

Central Electric

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

Cooperative Connections

DECEMBER 2016 VOL. 17 NO. 8

Spreading Good Cheer: Cooperatives Shine During Holidays **P8-9**



Giving Thanks and Looking to 2017



Ken Schlimgen
General Manager

I am writing this article on November 1, one week away from the election. The weather has been unseasonably warm, and the harvest appears to be going better than expected for most area farmers. Your cooperative is also getting things done before the ground freezes and everything turns white.

Concern for our community is one of the seven principles

that guide the cooperative business model, and during the holiday season, it seems especially important. If we take a little time to reflect on the past year, I would guess that each of us would find that we have been blessed in many ways.

In last month's newsletter, you saw how Central Electric is helping our communities through the Rural Economic Development Fund. What you should also know is that your cooperative does much more than just loan money for community projects. Each year, Central Electric makes donations to many local organizations. Our employees give of their time and resources to organizations like the United Way, and to their churches, schools, and youth programs.

This year, you are also helping Central Electric give back to our communities. Through the Operation Round-Up program, many of you are rounding up your monthly bill to the next dollar amount. That extra change will soon be helping several organizations in our local communities.

The Operation Round-Up Board of Trustees is meeting this month, to award funds for the very first time. We have

received 15 applications for funding from organizations from across our service area. We are excited to watch this money make a difference in our communities.

Once the work plan and budget are approved, we can take the next step to determine how your electric rates will change for 2017.

In August, your Board of Directors and management team completed a strategic planning session. The goal of the planning session is to be proactive and position Central Electric for the future, so we can be prepared for challenges and opportunities that may come our way. Our cooperative business model is one of unity. You are a member owner of Central Electric, East River Electric and Basin Electric. Collectively working together, our cooperative is stronger than it would be working apart from each other.

As you have read in previous issues of Central Electric's newsletter, your cooperative will be paying more for electric power in 2017. Due to several reasons, Basin Electric has had to increase wholesale electric rates in order to meet their financial requirements. The new wholesale electric rates for 2017 will increase Central Electric's expenses by an estimated \$1.7 million dollars. As a result, Central Electric has no choice but to increase electric rates in 2017.

Your Board of Directors will be reviewing your cooperative's work plan and budget for 2017 this month. Once the work plan and budget are approved, we can take the next step to determine how your electric rates will change for 2017. The new rates will then be presented to the Board of Directors for their approval at the December board meeting.

Our employees would like to wish each of you a Happy Thanksgiving and to let you know that we appreciate the opportunity to work on your behalf each day. Give thanks and count your many blessings this Holiday Season.

Your Benefit As a Cooperative Member: Capital Credits to Be Retired

The Central Electric Board of Directors has approved a capital credit general retirement of \$450,000. Members with active accounts with Central Electric will receive their refund as a credit on the December bill. By doing this, your member-owned cooperative will save the cost of printing and mailing checks. Inactive members will still receive a check.

Cooperative members realize the benefit of a cooperative when they receive a portion of the cooperative's margins. That's something customers of an investor-owned utility do not see.

Remember to keep a copy for your records. If you have questions, please contact us at 1-800-477-2892 or 1-605-996-7516.

Central Electric Cooperative Connections

(USPS 018-963)

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Mission Statement
Providing Reliable Energy and
Services at a Good Value

This institution is an equal
opportunity provider and
employer.

Co-op News

District Meeting Dates

Brule County
Tuesday, January 3
Ag Building
Pukwana

Davison County
Tuesday, January 17
Davison County Activity Center
Mitchell

Buffalo County
Thursday, January 5
Tribal Headquarters Gym
Ft Thompson

Jerauld County
Thursday, January 19
Springs Inn
Wessington Springs

Aurora County
Monday, January 9
Ag Building
Plankinton

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

Miner County
Tuesday, January 10
4-H Building
Howard

Sanborn County
Thursday, January 26
4-H Building
Forestburg

Christmas Open House

Thurs., December 15 - Wed., December 21

Stop into the Betts
Road Service Center
for cookies and
coffee. Office hours
are Monday through
Friday from 8:00
a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



Holiday Closings

Our office will be closed on the following days:
Thanksgiving - Thurs., November 24, 2016
Christmas Holiday - Mon., December 26, 2016
New Year's Holiday - Mon., January 2, 2017

Decorating Safety

Indoor Lights and Electrical Decor

- Always purchase electrical decorations and lights from reputable retailers.
- Use lights approved for safe use by a nationally recognized testing laboratory.
- Never connect more than three strands of incandescent lights together.
- Consider purchasing LED lights, which use less energy and run cooler than traditional incandescent lights.
- Before decorating, determine how many outlets are available and where they are located. Plan your displays accordingly.
- Carefully inspect each electrical decoration. Cracked or damaged sockets, loose or bare wires and loose connections may cause a serious shock or start a fire.
- Follow the manufacturer's use and care instructions that accompany electrical decorations.
- Avoid overloading electrical outlets with too many decorations or electrical devices. They can overheat and cause a fire.
- Make sure that cords are not pinched in doors, windows or under heavy furniture, which could damage the cord's insulation.
- Do not mount or support light strings in a way that might damage the cord's insulation.
- Always unplug electrical decorations before replacing bulbs or fuses.
- Turn off all indoor and outdoor electrical decorations before leaving home or going to sleep.

Outdoor Decorations

- Make sure all extension cords and electrical decorations used for outdoor decorating are marked for outdoor use.
- Match power needs (amperage) of electrical products with amperage rating of extension cords.
- Outdoor electric lights and decorations should be plugged into circuits protected by ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). If circuits are not GFCI-protected, portable outdoor GFCIs can be purchased where electrical supplies are sold and require no special knowledge or equipment to install.
- Inspect all lights, decorations and extension cords for damage before using.
- Fasten outdoor lights securely to trees, the house or other firm supports to protect them from wind damage, but take care not to attach the lights in a way that could damage the cord's insulation.
- Keep all extension cords and light strings clear of snow and standing water.
- Make sure spotlights used to illuminate decorations are well-ventilated, protected from weather and a safe distance from flammable items.
- Inspect ladders for loose or missing parts before using.
- Use wooden or fiberglass ladders when decorating outdoors. Metal ladders conduct electricity.
- Use the right ladder height, ensuring ladders extend at least three feet past the edge of the roof.
- Exercise caution when decorating near power lines. Keep yourself and your equipment at least 10 feet from power lines.

Source: *esfi.org*

Kids' Corner Safety Poster

"Never touch a power cord with wet hands."



Rebekah Sharples-Schmidt, 8 years old

Rebekah was 8 years old when she submitted this safety poster. She is the daughter of Glen and Riva Sharples-Schmidt, Wakonda, S.D. They are members of Clay-Union Electric, Vermillion, S.D.

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



**If storms down power lines,
remember to**

STAY AWAY!

Holiday Treats



Almond Snowballs

- 1/2 cup toasted slivered almonds
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1-1/2 cups powdered sugar, divided
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 2-1/2 cups all purpose flour

Process almonds in a food processor 30 seconds or until very finely ground. Beat butter at medium speed until creamy. Gradually add vanilla and 1 cup powdered sugar, beating until blended. Combine flour, salt and almonds in a medium bowl; gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until blended. Shape dough into 3/4-inch balls; place 2 inches apart on parchment paper-lined baking sheets. Bake at 325°F. for 12 to 15 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool on baking sheets for 2 minutes. Transfer to wire racks and cool for 10 minutes. Roll warm cookies in remaining powdered sugar.

Stephanie Fossum, Hudson

Chex Caramel Corn

- 1 bag popped microwave popcorn
- 3 cups Corn Chex
- 3 cups Rice Chex
- 1/2 to 3/4 cups honey roasted peanuts
- Topping:**
- 1/4 cup margarine
- 1/3 cup packed brown sugar
- 2 T. light corn syrup
- 1/2 tsp. vanilla

Pop corn; remove unpoped kernels. In large microwavable bowl, combine popcorn, cereal and peanuts. In medium bowl, microwave butter, brown sugar, syrup and vanilla on HIGH about 2 minutes, stirring after 1 minute, until mixture is bubbling. Pour over cereal/popcorn mixture; stirring gently until evenly coated. Microwave on HIGH 5 to 6 minutes, stirring and mixing after every minute. Spread on waxed paper or cookie sheet to cool. Break up. Store in airtight container.

Jane Ham, Rapid City

Can't Fail Caramels

- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 1 cup butter or margarine
- 1 cup light corn syrup
- 4 tsp. vanilla
- 1 cup heavy cream

Combine sugars, corn syrup, cream, milk and butter or margarine. Cook slowly, stirring constantly to 248°F. or when small quantity dropped in cold water forms a firm ball; remove from heat. Add vanilla. Pour into greased 8x8x2-inch pan or cookie sheet; cool. When firm, place on board and cut into squares. Wrap each square in waxed paper. Makes 1-1/4 pounds of caramels.

Judy Jensen, Langford

Peppermint Bars

- Brownie:**
- 1 (family-size) pkg. fudge brownie mix
- Chocolate Glaze:**
- 12 ounces semi-sweet baking chocolate, coarsely chopped
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) butter
- Crushed peppermint candies or candy canes
- Peppermint Filling:**
- 5 cups confectioners' sugar
- 14 T. butter, melted
- 2 T. heavy cream
- 1 tsp. peppermint extract
- 1/8 tsp. red food coloring

Prepare brownie mix as directed on package. Spread in greased, foil-lined 15x10x1-inch baking pan. Bake at 350°F. for 15 minutes or until toothpick inserted into center comes out clean. Cool in pan on wire rack. Meanwhile, beat filling ingredients in large bowl with electric mixer on medium speed until well blended and smooth. Spread evenly over brownie. Refrigerate 30 minutes. For glaze, microwave chocolate and butter in microwavable bowl on HIGH 2 minutes or until butter is melted, stirring until chocolate is melted. Spread over top of brownie. Sprinkle with crushed peppermint candies. Cut into bars. Makes 36 servings.

Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 258, Total Fat 14g, Saturated Fat 7g, Cholesterol 30mg, Sodium 104mg, Carbohydrates 31g, Dietary Fiber 1g, Protein 2g

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Pecan Delights

- 2-1/4 cups packed brown sugar
- 1 cup butter or margarine
- 1 cup light corn syrup
- 1/8 tsp. salt
- 1 (14 oz.) can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1/2-lb. whole pecans
- 1 cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 cup milk chocolate chips
- 2 T. shortening

In a large saucepan, combine the first 4 ingredients. Cook over medium heat until all sugar is dissolved. Gradually add milk and mix well. Continue cooking until a candy thermometer reads 248°F. (firm-ball stage). Remove from heat; stir in vanilla until blended. Fold in pecans. Drop by tablespoonfuls onto a greased or parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Chill until firm. Loosen from paper. Melt chocolate chips and shortening in a microwave-safe bowl or double boiler. Drizzle over each cluster. Cool.

Ginny Jensen, Volga

Hopscotch

- 1 cup chocolate chips
- 1/2 cup peanut butter
- 2 cups chow mein noodles
- 2 cups miniature marshmallows

Melt chocolate chips and peanut butter over hot water. Mix in noodles and marshmallows. Drop by teaspoonfuls onto waxed paper. Let cool.

Belle Kvale, Lemmon

Please send your favorite soup, brunch and seafood recipes to your local electric co-operative (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.

Director Nominating Petitions Available

Any member residing in District 1, Aurora County, currently held by Duane Wolbrink; District 2, Brule County, currently held by Roger Campbell; District 3, Buffalo County, currently held by David Gaulke; with an interest in serving on the Central Electric Cooperative Board of Directors should pick up a nominating petition for director at Central Electric's Betts Road Service Center, Mitchell, after these specific dates:

When filed, forms must bear the names of at least ten (10) Central Electric Cooperative, Inc. members from the director district in which the candidate is seeking election. Completed petitions must be filed at least twenty-five (25) days prior to any Member meeting at which Members are scheduled to elect directors.

District 1, Aurora County

Petition Pickup Date: Friday, November 25, 2016
Petition Deadline: Thursday, December 15, 2016
Election Date: Monday, January 9, 2017
Meeting Location: Plankinton, SD

District 2, Brule County

Petition Pickup Date: Monday, November 21, 2016
Petition Deadline: Friday, December 9, 2016
Election Date: Tuesday, January 3, 2017
Meeting Location: Pukwana, SD

District 3, Buffalo County

Petition Pickup Date: Monday, November 21, 2016
Petition Deadline: Friday, December 9, 2016
Election Date: Thursday, January 5, 2017
Meeting Location: Fort Thompson, SD

Qualifications of a Director

Any Central Electric Cooperative, Inc. member in good standing is eligible to seek election to the board from the director district where he or she lives. The candidate must be willing to commit at least 25 working days per year for board meetings and affiliated cooperative organization meetings and director training as a requirement stated in the bylaws. However, certain eligibility requirements are stipulated in the cooperatives bylaws. Among them:

Director Qualifications

1. The candidate must be a natural person receiving electric service from the cooperative or meet the qualifications for corporate representation.
2. Must have the capacity to enter legally binding contracts.
3. While a Director, and during the five (5) years immediately prior to becoming a Director, not be, nor have been, convicted of a felony; or plead, nor have pled, guilty to a felony (to include a nolo contendere plea);
(Will be subject to a background check when elected)
4. Within six (6) years of becoming a Director, and unless excused by the Board for good cause, receive a Director Certificate or similar certification from

the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association;

5. Unless excused for good cause by the Board Members, attend at least ten (10) out of twelve (12) of the regularly scheduled monthly board meetings during any calendar year;

6. Comply with any other reasonable qualifications determined by the Board.

While a Director, a Director or Director Candidate must:

1. Be a member in good standing, and except for the Director at Large, permanently reside in the Director District from which elected; and
2. Have the Director's primary residence served by the Cooperative or: provided that the operating or chief executive of any Member which is not a natural person, or designee, shall, notwithstanding that such member does not receive service from the Cooperative at such Member's primary residence, be eligible to become a Director, from the Director District in which such Member is located, if such Member or its designee is in substantial permanent occupancy, direction of use of the premises served by the cooperative; and is a permanent and year round resident within or in close proximity to an area served by the

Cooperative, but provided further that no more than one (1) such person may serve on the Board of Directors at the same time; but provided further that no more than one (1) such person from any one (1) non-individual Member may serve on the Board of Directors at the same time.

While a Director, a Director or Director candidate must not be:

1. A close relative of any existing Director, other than an existing Director who will cease being a Director within one (1) year;
2. An existing, or a close relative of an existing, non-Director Cooperative officer, employee, agent, or representative;
3. Employed by, materially affiliated with, or share a material financial interest with any other Director; or
4. Engaged in, nor employed by, materially affiliated with, or have material financial interest in, any individual or entity: (a) Directly and substantially competing with the cooperative; (b) or selling goods or services in substantial quantity to the Cooperative or to a substantial number of members.

Bylaws - Director Election

SECTION 4.05 Director Nominations

A. Nominating Petitions. An individual desiring to be a nominee for a Director position for which an incumbent Director's Director term is expiring must take out a nominating petition no more than forty-five (45) days prior to any Member meeting at which Members are scheduled to elect Directors. Said member shall return the completed Nominating Petition to the Cooperative at least twenty-five (25) days prior to the Member meeting at which Members are scheduled to elect Directors.

The completed nominating petition shall contain the name of the Nominating Petition Nominee; the Director position for which the Nominating Petition Nominee will run; and the printed names, addresses, and telephone numbers, and original signatures, of at least ten (10) Members residing in the Director District in which said nominee is seeking a directorship, or if for the Director-at-Large, ten (10) members residing in the Cooperative Service Area. After verifying that a Nominating Petition complies with this Bylaw, the Cooperative shall post the Nominating Petition nominees at the Cooperative's principal office.

B. Notice of Director Nomination. At least ten (10) days nor more than twenty-five (25) days prior to any Member meeting at which Members are scheduled to elect Directors, the Cooperative shall notify Members of the Director positions for which the incumbent Director's Director term is expiring; and Names and corresponding Director positions of all Nominating Petition Nominees;

SECTION 4.06. Director Elections.

Members located or residing in each Director District shall elect Directors, except for the Director-at-Large, which shall be elected by the Members of the Cooperative Service Area, as follows:

A. For District Director positions at the District Meeting for which the incumbent Director's Director term is expiring.

B. For the Director-at-Large position at the Annual Meeting by all Members located or residing in the Cooperative Service Area.

C. From the Nominating Petition Nominees.

D. At the Director District meeting by Members residing in said Director District by Member's written ballot, except for the Director-at-Large who shall be elected at the annual meeting by Members located or residing in the in the Cooperative Service Area by Member written ballot.

F. By a plurality of the votes cast by a quorum of Members in person who are entitled to vote for the Director position. In case of a tie Director vote, the Director elected shall be determined by a drawing by lot. A quorum at any Member meetings, to include a Director District meeting and/or an Annual Meeting, shall consist of the minimum number of Members required by South Dakota law at the time of such meeting. If a quorum is not present within one (1) hour after the appointed time, no meeting shall be held. If an election of Directors is not held, a special Member meeting at which Members are scheduled to elect Directors shall be held within a reasonable time.

G. Tellers shall be appointed to collect and count the ballots.

H. If only one (1) nominating petition has been turned in for a Director position for which the incumbent Director's Director term is expiring, no election shall be held in that District and the Nominating Petition nominee shall be deemed elected as the Director from said District.

I. Names of Nominating Petition nominees shall be printed on ballots in an order determined by drawing prior to the printing of ballots.

Section 4.07. Director Terms.

A Director's term is three (3) years ("Director term"). A Director elected at the Annual District Meeting or at the Annual Member meeting will be seated following the adjournment of the recessed portion of the first regular monthly board meeting following the Annual Member Meeting and will terminate with the adjournment of the recessed portion of the first regular monthly board meeting following the Annual Member Meeting. The Cooperative shall stagger Director terms by dividing the total of authorized Directors elected from the Director Districts into three (3) groups of three (3) Directors each. Members thereafter will annually elect one (1) Director group. Decreasing the number of Directors or length of Director terms may not shorten an incumbent Director's Director term. Despite the expiration of a Director term, the Director continues to serve until a new Director is elected, or until the number of Directors is decreased. Unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws, the Director term of a Director filling a vacant Director's position is the remaining unexpired Director Term of the vacant Director's position.



Shining Brightly

Electric Cooperatives Spread Cheer

SANTA MAY HAVE RUDOLPH WITH HIS NOSE SO BRIGHT, but several communities know that when it comes to spreading good cheer and lighting the way, their local electric cooperative shines through.

At Renville-Sibley Co-op Power Association in Danube, Minn., the coffee is on and cookies are served for members stopping in at the co-op's annual open house in early December. Lyon-Lincoln Electric in Tyler, Minn., also hosts a similar event in early December. While they're at it, eligible members are able to pick up capital credit checks.

Similar events are held at other cooperatives, whether it be one-day affairs at individual offices or as a general invitation to stop in for a cup of coffee or cider and possibly a treat.

Leading up to the holidays, cooperatives in Gregory, Milbank, Elk Point and elsewhere have served as drop off locations for contributions to local food pantries. These endeavors have gathered hundreds of pounds of much-needed food and cereal to help those in need.

Each year, Northern Electric Cooperative in Bath, S.D., greets passersby on U.S. Highway 12 with a light display that stretches across the co-op's south lawn. In recent years, co-op employees have also spearheaded a toy drive for the local Toys for Tots program.

And, when it comes to lighting things up, co-ops like Grand Electric Cooperative in Bison, S.D., and Clay-Union Electric Corporation in Vermillion,

Brenda Kleinjan





Tips from Elf on the Shelf

At Central Electric Cooperative in Mitchell, S.D., Trixie, the Elf on the Shelf, visited the cooperative in December 2015. Her antics were shared on the co-op's Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest feeds. Using a "Naughty or Nice" indicator, Trixie shared tips on energy efficiency and safety using the hashtags "#Elfontheshelf" and "TrixiesAdventures".

You can follow Trixie's Adventures on Pinterest and Instagram too! Search CentralElecSD on Instagram or visit their Pinterest site at <https://www.pinterest.com/centraleccoop/>.

"Nice": Always unplug indoor and outdoor decorations before leaving home or going to bed. *Source: esf.org*

"Naughty": Peeking in the oven before the Christmas cookies are done! When the door is opened, the inside temperature can lose as much as 25 degrees, forcing your oven to work harder. *Source: U.S. Department of Energy*

"Nice": Water your natural Christmas tree daily. A dry tree can be a fire hazard. *Source: Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI)*

"Nice": Put on a sweater, shawl or grab a blanket before turning up the thermostat. During an eight hour period, you can save up to 1 percent per degree turned back. *Source: U.S. Department of Energy*

"Naughty": Leaving your dryer running while unattended. Each year, roughly 2,900 home clothes dryer fires are reported. The leading cause is failure to clean the lint vent. *Source: United States Fire Administration*

"Nice": Open the blinds on south-facing windows on a sunny day to let the sunlight heat your home and close at

night. *Source: U.S. Department of Energy*

"Naughty": Leaving on electronics when leaving the room. TVs on average use more energy than the individual annual usage of clothes washers, dryers, freezers and cooking activities. *Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration*

"Naughty": Leaving the refrigerator door open for extended periods of time. Your mother knew what she was talking about when she said this! Be intentional each time you open the door.

S.D., lend a hand in hanging community holiday decorations.

In Bison, the connection between the co-op and the holiday decorations has lasted more than a half-century, said Operations Manager Mike Lemburg.



Lemburg knows the co-op has been hanging the decorations for the Bison Commercial Club for as long as he has worked at the cooperative. Conferring with his predecessor, Juell Chapman, Lemburg confirmed that the tradition started prior to Chapman's 1967 start at the cooperative.

Some time in late November, one will find employees of Grand Electric Cooperative and West River Telephone Cooperative working to hang the 25 to 30 decorations on poles throughout the community.

"The Commercial Club bought them and we hang them up," said Lemburg. Among the decorations that will adorn the community in northwestern South Dakota are candy canes, candles and tree shapes.

The employees also put up the cooperative's own decorations on the town's north end.

New to the community in 2015 was the addition of a parade of lights and a community meal. Proceeds from the event went to the community's ambulance fund.

And, throughout the season – and the entire year – the region's electric cooperatives provide safe, reliable electricity to light many a holiday celebration in homes across the area.

Left: Passersby on U.S. Highway 12 are greeted with a festive display on Northern Electric Cooperative's lawn near Bath, S.D. **Above:** A patriotic toy soldier waves the flag at Northern Electric. **Top:** With more than a half century experience in hanging the holiday decorations along the streets of Bison, S.D., Grand Electric was among the entries in the communities inaugural light parade in 2015. **Right and Cover:** Trixie, The Elf on the Shelf, spread energy efficiency and safety tips through social media to members of Central Electric Cooperative in Mitchell, S.D., in 2015.



Schools Receive **\$1 Million** in Tax Revenue From Cooperative

Central Electric Cooperative's 2015 kwh sales taxes amounted to over \$1 million. The tax is based on total kwh's sold to the members in each school district.

Our wholesale power suppliers, East River Electric Power Cooperative and Basin Electric Power Cooperative, also pay the tax on the amount of kwh's purchased by Central Electric

Cooperative. The tax paid to school districts grows as members use more electric power and more members receive service.

The amounts listed are rounded to the nearest dollar and include the contribution from Central Electric Cooperative, East River Electric Power Cooperative and Basin Electric Power Cooperative.

Kwh Tax Listed by School District

Bridgewater/Emery School District	\$6,056	Mitchell School District	\$288,158
Chamberlain School District	\$98,943	Mt Vernon School District	\$28,391
Corsica/Stickney School District	\$15,488	Oldham-Ramona School District	\$1,295
Ethan School District	\$14,540	Parkston School District	\$4,686
Hanson School District	\$44,127	Plankinton School District	\$50,711
Howard School District	\$284,866	Platte/Geddes School District	\$14,875
Huron School District	\$3,488	Sanborn Central School District	\$33,398
Kimball School District	\$43,909	Wessington Springs School District	\$42,345
Madison School District	\$591	White Lake School District	\$17,212
McCook Central School District	\$743	Woonsocket School District	\$17,198
Miller Area School District	\$375	Total	\$1,011,394

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Electric bills increase during the winter for a variety of reasons—holiday gatherings, houseguests, and shorter days and longer nights. Small measures, like turning down your thermostat, replacing incandescent bulbs with LED's and washing clothes in cold water can help control energy costs.

Source: TogetherWeSave.com

Employee News: Welcome, Heather

Welcome to Heather Wieczorek

Heather Wieczorek began with Central Electric on October 11th as the Administrative Assistant. Her primary responsibilities include managing the front desk, directing calls and walk-in members, data entry, and billing assistance.

Wieczorek is originally from Mitchell and currently lives in the rural Stickney area with her husband, Chad, who farms with his family, and their two children, Alli and Bryce. Wieczorek previously worked at Vantage Point and also spent several years in customer service at First National Bank.

Wieczorek states she enjoys working with people and looks forward to the member contact at Central Electric. Her hobbies include reading, camping, spending time with her kids and attending their sporting activities.

Central Electric welcomes Heather to the cooperative!



Employee Years of Service

Mark Johnson
November 5 - 15 years

Tim Neises
November 19 - 37 years

DeEtte Bohr
December 1 - 19 years

Philip LaBore
December 1 - 32 years

Scott Kroger
December 8 - 27 years

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

Country Cookin'
RECIPES NEEDED

Your recipe could be featured in the 33rd volume of East River Electric's *Country Cookin'* cookbook! Help us create another great cookbook by submitting your favorite recipes as well as recipes for the cookbook's "Light Side" section.

Submit recipes via email to kstone@eastriver.coop, fax to 605-256-8057, or contact your local cooperative for more information. Submission deadline is Monday, January 30, 2017.

Power Up Safely

Back-up Generators Useful Tools if Used Properly

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION, DEVELOPED BY THE American Red Cross with technical advice from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Fire Protection Association (publisher of the National Electric Code®) and the U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, is provided to address questions about using a generator when disaster or emergency strikes.

By
American
Red Cross









How to Buy a Generator

If you choose to buy a generator, make sure you get one that is rated for the amount of power that you think you will need. Look at the labels on light-

ing, appliances and equipment you plan to connect to the generator to determine the amount of power that will be needed to operate the equipment.

For lighting, the wattage of the light bulb indicates the power needed. Appliances and equipment usually have labels indicating power requirements on them. Choose a generator that produces more power than will be drawn by the combination of lighting, appliances and equipment you plan to connect to the generator including the initial surge when it is turned on. If your generator does not produce adequate power for all your needs, plan to stagger the operating times for various equipment.

TIPS FOR THE PROPER INSTALLATION AND USE OF GENERATORS

	<p>NEVER operate a generator INSIDE your home or in other enclosed or partially-enclosed spaces, including GARAGES.</p>		<p>Make sure your generator is properly grounded and used with a Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI).</p>		<p>Install battery-operated CO ALARMS or plug-in CO alarms with a battery backup inside the home.</p>
	<p>A generator is a TEMPORARY power source and should NEVER be used as a permanent solution.</p>		<p>Use only extension cords that have a THREE-PRONGED plug and are rated for the intended load.</p>		<p>Do NOT OVERLOAD the generator.</p>
	<p>NEVER connect generators directly to household wiring without first installing a TRANSFER SWITCH. This prevents backfeeding which could electrocute utility workers making repairs.</p>		<p>Your home generator should be installed by a QUALIFIED ELECTRICIAN and bear the mark of a nationally recognized testing laboratory, such as UL, Intertek or CSA.</p>		<p>The Consumer Product Safety Commission recommends generators be positioned at least 20 FEET from doors, windows and vents to prevent CO from entering the home.</p>

If you can not determine the amount of power that will be needed, ask an electrician to determine that for you. (If your equipment draws more power than the generator can produce, then you may blow a fuse on the generator or damage the connected equipment.)

How to Use a Generator at Home

The primary hazards to avoid when using a generator are carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning from the toxic engine exhaust, electric shock or electrocution, and fire. Follow the directions supplied with the generator. Every year, people die in incidents related to portable generator use.

Never Use a Portable Generator Indoors

This includes inside a garage, carport, basement, crawl space or other enclosed or partially-enclosed area, even with ventilation. Opening doors and windows or using fans will not prevent CO buildup in the home. The CO from generators can rapidly lead to full incapacitation and death, but CO can't be seen or smelled. Even if you cannot smell exhaust fumes, you may still be exposed to CO. If you start to feel sick, dizzy or weak while using a generator get to fresh air **RIGHT AWAY – DO NOT DELAY.**

Because you may have windows open to get fresh air while the power is out, be sure to place the generator away from windows, doors and vents that could allow CO to come indoors. To avoid electrocution, keep the generator dry and do not use in rain or wet conditions. To protect the generator from moisture, operate it on a dry surface under an open canopy-like structure, such as under a tarp held up on poles. Do not touch the generator with wet hands.

It is a good idea to install battery-operated CO alarms or plug-in CO alarms with battery back-up in your home, according to the manufacturer's installation instructions. If CO gas from the generator enters your home and poses a health risk, the alarm will sound to warn you. Test the battery frequently and replace when needed.

Be sure to turn the generator off and let it cool down before refueling. Gasoline spilled on hot engine parts could ignite.

Store fuel for the generator in an approved safety can. Use the type of fuel recommended in the instructions or on the label on the generator. Local laws may restrict the amount of fuel you may store or the storage location. Ask your local fire department for additional information about local regulations. Store the fuel outside of living areas in a locked shed or other protected area. Do not store it near a fuel-burning appliance, such as a natural gas water heater in a garage. If the fuel is spilled or the container is not sealed properly, invisible vapors from the fuel can travel along the ground and can be ignited by the appliance's pilot light or by arcs from electric switches in the appliance.

Plug appliances directly into the generator. Or, use a heavy duty, outdoor-rated extension cord that is rated (in watts or amps) at least equal to the sum of the connected appliance loads. Check that the entire cord is free of cuts or tears and

Keep It Ready

There are several things you should do to make sure your portable generator is ready to start and provide power at a moments notice.

Storage

Short-Term Storage (2 to 3 weeks)

- After each use, clean debris off unit.
- Store in a spot in your garage or out-building where you can get to it easily when you need to use it.

Long-Term Storage (2 to 3 months)

- For longer-term storage, fill tank with fuel and add a gasoline stabilizer in the tank.
- Perform scheduled maintenance per your owner's manual.
- If at all possible store it inside where it will be dry, protected and easy to get to.

Refer to your owner's manual for specific instructions.

*Source: Briggs and Stratton
DYK? Briggs and Stratton founder S.F. Briggs grew up at Watertown, S.D., and attended South Dakota State College, studying engineering.*

that the plug has all three prongs, especially a grounding pin.

Never try to power the house wiring by plugging the generator into a wall outlet, a practice known as "backfeeding." This is an extremely dangerous practice that presents an electrocution risk to utility workers and neighbors served by the same utility transformer. It also bypasses some of the built-in household protection devices.

Future Generator Safety Considerations

The only recommended method to connect a generator to house wiring is by having a qualified electrician install a power transfer switch. This switch must be installed in accordance with the National Electrical Code® (NEC), which is published by the National Fire Protection Association, as well as all applicable state and local electrical codes. Call a qualified electrician or check with your utility company to see if they can install the appropriate equipment.

For power outages, permanently installed stationary generators are better suited for providing backup power to the home. Even a properly connected portable generator can become overloaded. This may result in overheating or stressing the generator components, possibly leading to a generator failure. Be sure to read instructions that come with the generator to make sure you operate it within its limitations for power output.

Contact your local electric cooperative for more information about using a generator.

How Your Digital Devices Impact Energy Use



Patrick Soukup
Manager of Member Services & Marketing

Ah, the Digital Age. We have gadgets galore, the ability to manage our homes in new and innovative ways, brilliant images and captivating sounds of modern entertainment options and of course, the internet. Clearly, digital devices reign supreme. Yet these cool new capabilities come with a couple of pitfalls; vampire loads and the issue of “technology reincarnation.”

Over the course of the Digital Age, electricity use has continued to increase.

Families have multiple televisions. Computer prices have plummeted, meaning many homes now have multiple computers. Everyone in the family needs a cell phone. Gaming consoles and set top cable/satellite boxes satisfy our desire for entertainment.

Major appliances aside, most digital devices do not use 120-volt power, which is the standard voltage of a home outlet. They actually use a lot less. So, trying to plug your brand new smartphone directly into an outlet is going to lead to a fried device and lots of tears from someone. This is why low-voltage devices come with a power adapter. These “wall warts” as some term them, take the 120-volt electricity supplied by Central Electric and convert it to say, five volts. Unfortunately,

most folks leave their adapters plugged in to make recharging easier. The problem with this approach is that the seemingly harmless wall wart uses power even when it isn't charging a device.

This invisible energy consumption is often called “vampire load.” Studies show that 5 to 10 percent of the average home's energy use is from vampire loads. The only way to stop this is to unplug the power adapter when it is not in use or employ smart power strips. These look like

the typical power strip but with a twist—only one socket gets power all the time. When the device or appliance connected to it turns on and starts using power, the remaining sockets receive power too. This is perfect for entertainment systems, computer set ups and a variety of other situations.

Technological advances have steadily increased energy efficiency and reduced purchase prices. On its face, this seems like a good thing. Unfortunately, when replacing a product at the end of its life, the tendency is to go bigger, or continue to use the old tech. This is the second issue I noted—technology reincarnation.

For example, flat screen television prices have plummeted as technology has evolved—and so has the amount of electricity they use. Consumers wander into the big box store and are dazzled by walls of giant, brilliant televisions. What they used to pay for the 32” model now might net them a 50” giant. And who doesn't want to see their favorite show or sports event in near life size? But if you spring for the bigger TV, you won't benefit from the increased energy efficiency of the newer technology. The bigger model uses as much juice as the older, smaller TV, which likely ends up in another room (reincarnated in another setting) still using power.

Or refrigerators. These are the showpieces of the evolution of smart appliances. Many new models include touchscreens and cameras; they communicate over the internet and probably even keep food cold and make ice. Yet what often happens is the old refrigerator ends up in

the basement or garage, reincarnated as a dedicated beverage unit or overflow.

I'll offer a couple words of advice to help you avoid—or at least reduce—the effects of vampire loads and technology reincarnation. Invest in smart power strips or make a point to use outlets where you can conveniently unplug power adapters when not in use. Don't oversize your replacement appliances and entertainment gear unless family needs dictate the larger capacities. And recycle the replaced appliances and equipment. You will enjoy the Digital Age for a lot less.

Our many
Digital Devices
impact energy use.



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Regional Dateline

November 18-19

Holiday Arts Christmas Craft Show, Friday 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Masonic Temple, Mitchell, SD
605-248-2526 or
nanvan@santel.net

November 18-January 8

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

November 22-December 26

Christmas at the Capitol
Pierre, SD, 605-773-3178

November 25-26 and December 10, 17-18, 22-23

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

November 26

Holiday Activities and Parade
of Lights, Winner, SD
605-842-1533

November 26

Holiday Celebration and Winter
Market, Rapid City, SD
605-716-7979

December 2-3

Living Christmas Tree
Aberdeen, SD, 605-229-6349

December 2-3, 8-10, 15-17

Strawbale Winery Twilight
Flights 2016, Renner, SD
605-543-5071

December 3

Christmas Parade and Holiday
Gift & Craft Fair, Custer, SD
605-673-2244



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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

December 3

Holy Rocka Rollaz Christmas
Concerts, Terry Redlin Art
Center, Watertown, SD
605-882-3877

December 3

Potter Family Christmas Show
Lead, SD, 605-584-2067

December 3

Santa Visits, 10:30 a.m.
Senior Community Center
107 Barrett Ave. S
Wessington Springs, SD

December 3

Springs Area Community
Club Chili & Pie Feed
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Senior Community Center
107 Barrett Ave. S
Wessington Springs, SD

December 3

Annual PEO Sweet & Treats
Sale, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Our Savior's Lutheran Church
210 Dunham Ave. N
Wessington Springs, SD

December 8

Christmas at the Courthouse
1 to 4 p.m., Jerauld County
Courthouse, 205 Wallace Ave
S., Wessington Springs, SD

December 10

Breakfast with Santa
Watertown, SD, 605-882-6269

December 10

Frontier Christmas
Lake City, SD, 605-448-5474

December 10

Annual Black Hills Cowboy
Christmas, Lead, SD
605-584-2067

December 15

Afternoon Tea at the Cottage
featuring Christmas on the
Prairie, 3 to 4:15 p.m.
Shakespeare Garden
Wessington Springs, SD
Reservations only
605-539-1169

December 15-March 31

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

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 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 27-February 5

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