

# Central Electric

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

## Cooperative Connections

JUNE 2016 VOL. 17 NO. 2

**Rodeo**  
**High School**  
**Athletes**  
**Compete** P8-9



# Renewable Energy – We've Got You Covered



**Ken Schlimgen**  
General Manager

In my conversations with members, I have found that interest in renewable energy systems has been increasing over the past several years. While most of these conversations revolve around wind and solar, other unique technologies and ideas also come up in the conversation. It is clear that members have an interest in renewable energy and lowering their monthly electric bills.

Central Electric Cooperative and our power suppliers, East River Electric and Basin Electric Power Cooperative, are committed to providing you with affordable and reliable power while being environmentally responsible. If you were to do some research, you would find that your cooperative power supply is well ahead of the rest of the nation when it comes to investing in renewable resources. In fact, 11 percent of your power supply is generated by wind and another 19 percent comes from hydro. In addition, Basin Electric Power Cooperative has recently signed agreements that will essentially double the amount of electricity produced from wind.

**In fact, 11 percent of your power supply is generated by wind and another 19 percent comes from hydro.**

Locally, Central Electric has also been doing our part. Your cooperative has been offering rebates and incentives towards the purchase of energy efficient appliances, heating systems, and water heaters for many, many years. We also offer energy audit services to help you identify ways that you can reduce energy consumption or get more from what you are currently spending. Reducing how much energy you consume each month is the best way to lower your monthly costs.

There are new technologies that can help members monitor and reduce their electric consumption. Your cooperative offers a free service called “Smarthub” that allows members to check their electric usage daily. This information can be accessed through your smartphone or home PC. I recommend that you

go to our website and set up your account to see if you can benefit from this service. Central Electric’s heating and cooling service department can also install a smart thermostat in your home. The smart thermostat offers features that will lower the costs to heat and cool your home.

Central Electric installed a small solar system that became operational in July of last year. The purpose of this project is to help educate cooperative employees and members about solar pv systems. We are willing to share what we have learned about constructing and operating our solar project with anyone who is interested. Most importantly, we have actual energy production information for a system installed here vs projections in a sales proposal.



**Central Prairie Solar has been operational since July 2015. Central Electric has been collecting data from the project to educate employees and assist members who might be interested in solar energy.**

While renewable energy systems are often embraced as the answer to lowering utility costs and being environmentally friendly, they do have limitations. Many of the people I talk to have the impression that a renewable energy system will drastically reduce or even eliminate their electric bill. From our experience, that goal is achievable but requires a very large investment that may not make economic sense.

If you are considering the purchase of a renewable energy system, I encourage you to do your research. Include your cooperative on the list of organizations to contact. We have been working for decades to become knowledgeable energy experts for you to call on. That’s one thing that will not change. What will change is how electricity is generated, delivered, and consumed.

Central Electric is a leader in helping our members use their energy resources wisely, and we will continue to lead with the aim of meeting your needs.



# Central Electric Cooperative Connections

(USPS 018-963)

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## Summer Storm Safety Tip

Strong summer storms can create dangerous situations. Always avoid downed power lines - the wire could be live, which could be deadly for those nearby. Quickly report downed power lines to your local electric cooperative.



America's Electric Cooperatives

### 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

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



### Mission Statement

Providing Reliable Energy and  
Services at a Good Value

This institution is an equal  
opportunity provider and  
employer.

## Summer Electrical Safety Tips: Outdoor Hazards

**Summer is the time** when everyone wants to play outside, so it is important that everyone knows what possible electrical safety hazards to avoid in the out-of-doors. Go around the outside of your home and through your neighborhood with your family and show them where telephone poles and electrical lines are located. Explain the following so that everyone understands the dangers associated with them:

- Never play near or touch a power line with any part of your body, a toy, a stick or any other object whatsoever. Assume at all times that any power lines you see are live and dangerous. If you see a downed power line, stay well away and report it to your local utility company immediately.
- Never approach an electrical substation (or downed power lines) for any reason whatsoever. Period. If a friend, family member or a pet has entered this area, do not try to rescue them yourself – call 911 immediately.
- Never climb on or play around a utility pole. In fact,



PHOTO COURTESY OF ALABAMA/CLAYTON ELECTRIC

never post any signs or flyers on utility poles either as this can endanger you and utility workers that have to work on those poles.

- Never throw shoes or articles of clothing up onto power lines and never try to retrieve any object already hanging from a power line.
- To avoid getting kites, model aircraft or any other airborne toys stuck in power lines, play with these things in wide open spaces like parks or fields far away from power lines.

• Kids love to climb trees in the summer, but they should never climb trees that are too close to power lines; even if the tree isn't touching a line, the extra weight from someone climbing the tree could cause a branch to touch the line, which would be dangerous. In fact, if you feel that any trees in your yard or neighborhood are too close to power lines, talk with your local utility about having them trimmed or possibly removed.

• Keep an eye on the weather. Almost 100 people die each year and another 500 are severely injured from lightning strikes. If a thunderstorm is approaching, go indoors and stay there until the danger has passed.

Source: [rootelectric.com](http://rootelectric.com)

### Kids' Corner Safety Poster

**"Keep extension cords out of high-traffic areas like doorways or walkways where they pose a tripping hazard."**



**Lyla Michalek, 7 years old**  
*Lyla is the daughter of Anthony Michalek, Okaton, S.D. He is a member of West Central Electric Cooperative, Murdo, 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.

**STAND WITH CO-OPS**

**CO-OPS VOTE**

A PROGRAM OF AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

JOIN HERE: [WWW.VOTE.COOP](http://WWW.VOTE.COOP)



# Dairy Delicious



## Becki's Coconut Cream Cake

- |                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| 1 white cake mix           | <b>Frosting:</b>                       |
| 3 eggs                     | 3 (4 oz.) pkgs. cream cheese, softened |
| 1/3 cup vegetable oil      | 1 cup powdered sugar                   |
| 1/2 tsp. coconut extract   | 1 (8 oz.) container Cool Whip          |
| 1 cup sour cream           |  |
| 1 (8 oz.) can coconut milk |  |

Combine the cake mix, oil, eggs, sour cream and coconut milk. Mix until well blended. Spread batter in greased and floured 9x13-inch pan. Bake at 350°F. for 25 to 30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. For frosting, mix cream cheese and powdered sugar until smooth. Fold in Cool Whip. Frost cooled cake and sprinkle with additional coconut.

**Becki Hauser, Tripp**

## Elvis Pie

- |                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1 cup creamy peanut butter            | 2 cups cold heavy cream, divided          |
| 1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, softened | 1 (9 inch) graham cracker piecrust        |
| 1/3 cup plus 1/4 cup sugar, divided   | 2 large bananas, cut into 1/4-inch slices |
| 1-1/2 tsp. vanilla extract            | Chopped roasted peanuts                   |

Cream together peanut butter, cream cheese, 1/3 cup sugar and vanilla at medium speed. In a separate bowl, whip 1 cup heavy cream until soft peaks form. Carefully fold whipped cream into peanut butter mixture until completely combined. Scrape half the filling into the piecrust and smooth with spatula. Layer sliced bananas on top of filling. Spread remaining filling over bananas. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate until set, at least 1 hour. To make topping, whip remaining cream and sugar together until soft peaks form. Spread over pie. Sprinkled with chopped nuts.

**Lynn Holzerland, Waubay**

## French Vanilla Coffee Mix

- |                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| 1/3 cup instant coffee      | 1/3 cup sugar                              |
| 1 cup instant powdered milk | 1/4 cup French Vanilla instant pudding mix |
| 1/2 cup nondairy creamer    |  |

Combine all ingredients; store in a glass jar. For each serving, put 3/4 cup boiling water in mug. Add 2 heaping tsps. of mix; stir well.

**Mary Jessen, Holabird**

## Strawberry Frozen Yogurt Squares

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 (14 oz.) can fat-free sweetened condensed milk, divided | Pinch ground cloves                                   |
| Non-stick cooking spray                                   | 1 (10 oz.) pkg. frozen strawberries, about 2-1/2 cups |
| 1 cup Post Grape-Nuts® or similar cereal                  | 3 cups fat-free strawberry yogurt                     |
| 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon                                  |   |

Measure 1 cup of sweetened condensed milk; set aside. Line 8x8-inch baking pan with foil; spray with non-stick cooking spray. In medium bowl, combine cereal, cinnamon, cloves and remainder of sweetened condensed milk. Spread cereal mixture evenly on bottom of pan, place in freezer. Place strawberries and yogurt in a blender; cover and blend. Add 1 cup sweetened condensed milk; blend until smooth. Pour mixture over cereal, smoothing to edges of pan. Cover with foil (or plastic wrap) and freeze 8 hours or until firm. Use edges of foil to loosen and remove from pan; let recipe thaw for 5 to 10 minutes. Cut into squares and serve. Squares may be individually wrapped and stored in freezer for single servings. Makes 9 servings.

*Nutritional Facts Per Serving: Calories 200, Total Fat 0g, Sat Fat 0g, Cholesterol 5mg, Sodium 150mg, Total Carbohydrates 42g, Dietary Fiber 2g, Protein 7g, Calcium 20% Daily Value*

**Pictured, Cooperative Connections**

## Johnny Cake

- |                  |                        |
|------------------|------------------------|
| 1/2 cup butter   | 1 tsp. soda            |
| 3 eggs, beaten   | 1/2 tsp. baking powder |
| 1 cup sugar      | 1 cup flour            |
| 1/2 tsp. salt    | 1 cup corn meal        |
| 1 cup sour cream |                        |

Combine all ingredients. Pour into a 9x9-inch or 9x13-inch pan. Bake at 400°F. for 20 to 25 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.

**Judy Jensen, Langford**

## Potato Salad Dressing

- |                 |                          |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| 1/2 cup sugar   | 1 tsp. mustard           |
| 2 eggs          | Salt and pepper to taste |
| 1/4 cup vinegar | 1 cup mayonnaise         |
| 3 T. butter     |                          |

In a saucepan, mix together sugar, eggs, vinegar, butter, mustard, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil; boil until thick. Cool. Add mayonnaise; stirring well. Toss with your favorite potato salad ingredients

**Mary Alice Bartel, Wolsey**

*Please send your favorite dessert, salad and garden produce recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2016. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.*

# Future Linemen Awarded Scholarships

The South Dakota Rural Electric Line Superintendents Association awarded its annual scholarships at a presentation held at Mitchell Technical Institute in March. Central Electric Manager of Operations Brian Bultje serves as President for this Association.

The \$500 Mark and Kathy Hofer Scholarship was awarded to Brandon Warnke of Gregory. Hofer serves on the Central Electric Board of Directors and represents South Dakota on the National Rural Electric Cooperatives Association (NRECA) Board. He and his wife, Kathy, have sponsored this scholarship since 2007.

The \$500 Larry Brink Memorial Scholarship was awarded to Ryan Himley of Brookings.

Eight other recipients received \$500 each, sponsored by the Line Superintendents: Bradley Huffman, Philip; Gunner Kieler, McCook Lake; Connor McGarry, Aberdeen; Brad Kari, Newell; Hayden Thiry, White Lake; Gunnar Hagstrom, Crocker; Kane LaPlante, Clark; Derek Bille, Watertown.

The recipients will graduate this spring with diplomas in power line construction.



**Brandon Warnke (Gregory), recipient of the Mark & Kathy Hofer Scholarship, and Bill Brisk (Black Hills Electric Coop)**



**Lynn Kruse (Dakota Energy Coop) and Ryan Himley (Brookings), recipient of the Larry Brink Memorial Scholarship**



**Members of the SDRE Line Superintendents Association are pictured with MTI students who received scholarships. Pictured are (front row, left to right): Lynn Kruse, Dakota Energy Coop in Huron; Mark DeFea, Whetstone Valley Electric Coop in Milbank; and Bill Brisk, Black Hills Electric Coop, Custer. Middle row: Randy Borer, Cherry-Tod Electric Coop in Mission; Bradley Huffman, Philip; Gunner Kieler, McCook Lake; Connor McGarry, Aberdeen; Brad Kari, Newell; and Dave Zaug, Codington-Clark Electric Coop. Back row: Hayden Thiry, White Lake; Rob Vetch FEM Electric Association in Ipswich; Gunnar Hagstrom, Crocker; Kane LaPlante, Clark; Derek Bille, Watertown; and Mike Kelly, Northern Electric Coop in Bath.**

## Electricity Remains A Good Value

The cost of powering your home rises at a slower pace than many of your typical expenses. Compare the average price increase of these expenses each year over the last five years, and the value of electricity shines.



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index



# Students Honored at Touchstone Energy® Scholar of the Year Banquet

**Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives** in eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota joined to honor some of the area's most impressive high school seniors at the Touchstone Energy® Scholar of the Year Banquet. The banquet was held on Saturday, April 30th at Lake Area Technical Institute in Watertown.

The event honored the 35 high school students who were chosen each week throughout the school year as the Touchstone Energy Scholar of the Week. Those in attendance representing Central Electric were Hannah Noonan of Howard High School, Scholar of the Week for October 25-31, 2015; Tasha Determan of Hanson High School, Scholar of the Week for February 21-27, 2016; and Tristan Hayes of Kimball High School, Scholar of the Week for April 10-16, 2016.

Two \$500 and one \$1000 scholarships were awarded. Sydney Bormann of Parkston High School from Southeastern Electric, was awarded the \$1000 scholarship and Touchstone Energy Scholar of the Year. Sydney Gall of Scotland High School, from Bon Homme-Yankton Electric, and Caleb Whitmyre of Webster Area High School, from Lake Region Electric were, both awarded \$500 scholarships.

Former WNBA player Olympia Scott gave the keynote address. Scott is a Stanford University graduate and member of the Stanford Hall of Fame who went on to play 10 seasons in the WNBA, winning two world championships. KSFY News Anchor Courtney Collen served as Master of Ceremonies.



Three high school seniors earned scholarships from Central Electric and were invited to the Scholar of the Year Banquet. They are pictured with keynote speaker and former WNBA player Olympia Scott. Pictured left-right: Tristan Hayes, Hannah Noonan, Olympia Scott, Tasha Determan

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Avoid setting your thermostat at a colder setting than normal when you turn on your air conditioner. It will not cool your home any faster and could result in excessive cooling and unnecessary expense.

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)

# Competing with Heart

## S.D. High School Rodeo Athletes Hit the Arena

By  
Brenda  
Kleinjan

**On the cover:** Siarra Johnson of Castlewood was the Barrel Racing Champion with 76.0 points. **Below:** Jeremiah Johnson of Huron competes in steer wrestling. He placed 15th overall in the 2015 finals.

Photos Courtesy CowboyImages.net

**W**HILE MANY OF THE AREA'S HIGH SCHOOL athletes will have put their sports gear away for the summer having competed in their sport's state event, the South Dakota's high school rodeo athletes are just hitting their stride.

For high school rodeo athletes, June is their month. South Dakota regional rodeos are set for the first two weekends in June with Buffalo, Wall, Highmore and Huron hosting events June 3-5 while arenas in Dupree, Sturgis, Fort Pierre and Watertown will welcome athletes June 10-12. In Minnesota, regional rodeos are scheduled for weekends in May at Verndale, Long Prairie and Fergus Falls and June 4-5 in St. Peter with the state finals held June 10-12 in Hugo.

No matter where they compete, the approximately 450 members of the South Dakota High School Rodeo Association will have their sights set on Belle Fourche, host of the 2016 South Dakota High School Rodeo Finals June 14-18.

For Digger Rutten, public relations chairman

for South Dakota High School Rodeo Association, high school rodeo is at the heart of keeping the spirit of the West going.

"It's a good event and keeps the western heritage alive in South Dakota is what we stress with the athletes," said Rutten.

He notes that you'll find the state's high school rodeo athletes competing in school events throughout the year from football and volleyball to basketball and wrestling and golf and track.

"The kids are involved in other sports in their school, too, but the high school rodeo is something the whole family travels together. It's more of a family sport," said Rutten.

Rutten estimates that 300 contestants will qualify for the state finals. And, in the stands will be hundreds of family members and friends.

"It's a great fun family event, fun to compete in and fun to watch," said Rutten.

South Dakota's Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives have been supporters of high school rodeo



©CowboyImages.net



for several years. The cooperative brand adorns barrels used in regional and state competitions in the Rushmore State. And, athletes who earn short go shirts through their performances will carry a bit of co-op pride with them whenever they wear their shirt. As the short go shirt sponsors, the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives logo is stitched onto the shirt.

Nearly 120 such shirts were awarded after the 2015 finals.

According to Rutten, athletes qualify for the state final's short go by combing the scores earned at the regional rodeos with the results of the first two go's at the state rodeo.

The top four point getters in each event qualify for the national team while the 11 other athletes are recognized for making the short go.

In South Dakota, rodeo athletes compete in bareback riding, barrel racing, breakaway roping, bull riding, boys' cutting, girls' cutting, goat tying, pole bending, reined cow horse, saddle bronc, steer wrestling, team roping and tie-down. There is also a queen competition and shooting events.

"High school kids aren't running for money. They rodeo for the points and prizes," said Rutten, noting some differences between high school rodeo and pro rodeo.

"It's more the competition to see how good you can be versus going for some money," he said.

Additionally, high school rodeo has events that one doesn't see in some other levels of rodeo.

"Pole bending is something you see in high school and 4-H rodeo, but not at some of the other levels," Rutten said. "We have goat tying which you don't see in the pros and cutting and reined cow horse is a new event for us."

Behind the scenes at the rodeos are dozens of volunteers who work to keep the sport going for the teens.

Each one of the committees that hosts a regional rodeo has a committee of volunteers that puts on the regional rodeos.

A state level board of directors helps oversee things statewide, but regional committees and the state finals host committee are crucial to the program's success.

"The regional meets are designed so that they don't have to travel more than 200 miles to compete," said Rutten.

For more on Minnesota High School rodeo, visit <http://www.mnhsrodeo.com/>. For more information on South Dakota High School Rodeo, go to <http://www.sdhsra.com/>



Rachael McCoy (top) and Lathen Stevens (below) were among recipients of the South Dakota High School Rodeo Association's short go shirts. McCoy earned her shirt in the pole bending event while Stevens competed in the saddle bronc event. They were among nearly 120 SDHSRA athletes receiving short go shirts in 2015.

## Huron to Host National Junior High Finals Rodeo

The South Dakota State Fairgrounds in Huron, S.D., has been selected to host the 2018 and 2019 National Junior High Finals Rodeo (NJHFR) by the National High School Rodeo Association. The NJHFR is the second largest rodeo in the world with approximately 1,000 contestants and over 1,500 entries. During these events, three countries are represented including 42 U.S. states, five Canadian Provinces and the country of Australia.

While the official rodeo performances take place over the course of seven days, the entire event encompasses a total of 15 days from set-up to tear-down. Along with the rodeo, comes one of the largest western trade shows in the nation. There are also a myriad of other contestant recreational and sporting activities including one of the fastest growing shooting competitions in the U.S. Officials estimate the event will have an economic impact of over \$9.2 million for Huron and the surrounding area.

"This is going to be a great undertaking for Huron and the SD State Fairgrounds," stated Peggy Besch, SD State Fair manager, "but, we are up for the task! This will clearly be a partnership between the State Fair, the City of Huron, Huron Chamber & Visitors Bureau, Beadle County, businesses and organizations in the Huron area, and many volunteers."

"Not only is this event great for Huron and the SD State Fairgrounds, but it is great for the entire state," said Laurie Shelton, president and CEO of the Huron Chamber & Visitors Bureau. "All of these people will be traveling through South Dakota. They will be stopping for fuel, food, lodging and visiting the many tourist attractions along the way."

The NJHFR is scheduled for June 24-30, 2018, and June 23-29, 2019, in Huron, S.D.

Created in 2004, the NHSRA Junior High Division was established to bring the excitement of the sport to sixth, seventh, and eighth graders and to serve as a feeder system into the high school ranks of the Association. Today, all 48 states and provinces that belong to the NHSRA also produce a Junior High Division as well, with over 2,500 members in total now competing. Junior High Division students compete in a variety of events, including Barrel racing, pole bending, goat tying, breakaway roping, tie-down roping, chute dogging, team roping, ribbon roping, junior bull riding, bareback steer riding and saddle bronc steer riding.

Gallup, N.M., hosted the NJHFR from 2005 through 2013. The rodeo moved to Des Moines, Iowa, for 2014-15 and the 2016 NJHFR is set for June 19-25 in Lebanon, Tenn., which will also host the 2017 finals. South Dakota's state junior high finals were held May 13-15, 2016, in Rapid City.

# Operation Round Up<sup>®</sup> Board of Trustees Announced

As a part of Central Electric's commitment to our communities, in 2015 we launched the Operation Round-Up Program. This is a program where our members volunteer to round up their electric bill to the next whole dollar. The money raised is placed in a fund to be donated to projects that benefit communities across our service area. The donations will be decided by a nine member board of trustees. The trustees are appointed by your board of directors, and they have volunteered their time to serve you.



Scott Kolousek  
Greg Kotas  
Ellen Speck  
Connie Hattervig  
Carla Amick  
Dave Jorgenson  
Dale Peters  
Jill Ekstrum  
Jim Headley

Jerauld County  
Hanson County  
Buffalo County  
Miner County  
Sanborn County  
Davison County  
Aurora County  
Brule County  
Central Electric Board of Directors

Applications for Operation Round-Up funds will be made available this fall. Look for more information coming to our website, Facebook page, and in our newsletter.



**ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIPS QUIZ**

QUESTION 4 of 10:  
You'd like to run a cord along a wall, which is the safer way to do so?


OR


**Answer: The Right Picture**  
You should never staple or nail a power cord to the wall. Doing so presents many risks like electric shock and damaging the cord, creating a fire risk.

Take the full quiz at  
[WWW.TOUCHSTONEENERGY.COM](http://WWW.TOUCHSTONEENERGY.COM)

## ATTENTION MEMBERS

Central Electric plans to upgrade our Load Management equipment in the area north-east of Mitchell. We will be contacting you about replacing your existing load control receiver\* with an updated device. These upgrades will bring the latest in technology to our members and help maintain low electricity costs for years to come.

There will be no fee or cost to the member for these services.

We ask for your cooperation in this matter as we have numerous devices to change out. The job will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. If you have any questions or concerns, please call 1-800-477-2892. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

\*The load control receiver is the grey box typically located in your basement and utility rooms where your water heaters and furnaces are located. This applies to only those on load management.



**Above:** These are the current load management boxes in most homes. These will be replaced.

**Below:** This is a new load management receiver that will be installed. Some members may already have these in their homes.





# Why We Plan Outages

## And How to Stay “In the Know”

Have you ever received a notification from the folks here at Central Electric Cooperative informing you of a “planned outage?” You may have wondered, “what is a planned outage?” and “why does my electric utility need to perform one?” Occasionally, the equipment we use to bring power to your home needs to be replaced, repaired or updated. When this happens, as a way to keep our crews and you safe, we plan an interruption to electric service.

We do our best to plan these outages during times when you will be least inconvenienced, so we often perform planned outages during school and business hours.

According to Manager of Operations Brian Bultje, “We typically try to schedule shorter projects from 8:30 am – 11:00 am or 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm and avoid the noon hour if possible. If a business needs to be off or closed, we try to schedule it during a slow time for them.”



Crews perform a planned outage to replaced a burnt pole. Lineman Cody Riggs works on reattaching wires at the top of the new pole. Linemen John Vetch and Tony Roth assist nearby in the buckets.

We also try to avoid planning these outages during winter months or extreme temperatures. We understand these are peak times of the year when you depend on running your heating and cooling units the most.

While they may sound slightly inconvenient, planned outages are actually beneficial to you, our members. Regular system upgrades are necessary for optimal performance, and they increase reliability. Repairing and upgrading our equipment is also critical to maintaining public safety. If older lines need to be replaced, we plan for it, repair or replace it, and that keeps everyone safe.

**How can you ensure that you are notified if our crews plan an outage in your area? Make sure your contact information is up to date at the office.**

Planned outages also allow us to keep you informed of when and how long you will be without power. We attempt to notify you with adequate time before the outage, so you can be prepared. We also keep you aware of where in your area the line crews will be working in case travel is affected. However, please be aware that in an emergency situation, power could be turned off with minimal notification to make repairs.

According to Bultje, “These situations include emergencies that endanger the safety of the public or cooperative personnel, vehicle and farm equipment damages to power equipment, storm situations where power needs to be shut off quickly to make repairs and restore power, emergency substation repairs, or cooperative equipment failures.”

How can you ensure that you are notified if our crews plan an outage in your area? Make sure your contact information is up to date at the office. If you have updated your phone number, changed employers, or added an additional account-holder, your contact information might not be up to date. **If this affects you, please contact our office at 800-477-2892 or [cec@centralec.coop](mailto:cec@centralec.coop) to update your information.** We encourage all members to provide updated phone numbers and email addresses to receive planned outage notifications.

We want to make sure we are doing everything we can to keep you safe and to keep our system running smoothly. So, the next time you hear about a planned outage, know that it is one of the best ways we can provide you with quality electric service.

# Co-ops Vote

## Co-ops Launch Non-Partisan Voter Engagement Program

**A**MERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES HAVE LAUNCHED a non-partisan, nationwide effort to promote civic engagement and voter participation in the communities they serve.

Jeffrey Connor, interim CEO of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, unveiled the Co-ops Vote program in time for the 2016 election

cycle.

"Through Co-ops Vote, we want to help our members know when elections are, what's at stake and how to make their voices heard," Connor said. "Who folks vote for isn't really as important as the fact that they do vote."

The Co-ops Vote initiative focuses on eight

By  
Justin LaBerge



VISIT [VOTE.COOP](http://VOTE.COOP) TO LEARN HOW  
TO BECOME A CO-OP VOTER.



issues that are important to health and prosperity of communities served by electric cooperatives:

- Rural Broadband Access
- Hiring and Honoring Veterans
- Low-Income Energy Assistance
- Cybersecurity
- Water Regulation
- Rural Health Care Access
- Affordable and Reliable Energy
- Renewable Energy

“Electric cooperatives are perfectly designed to help address these important issues,” Connor said. “We can make politics ‘local’ again because civic engagement is part of our DNA.”

A new website, [vote.coop](http://vote.coop), offers co-op members information on the voter registration process in their state, dates of elections, information on the candidates running in those elections, and explanations of the eight key issues the campaign aims to address.

In keeping with its non-partisan goals, the initiative will not be endorsing specific candidates for office.

Mel Coleman, president of NRECA and CEO of North Arkansas Electric Cooperative said the program would help ensure the voices of rural Americans are heard.

“We want to make sure our government knows that rural America matters,” Coleman said. “This campaign isn’t about divisive, partisan issues. It’s about real people in real places facing real challenges. It’s about our co-ops living out the principles of our movement: Concern for community and democratic control.”

Connor cited partisan gridlock in Washington, the explosive growth of money in politics and the effects of gerrymandering as important reasons for launching the program. In 2014, 318 of

435 House races had a margin of victory of 20 points or more<sup>1</sup>, and 30 House candidates – 16 Democrats and 14 Republicans representing 11 states – didn’t even face an opponent in the general election<sup>2</sup>.

“Elections aren’t won and lost in November anymore,” Connor said. “They’re really decided in primaries months sooner, when fewer voters recognize the opportunity to vote, fewer participate and only a handful of issues are up for debate.”

This results in a Congress where more members represent the extremes of each political party and are less inclined to seek compromise and bipartisan solutions to problems.

“The electric cooperative movement has always been non-partisan, and our communities are facing too many challenges to have a government crippled by bickering,” Coleman said. “When our parents and grandparents set out to electrify rural America, they didn’t have time to ask the person next to them about their views on economic or social policy. Their economic policy was ‘we need to save this community’ and their social policy was ‘let’s do it together.’ I hope the Co-ops Vote program can help rekindle that spirit of cooperation.”

For more information about Co-ops Vote and the impact of these eight key issues on the people of South Dakota, western Minnesota and north central Nebraska, contact your local electric cooperative or visit [vote.coop](http://vote.coop).

*Justin LaBerge writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation’s 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.*



# CO-OPS VOTE

A PROGRAM OF AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

- ✓ Pledge to be a co-op voter
- ✓ Find key election information
- ✓ Learn about the issues
- ✓ Register to vote



## ✓ TAKE THE PLEDGE

- ✓ Commit today to make your voice heard on Election Day!
- ✓ Get reminders about the upcoming election.
- ✓ Recruit your friends, family, and co-workers to become co-op voters today.



# CO-OPS VOTE

A PROGRAM OF AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

VOTE.COOP

<sup>1</sup> [https://ballotpedia.org/Margin\\_of\\_victory\\_analysis\\_for\\_the\\_2014\\_congressional\\_elections](https://ballotpedia.org/Margin_of_victory_analysis_for_the_2014_congressional_elections)

<sup>2</sup> <http://atr.rollcall.com/elections-2014-running-unopposed-congress/>

# Summer Safety

When the weather gets hot, we head outdoors for sun and fun. Keep in mind some tips from the Electrical Safety Foundation International to make sure everyone has a safe summer.

## Water and electricity don't mix

Summer is the season for swimming and boating, and awareness of electrical hazards around water can prevent deaths and injuries. Water and electricity don't mix.

- Use covers on outdoor power outlets, especially near swimming pools. Keep cords and electrical devices away from the water, and never handle electrical items before you've dried off.
- Use a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) to help prevent electrocutions and electrical shock injuries. These devices interrupt the flow of power when they sense a surge. Portable GFCIs require no tools to install and are available at prices ranging from \$12 to \$30.

## Lightning and storms

Lightning strikes are fatal in 10 percent of victims, and 70 percent suffer serious long-term effects, according to the National Weather Service. Because lightning can travel sideways for up to 10 miles, blue skies are not a sign of safety. If you hear thunder, take cover.

- If weather conditions indicate a storm, stay inside—away from doors and windows—or seek shelter in a low-lying area away from trees and any metal, including sheds, clotheslines, poles, and fences. If you're near water, stay as far away as possible.
- If you're in a group, spread out—don't stand close together.
- Indoors, unplug electronics before the storm arrives, and don't use corded phones.
- Avoid plumbing—sinks, bathtubs, faucets.
- Don't forget about your pets. Doghouses are not safe from lightning, and chained animals are easy targets.
- If your home is flooded during a storm, don't turn on appliances or electronics until given the okay by an

electrician. If there's laying water, don't go inside. The water could be energized.

## Working with large appliances

If your air conditioner goes out, keep a few things in mind before you start poking around. Large appliances, such as air conditioners, are responsible for almost 20 percent of consumer-product electrocutions each year.

- Understand your electrical system—know which fuse or circuit breaker controls each switch, light, and outlet.
- Make sure circuits are turned off before starting work and take measures to ensure they're not turned back on while working.
- Use a circuit tester—always test before you touch.

## Find more safety tips at [esfi.org](http://esfi.org).

*Source: Electrical Safety Foundation International*

### Recommended Items to Include in a Basic Emergency Supply Kit:

<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Water, one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Flashlight and extra batteries</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>First aid kit</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Whistle to signal for help</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Dust mask, to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Can opener for food (if kit contains canned food)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Local maps</b>



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## Regional Dateline

### May 27

Foothills Rodeo Queen Contest, Lil' Miss and Mr. Pageant, Horsemanship at 1 p.m., Jerauld County 4-H Rodeo Grounds, Speeches and interviews to follow at Ag Building, Wessington Springs

### May 28-29

14th Annual SDRA Foothills Rodeo, 6 p.m. on Saturday 2 p.m. on Sunday, Jerauld County 4H Rodeo Grounds Wessington Springs, SD

### June 1-2

Governor's Ag Summit Brookings, SD, 605-773-5711

### June 2-5

RibFest, W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds, Sioux Falls, SD 605-367-7288

### June 3-4

Howard Headers Car Show and Cruise, Howard, SD 605-203-1086

### June 4

Game Fish & Parks Outdoor Recreation Day, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Jerauld County Trap Club, Wessington Springs, SD Contact Lynn Geuke at 605-942-7698

### June 4-5

Spring Volksmarch at Crazy Horse Memorial Crazy Horse, SD, 605-673-4681

### June 9-12

South Dakota Shakespeare Festival, Prentis Park Vermillion, SD, 605-622-0423



PHOTO COURTESY OF GHAD 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

### June 3-5

Fort Sisseton Historical Festival, Lake City, SD 605-448-5474

### June 24

"Hemmings Motor News Great Race" Lunch Stop Chamberlain-Oacoma, SD [www.greatrace.com](http://www.greatrace.com)

### June 11-12

Siouxland Renaissance Festival, Sioux Falls, SD 866-489-9241

### June 17-18

Prairie Hills Art Show, Friday 7 to 9 p.m., Saturday Noon to 4 p.m., 1905 Opera House Wessington Springs, SD Contact Wendy Bergeleen at 605-539-1963

### June 17-19

Crazy Horse Stampede Rodeo and Gift from Mother Earth Crazy Horse, SD

### June 24-25

South Dakota Senior Games Mitchell, SD, Contact Barb Pierkowski at 605-995-8048

### June 29

Jerauld/Buffalo County 4-H Horse Show, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., 4-H Arena/Rodeo Grounds, Wessington Springs Contact Julie Barber at 605-539-9471

### July 2

8th Annual Blue & Gold Golf Tournament, 10 a.m. tee off two-person scramble Springs Country Club Wessington Springs, SD 605-539-1944

### July 2

W.S. Fireman's Street Dance 9 p.m., Wessington Springs Contract Fire Chief Jim Vavra at 605-539-9018

### July 2-4

Dakota Running Irons (Cowboy Mounted Shooters) Saturday 5 p.m., Sunday 1 p.m., Monday 3 p.m. 4-H Rodeo Grounds Wessington Springs, SD Contact Craig Shryock at 605-730-1979

### July 4

Wessington Springs 4th of July Events, 5K Run at 8 a.m. 1.5 mile walk at 9 a.m. Barrel Racing at 10 a.m.

Parade at 2 p.m., Ball Games in evening, Fireworks at dusk For full schedule call Chamber at 605-539-1929 or [www.wessingtonsprings.com](http://www.wessingtonsprings.com)

### July 7, 14, 21, 28

Music in the Garden, 6 to 8 p.m. Wessington Springs, SD 605-539-1169

### July 9

Dare to Dream Conference Convention Center Watertown, SD, 605-361-3171

### July 30

Jerauld/Sanborn County Relay for Life, 5 to 10 p.m., Spartan Field, Wessington Springs, SD Contact John Paulson at 605-539-9632 or 605-539-1506

### August 20

Forestburg Melon Festival and Classic Car Show, Old Ball Park, Forestburg, SD, Contact Adam Alt at 605-770-8512