

Cooperative Connections



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Legislative Proposal Provides Framework For Compromise

Co-ops Support Summer Study Recommendation



Ken Schlimgen

General Manager

Electric co-ops have come to the table throughout the past year to find a workable compromise to protect co-op members, electric service territory boundaries and improve state law.

Central Electric has been working with legislators and electric cooperatives across the state to protect electric service territory boundaries in South Dakota and bring long-needed improvements to state law. We believe the framework of a compromise that was recently adopted by a legislative committee in November is a step in the right direction.

Throughout the summer, the state's electric cooperatives have been actively engaged in the discussions surrounding the South Dakota Legislature's Electric Services in an Annexed Area Interim Committee. This legislative "summer study" committee of nine lawmakers was formed during the 2019 legislative session. The main task of the committee has been to examine an exception in state law that gives municipally-owned electric systems the option to take service territory from incumbent utilities when a city annexes new property.

First, here's a little background knowledge on the issue. There are three distinct electric utility business models in South Dakota:

- Investor-owned utilities serve most cities and densely populated urban areas of the state. These utilities are owned by shareholders.
- Electric cooperatives serve mostly rural areas of the state. Co-ops are owned by the members they serve and are governed by democratically elected co-op board members.
- South Dakota has 310 municipalities, but only 35 have municipal electric systems. These systems are owned and operated by city government.

State law establishes territory boundaries for all electric utilities to protect consumers, facilitate efficient long-term planning of the electric grid and to avoid costly duplication of service and infrastructure. However, there are exceptions to this state law. The focus of the legislative summer study has been on the exception that gives the 35 municipal electric systems the option to take over service territory of an investor-owned utility or an electric cooperative in newly annexed areas.

South Dakota electric cooperatives have been telling lawmakers since 2018 that it is fundamentally unfair for municipal electric systems to have this option. The proposal adopted by the legislative committee in November provides a path forward to solve this problem.

The framework of the compromise that was adopted on an 8-1 vote would require regular meetings and good faith negotiations between all utilities involved in electric service territory boundaries in newly annexed areas. The compromise framework further states that if the utilities cannot negotiate an agreement as to who will serve the newly annexed areas, the Public Utilities Commission would settle the dispute.

Electric co-ops are private corporations owned and governed by the members we serve. Most electric co-op members are the farmers, ranchers, families, and small business owners that are the heartbeat of the South Dakota economy. Electric co-ops have come to the table throughout the past year to find a workable compromise to protect co-op members, electric service territory boundaries and improve state law.

I encourage you, as a member of an electric cooperative, to stay informed on this issue as we approach the 2020 South Dakota Legislative Session. Please, know that your local electric cooperative continues to work to protect its members. We would be happy to have more detailed discussions with you about this issue as it develops.

Until Next Month, Be Safe



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

(USPS 018-963)

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CENTRAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is the monthly publication for the members of Central Electric Cooperative, PO Box 850, Mitchell, SD 57301. Families subscribe to Cooperative Connections as part of their electric cooperative membership. Central Electric Cooperative Connections' purpose is to provide reliable, helpful information to electric cooperative members on matters pertaining to their cooperative and living better with electricity. Also available at www.centralec.coop.

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Office Information

M-F 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
800-477-2892 or
605-996-7516
www.centralec.coop



Mission Statement

Provide Reliable Energy & Services with a Commitment to Safety and Member Satisfaction

Holiday Open House

Visit our Mitchell office along Betts Road for cookies and coffee during our Christmas Open House.

December 16 - 20
8:00 A.M. - 4:30 P.M.



Holiday Closings

Our office will be closed on the following days in observance of the holiday season:

- Thanksgiving, November 28**
- Christmas, December 25**
- New Year's Day, January 1**



Employee Years of Service

DeEtte Bohr

December 1 - 22 years

Thank you for your service to the cooperative!

Electrical Safety Tips for the Holidays

The holiday season is here and Christmas is just weeks away. While it's certainly the best time of the year to spend time with family and friends before the New Year, it's also important that you think about keeping your friends and family safe around all the electricity you'll likely be using. Here are a few essential electrical safety tips for the holidays.

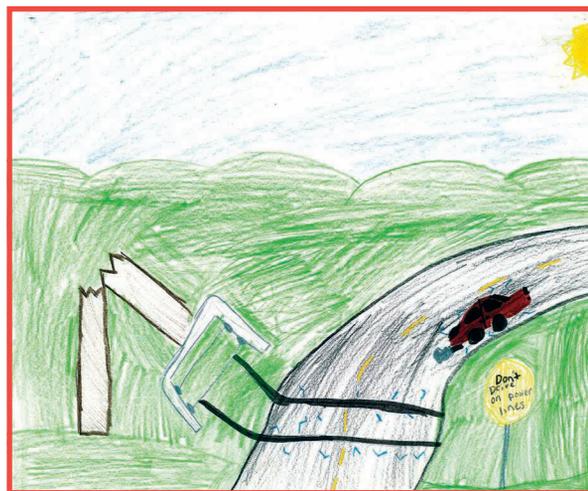
- Before you use any electrical decorations, you should inspect them for damage. Look for damaged sockets, cracked sockets, loose connections and bare or loose wires. All of these things could cause a fire or a serious shock.
- Once you've confirmed that all your electrical decorations aren't damaged, you should count how many outlets you have in your home and where they're located. You should plan out your displays based on the number of outlets and their location. When putting up the displays, be sure to follow the care and manufacturer's use instructions that came with the electrical decorations. Be sure to use the extension cords with the right amperage rating to match the amperage needs of your electrical products.
- When you're installing outdoor decorations, you should be very careful when you're decorating near any power lines. You and your equipment should be at least 10 feet from any power lines.
- Don't overload your home's electrical outlets. Every year, many homeowners end up overloading the electrical outlets in their home because they go overboard when it comes to decorating. Faulty wires and overloaded electrical outlets are the most common causes of fire during the holidays. You should only plug a single high-wattage appliance into every outlet. This will help you prevent overloading the outlets in your home.
- You should never connect more than three strands of incandescent lights. Connecting more than three strings can cause a fire or trip circuit breakers. You should think about buying LED lights, which are cooler than incandescent lights and use less energy. Be sure that the spotlights that you use to illuminate decorations are far from flammable items, protected from weather, and are well-ventilated. Make sure that you always unplug your decorations before you replace the fuses or bulbs. Turn off the outdoor and indoor electrical decorations before you go to sleep or leave home.
- Be sure that any electrical decorations and extension cords were made to be useable outdoors. Keep all light strings and extension cords away from water and snow. When decorating outdoors, you should use fiberglass or wooden ladders rather than metal ladders. You should plug outdoor decorations and electric lights into circuits protected by circuit interrupters. You should buy portable outdoor GFCIs if the circuits aren't GFCI protected.

As you can see, there are many things that you can do to keep your family and friends safe during the holidays.

Source: www.protectamerica.com



KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



"Don't drive on power lines."

Anna Engelbrecht, 9 years old

Anna is the grand-daughter of Alan and JoAnn Engelbrecht, Brandon, 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.

Holiday Favorites

Fanny Farmer Fudge

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| 4-1/2 cups sugar | 1 cup butter (use butter, not margarine) |
| 1 (12 oz.) can evaporated milk | 2 tsp. vanilla |
| 2 cups semi-sweet chocolate chips | 1-1/2 cups chopped walnuts (optional) |
| 2 cups milk chocolate chips | |

Mix sugar and milk together; bring to rolling boil. Boil for 6 minutes. Remove from heat; add chocolate chips and butter. Beat with electric mixer until very creamy. Add vanilla and stir well. Add nuts if desired. Pour into a 9x13-inch pan (glass works best) sprayed with cooking spray. Refrigerate at least 4 hours before cutting. Store in airtight container. Will keep for months in refrigerator and still be smooth and creamy.

Nancy Stenson, Fort Pierre, SD

Andes Mint Cookies

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 2-1/2 cups flour | 2 large eggs |
| 3/4 cup cocoa powder | 1 tsp. vanilla extract |
| 1 tsp. baking soda | 1 tsp. peppermint extract |
| 2 sticks and 2 T. butter, softened | 1 cup chocolate chips |
| 1 cup granulated sugar | 1 cup mint chips or chopped Andes mints |
| 1 cup brown sugar | |

Sift flour, cocoa powder and baking soda in a medium bowl and set aside. Using a hand mixer, cream together butter and both sugars until fluffy. Add eggs, vanilla and peppermint extracts, mixing well. Add dry mixture to butter mixture and mix well. Stir in chocolate and mint chips. Roll dough into 1-1/2-inch balls. Place on prepared baking sheet and with 2 fingers, press down to about 1-inch thick. Bake at 350°F. for 15 to 18 minutes or until no longer glossy.

Cortney Reedy, Tea, SD

Vanilla Pecan Pie

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 refrigerated pie crust | Vanilla Extract, divided |
| 1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, softened | 1/2 cup light corn syrup |
| 3 eggs, divided | 3 T. butter, melted |
| 3/4 cup sugar, divided | 1/4 tsp. salt |
| 4 tsp. McCormick® Pure | 2 cups pecan pieces, toasted |

Prepare crust as directed on package for one-crust pie using 9-inch deep dish pie plate. Beat cream cheese, 1 egg, 1/4 cup sugar and 2 tsp. vanilla in large bowl with electric mixer on medium speed until well blended and smooth. Spread evenly on bottom of crust. Bake at 350°F. for 15 minutes. Beat remaining 2 eggs and sugar in large bowl with wire whisk until smooth. Add corn syrup, butter, remaining vanilla and salt; stir until well blended. Sprinkle pecans evenly over cream cheese layer. Slowly pour corn syrup mixture over nuts. Bake 35 to 40 minutes or until just set in center. Makes 10 servings.

Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 506, Total Fat 34g, Fiber 2g, Protein 7g, Cholesterol 96mg, Sodium 307mg, Carbohydrates 43g

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Filled Graham Crackers

- | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------|
| 1 lb. box honey graham crackers | 1/3 cup milk |
| 1 cup brown sugar | 1 egg, beaten |
| 1/2 cup butter or margarine | 1 tsp. vanilla |

Line up 22 (unbroken) graham crackers on a sheet of waxed paper. Place remaining crackers in a zip-lock bag and crush fine with a rolling pin. Combine brown sugar, butter, milk and egg. Bring to a boil then cook an additional 7 minutes. Remove from heat; add crushed crackers and vanilla. When mixture has cooled a little, spread filling on 11 of the crackers and top with the other 11. Leave uncovered to keep them crisp or cover for softer crackers.

Mardelle Brown, Redfield, SD

Please send your favorite soup, brunch or seafood recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in June 2020. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

District Meeting Dates & Nominating Petitions Available

Mark your calendar for your local district meeting. The meal begins at 6:30 P.M. with a presentation to follow at 7:00 P.M. Each member in attendance will receive a \$10 energy certificate.

Any member residing in District 1, Aurora County, currently held by Duane Wolbrink; District 2, Brule County, currently held by Roger Campbell; or District 3, Buffalo County, currently held by Donita Loudner, with an interest in serving on the Board of Directors should take out and return a nominating petition for

director at Central Electric's Mitchell office along Betts Road, within the dates provided. Petitions must be returned by the close of the business day at 4:30 P.M.

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 Meeting	Meeting Date	Petitions Available	Petitions Due	Location
Aurora County	January 2, 2020	November 18, 2019	December 6, 2019	Ag Building, Plankinton, SD
Brule County	January 6, 2020	November 22, 2019	December 13, 2019	Ag Building, Pukwana, SD
Buffalo County	January 7, 2020	November 25, 2019	December 13, 2019	St. Joseph Catholic Church Hall, Fort Thompson, SD
Hanson County	January 9, 2020	election in 2021		St. Mary's Catholic Parish Hall, Alexandria, SD
Jerauld County	January 13, 2020	election in 2022		Springs Inn, Wessington Springs, SD
Sanborn County	January 14, 2020	election in 2022		4-H Building, Forestburg, SD
Miner County	January 21, 2020	election in 2022		4-H Building, Howard, SD
Davison County	January 23, 2020	election in 2021		4-H Fairgrounds, Mitchell, 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 cooperative's 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.



Riverview Christmas Tree Farm is located near Canton, S.D., near the Big Sioux River.

OH, CHRISTMAS TREE

Cut-Your-Own Tree Opportunities

Brenda Kleinjan

editor@sdrea.coop

Traditions can be an important part of the holidays and for many, nothing matches the aroma and feel of a fresh-cut Christmas tree.

Many have taken advantage of the cut-your-own tradition at the Black Hills National Forest. But for those not wanting to trek across the Rushmore State to the Black Hills, Christmas tree farms closer to home have been part of holidays.

In eastern South Dakota, families have been cutting their own trees at the Riverview Christmas Tree Farm at Canton, S.D., since 1989.

The tree farm is a family business that was opened in 1989 by Bill and Darlene Keizer. The business is now operated by the Todd and Shari Gannon family.

Families search the acres of trees looking for the perfect tree for their family. Five tree varieties ranging in sizes from six to 10 feet provide families several options. The tree farm provides the saw for cutting the tree and a tractor/trailer brings the family and their tree back to the farm's lodge to enjoy hot drinks and holiday treats.

The farm is open four weekends in November and December. In 2019, the farm will be open Saturdays (Nov. 23, Nov. 30, Dec. 7 and Dec. 14) from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sundays (Nov. 24, Dec. 1, Dec. 8 and Dec. 15) from Noon to 5 p.m. as well as Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 28 (2:30 p.m. to 5 p.m.) and Black Friday, Nov. 29 (10 a.m. to 5 p.m.)



Photo by SD Tourism

Visitors to the tree farm can enjoy the beautiful scenery, shopping for holiday crafts and Christmas wreaths. They can also pet the animals in the pen and see Santa!

Riverview Christmas Tree Farm Tree Varieties

- Fraser Fir
- Balsam Fir
- Canaan Fir
- White Pine
- Black Hills Spruce

Riverview Christmas Tree Farm features cut-your-own trees, ranging from six to nine feet tall, sell for \$9 to \$11 per foot, depending on the variety. Pre-cut trees, ranging from six to 10 feet tall sell for \$7 to \$8 per foot.

Learn more about Riverview Christmas Tree Farm at <http://www.riverviewtreefarm.com/>

Tips for Trees Cut at Black Hills National Forest

Cutting Guidelines

- The maximum tree height is 20 feet.
- Cut the stump within six inches of the ground.
- Cut and scatter the limbs and other unused parts of the tree so they lie within a foot of the ground.

Setting Up Your Tree

- Keep your tree as fresh as possible.
- Store your tree upright in a bucket of water in the garage or basement until you are ready to move it indoors.
- In the house, keep the tree well watered at all times.
- Keep the tree away from fireplaces, stoves or heating vents.

Kinds of trees available:

- **Ponderosa pine** is noted for its full shape and long graceful needles. It grows almost everywhere in the Black Hills.
- **Spruce** is very popular as a holiday tree. It grows at higher elevations and on wetter, north-facing slopes and drainage bottoms. Spruce has a classic tapered form and its short needles allow for easy stringing of lights and ornaments.
- **Juniper** is a shorter tree found at lower elevations in the southern and western parts of the Black Hills. Many people like its full shape and bluish-green coloring.

Cut Your Own Fresh Christmas Tree This Year From the Black Hills National Forest

Christmas tree tags will be available Nov. 12 to Dec. 24, 2019, at Forest Service offices in western South Dakota and northeast Wyoming.

The Black Hills National Forest will also continue the Fourth-Grade Free Christmas Tree Program again this holiday season.

Fourth-graders are eligible for a FREE Christmas tree permit through the Every Kid Outdoors initiative. Every Kid Outdoors is a nationwide call to action to build the next generation of conservationists. All fourth graders are eligible to receive a fourth-grade pass that allows free access to federal lands and waters across the country for a full year.

In order for students to receive a free Christmas tree permit, they must present a valid fourth grade pass or paper voucher printed from the Every Kid Outdoors website: <https://everykidoutdoors.gov>. To obtain the voucher, visit the website, click on the "Get your pass" button and follow the instructions. Print out the paper voucher and bring it with you to a district office or the supervisor's office on the Black Hills National Forest.

White spruce, ponderosa pine and western juniper are available and can be cut in many parts of the National Forest.

Each permit is accompanied by a handout with guidance about appropriate tree removal. Trees may not be cut in developed recreation sites, Forest Service administrative sites, active timber sales, the Black Hills Experimental Forest near Rochford, the Black Elk Wilderness, the Beaver Park area near Sturgis or within Spearfish Canyon.

Individual permits cost \$10, up to a maximum of five permits are allowed per individual and the maximum allowable height of cut trees is 20 feet. Permits require that you cut the entire tree, leaving no more than six inches of stump and that you cut unused branches so they lay flat on the ground.

The adhesive permit tag must be attached before a tree is removed from the cutting area; a citation can be issued for possession of a cut-but-untagged tree, even if a tag is available in person or in your vehicle.

Trees should be placed in water as soon as possible to help keep needles fresh. Once indoors, trees should be placed away from stoves, heaters or heating ducts. After Christmas, used trees should be disposed of properly as yard waste. Do not dump used trees on national forest land.

There are no refunds for uncut trees or unused permits. Please note that Forest Service offices will be closed on Thanksgiving Day. Dec. 24 is the last day permits will be sold at Forest Service offices. Private vendors may sell tags until Dec. 24.

Tags are available by mail from the Forest Supervisor's Office, 1019 North 5th Street, Custer, SD, 57730. Enclose a check or money order in the amount of \$10 for each tree permit, up to a maximum of five trees per individual as well as a self-addressed stamped envelope. The Forest Service will mail tags and cutting instructions.

RECIPES NEEDED FOR

THE COUNTRY COOKIN' cookbook

Your recipe could be featured in the 36th 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
January 27, 2020.

Members to Receive Credits on Next Bill Capital Credit Refunds

The Central Electric Board of Directors has approved a capital credit general retirement of \$500,000 for 2019.

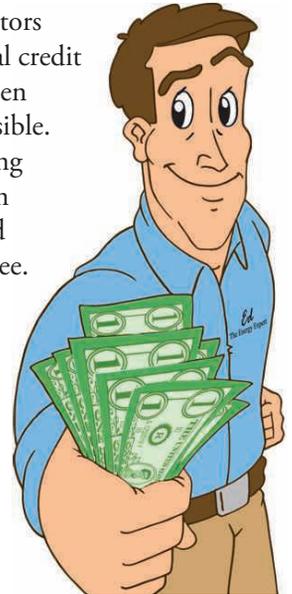
Members with active accounts with Central Electric will receive their refund as a credit on their bill received in early December. By doing this, your member-owned cooperative saves the cost of printing and mailing checks. Inactive members will receive a check in the mail.

When transferring service out of your name or moving off the service territory, ensure that Central Electric has your updated contact information for future capital credit payments.

Cooperative members are "owners" of the cooperative. As a non-profit cooperative, any margins are allocated

back to members each year. Funds are retained by the cooperative to maintain cash flow and good financial standing. Then, the Board of Directors approves capital credit retirements when financially possible. 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 our office.



Survey of Membership

Members may receive a paper survey in their mailbox this month.

Basin Electric Cooperative is conducting a survey on behalf of Central Electric Cooperative.

Please take time to offer your feedback as it will assist us in providing quality services that are important to you. Thank you in advance for your time.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Laundry Tip: Dry towels and heavier cottons separately from lighter clothing. You'll spend less time drying the lighter-weight items.

Source: energy.gov



Central Electric Personnel to Change Out Meters

Metering Upgrade

Central Electric Cooperative has begun the process of replacing all electric meters with new Verizon smart meters. This process will happen over the next three years.

The new meters will provide better reliability, efficiency, and information available to Central Electric.

The meters utilize cellular technology and will communicate energy use and data safely and securely back to Central Electric's data software.



What you need to know:

- You may see personnel in your yard changing your meter.
- Members may experience a short interruption in power when the meter is changed out.
- The new technology will allow meters to be read, disconnected, and reconnected remotely without a personnel visit.
- No action is required from our members at this time. A Central Electric representative will be in contact with you if needed.

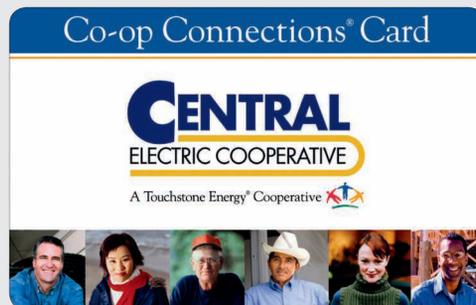
Outdoor Holiday Lighting

Safety Tip

Make sure you are using outlets with GFCI protection when decorating outdoors.



Local Discounts with your Co-op Connections® Card



Your cooperative membership earns you discounts at local participating businesses.

Simply show your Co-op Connections Discount Card and save.

- 1) **Two Dreams Boutique, Mitchell, SD;**
10% off in store order.
- 2) **Village Bowl, Mitchell, SD;**
Bowl 2 games, get the 3rd game free.
- 3) **Williams Musical and Office Equipment, Mitchell, SD;**
10% off regular price.
- 4) **Woelfel Jewelry, Mitchell, SD;**
15% off all diamond purchases and watches.
- 5) **605 Vision, Chamberlain, SD;**
15% off services and materials; cannot be combined with insurance or other offers.
- 6) **AAA South Dakota, Mitchell Branch, Mitchell, SD;**
Save \$15 on new membership by waiving entrance fee for SD residents only. Free atlas with insurance quote.
- 7) **Advantage Auto Glass LLC, Mitchell, SD;**
10% off windshield replacement or \$10 off windshield repairs.

For a full list of ways to save, visit www.connections.coop.

To request a card or become a participating business, visit www.centralec.coop or call 800-477-2892 or 605-996-7516.



Keeping Good Cheer

Holiday Safety and Crime Protection

National Neighborhood Watch

<https://nnw.org/holiday-safety>

The jolly man in red is the only visitor that's supposed to be entering homes stealthily this Christmas, shimmying down chimneys and stealing bites of cookies washed down with gulps of milk.

But, for too many, St. Nick isn't the only unexpected holiday visitor. Porch pirates are stealing holiday joy and other criminals are itching to find untended digital portals into homes.

A 2017 study titled "Package Theft Report: Porch Pirates, Purchase Habits and privacy" by Schorr.com found that nearly 1 in 3 Americans say they have experienced package theft. A separate study by www.insurancequotes.com found that around 25.9 million Americans have had a package delivered during the holiday shopping season stolen, up from 23.5 million reported porch thefts in 2015.

General Holiday Safety and Crime Prevention Tips

Courtesy of the Knoxville, Tenn., Police Department

At Home

- Make sure all doors and windows have secondary locks (window pins, deadbolts, dowels, etc.) and use them!
- Don't hide spare keys in mailboxes or planters or under doormats.
- Ensure that dark areas and entrances have outdoor lights that are turned on after dark or are activated by sensors.
- Keep trees and shrubbery trimmed so they do not conceal doors and windows. Remember, overgrown foliage can provide a hiding place for criminals.
- Place gifts where they can't be seen from the outside.



Packages left on doorsteps can attract holiday thieves.

- Consider safe deposit boxes for coin and stamp collections, seldom-worn jewelry, stock bonds, etc.
- Be sure to mail cards, checks or gift certificates from the Post Office or at a blue U.S. Postal Service collection box.
- Lock your vehicle and remove all the valuables. Yes, even in your driveway.

Strangers at Your Door

- Use caution anytime there is a stranger at your door.
- Be suspicious of unexpected sales calls or deliveries. Ask for identification.
- Be aware of scams that criminals commit to take advantage of people's generosity during the holidays.

Avoid Porch Theft:

Five tips to Protect Your Packages

- Network with Neighbors
- Have Packages Delivered to Work
- Leave Specific Drop-off Instructions
- Use a Smart Lock
- Install Security Cameras

Keeping Your Devices Secure

- **Use Security Software.** Install anti-virus software, anti-spyware software and a firewall. Set your preference to update these protections often. Installing these types of programs will help protect against intrusions and infections that can compromise your computer files and passwords. These programs install security patches for your operating system and other software programs.
- **Avoid Phishing Emails.** Don't open files, click on links or download programs sent by strangers. Opening a file from someone you don't know could expose your system to a computer virus or spyware that captures your passwords or other information you type.
- **Be Wise about Wi-Fi.** Before you send personal information over your laptop or smartphone on a public wireless network in a coffee shop, library, airport, hotel or other public place, see if your information will be protected. If you use an encrypted website, it protects only the information you send to and from that site. If you use a secure wireless network, all the information you send on that network is protected.
- **Lock Up Your Laptop.** Keep financial information on your laptop only when necessary. Don't use an automatic login feature that saves your user name and password and always log off when you're finished. That way, if your laptop is stolen, it will be harder for a thief to get at your personal information.
- **Read Privacy Policies.** Yes, they can be long and complex, but they tell you how the site maintains accuracy, access, security and control of the personal information it collects; how it uses the information and whether it provides information to third parties. If you don't see or understand a site's privacy policy, consider doing business elsewhere.



Outdoor decorations can also be targets of holiday grinch.

- Investigate charities before making donations. Ask how the funds will be used.

Leaving for the Holidays

- Ask a trusted friend, neighbor or Neighborhood Watch member to watch your home.
- Use timers for lights and radios while you're away.
- Remember to make arrangements for mail and newspapers.

After the Holidays

- Don't advertise expensive toys, electronics or other gifts received by the boxes left for garbage collections. Compress large boxes and place them in black garbage bags for pick-up.
- Add new items to your home inventory. Take photos or video of all items of value in your home and list each item's make, model, serial number and other information.
- Engrave new items to help identify them in the event they are stolen.

What to do if you've become a victim of a porch pirate

- Check with your delivery company to make sure your package was actually delivered.
- Know exactly what's in the missing box.
- If you see the thief, pay attention to

Six Ways to Grinch-Proof Your Holiday Light Displays

- **Shut down at night**
- **Set up surveillance**
- **Crime-proof your yard**
- **Consider bringing in valuable items at night**
- **Stay connected**
- **Report, report, report**

what his or her vehicle looks like and its license plate number. Second to that, get the thief's physical description – gender, approximate height and weight and what they're wearing – so you can tell an officer.

- Call 911 and ask for an officer to come to your home.
- If you have a security camera on your home, get a copy of the video to police. Ask your neighbors if their cameras captured the thief in action.

Source: National Neighborhood Watch, A Division of the National Sheriffs' Association

A Fight with Mud and Race Against the Frost: Construction and Maintenance Update



Brian Bultje

Manager of Operations

Currently as I write this, crews are battling muddy conditions, and with the nighttime below freezing temperatures, we are also seeing small amounts of frost in the open areas. Future forecasted temperatures are also below normal.

Crews are doing their best in these conditions to install lines before the ground freezes. We are still receiving member requests for new construction or upgrades, so I would ask for your patience and understanding as we try to complete as much as possible. Certain projects will need to be built in overhead, rather than underground. For projects that do need to be installed underground, there is a “frost charge” available.

Our regular maintenance schedule has also been affected. Pole testing was initially postponed to November 1, and after reassessing conditions, will now be cancelled until next year.

We have contracted with Erickson Tree Service to do some tree trimming through the end of the year. They began in early November and will work on any existing member service tickets across our service territory, beginning in Davison, Hanson and Sanborn counties. Then, if all goes well, they will trim along some main lines. Erickson Tree Service equipment will have Central Electric logos on their equipment while they are working.

The water doesn't seem to be going anywhere anytime soon, so we urge our members to continue to prepare for a wet winter and spring. Please consider some of these precautions:

- If your sump pump runs frequently, arrange for a battery back-up or generator in case of an outage. Wet conditions will delay outage restoration. Many roads will be or are already impassable, and these roads can't be immediately plowed once the snow falls.
- Plan early for any future construction projects requiring electric service. Our crews are trying their best to meet everyone's needs, but the weather has been a major deterrent. To ensure you have power when you need it, please involve us in your early planning stages.
- As always, stay away from downed lines and damaged electrical equipment. As we transition from harvest to winter weather conditions, continue to look up and out for power lines and know what to do if you contact a power line or underground equipment.

This fall, members receiving power from the Storla, Plankinton, and Wilbur substations experienced numerous power blinks. The causes were determined as wildlife along our power supplier's, East River Electric's, transmissions lines. At one-point, East River was using trac machines, an airplane, and walking the line by foot to patrol the lines. Crews scheduled repairs as soon as possible once the causes were determined.

East River plans to rebuild more than 40 miles of line in 2020-22 in this affected area, which should resolve most of these recent blink issues. We thank our members for your patience and understand the inconvenience it caused.



Crews battle muddy conditions to complete construction projects. Once heavy frost sets into the ground, there is a greater chance of damaging equipment.

Holiday Giveaway Your Chance to Win a Pelican™ Big Green Egg™ Cooler

Any GE or Speed Queen appliance purchase from November 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019 will be entered to win a 50 Qt Pelican Big Green Egg Cooler, retail \$329.95.



Dishwasher Closeout Clearance Sale + \$200 Rebate GE Dishwashers Special

Several closeout clearance dishwasher models are available on our showroom at our Mitchell office along Betts Road. Once these models are sold, they will no longer be available.

These clearance models can be paired with a \$200 GE Closeout Display Model Rebate through November 30, 2019.



Brandon Auch
Appliance Repair Technician

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October 19-January 5

Pheasant Hunting Season, Statewide, Pierre, SD, 605-223-7660

November 15-December 18

Black Hills Christmas Tree Permit Season, Custer, SD, 605-673-9200

November 22-23

Holiday Arts Christmas Craft Show, Masonic Hall, Mitchell, SD, 605-359-2049

November 22-January 5

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

November 23-24

Winterfest: A Winter Arts Festival, Aberdeen, SD, 605-226-1557

November 26-December 26

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

November 29

Annual Holiday Open House, Cultural Heritage Center, Pierre, SD, 605-773-3458

November 29-30

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

November 30

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

November 30

Christmas at the Palace, Open House featuring decorated Farmhouse and Barn, door prizes, hot chocolate, cider, mini photo sessions, classes and vendors, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., The Green Palace Wedding and Event Barn, 24655 354th Avenue, Pukwana, SD, Contact 605-730-6923

**December 14: Frontier Christmas,
Lake City, SD, 605-448-5474**

Photo courtesy: travelouthdakota.com

December 6-7, 12-14, 19-21

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

December 7

Christmas in the Village Craft Fair, Community Center, Oacoma, SD, Contact Leslie at 605-730-1076

December 7

Holidazzle Light Parade, Spearfish, SD, 605-717-9294

December 7

Rapid City Garden Club's 58th Annual Wreath & Centerpiece Sale, Canyon Lake Activity Center, Rapid City, SD, 605-343-0710

December 7-8

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

**December 7-8, 14-15,
21-24 and 27-28**

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

December 15-March 31

South Dakota snowmobile trails season, Lead, SD, 605-584-3896

December 31

Make-A-Wish New Year's Eve Benefit and Dance, Ramkota Hotel & Convention Center, Doors Open at 7 p.m., Aberdeen, SD, 605-370-4588

January 7-9

Dakota Farm Show, Vermillion, SD, 800-873-1411

January 16-17

Media One Funkski, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-339-0000

January 25

31st Annual Living History Fair 2020, A trade fair with historic arts, crafts, displays, museums and clubs representing times of A.D. 1000 to A.D.1890, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Lake Area Technical Institute, Watertown SD, 605-693-4589 or christy@cchsmuseum.org

January 31-February 9

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

March 14

28 Below Fatbike Race, Ride and Tour, Lead, SD, 605-641-4963

March 20-21, 27-28

Annual Schmeckfest, Freeman, SD, 605-925-4237

March 28

Annual Ag Day at the Washington Pavilion, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-6000

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.