

# Central Electric

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

# Cooperative Connections

APRIL 2015 VOL. 15 NO. 12



**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.** Pg 8



# President and General Manager Report



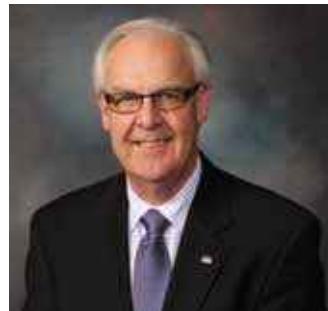
**Duane Wolbrink, Stickney, SD was elected to the board in 1995 and has served as President since 2002.**

It doesn't seem possible but your cooperative's annual meeting is Tuesday, April 7th. Again this year the annual meeting will be held at the Mitchell Corn Palace. The lobby area is still undergoing renovations, so information for how and where to enter the Corn Palace will be announced as we get closer to the event.

This issue of the Cooperative Connections magazine serves as your cooperative's annual report. You will see by the financial information presented on pages 10-11 that 2014 was a good year for your cooperative. We experienced record energy sales and record revenues. Our HVAC, Wiring, and Appliance departments also had record breaking years. For this, we want to thank each of you, the members and the employees, for this great success.

The last couple years we have asked you to be engaged with us and become involved politically, and become involved you did. We are always vigilant to see what regulations or legislation may be coming down the pipe from EPA or other government entities that will adversely affect your cooperative and electric rates. A year ago, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), asked us to support fighting the EPA on new emission regulations on all electricity generating plants. These regulations required electric generating plants to meet standards that either weren't achievable or would be extremely expensive to meet.

If you recall at last year's annual meeting, we asked you to sign postcards to send to Washington showing your disapproval of their extreme regulations, and you were engaged. Collectively, rural electric members sent 1.2 million postcards to Washington DC. We are not sure what the decision of the EPA will be, but they acknowledged this was the largest response that they had ever received and that they are going to review their actions.



**Loren Noess has served as General Manager since 1990.**

Without unseen extreme regulations, the outlook for the cost of the power we purchase from Basin Electric looks very good. Basin is forecasting stable rates for the next five years and minimal increases after that. The forecast from the Western Area Power Administration, the organization that distributes the power from the dams on the Missouri River, looks favorable also. This is great news for the future of electric rates.

This past year, your cooperative completed a cost of service study to get a true picture of the costs to deliver electric power to the members. Overall, our revenue is adequate so we are not in need of a rate increase; however, the study did recommend changes to the individual components of our rates to make them as fair as possible for all our accounts. These changes should not change the overall revenue to the cooperative by making the rates we are charging more fair to our membership.

The cost of service study indicated that members who purchase above average Kwh's are paying more than their fair share of the costs for providing electric service. You can probably tell then that those members who purchase very few Kwh's don't pay enough towards the cost of providing electric service.

At the present time, our facility charge is at \$29.00. The first 600 KWHs you purchase are billed at 13 cents, the next 600 Kwh's are billed at 11 cents, and any additional Kwh's are billed at 7.4 cents. The costs for delivering electric power to you are recovered in the facility charge and in the purchases of the first 1,200 Kwh's. Every month, we have 600 or more meters that use less than 600 KWHs. Therefore, these meters are not generating their fair share of the revenue to deliver electric service to them.

Your Board of Directors are having long, hard deliberations and discussions to determine what our rate structure should be. While we have not approved changing the electric rates, we are

Continued on page 7

# Central Electric Cooperative Connections

(USPS 018-963)

General Manager - Loren Noess

Managing Editor - Ken Schlimgen

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Courtney J Deinert

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Vice President - Todd VanWallaghen

Secretary - Bernetta Burghardt

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[www.centralec.coop](http://www.centralec.coop)

**Mission Statement**  
Providing Reliable Energy and  
Services at a Good Value

# Board of Directors Central Electric Cooperative



Duane Wolbrink  
President  
Stickney  
Elected 1995



Todd VanWalleghen  
Vice President  
Letcher  
Elected 2010



Bernetta Burghardt  
Secretary  
Fedora  
Elected 2004



James "Jim" Headley  
Treasurer  
White Lake  
Elected 1996



David Gaulke  
Gann Valley  
Elected 2008



Mark Hofer  
Spencer  
Elected 1990



Darwin "Butch" Morrison  
Mitchell  
Elected 2003



Mark Reindl  
Wessington Springs  
Elected 2010



Roger Campbell  
Pukwana  
Elected 2014

# April Showers Bring... Hydroplaning



especially dangerous for vehicles driving faster than 35 miles per hour, such a car in the merge lane heading on to a highway.

## How do you reduce the risk of hydroplaning?

You should always keep your tires properly inflated in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications. Make sure that your tires are rotated so that their tread wears evenly. Replace old worn tires as needed. Pay special attention and slow down when driving in inclement weather. Leave extra space between your vehicle and the vehicle ahead of you in case you need to stop suddenly. Adjust your traveling speed in accordance with the weather conditions. If possible, drive in lanes that are not flooded with water and stay clear of rain puddling in the roadway. Do not engage cruise control in bad weather, because it sets the acceleration automatically.

## What should you do if your vehicle starts to hydroplane?

If you feel your vehicle start to hydroplane, do not panic. The first thing to remember is to not brake or accelerate suddenly. If you brake or accelerate suddenly, it could cause your vehicle to spin out of control. Look for an empty space in the road ahead and steer gently in that direction. Ease off of the gas pedal slowly, so that your wheels can regain contact with the roadway. Drive safely!

*Source: arifleet.com*

## Kids' Corner Safety Poster

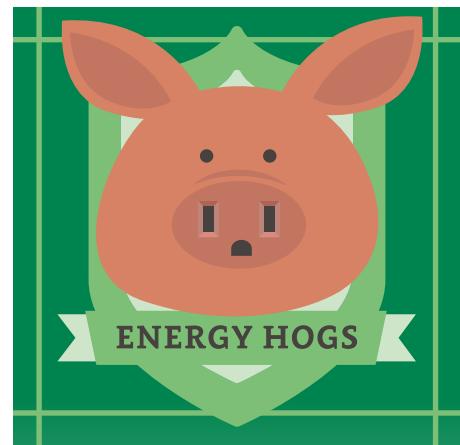
"Be careful with electricity – it can shock you!"



**Austin Waring,  
8 years old**

*Austin is the son of Jeremy and Ramona Waring, Colton, S.D. They are members 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.



Did you know the refrigerator is one of the biggest energy hogs in your home? Use these simple tips on how to keep your fridge running efficiently.

- **REMEMBER TO COOL DOWN.** Warm food in the refrigerator forces the appliance to adjust the temperature, using more energy.
- **A FULL FRIDGE IS A HAPPY FRIDGE.** When your refrigerator and freezer are full, the appliance runs more efficiently.
- **KEEP IT CLEAN.** Remember to clean dust and dirt from the coils behind or underneath the refrigerator.
- **TAKE COVER.** Uncovered food and liquids release moisture and force the compressor to work harder.



*Photo source: General Electric*

# Appetizers & Beverages

## Cranberry Meatballs

1 (16 oz.) can jellied cranberry sauce	3 T. brown sugar
1 cup ketchup	1 T. lemon juice
	72 pre-cooked meatballs

In large saucepan, combine first 4 ingredients. Cook, stirring frequently, until the cranberry sauce is melted. Add meatballs and heat thru.

**Mary Jessen, Holabird**

## Yummy Fruit Dip

1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, softened	1/4 cup white sugar
3/4 cup brown sugar	1 tsp. vanilla

Mix together all ingredients; refrigerate. Serve with fresh fruit.

**Shirley Dreher, Clark**

## Pineapple-Strawberry Smoothie

1 (20 oz.) can pineapple chunks	1 cup pineapple juice
1 medium banana	1 cup vanilla yogurt
	1/2 cup strawberries

Combine all ingredients in blender. Serve in chilled glasses.

**Stephanie Fossum, Hudson**

## Mocha Cooler

2/3 cup milk	1 T. instant coffee
2 T. instant cocoa mix	1/3 cup vanilla ice cream

Mix milk, cocoa mix and coffee in electric blender. Add ice cream and blend until smooth.

**Rebecca Hauser, Tripp**

## Baked Brie with Jam

1 (8 oz.) can crescent rolls	1 (18 oz.) jar jam*
1 (8 oz.) round Brie cheese	

Unroll dough on greased cookie sheet; pat dough so perforations seal. Place Brie in the middle of the crescent rolls. Cover top of Brie with jam. Press dough evenly around Brie/jam – try to seal completely. Bake at 350°F. for 20 to 30 minutes or until golden brown. Cool 15 minutes. Serve warm with assorted crackers. \*We prefer raspberry.

**Mary Contz, Hendricks, MN**

## Bacon, Lettuce and Tomato Bruschetta

8 to 10 slices bacon, crispy cooked and crumbled	1/4 tsp. salt
3 to 4 roma tomatoes, (plum), seeded and chopped, about 1-1/3 cups	1/4 tsp. black pepper
1 cup lettuce, chopped	1/3 cup blue cheese or feta cheese, crumbled (optional)
2 T. fresh basil, chopped	About 1/3 cup olive oil
1 clove garlic, minced	1 (16 oz.) pkg. French bread, cut in 1/4-inch slices

In medium bowl, stir together all topping ingredients; set aside. Brush olive oil on both sides of bread slices; place on baking sheet. Bake at 400°F., turning once, for 7 minutes per side or until crisp and golden brown; cool. Spoon about 1 T. topping on each toast round. Makes about 24 appetizers.

*Nutritional information for 1 piece: 68 calories; 5g fat; 1g saturated fat; 2mg cholesterol; 2g protein; 6g carbohydrates; 1g fiber; 121mg sodium*

**Pictured, Courtesy of [www.porkbeinspired.com](http://www.porkbeinspired.com)**

## Vidalia Onion Dip

1 large Vidalia onion, chopped	1 cup grated Swiss Cheese
1 cup mayonnaise	

Mix together and place in baking dish. Bake at 350°F. for 30 minutes or until hot and bubbly.

**Glenda Morton, Sioux Falls**

## Sausage Dip

1 lb. bulk sausage	1 (10 oz.) can Ro-Tel tomatoes
1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese	with green chilies

Brown and drain sausage. Add Ro-Tel and cream cheese. Put in small crockpot and cook until hot, stirring often. Serve with chips or crackers.

**Amy Schoenfelder, Cavour**

## Graduation Punch

1 (6 oz.) can orange juice	2 quarts water
1 (6 oz.) can lemonade	1 cup sugar
1 pkg. orange koolaid	1 (64 oz.) bottle ginger ale
2 cups pineapple juice	

Mix together all ingredients except ginger ale. Add ginger ale just before serving.

**Jane Ham, Rapid City**

*Please send your favorite casserole, dairy and dessert 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.*

# Minutes of the Annual Meeting, April 1, 2014

The Annual Meeting of the members of Central Electric Cooperative Association was held on Tuesday, April 1, 2014, at the Corn Palace, Mitchell, South Dakota. Duane Wolbrink, President, called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. President Wolbrink announced that there was a quorum of registered members present (364) at the time the meeting began.

Attorney Don Petersen was appointed acting secretary.

President Wolbrink announced that registration had closed.

President Wolbrink called upon associate Pastor Chris Baesler of First Trinity Lutheran Church to give the invocation.

Everyone was asked to stand for a short video and the National Anthem, followed by the saying of the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Wolbrink asked if there were any members who wished to discuss the proof of notice or the order of business that had been mailed to them. There being no objection the reading was dispensed with and the order of business was approved as sent.

The minutes of the 2013 Annual Meeting minutes were mailed to each member as part of the Central Electric Cooperative Connections Annual Report. President Wolbrink asked if there were any objections of dispensing with the reading of the minutes. There being no objections, the minutes were approved as mailed.

President Wolbrink gave the president's report which included thanking retiring board member Roger Mentzer for his service and welcoming new director Roger Campbell and his wife Judy from Pukwana; Central Electric General Manager Loren Noess was inducted into the South Dakota Hall of Fame; exceedingly cold weather from October 2013 to March of 2014 caused monthly record demand for electricity; and the death of Central Electric employee Bob Fey.

President Wolbrink welcomed East River Electric Power Cooperative Board Member Kermit Pearson. Pearson discussed the proposal from the current administration and the Environmental Protection Agency to have no more coal plants built in the United States. This would have a big impact on Basin Electric members, which includes Central Electric, as we receive in excess of 60 percent of our power from coal generation.

President Wolbrink called on Manager Noess for his report to the membership. Manager Noess welcomed members to the Annual Meeting and noted the great attendance. He recognized this year's recipient of the Basin Electric Power Cooperative Scholarship, Hudson Priebe, Chamberlain; and the two recipients of the Jay Headley Memorial Scholarships, Abby Repening, Mitchell and Lisa Smith, Kimball.

Manager Noess then announced this year's Youth Tour winners: Kristina Luczak, Letcher; James Mayclin, Plankinton; Amber Hopkins, Pukwana; Wade Weber, Emery; Maria Schwader, Winfred; and Jarid Bechen, Letcher.

Manager Noess asked Central Electric employees to come up on stage and he introduced them. Employee John Vetch was then recognized for 25 years of service to Central Electric.

President Wolbrink called for any unfinished business. There was none. President Wolbrink then called for any new business. There was none.

President Wolbrink introduced Operations Manager Brian Bultje and Director of Member Services and Marketing Ken Schlimgen who drew names for prizes.

President Wolbrink asked for and received a motion and a second to adjourn the 2014 Central Electric Annual Meeting. There being no further discussion from members the meeting was adjourned.

We put up the poles, connect miles of wire and flip a few switches of our own. All to make sure your life is always powered. Learn more about the power of your co-op membership at [TogetherWeSave.com](http://TogetherWeSave.com).

## YOUR ELECTRICITY ISN'T SOMETHING WE TAKE LIGHTLY.



TOGETHERWE SAVE.COM

# President and General Manager Report

Continued from page 2

strongly considering a higher facility charge and a lower Kwh charges. As I said earlier, your cooperative does not need to generate more revenue. The discussions we are having would mean members who use little to no Kwh's will pay more each month, but members who use 1100 Kwh's or more will pay less each month. We feel our duty as directors is to be as fair as

options for these accounts. Ken Schlimgen, Director of Member Services, is doing some research and applying to become a dealer for small solar units to be used in situations such as a pasture well service.

Another change that will be taking place in 2015 will be the employment of a new General Manager. Our current manager



**The above photo is an example of the solar pv system that Central Electric is planning to install at the Betts Road Service Center west of Mitchell. The project will be used to gather information on how solar pv systems work, and what consumers should consider before installing a solar pv system.**

possible to all our member/consumers.

One of the new technologies we are hearing a lot about lately is solar power. A story on solar projects seems to appear weekly in our trade publications. Your cooperative is taking a proactive approach to the new solar technology. We are planning a 7 KW solar PV system at our Betts Road Service Center. East River Electric Power Cooperative is partnering with us on the project to learn about the advantages and disadvantages of solar power. We will share what we learn from this project through our newsletter and informational meetings to be held later in 2015. Our goal is to be a resource you can use to determine if solar energy is a viable option to consider. Stay tuned.

In addition, we are researching solar PV for well pumping. As I mentioned earlier, changing the facility charge will increase the monthly costs for low usage accounts like pasture well services. We feel it is necessary to provide alternative

Loren Noess has announced that he will be retiring the first of July. The board is fully engaged in conducting a search to secure the best person possible to fill the General Manager position. We will be having an Open House to honor Loren on his retirement on June 26. We invite everyone to come to the headquarters to thank Loren for all he has done for us and congratulate him on his retirement.

As you can see, there is a lot going on at your cooperative. The directors take our job very seriously. Our mission statement states that we exist to provide products and services at good value, but it is more than that. Your cooperative is here to provide rural opportunities and to make your lives better. I challenge you, our members, if there is a service that you need today or in 5-ten years, let us know. In doing this, you are helping your cooperative prepare for the future.

I thank you for your support and look forward to serving you in the future.

# Don't Just Dig It

## Simple Call to 811 Can Save Money, Lives

**A**PRIL MAY BE KNOWN FOR ITS SHOWERS, BUT IT'S also a month set aside to raise awareness for safe digging.

According to the Common Ground Alliance's Damage Information Reporting Tool (DIRT) Report, an underground utility line is damaged every six minutes because someone decided to dig but didn't call 811. At that rate, in a 24-hour-a-day society, that's more than 87,000 times in a year where people – someone's mother or father, son or daughter – risked injury or costly damages.

The 2013 DIRT Report found that nationwide there were an estimated 335,000 events involving dig-ins to utilities. The cause of those dig-ins were identified in about 75 percent of the situations reported in 2013.

Of those events with causes listed, half were due to insufficient excavation practices, a quarter were because notification simply was not made and 16 percent were due to insufficient locating practices.

The 2013 DIRT Report also noted that nationwide, occupants and farmers were the groups most likely not to call 811 prior to digging.

Building a deck? Planting a tree? Installing a mailbox? 811 is the new number you should call before you begin any digging project.

The federally mandated national "Call Before You Dig" number, 811, was created to help protect you from unintentionally hitting underground utility lines while working on digging projects. People digging often make risky assumptions about whether or not they should get their utility lines marked due to concerns about project delays, costs and previous calls about other projects.

### HOW DOES 811 WORK?

When someone calls 811 in the United States, he or she is connected to the local one call center, where a representative collects information about the caller's planned dig site. The one call center then communicates the information to the appropriate utility companies, which send professional utility locating technicians to identify and mark the approximate location of lines within a few days of the phone call. Once lines have been marked, the caller may dig safely around the marks.

These assumptions can be life-threatening. Every digging job requires a call – even small projects like planting trees or shrubs. If you hit an underground utility line while digging, you can harm yourself or those around you, disrupt service to an entire neighborhood and potentially be responsible for fines and repair costs. Homeowners often make risky assumptions about whether or not they should get their utility lines marked, but every digging job requires a call – even small projects like planting trees and shrubs. The depth of utility lines varies and there may be multiple utility lines in a common area.

Digging without calling can disrupt service to an entire neighborhood, harm you and those around you and potentially result in fines and repair costs.

Calling 811 before every digging job gets your underground utility lines marked for free and helps prevent undesired consequences.

By Brenda Kleinjan



# More Than Half of Homeowners Put Themselves at Risk by Not Calling 811

A 2014 survey by the Common Ground Alliance found that 51 percent of American homeowners who planned to dig in 2014 for projects that included landscaping, installing a fence or mailbox and building a deck or patio would put themselves and their communities at risk by not calling 811 to learn the approximate location of underground utilities.

Digging without knowing the approximate location of underground utilities increases the likelihood of unintentional damage, which can cause serious injuries, service disruptions and repair costs.

There are more than 100 billion feet of underground utilities in the United States, according to data compiled by CGA from various industry groups. That figure equates to more than one football field's length (105 yards) of buried utilities for every man, woman and child in the U.S.

The 2014 survey also found that homeowners will call 811 for certain projects, but not for all DIY landscape projects. Homeowners will not call 811 for the following DIY projects:

- 84 percent – Planting shrubs
- 63 percent – Planting a tree
- 61 percent – Installing a pole for a basketball goal
- 50 percent – Building a deck
- 46 percent – Installing a fence
- 45 percent – Digging a patio

**(Editor's Note:  
811 should be  
called before  
ALL of these  
activities.)**

The survey also identified top reasons why people do not plan to call 811 before digging. Fifty-six percent said that they felt they already knew where utilities were buried on their property and 47 percent did not think they would dig deep enough to come in contact with utility lines, despite the fact that utilities can sometimes be just a few inches below the surface due to erosion and other topography changes. CGA's 1,500 members, the U.S. Department of Transportation, most governors and many mayors have proclaimed April as National Safe Digging Month as a way to bring extra attention to the issue and reduce the risk of unnecessary infrastructure damage. As part of National Safe Digging Month, CGA encourages homeowners to take the following steps when planning a digging project this spring:

- Always call 811 a few days before digging, regardless of the depth or familiarity with the property.
- Plan ahead. Call on Monday or Tuesday for work planned for an upcoming weekend, providing ample time for the approximate location of lines to be marked.
- Confirm with your local one call center that all lines have been marked.
- Learn what the various colors of paint and flags represent at [www.call811.com/faqs](http://www.call811.com/faqs).
- Consider moving the location of your project if it is near utility line markings.
- If a contractor has been hired, confirm that a call to 811 has been made. Don't allow work to begin if the lines aren't marked.

CGA is a member-driven association of 1,500 individuals, organizations and sponsors in every facet of the underground utility industry. Established in 2000, CGA is committed to saving lives and preventing damage to underground infrastructure by promoting effective damage prevention practices. CGA has established itself as the leading organization in an effort to reduce damages to underground facilities in North America through shared responsibility among all stakeholders. For more information, visit CGA on the web at [www.commongroundalliance.com](http://www.commongroundalliance.com).

## Safe Digging Starts by Calling 811

From planting shrubs to building a fence, many outdoor projects require digging. This spring, electric cooperatives and the Safe Electricity program ([www.safeelectricity.org](http://www.safeelectricity.org)) remind you to call 811 before the shoveling begins. This simple step could prevent serious injury or even save your life.

"Outdoor projects take planning and preparation," says Molly Hall, executive director of the Energy Education Council and its Safe Electricity program. "Part of that preparation is planning to avoid underground utilities and 811 helps both consumers and contractors to do this."

The 811 "Call Before You Dig" number is a free, national line that was created to help prevent people from coming into contact with underground utility lines during digging projects.

When you call, 811 routes you to your local electric co-op's locating service. Make sure to tell the operator where you plan to dig and what type of work you will be doing. From there, it takes a few business days for a professional to come mark your public utilities with flags or spray paint. If you are in a rush to complete a project, a few days might seem like a long wait. However, a small waiting period can spare you an injury that could take years of recovery.

Even digging professionals can run into trouble with buried power lines.

Tom Dickey, a contractor for an underground utility provider in Auburn, Ill., learned the dangers of underground electricity years ago when he was on the job. Dickey was asked to add a small task at the end of the workday — after his safety gear was already headed back to his shop in another truck. He made a decision that put time and efficiency above safety. With one accidental slip, he came in contact with lethal levels of electricity. Fortunately, Dickey survived, but even years later he still copes with the pain.

Even if you previously had utilities located by calling 811, it is best to call before every digging project. Underground utility lines can shift and it is important to be certain of where they are.

Cooperatives care about their members' safety and urge you to start all outdoor digging projects the safe way — by calling 811.

For more information about 811 and electrical safety, visit [call811.com](http://call811.com) and [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

Safe Electricity is the safety outreach program of the Energy Education Council, a non-profit organization with more than 400 electric cooperative members and many others who share the mission of educating the public about electrical safety and energy efficiency.



**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.**

# BALANCE SHEET

<b>ASSETS</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>
Lines, Office Building and Operational Equipment -----	\$ 67,018,012	\$68,033,291
Less Depreciation -----	\$(18,051,148)	\$(19,278,377)
Total Electric Plant Less Depreciation -----	\$48,966,864	\$48,754,914
 Cash and Investments:		
General Fund -----	\$14,378	\$620,543
Investment:(Associated Organizations) -----	\$12,751,368	\$14,752,380
Total Cash Investments -----	\$12,765,746	\$15,372,923
Total Receivable -----	-\$3,449,100	\$3,195,058
Materials and Supplies -----	-\$1,437,028	\$2,275,320
Prepaid Insurance -----	-\$154,617	\$223,586
Other Current and Accrued Assets -----	\$6,605	\$7,208
Deferred Debits -----	\$1,330,609	\$1,317,740
<b>TOTAL ASSETS -----</b>	<b>\$68,110,569</b>	<b>\$71,146,749</b>
 <b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Total Amount Owed to RUS & CFC -----	\$33,575,282	\$35,088,479
Consumers Deposits-----	\$143,301	\$97,517
Deferred Credits-----	-\$1,600,000	\$1,700,000
Other Current and Accrued Liabilities -----	\$2,086,568	\$2,250,317
Accounts Payable-----	-\$2,313,399	\$2,304,825
<b>TOTAL AMOUNT WE OWE-----</b>	<b>\$39,718,550</b>	<b>\$41,441,138</b>
 <b>EQUITY</b>		
Patronage Capital and Other Equities -----	\$28,392,019	\$29,705,611
<b>TOTAL EQUITIES -----</b>	<b>\$28,392,019</b>	<b>\$29,705,611</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY-----</b>	<b>\$68,110,569</b>	<b>\$71,146,749</b>

# STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

## **REVENUES:**

	2013	2014
Revenue from the Sales of Electricity		
Wheeling and Fees -----	\$29,151,343	\$29,680,761
<b>TOTAL REVENUE-----</b>	<b>\$29,151,343</b>	<b>\$29,680,761</b>

## **EXPENSES:**

Cost of Purchased Power-----	\$20,059,539	\$20,832,120
Distribution-Operations Expense-----	\$1,124,260	\$1,090,775
Distribution-Maintenance Expense -----	\$1,530,689	\$1,591,437
Consumer Accounting and Collecting Expense -----	\$307,338	\$336,461
Consumer Service and Information Expense-----	\$282,461	\$275,576
Sales Expense-----	\$116,454	\$98,161
Administrative and General Expense-----	\$1,184,732	\$1,241,131
Depreciation Expense-----	\$1,905,124	\$2,000,553
Taxes Expense-----	\$531,550	\$539,424
Interest Expense-----	\$1,125,260	\$1,137,642
Other Deductions-----	\$17,841	\$21,070
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE-----</b>	<b>\$28,185,248</b>	<b>\$29,164,350</b>

## **MARGINS:**

Patronage Capital and Operating Margins -----	\$966,095	\$516,411
Non-Operating Margins -----	\$125,967	\$233,882
Generation and Transmission and Other Capital Credits ---	\$1,084,215	\$1,121,810
<b>PATRONAGE CAPITAL OR MARGINS -----</b>	<b>\$2,176,277</b>	<b>\$1,872,103</b>

# Home Safe Home

**A**S ADULTS LOOK TOWARD THE FUTURE TO ENVISION how they will spend their golden years, they think about spending time with family or enjoying well-earned leisure. They often envision spending those years in the home where they raised their children and spent their working years.

One in five houses in South Dakota was built prior to 1940. Rural areas have higher rates of these homes (26 percent compared to 14.1 percent in more urban areas). This is important to consider as we plan for our retirement because older homes were not often constructed with accessibility in mind. Accessibility refers to the ability to enter and use a building and its features by people with disabilities.

Features of homes that pose challenges for people with disabilities:

- Multilevel**
- Steps to enter building**
- Narrow doors and halls**
- Electrical outlets placed near the floor**
- Small bathrooms**
- Poor lighting**

## **Laundry room in the basement**

## **Lack of bedroom on main floor**

## **Split level**

## **Round door knobs**

Age and disease are two different processes, however, older age does increase the chance of developing chronic disease or disability. Adults who experience these challenges may find it difficult to remain in their home with modifying it. Home modifications are an essential component of any retirement plan. We are often concerned that home modifications will make our homes look like a nursing home. Nothing could be further from the truth. Modern contractors are very skilled at making home modifications for accessibility while maintaining visual appeal. In fact, grab bars can be disguised as towel rods or toilet paper dispensers. The key is to evaluate our homes prior to the need for modification and include the cost of modifications in our retirement plans.

*See more at: <http://igrow.org/healthy-families/aging/should-home-modifications-be-part-of-our-retirement-plan/#sthash.TmIACqEp.dpuf>*



# Elements of Universal Design/Home Modification

## What is Universal Design?

Universal design is a worldwide movement that is based on the idea that all environments and products should be usable by all people, regardless of their ages, sizes or abilities. Because this movement applies to everyone, the concept of universal design is known around the world as "design for all," "inclusive design," and "life-span design."

An important component of universal design is the maintenance of aesthetics. In other words, to create something that is still "visually pleasing" to others despite being accessible to everyone. Function does NOT have to sacrifice beauty. As a result, universally designed homes and public buildings can be just as beautiful and welcoming as any other design approach. Increasingly, experts are referring to the concept of universal design as the "wave of the future." It is the hope of universal design advocates that eventually all buildings, homes and products will be designed to meet the needs of everyone.

## Why Home Modification?

Whether you are building a new home or repairing or renovating an existing home, you too can incorporate, through home modification, characteristics of universal design. Home modification can vary from building a new home with universally designed features, to simple installation of lever door knobs on an older home to more complex structural changes in an existing home, such as installing a walk-in shower or an accessible ramp. The goal of home modification for existing homes is not to entirely redesign the home but to make a range of changes or repairs that result in your home being a comfortable, user-friendly and safer place to live.

Implementing universal design home modifications can result in a home that you can remain in as you age. This concept is often referred to as "aging in place." The idea behind "aging in place" is to enable individuals to live independently in their homes for as long as possible. The goal is to avoid having to relocate simply because one's home is too difficult to get around in.

## What are the Principles of Universal Design?

A group of universal design advocates from the Center for universal design at North Carolina State University developed seven principles of universal design. These principles can be applied to evaluate existing environments or products, serve as guidelines in the development or renovation of existing environments, and serve to educate consumers and professionals wanting to understand the characteristics of this design approach.

**Principle 1: Equitable Use** – The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.

**Principle 2: Flexibility in Use** – The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.

**Principle 3: Simple and Intuitive Use** – Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills or current concentration level.

**Principle 4: Perceptible Information** – The design

communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions of the user's sensory abilities.

**Principle 5: Tolerance for Error** – The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.

**Principle 6: Low Physical Effort** – The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.

**Principle 7: Size and Space for Approach and Use**

– Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation and use, regardless of the user's body size, posture or mobility.

The American Association of Retired Persons provides a list of common challenges individuals encounter and some universal design features that may serve as possible solutions ([www.aarp.org/universalhome/solutions.html](http://www.aarp.org/universalhome/solutions.html)). Below are some examples:

### Limited Lifting or Flexibility

- Install lever faucet handles or single lever faucets that are easy to turn.
- Choose u-shaped drawer handles for cabinets and drawers that are easier to grasp.
- Consider decorative grab bars in the shower or by the toilet and tub to increase safety.
- Replace standard light switches with rocker switches that are easier to use.



### Limited Mobility

- Install a bath/shower seat or tub with a transfer bench to ease getting in and out of the bath.
- Use transition wedges at door thresholds to avoid tripping.
- Give sidewalks and driveways a textured surface to increase traction and stability.
- Use handrails on both sides of stairways.

### Limited Vision

- Purchase appliances with large print controls.
- Install lighting near outside walkways, stairs and entrances.
- Use nightlights where appropriate.
- Install under-the-cabinet lights, or task lighting, over kitchen counter work areas.

Remember, a home that has universal design features is a home that fits everyone's needs, whether they are young or old, short or tall, with physical limitations or without.

# East River Electric Annual Report



**Tom Boyko**  
General Manager - East River  
Electric Power Cooperative

Since rural America was electrified over 80 years ago, this region's electric cooperatives have been powered by people. Not by poles, wires, power plants or wind turbines, but by people. Without the drive and the resolve of the people who came before us, those poles and power plants wouldn't exist. Rural folks banded together back then for a common purpose: to serve their neighbors and to bring power into rural areas where it had never been before.

Today, your electric cooperative is still powered by people. It's powered by you and your neighbors who continue the tradition by coming together for a common purpose. It's powered by your dedicated board of directors and the hard-working staff members who put in long hours and respond in a moment's notice during a storm if the power goes out. Your cooperative exists to meet your electric needs and power your life.

At East River Electric, we're committed to working with you to provide safe and reliable power at an affordable price. East River exists to enhance the value of its members, and our 128 employees are working each day to add value to your cooperative.

2014 was another successful year for East River and its members. We saw continued growth throughout our service territory and have worked hard to maintain reliability while we add to our already large transmission system. Over the past year we've either replaced or added 60 miles of line to our transmission system and upgraded two substations all in an effort to improve reliability while keeping your costs affordable.

East River and our supplemental power provider Basin Electric continue to take advantage of more renewable energy sources. In 2015, Basin Electric will add another 300 megawatts of wind energy to its portfolio, bringing Basin's total wind resources to 1,400 megawatts. Along with our hydropower allocation from the Western Area Power Administration, renewable energy will make up nearly 40 percent of our total power supply by the end of this year. We also continue to explore the future of solar generation in our service territory with some of our member systems looking into community solar gardens and other forms of solar integration. Our cooperative network is always looking for new opportunities to harness the power of the sun, wind and water to provide more and more renewable energy.

We received good news from the Western Area Power Administration this year: we won't see a rate increase in 2015. We continue to work closely with this federal agency that provides power from the dams on the Missouri River on future rates and maintenance of their facilities.

Our load management system will celebrate 30 years in 2015 and remains a critical component in our effort to keep your costs affordable. The system is able to turn off water heaters and some other appliances and equipment during peak power usage to save you money. The system that was first implemented in 1985 has saved consumers over \$175 million in wholesale power costs over the past three decades.



**East River Electric crews building replacement transmission lines in Davison and Aurora County in 2014. The line provides electric service to the Plankinton Substation.**

Even with all of the successes East River has experienced, we face some steep challenges ahead. We're still very concerned about the Environmental Protection Agency's efforts to regulate carbon and impose strict regulations on power plants that will drive up the cost of electricity. I want to thank you for your efforts in writing comments to the EPA last year. Your voice made a difference. Because of your willingness to speak out, the EPA now has a better understanding of how these regulations would impact us here in rural America. There is still a lot of uncertainty about how the EPA will implement these burdensome regulations, but we'll continue to stand up for you and try as hard as we can to educate policymakers about the negative impacts these rules would have. We must take a realistic look at how these regulations will affect the American economy and your bottom line. Rest assured we will do whatever we can to make sure your voice is heard and will work to keep your costs affordable.

As a Touchstone Energy Cooperative, you have access to a nationwide network of resources committed to accountability, integrity, innovation and commitment to community. Touchstone Energy works to spread the word about the power of cooperation, how cooperative businesses are different, and ways we can help our members lead better lives. Thank you for your continued support of the Touchstone Energy brand.

East River Electric is proud to partner with Central Electric and continue the tradition of providing you with safe, affordable and reliable electricity to power your life. East River thanks Duane Wolbrink for his service representing Central Electric members on the East River board of directors and thanks to Central Electric General Manager Loren Noess for his work on behalf of the membership. These folks work very hard on your behalf. Thank you for staying involved in your cooperative. It's incredibly important that you stay engaged because this cooperative truly is powered by people like you.

## *Central Electric Cooperative Announces*

### *15th Annual Meeting*

*Tuesday April 7th - Corn Palace, Mitchell, SD*

*6:30 p.m. Registration opens and meal is served*

*Meal will consist of a three meat buffet including broasted chicken, roast beef, ham, buttered green beans, mashed potatoes with gravy, dinner roll, cole-slaw, macaroni salad, coffee, lemonade and ice cream.*

*7:30 P.M. Business Meeting*

## Regional Dateline

### March 18-22

State 8-ball Tournament  
Rushmore Plaza Civic Center  
Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4115

### March 21-22

Farm Toy and Collectibles Show, Aberdeen, SD  
605-225-4841

### March 21-22

Spring Craft Show  
Watertown, SD, 605-882-1734

### March 21-22

Curt Carter Gun Show  
Watertown, SD, 605-793-2347

### March 27-29

Black Hills Home Show  
Rushmore Plaza Civic Center  
Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4115

### 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

### April 6

Shrine Circus, Huron, SD  
605-225-4841

### April 9-11

Shrine Circus, Aberdeen, SD  
605-225-4841

### April 9-11

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

PHOTO COURTESY OF NAJA SHRINE



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.

### April 11

Spring Fling Home & Garden Show, Hot Springs, SD  
605-745-4140

### April 11-12

Dakota Territory Gun Show  
Rushmore Hall, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD  
605-394-4115

### April 18

LATI Auto Club Car Show  
Watertown, SD, 605-882-5284

### April 18

Lunafest Film Festival  
Custer, SD, 605-517-1664  
[www.lunafest.org](http://www.lunafest.org)

### April 18-19

Annual AMA Coins Show  
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-321-9195

### April 18-19

Banff Mountain Film Festival World Tour  
Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4101

### April 23-25

Black Hills Fiber Arts Fair  
Rapid City, SD, 605-791-0711  
[www.blackhillsfiberartsfair.org](http://www.blackhillsfiberartsfair.org)

### April 25

RiverRat Marathon and Bike Ride, Yankton, SD  
[www.riverratmarathon.com](http://www.riverratmarathon.com)

### May 2

S.D. Coin & Stamp Club Show  
Watertown, SD, 605-886-4609

### May 2

Spring Market and Boats, Jets and Pets, Rapid City, SD  
605-716-7979

### May 6-10

Black Hills Film Festival  
Hill City, SD, 605-574-9454  
[www.blackhillsfilmfestival.org](http://www.blackhillsfilmfestival.org)

### May 9-10, 16-17, 24-25

NE Area Pari Mutual Horse Racing  
Aberdeen, SD, 605-715-9580

## Events of Special Note

### April 11-12

Faulkton Area Arts Council  
25th Annual Arts Show  
Community Center (west side of school), Faulkton, SD  
605-598-4482 or  
605-598-4160

### April 27-29

Shrine Circus, Mitchell, SD  
605-336-1117

### May 20-23

Shakespeare Garden Planting Festival  
Wessington Springs, SD  
605-539-1529  
[shakespeariegarden.blogspot.com](http://shakespeariegarden.blogspot.com)

### May 22

Williams & Ree Comedy Show, Watertown, SD  
1-800-658-4717

### May 23-24

Black Hills Music Festival Spearfish, SD, 605-645-1880  
[www.bhmusicfest.com](http://www.bhmusicfest.com)

### May 23-24

SDRA Foothills Rodeo  
Wessington Springs, SD  
605-770-4370

### June 20-21

Parrot Festival, Black Hills Parrot Welfare and Education Center, Belle Fourche, SD  
605-892-2336  
[blackhillsparrotwelfare.org](http://blackhillsparrotwelfare.org)