

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



South Dakota Snowmobiling

Seasonal Fun in the
Snow

Pages 8-9

High School Students
Gaining Dual Credits

Pages 12-13

4 KEY FACTORS That Impact Energy Bills

You pay for the electricity you consume each month, but there are additional factors that impact your energy bills.

1 Fuel Costs

Before electricity can be delivered to your home, it must first be generated at a power plant or from a renewable source.

Wholesale power costs, which account for nearly 60% of the costs at your cooperative, for 2024 are expected to increase approximately 3.63% over our 2023 rates.

2 Service Costs

Your bill includes a monthly service charge, which recovers part of the co-op's ongoing investments in poles, wire, meters, system maintenance and additional costs necessary to provide electric service.

3 Weather

When temperatures soar or dip, your cooling or heating equipment must run longer and at maximum capacity, which can greatly increase your energy use. Extreme temperatures can also affect electricity market prices. When the need for electricity increases due to extreme heat or cold, the price of power typically rises.

4 Energy Consumption

This is the amount of electricity you use each month to power your home's cooling/heating system, appliances, lighting, electronics and more. The amount of electricity you consume is measured in kilowatt-hours, or kWh. You have control over how much energy you use, which can ultimately help manage your monthly costs.



Tim O'Leary
General Manager

Increases on the Horizon

The cooperative's mission statement is to provide reliable electricity and services to enhance the quality of life in our rural communities. In order

to provide safe, reliable electric power to our members, we must continually maintain and improve our system infrastructure. With that in mind, the cooperative's board of directors approved a change in rates that will become effective on May 1, 2024. When setting rates, the board does its best to set the rates as close to our actual costs as possible while still maintaining the financial requirements set by our lending partners.

The cooperative has seen increases in wholesale power costs, increases in materials and equipment due to inflation, and increases in insurance and other local costs over time and this has led to the need of changing rates in 2024. The last rate change at the cooperative took place on January 1, 2017. Wholesale power costs, which account for nearly 60% of the costs at your cooperative, for 2024 are expected to increase approximately 3.63% over our 2023 rates. The other significant increase is in our interest costs on long-term debt which is expected to increase by \$200,000 in 2024.

The board had the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) perform a cost of service/rate study last year and they received the final results in early 2023. The study indicated the need for an increase in 2023, but the board decided that it would wait and see how 2023 went and review the need during the 2024 budgeting process. The draft 2024 budget indicated a \$496,000 operating loss and the need for a rate change in 2024. With that in mind, the board tasked staff to come up with options for them to discuss at their December board meeting.

The board reviewed the options and

determined that a May 1, 2024, increase would work best due to May being a lower kWh use month for most members and it is after the winter heating season. The board settled on an average increase of 8% in revenue. The increase will affect each member and rate schedule differently. Each class will see an increase in the monthly access charge and the energy rate. The access charge recovers a portion of the cost to serve each member whether they use electricity or not at the location. The new rate schedules will have the cooperative recover approximately 60% of the total cost to serve a particular location and this will vary by rate schedule and whether the account is served by a single phase or three phase line.

We will include a chart in next month's newsletter to show the changes to each of the rate schedules and we will be sending out letters to all of our members indicating the changes to their rate schedules for 2024. We will continue this conversation in upcoming newsletters, through a direct mailing, at the district meetings and at the annual meeting in June.

Rate increases are difficult for everyone, but you can be assured that we will continue to look for opportunities to improve efficiencies and keep rates as reasonable as possible. To assist our members in managing their electric bills, we offer several energy efficiency incentives and programs. Please visit our website or call the office to learn more about these programs.

The board of directors and employees at your electric cooperative take rate changes seriously and we are constantly looking for ways to become more efficient and keep our local expenses low. However, when costs increase more than we can absorb, the rates must be adjusted in order to cover the increased costs. We understand that this isn't the best news, but we continue to believe that electricity provides incredible value as we go about our daily lives.

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

LYON-LINCOLN ELECTRIC

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Jessica Gums, Editor

Effects of Inflation

General economics study defines inflation as the general increase in prices and fall in the purchasing value of money. We’ve heard a great deal about inflation over the past few years and have likely felt the effects in our day-to-day lives. Lyon-Lincoln Electric isn’t immune to these factors and rising costs of materials and interest are no longer avoidable. Tim has written a few articles covering the rate changes that will be implemented in May, I wanted to use this space to discuss some of the changes seen in the past few years. In the next few months, we’ll focus on some of the equipment used here at the cooperative, and how those prices have changed as well.



Brian Jeremiason
 Manager of Marketing & External Relations

Economists typically measure inflation using the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The Bureau of Labor Statistics established this index in 1913 to track changes in prices and purchasing power of the US Dollar.

Inflation from 2020 to 2024 has averaged 5.18% by year, for a cumulative price change on average of 22.4%. That means that what you could purchase for a dollar in 2020, would now cost \$1.22. When your income doesn’t grow at the same rate as inflation, your purchasing power decreases, and your dollar doesn’t go as far. Many of us have felt that in our personal budgets, and Lyon-Lincoln which hasn’t had a rate increase since 2017 has felt the impact as well. That dollar we used in 2020, is now essentially worth 81 cents.

The transportation sector of the economy has been hit the hardest, with a cumulative increase of 45.92%. Fuel for our trucks, shipping and trucking expenses for our poles, wires and transformers have all seen large increases over the past few years.

Nationwide, gas prices on average increased from \$2.57 per gallon to \$3.50 per gallon, milk prices have increased from \$2.96 per gallon to \$3.86, and electricity prices have increased on average from 13 cents per kWh to 17 cents per kWh.

In addition to the increasing costs of goods and services. Money borrowed to pay for these materials and projects has also become more expensive. If you’ve purchased a home or vehicle, you’ve seen these firsthand. According to JP Morgan Chase the Prime Interest Rate in March of 2020 was 4.25% and had doubled to 8.5% by July of 2023.

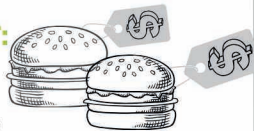
As you can see, there are a number of factors that contribute to the rising expenses your co-op is experiencing. More information will be shared in upcoming articles. On a slightly brighter note, a dollar invested in the S&P 500 index in 2020 would have earned a return of 45.67% over the past few years. However, the nominal \$1.46 that had been earned would have the purchasing power of \$1.19 when adjusted for inflation.

ELECTRICITY REMAINS A GOOD VALUE

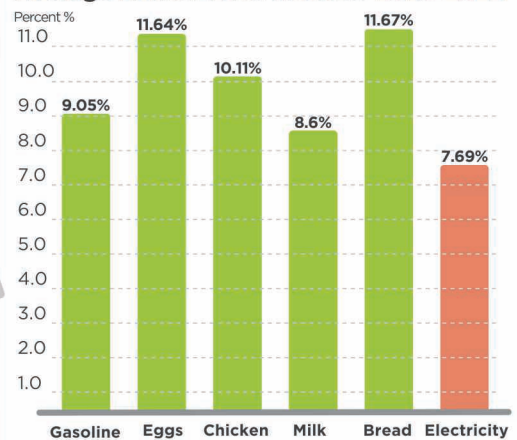
Although inflation has led to increasing costs in many areas of our lives, the cost of powering your home rises slowly when compared to other common goods. Looking at price increases over the last five years, electricity remains a good value.

FUN FACT:

One alternate measure of price changes is the Big Mac index...You guessed it! It measures how the price of a Big Mac compares in different countries & changes over time.



Average Annual Price Increase 2020-2024



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

Cooking Safety

Watch What You Heat: Cooking is the Number One Cause of Home Fires

Plan A: Primary Prevention

- The best time to cook is when you are wide awake, and not drowsy from medications or alcohol.
- Always wipe clean the stove, oven, exhaust fan to prevent grease buildup.
- Wear short or close-fitting sleeves when cooking.
- Keep a pan lid and dry potholders or oven mitts near you EVERY time you cook.
- Turn pot or pan handles toward the back of the stove.
- When heating food in the microwave, use microwave- safe cookware that allows steam to escape.
- Allow food to rest before removing from the microwave.
- When frying, use a pan lid or splash guard to prevent grease splatter.
- Stay in the kitchen while you are frying, grilling, or broiling food. If you leave, turn off the stove.
- If you are simmering, baking, roasting, or boiling food, check it regularly. Remain in the home while food is cooking, and use a timer to remind you to check on your cooking.
- After cooking, check the kitchen to make sure all burners and other appliances are turned off.

Plan B: Secondary Prevention

If your food does catch on fire...

1. Cover the pan with its lid. A cookie sheet works too. Leave covered until the pan is cool. NEVER move the pot or carry it outside - the pot is too hot to handle and the contents may splash, causing a severe burn.
2. Turn the heat off. With the lid on and the heat off, the fire should quickly put itself out. NEVER use water to put out a kitchen fire. Water will cause the

oil to splatter and spread the fire, or scald you as it vaporizes.

3. If the fire is inside the oven or microwave, keep the door shut and turn it off. Keep closed until the oven is cool.
4. If the fire gets out of control- get out, stay out and call 9-1-1. Don't return inside for any reason.

STATS

- 47% of all home fires are caused by cooking
- Preventing a burn injury is always better than the pain and trauma of medical treatment afterward.

National Burn Awareness Week (Feb. 4-10, 2024) is a window of opportunity for organizations to mobilize burn, fire, and life safety educators to unite in sharing a common burn awareness and prevention message in our communities.

Source: American Burn Association



Call 811 Before You Dig

Lillee Pannell, Age 10

Lillee Pannell instructs readers to call 811 before digging. Lillee is the daughter of Scott and Kim Pannell from Sioux Falls, S.D., members of Southeastern Electric Cooperative.

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.

BRUNCH SPECIALS

FRENCH TOAST SUPREME

Ingredients:

1/2 cup butter
 2 tbsps. white corn syrup
 1 cup brown sugar
 5 eggs
 1 cup Carnation milk
 1 tsp. vanilla
 1/4 tsp. salt

Method

Boil together butter, corn syrup, and brown sugar for one minute. Grease a 9x13 pan and put the caramel mix in bottom. Slice French bread about one inch thick or use Texas toast. Put slices close together on top of the caramel sauce. Beat together eggs, milk, vanilla, and salt. Pour on top of bread. Cover and refrigerate overnight. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes. When ready to serve, turn the pieces over and caramel will be on top. Best served warm.

Brigitta Hofer
 Bridgewater, S.D.

MINI FRITTATAS

Ingredients:

8 eggs
 1/4 cup milk
 1 1/2 tps. Italian seasoning
 1/4 tsp. salt
 1/8 tsp. ground black pepper
 1 cup crumbled cooked bacon
 1 med. onion, finely chopped
 1 med. zucchini, finely chopped
 1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese, divided

Method

Preheat oven to 350°F. Beat eggs, milk, Italian seasoning, salt and pepper in medium bowl until well blended. Add bacon, onion, zucchini and 1/2 cup of the cheese; mix well. Spray one (12-cup) muffin tin generously with no stick cooking spray. Spoon about 1/4 cup egg mixture into each cup. Sprinkle with remaining 1/2 cup cheese. Bake 20 to 22 minutes or just until eggs are set. Run small knife or spatula around each cup to loosen mini frittatas. Let stand five minutes before serving.

McCormick.com

CINNAMON PANCAKES

Ingredients:

2 cups pancake mix
 1 tsp. cinnamon
 2 eggs, beaten
 1 cup milk
 2 tbsps. vegetable oil
 1 tsp. pure vanilla extract

Method

Stir pancake mix and cinnamon in large bowl until well blended. Stir in eggs, milk, oil, and vanilla just until blended.

Pour 1/4 cup of batter per pancake onto preheated lightly greased griddle or skillet. Cook one to two minutes per side or until golden brown, turning when pancakes begin to bubble. Serve pancakes with Spiced Syrup, if desired.

Kitchen Tip: To make flavorful Spiced syrup, mix one cup pancake syrup, one teaspoon pure vanilla extract and 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon in a small microwave-safe bowl and microwave on HIGH for one minute or until warm, stirring once.

McCormick.com

Please send your favorite 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 2023. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

November Board Meeting Minutes

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Directors of Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative was held on Monday, November 27, 2023. Directors present James Rokeh, Kathy Schreurs, Scott Johnson, Dale Fier, Mike Longtin, Jared Dritz, Joel Buyck, Mary Gunnink and Galen Grant. Also present at the meeting were General Manager, Timothy O'Leary, Finance Manager, Kristi Jensen, and Attorney, Michael W. Cable.

President, Dale Fier, then called the meeting to order and routine business was conducted including approval of the October 23, 2023 meeting minutes, a review of the check schedule, applications for memberships, and shares to be cancelled.

Finance Manager, Kristi Jensen, gave the Financial and Statistical Report for the period ending September 30, 2023. The Board reviewed the Audit prepared by Eide Bailly and were advised of the responsibilities of management for the financial statements, the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements, other reporting required by government auditing standards, and the report on legal and regulatory requirements. The Board and Auditors reviewed the Balance Sheets for the time period to August 31, 2023 and the year 2022, the Statements of Operations for the same time period, the Statements of Patronage Capital and Other Equities for the same time period, the Statements of Cash Flows and Notes to Financial Statements for the same time period. After discussion and review with the Auditors, a motion was made by Ms. Schreurs, seconded by Mr. Longtin, and carried to approve the Audit presented by Eide Bailly.

Lyle Lamote, Line Superintendent, gave

the Outage Report to the Board for the month of October. He also indicated that there was an October Safety Meeting held on October 12, 2023 concerning the topic of Distracted Driving/Mobile Usage and Defensive Driving for Large Vehicles presented by Brandon Cruz from Star Energy. Lyle Lamote and GM, Timothy O'Leary, then presented to the Board a quote that had been received from EXACTER for performing circuit data gathering and analysis by utilizing vehicles, equipment, and RF technology to identify problems that may exist on the distribution lines of Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc. Natalee Possail- 1513101. Mr. Lamote then indicated that the linemen were doing the following work: The County Road 5 Project south of Ghent, Minnesota was finished, one mile of three phase underground line for a new service west of Balaton needs to be installed, there is work being completed on the OCRs for the Marble and Ghent Substations, and linemen will be performing line patrol in December.

Brian Jeremiason, Manager of Marketing and External Relations, reviewed his report with the board which included the following: He attended NRECA's Cybersecurity Tabletop Exercise which was a simulated scenario through their virtual training platform, Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc. upgraded the SmartHub app and the website on the Cooperative's end to provide more information to members and make the system easier to use, and reviewed the rebate programs that the cooperative offers.

General Manager, Timothy O'Leary, then gave his manager's report; some of the items reviewed were as follows: the Board reviewed the October power bill and sales

to members and compared those figures to budgeted amounts, looked at line loss for the system, and reported on the East River Electric Power Cooperative, Inc. MAC Meeting. The board was advised that Wade Thooft, Operations Staff Assistant, and General Manager, Timothy O'Leary, participated in a phone call with East River Electric Power Cooperative, Inc.'s staff regarding the transition to the next generation load management receivers.

The Board then reviewed the October 2023 Cyber Security Program Report presented by East River Cyber Security Department dated November 1, 2023. The Board recessed for lunch at 11:59 pm and reconvened at 12:22 pm and during the lunch period the Board reviewed The East River Electric Power Cooperative, Inc. monthly video report which included the Basin Summary. The Board reviewed and approved the Director Districts which described the number of members in each District. Said map described the Townships located in each District with the total number of members for each District and for the Cooperative. Directors gave a report concerning the recent meetings they had attended and reviewed upcoming meetings and notices.

There being no further business to come before the Board, President, Dale Fier, adjourned the meeting at 1:25 pm.

November Outage Report (10 or more consumers)

11/09/23- 1,303 consumers were out 17 minutes in the Ghent, Ivanhoe, and Lynd Substations. The cause was a burndown on East River's transmission line.

Winter savings

When outdoor temperatures drop, our electricity use increases. That's because we're doing more activities inside, and our heating systems are running longer and more often to counteract colder outdoor temperatures. Factor in that we all tend to use electricity at the same times—in the morning and early evenings—and that equals a lot of strain on our electric grid.

To help keep the heat on for you, your family and neighbors, here are a few things you can do to relieve pressure on the grid (and save a little money along the way):

- Select the lowest comfortable thermostat setting and turn it down several degrees whenever possible. Your heating system must run longer to make up the difference between the thermostat temp and the outdoor temp.
 - Pro Tip:** Seal air leaks around windows and exterior doors with caulk and weatherstripping. Air leaks and drafts force your heating system to work harder than necessary.
- Stagger your use of major appliances such as dishwashers, ovens and dryers.
 - Pro Tip:** Start the dishwasher before you go to bed and use smaller countertop appliances like slow cookers and air fryers to save energy.
- Ensure that your heating system is optimized for efficiency with regular maintenance and proper insulation.
 - Pro Tip:** Make sure your furnace filter isn't clogged and dirty. Replace it as needed.
- When possible, use cold water to reduce water heating costs.
 - Pro Tip:** Setting your water heater thermostat to 120 degrees can help you save energy and reduce mineral buildup and corrosion in your water heater and pipes.
- Unplug devices when not in use to eliminate unnecessary energy use. Even when turned off, electronics in standby mode consume energy.
 - Pro Tip:** Plug devices into a power strip so you can turn them all off at once with the push of a button.

As we face the challenges posed by winter weather, understanding its impact on energy demand is crucial for maintaining a reliable power supply. By adopting energy conservation practices during periods of extreme cold, not only can you save money on your electric bills, but you can also each contribute to the resilience of the power grid, keeping our local community warm and connected.

BEST BETS FOR Winter Savings

Energy consumption spikes during winter months as we spend more time indoors and heating systems work overtime. You can help reduce demand and strain on the electric grid by conserving during peak energy times. Reducing energy use will also help lower your energy bills.

<p>UNPLUG WHEN POSSIBLE</p> <p>Turn off unnecessary lights and electronics when you aren't using them.</p>	<p>ELIMINATE DRAFTS AND AIR LEAKS</p> <p>Seal air leaks and drafts around windows and exterior doors.</p>
<p>MAINTAIN HEATING EQUIPMENT</p> <p>Maintain your heating system by replacing dirty, clogged filters and scheduling an annual inspection for necessary maintenance.</p>	<p>USE APPLIANCES WHEN ENERGY DEMAND IS LOWER</p> <p>Run large appliances like clothes washers, dryers and dishwashers early in the morning or before you go to bed.</p>
<p>LOWER THE THERMOSTAT</p> <p>Home heating accounts for a large portion of energy consumption. Adjust your thermostat to the lowest comfortable setting (68 degrees or lower).</p>	

WIN MONEY

FIND YOUR NAME & MEMBER #

The tradition of listing member names and numbers in the newsletter continues in the Co-op Connections. If you find your name and member number, call the office and let us know and you will receive a \$20 energy credit.

In last month's Co-op Connections, Earl Skaar & Brent & Blythe Zeug were listed and will receive an energy credit if they spot their names and call the office. Once again, there are two new names and numbers hidden in this issue. Good Luck!

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

TIP OF THE MONTH

Area rugs are an easy, cost-effective solution to cold floors. Adding area rugs to hard-surface flooring can add warmth to any room and keep your feet cozy on cold winter days. Choose rugs made from wool or other natural fibers and plush or high-pile textures for the most insulation. Place rugs in areas where you need additional warmth, like the foot of a bed or under a coffee table. Area rugs can enhance the aesthetic of your home and keep you cozier.

Source: energystar.gov



SOUTH DAKOTA'S SNOWMOBILE CLUBS

A group of Black Hills Snowmobile Club members enjoy a ride through the snow covered pines.

Snow Lovers Create Trails and Lifelong Friendships Through Club Membership

Shannon Marvel

shannon.marvel@sdrea.coop

Being a member of one of South Dakota's many snowmobiling clubs is more like being a member of a big, adrenaline-loving family.

Being a part of a snowmobile club provides the opportunity to meet likeminded individuals that can easily turn into some of your best friends. That's the case for Mike Boock, of Rapid City, who is a longtime member of the Black Hills Snowmobile Club (BHSC).

"Most of the friendships that I have today are because of the snowmobile club. Many of us even camp together during the summer at the lake," Boock said.

Boock said the club boasts up to 70 members in all. While he primarily rides the mountains of Colorado and Wyoming, Boock loves riding in Black Hills when the area receives enough snow.

There are a total of 416 miles of groomed snowmobile trails

in the Black Hills National Forest, making it a pristine spot for snowmobiling.

The snowmobile clubs in the Black Hills have it a little easier than those out east as they don't have to mark, install, groom or repair trails.

"The state takes care of that," Boock said. "This allows clubs like the BHSC to become more of an educational and community support organization."

This allows club members more free time to volunteer or participate in community events, such as the Festival of Lights Parade and Storybook Island Christmas Nights of Light.

Kelly Weaver is the President of the South Dakota Snowmobile Association and a member of the Aberdeen Drift Busters Snowmobile Club.

The Aberdeen Drift Busters maintain what's called the Dakota Midland trail system, which connects Aberdeen, Mina Lake, Richmond Lake, Westport, Frederick and Columbia.

"This provides about 75 miles of riding in a safe, marked, and groomed corridor," Weaver said.

There are rules governing the trail system. While there are no posted speed limits on the trail, when the trail is located in a road right-of-way, the speed limit of the road applies.

There are also laws governing the type of vehicle that can be ridden on a snowmobile trail. Machines must meet the state definition of a snowmobile. ATV's and other motorized vehicles do not typically meet that definition.

Aberdeen Drift Busters has held the title of being the largest snowmobile club in the state for several years. It was established in 1969, the same year the South Dakota Snowmobile

Association was established.

“Currently, our membership is right around 100 families,” Weaver said. “The club has been as large as 225 members but membership has slowed over the past decade due to the lack of snow and the growing number of activities that families have an opportunity to participate in.”

Anyone can join a snowmobile club and snowmobile ownership is not a requirement.

“You are connected with very experienced snowmobilers who can provide information about machines, riding ventures and how organized snowmobiling operates,” Weaver said. “It is a way to connect with people who have a shared passion for the sport.”

Weaver had her first taste of snowmobiling as a young child with her father and neighbors.

“When I was young, I only rode as a passenger, which I found was not to my liking. When I met my future husband, he also had a snowmobile and I had to ride as a passenger once again,” Weaver said.

Weaver and her husband decided to join the Aberdeen Drift Busters while taking a break from riding for a bite to eat years ago.

“In 1986, my fiancé – now husband – and I were on a snowmobile ride and stopped to eat at a trailside business. Another snowmobiler, who we did not know, approached us and told us we needed to join the club. We did and have been actively involved ever since. That snowmobiling ‘stranger’ became a lifelong friend who we’ve shared many snowmobile memories with,” Weaver said. “Like most things we are drawn to, it is the ability to connect with others who share a common interest that keeps us involved. We have met so many people across the state and the nation through our involvement and have experienced some awesome and fun-filled trips over the years. There are so many ways to be involved that even members who are not avid riders can benefit from and enjoy

being part of the club.”

Once married, Weaver decided she’d need her own sled if she were to continue with snowmobiling. When her husband acquired a new Polaris, she was granted a used Arctic Cat Jag that she described as a “trusty starter sled.”

“Early on in our riding, we were able to make trips to the Black Hills, Big Horn Mountains and West Yellowstone. These venues are even more breathtaking in the winter,” Weaver said.

A long day on the trail in a large riding area might last six to eight hours. There needs to be a minimum of six inches of snow on the ground, depending on the terrain.

It may take several layers of snow to create a base for the trail, which can then be groomed and maintained throughout the season.

With adequate snow and a trail in place, an ideal riding day for Weaver would be sunny skies with a little wind, and temperatures between 0 and 30 degrees.

Over in the southeastern corner of

the state, Duane Duerr, President of the Siouxland Sno Trackers, finds great enjoyment in riding his Ski Doo 900 Ave Four Cycle snowmobile.

The Siouxland Sno Trackers is one of the original snowmobile clubs in South Dakota and has around 78 miles of groomed trails for its 80 members.

Duerr grew up in Minnesota and joined the club in 2006 when he moved to South Dakota. Joining the club helped him to learn the trails and rules, and provided him with many friendships.

“I think snowmobiling has become more popular, but involvement in all organizations is down,” Duerr said. “Many do not realize that snowmobile clubs are why we have a trail system and that they put it in and take it out. Without the clubs, we will no longer have trails in South Dakota. Member support is what makes a difference and too many take that involvement for granted.”

More information on the state’s snowmobile clubs can be found at the SDSA’s website at snowmobilesd.com.



Watertown’s South Dakota Snowmobile Club members take a break during an outing.

Preparing for the Winter Season

Maintaining reliability even in the harshest conditions

In the Upper Midwest, we're used to harsh winters. And as your local electric cooperative, we're prepared to face whatever Mother Nature throws at us: ice, snow, wind, or frigid temperatures. We're here for you through it all to provide you with reliable power at an affordable price. That doesn't mean we won't face challenges – but your Cooperative, Lyon-Lincoln Electric, prepares for harsh weather in several ways to make sure we have the highest reliability possible.

To enhance energy security and resilience, a diverse mix of energy sources is essential. We often refer to this as an “all-of-the-above” generation strategy. Our generation mix includes a combination of coal, natural gas, wind, hydropower, and soon solar energy. Dispatchable generation that can be turned on when needed includes coal, natural gas and hydropower. Non-dispatchable, or intermittent, resources like wind and solar are only available when the wind is blowing, or the sun is shining.

Lyon-Lincoln Electric is connected to large power suppliers like East River Electric Power Cooperative, Basin Electric Power Cooperative and the Western Area Power Administration. Tami Harris- 1087303. Those entities are part of the Southwest Power Pool (SPP) – a regional transmission organization responsible for balancing the grid in our region. SPP officials have analyzed the probability of energy shortfalls this winter and have concluded that there is little chance of energy shortfalls.

“There were no region-wide concerns identified that we are not capable of resolving,” said SPP Senior Vice President of Operations Bruce Rew during a recent winter preparedness and emergency communications meeting hosted

by SPP. “We are, however, continually performing studies to assess system changes and to develop ways to mitigate problems should any study indicate the potential for those to occur.”

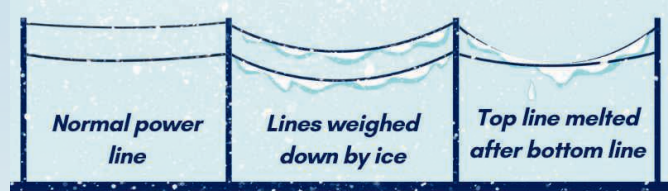


According to SPP, the operations analysts who have studied grid conditions for this upcoming winter season say with 98.5 percent certainty that the region will have enough energy available to meet demand under normal, expected winter conditions, and even with a 5 percent increase in electricity demand SPP will have a 97% chance of having sufficient generation to serve consumers. That means while there is still a chance that extreme weather conditions could cause concern, the probability is very low that we could experience power interruptions this winter because of a lack of generation capacity.

Lyon-Lincoln Electric has also taken steps to prepare for extreme weather conditions by investing in its electric distribution system, putting an ever-increasing number of miles of line underground, designing a well-connected transmission system so energy can be efficiently transported reliably, and making sure we have an all-of-the-above generation strategy that doesn't rely on just one type of generation technology. We've also installed technologies throughout the system that can detect problems, an energy management system that can reduce energy usage during peak times, and we winterize our equipment so it holds up even in the harshest conditions.

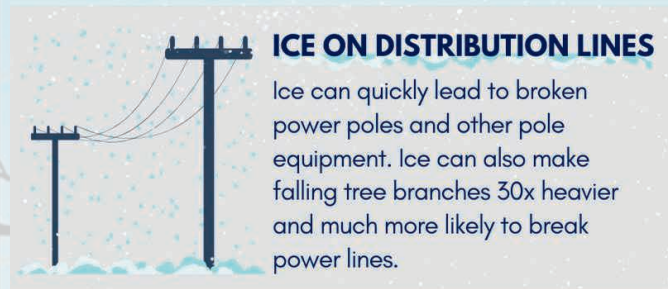
Although the chances of power interruptions this winter are minimal, we are very concerned about the future of generation assets on the grid. The retirement of a number of dispatchable generation units across the country, combined with rising energy demand as sectors of the economy are increasingly electrified, will impact the reliability of the grid. The potential for federal regulatory mandates could force electric cooperatives to close coal or natural gas plants, which will certainly have a negative impact on the reliability of the power grid. Some parts of the country are predicting dire circumstances this winter because fewer coal and natural gas plants will be generating electricity. We are working with our lawmakers and regulatory officials to stem the tide of premature retirement of these assets because a reliable and resilient energy generation system is vital to meet the heightened demand during the winter season.

We will continue to use and advocate for a diverse energy mix, upgrade infrastructure when needed, and implement winterization measures. As always, Lyon-Lincoln Electric is working to keep your power reliable and affordable while we maintain a robust energy delivery system that ensures a stable and secure energy supply throughout the winter months and beyond.



ICE ON POWER LINES IS A WEIGHTY SUBJECT

When it comes to getting electricity across power lines and into homes, ice can be a force to be reckoned with.



ICE ON DISTRIBUTION LINES
Ice can quickly lead to broken power poles and other pole equipment. Ice can also make falling tree branches 30x heavier and much more likely to break power lines.

ON A 300-FOOT SPAN OF 1-INCH- THICK POWER LINES

- 1/2 inch of ice adds 281 lbs. of weight
- 1 inch of ice adds 749 lbs. of weight
- 2 inches of ice adds 2,248 lbs. of weight

WHEN ICE MELTS

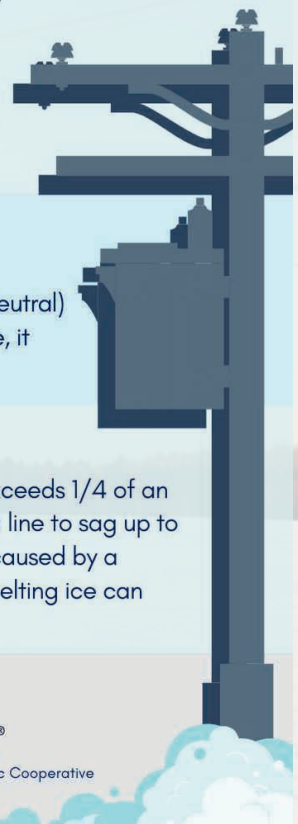
Melting ice can cause power outages. If ice on the bottom (neutral) line melts before the lines above, it can cause the lines to touch.

OTHER ICE FACTS

Damage can begin when ice exceeds 1/4 of an inch 1/2 inch of ice can cause a line to sag up to 12 inches Pressure can also be caused by a broken tree limb Both ice and melting ice can cause power outages



Source: Jerri Imgarten-Whitley and Victory Electric Cooperative





Jocelyn Cihak takes a dual-credit calculus class offered by Northern State University. *Photo courtesy of Northern State University*

DUAL-CREDIT

High Schoolers are Gaining College Credits

Scott Waltman

Some graduates of South Dakota high schools are showing up on college campuses with a semester's worth of credits.

Sometimes even more.

The dual-credit program has proven to be both beneficial and popular since it was introduced by Gov. Dennis Daugaard in 2014.

It's easy to understand why. Here's how the program works. High school juniors and seniors at any South Dakota high school can take classes for which they get both high school and college credits. There are scores of

classes to choose from, and the cost to take them is steeply discounted.

For instance, once a student enrolls at any of the state's six public schools or universities, they pay between \$253.85 and \$260.55 per credit hour. That cost for a high school student taking a college-level class through the dual-credit program? It's a mere \$48.33 per credit hour.

That's why education officials in South Dakota love the program.

Nathan Lukkes, executive director and chief executive officer for the South Dakota Board of Regents, said providing an affordable education has been a priority for the regents in

recent years. Tuition freezes and an increased number of scholarships are part of that work. But so are dual-credit classes, he said.

Most of the dual-credit courses are general education classes – or generals, as college students often call them – he said. Through the program, students can have some of those courses out of the way before they even get their high school degrees.

The work done by the regents and the universities resulted in Forbes naming South Dakota the most affordable state in which to get a high school education, Lukkes said.

All six South Dakota public universities offer dual-credit classes, and the number of high school students taking advantage has been going up in recent years.

The number of students taking dual-credit classes changes throughout

the year, but there were 1,223 taking classes at Northern State University in Aberdeen in fall 2023 compared to 1,141 the year before. And at South Dakota State University in Brookings, the number jumped from 903 to 1,031 in fall 2023, according to statistics from the board of regents.

Here's how the systemwide numbers are trending based on the number of students taking dual-credit classes, according to the 2023 South Dakota Board of Regents Fact Book, which was issued during summer at the end of the most recent fiscal year.

2021-2022: 4,300

2020-2021: 3,919

2019-2020: 3,781

2018-2019: 3,168

The 10 most popular classes all had more than 150 students.

College algebra: 990

Fundamentals of speech: 905

Composition I (English 101): 830

General psychology: 513

U.S. history I: 379

American government: 317

Music appreciation (Music 101): 280

Introduction to sociology: 241

Biology survey I (Biology 101): 157

Biology survey lab: 156

In 2021, there were 9,523 dual-credit courses taken by South Dakota high school students, according to information from the regents. That number includes summer courses and students who took more than one course.

At Northwestern High School in Mellette, Superintendent Rob Lewis said about 25% of the juniors and seniors are taking advantage of dual-credit courses. One student has taken a full semester's worth, he said.

Do the math over the course of a semester, and that's a savings of north of \$2,300. And that doesn't take on-campus housing and food into account.

That's just a great deal for high school kids, Lewis said.

Chris Ulrich, the middle school and high school principal at Northwestern, agrees.

"It's a nice opportunity for kids

to get not only college credits, but also experience what college is like," he said.

And they get to do it within the comfort of their high school, Ulrich said. The program is a great transitional step leading from high school to college, he said.

AP, or Advanced Placement classes, were great, but dual-credit classes are even better, Lewis said.

AP classes are college-level courses taught by high school teachers. But they don't always equate to college credit. Dual-credit courses are taught by college instructors and professors and always result in college credit, if a student passes.

In South Dakota, dual-credit courses can be taken on any of the six public university campuses, in Sioux Falls, Rapid City, Huron, Pierre, Watertown and online.

And there's another benefit, Lukkes said. Dual-credit classes create a tie between South Dakota high school students and the regental schools. Any chance a high school student has a chance to engage with a state school creates a bond that could help keep that kid in South Dakota, he said.

Perhaps a Spearfish High School student takes a dual-credit class at Black Hills State University and it's a good experience. Maybe that high school graduate stays in town and enrolls at BHSU.

Lewis, too, said the program is a great way to keep students in South Dakota for college and perhaps beyond.

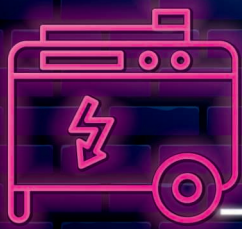
That's also a focus for the Aberdeen Development Corp., which is starting a program aimed at keeping more Northern graduates in town to start their professional careers.



Rhianna Troske, a student at Northwestern High School in Mellette, takes a dual-credit class while at school. Photo by Scott Waltman

WHAT IS backfeed?

Avoid deadly backfeed and help keep lineworkers safe.



Backfeed happens when a person connects their portable generator to a wall outlet, which allows power to flow in reverse – that is, the alternate power source feeds energy back through their home’s electrical system, their meter and back into the power lines.

Potentially deadly backfeed can also happen with permanently installed generators that are not used or installed correctly. They should be wired into your home by a qualified electrician, who will install either an automatic or manual transfer switch, depending on the generator. The job of this switch is to transfer a power source safely from its primary source to a backup source.

To keep utility crews safe, never plug a portable generator directly into a wall outlet or electrical system, and ensure transfer switches are professionally installed and working properly. Electric lineworkers thank you in advance.

Learn more at: [SafeElectricity.org](https://www.SafeElectricity.org)



Deadline:
Feb. 9th, 2024

REMINDER: Now Accepting Scholarship Applications

The scholarship application can be found on the Lyon-Lincoln Electric website by visiting <https://llec.coop/llec-scholarships>.

Applications can also be requested from the co-op office or through your high school guidance counselor.



YEAR-TO-DATE COMPARISON

	Oct.- 2022	Oct.- 2023
Total Revenue	\$8,965,088	\$9,091,730
Cost of Power	\$4,968,539	\$5,157,548
Operating Expenses	\$3,701,157	\$3,619,414
Operating Margins	\$295,392	\$314,768
KWH's Purchased	83,031,326	84,057,931
Services in Place	4,122	4,126
Miles of Line	1,670	1,671
Revenue per Mile	\$5,368	\$5,441



OPERATION ROUNDUP

TURN YOUR

COINS INTO CHANGE

NOVEMBER 2023 GRANTEES

Lyon County Salvation Army

\$1,500 towards the Red Kettle Campaign/ emergency assistance for people in crisis

Junior Achievement North-Lyon County

\$1,500 towards Junior Achievement curriculum

SWWC Foundation for Innovation in Education

\$1,000 towards the SWWC Student Enrichment Program



HOW OPERATION ROUNDUP WORKS

Operation RoundUp® is a program made possible by Lyon-Lincoln Electric members who round up their monthly electric bill to the next dollar. The extra cents go directly into a Trust that is administered quarterly in grants to community organizations. A board of trustees adheres to specific guidelines to ensure your dollars are spent wisely.

NOVEMBER BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Lyon-Lincoln Electric Trust, Inc. was held November 27th, 2023. The board reviewed applications and grant requests were approved. Then, thank you notes and final reports from grant recipients were reviewed. The next meeting will be held March 4th, 2024. Applications for grants can be found at www.llec.coop under the "Your Cooperative" tab.

The next round of applications will be due February 23, 2024.

2023-2024 BOARD MEMBERS

- Heidi Fier, President
- Michelle Williams, Vice President
- Ann Longtin, Secretary/Treas.
- Diana Nielsen, Director
- Katy Vos, Director
- Judy Hayes, Director
- Kayla Werkman, Director
- Greg Kohler, Director
- Deb Belaen, Director



FEB. 24, 2024
Nemo 500 Outhouse Races & Chili Cookoff
 10 a.m.
 Nemo Guest Ranch
 Nemo, 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.

FEB. 3
Lake Hendricks Fishing Derby
 11 a.m.
 City Boat Landing
 Hendricks, MN

FEB. 9-10
Mardi Gras Weekend
 Historic Downtown Deadwood
 Deadwood, SD

FEB. 10
Polar Bear Chili Cook-Off
 11 a.m.
 Main Street
 Hill City, SD

FEB. 11
Beadle County Humane Society Bingo, Silent Auction & Bake Sale Benefit
 2 p.m.
 Huron Community Center
 Huron, SD

FEB. 18-20
MASC presents Disaster! the Musical
 Vesta Community Center
 Vesta, MN

FEB. 22
The Starlets: Pop Female Trio
Aberdeen Community Concert Association
 7 p.m.
 Johnson Fine Arts Center NSU
 Aberdeen, SD

FEB. 23-24
Women in Blue Jeans Conference
 Highland Conference Center
 Mitchell, SD

MARCH 1-3
National Pheasant Fest & Quail Classic
 Denny Sanford Premier Center
 Sioux Falls, SD

MARCH 2
Live on Stage
 High Country Guest Ranch
 Hill City, SD

MARCH 7
Elevate Rapid City Economic Summit
 8 a.m.
 The Monument
 Rapid City, SD

MARCH 9
French Toast/Pancake Feed & Health Fair
 8:30 a.m.
 Tea Community Building
 Tea, SD

MARCH 9
SunCatcher Therapeutic Riding Academy & 3rd Annual Shamrock Gala and Benefit Auction
 5 p.m.
 Alex Johnson Ballroom
 Rapid City, SD

MARCH 11-15
Black Hills Institute's 50th Anniversary Celebration
 Hill City, SD

MARCH 15
East Dakota Chapter NWFT 31st Annual Banquet
 Ramkota Exhibit Hall
 Sioux Falls, SD

MARCH 16
Live On Stage
 High Country Guest Ranch
 Hill City, SD

MARCH 16-17
Hill City Antiques, Railroad & Collectibles Show & Sale
 Hill City Center
 Hill City, SD

MARCH 17
St. Patrick's Day Green Pancakes and Sausage
 8:30 a.m.
 RVUMC
 Rapid City, SD

MARCH 20-23
Hill City Restaurant Week
 Hill City, SD

MARCH 23
Tyndall VFW Vegas Night
 7:30 p.m.
 Tyndall Community Center
 Tyndall, SD

MARCH 23
Hill City Children's Easter Egg Hunt
 Visitor Info Center
 Hill City, SD

MARCH 24
Ham Dinner & Silent Auction
 11:45 a.m.
 RVUMC
 Rapid City, SD

MARCH 24
Run for the Rangers
 Hill City, SD

Note: Please make sure to call ahead to verify the event is still being held.