

Cooperative Connections

**Reasons to
Love Your
Electric Co-op**

Page 8

**Outhouse
Racing in
Nemo**

Page 12

Looking Ahead with 2020 Vision



Ken Schlimgen

General Manager

Central Electric will pay more for electric energy in 2020, but we do not plan to change our electric rates.

It is hard to believe, but this year marks the 20th anniversary of when two cooperatives merged and formed Central Electric. On behalf of your Board of Directors and employees, we would like to express our sincere thanks for the support we continue to receive from our members and friends.

I am pleased to report that your cooperative ended 2019 in a strong financial position. Your board of directors approved a budget that **does not include a change in electric rates for 2020**. This announcement was made at our District meetings as I shared goals for the coming year. Two of those goals are to be financially responsible and to provide stable and affordable rates.

The U.S. Energy Administration recently released an electric rate comparison for the United States. The information showed the average price per Kwh paid by residential consumers in 2018 was 12.9 cents. It also showed the average price paid in South Dakota by a residential consumer to be 11.6 cents. If you are wondering how your cooperative compares, **Central Electric's residential/farm accounts paid an average of 11.2 cents per Kwh.**

Central Electric will pay more for electric energy in 2020, but we do not plan to change our electric rates. As a result, **we expect our margins to be very thin.** We will monitor our financial condition closely throughout the year and adjust our plans if needed.

One step we have taken to get through the year is **end our program for complimentary repairs to security lights.** This complimentary service has an annual expense of \$130,000 to Central Electric. We will continue to look for additional ways to be more efficient in our operations in an effort to keep rates stable and provide reliable electric service.

During the legislative session, we will join the cooperatives of SD in an effort to protect our service territory. My column

in the December newsletter explained the issue and the **likely need for legislation in 2020.** I would encourage you as a member-owner to stay informed on this topic as your support will be critical to our success.

Your board of directors and employees are scheduled to go through a strategic planning session this summer. We go through this process every two years to identify issues that can adversely affect your cooperative and set goals to improve our operations.

After the planning session, **we will complete a cost of service study.** The study will be undertaken by an outside entity and will focus on the electric rates your cooperative is utilizing. The study will evaluate if the current rate structure is fair to our rate classes and recovers all our expenses. We will also consider other rate structures that may be used in the future. For example, a "time of use" rate could offer different rates for electricity based upon the time of day each Kwh is used.

The employees have another very busy year ahead of them. We are entering year two of a more aggressive line and meter replacement plan. In addition to our normal maintenance and work, **we will replace 55 miles of distribution line, remove 75 miles of line as a result of last year's work, make improvements to two substations, replace 3,000 meters and build additional line as needed.** This represents about \$5 million of improvements.

Our power supplier, East River Electric Power Cooperative, will also **replace transmission line from Mt. Vernon to Pukwana** in the coming year. This is part of \$24 million in system improvements to be completed in our area from 2019–22.

All of this work is helping your cooperative to provide a reliable source of electric energy and excellent customer service to our membership.

Until Next Month, Be Safe.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

(USPS 018-963)

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- Duane Wolbrink - President
- Todd VanWalleghen - Vice President
- Bernetta Burghardt - Secretary
- Mark Reindl - Treasurer
- Mark Hofer - NRECA
- Roger Campbell
- Donita Loudner - SDREA
- Darwin "Butch" Morrison
- Jim Headley

General Manager: Ken Schlimgen

Editor: Courtney J. Deinert - courtneyd@centralec.coop

Assistant Editor: Patrick Soukup

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

BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

Meeting Summary

The board of directors met on December 16, 2019 at the Betts Road Service Center for the regular board meeting.

The board approved the November 18, 2019 meeting minutes and the November safety meeting minutes. The board then reviewed monthly reports by management including details on operations, member services, communications, service department and the financials.

Board Report

Manager Schlimgen updated the board on the following:

- East River Manager's meeting summary, including
 - Regional G&T rate comparisons,
 - Ethanol industry and small refinery exemptions update, and
 - Legislative update.
- A request for a service territory exemption to allow Charles Mix Electric Cooperative to extend service into Central Electric's service territory.
- Renewable Energy Credits to be sold in 2020.
- Summary of 2019 kWh purchases.
- Impact of electric heat kWh sales compared to total kWh sales.
- Requested attendance count for the East River Energize Forum.

Attorney Don Petersen led a discussion on potential bylaw revisions.

Director Wolbrink gave an update on the East River Electric Cooperative Board Meeting, including resources available

through the Avera Farm & Rural Stress Hotline.

Manager Schlimgen, Director Reindl and Director Wolbrink gave a summary of the Midwest Annual Meeting.

All directors provided a summary of the SDREA Board Leadership training.

Board Action

The board considered and/or acted upon the following:

1. Approved recommendations for potential bylaw revisions to be brought forward to the membership.
2. Appointed Donita Loudner as delegate and Duane Wolbrink as alternate for the NRECA, CFC, and Federated Annual Meetings.
3. Approved revising Policy 724 to close the office on the day after Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve.
4. Approved proceeding with the process for a service territory exemption with Charlex Mix Electric Cooperative.
5. Approved writing off bad debt in 2019 for a total of \$10,154.24.
6. Approved Inventory of Work Orders No. 225 and 225-1 for \$142,396.68 and \$53,735.28.
7. Approved engaging Eide Bailly for Central Electric's annual audit.

The next board of directors meeting will be held January 20, 2020 at the Betts Road Service Center.

Please contact the cooperative office for more information regarding the board meeting.

Financial Report	November 2019	Year-to-Date
kWh Sales	26,259,997 kWhs	315,930,506 kWhs
Electric Revenues	\$2,694,006	\$31,118,838
Total Cost of Service	\$2,494,444	\$29,826,693
Operating Margins	\$199,562	\$1,292,145

Space Heater Safety

Heating equipment is the second leading cause of home fires in the United States. More than 65,000 home fires are attributed to heating equipment each year. These fires result in hundreds of deaths, thousands of injuries and millions of dollars in property damage.

Portable electric space heaters can be a convenient source of supplemental heat for your home in cold weather. Unfortunately, they can pose significant fire and electric shock hazards if not used properly. Fire and electrical hazards can be caused by space heaters without adequate safety features, space heaters placed near combustibles, or space heaters that are improperly plugged in.



Safety should always be a top consideration when using space heaters. Here are some tips for keeping your home safe and warm when it's cold outside:

- Make sure your space heater has the label showing that it is listed by a recognized testing laboratory.
- Before using any space heater, read the manufacturer's instructions and warning labels carefully.
- Inspect heaters for cracked or broken plugs or loose connections before each use. If frayed, worn or damaged, do not use the heater.
- Never leave a space heater unattended. Turn it off when you're leaving a room or going to sleep, and don't let pets or children play too close to a space heater.
- Space heaters are only meant to provide supplemental heat and should never be used to warm bedding, cook food, dry clothing or thaw pipes.
- Install smoke alarms on every floor of your home and outside all sleeping areas and test them once a month.
- Proper placement of space heaters is critical. Heaters must be kept at least three feet away from anything that can burn, including papers, clothing and rugs.
- Locate space heaters out of high traffic areas and doorways where they may pose a tripping hazard.
- Plug space heaters directly into a wall outlet. Do not use an extension cord or power strip, which could overheat and result in a fire. Do not plug any other electrical devices into the same outlet as the heater.
- Place space heaters on level, flat surfaces. Never place heaters on cabinets, tables, furniture, or carpet, which can overheat and start a fire.
- Always unplug and safely store the heater when it is not in use.

Source: esfi.org

Getting Involved

The state legislatures of both Minnesota and South Dakota convened in early January. Need to contact your legislator while in Pierre or Saint Paul? Here's how:



Contacting Members of South Dakota's Legislature:

Go to <http://sdlegislature.gov/> From there, you can search your senator or representatives, see the committees which they are assigned and send them an email. Need to reach them by phone? You can call and leave a message with the Senate at 605-773-3821 or with the House of Representatives at 605-773-3851. You can also send a fax to 605-773-6806.

Contacting Minnesota Legislators:

For contact information on Minnesota house members, visit:

<https://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/members>

For contact information on Minnesota senators, visit:

<http://www.senate.leg.state.mn.us/members>

KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



"Don't let anything get near your extension cords!"

Sierra Staufacker, 9 years old

Sierra is the daughter of Cory and Staci Staufacker, Balaton, Minn. They are members of Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Tyler, Minn.

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.

Bountiful Brunch

Pineapple-Zucchini Bread

3 eggs	3 cups flour
2 cups sugar	1 tsp. salt
2 tsp. vanilla	1 tsp. soda
1 cup oil	1 cup crushed pineapple, drained
2 cups peeled and grated zucchini	

Beat eggs, sugar, vanilla and oil. Mix in zucchini and dry ingredients; stir well. Fold in pineapple. Bake at 350°F for 1 hour. Makes 2 loaves.

Geraldine Dahlin, Beresford, SD

Apple Pie Breakfast Bake

2 cans refrigerated French bread	1 (14 oz.) can sweetened condensed milk
1 cup butter, melted	1 tsp. apple pie spice
1 (21 oz.) can apple pie filling	1 tsp. vanilla

Bake loaves as directed on can; cool 20 minutes. Cut 1-1/2 loaves into 1/2-inch cubes to equal 7-1/2 cups. Reserve remaining 1/2 loaf for another use. Increase oven temperature to 375°F. In a 9x13-inch glass baking dish, evenly layer melted butter, apple pie filling and bread cubes. In a medium bowl, stir together milk, apple pie spice and vanilla. Pour over bread, pushing bread down to absorb liquid. Bake 25 to 30 minutes or until deep golden brown and bubbly. Cool 15 minutes. Serve warm with maple syrup. (Note: You may also use day-old French bread cut into 1/2-inch cubes.)

Jean Osterman, Wheaton, MN

Breakfast Casserole

1 (8 oz.) can crescent rolls	1-1/2 cups shredded cheese
1 (16 oz.) pkg. bulk sausage, cooked and drained	8 eggs, lightly beaten
Diced onion, green pepper and mushrooms, optional	1/2 cup milk
16 to 32 oz. hash brown potatoes, depending on number of servings desired	1 pkg. country-style gravy mix, prepared according to package directions

Press crescent rolls in a lightly greased 9x13-inch pan. Spread with sausage crumbles and veggies. Layer hash browns on top. Sprinkle with cheese. Combine eggs with milk; pour over all. Spread on gravy. Bake at 325°F for 1 hour or until cooked through in the middle.

Kim Jost, Agar, SD

Grilled Fruit with Cinnamon Oatmeal Crumble

6 T. butter, softened, divided	2 ripe peaches, halved and pitted
2 T. light brown sugar	2 ripe plums, halved and pitted
1 tsp. cinnamon, ground	
3/4 cup quick-cooking oats	

Mix butter, brown sugar and cinnamon in a medium bowl. Reserve 2 T.; set aside. Add oats to remaining butter mixture, stirring until well blended. Brush fruit with reserved butter mixture. Place cut-side down on grill over medium heat. Tent with foil or close grill lid. Grill 2 minutes or until grill marks appear. Turn fruit cut-side up; spoon oat mixture evenly on top of each piece. Return foil tent or close lid. Grill 3 minutes longer or until fruit is tender and topping is crisp. Serve topped with whipped cream or ice cream, if desired. Cooking over a campfire? Place grill grate over top of campfire. Grill fruit as directed, rearranging hot coals as needed to maintain even direct heat. Makes 4 servings

Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 290, Total Fat 18g, Fiber 3g, Cholesterol 45mg, Sodium 137mg, Carbohydrates 29g, Protein 3g

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Omelet in a Bag

2 large eggs	Green pepper, diced
Ham or bacon pieces	Mushrooms, chopped
Onion, chopped	Grated cheese
Tomato, diced	

Give each guest a quart-size Ziploc freezer bag and have them write their name on the bag with a permanent marker. Crack 2 eggs into each bag (not more than 2). Shake to combine them. Put out a variety of ingredients and let each guest choose what they want in their omelet. Shake the bag. Zip the bag after making sure to get all the air out. Bring a large kettle of water to a full rolling boil. Place the bags into the water. When the water begins to boil again, boil for exactly 14 minutes. You can usually cook 6 to 8 omelets at a time. For more, make another kettle of boiling water. Open bags and the omelet will roll out easily. Serve with fresh fruit and coffee cake.

Roxanna Streckfuss, Mansfield, SD

Please send your favorite seafood, appetizer and beverage 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.

Scholarships Available in amounts of \$1,000

Central Electric Cooperative is offering three (3) scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 each, sponsored by Basin Electric Power Cooperative and the family of the late Jay Headley.

Basin Electric Power Cooperative Scholarship

Basin Electric Power Cooperative is awarding one (1) \$1,000 scholarship to a dependent of a member-owner of Central Electric.

To be eligible, a student must be

- 1) a dependent of a member-owner whose primary residence receives electric service from Central Electric Cooperative;
- 2) Enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time undergraduate course of study at an accredited post-secondary institution; and
- 3) a U.S. citizen.

Jay Headley Memorial Scholarships

The family of the late Jay Headley of White Lake, SD is awarding two (2) \$1,000 scholarships in his memory.

To be eligible, a student must be

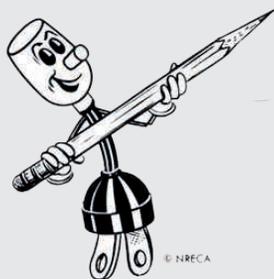
- 1) a dependent of a member-owner whose primary residence receives electric service from Central Electric Cooperative;
- 2) Pursuing a bachelor's of science degree in an agricultural related field; and
- 3) a U.S. citizen.

How to Apply

Applications are available at www.centralec.coop or by contacting our office.

Scholarships can be emailed to cec@centralec.coop or mailed to Central Electric Cooperative, PO Box 850, Mitchell, SD 57301.

Applications are due by February 1, 2020.



February 1 Deadline Approaching

Empower Youth

Current high school freshmen and sophomores are encouraged to apply for the summer leadership program "Empower Youth." Empower Youth's mission is to help high school students recognize their leadership potential and instill the cooperative mindset of bettering the world around them!



The program includes two (2) one-day leadership workshops during the summer. Program participants also attend the South Dakota Youth Excursion to Bismarck, ND on July 27-30, 2020. During Youth Excursion, students will tour the Great Plains Synfuels Plant, the Freedom Coal Mine and Antelope Valley Station electric power plant. Evenings will be spent swimming, dancing and shopping with new friends from other rural electric cooperatives across the state.

To be eligible, you must be a high school freshman or sophomore who permanently resides within Aurora, Brule, Buffalo, Jerauld, Sanborn, Miner, Davison, or Hanson counties of South Dakota or be the dependent of a Central Electric member. One student from each county or director district may be selected.

To apply, fill out an application available at www.centralec.coop. **Applications are due by February 1, 2020.**

Washington, D.C. Youth Tour

Attention high school juniors! You have a chance to take a trip-of-a-lifetime to Washington, D.C. The chosen representatives will travel to Washington, D.C., along with 1,800 other students from Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives throughout the U.S. and take part in the Rural Electric Youth Tour on June 18-26, 2020.

Sightseeing tours will include the Lincoln Memorial, National Cathedral, White House, FDR Memorial, Smithsonian Air and Space Museum, Arlington National Cemetery, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, and Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

To be eligible, you must be a high school junior who permanently resides within Aurora, Brule, Buffalo, Jerauld, Sanborn, Miner, Davison, or Hanson counties or be the dependent of a Central Electric member.

To apply, students must complete an essay, not to exceed 1,000 words, on the following topic: *"As a member-owned, not-for-profit utility, Central Electric Cooperative strives to improve the quality of life for our members. Discuss the benefits of your cooperative membership."*

The deadline is February 1, 2020. For more information, visit www.centralec.coop.



Employee Years of Service



Brandon Auch
Appliance Repair Technician
February 4 - 1 year



Cody Riggs
Journeyman Lineman
February 15 - 5 years

Central Electric Recognized as "Friend of 4H"

Central Electric Cooperative was recognized as the "Friend of 4H" at the Aurora County 4H Recognition Event on November 17, 2019.

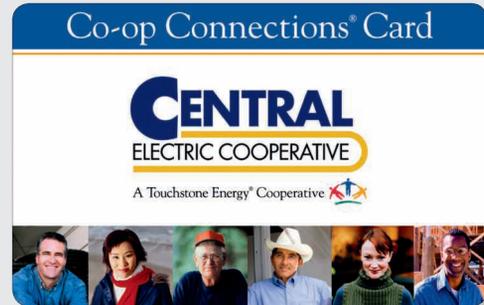
The "Friend of 4H" is awarded annually to a business who supports 4H based on nominations from the leaders group.

Central Electric has supported all the local 4H groups over the years to provide positive experiences for our youth. By supporting the youth programs, Central Electric invests in our future leaders and the future of our local communities.



President Sue Falhauber presents the award to Manager of Communications Courtney Deinert

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) **Daylight Donuts & Coffee, Mitchell, SD;**
\$1.00 for donut and regular coffee.
- 2) **Der Platz - Bill & Ila's Bed & Breakfast, Mitchell, SD;**
\$10 off stay.
- 3) **Double D Body Shop, Woonsocket, SD;**
\$5 off windshield chip repair.
- 4) **Gene's Photography, Mitchell, SD;**
1/2 price session fees.
- 5) **Genevieve's Print*Art*Design, Wessington Springs, SD;**
15% off labor for services.
- 6) **Graham's Interstate Sinclair, Mitchell, SD;**
7 cents off gallon gas/fuel.
- 7) **Hair Expressions Salon, Chamberlain, SD;**
\$25 off 1st set of eyelash extensions; \$20 off spa facial with microdermabrasion.
- 8) **Ken's Service, Gann Valley, SD;**
10% off tire repair services.

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.



ENERGIZING COMMUNITIES

We're led by members like you. Which means we're not out to make money. Instead, we're building communities by listening to your needs. We're shaped by the people we serve.

REASONS TO LOVE YOUR ELECTRIC CO-OP

Delivering More than Just Electricity

Brenda Kleinjan

editor@sdrea.coop

From reliable energy to community involvement, there are a lot of reasons why co-op members love their electric cooperatives.

Co-Ops Are Local, Community-Focused Organizations

Co-ops have a rich history of serving their members and are facing the future with innovative ideas to help their members and grow their local communities.

Local people helping out. From billing clerks to line workers and every job in between, the people working at your local electric cooperative are the ones you'll see in your communities. They are serving on volunteer fire departments and as first responders, serving on school boards and county commissions, as ushers at church and as youth sports coaches.

Sioux Valley Energy employees get final instructions before embarking on their meal delivery routes.



Some cooperatives have launched employee community service days where local communities or organizations benefit from a day of service, whether it be a town clean up, restoring a rural cemetery, delivering meals to shut-ins or helping others in need.

Keeping Members Informed

Whether it's through this magazine, which reaches members each month or through social media channels like Facebook and Twitter or mobile apps like SmartHub, cooperatives continually strive to inform their member-owners about events and issues that matter. From a quick post or tweet about why the power may have blinked or celebrating the achievements of area youth, co-ops are communicating with their members and connecting them to their community. As storms approach, co-ops offer helpful tips for preparing for inclement weather and how to deal with the aftermath of storms.

Helping Members Save Money

Co-op demand response and load management programs have helped members save money for decades. And now, with interactive tools like SmartHub, an increasing number of co-op members are accessing information about their home's energy use right from their mobile device or computer. Several co-ops offer energy audits and other ways to reduce energy use.

Appliance rebates, loans for heating and cooling equipment and reduced rates for some energy use

are offered by some co-ops in the state. Check with yours to find out what programs could benefit you.

Diversifying Energy Resources

Cooperatives have a history of using an all-of-the-above approach to meeting members' energy needs. The first utility-scale wind project in South Dakota was built by co-ops and several co-ops have solar demonstration projects to help members learn about solar grid interconnection and other aspects of the resource.

Investing in Youth

When it comes to looking to the future, co-ops have the youth in their communities in mind. Each year, co-ops invest more than \$100,000 in scholarships for students pursuing further education at colleges or technical schools. Dozens of students have the opportunity to go to Washington, D.C., for the annual rural electric youth tour, courtesy of their local electric cooperative. Several co-ops in the state send students on the four-day Youth Excursion to North Dakota each summer to explore energy careers and cooperatives. And throughout the school year, Co-ops in the Classroom and other safety demonstrations visit schools across the region to help younger students learn about using electricity wisely and how so be safe around it.





Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) are created when renewable energy is produced from area wind projects, such as the Crow Lake Wind project near White Lake, SD.

YOUR CO-OP IS RENEWABLE

New Renewable Energy Credit Program Available for Members

Patrick Soukup

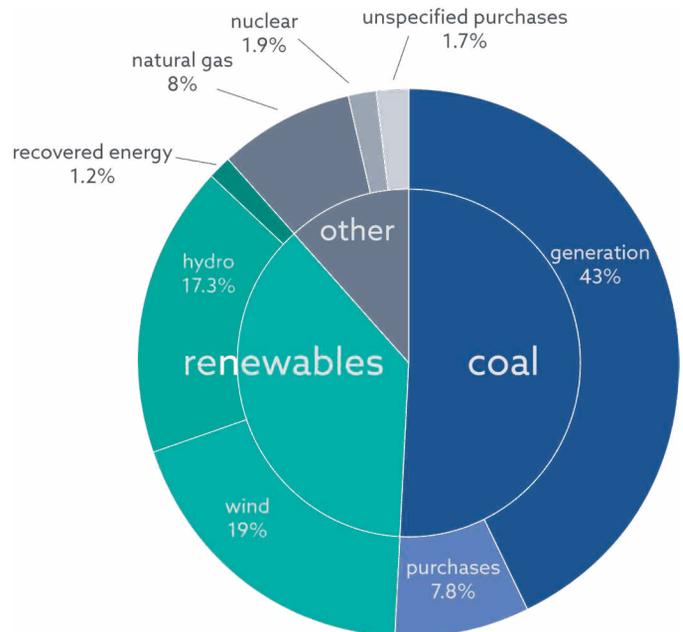
Manager of Member Services/Marketing

Central Electric Cooperative members now have the opportunity to power your home or business with 100% renewable energy.

The energy we use to power the homes and businesses of our members comes from a diversified mix of coal, hydro, natural gas, wind, waste heat and nuclear. There's no specific way to know which source energy comes from once it's created and sent out on the grid.

However, when renewable energy is produced, a renewable energy credit (REC) is created and that REC represents the valuable renewable attributes of that energy form. One REC is equivalent to 1 megawatt hour (MWh) produced by a renewable energy source.

The energy we use comes from a diversified mix, including over one-third renewable energy. The graph shows the 2018 Generation Resources for our power provider East River Electric Power Cooperative.



Central Electric has RECs available for purchase to offset your current usage with 100% renewable energy through our REC program.

The electricity you receive will still be the same reliable, affordable energy you've always received but, by going 100% renewable, you'll be supporting current and future renewable projects in our area.

How much does it cost?

The cost is \$1.00 per REC, which equals 1 MWh (or 1,000 kWhs).

If your monthly usage is 1,200 kWhs, your cost is \$1.20 plus tax, in addition to your regular electric bill.

Do I need to purchase any special equipment?

No. Central Electric will continue to fulfill all your electric needs, and you can enjoy the benefits of renewable energy.

Do I receive anything for participating in the program?

Central Electric will present you with a

Certificate of Partnership for your participation in the program.

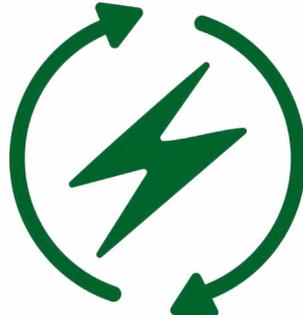
Central Electric also has marketing materials available, such as a "Proudly Powered by 100% Renewable Energy" logo, available for your use at your home, operation or business.

You'll be supporting current and future renewable projects in our area.

Where do the RECs come from?

The RECs come from several wind farms in the region that supply renewable energy to our power providers. These include, but are not limited to the following:

North Dakota: PrairieWinds 1, Wilton 1 & 2, Baldwin Wind Project and Minot Wind Project; and



PROUDLY POWERED BY 100% RENEWABLE ENERGY

Participants are able to display the "Proudly Powered by 100% Renewable Energy" program badge at their home, business or on any marketing materials.

South Dakota: Crow Lake Wind, the Chamberlain turbines, Day County Wind Farm and South Dakota Wind Project.

If you're interested in participating in the REC program and supporting renewable energy production, please contact Central Electric. We're excited to help you reach your renewable energy goals!



POWER YOUR HOME ON 100% RENEWABLE ENERGY!

Nemo 500 Outhouse Races

NAJA Shrine
Transportation
Fund for Kids
Benefits from
Outdoor Event

Brenda Kleinjan

editor@sdrea.coop

**We called it the
Nemo 500 because
it sounded good.**

When one thinks of racing, cars, horses or motorcycles likely come to mind. But, in the Black Hills community of Nemo, outhouses – equipped with wheels, skis or both – are the vehicle of choice.

While each outhouse must be equipped with a seat with one hole, there are additional basic requirements in this competition designed to raise funds for the NAJA Shrine Kids Transportation Fund.

First, each outhouse will have a rider. And during the race, that rider will trade places with a teammate.

“There always has to be someone on the throne,” said Ervin “Red” Alspaw, a Shriner with the Oasis of Deadwood and one of the contacts for the race.

The outhouse must be at least five feet tall and the door (if there is one) has to stay open during the race.

The outhouse must have four walls and a roof and the team’s name must be on each of the walls.

“It’s a hoot,” said Alspaw.

Money raised at the event helps Shriners cover the transportation expenses of some 630 children in western South Dakota who seek care at Shriners Hospitals



A team prepares to race their outhouse in the 2017 competition.

nationwide.

“We called it the Nemo 500 because it sounded good,” said Troy Saye, race organizer and owner of the Nemo Guest Ranch where the event is held.

“We stepped it off a few years ago and it’s actually about 970 feet. You start at the restaurant and at midway everyone runs around the outhouse, retrieving a colored roll of toilet paper which must be placed in the correct order on a plunger.

Alliterations, euphemisms and creativity may make for memorable team names, but speed is the name of the game as the fastest team to complete the



Kids compete in the scoop shovel races.

The Rules

OUTHOUSE RACE RULES and STRUCTURE

- 1) Outhouse can only be human powered. No electric-, solar- or gas-powered assistance. The outhouse must have four walls, roof, doorway and seat with at least one hole. It may have a door, but the door must remain securely open during the race.
- 2) The outhouse must be a minimum of nine square feet at the base and a maximum overall width not to exceed six feet (including grasping or pushing devices). A minimum height of five feet from the floor to the highest point of the roof.
- 3) Any number and size of wheels or skis may be used.
- 4) Any device for pushing or pulling the outhouse may be used except ropes. All pushing or pulling devices must be secured solid.
- 5) Outhouses may be built from any material but glass and must be structurally sound.
- 6) Each entry must have an outhouse name that is to be displayed on each side of the structure. Sponsors' names may be displayed anywhere on the outside.
- 7) There will be three age divisions. (Age divisions will be determined by average team ages. Add all team members' ages and divide by the number of team members.)
 - Division 1: Ages 12 to 25
 - Division 2: Ages 26 to 45
 - Division 3: Ages 46 and over

Good to know:

Teams consist of two to five people, one of which must ride inside the outhouse.

Safety gear including helmets are required for all members and ice cleats are recommended.

Outhouse passengers must be 12 years old or older. Handles or seatbelts are required for the outhouse passengers.

Teams' dress is to reflect the theme of their entry.

Teams make a mandatory pit stop at mid race for a fire-drill. Each member must run around the outhouse three times and the rider must switch places with one of the pushers. Each team member will be required to place a color-coded roll of toilet paper on a color-coded plunger in order of color scheme provided at race time. The race will be timed from start to finish, the objective is to get the lowest time to win.



The costumed Sesame Streak team poses with their People's Choice outhouse trophy after the 2016 race.

race is the winner.

Winners in each of the age divisions get an outhouse trophy hand-made by Troy and Willie Saye.

The Sayes created the event after a 2006 visit from Willie's cousin, shortly after they bought the Nemo Guest Ranch.

"He said he had to get home for an outhouse race. We didn't know what it was," said Troy. The couple researched the event and found that several other

states held races. They developed their rules for the Nemo event. Early races were held just for fun or to raise money for different organizations. The race has been a benefit for the NAJA Shrine Kids Transportation Fund for the last eight or nine years.

The creative names don't stop at the race team names. It takes a certain fortitude to dip a spoon into some of the entries in the chili cook-off contest where cooks serve up three gallons of chili with names like "Presidential Poopers Chili" and "Dave's Chunky Pork and Beef Chili."

Kids can compete in the Scoop Shovel Races, but competitors must provide their own scoop shovel.

If you're going, check-in for the three divisions is at 10 a.m. and race time is 1 p.m. Preregister your team by Feb. 1 to receive a T-shirt.

If you have a team but don't have

an outhouse to race in, contact the Nemo Guest Ranch to see if theirs is available.

Advice for first-time attendees? Arrive early, dress warm and be prepared for

a bit of a walk (late-comers have had to park a half-mile away from the event.)

Attendance at the event varies with the weather, Saye said. Crowds range from 1,000 people up to 2,400 people when the race time temperature was 53 degrees.

"You have got to see it to really enjoy it," said Saye.

"When we first started, we never imagined it would take off the way it did," said Saye.

Interested? Visit nemo500.com for more information or contact the Nemo Guest Ranch at 605-578-2708.

When we first started, we never imagined it would take off the way it did.

Meet the Challenge of Power Outages with the Safe Use of Generators

GENERATOR SAFETY



Patrick Soukup

Manager of Member Services/Marketing

Your generator should have more output than the wattage of your required electronics and appliances.

One way to meet the challenge of a power outage head on is with a generator. Generators can help you get by until your utility restores power.

If you are in the market for a new generator, the following selection tips can help you make sure the generator you are buying is right for your needs.

Selecting a Generator

Before anything else, you need to think about site selection—where you will put a generator (an outdoor location that is in a dry area and on a level surface).

Then, you should decide if a portable generator will meet your needs during an outage. A portable generator simply cannot meet all your electric needs. You must decide what electronics would be most important during a power outage. Add up the wattage of these appliances. Your generator should have more output than the wattage of your required electronics and appliances. This way, the generator will be able to create the extra electricity it takes to start up some appliances.

An alternative to the portable generator is a permanent generator. These generators

are wired directly into your home by a qualified electrician.

After making the correct purchase, operating your generator safely is crucial.

Operating a Generator

Read and follow all manufacturer operating instructions to properly ground the generator. Be sure you understand them before hooking up the generator.

To prevent back feed, standby generators should have a transfer safety switch installed by a professional, and portable generators should never be plugged directly into a home outlet or electrical system. Use an extension cord to plug appliances into an outlet on the generator to power them.

Never operate a generator in a confined area, such as a garage. Generators can produce numerous gases, including toxic and deadly carbon monoxide. They require proper ventilation.

Generators pose electrical risks especially when operated in wet conditions. Use a generator only when necessary during wet or moist conditions. Protect the generator by operating it under an open, canopy-like structure and on a dry surface where water cannot form puddles or drain under it. Always ensure that your hands are dry before touching the generator.

When you refuel the generator, make sure the engine is cool to prevent a fire, should the tank overflow.

There should be nothing plugged into the generator when you turn it on. This prevents a surge from damaging your generator and appliances.

Be sure to keep children and pets away to prevent burns.

For more safety information on the safe operation generators, contact your cooperative or find more tips at SafeElectricity.org.



When the power goes out,
you go on.

KOHLER Generators



What's an automatic transfer switch (ATS)?

Meet the brains behind your home generator system. The ATS is always monitoring your home's power. During an outage, it automatically transfers power from the utility to your generator. When power is restored, the ATS turns off the generator and returns your home's power to the utility grid.

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December 15-March 31

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

January 25-26

Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Gun Show, National Field Archery Building, Yankton, SD, 701-361-9215

January 31-February 2

12th Annual Winterfest of Wheels, Convention Center, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-231-3100

January 31-February 9

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

February 1

James River Gobblers Hunting Heritage Banquet, Doors open 5 p.m., Banquet 6:30 p.m., Highland Conference Center, Mitchell, SD, Contact John at 605-999-3208

February 1-2

Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Gun Show, Dakota Event Center, Aberdeen, SD, 701-361-9215

February 8-9

Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Gun Show, Convention Center, Sioux Falls, SD, 701-361-9215

February 15-16

Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Gun Show, Ramkota Hotel, Pierre, SD, 701-361-9215

February 17

30th Annual Farm and Home Show, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Elementary School, Wessington Springs, SD



March 14: 28 Below Fatbike Race, Ride and Tour, Lead, SD, 605-641-4963

Photo courtesy: travelouthdakota.com

February 21

KORN and Breaking Benjamin, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4111

February 21-22

Mardi Gras Weekend, Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

February 22

Cabin Fever Games, Yankton, SD, 605-665-8994

February 22-23

48th Annual Farm, Home & Sports Show, Ramkota Hotel, Pierre, SD 605-224-1240

March 14-15

Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Gun Show, Davison County Fairgrounds, Mitchell, SD, 701-361-9215

March 18, June 11, August 13 and October 8

Kids Mystery Dinner Theater, Brookings, SD, 605-692-6700

March 20-21, 27-28

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

March 21-22

Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Gun Show, Codington County Ag Building, Watertown, SD, 701-361-9215

March 28

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

April 3-4

Forks, Corks and Kegs Food, Wine and Beer Festival, Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876 or 800-999-1876

April 4

Mitchell Lion's Club Annual Pancake & Sausage Feed, 7 a.m. to 1 p.m., All you can eat, \$7/ticket, Age 5 & under free, John Paul II School Gymnasium, Mitchell, SD

April 18

Design Challenge, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-731-2348

June 4-7

Wheel Jam, SD State Fairgrounds, Huron, SD

June 5-6

SD BBQ Championships, SD State Fairgrounds, Huron, SD

June 25-27

31st Annual Red Power Round Up, auction, parade, quilt show, children's activities, tour and entertainment to celebrate the history of International Harvester and ag memorabilia, SD State Fairgrounds, Huron, SD, Call 605-460-0197 or visit redpowerroundup2020.com

August 22

World of Outlaws Race, SD State Fairgrounds, Huron, SD

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.