

# Cooperative Connections



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# Protecting Ourselves Online

Unfortunately, in today's world, scams are a common place.



**Ken Schlimgen**

General Manager

The internet is an exciting tool that puts information at our fingertips. With the click of a mouse, we can be chatting with friends, doing research on our next major purchase, or playing games with someone in another county or even another country.

I have learned through others' experience that the internet can be a place for thieves and predators to take advantage of us. Almost daily, you hear examples of individuals and businesses who had their online data breached. It is important to be smart when using the internet so your experience is a safe one. If you have children using the internet, it is important to supervise their internet use to protect them and yourself.

This past month Central Electric employees listened to a guest speaker, Karen, who was an expert in "cybersecurity"—or, simply said, "being safe on the internet."

The first thing Karen suggested was to utilize strong passwords. Use passwords that are at least 8 characters in length and are a combination of letters, numbers, and special characters. Instead of using words from the dictionary, consider using a pass phrase. For example, "100 bottles of Beer on the Wall" could become "10oBb0tW".

Do not use your passwords on computers that you do not control, and use different passwords for work than for personal business. It is also recommended to change passwords every 90 days, although a really strong password does not need frequent changing. Of course, it goes without saying, "do not give your password to anyone".

Karen advised the employees to be aware of their surroundings. If you are in an airport, take notice of who might be sitting next to you or who might be looking over your shoulder. She spoke of her experience sitting next to another traveler who had written their passwords on a sticky note and stuck it to the screen of their laptop. In a matter of seconds, she knew how to access that computer. Karen also said to avoid accessing your online accounts through public Wi-Fi hotspots.

Utilizing multifactor authentication when possible is a very good step in protecting your information. This simply means having more than one type of identification in order to gain access to an on-line account. One example of this would be logging into your account using your password. The website then sends a text to your phone which you must respond to before you are allowed access to the account.

Karen suggested ignoring the surveys that you often see on Facebook and other social websites. These surveys often look fun and make you feel good but each answered question allows the person on the other end of the survey to learn about you, such as things that might help them gain access to your accounts or could even help them to impersonate you on other websites.


Karen mentioned the weakest link in protecting our online data is ourselves. We all too often use a weak password, open email attachments that we are not expecting or open an email from someone we do not know. We also have a tendency to walk away from our computer or smartphone without logging out or locking the device.

Karen shared lots of tips and good advice with our employees. Central Electric is taking steps to educate our employees on how to be safer on the internet in order to protect our data and computer systems. Please takes steps to educate yourself on the simple things you can do to protect your online data.

Until Next Month – Be Safe.

**Do not use your passwords on computers that you do not control, and use different passwords for work than for personal business.**



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

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Subscription information: Central Electric Cooperative members devote 50 cents from their monthly electric payments for a subscription. Non-member subscriptions are available for \$12 annually. Periodicals Postage Paid at Central Electric Cooperative, PO Box 850, Mitchell, SD 57301, and at additional mailing offices.

Postmaster: Please send address changes to Central Electric Cooperative, PO Box 850, Mitchell, SD 57301. Address all other correspondence to: Cooperative Connections, PO Box 850, Mitchell, SD 57301 Telephone: (605)996-7516; Fax: (605) 996-0869; e-mail: [cec@centralec.coop](mailto:cec@centralec.coop); website: [www.centralec.coop](http://www.centralec.coop).

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 605-996-7516  
[www.centralec.coop](http://www.centralec.coop)



### Mission Statement

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

## Operation Round-Up® Meeting Summary



The Operation Round-Up Board of Trustees met on May 22, 2018 to review applications for funding. In summary, the Trustees awarded \$12,200 to eight applicants:

- 1) **Habitat for Humanity-Dacotah Tipis, Ft. Thompson, SD;**  
 \$2,000 for radon mitigation in their volunteer's shelter;
- 2) **Gann Valley Community Center, Gann Valley, SD;**  
 \$1,000 for replacing damaged insulation;
- 3) **Howard Youth Basketball, Howard, SD;**  
 \$1,500 for new basketball hoops;
- 4) **Letcher Community Development, Letcher, SD;**  
 \$2,300 for community center updates;
- 5) **Plankinton Pool Committee, Plankinton, SD;**  
 \$700 for new chairs and updates;
- 6) **Stickney Volunteer Fire Department, Stickney, SD;**  
 \$2,250 for gear washing equipment;
- 7) **Wessington Springs Baseball, Wessington Springs, SD;**  
 \$1,500 for equipment updates;
- 8) **White Lake Volunteer Fire Department, White Lake, SD;**  
 \$950 for a hazardous gas detection monitor

Operation Round-Up grants are made possible by our members who "round up" their electric bill each month. The next Operation Round-Up application deadline is November 1, 2018.

## Office Closed on July 4

Our office will be closed on  
 Wednesday, July 4th in obser-  
 vance of Independence Day.

In case of an outage, call  
 800-477-2892 or 605-996-7516.



## Employee Years of Service

### Tim Harrington

July 2 - 34 years

### DuWayne Moore

July 5 - 11 years

**Thank you for your service to the cooperative!**

## Safety Before and After Storms

Severe storms are more common in the spring and summer, but they can occur any time of year. Be prepared for storms and know how to stay safe.

### Before the storm:

- Assemble a kit of essentials, like water, battery-operated flashlights, and radios. Keep a list of emergency phone numbers, including the electric utility.
- If severe weather is on its way, pay attention to local weather reports and recommendations. A tornado or severe storm watch means conditions are favorable for those weather conditions forming. A warning means dangerous weather conditions are imminent.
- Lightning can travel up to 10 miles away from a storm, so seek shelter when you hear thunder.
- Consider installing ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) or purchasing a portable GFCI. GFCIs detect dangerous electrical situations and cut off power before a person can be shocked. These dangerous electrical situations are likely to occur around water, so GFCIs should be installed in bathrooms, laundry rooms, kitchens, basements and outdoors – anywhere water and electricity may meet.
- If power goes out, switch off lights, large electronics and appliances to prevent overloading circuits and damaging appliances when power is restored. Leave one lamp or switch on as a signal for when your power returns.

### After the storm:

- When venturing outside, stay away from downed power lines and be alert to the possibility that tree limbs or debris may hide an electrical hazard. Assume any dangling wires you encounter are energized and dangerous. Warn others to stay away and contact the electric utility.
- If you are driving and come upon a downed power line, stay in your vehicle, warn others to stay away and contact emergency personnel or electric utility. Also, when driving, be careful at intersections where traffic lights may be out. Stop at all railroad crossings and treat road intersections with traffic signals as a four-way stop before proceeding with caution.
- Before re-entering storm-damaged buildings or rooms, be sure all electric and gas services are turned off. Never attempt to turn off power at the breaker box if you must stand in water to do so. If you can't reach your breaker box safely, call your electric utility to shut off power at the meter.
- Never step into a flooded basement or other area if water is covering electrical outlets, appliances or cords. Be alert to any electrical equipment that could be energized and in contact with water. Never touch electrical appliances, cords or wires while you are wet or standing in water.
- Do not use water-damaged electric items until a qualified electrician has inspected them and ensured they are safe.
- When using a portable generator, follow all manufacturers' recommendations. Keep the generator dry and never plug it into a wall outlet or directly into the home's wiring. This could inadvertently energize the utility lines and injure yourself or others working to restore power.
- A permanent standby generator should be professionally installed and include a transfer switch to prevent electricity from leaving your generator and going into power lines where it can kill line workers.

Source: safeelectricity.org

# CO-OPS VOTE

A PROGRAM OF AMERICA'S  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

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



VOTE.COOP

## KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



**"Don't fly kites near power lines."**

**Sophia Bad Warrior**, Second-grader at  
Dupree Public School

Sophia is the daughter of Dugan and Peg Bad Warrior, Dupree, S.D. They are members of Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative, Timber Lake, 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.

# Delectable Desserts

## Rhubarb Dessert

- |                      |                                 |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 white cake mix     | 1 (3 oz.) pkg. strawberry jello |
| 4 cups diced rhubarb | Whipped topping                 |
| 1 cup sugar          |                                 |

Prepare cake according to package directions. Spread in a 9x13-inch pan. Layer rhubarb over cake batter. Sprinkle with sugar and dry jello. Bake at 350°F. for 35 to 40 minutes. Serve with Cool Whip.

**Pam Hofer, Carpenter, SD**

## Best Ever Chocolate Chip Cookies

- |                               |                        |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 cup white sugar             | 2 tsp. baking soda     |
| 1 cup brown sugar             | 2 tsp. cream of tarter |
| 2 cups butter-flavored Crisco | 2 tsp. baking powder   |
| 2 eggs                        | 1 tsp. salt            |
| 2 tsp. vanilla                | 3-1/2 cups flour       |
|                               | 12 oz. chocolate chips |

Cream together the first 5 ingredients; add next 5 ingredients. Stir in chocolate chips. Bake on air bake pan at 350°F. for 10 to 12 minutes. Let set a few minutes before removing from pan.

**Sharon Sunvold, Renville, MN**

## Honey Bun Cake

- |                                |                                       |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 yellow cake mix              | 1 T. cinnamon                         |
| 4 eggs                         | <b>Icing:</b>                         |
| 2/3 cup vegetable oil          | 1-1/2 cups powdered sugar             |
| 1 (8 oz.) container sour cream | 3 T. butter, melted                   |
| 1 cup brown sugar              | 2 T. milk (or to desired consistency) |

Combine cake mix, eggs, oil and sour cream. Pour 1/2 of batter into a greased 9x13-inch pan. Mix together brown sugar and cinnamon; sprinkle over batter in prepared pan. Pour remaining batter over top of cinnamon mixture. Run a butter knife through to marble the batter. Bake at 350°F. for 45 minutes. Let cake set 5 minutes, then frost with icing. For icing, mix together powdered sugar, butter and milk; pour over cake. Let cool at least 30 minutes before serving.

**Sheryl Fromm, Hartford, SD**

## Raspberry Almond Crumb Bars

- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| 2-1/2 cups flour             | 1 tsp. McCormick® Pure Almond Extract               |
| 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar | 3/4 cup (1-1/2 sticks) cold butter, cut into chunks |
| 1/2 cup granulated sugar     | 1 cup raspberry preserves                           |
| 1/2 tsp. baking soda         | 1/2 cup sliced almonds                              |
| 1/2 tsp. salt                |   |
| 1 egg                        |   |

Mix flour, sugars, baking soda and salt in food processor until well blended. Add butter; pulse until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Mix egg and almond extract in small bowl. Add to food processor while pulsing. Reserve 1/3 of crumb mixture for topping. Press remaining crumb mixture into an even layer in foil-lined 9x13-inch baking pan. Spread raspberry preserves over top. Sprinkle clumps of the reserved crumb mixture over preserves. Sprinkle with almonds. Bake at 350°F. 35 to 40 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Cool in pan on wire rack. Cut into bars. Makes 24 servings.

*Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 175, Total Fat 7g, Sodium 129mg, Cholesterol 23mg, Carbohydrates 26g, Protein 2g, Dietary Fiber 1g*

**Pictured, Cooperative Connections**

## Mother's Day Pie

- |                        |                                |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 cup sugar            | 1 tsp. vanilla extract         |
| 2 T. all-purpose flour | 3 eggs                         |
| 1/4 tsp. salt          | 1 (12 oz.) can evaporated milk |
| 6 T. butter, melted    | 1 cup shredded coconut         |

In a medium bowl, combine sugar, flour and salt. Stir in butter and vanilla extract. Add eggs, one at a time, mixing well after each addition. Mix in evaporated milk followed by coconut. Pour into a greased and floured 9-inch pie plate or quiche pan. Bake at 325°F. for 35 to 40 minutes or until custard is nearly set and a knife inserted in center comes out clean. Let cool. Refrigerate before serving.

**Joy Hagen, Webster, SD**

Please send your favorite salad, garden produce and pasta recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2018. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

# Gaikowski Promoted to Area Foreman



Gene Gaikowski has been promoted from journeyman lineman to area foreman at the Wessington Springs outpost.

Gaikowski filled the position of Don Patton who retired in May.

Gaikowski joined the Wessington Springs crew with Central Electric in June 2017. He has experience working for Verendrye Electric Co-op in North Dakota, Carbon Power & Light, Inc. in Wyoming, and taught in the power line program at Mitchell Technical Institute. Gaikowski has also served in the U.S. Marine Corps and National Guard.

Gaikowski and his wife, Loree, live in Wessington Springs, with their three children, Carter, Nathan, and Madilyn.

# Operations Employees Hired for Summer

Welcome to Landen Thompson, Grady Bellingtier, and Daniel Koupal who have joined our operations crews for the summer.

Thompson is from Rapid City and the son of Tim and Amy Thompson. He completed the power line program at Mitchell Technical Institute (MTI) this past spring. Thompson says the power industry runs his family. His grandfather and cousin are linemen, and his mother, Amy, is a Branch Manager at West River Electric Co-op.

Bellingtier is from Clear Water, NE and recently completed his first year at MTI. He will be returning to MTI this fall for the substation program and to complete his associate's degree. Bellingtier's father was a power lineman also. His parents, Greg and Connie Bellingtier, run large

dairy operations back home.

Koupal previously worked for Central in summer 2017 after simultaneously completing his high school diploma and power line certificate at MTI. Koupal is originally from Mitchell, SD, and the son of Bill and Pam Koupal. Since last year, Koupal has been working for a contractor and "living out of a suitcase" while traveling for work.

Thompson and Koupal will complete 1,000 hours with Central Electric. Bellingtier will work with crews until fall classes begin at MTI. All three will assist all operations crews as needed. Not only does this assist our operations department, but they can document these hours toward earning their journeyman certificate.



Landen Thompson (left), Grady Bellingtier (middle), and Daniel Koupal (right) will assist the Operations crews this summer and earn hours toward their journeyman certificate.

# Annual Pole Testing

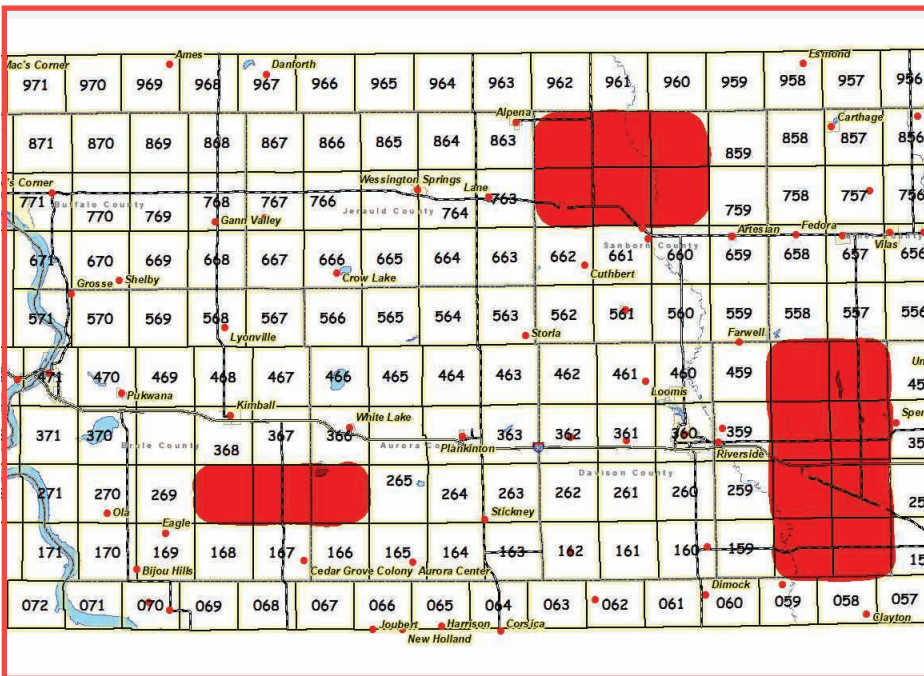
Central Electric's annual pole inspection program began Monday, June 4th.

The areas to be tested include townships Highland and Wilbur in Brule county; Gales in Aurora county; Warren, Jackson, Floyd, Woonsocket, Silver Creek, and Oneida in Sanborn County; and Fairview, Spring Lake, Jasper, Edgerton, Wayne, Pleasant, Beulah, and Taylor in Hanson county.

Central Electric has again contracted with SBS Pole Inspections to complete the testing. SBS will utilize a crew of three to five men who have worked in our area in previous years.

Members may notice the crew digging around poles or riding four-wheelers and pickups along power lines. Crews will identify themselves by using Central Electric magnets on the pick-ups and other possible means.

The inspection program detects poles with potential faults and prevents future unplanned outages or damages. Approximately 5,000 poles will be tested.



Pole testing will be completed in the red shaded areas, including Aurora, Brule, Sanborn, and Hanson counties. Testing began in June and will continue over the next several weeks.

# Safety in the Field

Central Electric crews responded to two separate incidents at the end of May where farm machinery hit power equipment. Fortunately, everyone walked away safely.

As planting season wraps up, farmers will still be operating sprayers, haying equipment, and other machinery that could damage power poles and put them at risk.

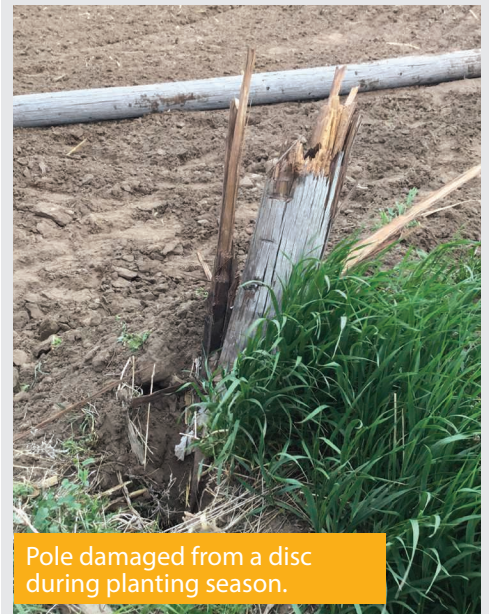
Accidents can happen to anyone, and many occur while completing routine activities that are performed on a regular basis.

Remember to “Look Up and Out” for all overhead and underground power equipment. If you do contact a line, here’s what to do:

**STAY PUT** and **CALL 911** or your electric utility. Staying in the equipment is the safest place for you to be.

In case of fire, **JUMP CLEAR** from the tractor or vehicle. Do not touch the tractor and ground at the same time.

**SHUFFLE** or **HOP AWAY** from the equipment at least 40 feet. Walking or running puts you at risk for electrocution.



Pole damaged from a disc during planting season.

New and emerging technologies are continuously offering innovative ways to effectively manage and reduce energy consumption. Unfortunately, not all technologies can live up to their hype. Your local electric co-op can help you navigate these emerging technologies and provide the most cost-effective and beneficial energy management solutions.





# NAVIGATING

## Emerging Efficiency Technologies

### Kaley Lockwood

National Rural Electric  
Cooperative Association

Investing in energy efficient technology is becoming an increasingly attractive way to cut costs for homeowners and renters alike. This rings true especially in the deep heat of summer. Hotter days often result in higher energy bills, partially due to A/C units working overtime to keep homes cooled and comfortable.

New and emerging technologies are continuously offering innovative ways to effectively manage and reduce a home's energy consumption. Smart thermostats, for example, have proven their worth in shaving 10 to 15 percent off an average home's electric bill. These thermostats, in time, will effectively pay for themselves which make them an attractive option to many. Unfortunately, not all technologies can live up to their hype and some even come with side effects that can arguably overshadow their benefits.

The Mistbox Air Conditioner Cooler is one such technology. Mistbox claims to save its customers between 20 to 38 percent on their electricity bills. This technology requires a simple installation to a home's outdoor A/C unit and works by spraying a mist to precool the air around the unit. In using this evaporative cooling method, you're a/c unit theoretically doesn't have to work as hard to pump cool air into your home. This may be beneficial when air temperature is at its highest. In the short term Mistbox may work, but there are some real caveats that need to be considered.

A primary point of concern is that an A/C unit is not designed to be sprayed down with such frequency. Although the Mistbox system comes with a water filter, the company only recommends using its technology if your home's water has a hardness less than 500 parts per million. This automatically rules out anyone who uses well water. Even if you do have a

**Electric cooperatives know it's important to help our members navigate these emerging technologies and provide the most cost-effective and beneficial energy management solutions.**

home with the required water hardness, the filtration system can't completely prevent your system from rusting. Corrosion will occur resulting in a damaged unit.

Electric cooperatives know it's important to help our members navigate these emerging technologies and provide the most cost-effective and beneficial energy management solutions. If you're interested in taking steps to become more energy efficient, we recommend these tried and true tips:

- Clean and change the filters on your HVAC system regularly to make your unit run more efficiently, keeping your house cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter.
- In spring and summer months, set your ceiling fans to turn in the counterclockwise direction to create a cool breeze. In autumn and winter months, set your fan to turn in the clockwise direction. This will redistribute warm air throughout the room.
- Add caulk or weather stripping to seal air leaks around leaky doors and windows.
- Insulation is important. Properly insulating your home reduces heating and cooling costs, and improves comfort.
- Remember, there are easy steps you can take now to improve the energy efficiency of your home. To learn about additional ways to save, contact the energy experts at your local electric cooperative.

*Kaley Lockwood writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural*

*Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56 percent of the nation's landscape.*

# Empower Youth Begins

## Two Area Students Participate in Regional Leadership Program

Courtney J. Deinert

courtneyd@centralec.coop

Grace DuVall from Pukwana, SD and Casey Miller from Mitchell, SD are two students selected to participate in the Empower Youth program organized by Basin Electric Power Cooperative.

DuVall is the daughter of Darrel and Yvette DuVall and a junior at Chamberlain High School. DuVall hopes to learn more about careers and is excited about meeting new people during the program. Her long-term plans include majoring in international studies.

Miller is the son of Rick and Kay Miller and a junior at Mitchell High School. Miller applied for Empower Youth as a way to stand out in his future endeavors. He plans to pursue a program in the medical field after high school.

**We definitely have a group of strong leaders, each with their own strengths**

The first session of Empower Youth was held on May 31 in Aberdeen, SD. Motivational speaker Craig Hillier fired up the students about leadership. Then, in the afternoon, they participated in hands-on



DuVall (front left) and Miller (back row, second from right) joined ten other students from the region for Empower Youth in Aberdeen on May 31.

activities to learn about cooperatives and create their own co-op.

“We definitely have a group of strong leaders, each with their own strengths, for our inaugural Empower Youth leadership program,” said Youth Coordinator Kristie Ching. “I can’t wait to see how each of them grows as a leader over the course of the next few months.”

Empower Youth includes two more sessions. In July, participants will travel to North Dakota for South Dakota Youth Excursion. During Youth Excursion, students see first-hand where our electricity is generated. Session three will conclude the program with a one-day workshop in August.

Through the program, students have an opportunity to earn scholarships based on a point system. Participants earn points through community service, job shadowing, participating in cooperative meetings or activities, and attending the sessions.

For more information on Empower Youth, visit [www.empoweryouth.coop](http://www.empoweryouth.coop). Applications for next year’s program will be available later this fall.



Miller (left) and DuVall (middle) work with their team to “build a house” with a select amount of materials



DuVall reads off a “co-op fact” during a large game of Jenga

# Spotlight on Excellence Awards Program



Central Electric Cooperative recently received recognition in the 2018 Spotlight on Excellence national awards program, sponsored by the Council of Rural Electric Communicators and the National Rural Electric Association (NRECA). Central Electric received a Gold Award in the Best Event category for “Solar Informational Workshops.”

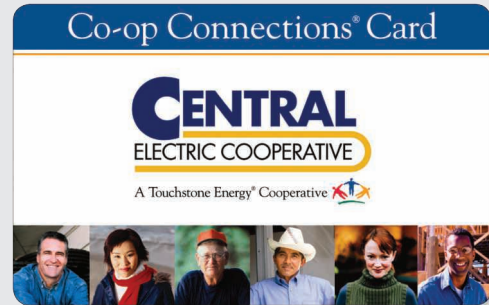
The Solar Workshops were hosted in February 2017 and presented by General Manager Ken Schlingen, Manager of Member Services & Marketing Patrick Soukup, and Manager of Communications Courtney Deinert.

“Electric cooperatives are being challenged to communicate to the people they serve more than ever before,” said Scott Peterson, Senior Vice President of Communications for NRECA. “Printed news publications, news releases, social media and videos are all more important than ever to keep members updated on issues affected the electric cooperatives.”

The annual Spotlight on Excellence Awards competition recognizes top-rated communication and marketing efforts by electric cooperatives and related organizations. Entrants competed with electric cooperatives of similar size in 16 categories.

Electric cooperative communicators and marketing professionals submitted nearly 770 entries in the Spotlight on Excellence program. Faculty members from the University of Missouri - Columbia and University of South Carolina, as well as noted professionals in the fields of marketing, web design and digital communications, and newspapers, judged the event.

## 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) 605 Vision, Chamberlain, SD; 15% off services and materials; Cannot be combined with insurance or other offers.
- 2) AAA South Dakota, Mitchell, SD Branch; Save \$15 on new membership by waiving entrance fee for SD residents only. Free atlas with insurance quote.
- 3) Advantage Auto Glass LLC, Mitchell, SD; 10% off windshield replacement or \$10 off windshield repairs.
- 4) Aero Dyna Kleen Services, Mitchell, SD; \$20 off on furnace and duct cleaning; 10% off on carpet cleaning.
- 5) AmericInn Lodge & Suites, Chamberlain, SD; 10% off rack rate (not valid with any other offer).
- 6) America's Mattress, Mitchell, SD; 10% off mattress and boxspring purchased, cash and carry.

For a full list of ways to save, visit [www.connections.coop](http://www.connections.coop).

To request a card or become a participating business, visit [www.centralec.coop](http://www.centralec.coop) or call 800-477-2892 or 605-996-7516.





# Energy Audits

## Savings You Can Count On

**Derrill Holly**

National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

Better energy efficiency at home starts with savings, not sales, and an energy audit conducted by a trained energy advisor can help you get there.

“Members are our community and we are the experts in the electric energy arena,” said Manuela Heyn, an energy services representative for Gulf Coast Electric Cooperative, who is also a member of the Southport, Florida-based Co-op. “We have the tools, knowledge and commitment to assist our people. Saving energy can also help shave peak loads.”

Heyn conducted her first energy audits with very basic tools: a flashlight, laser temperature gun and candy thermometer (to check water heater output temperature). She now has access to more sophisticated equipment such as thermal imaging equipment.

Members become frantic when they see a major increase in the power bill and want almost immediate answers as to why. In conjunction with experience and the ability to refer to meter data reports, the process of identifying major power consumption problems has been simplified and resolved in many instances in the office.

During on-site audits, she uses all her senses to find abnormalities such as hot water line leaks, running well pumps, damaged power cords, construction issues – one case leading to spongy drywall, disconnected ducts and lack of insulation to name a few.

She also checks household systems many homeowners seldom see or consider unless they spend time with their HVAC technician.

“One home I visited had an overflowing air handler water pan and extreme fungal growth” said Heyn. “Some members, particularly renters, don’t realize that their HVAC systems have an air filter. When they are dirty, they can freeze up the system and cause an increase in power consumption.”

### Expert advice

Many of the electric co-ops that provide energy audits support professional development for energy advisors that includes exposure to building science concepts.

Training focused on both new construction techniques designed to improve energy efficiency and retrofitting options for upgraded older housing are common. Specialized training for multi-family units and manufactured housing are also common.

“By providing a picture of how energy is used in the home, people can concentrate on what can save them the most energy,” said Eileen Wysocki, an energy auditor with Holy Cross Energy, headquartered in Glenwood Springs, Colorado.

Wysocki starts with a baseload estimate of energy use based upon meter data. Talking with the consumer-member, she learns about household size and behavior patterns, and considers seasonal factors like heat tape used to prevent water lines from freezing.

“We have many ‘second homes’ in our service territory,” said Wysocki, adding that even when those homes are empty, energy use continues. “Fan coil blower motors, whole house humidi-

fiers, boiler pumps, ventilation systems, driveway snowmelt pumps, pool pumps, hot tubs, garage heaters, heated toilet seats and towel bars are using energy, regardless of occupancy.”

The co-op serves Colorado’s popular ski areas around Aspen and Vail, and is currently designing a new audit form. It will stress benefits members can receive through efficiency upgrades, including comfort, said Mary Wiener, energy efficiency program administrator for Holy Cross Energy.

Co-ops that offer energy audits use the service to reinforce their roles as trusted energy advisors, helping members save energy in an effort to help them control their electricity costs.

While some co-ops provide complementary audits free of charge, especially when they are requested in response to high bill concerns, others may charge a small fee, offering rebates to members who implement some of the recommendations provided.

Time spent with an energy auditor can help a member avoid ineffective upgrades or the purchase of oversized equipment

that might not improve their comfort or produce savings through recoverable costs.

## Offering solutions

An energy advisor’s home visit usually gets far more attention than a brief discussion

**On average, a member can reduce their energy use by about 5 percent if they follow the low-cost or no-cost advice given during the audit.**

about energy efficiency at a co-op district meeting, a county fair or other community event. Most audits are initiated following a request tied to high bill concerns, when members are really motivated to control their energy costs.

On average, a member can reduce their

energy use by about 5 percent if they follow the low-cost or no-cost advice given during the audit. Additional savings of up to 20 percent can be achieved by addressing issues with big-ticket items, such as HVAC replacement, attic insulation or major duct repair discovered during the audit.

Improved energy efficiency not only helps the co-op control peak demand and wholesale power costs, it also provides opportunities to discuss services available to members. Those include rebates, weatherization programs and payment assistance.

To learn more about energy audits available to you, contact your local electric cooperative.

*Derrill Holly writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56 percent of the nation’s landscape.*



## Energy Audits Point the Way to Savings

Conducting an energy audit of your home is a great way to identify opportunities for energy savings. Below are five areas an auditor will typically cover.

- **Leaks and Losses:** Damaged, missing or improperly installed insulation can increase energy use year-round. Knowing where and how to check can identify problems.
- **Comfort Costs:** A visual inspection of your thermostat, water heater, heating and air conditioning equipment and ductwork, can identify performance problems.
- **Assessing Appliances:** The age, condition, location and use patterns for washers, dryers, refrigerators, and other major appliances can impact their efficiency levels.
- **Learning Lighting:** A quick discussion about lighting options with an energy auditor can take the guesswork out of choosing the best bulbs and fixtures.
- **Activity Adjustments:** Knowing how and when you use energy can help you save money. Shifting the time of day you use energy to do things (like laundry and cooking) to cooler, less humid hours can ease the load on HVAC systems.



Byrd repairs line after a storm in April 2008.

# CONGRATS, GEOFF

## Byrd Retires after 31 Years of Service



Geoff Byrd, journeyman lineman with the Mitchell crew, will retire this June after 31 years of service with Intercounty and Central Electric Cooperative.

Byrd joined Intercounty in June 1987 as a groundman, and then worked his way up to equipment operator and journeyman lineman.

However, don't let his "retirement" fool you—Byrd also works for Krohmer Plumbing and still plans to work full-time in their warehouse.

In his free time, he looks forward to fishing, camping, and spending more time with his grandkids at baseball and basketball games.

"Geoff's friendship, experience, and knowledge of our system will be missed, but we wish him the best in his retirement," said General Manager Ken Schlimgen. "Congratulations and best wishes to Geoff and Theresa as they begin the next chapter in their lives."

**Geoff's friendship, experience, and knowledge of our system will be missed.**



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Services Available for both Members & Non Members

## June - September Thursdays

Mitchell Farmers Market, 4:30 to 8 p.m., Corn Palace Plaza, Mitchell, SD, Contact Maria Payne at 605-995-8048 or mpayne@cityofmitchell.org (no event Aug. 23)

## June 15-July 13

River City Friday Nights, live entertainment, kids games, food and retail vendors, 6 to 10 p.m. on Friday evenings, Main Street, Chamberlain, SD, Contact Mollie Harmon at 605-682-9051

## June 21-23

Senior Games, Mitchell, SD, Contact Howard Bich at 605-491-0635

## June 24

Pastured Meats and Egg Production Goosemobile Tours, Free, 1 to 5 p.m., Canistota and Canova, SD, 605-681-6793 or SDSPAinfo@gmail.com

## June 29-30

Heartland Quilters Guild Quilt Show, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on 29th, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on 30th, Mitchell Wesleyan Church, Mitchell, SD, Contact Gwen Effling 605-770-2385

## June 30-July 1

Archeology Awareness Days, Mitchell, SD, 605-996-5473

## July 3-5

Frontier Days Rodeo, Interior, SD, 605-455-1000

## July 6-8, 13-15, 20-22

Laura Ingalls Wilder Pageant, 8 p.m., Pageant Site, De Smet, SD, 800-880-3383



**July 29:** 13th Annual Langford Car Show, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., trophies awarded at 1:30, Park of the Pines, Langford, SD, Contact Russell Nickelson at 605-493-6597

Photo courtesy: Langford SD Facebook Page

## July 7

Ladies Only Fishing Tournament, American Creek Marina, Chamberlain, SD, Contact Kelli at 605-730-1697 or Brenda at 605-680-4494, Find "Fishing for a Cure - Ladies Fishing Tournament" on Facebook

## July 7, 21, Aug. 25, Sept. 8, 22

Lawn Mower Races, Pukwana, SD, 605-680-1718 or 605-682-9781

## July 14

Meat and Dairy Goat Workshop, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., \$30, Meal included, Brookings, SD; 605-681-6793

## July 17-22

Corn Palace Stampede Rodeo, Mitchell, SD, 605-770-4919

## July 20-21

Gumbo Ridge Bronc Ride and Ranch Rodeo, Murdo, SD, 605-669-3031

## July 20-22

Annual Gem & Mineral Show, Rapid City, SD, 605-269-2015

## July 25

Stockyard Ag Experience - Local Foods Fair, 3 to 8 p.m., Free, Sioux Falls, SD, Contact 701-883-4304

## July 28

Growing Ancient Grains and Greenhouse Tomato Tours, Local Foods Potluck, 1 to 5 p.m., Free, Bring a dish to share, Newell, SD, 605-681-6793

## July 28

MVP Outdoor Vendor and Craft Show, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., James Valley Community Center, Mitchell, SD, Contact 605-995-8441

## August 18

American Island Days, Inflatables, car show, Ag Olympics, Free Admission, 9 a.m. to 11 p.m., American Creek Campground, Chamberlain, SD, Contact Donna Buche at 605-680-1202

## August 18

Melon Festival and Car Show, Free will admission, Pork loin supper, bean bag tournament, silent auction, live music, and kids activities, 3 p.m., Forestburg, SD

## September 21-22

Holiday Arts Fall Craft Show, Masonic Temple, Mitchell, SD, 605-359-2049

## October 6

Pumpkin Train, Prairie Village, Madison, SD, 800-693-3644, www.prairievillage.org

**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.**