

# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Jessie Ruml pursues a labor of love growing an assortment of fresh-cut flowers at Pixie Acres Flower Farm near Castlewood

*Photo by Rachel Clelland Photography*

## In Bloom

**Cut flowers spread summer cheer**

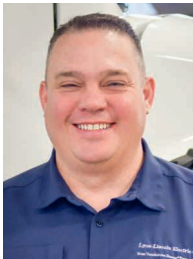
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**Addressing power supply and demand**

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# Reporting outages & keeping members informed when the lights go out



**Tim O'Leary**  
General Manager

The 83<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting of Lyon-Lincoln Electric Co-op (LLEC) was held the evening of June 1st. The meeting provides an opportunity for our member-owners to actively participate in the cooperative by voting for candidates they would like to see represent them on the board of directors. The meeting provides staff and directors to update the membership on the financial condition of the co-op, recap activities from the previous year and look at issues that may affect the co-op in the future. A full recap of this year's annual meeting and pictures will show up in next month's newsletter.

In this month's newsletter, you will find an article and pictures on the May 12th weather event that hit our area and caused multiple outages on our distribution system and East River's transmission system. The transmission system delivers the power to our area distribution substation and then goes out on our distribution system to our member-owners. This storm damaged transmission lines serving each of our substations, so every member of the cooperative and residents in the City of Tyler saw extended outage times.

We had a large number of members that tried calling in at the same time during the large outage. Some were able to get through to our after-hours dispatch center, CRC, but many of the calls rolled over to another number and remained unanswered. We reached out to our phone provider, and they found a setting that was set up wrong. Once that setting was corrected, calls rolled over to the after-hours dispatch center. We leave the phone forwarded during high call volumes, because we have limited staff, and the dispatch center can answer more calls when the outage hits such a large area. Trent & Amber Altheide - 1506600

In addition to calls coming in to report outages, we received a number of emails that let us know that power was out. We ask those that email in outage information to also call it in, since the email address is not actively

monitored after normal working hours.

We will be adding the following to the [email@llec.coop](mailto:email@llec.coop) address: Your message has been received and is being routed to the appropriate staff. Please keep in mind that our regular hours are 8:00 am to 4:30 pm Monday through Friday. Your message is important and will be addressed as soon as we are able. To report an outage, or if you need immediate assistance, please call 800-927-6276.

We also get some messages via our Facebook page that is not monitored 24/7. So, what's the bottom line? We would like all outage reports to be called into the office during normal working hours or our dispatch center when the office is closed.

We understand that most of our members calling in or emailing us are looking for when power will be restored to their area, so we do our best to answer with an educated guess. Rest assured, that it is our goal to restore power safely to all of our members and we appreciate the patience that our members have shown throughout the years during storm situations.

Our Facebook page is used to update our members on the extent of damage, and we will try to provide a time estimate on the page when we have enough information to provide an educated guess. We are looking for ways to have our Facebook updates show up on our website ([www.llec.coop](http://www.llec.coop)) as well, since not everyone has or wants to be on Facebook.

## Have a happy, healthy, and safe summer!

### April Outage Report

(10 or more Consumers)

4-23-22- 12 consumers were off 3 hours and 5 minutes in the Township of Royal. The cause was a transmission line that fell on top of our overhead line.

4-30-22- 13 consumers were off 1 hour 40 minutes in the Townships of Alta Vista and Eidsvold. The cause was an open OCR from a squirrel.

## COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

### LYON-LINCOLN ELECTRIC

(ISSN 1540-6989)

#### Board of Directors

Sandy Ludeman, Tracy – President  
Galen Grant, Russell – Vice President  
Kathleen Schreurs, Tyler – Sec./Treas.  
Merv Anderson, Porter  
Jared Dritz, Porter  
Mary Gunnink, Lake Benton  
Scott Johnson, Tyler  
Dale Fier, Taunton  
James Rokeh, Minneota

#### Staff and Personnel

Tim O'Leary – General Manager  
Lyle Lamote – Line Superintendent  
Kristi Jensen - Finance Manager  
Brian Jeremiason – Manager of  
Marketing & External Relations  
Rochelle Borresen – Accountant  
Lisa Hauswedell – Billing Clerk  
Jessica Gums – Executive Assistant

#### Staff and Personnel

Randy Keifer – Crew Chief  
Journeyman Linemen:  
Ross Birath  
Dan Tutt  
Tyler Blomme  
Tyler Sand  
Nathan Pavek  
Sam Rohde - Apprentice Lineman  
Wade Thooft – Operations Staff  
Assistant  
Alan Fischer – Warehouse  
Coordinator/Work Order Clerk

[www.llec.coop](http://www.llec.coop)

Lyon-Lincoln Electric hours from  
May 2 to September 30, 2022 are  
7:00 AM – 4:30 PM Mon. thru Fri.

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to: Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative  
Connections, PO Box 639, W Hwy. 14, Tyler,  
MN 56178; telephone (507) 247-5505; toll  
free 1-800-927-6276; fax (507) 247-5508.

**Jessica Gums, Editor**

## Lyon-Lincoln Electric will be CLOSED on July 4 in observance of Independence Day



### YEAR-TO-DATE COMPARISON

	March-2021	March-2022
Total Revenue	\$2,830,742	\$3,102,025
Cost of Power	\$1,618,405	\$1,498,314
Operating Expenses	\$1,215,885	\$1,228,355
Operating Margins	\$(3,548)	\$375,356
KWH's Purchased	28,071,754	31,263,156
Services in Place	4,129	4,133
Miles of Line	1,670	1,671
Revenue per Mile	\$1,695	\$1,856

# Reduce your risk of shock in the home

Contact with electricity can result in something as innocuous (but still painful) as a mild shock to severe injuries like nerve damage and burns. In some cases, it can even cause cardiac arrest and death. Here's a list of some of the most common shock risks inside a home.

**1. Appliances.** Most shocks from household appliances occur during repairs. It's not enough to turn off an appliance before working on it - you need to unplug it to reduce risk. Large appliances are responsible for 18 percent of household electrical accidents; small appliances account for 12 percent.

There's also danger if your appliance comes into contact with water. Many of these hazards can be avoided by using a ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI). A GFCI is a protective device installed on electrical outlets, primarily used where water is present. When the device detects an imbalance in the electric current, it turns off the power to minimize the potential for an electric shock.

**2. Ladders.** Typically, ladders present a falling hazard, but 8 percent of household shocks are also related to ladders. Electrocutation typically happens when the ladder makes contact with electrical wires. Before you use a ladder, make sure you can clearly see all power lines in the area - including those that may be hidden by tree branches. Ensure that the ladder is 10 feet away and won't contact a power line if it falls in any direction.

**3. Power tools.** Power tools account for 9 percent of consumer product-related shocks. According to OSHA, when you use power tools that are not double-insulated, are damaged or have damaged cords, you increase your chances of being injured. The chance of danger also increases when you use incompatible cords, use power tools incorrectly or use them in wet conditions. This is another situation in which GFCIs can help.

**4. Electrical outlets and extension cords.** Inserting anything that doesn't belong - screwdrivers, knives, fingers or toy cars, to name a few - into an electrical outlet can result in a dangerous electrical contact.

Use cover plates that fit properly and safety covers on all outlets. By installing tamper-resistant receptacles, outlets will have permanent security against foreign objects being inserted into the slots.

Any broken, loose or worn-out plugs, switches and light fixtures should be replaced immediately.

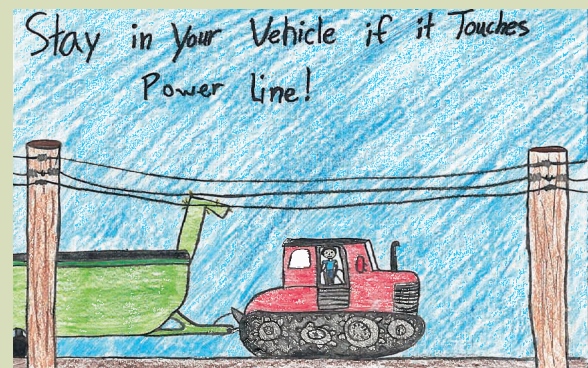
## COOPERATIVES RESPOND TO EMERGENCIES



When back-to-back spring snow storms struck Burke Divide Electric Cooperative (Columbus, ND), cooperatives from South Dakota and Minnesota traveled long distances to respond to the call for help.

When a deadly derecho swept through eastern South Dakota in early May, co-op crews worked long hours to restore power to thousands of electric cooperative members. It's what cooperative linemen do.

Find out more about how our line crews respond to emergencies by visiting Cooperative Connections Plus. Simply scan the QR code at right.



## Call 811 before you dig

### Esmae Beld

Esmae Beld, age 11, offers some sound advice to stay inside your vehicle and call for help if it comes in contact with energized power lines. Esmae is the child of Orlando and Shanna Beld. They are members of H-D 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.



# DREAMY DESSERTS

## LEMON MERINGUE PIE

Ingredients:

### Pie

1 cup sugar  
1/4 cup cornstarch  
1-1/2 cups cold water  
3 egg yolks, lightly beaten  
1/4 cup lemon juice  
1 tablespoon butter  
1/2 teaspoon McCormick® Pure Lemon Extract  
1 baked pie crust (9-inch)

### Meringue Topping

1/3 cup sugar  
1/2 teaspoon McCormick® Cream Of Tartar  
3 egg whites  
1/4 teaspoon McCormick® Pure Lemon Extract

### METHOD

Preheat oven to 350°F. Mix sugar and cornstarch in medium saucepan. Gradually stir in water until smooth. Stir in egg yolks. Stirring constantly, bring to boil on medium heat; boil 1 minute. Remove from heat. Stir in lemon juice, butter and extract. Pour hot filling into baked pie crust. For the Meringue Topping, mix sugar and cream of tartar. Beat egg whites in medium bowl with electric mixer on high speed until foamy. Gradually add sugar mixture and extract, beating until stiff peaks form. Spread meringue evenly over hot filling, sealing to edges of crust. Bake 15 to 20 minutes or until meringue is golden. Cool completely on wire rack. Store in refrigerator.

**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 2022. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

## CARAMEL STUFFED KRISPIE BARS

Ingredients:

### Caramel filling

4 oz. caramel Kraft bits, unwrapped  
4 oz. sweetened condensed milk  
8 tbsp. butter

### Rice Krispie layer

12 tbsp. butter, halved  
10 cup Rice Krispies, halved  
8 cup mini marshmallows, split in half  
2 cup additional mini marshmallows for sprinkling

### METHOD

Line pan (9x13) with nonstick foil. Microwave caramel bits, butter and condensed milk until melted and smooth when stirred. Microwave 6 tablespoons butter and 4 cups marshmallows just a minute and stir. Stir in cereal and press into pan. Pour on the caramel. Sprinkle on the additional 2 cups marshmallows and place in freezer for 15 minutes. Use the remaining Krispie ingredients and repeat directions. Press this layer on top of the marshmallows and caramel layer and return to freezer. Switch to the refrigerator and let set for a few hours. Cut into big squares and enjoy.

**Eric Neville, Milesville**

## DUMP BARS

Ingredients:

2 cups white sugar  
1 3/4 cups flour  
1 tsp. salt  
1 cup vegetable oil  
1 tsp. vanilla  
1/2 cup cocoa  
4 eggs  
1 cup chocolate chips

### METHOD

"Dump" all ingredients except chocolate chips together in bowl. Mix with spoon. Spread in greased 9x13 pan. Sprinkle chocolate chips on top. Do not stir. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes.

**Deanna Poppen, Sioux Falls**



## Win Money

### Find Your Name & Member Number and Win \$

The tradition of listing member names and numbers in the newsletter continues in the Cooperative 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 Cooperative Connections, Myron Green and Daniel & Rebecca Polfliet spotted their names and will receive an energy credit. Once again, there are two new names and numbers hidden in this issue. Good Luck!

## Energy Saving Tip

Did you know the combined use of large appliances like dishwashers, clothes dryers and washing machines account for the largest percentage of electricity use in the average U.S. home? Take small steps to save energy when using these appliances. Only run full loads in the dishwasher, and thoroughly scrape food from dishes before loading. Dry towels and heavier cottons separate from lighter-weight clothing, and clean the lint screen after every use. Wash clothing in cold water to save energy used to heat water.

## BOARD NEWS

### April Board Meeting Minutes

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Directors of Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative was held on Monday, April 25, 2022. Directors present were James Rokeh, Jared Dritz, Mary Gunnink, Galen Grant, Scott Johnson, Merv Anderson, Sandy Ludeman, Dale Fier and Kathy Schreurs. Also present at the meeting were General Manager, Timothy O'Leary, Finance Manager, Kristi Jensen, and Attorney, Michael W. Cable.

The Board and others in attendance stood and gave the Pledge of Allegiance before the meeting was called to order.

President Ludeman called the meeting to order and routine business was conducted including approval of the March 28, 2022 meeting minutes, a review of the check schedule, applications for memberships, and shares to be cancelled.

Kristi Jensen, Finance Manager, gave the Financial and Statistical Report for the period ending February 28, 2022. The Board was also presented information concerning the Cooperative System Integrity Fund established through the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation.

Lyle Lamote, Line Superintendent, reviewed with the Board the March Outage Report and indicated that there were 74 consumers off for 45 minutes in the Townships of Clifton and Stanley caused by a semi-truck that hit a 3-phase pole and 16 consumers were off 1 hour and 40 minutes in the Townships of Amiret and Sodus caused by a car that hit a guy wire which opened the OCR. The March Safety Meeting was held on March 19, 2022 and concerned the topic of Traffic Safety. Terry Ehli, MREA's Safety Instructor, conducted said Safety Meeting. Mr. Ehli had brought with him a driving simulator for the lineman to use which was purchased by MREA and Anoka-Ramsey Community College. The simulator has 10 learning lessons to go through for the employee looking for hazards on the streets and roads. Mr. Lamote indicated that the linemen had finished line patrol

and finished making the changes on the GIS Maps. Presently the linemen were cutting trees by Canby and performing maintenance. Mr. Lamote also indicated to the Board that Jim Shelquist will be inspecting poles in the Townships of Amiret, Lake Marshall, and Lynd which would consist of approximately 2,000 poles.

Brian Jeremiason, Manager of Marketing and External Relations, gave his monthly report. Mr. Jeremiason advised the Board that on April 12, 2022, Jake Schaefer, a Cyber Security Analyst with East River, was onsite at the Cooperative Headquarters to do the monthly Cooperative visit and conduct some scenario reviews with the employees. He indicated that they had gone through four separate scenarios and discussed and reviewed with the Board the four scenarios.

General Manager Timothy O'Leary then gave his manager's report; some of the items reviewed were as follows: The Board reviewed the power bill and sales to members and compared those figures to budgeted amounts and looked at line loss for the system. Mr. O'Leary reported on the East River Electric Power Cooperative, Inc. MAC Meeting and then reviewed with the board upcoming meetings, events, and notices.

The Board reviewed the March Cyber Security Program Report dated April 4, 2022. The directors reported on training sessions and meetings attended and reviewed and discussed upcoming meetings and educational workshops to be held.

The Board recessed for lunch at 12:05 o'clock P.M. at which time they watched the East River Electric Power Cooperative, Inc. Monthly Video Report which included the Basin Summary. At 12:41 o'clock P.M. the Board reconvened the meeting. The Board then reviewed and carried Policies 605-606.

With there being no further business to come before the board, a motion was made and carried to adjourn.



## Anderson reflects on his 27 years of service on Lyon-Lincoln's Board of Directors



Pictured, from left to right: Board President Sander Ludeman, Board Member Retiree Merv Anderson, & General Manager Tim O'Leary

Since 1995, Merv Anderson of Rural Porter has represented District 3 on the Board of Directors for Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative. With his ninth term nearing the end, Merv has decided it's time for a change of pace and did not seek re-election.

Merv's journey on the Lyon-Lincoln Electric Board of Directors started at the district 3 meeting in Porter, MN in 1995 when a neighbor nominated him to be a candidate for the Annual meeting. He originally agreed to be on the ballot because the incumbent was running for re-election so he assumed he was the "other name on the ballot" and would not get elected. At the Annual meeting, members voted and when the ballots were counted, he was elected. "I had no idea what was involved and what was required. I soon found out that a great deal more time was needed than a few local meetings"

In his first term, Merv mostly spent time learning the basics of being an effective board member. Much to his surprise, that was only the beginning of the learning as the electric power industry is constantly changing. He discovered to be a dedicated board member, it takes 30 to 40 days each year to devote the time needed to attend Lyon-Lincoln Board meetings, conventions, director training,

and meetings with state and national legislators to keep up with changes in the electric and energy industries. Fortunately, he was farming so his schedule was flexible and was able to commit the necessary time.

Over the years of attending training courses, Merv has earned his Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) award, his Board Leadership Certificate (BLC) and then continued beyond that with additional courses to complete his Director Gold Status which recognized his commitment to advancing his knowledge and executing his board responsibilities to the best of his ability. Merv credits his training in aiding him to serve as board chair for several terms.

Merv is proud to have served with many board members throughout his tenure. "All of us bring something different to the board. We have always had a dedicated and effective board that researched and discussed all issues. After decisions were made, we were unified with the final decision even though there were different viewpoints during the discussion." Merv also added "My years as director have been very rewarding but also trying due to political decisions and rulings that affect our local operation and in turn affect each of our member-owners."

**"I have served with many board members through the years and have enjoyed working with all of them, I came to consider all of them friends"**

While Merv won't be attending board meetings anymore, he doesn't show any signs of slowing down! Anderson was and still is involved with the Porter American Legion and Canby VFW, as he is a life member of both, as well as participating in many other community groups and associations and intends to stay on as a part-time crop insurance adjuster. In Merv's words "After my retirement from the board, I will have a little more free time to spend with my family and friends. I have 3 sons, grandchildren, and even great grandchildren, so I won't have time to get bored."

Looking to the future, Merv hopes rural cooperative members will embrace the cooperative model, which centers largely around community. "Come to the Annual meetings. Participate and find out what it means to be a cooperative member."



Merv Anderson at the 2002 Annual Meeting

We wish Merv all the best as he moves on from his director position. Merv would also like to personally thank all the board members he has served with and to all the member-owners for their support and votes of confidence to allow him to serve as a Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative Director for the past 27 years.



Philip and Jessie Ruml raise an assortment of fresh-cut flower varieties on their micro-farm near Castlewood. *Photo by Rachel Clelland Photography*

### Specialty micro-farmers raise fresh-cut flowers for weddings, parties and other red-letter events

**Billy Gibson**

[billy.gibson@sdrea.coop](mailto:billy.gibson@sdrea.coop)

The last time you saw a summer bride carrying a brightly colored floral bouquet down the aisle, it's likely those flowers came from some faraway field in some other part of the planet.

But that's quickly changing as a growing group of intrepid micro-farmers throughout the Upper Midwest are finding their way into the specialty fresh-cut flower business.

Emphasis on the word intrepid: it's not easy raising red roses in a climate more associated with icicles than irises.

Jessie Ruml isn't the least bit intimidated. She's in her fourth year of growing a variety of decorative flowers and reports that the bulbs are blooming and business is booming at Pixie Acres Flower Farm near Castlewood.

After 10 years as a dental hygienist waging a protracted war against plaque, Ruml decided to turn in her stainless steel sickle scaler and look for another occupation that would keep her on the

family farm and close to home with her four spirited daughters.

One afternoon while the children were out playing in the yard, she was swiping through her social media accounts and up popped a picture of a brilliant display of dahlias lying in the bed of an old pickup truck. The scene stopped her dead in her scrolling tracks.

"The colors were so vivid, I immediately felt the hair stand up on the back of my neck. I knew in an instant that's what I needed to do with my life," said Ruml, a self-described farm girl originally from Elk Point and a current member of H-D Electric Cooperative.

It didn't take long for Ruml to realize why South Dakota is not exactly known as the fresh-cut flower capital of the world - at least not yet. She compares growing flowers in eastern South Dakota to 24-hour babysitting. It's a painstaking task to bring flower seeds to full bloom in such a capricious and often harsh climate.

She and her husband Philip, who works full time in the ag industry,

don't even consider taking an extended vacation between the months of March and October when the Rums hold a "fall finale" on the farm to sell off the remainder of their crop or donate it to local charities. Flower plants are high maintenance, sensitive to the elements and require tons of TLC with watering, weeding and fertilizing, she explained: "We can't leave them untended for more than a few hours at a time."

But Jessie keeps a positive perspective when her back and her body start aching from all the hard work.

"You have to get on your hands and knees because there's not a lot of mechanical equipment like in larger scale farming," she said. "But all the effort only makes it that much more special to bring somebody joy, to see the happiness on their faces when you give them a bouquet of fresh flowers. It's hard on your body, but I'm grateful for each day I get to put my hands in the dirt."

She breaks up the monotony and the grind of flower farming by conducting floral design workshops, which she describes as a "girls' night out" where there's lots of laughs and perhaps some light spirits flowing in the



## ZONE 4 FLOWER VARIETIES

Here are the top five flower varieties most suitable for USDA Hardiness Zone 4 planting:

1. Petunias
2. Daisies
3. Dahlia
4. Zinnia
5. Tulips



Christy Heckathorn, owner of Fleurish Flower Farm and Design near Elk Point, shows Union County Electric General Manager Matt Klein how she uses soil blocking to grow hardier seedlings and increase production. *Photo by Billy Gibson*

studio. Participants learn how to make arrangements and fill vases and tour the fields to see how the operation works.

She also looks for opportunities to support the community, like donating a portion of her sales to assist families whose homes were destroyed by a tornado that severely damaged much of Castlewood on May 11.

Over the past few years, more growers are taking on the challenge of Zone 4 flower farming and have entered the market in places like Belle Fourche, Vermillion, Lake Preston, Sioux Falls, Mitchell, Wolsey, Artesian and others. Many are members of the South Dakota

Specialty Growers Association based in Yankton. The group held a virtual “member meet-up” on June 14 to collaborate, educate and exchange ideas.

One floral designer who jumped into the fresh-cut flower business two years ago is Christy Heckathorn, owner of Fleurish Flower Farm and Design in Ruml’s native Elk Point. In point of fact, it was Heckathorn - a family friend - who designed the floral arrangement for Ruml’s bridal bouquet 15 years ago.

Heckathorn got involved in the industry when she went to work at Pioneer Drugs, a local pharmacy that also had a flower shop and a soda fountain

inside. She spent five years there serving customers and also working on the side to help brides select arrangements for their big day.

While Heckathorn has gathered an wealth of training and experience over the years, she said she delights in using flowers to elicit smiles and positive reactions in her clients and other people she meets – especially those who could use a laugh when battling through personal challenges.

“A lady once came with her family and I could tell she had a lot on her mind,” she recalled. “I talked with her and found out she was going through cancer treatment and they had come here just to get away for awhile, enjoy the flowers and forget about things. My mother just went through cancer treatment. So I told them to come back any time and they would always be welcomed.

“One of the reasons I love flowers is because they bring joy to other people. If you can grow flowers and put a smile on someone’s face as a result of your labor, that’s a good life recipe.”



Jessie Ruml uses a pair of high tunnel greenhouses on her farm near Castlewood to shelter her flower plants from often unpredictable South Dakota weather patterns. *Photo by Rachel Clelland Photography*

# Commitment to community through Operation RoundUp® Scholarships

future career goals, and a short essay focused on an electricity or cooperative theme. In conjunction with our Power Supplier Basin Electric Cooperative, we were also able to present one additional \$1,000 Scholarship.

Each year, Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc. demonstrates its commitment to community by awarding scholarships to deserving students in our service area. This year we were able to award ten Operation RoundUp® Scholarships to students from several area schools. The selection of the winners is based on SAT/ACT scores, grade point average, an application outlining high school/college honors, community and school activities, work experience,



Basin Electric Scholarship Recipient

### Zachary Buchholz

Deubrook High School

Parents: Suzy & David Buchholz  
Post Highschool Plans: Attend South Dakota State University, Brookings, SD for Mathematics



### Garrett Callens

Homeschool

Parents: Joanne & David Callens  
Post Highschool Plans: Attend University of Mary, Bismarck, ND for Nursing



### Brady Gifford

RTR High School

Parents: Kristy & Brandon Gifford  
Post Highschool Plans: Attend Northwest Technical College, Bemidji, MN for Plumbing and H-Vac



### Evan Greenfield

Marshall High School

Parents: Shirley & Mychael Greenfield  
Post Highschool Plans: Attend Dakota State University, Madison, SD for Computer Network Administration



### Taylor Lacek

RTR High School

Parents: Mary Kay & Mark Lacek  
Post Highschool Plans: Attend South Dakota State University, Brookings SD for Ag Business & Journalism



### Logan Lamote

RTR High School

Parents: Mel & Lyle Lamote  
Post Highschool Plans: Attend Mitchell Technical College, Mitchell, SD for the Power Line Program





**Sheridan Ludeman**

Tracy Area High School  
Parents: Stacey & Ben Ludeman  
Post Highschool Plans: Attend Augustana University, Sioux Falls, SD for Nursing



**Jeren Rost**

Minneota High School  
Parents: Lynn & Jeremy Rost  
Post Highschool Plans: Attend Southwest State University, Marshall, MN for Elementary Education



**Casey Swanson**

RTR High School  
Parents: Melissa & Craig Baune  
Post Highschool Plans: Attend South Dakota State University, Brookings, SD for Nursing



**Lane Thomas**

Plum Creek Academy  
Parents: Heather & AJ Thomas  
Post Highschool Plans: Attend Minnesota West Community & Technical College for Networking/IT



**Blake Weedman**

Marshall High School  
Parents: Catherine & Brian Weedman  
Post Highschool Plans: Attend Dakota State University, Madison, SD for Computer Science

## Congratulations to all of our scholarship recipients!



# SUMMER POWER

## Local co-ops are prepared to meet peak demand for electricity this summer

You may have seen articles recently about the potential for rolling power outages across the West and Midwest that could be triggered by a combination of insufficient generation, increased demand for power and warmer than normal temperatures expected this summer across the region. While no one can predict what extreme weather could be coming our way, or unexpected issues with power plants and renewable resources, electric co-ops in South Dakota and western Minnesota are confident that we will have enough generation to meet our electric needs.

The following questions and answers aim to provide background on Regional Transmission Organizations (RTOs), the role RTOs play in serving consumers, potential power supply impacts to this region throughout the summer,

and some lessons learned from the February 2021 energy emergency.

### WHERE DOES MY ELECTRICITY COME FROM?

Decades ago, when electric cooperatives were created to bring power to rural America, there were few electric generation options available. In our region, electric cooperatives worked together to access hydropower from the dams on the Missouri River and later created East River Electric Power Cooperative, Rushmore Electric Power Cooperative and Basin Electric Power Cooperative to fulfill their power needs.

These generation and transmission cooperatives provide transmission services and construct regional power plants and transmission infrastructure. In the past, when co-ops needed

more electric generation because of economic growth, we built it.

Co-ops still own and build generation units today, but the operation of the grid that serves our region changed significantly about seven years ago. In 2015, East River Electric, Rushmore Electric, Basin Electric and the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), which sells hydropower from the dams, all entered the Southwest Power Pool (SPP). SPP is an RTO that operates throughout the central portion of the United States and allows utilities to work together to provide the most efficient and cost-effective generation and transmission services to control costs.

### DOES THE SOUTHWEST POWER POOL (SPP) EXPECT TO HAVE ENOUGH GENERATION TO MEET DEMAND THIS SUMMER?

SPP operates like the “air-traffic controller” of the bulk electric grid from Canada to Texas. It oversees the grid and the wholesale power markets serving most of the electric cooperative consumers in South Dakota. According to a May 12 press release from SPP, the organization said it “expects to have enough generating capacity



to meet the regional demand for electricity through the summer season.” SPP anticipates that demand for electricity will peak at 51.1 gigawatts during the summer season, which runs June to September 2022. According to SPP, a diverse fleet of generation units, including cooperative-owned power plants and renewable resources, will be prepared to serve at least 55.5 gigawatts of demand.

### **WHAT IS THE MIDCONTINENT INDEPENDENT SYSTEM OPERATOR (MISO) AND WHY DOES IT EXPECT TO HAVE AN ENERGY SHORTFALL THIS SUMMER?**

The Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) is similar to SPP – it is an RTO responsible for matching generation resources with power demand from consumers throughout the Midwest in states like Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Michigan and Illinois. Each RTO serves different areas of the country and has a different mix of generation resources. Some consumers in South Dakota are served from the MISO system, but most cooperative consumers are served through SPP. MISO raised alarms in April when the organization said it projects “insufficient firm resources” to supply the summer demand for electricity.

In 2005, MISO’s total generation mix was 76 percent coal, 13 percent nuclear, 7 percent natural gas and the rest came from a mix of other resources. By 2020, the amount of coal-based generation fell to 33 percent while natural gas grew to 34 percent, nuclear reached 17 percent and wind and solar accounted for 13 percent. It has been a drastic change in a short amount of time. With a higher amount of variable generation resources, less

## **SPP “EXPECTS TO HAVE ENOUGH GENERATING CAPACITY TO MEET THE REGIONAL DEMAND FOR ELECTRICITY THROUGH THE SUMMER SEASON.”**

firm generation available and the anticipation of increased electric usage because of higher than average temperatures, it sets up the potential for rolling power outages across the MISO footprint this summer.

### **HOW DO THE ENERGY MARKETS WORK?**

Basin Electric owns generation and sells it into the SPP and MISO markets. Basin Electric buys all the power they need from those same markets to serve their membership, including your local electric co-op. It helps control costs throughout our co-ops by allowing us to sell generation into the markets when it is economically advantageous, or to access cheaper generation from the market when we need it. It was a critical strategic step taken by electric cooperatives to save their members money. But it also means that we can be subject to SPP directed rolling outages if demand exceeds generation across the entire SPP footprint like we saw in February 2021. Although electric cooperatives in the Dakotas are required to have enough generation to serve our own consumers, because co-ops are integrated in the grid we must share in any potential outages due to an energy emergency.

### **DID UTILITIES LEARN ANYTHING FROM THE FEBRUARY 2021 ENERGY EMERGENCY?**

In February 2021, record-low temperatures and record-high electricity use across a region stretching from the Canadian border to Texas created what SPP called “the greatest operational challenge in its 80-year history.” Yet, even in

the extreme conditions, SPP had about four hours total of rolling outages across its 14-state region. That included South Dakota and cooperatives served by East River Electric and Rushmore Electric. East River was required to drop about 83 megawatts of demand over a short time on Feb. 16, 2021. Rushmore Electric was required to drop 22 megawatts on Feb. 16, 2021. After the emergency, SPP commissioned a comprehensive report and conducted an in-depth analysis of what happened. The report produced 22 actions, policy changes and assessments related to fuel assurance, resource planning and availability, emergency response and other areas.

Joining SPP was a strategic step that our cooperative network took several years ago to capture the benefits of being in an RTO. We have experienced immense financial and operational benefits over the past several years from our membership in SPP which have helped to keep electric rates stable. Looking ahead to this summer, most electric cooperatives in South Dakota are not within the MISO footprint and are not expecting an impact from any potential MISO rolling power outages. However, a few local co-ops in Minnesota and northern South Dakota may be called upon to take a rolling outage. Those co-ops will communicate with members if this becomes a possibility and will work to minimize the impact of these potential outages.

# Restoring power safely and efficiently

We do our best to avoid them, but there's no way around it: power outages occasionally happen.

For most Lyon-Lincoln Electric members, outages are rare and only last a few hours. But when major storms, like what the National Weather Service termed as a "rare and extreme severe weather event" that caused extensive damage throughout our service territory on Thursday evening, May 12, 2022, extended outages are unavoidable. The winds downed power lines, and damaged buildings and farm equipment in a wide area from eastern South Dakota into central Minnesota.



**Lyle Lamote**  
Line  
Superintendent

Lyon-Lincoln Electric lost 29 poles and numerous lines from trees and debris going through the lines. The biggest issue was East River Electric, our power supplier, who lost 30 transmission poles across our service territory which made it difficult for them to backfeed their substations until they could get out in the field to replace them the next day.

So when the power goes out, how Lyon-Lincoln Electric crews know where to start working? How do you know if your outage has been reported? We've got answers to these questions and more, and it all starts with a safe, efficient plan for power restoration.

When the lights go out and it's safe for our crews to begin the restoration process, they start by repairing power lines and equipment that will restore power to the greatest number of people in the shortest time possible.

This process typically begins with repairs to the larger main distribution lines that service a great number of homes and businesses. After those repairs are made, crews work on tap lines, which deliver power to transformers, either mounted on utility poles (for above-ground service) or placed on pads (for underground service). Finally, individual service lines that run between the transformer and the home are repaired.

**"We can't control the weather, but we can prepare for it. Lyon-Lincoln Electric keeps a supply of extra utility poles, transformers and other equipment on hand so we can quickly get to work in the event of an outage."**



When widespread outages occur, multiple crews will be out in the field simultaneously working to repair damage at multiple locations. We also coordinate with nearby co-ops to bring in additional crews when necessary.

A proactive approach to maintenance helps minimize the chance of prolonged outages; this is why you see Lyon-Lincoln Electric crews periodically trimming trees and clearing vegetation near rights-of-way. We love trees too, but it only takes one overgrown limb to knock out power for not only you but also your neighbors. Nathan Krog - 1497100 Trimming improves power reliability for our entire community. In addition to managing vegetation, we regularly inspect utility poles, power lines and other critical equipment to maintain a more reliable system.

If you experience a power outage, don't assume a neighbor reported it. It's best to report the outage yourself, and we make it easy to do. The quickest way to report an outage is by calling our office at (800)-927-6276 or (507)-247-5505.

If you have a medical condition that requires electrical equipment, please let us know, and always have a backup plan in place. This plan could include a portable generator, extra medical supplies or moving to an alternate location until power is restored. If you plan to use a generator for backup power, read all safety information and instructions before use.

Mother Nature can be unpredictable, but as a member of Lyon-Lincoln Electric, you can feel confident knowing we're standing by, ready to restore power as quickly and safely as possible.









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.

To view the publication's master event calendar, scan the QR code below:



Or visit <https://sdrea.coop/cooperative-connections-event-calendar> to view more upcoming events.

**JUNE 24-26**  
**Black Hills Bluegrass Festival**  
 Rush No More RV Resort & Campground, Sturgis, SD, [blackhillsbluegrass.com](http://blackhillsbluegrass.com)

**JUNE 24-26**  
**Main Street Arts & Crafts Festival**  
 Centennial Park, Hot Springs, SD, [mainstreetartsandcrafts.com](http://mainstreetartsandcrafts.com)

**JUNE 24-26**  
**Quarry Days**  
 Citywide, Dell Rapids, SD, 605-428-4167

**JUNE 25**  
**Zippity Zoo Day**  
 805 S. Kiwanis Avenue, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7003

**JUNE 26**  
**Prairie Village Variety Show**  
 Prairie Village, Madison, SD, 605-256-3644

**JUNE 30-JULY 4**  
**Annual Black Hills Roundup**  
 300 Roundup Street, Belle Fourche, SD, [blackhillsroundup.com](http://blackhillsroundup.com)

**JULY 2-4**  
**Sitting Bull Stampede Rodeo**  
 Various Locations, Mobridge, SD, 605-845-2387

**JULY 3-4**  
**Custer's Old Time Country Fourth of July**  
 Various Locations, Custer, SD, 605-673-2244

**JULY 4**  
**4th of July Parade & Celebration**  
 Kemp Avenue, Watertown, SD, 605-886-5814

**JULY 6**  
**St. Mary's CCW Tracy Area Gardens & Quilts Tour**  
 Tracy, MN, [www.facebook.com/TarcyAreaGardenTour](http://www.facebook.com/TarcyAreaGardenTour)

**JULY 9-10**  
**Brookings Summer Arts Festival**  
 Pioneer Park, Brookings, SD, [bsaf.com](http://bsaf.com)

**JULY 13-16**  
**Black Hills Corvette Classic**  
 Various Locations, Spearfish, SD, [blackhillscorvetteclassic.com](http://blackhillscorvetteclassic.com)

**JULY 14-17**  
**Corn Palace Stampede Rodeo**  
 Various Locations, Mitchell, SD, [cornpalcestampede.com](http://cornpalcestampede.com)

**JULY 14-17**  
**Danish Days**  
 Various Locations, Viborg, SD, [danishdays.org](http://danishdays.org)

**JULY 15-17**  
**Gold Discovery Days**  
 Various Locations, Custer, SD, 605-673-2244

**JULY 15-17**  
**Laura Ingalls Wilder Pageant**  
 43379 Rose Lane, De Smet, SD, [desmetpageant.org](http://desmetpageant.org)

**JULY 16**  
**Bloomin Quilt Show**  
 47439 214th Street, Aurora, SD, 605-690-3246

**JULY 23**  
**Yankton Rock-N-Rumble Motorcycle Rally**  
 3rd Street, Yankton, SD, 605-299-9734

**JULY 25-30**  
**Days of '76 Rodeo and Parades**  
 18 Seventy Six Drive, Deadwood, SD, [daysof76.com](http://daysof76.com)

**JULY 29-31**  
**Bruce Honey Days**  
 Various Locations, Bruce, SD, 605-627-5671

**JULY 30**  
**South Dakota Chislic Festival**  
 Prairie Arboretum, Freeman, SD, [sdchislicfestival.com](http://sdchislicfestival.com)

**AUGUST 6-7**  
**Pioneer Power Threshing Show & Flea Market**  
 For show information call 507-530-6470 or 507-828-9666  
 For flea market info call 507-768-3522

**AUGUST 5-13**  
**Sioux Empire Fair**  
 W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds, Sioux Falls, SD, [siouxempirefair.com](http://siouxempirefair.com)

**AUGUST 5-14**  
**Sturgis Motorcycle Rally**  
 Main Street, Sturgis, SD, [sturgismotorcyclerrally.com](http://sturgismotorcyclerrally.com)

**AUGUST 19-20**  
**Harvest Festival**  
 Various Locations, Elkton, SD, 605-542-2681

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