual Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. The 2020 participants might not find their future mate, but they will definitely have experiences of a lifetime.



The Schwaders live in Howard where Kailee teaches. They were recently featured in the electric cooperative “ReEnergizing Rural” campaign.

December 15-March 31

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

January 24-25

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

January 31-February 2

12th Annual Winterfest of Wheels, Convention Center, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-231-3100

January 31-February 2

Winterfest, Lead, SD, 605-584-1100

January 31-February 9

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

February 1

Old Western Movie Matinee, "3:10 to Yuma" featuring Glenn Ford, 1 p.m., Suggested donation: \$5, Includes popcorn, beverages and cookies, High Plains Western Heritage Center, Spearfish, SD, 605-642-9378

February 8

Old Western Movie Matinee, "How the West Was Won" featuring Jimmy Stewart, 1 p.m., Suggested donation: \$5, Includes popcorn, beverages and cookies, High Plains Western Heritage Center, Spearfish, SD, 605-642-9378

February 8-9

Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Gun Show, Convention Center, Sioux Falls, SD, 701-361-9215

February 10-16

Frost Fest, Brookings, SD, 605-692-6125



Photo courtesy: travelouthdakota.com

February 15-16

Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Gun Show, Ramkota Hotel, Pierre, SD, 701-361-9215

February 21

KORN and Breaking Benjamin, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4111

February 21-22

Mardi Gras Weekend, Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

February 22-23

48th Annual Farm, Home & Sports Show, Ramkota Hotel, Pierre, SD 605-224-1240

February 26

The Harlem Globetrotters, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center Barnett Arena, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4111

February 27-March 1

35th Annual SD State Dart Tournament, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4111

February 29

Speaker Series "Dakota Daughters" featuring Joyce Jefferson & Friends, 1 p.m., Suggested donation: \$5 at the door, High Plains Western Heritage Center, Spearfish, SD, 605-642-9378

March 15

High Plains Live! Presents: "History of Traditional Western Music" featuring Allen & Jill Kirkham, 2 p.m., Reserved Seating: \$15, General Admission: \$10, High Plains Western Heritage Center, Spearfish, SD, 605-642-9378

March 20-21, 27-28

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

March 21

Speaker Series "The German Russians" featuring Bill Bosch, 1 p.m., Suggested donation: \$5 at the door, High Plains Western Heritage Center, Spearfish, SD, 605-642-9378

March 28

Speaker Series "Arikara Indians & Fort Sully" featuring Bonnie Zebroski, Suggested donation: \$5 at the door, High Plains Western Heritage Center, Spearfish, SD, 605-642-9378

April 3-4

Forks, Corks and Kegs Food, Wine and Beer Festival, Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

April 17-19

First Dakota Classic Archery Tournament, Yankton, SD, 605-260-9282

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.