

Central Electric

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

Cooperative Connections

JANUARY 2015 VOL. 15 NO. 9



A FORECAST OF ENERGY SAVINGS

Pg. 8

Looking Toward the New Year



Loren Noess
General Manager

The cooperative is in the process of completing a study of our current rate policies. The purpose of the study is to verify that our current rate policies are collecting revenues fairly from all of our members.

The service department's billable work so far in 2014 is 20 percent ahead of last year at this time. This is impressive when you consider these employees spent 4-6 weeks early this year trimming trees for the cooperative. Our line department completed the installation of all the planned underground cable projects plus a few that were not planned, installed new services, upgraded existing services, and completed several maintenance projects in 2014. Due to the earlier than anticipated cold weather, the installation of buried cable has come to a stop, but the membership should see the benefits of these improvements for years to come.

Your cooperative will be using new computer software and a new billing system in 2015. We are changing to a new system that is more member friendly and provides more information for member bills and member usage. The software should also streamline our internal processes such as inventory management, mapping and others. Twenty years ago, Central Electric shared the costs of our current software with several neighboring cooperatives. By working together, each cooperative saved a considerable amount of money. This cooperative group will now be using software supported

As we approach the end of the calendar year, we tend to look back at what we have accomplished and use that information to plan our goals for the coming year. At Central Electric, your employees accomplished an amazing amount of work over the past 12 months.

Financially, the cooperative is looking very good heading into the last month of the calendar year. As we announced last month, there will be no increase in rates for 2015.

by National Information Solutions Cooperative (NISC). NISC is a cooperative business with over 700 Electric and Telecommunication Utilities as members. NISC is governed by a 14 person board of directors representing utility and telecommunication memberships. Our employees have received much training in 2014 and we hope to "go live" with their new software early in 2015.

On page 3 in this newsletter are the dates and locations for our District Meetings. Please try to attend the meeting in your area and enjoy a good meal, receive a \$10 bill credit and learn a little about this cooperative you own.

You as a member/owner contribute to the capital of Central Electric as a condition of membership. This contribution of capital is part of your monthly electric bill.

As a member, you have a say (democratic control) through your elected board of directors. The board sets that strategic directions of the cooperative. Then the management and employees put that direction into action through the operation of the cooperative.

As we
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While the safe, reliable and affordable provision of electricity is most important, your co-op does many other things. Central Electric supports area 4-H clubs and many other youth programs. The cooperative provides scholarships, donates to community organizations and helps with economic and community development. Our service department provides wiring, HVAC (Heating Venting and Air Conditioning), and appliance services to our communities. These are just a few examples of the many ways your cooperative serves our members and our communities.

Central Electric is not a large power company headquartered in another state with stockholders from around the world. We have five service centers with linemen located near you to service your needs. We were formed by neighbors and friends who came together with the goal to improve the quality of life by safely delivering reliable and affordable electricity. Our goal is to continue to do that and improve the quality of your life with the same neighborly approach.

Our cooperative principles guide us, and through your economic participation, we make sure our focus is on you, the member-owner.

Central Electric Cooperative Connections

(USPS 018-963)

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Mission Statement
Providing Reliable Energy and
Services at a Good Value

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Co-op News

District Meeting Dates

Hanson County

Monday, Jan. 5, 2015
St. Mary's Catholic Church Hall
Alexandria

Davison County

Tuesday, Jan. 6, 2015
Davison County Activity Center
Mitchell

Miner County

Thursday, Jan. 8, 2015
4-H Building
Howard

Jerauld County

Tuesday, Jan. 20, 2015
Springs Inn
Wessington Springs

Aurora County

Monday, Jan. 26, 2015
Ag Building
Plankinton

Brule County

Monday, Jan. 19, 2015
Ag Building
Pukwana

Sanborn County

Thursday, Jan. 22, 2015
4-H Building
Forestburg

Each member who attends their district meeting will be given a gift certificate worth \$10 towards their electric bill or \$15 towards any other service or product sold by Central Electric.

A meal will be served prior to the business meeting. All members will be notified by mail stating the official time, date and location of their district meeting.

Holiday Closings

Central Electric Offices will be closed on December 25th and January 1st so our employees may spend the Holiday Season with family and friends.

Podcasts Offer Energy Efficiency Tips

When compared to years past, building science hasn't changed all that much. Fifty years ago, a properly constructed and insulated home could provide comfort and affordable electric bills – this is still true today.

Although building science remains the same, energy efficiency technology has changed with the improvement of construction framing methods, insulation, windows, doors and air sealants. The introduction of infrared thermal imaging cameras now allows us to see the behavior of heat transfer, insulation performance (or lack thereof), moisture and air infiltration within a dwelling.

The cost and value of a kilowatt-hour is just as important today as it was in 1964. Nationwide, electric cooperatives have stayed the course for decades by providing their members with helpful energy efficiency resources for new home and retrofit construction. You can rest assured we'll be doing so for decades to come.

This month, we invite you to check out another free educational resource for your energy efficiency toolkit – the Smart Energy Tips podcast. Many of you already know about podcasts. For those who don't, a podcast is an audio format available on the Internet. A podcast can be listened to on your computer or a portable media device, such as an iPod or smartphone. Once you subscribe to our podcast feed, new episodes are automatically downloaded to your device as soon as they are available, and you can listen to them at your convenience.

The Smart Energy Tips podcast provides fact-based building science information in a fun format that's easy for the listener to understand. The content helps you take charge of your utility bills without sacrificing comfort and conveniences. Episodes address how construction practices, appliances, heating and cooling equipment, moisture, weather, politics, regulations, consumer habits and much more impact your electric bill. We help you identify your energy and comfort problems and find the solutions.

For audio device or smartphone listeners who are currently subscribed to iTunes:

- Simply access your account.
- Click on the "Podcast" tab.
- Enter "Smart Energy Tips" in the search window.
- Then click on the Smart Energy Tips window to subscribe.

For those without an iTunes account:

- Visit the Apple Store at: <http://store.apple.com/us> to subscribe for a free account.
- Click on the "Download iTunes" button and follow the instructions.
- Once your account is activated, just follow the steps in the previous paragraph.

For computer listeners, visit the www.smartenergylips.org website and click on the podcast tab to access the episode files.

Bret Curry is the residential energy manager for Arkansas Electric Cooperative Corporation and is the developer of the Podcast. He welcomes listeners to contact him with energy efficiency or comfort-related challenges that can be addressed in a future podcasts or any energy efficiency related questions at: smartenergylips@aecc.com.

Winter Driving Tips

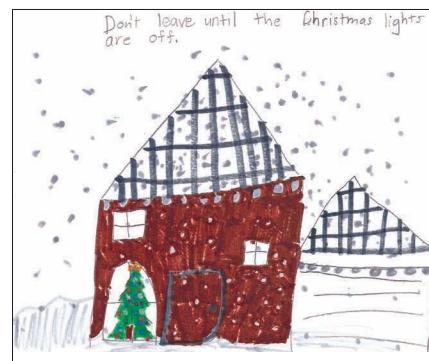
Severe weather can be both frightening and dangerous for automobile travel. Motorists should know the safety rules for dealing with winter road emergencies. AAA reminds motorists to be cautious while driving in adverse weather and recommends the following tips for long-distance winter trips:

- Watch weather reports prior to a long-distance drive or before driving in isolated areas. Delay trips when especially bad weather is expected. If you must leave, let others know your route, destination and estimated time of arrival.
- Keep at least half a tank of gasoline in your vehicle at all times.
- Pack a cellular telephone with your local AAA's telephone number, plus blankets, gloves, hats, food, water and any needed medication in your vehicle.
- If you become snow-bound, stay with your vehicle. It provides temporary shelter and makes it easier for rescuers to locate you. Don't try to walk in a severe storm. It's easy to lose sight of your vehicle in blowing snow and become lost.
- Don't over exert yourself if you try to push or dig your vehicle out of the snow.
- Tie a brightly colored cloth to the antenna or place a cloth at the top of a rolled up window to signal distress. At night, keep the dome light on if possible. It only uses a small amount of electricity and will make it easier for rescuers to find you.
- Make sure the exhaust pipe isn't clogged with snow, ice or mud. A blocked exhaust could cause deadly carbon monoxide gas to leak into the passenger compartment with the engine running.
- Use whatever is available to insulate your body from the cold. This could include floor mats, newspapers or paper maps.
- If possible run the engine and heater just long enough to remove the chill and to conserve gasoline.

Source: exchange.aaa.com

Kids' Corner Safety Poster

"Don't leave until the Christmas lights are off."



Gianna Gretta Hans, 9 years old

Gianna is the daughter of Dominic and Zita Hans, Mission Hill, S.D. They are members of Clay Union Electric Corporation, Vermillion, 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.

Satisfying Soups



Beer Cheese Soup

1/2 cup butter or margarine	6 cups chicken broth
1/2 cup diced onion	1-1/2 lbs. Velveeta, sliced
1/2 cup diced carrots	1 jar diced pimento
1/2 cup diced celery	12 oz. beer
1 cup flour	

Melt butter in a large soup pot. Add vegetables and cook until tender, but before onion begins to brown. Add flour and stir until fully absorbed. Slowly add chicken broth (about 1/2 cup at a time), stirring after each addition. Bring to a boil; simmer for 20 minutes. Add Velveeta and stir until completely melted. Add pimento and beer. Stir continuously until heated throughout. Serve with saltines.

Julia Rombough, Keystone

Meatball Soup

1 lb. ground beef	1/2 onion, chopped
1 egg	1 fresh tomato, chopped
1/2 tsp. salt	4 cups water
1/2 tsp. pepper	1/4 cup tomato sauce
1/4 cup bread crumbs	2 medium potatoes, diced
1 tsp. oil	1 carrot, sliced

Mix ground beef, egg, salt, pepper and bread crumbs; form into balls. Sauté onion and tomato in oil until tender. Add water and tomato sauce; bring to a rolling boil. Drop meatballs into boiling water one at a time. Add potatoes and carrots. Slow boil approximately 20 minutes or until vegetables are tender.

Elsie Heutinck, Olivia, Minn.

Zucchini Soup

8 cups chopped zucchini (do not peel)	1/2 tsp. garlic powder
	1/4 tsp. or more pepper as desired
1 large onion, chopped	
3 cups water	1/2 cup real bacon bits
3 chicken bouillon cubes	

Combine first 6 ingredients; boil for 25 minutes or until tender. Cool for 30 minutes, then put in blender and puree slightly. Mixture will be hot in the blender, so put a cloth over the top and fill only about 2/3 of the blender. Add bacon bits.

Diane Buckhouse, Sioux Falls

New England Clam Chowder

4 slices bacon, chopped	2 (12 oz. each) cans Nestlé Carnation Evaporated Milk
1 lb. (about 3 medium) potatoes, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch chunks	2 (6.5 oz. each) cans chopped or minced clams, undrained
1/4 cup chopped carrot	1/2 tsp. salt
1/4 cup chopped onion	1/2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
1/4 cup finely chopped celery	1/4 tsp. ground black pepper
1/4 cup all-purpose flour	

Cook bacon in medium saucepan until crisp; drain. Reserve 2 T. bacon fat. Return reserved bacon fat to saucepan. Add potatoes, carrot, onion and celery. Cook, stirring frequently, for 6 to 7 minutes or until potatoes are tender. Combine flour and evaporated milk in small bowl until blended; add to potato mixture. Stir in clams with juice, salt, bacon, Worcestershire sauce and pepper. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook, stirring frequently, for 15 to 20 minutes or until creamy and slightly thick. Makes 4 servings.

Nutritional information per serving: 270 calories; 110 calories from fat; 12g total fat; 7g saturated fat; 50mg cholesterol; 720mg sodium; 26g carbohydrate; 1g fiber; 11g sugars; 14g protein; 15% Vitamin A; 20% Vitamin C; 30% Calcium.

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Homemade Chicken Noodle Soup

1 whole chicken	5 eggs
1 to 2 cans chicken broth	2 tsp. salt
1 (12 oz.) can condensed carnation milk	4 to 5 cups all-purpose flour

Boil chicken and remove bones. Add 1 or 2 cans chicken broth for more flavor. For noodles, mix eggs, condensed carnation milk, salt and flour to make a stiff dough. Knead on counter top; keep adding flour until it rolls out nicely without sticking. Using a rolling pin, roll as thin as you can. Cut into strips with a pizza cutter. Let dry for 1 hour; add to boiling chicken. Cook for 20 minutes or until done.

Darlene Price, Prairie City

Beefy Nacho Potato Soup

4 to 5 medium potatoes, peeled and cubed	1 cup water
	2 cups milk
1 can whole kernal corn, undrained	2 cups Cheddar cheese
1 can diced tomatoes	1 lb. browned ground beef 1 small jar salsa

Combine all ingredients in a slow cooker; cook on low for 3 to 4 hours.

Stephanie Fossum, Hudson

Please send your favorite soup, bread, breakfast and seafood recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in June 2015. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

2015-2016 Scholarships



Central Electric will provide three \$1,000 academic scholarships for the 2015 - 2016 school year.

The Basin Electric Power Cooperative Scholarship is in its 25th consecutive year and is funded by Basin Electric Power Cooperative of Bismarck, ND.

The Jay Headley Memorial Scholarships are in their 14th consecutive year and are funded by the family of the late Jay Headley.

Both Scholarships are designed to recognize and encourage the academic and community achievements of the students in our area.

For more information, contact Central Electric Cooperative at 605-996-7516 or 800-477-2892. You can also download information and application forms from the website www.centralec.coop or contact your Guidance Counselor.

See application for eligibility requirements.

CENTRAL
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



800-477-2892 or 605-996-7516

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South Dakota Electric Cooperative Members Submit More Than 16,400 Comments to EPA

Comments oppose new regulations that would increase price of electricity

South Dakota Rural Electric Association General Manager Ed Anderson announced that more than 16,400 South Dakota electric cooperative members submitted comments submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in opposition to the agency's proposal to essentially eliminate coal fired generation in America. The comment period closed Dec. 1.

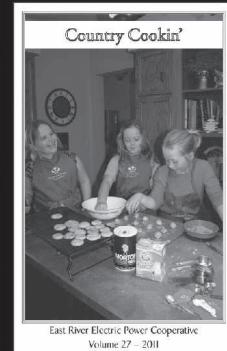
"Electric cooperative members in South Dakota receive power from some of the most environmentally efficient coal fired generation facilities in existence. Unfortunately, the EPA didn't consider the real world impact this latest proposal will have on the budgets of families and businesses across America," Anderson said. "That's why more than 16,400 of South Dakota electric cooperative members spoke out and told the EPA they couldn't afford another all-pain-for-no-gain government regulation. It's possible to balance affordability and environmental stewardship. Electric cooperatives have promoted energy efficiency and conservation for decades, long before it was cool to be green. If the administration wants a model to follow to address climate change without breaking the bank (your bank), take a look at us. There are options."

Electric cooperatives throughout South Dakota participated in a nation-wide effort from electric cooperatives that collectively submitted more than 1.1 million comments to the EPA opposing new regulations for new and existing power plants.

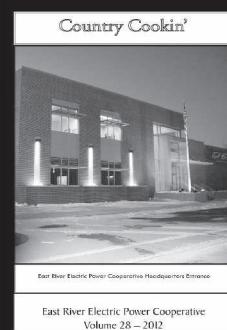
Country Cookin' Recipes Needed!



East River Electric Power Cooperative
Volume 29 – 2013



East River Electric Power Cooperative
Volume 27 – 2011



East River Electric Power Cooperative Headquarters Entrance
Volume 28 – 2012

Recipes are needed for the 31st volume of the East River Electric's Country Cookin' Cookbook!

Please help us create another great cookbook by submitting your favorite hearty recipes as well as recipes for the "Light Side" section of the cookbook.

Submission Deadline is Thursday January 1, 2015.

Submit Via email to kkaup@eastriver.coop, fax to: 605-256-8057 or contact Central Electric.

Winter Predictions: What Does the Almanac Say?

IN THE LAND OF INFINITE VARIETY AND THE LAND OF 10,000 Lakes, Mother Nature can be fickle. There's an old adage in South Dakota and western Minnesota: if you don't like the weather, wait a minute.

Predicting that weather can be a tricky thing. Predictions for the 2014-2015 winter were somewhat varied when *The Farmers' Almanac* and *Old Farmer's Almanac* came out last summer. Both publications promised a cold winter. One foretold of a dry winter, the other promised plenty of flakes.

"Another teeth-chatteringly cold winter is on its way! With its traditionally 80 percent – accurate weather forecasts, *The Old Farmer's Almanac* predicts that this winter will be another arctic blast with above-normal snowfall throughout much of the nation. The extreme weather will continue into Summer 2015, which is expected to be predominantly hot and dry," editors of *The Old Farmer's Almanac* said when the publication was released last summer.

"Winter will bring a frosty bite and next summer will be its mirror opposite, so get ready for a one-two punch," says Janice Stillman, editor of *The Old Farmer's Almanac*. "Be prepared – there's plenty in the forecast to cause all sorts of mayhem: blizzards, droughts and hurricanes!"

A competing publication, *The Farmer's Almanac*, published out of Lewiston, Maine, said its forecast for the 2014-15 winter was not for the faint-of-heart.

According to the 198th edition of *The Farmers' Almanac*, "The winter of 2014-2015 will see below-normal temperatures for about three-quarters of the nation, with the most frigid areas occurring in and around the Northern Plains into the Great Lakes."

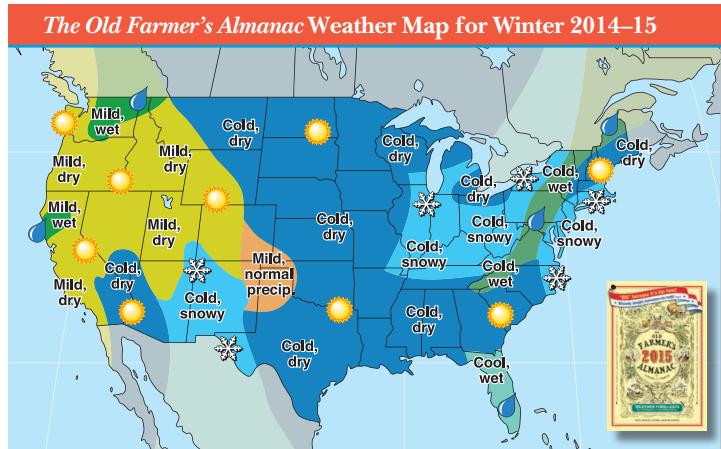
The Almanac, which has been predicting the weather for nearly 200 years, suggests that there will be a very cold outbreak during the final week of January into the beginning of February, going as far as to state that temperatures could drop to 40 below over the Northern Plains. Yes, "more shivery and shovely" conditions are on tap for the winter ahead.

Local meteorologists also vary on their predictions.

"This winter has been one of the most difficult to forecast in a long time," said Mike Modrick, chief meteorologist at KOTA Territory News in Rapid City, S.D., in early December. "There are finally signs that an El Nino-like weather pattern is developing, but an El Nino has never developed this late in the year in the past 60 years of records. In part, that pattern means a southern branch of the jet stream bringing much-needed rain to California. And December is looking warmer and drier than normal for us in the Northern Plains. If El Nino actually develops, warmer and drier-than-normal is likely to define our winter. Even so, around 50 percent of our warmer and drier El Nino winters can bring a cold February. So keep the warm socks handy!"

Despite the predictions, it's easy to assume that at some point in the winter, it's going to get cold. Really cold. And whether the prediction is for dire cold or a relative balmy winter, local electric cooperatives are equipped with information and tips for helping their members make their homes more energy efficient and help to cut monthly energy bills. The savings don't stop when the cold weather goes away; improving a home's energy efficiency can yield benefits year-round.

By
Brenda Kleinjan



Seal it up!

A tried and true method for improving a home's energy efficiency? Cut down on air leaks. An inexpensive tube of caulk and a batt of insulation can be a good start when chasing down cracks, crevices and other areas where heated inside air is seeping into the wide, cold open outdoors.

Faulty seals, cracks, penetrations, holes and more can all contribute toward infiltration, increasing our energy bills. Cable lines, telephone wires and dryer vents are just a few of the many penetrations a home can have. At each instance it is important to make the openings airtight to keep warm air from getting inside in the summer and conditioned air from escaping.

1) Weather-strip your doors: Cold air can enter into the house through open cracks and gaps from doors, windows and floors. Simple, weather stripping and caulk will reduce cold drafts and keep your home warmer.

2) Seal baseboards and caulk windows: Feel your hand around the bottom of your baseboards to detect where cold air might be getting into the living space.

3) Wrap the water heater and ducts, insulate the pipes and change the filters: Making your HVAC perform at maximum efficiency will save on the bottom line. Check for leaks in the ducts. Leaks in the duct work can increase cost by up to 30 percent and reduce comfort.

4) Add a door sweep to rooms that you use less frequently: Significant air flow can occur through the space between the bottom of the door and the floor.

5) Replace your old thermostat: Programmable and Smart thermostats can reduce heating costs by monitoring your system to run only when you need it.

(According to the energy savings calculator at togetherwesave.com, sealing cracks around vents, pipes and other openings into your home can cut \$212 off your annual energy bill.)

Keep it clean!

Check your heating and cooling system's filter every month, especially during heavy use months (winter and summer). If the filter looks dirty after a month, change it. At a minimum, change the filter every three months. A dirty filter will slow down air flow and make the system work harder to keep you warm or cool – wasting energy. A clean filter will also prevent dust and dirt from building up in the system – leading to expensive maintenance and/or early system failure.

(Again, according to the calculator at togetherwesave.com, changing your HVAC's filter each month can save up to \$82 a year in heating costs.)

Let the sunshine in!

Opening your home's window coverings during the day to let warm sunlight in and remembering to close them at night and during the summer months *can save an additional \$35 a year*.

Stack it up!

Increasing your attic's insulation to at least 15 inches thick can put *an additional \$241 a year back in your pocket* due to energy savings. (It is recommended that attic insulation in the Dakotas and western Minnesota be at R-49.)

Did we mention seal it up?

Sealing your home's heating and cooling ducts can *save an*

additional \$177 a year.

Ducts that move air to and from a forced-air furnace, central air conditioner or heat pump are often big energy wasters. Sealing and insulating ducts can improve the efficiency of your heating and cooling system by as much as 20 percent – and sometimes much more.



Focus first on sealing ducts that run through the attic, crawlspace, unheated basement or garage. Use duct sealant (mastic) or metal-backed (foil) tape to seal the seams and connections of ducts. After sealing the ducts in those spaces, wrap them in insulation to keep them from getting hot in the summer or cold in the winter. Next, look to seal any other ducts that you can access in the heated or cooled part of the house.

Bundle up.

Put on a sweater and bump your thermostat down a couple of degrees. Turning the temperature from 75 down to 72 can *save about \$90 a year*; dropping it to 68 degrees in the winter can bring the savings up even more.

Out with the old, in with the new...

If it's time to upgrade your home's heating and cooling system, look at an efficient geothermal heat pump. An ENERGY STAR® system with a SEER of 18 can *add nearly \$500 a year in savings*, as compared to a 10 SEER standard system.

It all adds up

Combined, the savings add up. Using the calculator on togetherwesave.com, the savings noted above could save a homeowner more than \$1,370 a year. However, it's important to note that the calculator uses a variety of assumptions in estimating cost savings. Because each home is unique and each family's habits are different, actual energy savings will vary.

The estimates above used an assumption for the cost of electricity of \$0.114/kWh, which is the national average cost of electricity (as calculated by the Energy Information Administration) in all calculations. The calculator also based its model home as a three bedroom, two bath home with partially conditioned basement located in Lebanon, Kansas. The home has a total heated and cooled area of 2,262 square feet with a 1,479-square foot main living area. The house's long axis runs North-South. There is no exterior shading. The model and room layout is based on a demo file provided by Wrightsoft. (Users of the program enter their own ZIP code, which alters the model slightly.)

Contact your local electric cooperative for more tips and suggestions to save this winter.

Horizon Health Care Receives Loans for New Woonsocket Community Health Center

The new Horizon Health Care, Inc (Horizon) medical clinic in Woonsocket has benefitted from a pair of low interest loans through Central Electric Cooperative and the Rural Electric Economic Development (REED) Loan and Grant (REDLG) program to secure financing for the project through the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

"We're so pleased to be able to help Horizon in this way," said Loren Noess, Central Electric's General Manager. "A big part of our mission is to build stronger communities and helping to increase access to good, affordable health care is one way we can keep our towns strong."

The REED Fund works with other local lenders to assist in financing economic development projects in eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota.

"We've been fortunate to assist Horizon in a number of our rural communities and it's making a real difference in the lives of people in rural areas," said REED Fund manager Linda Solmonson. "Working closely with our member cooperatives, the REED Fund looks for ways we can positively impact people's lives and build a stronger economic future in our area."

The 2,800 square foot clinic opened its doors to patients September 27th and held its grand opening on October 15th. The two loans closed on November 20th. The medical facility serves the city of Woonsocket and surrounding areas and



John Mengenhausen (left) of Horizon Health Care and Central Electric General Manager Loren Noess sign loan documents for the new Woonsocket Health Center.

includes three exam rooms, a nurses' workstation, a minor procedure room, and rooms for x-ray, telemedicine, and laboratory work.

Horizon operates 13 medical and four dental facilities within the surrounding areas and throughout the state of South Dakota.

Bundle up for Old Man Winter

Winter came early and caught many of us by surprise. Are you ready for winter's cold grasp? Snow and ice are inevitable when dealing with winter storms, but being prepared can make a world of difference. Central Electric recommends the following tips to help you prepare for wintery blasts.

Winterize your home

Winter storms wreak havoc on your home. By winterizing your living space, you'll be prepared for extreme cold and hazardous conditions.

- Remember to maintain and inspect heating equipment and chimneys every year to ensure they're working safely and properly.
- Caulk and weather strip doors and windows to make the most of your heating system.
- Freezing temperatures often cause water pipes to burst. Remember to insulate pipes with insulation or newspapers

and plastic. Allow faucets to drip during extreme cold to avoid frozen pipes.

- Consider installing storm windows for better insulation. You can also cover windows with plastic (from the inside) to keep the cold out.
- Make sure everyone in your family knows where the home's fire extinguisher is located and how to use it properly. House fires occur more frequently during winter months, as people tend to use alternative heating methods that may not be safe.

Prepare a winter survival kit

Severe winter storms often bring heavy accumulation of ice and snow, which can lead to downed power lines and extended outages. Our crews will work hard to restore power, but having a winter survival kit on hand is a smart idea.

- Store food that does not require cooking, such as canned goods, crackers, dehydrated meats and dried fruit. Keep a

Scholar of The Week - Chesney Arend

Chesney Arend from Bridgewater-Emery High School has been selected as the TouchStone Energy Scholar of the Week.

Chesney has a 3.82 grade point average and plays Volleyball, runs Track and takes part in Cheerleading while also being involved with the National Honor Society, Band and Choir.

Chesney Arend has a very full plate this year at Bridgewater-Emery High School. "Anatomy, Physics, taking AP Literature, I'm taking College Algebra and I am taking an online

Pharmacy Tech program. It's a lot of work. I am pretty motivated though. I like to get my work done ahead of time like in class and stuff so I have time to sleep at night."

Bridgewater Emery Principal, Christena Schultz says what Chesney has done during her high school career helps her inspire the underclassmen, who see her as a role model. "It really makes you feel good that we, my staff and I, can



Chesney Arend (center) receives her scholarship award from Central Electric General Manager, Loren Noess (right) and High School Principal Christena Schultz.

of Jeff & Lisa Arend.

Central Electric, a Touchstone Energy Cooperative, awarded a \$100 scholarship to Arend. Central Electric Manager Loren Noess and Member Services Director Ken Schlimgen visited Bridgewater-Emery High School to recognize Arend and present the financial award. Arend was also featured on KSFY TV news on November 27th.

hopefully continue to produce leaders like this who can carry it out into the real world as well."

And what does the future hold for Chesney? As you might imagine, her full plate won't be empty anytime soon. "I plan on going to USD. I'm probably going to go into the medical field. I'm not quite sure where yet. My sights are set on med school but it might not happen....it might."

Arend was nominated by Bridgewater-Emery High School Principal, Christena Schultz. She is the daughter

large supply of water on hand. The website www.Ready.gov recommends five gallons per person.

- Be sure to refill all prescriptions in the event of a major power outage.
- Keep all forms of identification handy, such as driver's licenses, photo IDs and social security cards. Bank account information and insurance policies are also good to have on hand.
- First Aid Kit, blankets, flashlight, battery-powered radio and extra batteries.

Stay warm and safe

If an outage occurs, you should plan for an alternate heating source. A fireplace, propane space heater or wood-burning stove would be sufficient. Fuel and wood-burning heating sources should always be vented, and make sure carbon monoxide and smoke detectors are working properly. Always practice extreme caution when using alternate heating sources.

If you decide to use a portable generator during an outage, make sure it is placed outside the home for proper ventilation. Be careful not to overload the generator. Use appropriate extension cords that can handle the electric load.



Follow these tips, and your family will stay warm in the event of a power outage. For more information on preparing for winter storms, visit www.ready.gov.

Building Block No. 4

Consumer Energy Efficiency

THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY'S fourth building block of its proposed Section 111(d) rule puts some of the burden of meeting its carbon reduction proposed limits directly into the laps of individuals.

The block calls for improving energy efficiency by consumers reduces the need for power generation. EPA's CO₂ reduction goals envision all states increasing energy efficiency programs to result in the avoidance of 1.5 percent of energy demand per year.

Co-ops have an established track record of encouraging their members to use energy wisely. In

fact, the country's Touchstone Energy Cooperative members participate in the only national utility-sponsored campaign to promote energy efficiency: TogetherWeSave.com.

Additionally, 70 percent of cooperatives nationwide offer financial incentives to promote greater efficiency and 96 percent of cooperatives have an efficiency program in place.

But, to meet the EPA's efficiency goals – which include an evaluation, measurement and verification (EM&V) plan component to verify the efforts – could prove costly. The National Rural Electric

By Brenda Kleinjan



EPA's "Building Blocks"

Cooperative Association estimates that to meet the efficiency goals, co-ops and consumer members would have to spend \$58 billion on energy efficiency. That level of investment, NRECA argues, may go beyond the abilities of consumer-owners and co-ops to afford, given co-op demographics. (Nationally, America's electric cooperative serve 42 million Americans in some of the more remote parts of the country.)

The practicality of the building block is a concern to others as well.

"They are expensive programs to run; typically you would need a broader base to be cost-effective to run," said Kim Pederson, Manager of Market Planning for Otter Tail Power Company, an investor-owned utility based in Minnesota that serves towns in northeastern South Dakota. Pederson was a panelist addressing the fourth building block during a South Dakota Public Utilities Commission conference on 111(d) held in July.

"In a state without a lot of metro and clusters of population, it gets a lot tougher....South Dakota is so spread out," said Pederson. She said Otter Tail estimates it would cost nearly \$1.2 million to achieve the 1.5 percent goal for its South Dakota customers by 2024. (Otter Tail based their assumptions on actual costs incurred with meeting a state-mandated rule in Minnesota that was implemented in 2007. She noted in her comments that the state has yet to meet the 1.5 percent goal, despite the significant investments being made.)

NRECA also contends that studies demonstrate that urban experiences in energy efficiency achievements cannot be achieved in rural areas.

An additional concern with the building block – and perhaps a fundamental concern – is that the building block exceeds EPA's legal authority under section 111(d) of the Clean Air Act.

Electric co-ops support energy efficiency programs designed to save consumers money and conserve energy resources. However, co-ops – through NRECA – argue that EPA does not have the authority to set national energy policy, let alone mandate energy conservation.

NRECA maintains that the proposed EPA rules are complex with unintended consequences and that the EPA is overreaching its legal authority.

For co-op members, the additional costs hit member-owners hardest. The not-for-profit co-op business model forces any costs from upgrades or shuttered power plants to be borne directly by co-op members.

According to the American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity, the EPA's proposed rule – encompassing its four building blocks – could force the retirement of 30,000 megawatts to 80,000 megawatts of coal-based generation and could cause more than 200,000 jobs to be lost in 2020.

The projected global climate benefits are a less than 1 percent reduction in CO₂ concentrations, a reduction in global average temperature of 0.016 degree and a reduction in sea level rise of 1/100th of an inch.

The public comment period on the EPA's proposed rule closed on Dec. 1. The EPA intends to issue a final rule in June of 2015 and states will then have one year to develop implementation plans or if they collaborate on multi-state or regional plans, they are allowed two years to develop their plan. Case by case, states can seek a one-year extension from the EPA. Therefore, in some states it may take until June of 2018 to fully understand what compliance with this proposal will mean.

Editor's Note: This is the fourth of a five-part series that will explore each of the EPA's Building Blocks. The four building blocks are: (1) making coal plants more efficient; (2) displacing existing coal with existing natural gas plants; (3) increasing the use of nuclear and renewable energy; and (4) decreasing electricity consumption by increasing end-user energy efficiency.

COAL PLANT EFFICIENCY

Make physical and operational changes at existing coal-based power plants to improve heat-rate efficiency by 6 percent, which reduces the amount of coal needed per MWh of generation, thereby reducing CO₂ emissions.

NATURAL GAS

Existing natural gas combined-cycle plants are used more or less frequently, depending upon a variety of factors. EPA's CO₂ reduction goals are based on dispatching those natural gas plants more frequently (up to 70 percent capacity factor) while closing or curtailing existing coal-based generation sources.

RENEWABLE AND NUCLEAR POWER

Nuclear power and renewable resources like hydro, wind and solar power do not have direct CO₂ emissions. EPA's goals are based on keeping some existing nuclear power plants (that are at risk of closing) operating, ensuring that new nuclear plants under construction get finalized, and that more sources of renewable energy are developed.

CONSUMER ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Improving energy efficiency by consumers reduces the need for power generation. EPA's CO₂ reduction goals envision all states increasing energy efficiency programs to result in the avoidance of 1.5 percent of energy demand per year.

STATE CARBON INTENSITY GOAL

State	2012 Emissions Rate (lbs/MWh)	Final Goal (2030 & After)	Final Reduction	Final Percent Reduction
Iowa	1,552	1,301	-251	-16.2%
Minnesota	1,470	873	-597	-40.6%
Montana	2,246	1,771	-475	-21.1%
Nebraska	2,009	1,479	-530	-26.4%
N. Dakota	1,994	1,783	-211	-10.6%
S. Dakota	1,135	741	-394	-34.7%
Wyoming	2,115	1,714	-401	-19.0%

Growing Opportunity: Bad Nation Rustlers 4-H Club

By Courtney J Deinert

One mother's dream for her children has transformed into an opportunity for all youth in her community. Diane Inch, a resident of Fort Thompson, established and now advises the only 4-H club in Buffalo County.

Despite its rich history, 4-H is a completely new and exciting adventure for the youth in Fort Thompson. Inch began the Bad Nation Rustlers 4-H club when she and her family moved to the area. No club existed there, and the nearest one was over 20 miles away. Her children had previously been involved in 4-H and enjoyed working with their animals, so Diane wanted to continue to provide that opportunity to her children as well as other potential members. Inch said, "I took on the program here in the hopes that the members can try new things, meet new people and become involved in the community together."

Bad Nation Rustlers is now in its 3rd year and operates under the Jerauld/Buffalo County Leaders Association and Extension Office. The 4-H club has grown from the original 3 members to 6 members, and Diane hopes to double this number over the next year. By having more members in the club, there is greater opportunity for different activities.

In order to be a member, youth need to be at least 8 years of age by January 1st of the participating year. For any interested children younger than 8 years old, they may join "Cloverbuds." "Cloverbuds" are able to show in certain categories and will receive participation awards but will not be judged. Inch also has her own requirement for the members: "I ask that at meetings they support and show respect for one another, they help each other, participate in activities, have positive attitudes and try their best."

Julie Barber, 4-H Program Assistant at Jerauld Co. Extension, said "It's nice to have a group expand 4-H in the area. We'd like to see the group grow." Anyone interested in



Nicole Inch, a member of the Bad Rustlers 4-H Club is shown with her Grand Champion Goat.

joining can enroll online at <http://sd.4honline.com> or visit the Jerauld Co. Extension Office in Wessington Springs.

Contrary to a common perception of 4-H, animals and livestock are only portions of what 4-H entails. Members are not required to own any animals. Inch said, "If you are interested in it, it most likely is part of 4-H." She mentions that others areas of 4-H include drama, cooking, sewing, fishing, welding, photography, crafts, engines, gardening, and rocketry.

Inch said, "Being involved in 4-H benefits the members by teaching them new skills, exposing them to different hobbies and ideas, the responsibility of taking care of animals, speaking in public and to adults, and pride in their accomplishments at the fair."

Despite their small membership, the Bad Nation Rustlers have been successful with their projects. They

participated in County Achievement Days in Wessington Springs on August 1. They earned awards in photography, chickens, rabbits, and dairy goats, as well as state qualification in many of their projects.

While the Bad Nation Rustlers club is looking to grow in members, they also welcome any community members with a skill, such as storytelling, singing, dancing, cooking, or crafting, that they would be willing to share with the group.

4-H is a development organization that seeks to empower youth in reaching their full potential and ultimately "learn by doing," engaging them in hands-on activities in the areas of science, citizenship, and healthy living. The 4-Hs stand for "Head, Heart, Hands, and Health"—the four values that members focus on. 4-H is also the largest youth development organization in the nation, with more than 6 million participating youth, 540,000 volunteers, and 60 million alumni.

Weisz Announces Retirement After 42 Years



Central Electric journeyman lineman Bob Weisz has announced his retirement beginning January 1, 2015. Having worked for the cooperative for 42 years, Weisz has quite the story to tell, and that's a story we'd like to share.

Weisz's career began in the fall of 1968 with Martin Beach Inc. in Huron, SD, where he constructed power

lines as a groundman. One day, Weisz's boss told him that if he wanted to make more money, he should get himself a lineman's belt, a set of hooks, and start climbing. However, that was only the beginning.

In April 1970, Weisz was building line in Valley City, ND. While there, Weisz met his wife, Laura. They now have four children and eight grandchildren. In 1972, Weisz joined the cooperative family at Intercounty Electric. Weisz says, "This was a lot better than living out of a suit case during the week, getting up early on Mondays, and driving 100 miles to start the week's work."

Weisz's education as a lineman consisted of on-the-job training. Mitchell Technical Institute opened in 1968 and did not offer lineman school yet at that time. In 1974, Weisz earned his journeyman certificate, usually a four year program, after only two years. Weisz was granted two years credit toward the program for his previous construction experience.

When Weisz began climbing poles, he says, "We climbed about everything. Putting burn downs up and changing out transformers at night, during rain storms, and blizzards." Now, however, overhead work is done with bucket trucks and the majority of line maintenance is able to be done while the line is energized. As opposed to climbing, most new line construction is spent kneeling down and terminating new underground conductors.

"Being a lineman, you never know what you will come across during an outage," Weisz says. "When you have a ball of fire the size of a lightning bolt and the sound of a shotgun going off, you know something went wrong." Weisz has seen Mother Nature blow up a transformer by lightning or shatter a

pole to a mere splinter standing a foot tall. He's seen ice storms take down poles for as far as you can see. Weisz adds, "Being a lineman, you have to look out for each other so someone doesn't get hurt."

Weisz said their trucks in 1972 had poor heaters: "On a cold night, you would have to wipe the frost off the inside of the windshield to see where you were driving." There was also no air-conditioning, no AM radios (FM radios being unheard of), and no 4x4 pickups, using snow shovels and tire chains instead.

As opposed to the 24 hour dispatch service used now, Intercounty had an answering machine linked to each lineman's home phone. The wives would take the calls in the middle of the night, with no cell phone or radio contact to reach their husbands. Weisz said, "A lot of times, we would get home and turn around and go back to work with another outage."

However, some things never change, and Weisz says those are the times when outage calls come in—during meal time, just when you fall asleep, church, birthdays, Christmas Eve, New Year's Eve, and even while enjoying a sunny nice day.

Weisz says, "After I retire, I plan to spend time with family, travel, work in my shop, and roll over in bed when it starts to lightning and thunder." Central Electric thanks Weisz for his service for the past 42 years, and wishes him a very happy retirement.



Robert Weisz (left) receives his Journeyman Lineman certificate in 1974 from then Operations Superintendent Wayne Heidinger

Regional Dateline

December 20

SACC Chili & Pie Feed
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Senior Community Center
Wessington Springs, SD
605-539-1929

December 20

Holiday Bingo, 1 to 3 p.m.
Springs Inn Café
Wessington Springs, SD
605-539-1929

January 3

Annual Pigeon Show
Watertown, SD, 605-520-1053

January 4, 11, 18, 25

Foreign Film Festival
Spearfish, SD, 605-642-7973
www.matthewsopera.com

January 6-8

Dakota Farm Show
DakotaDome, Vermillion, SD
507-437-7969

January 8-10

Ice Fishing Tournament
Mobridge, SD, 605-845-2387
www.mobridgeoutdoors.com

January 10

Health and Safety Fair
Watertown, SD, 605-882-1734

January 10

Frosty Frolics – Family
Snowshoeing 101
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-4414
maryjowegnerarboretum.com

January 17, February 21 and March 21

James Valley Model Railroad
Open House, Aberdeen, SD
605-226-2139



PHOTO COURTESY OF S.D. DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM

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.

January 21

Annual Ranchers Workshop
9 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. CT
Community Events Center
White River, SD
605-259-3252 ext. 3

January 23-24

Winter Show, Sisseton, SD
605-698-7261

January 24

Winter Games Winter Fest
Finale, Watertown, SD
605-882-6269

January 24

Glacial Lakes Beer Fest
Watertown, SD, 605-886-6127

January 25

Public Opinion Prom and
Bridal Show, Watertown, SD
605-886-6901

January 25

Eureka Hymns Annual Concert
Eureka, SD, 605-284-2136

January 30-31

ISOC SnoCross Shootout
Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

January 30-31

Day County Farm, Home and
Sport Show, Webster, SD
605-345-4668
www.webstersd.com

January 30-February 8

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

January 31

Living History Fair
Watertown, SD, 605-881-1758

February 7-8

Dakota Territory Gun
Collector's Association Show
Aberdeen, SD, 701-851-0129

February 10-14

Farm Show, Watertown, SD
605-886-5814

Events of Special Note

December 20

Santa Visits, 3:30 to 5 p.m.
City Hall Community Room
Wessington Springs, SD
605-539-1929

January 13

South Dakota 90th Legislative
Session opens

February 13

Heart to Heart Chocolate
Auction, Brookings, SD
605-688-5423

February 15

It's Your Party Bridal Show
Watertown, SD, 605-886-4127

February 16

Farm and Home Show
Wessington Springs, SD
605-539-1929

March 28

Mitchell Area Safehouse
Second Annual "Night at the
Races," 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.
Social Hour, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m.
Horse Races, Highland
Conference Center
Mitchell, SD, Tickets at The
Chamber, County Fair and
First Dakota

February 24-26

Ag Expo, Aberdeen, SD
605-725-5551