

Central Electric

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

Cooperative Connections

JANUARY 2017 VOL. 17 NO. 9



Resolutions

To Help You Save P8-9

Happy Holidays!



Ken Schlingens
General Manager

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to everyone. I wish you a safe and joyous Holiday Season and a successful 2017.

In the spirit of giving, your Board of Directors authorized the retirement of \$450,000 of capital credits which you received as a credit on your most recent electric bill. Central Electric has given over \$6.5 million back to our members in the form of checks and bill credits since we consolidated in 2000.

Last month, I mentioned that the Operation Round-Up board met in November to review applications

from organizations requesting donations for community projects. We received a total of 15 applications and approved 10 of those applications for funding. The first donation was given to the Stickney Fire Department & Rescue for the purchase of a Lifepak 15 heart monitor and defibrillator. More information on Operation Round-Up and that donation are featured on pages 10-11. Stay tuned as more projects receive their funds throughout the coming year.

Your cooperative's work plan and budget were approved at the last board meeting. This year's capital budget did not include the replacement of any vehicles. This has to be the first time I can remember not needing to replace even one truck.

The major purchase we will make is a replacement radio system at an estimated cost of \$145,000. We can no longer get technical support or replacement parts for the current radio system, and it is an important tool for keeping our employees safe. We have a fleet of 37 vehicles and five offices all requiring radio equipment. We share this radio system with East River Electric and several other electric cooperatives. In addition to the radio system, we will be replacing 28 miles of overhead 3 phase line with underground cable, and making several system improvements—all totaled carry a price tag of \$3.6 million.

The 2017 budget includes a 9% increase in wholesale power costs to your cooperative. Wholesale power costs make up 72% of our total expenses. Other expenses are maintenance (9%), depreciation (6%), administration (5%), interest (4%), taxes (2%), and customer services (2%).

We will be testing new meter technology and conducting a survey of our members as two items that are not normally found in our budget. We want to test Kwh meters that utilize a radio frequency to communicate their readings and information back to the cooperative. This communication method is proving to be more reliable than the power line carrier technology that we currently use. The meter industry is moving away from equipment that uses the power line carrier communications, and we need to plan for eventually replacing our current system. There are a handful of vendors for the new meters, and this test will allow us to compare them and make a better decision about the direction we will go in the future.

We have had many discussions in the board room and at other meetings about solar and wind systems that have the ability to produce electricity. In 2015, we installed a solar system at our office to help educate our employees and our members on solar photovoltaics. What we don't know is what you think about these wind and energy systems or what role you want your cooperative to play in the future use of this technology. Later this year, we will ask you to complete a survey and provide us with your input. Central Electric is your cooperative, and we want to be responsive to your energy needs.

Your cooperative is having a much better year than expected financially. Our margins, through November 1st, are well ahead of what we budgeted for and as a result, we are planning to transfer \$1.2 million of revenues from 2016 into 2017. Even with this transfer of revenue, electric rates will increase 5% in January of next year to offset the increase in wholesale power costs.

I want to call your attention to the 2017 District Meeting Schedule on page 3. The eight meetings will be held throughout January and give our members the opportunity to visit with us about issues affecting the cooperative. There is still much concern over the future of coal power plants and how the new administration will lead our country to a strong energy future. Hopefully, we will have answers to our many questions in the coming year.

As I look forward to 2017, I am very thankful for your cooperative's employees and a strong Board of Directors who will meet challenges as they come and create opportunities for success. Remember that electricity is a tool that makes your life easier and more comfortable. Use it wisely and safely.

Central Electric Offices will be closed on December 26th and January 2nd in observance of Christmas and New Year's Day.

Central Electric Cooperative Connections

(USPS 018-963)

General Manager - Ken Schlimgen

Managing Editor - Courtney J. Deinert
Assistant Editor - Patrick Soukup

President - Duane Wolbrink
Vice President - Todd VanWalleghen
Secretary - Bernetta Burghardt
Treasurer - James Headley

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Co-op News

District Meeting Dates

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. **This date for Jerauld County has been updated below*

Brule County
Tuesday, January 3
Ag Building
Pukwana

Davison County
Tuesday, January 17
Davison County Activity Center
Mitchell

Buffalo County
Thursday, January 5
Tribal Hall
Ft Thompson

Hanson County
Monday, January 23
St. Mary's Catholic Hall
Alexandria

Aurora County
Monday, January 9
Ag Building
Plankinton

Jerauld County
Tuesday, January 24*
Springs Inn
Wessington Springs

Miner County
Tuesday, January 10
4-H Building
Howard

Sanborn County
Thursday, January 26
4-H Building
Forestburg

Office Hours
Monday through Friday,
8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

24 - Hour Service
1-605-996-7516 or
1-800-477-2892

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Mission Statement
Providing Reliable Energy and
Services at a Good Value

This institution is an equal
opportunity provider, employer,
and lender.



Employee Years of Service

Tony Roth
January 3 - 12 years

Mick Poncelet
January 3 - 33 years

Kevin Johnson
January 16 - 11 years

Ken Schlimgen
January 28 - 32 years

Thank you for all you do for the cooperative and our members!

Carbon Monoxide Alarm Safety Tips

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a poisonous gas that is created when common fuels such as natural gas, oil, wood or coal burn incompletely. This odorless, colorless, tasteless gas is often called the “silent killer” because it is virtually undetectable without the use of detection technology like a CO alarm.

Installation Tips:

- Install CO alarms on every level of your home and outside each sleeping area.
- Interconnected CO alarms provide the best protection. When one sounds, they all sound.
- CO alarms are not a substitute for smoke



alarms. Install both types of alarms in your home.

- Purchase CO alarms from a reputable retailer that you trust.

• Choose alarms that bear the label of a nationally recognized testing laboratory.

- Follow the manufacturer’s instructions regarding proper placement and installation height.

Maintenance Tips:

- Test CO alarms at least once a month by pressing the TEST button.

• CO alarm batteries should be replaced in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions, at least once a year. If an alarm “chirps” or “beeps” to indicate low batteries, they should be replaced immediately.

• The lifespan of CO alarms varies. CO alarms should be replaced in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions.

Alarm Tips:

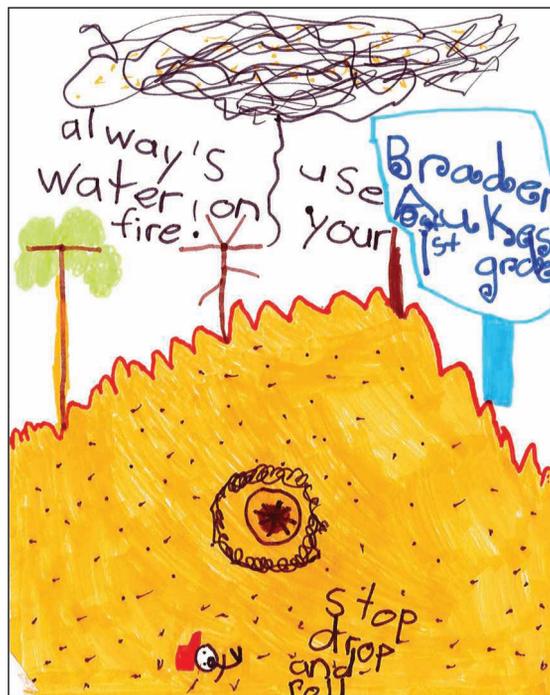
• Make sure that everyone in your family knows the difference between the sound of the CO and smoke alarms, and what number to call for a CO emergency.

• If your CO alarm sounds, immediately move to fresh air outside. Alert others in the home to the danger and make sure everyone gets to fresh air safely.

- Never ignore a sounding CO alarm.

Source: esfi.org

Kids’ Corner Safety Poster



“Always use water on your fire.”

Bradben Aukes
Bradben was in first-grade when he submitted this safety poster. He is the son of Brian Aukes, Beaver Creek, Minn. He is a member of Sioux Valley Energy, Colman, S.D.

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

92nd Legislative Session

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Super Soups



Cheeseburger Soup

- 1/2 lb. ground beef
- 3/4 cup chopped onion
- 3/4 cup shredded carrots
- 3/4 cup diced celery
- 1 tsp. dried basil
- 1 tsp. dried parsley flakes
- 4 T. butter or margarine, divided
- 3 cups chicken broth
- 3 cups diced, peeled potatoes
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 cups cubed processed American cheese
- 1-1/2 cups milk
- 3/4 tsp. salt
- 1/4 to 1/2 tsp. pepper
- 1/4 cup sour cream

In a 3-quart saucepan, brown beef; drain and set aside. In the same saucepan, sauté onion, carrots, celery, basil and parsley in 1 T. butter until vegetables are tender, about 10 minutes. Add broth, potatoes and beef; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 10 to 12 minutes or until potatoes are tender. Meanwhile, in a small skillet, melt remaining butter. Add flour; cook and stir for 3 to 5 minutes or until bubbly. Add to soup; bring to a boil. Cook and stir for 2 minutes. Reduce heat to low. Add cheese, milk, salt and pepper; cook and stir until cheese melts. Remove from the heat; blend in sour cream. Yield: 8 servings

Nancy Noess, Mitchell

Butternut Squash Bisque

- 1 T. canola oil
- 1 T. unsalted butter
- 1/2 cup diced onion
- 3/4 cup diced carrots
- 3 cups vegetable broth
- 4 cups peeled and cubed butternut squash
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1/2 cup heavy cream, optional
- Ground nutmeg to taste

Heat oil and melt butter in a large pot over medium heat. Cook and stir onion until tender. Mix carrots and squash into pot. Pour in vegetable broth and season with salt, pepper and nutmeg. Bring to a boil; reduce heat and simmer until vegetables are tender. In a blender or food processor, puree soup mixture until smooth. Return to pot; stir in heavy cream. Heat through but do not boil. Serve warm with a dash of nutmeg. Yield: 4 servings

Debra Weaver, Box Elder

Super Easy Potato Soup

- 8 oz. cream cheese, cut into small pieces
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 32 oz. chicken broth
- 2 lb. hash browns
- 1/3 cup chopped onion
- Diced bacon or ham, as desired
- Salt and pepper to taste

Mix together all ingredients in a slow cooker. Cook on LOW for 7 hours. May add diced green or red peppers and carrots for color.

Amy Schoenfelder, Cavour

Cream of Crab Soup

- 1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter
- 1 medium onion, coarsely chopped (1 cup)
- 1/3 cup flour
- 1 T. OLD BAY® Seasoning
- 1/2 tsp. McCormick® Parsley Flakes
- 4 cups milk or half-and-half
- 1 lb. lump crab meat
- 3 T. dry sherry

Melt butter in 3-quart saucepan on medium heat. Add onion; cook and stir 5 minutes or until softened. Add flour, Old Bay and parsley; whisk until well blended. Whisking constantly, gradually add milk. Bring to boil, stirring occasionally. Stir in crab meat. Reduce heat to low; simmer 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in sherry. Heat 1 to 2 minutes. Sprinkle with additional Old Bay, if desired. Yield: 6 servings

Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 285, Total Fat 14g, Cholesterol 119mg, Sodium 605mg, Carbohydrates 16g, Dietary Fiber 1g, Protein 22g

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Mushroom Salsa Chili

- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1 lb. bulk pork sausage
- 2 (16 oz. each) cans kidney beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 (24 oz.) jar chunky salsa
- 1 (14.5 oz.) can diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 (8 oz.) can tomato sauce
- 1 (4 oz.) can mushroom stems and pieces, drained
- 1/2 cup each chopped green pepper, sweet red and yellow pepper
- 1/2 tsp. dried oregano
- 1/4 tsp. garlic powder
- 1/8 tsp. thyme
- 1/8 tsp. dried marjoram

Cook beef and sausage over medium heat until meat is no longer pink; drain. Transfer meat to a 5-quart slow cooker. Stir in the remaining ingredients. Cover and cook on low for 8 to 9 hours or until vegetables are tender.

Stephanie Fossum, Hudson

Santa Fe Cheese Soup

- 1 (15 oz.) can whole kernel corn, drained
- 1 (15 oz.) can pinto beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 (14 oz.) can chicken broth
- 1 (10 oz.) can diced tomatoes and green chilies, undrained
- 1 (4 oz.) can premium chuck white chicken, drained
- 1 (4 oz.) can chopped green chilies, if desired
- 1 lb. processed American cheese, cubed

In a 3-quart saucepan or slow cooker, combine all ingredients. Cook and stir until cheese is melted. Garnish with crushed tortilla chips. If using a slow cooker, cook on LOW for 2 to 3 hours, stirring occasionally. Note: May serve with a dollop of sour cream in each bowl.

Patricia Hopkins, Central City, NE

Please send your favorite brunch 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 2017. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

Rate Increase takes effect January 2017

Central Electric Cooperative will be experiencing a rate increase for 2017. We have included a Q & A to hopefully answer many of our members' questions. For any further questions, our members are welcome to contact us at 800-477-2892.

Q: How much will my bill increase?

Rates and the facility charge will increase by 5%. However, **the heat rate is not changing.**

Q: What does the facility charge represent?

The facility charge is meant to cover the basic costs of providing electric service, before a single kwh is used. These expenses include poles, wires, transformers, transportation, facility and customer service functions (i.e. line maintenance, right-of-way clearing and general administrative responsibilities). These costs are necessary to ensure that you have access to electricity whenever you flip the switch. Whether a member uses 1 kwh or 1000 kwhs, the cost is the same to the cooperative to build and maintain line, and deliver electricity.

Q: Why is the facility charge higher than other electric utilities in the area?

Central Electric has one of the lowest consumer density rates in South Dakota, averaging 1.59 members per mile of line. This means our members are distributed across a large geographic area which takes a large amount of line. Therefore if we take 1.59 members per mile x the basic facility charge \$53.20, this equals \$84.59 in revenue per mile for the cooperative to maintain lines.

However, a utility serving a town or high-density area might serve 15-20 people per mile of line. If that utility takes 15 members x a \$6 basic facility charge, this equals \$90 in revenue per mile of line for that utility for costs.

Q: How does this affect my submeter/heat rate?

The heat rate will remain the same at \$.056/kwh. The heat rate applies to anyone who has a submeter to earn the lower rate for eligible electric heating kwhs. For more information about submeters and the heat rate, call Patrick at our office at 800-477-2892.

Q: Why will there be a rate increase?

In Aug. 2016, our wholesale supplier Basin Electric implemented a 13% increase. This was due to several factors that Basin CEO Paul Sukut called the "perfect storm." East River Electric had a strong financial year which allowed them to absorb the increase in 2016. However, our members are now facing this increase in 2017.

Q: When was the last rate increase?

Central Electric experienced a 4% rate increase last year in January 2016. Please note as a non-profit cooperative, rates are increased only to cover costs and not to generate revenue for a profit. Wholesale powers costs make up 72% of the cooperative's expenses.

Q: What is the effective date of the new rates, and when will I see this on my bill?

The new rate takes effect for electricity used beginning January 1, 2017. Members will see the new rate on their January usage bills which will be mailed in early February 2017.

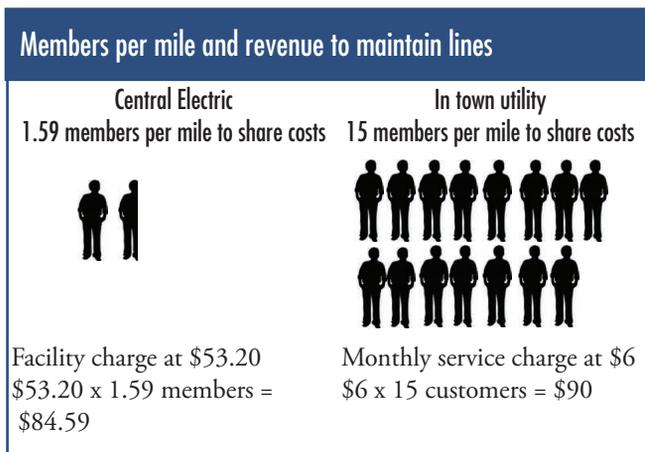
Q: Who determines when a rate increase is necessary and the cost increase?

Central Electric's Board of Directors and Management Staff continuously monitor the financial stability of the organization to determine if or when a rate increase is necessary. The decision to increase rates is taken very seriously. Costs are continuously monitored to ensure cooperative funds are spent wisely.

Q: What is Central Electric doing to keep costs down?

Central Electric strives to operate efficiently while adhering to our commitment of providing affordable, high quality and reliable electric service. We continuously evaluate our operations in an effort to keep your rates as low as possible through the following:

- Alliance with several companies for group buying power



- Factory direct purchasing
- Evaluate condition, age & value when considering equipment replacement
- Purchase used equipment from lease programs
- Maintain very high level of maintenance to extend the equipment life
- Better coordinate jobs among crews for efficiency
- Refinancing loans to lower interest rates
- Utilizing a load management program
- Using federally funded mitigation programs to make system improvements

Q: How do Central Electric's rates compare to other utilities?

As of September 2016, the US average was 12.87 cents per kwh and the SD average was 12.49 cents per kwh. Central Electric's new residential rate per kwh will be below average at 11.39 cents per kwh for the first 600 kwhs used. Source: www.eia.gov

Q: I understand that Central Electric has a program to give back to our communities. Are my rates being increased to support this program?

Central Electric has an Operation RoundUp® fund meant to benefit our local communities. Revenue from member's electric rates does not contribute to this fund. Operation RoundUp grants are funded by our generous members who have agreed to have their electric bills rounded up to the nearest dollar each month. Those extra cents flow into the charitable fund. For more information on Operation RoundUp, visit www.centralec.coop or call our office.

Q: Are my rates increasing due to new legislation concerning renewable energy requirements for electric providers?

It is true that the generation by renewable resources is more costly per kWh. Our wholesale suppliers, Basin Electric and Western Area Power Admin., continuously look for the most cost effective ways to add renewable resources to their energy portfolios to keep your rates as low as possible. Renewables make up 37% of our total power portfolio: 18% hydropower and 19% wind.

Q: What can I do to reduce my electric costs?

Contact our office to learn how to save more energy throughout your home and to learn about energy efficiency rebates, incentives and loans. For more energy saving tips, visit yourcoopower.com.

Did you know?

Our 3-tier electric cooperative family consists of three independent electric co-ops working together to deliver reliable electric service to you:

Basin Electric Power Cooperative

Generates the electricity that is ultimately received by member-owners in their homes and businesses. Basin also builds and maintains transmission lines and substations that deliver electricity across nine states.



East River Electric Power Cooperative

Builds and maintains transmission lines and substations that bring electric power to member distribution cooperatives.



Central Electric Cooperative

Builds and maintains line to deliver electricity from the substations directly to the member's meter. Central Electric is the direct contact with members on administrative and member service functions such as billing, energy efficiency, and other services.



Resolution to Save

Simple Steps to Saving on Your Energy Bill

AS THE NEW YEAR DAWNS, THOUSANDS OF AMERICANS will make resolutions. Resolutions to lose weight. Resolutions to exercise more. Resolutions to save money.

America's Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives offer key tips for reducing energy costs – and many are low- to no-cost solutions. And, some are easy to implement – and stick with throughout the year.

"In a home, heating, ventilation and cooling (HVAC) is the largest use of energy. Setting back your thermostat is the easiest and cheapest way to save energy," said Chad Reisenauer, a certified energy manager at Basin Electric Power Cooperative in Bismarck, N.D.

Here's the first 10 things to consider:

1. Replace any light bulb, especially ones that are on more than one hour per day, with a light-emitting diode (LED) bulb. Lighting ac-

counts for about 11 percent a typical home's energy use, so savings here can add up.

2. Close shades and drapes during the day to help keep heat out in summer. Opening coverings on south-facing windows can allow for radiant heat to enter during winter months. Heating and cooling accounts for the largest use of energy in a home.

3. Plug electronic devices such as cable boxes, printers and TVs into power strips to turn off during vacations or long periods without use. Depending on your family, electronics can account for 8 percent to 15 percent of a home's electric bill.

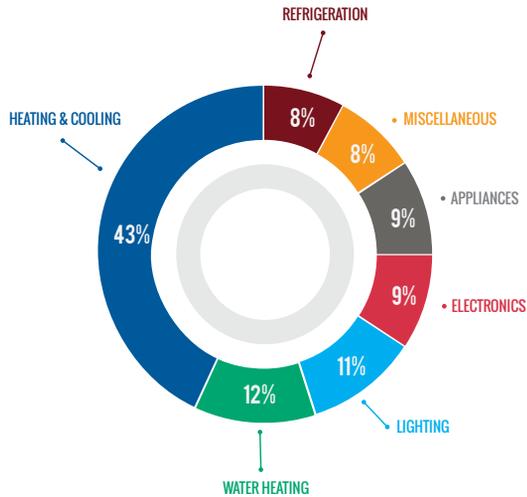
4. Outside your home, caulk around all penetrations including telephone, electrical, cable, gas, water spigots, dryer vents, etc. Take the caulk gun inside, too. Caulking along baseboards with a clear sealant is recommended as

Brenda Kleinjan



HOME ENERGY USE

WHERE DOES YOUR ENERGY GO?



Home energy use is different for everyone and hinges on several factors, including size of home, members in your household, your location and preferences. Knowing how your energy spend is divided will help you prioritize your energy saving habits.

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, www.EIA.gov.

is caulking around plumbing penetrations that come through walls beteneath sinks.

5. Change HVAC air filters monthly. Make sure when changing the filters they are facing the correct direction. (Look for the arrow on the side of the filter.)

6. Use the dishwasher's air-dry cycle instead of the heat-dry cycle to dry dishes. The kitchen can account for 15 percent to 20 percent of your home's energy use.

7. Keep your garage door down. A warmer garage in the winter and cooler garage in the summer will save energy.

8. Set water heater temperature no higher than 120° F. Water heating can account for 12 percent of a home's energy use. For smaller households of one or two members, the temperature can be turned down to 115° F.

9. Make sure dryer vent hose is not kinked or clogged. Also be sure to clean the dryer's lint trap before each use and ensure that the dryer's outdoor exhaust door is not blocked or clogged.

10. Ensure refrigerator door seals are tight. Set the refrigerator temperature to 34° F. to 37° F. and the freezer temperature to between 0° F. and 5° F.

"Most of these are low-cost/no-cost measures," said Alan Shedd, a professional engineer and certified energy manager who is the director of energy solutions for the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives brand. "While you can save more by sealing ductwork and air-sealing your house to reduce leaks, we don't want to discourage people from doing the simple things first."

"Check out the newly re-designed TogetherWeSave page on TouchstoneEnergy.coop. We've added an energy saving tips section that includes a Top-10 list. For a direct link use <http://www.touchstoneenergy.com/energy-money-saving-tips/more-tips/> and click on the "Top 10."

Inset above: Chad Reisenauer, a certified energy manager with Basin Electric Power Cooperative in Bismarck, N.D., takes measurements using a light meter at Wall Drug in Wall, S.D., as West River Electric Association's Veronica Kusser records the results. Another WREA team was counting each of the attraction's thousands of light bulbs as part of an energy audit to determine where energy savings could be found in the 85-year old tourist attraction.

Energy Savings Prescription Pays Off at Wall Drug

As the owners of iconic Wall Drug in Wall, S.D., prepared to celebrate their 85th year of operation, they turned to their local Touchstone Energy Cooperative, West River Electric Association, for an energy audit and a prescription to use electricity more wisely.

In January 2016, an energy audit of the facility was conducted. The sprawling complex which includes the street-level stores that are open to the public, also includes thousands of square feet of behind-the-scenes storage and offices that extend below and above the millions of visitors.

The audit accounted for the 5,400 light bulbs and more than 3,100 light fixtures throughout the attraction. It also looked at heating and cooling expenses associated with the facility as well as the efficiency of appliances and other electronics.

When all was said and done, the recommendations included some basic steps that are applicable in both homes and businesses.

The Husted family — which owns Wall Drug — had already started converting much of the property to LED lighting. But, an important step behind-the-scenes had the potential to really add up in savings.

The audit recommended installing occupancy sensors — devices that sense when people enter and exit a room and adjust the lighting

accordingly — was a major step in reducing costs.

Another major recommendation was that exterior doors be kept closed during summer months to keep cooler air inside the building.

On one meter alone (the attraction has several meters), energy consumption was significantly reduced by taking the recommended steps.

Find out more about energy-saving steps you can take by contacting the energy experts at your electric cooperative.



Stickney Fire & Rescue: A community steps up to the call

By Courtney J. Deinert

Concern for community—that's a cooperative principle and the story behind the town of Stickney.

Prior to May 1, 2016, the city had several first responders in the community but did not have its own ambulance service. The Plankinton Ambulance would need to respond to emergencies in Stickney and rural area, which could be over 10 miles away. Because of this, some Stickney area residents wouldn't call 911 but instead would drive those in need directly to the hospital.

After seeing a need for an ambulance service, the community joined together and raised \$61,000 to provide the ambulance service with the necessary equipment.

The town's first ever ambulance service is now able to serve approximately 850 people reaching from slightly west and south of Aurora Center over into Davison County. The crew includes 23 certified drivers, some of which include the 4

EMTs, 2 nurses, and about 14 first responders.

Through the Central Electric Operation RoundUp® Fund, members of Central Electric helped raise \$3,500 for the Stickney Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue for the purchase of a Lifepak 15.

The Lifepak 15 can conduct an EKG, defibrillation, and has a heart monitor with a built-in modem through Verizon. The modem allows the Lifepak 15 to communicate diagnostics on the patient to the hospital while in transit. Therefore, patients can be treated quickly by an informed medical staff.

Director Cherie Sauvage states, "When seconds and minutes count, this machine can save lives."

The total cost of the Lifepak 15 machine was about \$28,000. The Lifepak 15 was also funded largely by donations. In addition to Central Electric's Operation RoundUp donation, Stickney Rescue received a \$10,000 donation from





the John T. Vucurevich Foundation and \$3,100 from a free will donation beef loin supper with a matching donation of \$2,500 from the Modern Woodmen of America.

Central Electric General Manager Ken Schlinggen stated, “That goes to show how involved and committed the people in this community are.”

Since Stickney Rescue’s initiation, they have already responded to 11 calls and estimate they’ll answer about one to two per month. Nine calls were received total for 2015 prior to the service’s establishment.

Other lifesaving equipment on the ambulance includes the Lucas CPR device and the “Striker Cot.” The Lucas device applies chest compressions during CPR and frees up the responders to focus on other necessary tasks and decision making.

The “Striker Cot” has an automatic system to raise the cot into the ambulance so EMTs do not have to lift and load it manually. The responders only need to lift the body onto the cot. This helps the responders immensely since typically only one driver and one or two EMTs go out on a call.

For more information on the Central Electric Operation RoundUp fund, contact our office at 800-477-2892 or visit our website at www.centralec.coop. Operation RoundUp is a voluntary program where member’s electric bills are rounded up to the next dollar, and the cents flow into a charitable fund for worthy causes like this one. Thank you to our members who participate in this program and make it possible to invest back into our local communities.

Above: Central Electric presents a check for \$3,500 to Stickney Fire and Resue. Left to right: Ken Schlinggen, General Manager; Dave Jorgenson, Operation RoundUp Board Member; Cherie Sauvage, Stickney Fire & Rescue Director & EMT; Mike VandenHoek, first responder, fireman & certified driver; Dale Peters, Operation RoundUp Board Member; Carrie VanGanderen, RN; Jeff Sauvage, Fire Chief, first responder & certified driver; and Vicki Gerlach, RN.

Right-top: Lucas CPR device

Right-middle: Lifepak 15 includes EKG, defibrillation, and heart monitor

Right-bottom: Director Cherie Sauvage demonstrates the Striker Cot



Illuminating Choices

Watts, Lumens, Kelvin Can Be Confusing When Buying Bulbs

GONE ARE THE DAYS WHEN GRABBING A LIGHTBULB at the hardware store was as simple as knowing whether you were in search of a 40-watt, 60-watt or a 100-watt bulb.

Today, a trek down the lighting aisle can be confusing and at times intimidating as one wades through the packaging.

If you have been gradually making the switch to the new energy efficient lighting choices, you've noticed that more changes have come to the light bulb aisle. Remember when the odd looking corkscrew compact fluorescent (CFL) bulb was introduced to consumers a few years ago? It's still there and so are most of the classic pear-shaped incandescent bulbs. But today's lighting choices have expanded and gotten serious makeovers – their packaging labels and lingo included. There are LEDs, CFLs, halogen, lumens, CRI and more, and there is a host of lighting brands. But in recent years, the focus has been on making *all* bulbs more energy efficient and cost effective.

End of an Era

We've basked in the golden glow of Thomas Edison's incandescent bulb since the 1800s, but January 2014 marked the end of its run. That's when the federal government finalized its mandated phase out of selected general-purpose light bulbs and Edison's less energy efficient incandescent ones. While you still may find 100- and 75-watt bulbs on store shelves, manufacturers in the U.S. stopped producing them. The old 40- and 60-watt bulbs, which represented over half the market, are following suit. What brought about the lighting change? In 2007, the U.S. Department of Energy estimated that home and commercial lighting was consuming more electricity annually – about 300 billion kilowatt-hours of lighting or the equivalent of about 100 power plants – but most of it was wasted. Old-fashioned incandescent bulbs used plenty of energy to produce only 10 percent light, with 90 percent of the energy given off as heat. In comparison, today's more energy-saving incandescent light bulbs use 25 percent less energy to do the job of lighting the same spaces in your home.

Look on the Bright Side

Prime replacements for the traditional incandescent light bulb are the higher-efficiency CFL

and LED or light emitting diode bulbs. But be prepared to pay more upfront for some of the bulbs you choose. Lighting experts say that LEDs are the best choice for energy efficiency and if price is not a concern – they can last for up to two decades, save you 75 percent or more in energy costs, and offer superior color and brightness. However, they can cost an estimated \$10 to \$60 per bulb.

The Energy Department assures consumers that there is a bright side – lower electricity bills over the longer term. These are their estimates: using a traditional incandescent bulb adds about \$4.80 per year to the average household electric bill, but a CFL bulb adds just \$1.20 a year and an LED about \$1 per year. That means that a typical household could potentially save about \$50 per year by replacing 15 old incandescent bulbs.

Lighting the Way

Since lighting accounts for nearly 20 percent of the average home's electricity use, don't stay in the dark when shopping for new bulbs that save on energy and your electric bill. **Things to know before you go:**

Lumens are the new watts. It's all about the lumens or the amount of light a light bulb emits. Remember this formula: The higher the lumens, the brighter the light – to replace a 100-watt incandescent bulb, choose a bulb that offers about 1,600 lumens. There are handy charts at www.energystar.gov/ that help you compare the old measure of watts to lumens.

Three-steps to your new bulbs. STEP 1: Choose the amount of lumens you need based on how bright you want a room; **STEP 2:** Determine which bulb has the lowest estimated energy cost per year. This will save you the most money; and **STEP 3:** Choose bulbs based on your needs – how long it will last and light appearance.

Read the label. Always check the package, making sure that it carries the U.S. Department of Energy's ENERGY STAR® logo. New Lighting Facts labels on boxes will also help consumers understand what they are purchasing – amount of lumens, estimated annual operating cost and light color.

By B. Denise
Hawkins

Don't Watch for Watts, Look for Lumens!

Tips for lightbulb shopping by lumens instead of watts

A lumen is a measurement of how much light you are getting from a light bulb. More lumens means a brighter light, fewer lumens a dimmer light.

What you will see on the package

Brightness
Energy cost

The bulb's life expectancy

Light appearance
(for example, if the bulb provides "warm" or "cool" light)

Wattage
(the amount of energy the bulb uses)

Whether the bulb contains mercury

Lighting Facts Per Bulb	
Brightness	870 lumens
Estimated Yearly Energy Cost	\$1.57
Based on 3 hrs/day, 11¢/kWh Cost depends on rates and use	
Life	5.5 years
Based on 3 hrs/day	
Light Appearance	
Warm	Cool
2700 K	
Energy Used	13 watts
Contains Mercury	
For more on clean up and safe disposal, visit epa.gov/cfl	

Brightness
870 lumens
Estimated Energy Cost
\$1.57 per year

What watts translate to

Watts vs. Lumens

What you used to look for	WATTS (energy consumed)		LUMENS (brightness output)	Now you look for
	150 w		2600 lm	
	100 w		1600 lm	
	75 w		1100 lm	
	60 w		800 lm	
	40 w		450 lm	

What Color Bulb Would Work Best For Your Use?



Light color is measured on a temperature scale referred to as Kelvin (K). Lower Kelvin numbers mean the light appears yellow; higher Kelvin numbers mean the light is whiter or bluer.

2700K	3000K	3500K	4100K	5000K	6500K
warm white soft white		cool white neutral white		natural daylight	
Common uses: most spaces, standard color		kitchens and work spaces		reading	



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives
The power of human connections®

For more energy saving tips, visit www.YourCoopPower.com

Scam Alert: Phone scammers are targeting utility customers

After recently hearing about a scam attempt in our area, Central Electric is urging all of our members to be aware of utility customer targeted scams.

During the week of November 28th, a local business received a phone call from someone who claimed to be Central Electric. The caller stated they would turn off the business's electricity if they did not pay their past due balance. Fortunately, the recipient identified the call as suspicious and reported it to Central Electric.

If you received a call like this, would you know if it was a scam? Here's some tips on what to look for to ensure that you know what to do:

Central Electric Employees will NEVER call and demand immediate payment. Any members with past due balances are notified several days in advance by letter and an automated phone call. Our employees will never initiate a call and demand immediate payment for a bill.

Don't be threatened by high pressure tactics. Scammers will provide an urgent timeline in which you need to provide payment by a certain date and time in the near future to avoid disconnection. An urgent phone call is a red flag.

A preloaded/prepaid debit card is not necessary to pay your bill. Scammers may ask you to go buy a prepaid debit card and give them the card numbers over the phone. They might claim that this is "quicker" and ensures your power will not be shut off. This makes it easier for them to take your money without being caught.

An employee will never take a credit card number over the phone for an electric bill payment. All credit card payments are to be made on our secure, automated line at 855-730-8707. This is requirement for your safety and security of our system.

Caller ID's can be misleading. Unfortunately, scammers are able to spoof a fake caller ID or even make their ID to appear the same as the electric utility. If ever in doubt, hang up and call the utility directly before taking any action.

Scammers might claim that you have a "new electric provider" and need to pay your bill to a different company. This is highly unlikely. Always call your electric provider if you are in doubt.



Utilities will **never** ask you to buy a prepaid debit card.

 **NRECA**
America's Electric Cooperatives

 **UTILITIES UNITED**
AGAINST SCAMS

Scammers might claim they are "assisting" your electric company with collections. Central Electric does not outsource our collections process. You will not be contacted by a non-Central Electric employee about your bill.

So how can you safely pay your electric bill? Central Electric provides several options for your security:

1. **Online:** You can sign up for SmartHub or make a one-time payment online by visiting www.centraleccoop.com
2. **Phone:** By calling 855-730-8707, you are using a secure line to make a payment or check your account.
3. **Bank Draft or Recurring Credit/Debit Card:** Eliminate the risk of a late fee and sign up to have your payment deducted from your credit card or bank account on the 15th of each month. Sign up by calling 855-730-8707.
4. **Mail:** As always, we accept checks and money orders included with your bill stub by mail.
5. **Dropbox:** You can leave a payment at our dropbox outside our office on Betts Road. The dropbox is checked each business day morning. Please do not leave cash in the dropbox for your safety.
6. **Kiosk:** A kiosk is available at the Lode Star Motel lobby in Ft. Thompson to make secure payments via credit card, cash or check. No money orders accepted.

2017-2018 Scholarships



Central Electric will provide three \$1,000 academic scholarships for the 2017 - 2018 school year. The Basin Electric Power Cooperative Scholarship is in its 27th consecutive year and is funded by Basin Electric Power Cooperative of Bismarck, ND.

The Jay Headley Memorial Scholarships are in their 16th 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 and applications, visit our website at www.centralec.coop or visit with your Guidance Counselor. You can also reach our office at 605-996-7516 or 800-477-2892.

See application for eligibility requirements.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

800-477-2892 or 605-996-7516

www.centralec.coop

Regional Dateline

December 15-March 31

South Dakota Snowmobile Trails Season, Lead, SD
605-584-3896

December 22-23

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

January 7-14

71st Annual Snow Queen Festival, Aberdeen, SD
www.sdsnowqueen.com

January 12

The Ennis Sisters in Concert Spearfish, SD, 605-642-7973

January 12-14

16th Annual Ice Fishing Tournament, Mobridge, SD
605-845-2500

January 18-26

38th Winter Art Show
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Spearfish, SD, 605-642-7973

January 19-21

Snowmobile Rally
Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

January 20-21

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

January 21

Bark Beetle Blues Crawl
Custer, SD, 605-440-1405

January 21

Tommy: A Bluegrass Opry by the HillBenders, Spearfish, SD
605-642-7973



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHAD COPPERS, S.D. 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.

Events of Special Note

November 18-January 8

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

February 11

Ben Folds with the South Dakota Symphony
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-6000

January 27-February 5
Annual Black Hills Stock Show & Rodeo, Rapid City, SD
605-355-3861

February 3-4
Who Got Greased? Murder Mystery Dinner Theater
Elks Lodge, 705 Circle Drive
Aberdeen, SD, 605-380-9743

February 4
Twenty One Pilots in Concert
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7288

February 4
LHIA Fishing Derby
11 a.m. to 3 p.m., City Boat Landing Access Point
Lake Hendricks, MN

February 7-11
Winter Farm Show
Watertown, SD, 605-886-5814

February 10-11
Strawbale Winery Valentine Twilight Flights, Renner, SD
605-543-5071

February 10-12
35th Annual Black Hills Sport Show and Outdoor Expo
Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4115

February 11
Sioux Empire on Tap
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7288

February 16-18
Sioux Falls Sno Jam Comedy Festival, Sioux Falls, SD
siouxfallssnojamcomedyfest@gmail.com

February 16-19
Steel Magnolias Community Theater, Spearfish, SD
605-642-7973

February 17-19
Sioux Empire Wacipi
Sioux Falls, SD, 310-922-1886

March 4-7
Summit League Basketball Championship
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7288

March 11-12
2017 Gun Show, American Legion Hall, Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. MST, Philip, SD
605-859-2635, 605-859-2280
605-859-2892 or
605-859-2219

March 17-18
28 Below Fatbike Race
Lead, SD, 605-584-3435

March 24-25, March 31-April 1
59th Annual Schmeckfest
Freeman, SD, 605-925-4237

March 31-April 2
Professional Bull Riders Built Ford Tough Series
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7288

April 7-8
Forks, Corks and Kegs Food and Wine Festival
Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876