

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Let's Go Fly a Kite

**Brookings Kite Festival
Creates Excitement**

Pages 8-9

Cooperative Metering

Pages 12-13

Photo Credit: Visit Brookings

Strategic Planning

Maintaining focus on our members



Tim O'Leary
General Manager

I would like to talk about a recent Strategic Planning session that your cooperative had as we continue to look for ways to serve our member-owners. We were helped in the strategic planning process by the Cooperative Finance Corporation, one of the lenders we use to build and maintain our distribution system and our power supply and transmission provider East River Electric Power Cooperative.

The strategic planning process started with a survey that was filled out by each board member and employee. The survey was used to determine what each of us thought were the cooperative's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. These thoughts were used throughout the day and a half session to determine the strategic direction that we should look at over the next three years. As with most of the discussions we have at the cooperative, our focus will continue to be on safety, reliability, affordability, and communications with our member-owners and employees.

Safety will play a central role in each of the strategic goals listed below and will be a priority for our employees and in our messaging to you, our member-owners.

The four strategic goals and the objectives are in draft form, and we will work on more detailed plans on how to meet the goals over the next several months. Michael McLain - 907401. We plan to have the board approve the final goals/objectives at their September board meeting.

Goal 1: Modernize infrastructure to sustain reliability on optimize efficiency. We continue to look at replacing aging assets, with a continued emphasis on replacing our older underground and overhead facilities. This goal will have us look at our current office space and upgrades that can be made to enhance productivity and make it easier for our members to do business with us. One thing that was brought up during the discussion of

this goal was rate impacts. We want to make sure that we consider any rate impacts and reliability when looking at making upgrades to the distribution system.

Goal 2: Utilize existing technology and stay up to date on new technologies that will ensure our members will be able to interact with the cooperative. We will continue to look at distributed generation opportunities and make sure that our member-owners have the information that they need when deciding on whether they should install small solar, small wind or batteries. We will be visiting with our software vendor to determine other technology options that would make it easier for our members to do business with us at all times of the day or night. One of the items that we will explore is a Outage Management System (OMS) which would allow us to share a map of current outages and help our lineman during outages.

Goal 3: Foster informed member participation with enhanced member engagement and education. This follows the 5th Cooperative Principle of Education, Training, and Information. We will look to develop a strong relationship with our auto dealers for when they sell an electric vehicle (EV) to one of our members. We will look to actively pursue economic development activities that will increase our sales and allow us to spread costs over more kWhs.

Goal 4: Ensure effective governance and operational excellence by providing and encouraging continuous board and employee education and training. Educated board members and employees allow us to serve the members of the cooperative better as we are able to keep on top of trends and technologies in our fast-changing industry.

We will continue to define these goals and objectives over the next several months and we will share the outcome in a newsletter article later this year.

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

LYON-LINCOLN ELECTRIC

(ISSN 1540-6989)

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Mike Longtin, Taunton – Vice President
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Joel Buyck, Garvin
Jared Dritz, Porter
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Lyle Lamote – Line Superintendent
Kristi Jensen - Finance Manager
Brian Jeremiason – Manager of Marketing & External Relations
Rochelle Borresen – Accountant
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Staff and Personnel

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Dan Tutt
Tyler Blomme
Tyler Sand
Nathan Pavek
Trent Skjefte – Apprentice Lineman
Sam Rohde – Apprentice Lineman
Wade Thooft – Operations Staff Assistant
Alan Fischer – Warehouse Coordinator/Work Order Clerk

www.llec.coop

Lyon-Lincoln Electric Summer hours are 7:00 AM – 4:30 PM Monday thru Friday

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Jessica Gums, Editor



YEAR-TO-DATE COMPARISON MARCH 2024

	Mar.- 2023	Mar.- 2024
Total Revenue	\$3,100,437	\$2,870,883
Cost of Power	\$1,560,645	\$1,696,607
Operating Expenses	\$1,167,220	\$1,260,878
Operating Margins	\$372,572	\$(86,602)
KWH's Purchased	31,230,623	\$2,870,883
Services in Place	4,123	\$1,696,607
Miles of Line	1,670	\$1,260,878
Revenue per Mile	\$1,857	\$(86,602)

APRIL OUTAGE REPORT

10 OR MORE CONSUMERS

4/21/24- 18 consumers were off 1 hour and 25 minutes in Verdi Township. The cause was a consumer that dug through underground cable.

4/23/24- 18 consumers were off 1 hour and 30 minutes in Fortier and Hansonville Townships. The cause was an open OCR.

COMMON CAUSES OF POWER OUTAGES

There is never a good time for the power to go out, but if it happens on a sunny day, you might be left wondering why. Here are the most common causes of a power outage.



High winds, snow and ice can cause tree limbs to fall on power lines. Other weather effects, like wildfires and lightning strikes, can cause major damage to equipment.



Squirrels, birds, snakes and other animals can inadvertently contact power lines, causing short circuits and disruptions to electrical supply.



Occasionally, we plan outages to perform upgrades or repairs to parts of the local grid.



Vehicles can crash into utility poles, bringing down power lines. Construction and excavation work can also result in disruptions to underground lines.

Fireworks Safety

Summer is synonymous with barbecues, parades and fireworks. The National Safety Council advises everyone to enjoy fireworks at public displays conducted by professionals, and not to use any fireworks at home. They may be legal but they are not safe.

Every year, thousands of people are injured badly enough to require medical treatment after fireworks-related incidents, with many of the injuries to children and young adults. While the majority of these incidents are due to amateurs attempting to use professional-grade, home-made or other illegal fireworks or explosives, less powerful devices like small firecrackers and sparklers can also cause significant injury.

Additionally, fireworks start an average of 19,000 fires each year.

Fireworks Safety Tips: If You Choose to Use Legal Fireworks

If consumer fireworks are legal to buy where you live and you choose to use them, be sure to follow the following safety tips:

- Never allow young children to handle fireworks
- Older children should use them only under close adult supervision
- Never use fireworks while impaired by drugs or alcohol
- Anyone using fireworks or standing nearby should wear protective eyewear
- Never hold lighted fireworks in your hands
- Never light them indoors
- Only use them away from people, houses and flammable material
- Never point or throw fireworks at another person
- Only light one device at a time and maintain a safe distance after lighting
- Never ignite devices in a container
- Do not try to re-light or handle malfunctioning fireworks
- Soak both spent and unused fireworks in water for a few hours before discarding
- Keep a bucket of water nearby to fully extinguish fireworks that don't go off or in case of fire
- Never use illegal fireworks

Better yet, grab a blanket and a patch of lawn, kick back and let the experts handle the fireworks show.

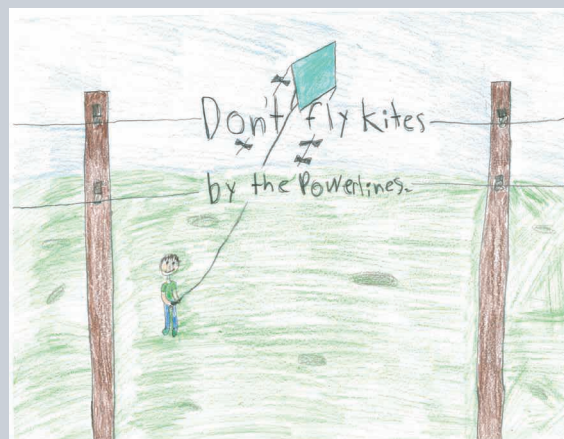
Sparklers Are Dangerous

Every year, young children can be found along parade routes and at festivals with sparklers in hand, but sparklers are a lot more dangerous than most people think.

Sparklers burn at about 2,000 degrees – hot enough to melt some metals. Sparklers can quickly ignite clothing, and children have received severe burns from dropping sparklers on their feet. According to the National Fire Protection Association, sparklers alone account for more than 25% of emergency room visits for fireworks injuries. For children under five years of age, sparklers accounted for nearly half of the total estimated injuries.

Consider using safer alternatives, such as glow sticks, confetti poppers or colored streamers.

Source: National Safety Council



"Let's Go Fly a Kite Up to the Highest Heights."

Eldon Femrite, Age 12

Eldon Femrite warns readers to not fly kites by power lines this summer. Eldon's parents are Jody and Rosemary Femrite, members of Codington-Clark Electric.

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.

DELICIOUS Desserts

NO CHURN ICE CREAM

Ingredients:

2 cups heavy cream
14 oz. sweetened condensed milk
Other mix-ins as desired

Method

In a mixing bowl, whip heavy cream until stiff peaks form.

Mix in sweetened condensed milk and any flavors/mix-ins you like (strawberries, Oreos, lemon, vanilla extract, etc.).

Pour into loaf pan and freeze until solid (2+ hours).

Kayla Beaner
Centerville, S.D.

CINNAMON PECAN PIE

Ingredients:

1 refrigerated pie crust, (from 14.1-oz. pkg.)
3 eggs, lightly beaten
1 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
1 cup light corn syrup
2 tbsps. butter, melted
1 tbsp. cinnamon extract
1 1/2 cups pecan pieces

Method

Preheat oven to 350°F. Prepare pie crust as directed on package for one-crust pie using 9-inch pie plate.

Mix eggs, sugar, corn syrup, butter and cinnamon flavor in large bowl until well blended. Stir in pecans.

Pour into crust. Bake 50 to 55 minutes or until knife inserted halfway between center and edge comes out clean. Cool completely on wire rack.

McCormick.com

RHUBARB PIE

Ingredients:

Crust

1-2 cups flour
1/2 stick butter or margarine
1/4 cup water

Pie

3 tbsps. butter or margarine
1 cup sugar
3 eggs, separated
2 tbsps. flour
1/2 tsp. salt
2 1/2 cups cut rhubarb
Smucker's caramel sundae syrup

Method

Crust: Add ingredients and knead to complete pie crust. Amounts will vary due to humidity. Knead dough into pie pan and poke holes into the bottom as needed. You may make creative edges as you wish, however it is not necessary.

Pie: Soften butter or margarine and stir together with the sugar, egg yolks, flour, and salt. Beat egg whites until stiff. Add rhubarb and fold in the egg whites. Add the filling to the 8-inch, unbaked pie crust. You may add a drizzle of Smucker's sundae syrup for additional flavoring before baking. Bake in oven set at 400 until golden brown. You may also add more caramel syrup to pie after baking for ultimate effect.

Lisa Kummer Soukup
Tea, S.D.

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 2024. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

April Board Meeting Minutes

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Directors of Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative was held on Monday, April 22, 2024. Directors present James Rokeh, Kathy Schreurs, Scott Johnson, Dale Fier, Mike Longtin, Jared Dritz, Joel Buyck, Galen Grant, and Mary Gunnink. Also present: 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. President, Dale Fier, then called the meeting to order and routine business was conducted including approval of the March 28, 2024 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 February 29, 2024. The Board reviewed the Statement of Qualified Patronage Distribution from CoBank, information that had been received from the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation concerning interest payments on subordinated certificates, and reviewed the Annual Benefits of Ownership Statement for Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc. that was forwarded from National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation.

Lyle Lamote, Line Superintendent, gave the Outage Report for the month of March, 2024. He also reviewed with the Board the monthly Safety Meeting which was held on March 14, 2024. Erick Boder, MREA's Safety Instruc-

tor presented the program Working Alone and in the Electric Industry is one of the most dangerous situations a worker can find themselves. There was also discussion concerning the topic of Hot Weather Safety and looked at the causes of heat stress. Mr. Lamote indicated that the linemen were doing the following work some of which had been completed and some was still in the process: The linemen were cutting trees, continuing line maintenance activities, performing underground jobs, and removing overhead lines for a lift station in Russell.

Brian Jeremiason, Manager of Marketing and External Relations, was not in attendance at the meeting due to his participation in a meeting in Washington D.C. Jacob Hovey & Christine Krusemark - 1565900 General Manager, Timothy O'Leary, gave Mr. Jeremiason's report which was as follows: review of information about Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc.'s social media efforts and who the cooperative is reaching and what the Cooperative's audience looks like, the cooperative had worked with NISC and Clover Security to complete Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc.'s annual PCI Compliance, and Mr. Jeremiason's attendance at the NRECA Legislative Conference.

General Manager, Timothy O'Leary, then gave his Manager's Report; some of the items reviewed were as follows: the Board reviewed the March 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. There was discussion concerning a slide from Basin that showed costs associated with building different types of technologies, an update on this year's MREA's spring CEO Meeting, Operation RoundUp Board terms, and a review of upcoming meetings and notices.

The Board reviewed the March 2024 Cyber Security Program Report presented by East River Cyber Security Department dated April 3, 2024. The Board then reviewed The East River Electric Power Cooperative, Inc. monthly video report which included the Basin Summary.

Vice-President, Mike Longtin, gave a report concerning the Basin Electric Power Cooperative, Inc. meeting he had attended and his report included issues involving Dakota Gas, rate hearings, loads in Kingsbury County, and the Summit Pipeline.

General Manager, Timothy O'Leary, indicated that the District Meetings went well and the members who attended were very complimentary of the Cooperative.

Director, Joel Buyck, and Director, James Rokeh, gave a report on the Redwood EC Annual Meeting that they had attended. The Board was presented with the Agenda that was prepared for the Strategic Planning Session for Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc.

There being no further business to come before the Board, President, Dale Fier, adjourned the meeting at 12:31 pm.

The Power of Smart Home Technologies

Smart home technologies are transforming how we live, making our homes more comfortable, convenient and energy efficient than ever before.

Smart home technologies are devices that communicate with each other to automate everyday tasks and functions around the home, like heating and cooling, lighting and security. In addition to convenience, smart technologies enable consumers to manage and monitor their energy consumption through device scheduling and control.

With just a tap on your phone or a voice command to your virtual assistant (like Alexa or Siri), you can conveniently control many aspects of your home environment. If you're new to the smart tech world, there are several cost-effective devices you can try as you explore ways to make your home smarter.

One of the best and most inexpensive places to start is with a smart bulb or plug. Smart LED bulbs allow you to control home lighting remotely through a smartphone app or voice commands. You can set schedules to automatically turn lights off or on, which can help you save energy and boost home security.

If Alexa or Siri is already part of your household, you can build on your existing "tech ecosystem" by adding a smart hub, like Amazon Echo or Apple HomePod. Voice assistants that are synced to smart devices like bulbs and plugs provide additional options for device management and allow family members to interact with the various devices through voice control rather than individual apps.

Home heating and cooling account for a significant portion of energy use, so one of the best investments you can make in smart tech is a smart thermostat. While traditional programmable thermostats can be set to your schedule and preferences, a smart thermostat takes this one step further by learning and adjusting to your routine and building a schedule around it.

Whether you're looking to automate every aspect of your home or simply want to try a device or two, smart technologies have the power to transform your living space into a home where comfort and convenience reign supreme.



TIPS FOR INTEGRATING SMART HOME TECH

If you're new to smart home technologies, keep the following tips in mind as you explore home automation options.

- 1. Define goals.** Determine the areas in your home you want to make smart, like lighting, security and entertainment systems.
- 2. Choose compatible devices.** A smart hub can make integration easier with a central device to control multiple smart technologies.
- 3. Check Wi-Fi strength.** Smart home technologies require a stable internet connection to function properly, so consider factors like router placement and signal strength.
- 4. Prioritize security.** Set strong, unique passwords for your Wi-Fi network, set devices to update automatically and limit personal data collection.

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, Michael Lenertz & Darwin J. Towne were listed and will receive an energy credit if they spotted their names and called the office. Once again, there are two new names and numbers hidden in this issue. Good Luck!

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

TIP OF THE MONTH

Electricity used to operate major appliances accounts for a significant portion of your home energy use. Here's an easy way to lighten the load on your clothes dryer. Before you dry a load of damp clothing, toss in a clean, dry towel. The towel will absorb excess water, shortening the drying time. If your dryer does not include an autosense feature to determine drying time, remember to reduce the timer to about half of what you normally would. Remove the towel about 15 minutes after the cycle begins. Shorter drying times will extend the life of your dryer and save energy.

Source: energystar.gov

KITE FESTIVAL



Photo Credit: Visit Brookings

Let's Go Fly a Kite

Shannon Marvel

shannon.marvel@sdrea.coop

The sky becomes more of an art canvas during the Brookings Kite Festival. For the last 25 years, kite fliers from across the country gather to let their art take flight at the festival.

One of those artists is Mike Gee of North Dakota.

"We go down there to Brookings and really like the kite flying field there. It's just nice to come down and fly kites with friends who also enjoy flying kites," Gee said.

Gee flies what's called "show kites", which are big, inflatable kites that can span 20 feet across the sky.

There are other kites flown during the festival, including soft kites, stick kites and sport kites.

A sport kite is one that is attached to two or four lines. Often they'll be flown in teams and perform maneuvers in the sky.

"If you talk about crazy kites, there's a wide variety. There are so many different creative people building things in creative ways," Gee said. "It is definitely an art. It's what you put on the canvas that makes it special."

The kites are typically made with nylon, sail making cloth that doesn't stretch.

"You can't just go to the fabric store and buy tent fabric. We have a couple different weights of fabrics we use. And you need that tail on there to keep the kite stable," Gee said.



Photo Credit: Brookings Kite Festival



Photo Credit: Brookings Register

Sally Damm Norby, of the Brookings Optimists Club, said the festival got its start when Lynn Versher, former director of the South Dakota Art Museum, approached Optimist member Bill Flynn about creating a joint effort to bring big kites to Brookings.

“This volunteer organization aims to make a positive impact on the lives of youth and communities. The Brookings club’s primary focus is on advancing the opportunities and programs for youth events that are encouraging with exceptional supportive outcomes. The Brookings Optimist Kite Festival offers a comprehensive learning experience that incorporates expressions of culture, science, creativity, civic involvement, and is

environmentally friendly,” Norby said.

Youth are encouraged to come down and learn how to make a kite of their own, with professional guidance.

Gee said he encourages visitors to come up to kite fliers to ask questions or strike up a conversation.

“One thing I really like about kite flying is it seems like no matter who you talk to on the field, someone can relate to an experience of flying a kite,” Gee said. “When we start flying kites, it brings back memories of when other folks were kids flying kites. It’s kind of emotional for some people.”

This year’s event will take place on June 22-23 at the Fishback Soccer Park in Brookings.

Gee said this location is a safe spot to fly kites, and well away from any electrical line hazards.

“If you’ve flown kites long enough, you have a story about power lines. When you hit a line, you call the power company, and they advise you of what to do. The best thing to do is avoid those wires. I always think, ‘If my line breaks, which way is my kite going to go and what’s over there,’” Gee said.

Gee encourages visitors to come down to the Brookings Kite Festival with their lawn chairs and blankets and stay for more than just a half hour.

“The thing is when the wind changes direction or speed, the kites change. There’s just so much going on throughout the day. You’ve really got to sit back and pay attention,” Gee said.



Photo Credit: Visit Brookings

COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY:

BASIN & OPERATION ROUNDUP SCHOLARSHIPS

Each year, Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative, 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, 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.



Kennedy Drake

Basin Electric Scholarship Recipient

Marshall High School

Parents: Renae & Chad Drake

Post High School Plans: Attend SMSU for Business/Finance



Hannah Bauer

Marshall High School

Parents: Jeny & Gregory Bauer

Post High School Plans: Attend Winona State University for Biochemistry



Emma Chandler

Tracy Area High School

Parents: Alecia & Thomas Chandler

Post High School Plans: Attend University of Sioux Falls for Radiologic Technology



Sawyer DeSmet

Minneota High School

Parents: Jasmine & Richard DeSmet

Post High School Plans: Attend SDSU for Animal Science



Kale Dritz

Canby High School

Parents: Amber & Jared Dritz

Post High School Plans: Attend University of MN, Duluth for Science



Lindsey Hart

Marshall High School
Parents: Lisa & Craig Hart
Post High School Plans: Attend University of MN, Twin Cities for Dance



Austin Dunn

Marshall High School
Parents: Connie & Chris Dunn
Post High School Plans: Attend University of MN, Morris for Mechanical Engineering



Aidan Johnson

RTR High School
Parents: Carrie Birath & Shane Johnson
Post High School Plans: Attend Southeast Technical School for Turf Management



Max Rost

Minneota High School
Parents: Andrea & Marty Rost
Post High School Plans: Attend SDSU for Pharmacy



Ava Schoenfeld

RTR High School
Parents: Jen Boersma & Keith Schoenfeld
Post High School Plans: Attend SDSU for Agribusiness



Zoey Williams

RTR High School
Parents: Julie & Eric Williams
Post High School Plans: Attend SDSU for Hospitality, Tourism, & Event Management

COOPERATIVE METERING

Roger Lawien

More than 40 cooperative linemen and metering specialists gathered in Pierre for South Dakota Rural Electric's Meter School. This two-day gathering offers the opportunity to enhance skills, build a community of professionals, and learn the nuances of metering. As our need for more energy continues to grow, so does how we properly meter consumption.

Modern electric meters do much more than keep track of the electricity we consume. Correct electric metering is also essential for grid reliability and stability. Accurate measurements aid your cooperative in identifying and addressing issues such as voltage fluctuations or load imbalances promptly.

This proactive approach enhances the resilience of the electrical grid, reducing the likelihood of outages and ensuring a continuous and reliable power supply. At its core, accurate metering ensures fair and precise billing, preventing financial disputes and establishing trust between cooperatives and members.

From an economic standpoint, correct electric metering plays a pivotal role in resource allocation allowing member owned cooperatives to better understand consumption patterns, enabling them to optimize energy distribution and invest strategically in infrastructure development. This, in turn, leads to more efficient operations, cost savings, and improved overall service quality.

Precise metering supports energy conservation.

Members can sign into their account online, view consumption. Armed with accurate usage data they are empowered to make informed decisions about their energy consumption. This encourages responsible energy usage practices, reducing waste and lowering overall demand.

Metering guru and instructor John Pollard said it best. "These training schools are important. Metering is a craft handed down from generation to generation. With the advances of solid-state metering, these students are the supreme candidates to lead us into the future."

Your electric cooperative is your partner in getting it done!



2023 SDREA Meter School Instructors Photo by Roger Lawien

What is a Smart Meter?

A smart meter is a common term for Automated Metering Infrastructure, or AMI. These are connected devices that transmit information back to the electric utility's meter data management system and the information collected is used primarily for billing and outage response purposes. Smart meters started to be installed about 25 years ago. Individual utilities have different aged systems, but all electric cooperatives in South Dakota have two-way communication with every meter in the system.

What advantages do Smart Meters bring?

Before smart meters were installed, customers were required to read their own analog meter and report their monthly usage for billing purposes, or a utility employee would physically travel to every home, farm or business in their large service territories to read usage data. Smart Meters take the burden off customers and employees, saving time and money for all consumers. In some cases, the aggregated energy usage information from their home can be visible to the customer via the Internet or a phone application.

- Smart Meters can be used to pinpoint exact locations of power outages more quickly by transmitting an “out of power” notification, meaning a faster response time to outages.
- Smart Meters allow information to be shared with individual consumers about their energy usage – allowing them to find energy efficiency opportunities or potential problems in their home.
- Smart Meters improve electric service reliability and power quality. Information obtained from the automated meters often identifies problems that can be repaired before they cause an outage.
- Information can be used by engineers to more effectively and appropriately size lines and transformers, saving the cooperative and members money.

What information does a Smart Meter record?

Automated meters record an electronic kilowatt-hour (kWh) reading, the date and time of energy usage, the overall peak demand of the electric account, if the meter has been tampered with, and the number of times the meter has experienced a loss of power.

Security of information

Electric cooperatives do not sell or share consumer data. Cooperatives abide by all laws regarding the privacy, protection and disclosure of personal information. The meters and associated communications systems are equipped with security features to prevent unauthorized access.

Are there potential health impacts from a smart meter?

Research conducted by the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI), the Utilities Telecom Council (UTC) and other similar groups have shown no health impacts from automated meters. The radio frequencies emitted by digital meters are well below the maximum recommended in federal guidelines. A digital meter equipped to send and receive data has an RF density hundreds of times lower than the RF density of a cell phone, and the meters are installed on the outside of homes or buildings.

OPERATION ROUNDUP

TURNING

COINS CHANGE



Community Updates



TeenPact Leadership Schools

At TeenPact Leadership Schools, we believe students learn best by doing. That's why our State Classes are comprised of focused hands-on leadership training. Designed to give students the ultimate crash course in state government, the TeenPact Political Communication Workshop, for students ages 13-19, is designed to give students a better understanding on how to communicate, especially when it comes to articulating political ideas. Exciting and educational, this workshop teaches students how to approach controversial issues, think critically, and communicate effectively.

With help from Operation RoundUp grant funds, students enrolled in TeenPact were able to visit the state capitol in St. Paul for a week of learning and training in government. Students and families were introduced to the concept that they are never too young to be a leader. By spending four days at the capitol, TeenPact students got a glimpse of what goes on beyond the marble steps as they learned leadership skills including public speaking, civic involvement, and personal growth. Filled with memorable experiences and lots of fun, this week left an unforgettable impact on all who participated!

-Jessica Swedzinski, State Coordinator



Pictured above: TeenPact students during their Capitol visit



Pictured: Students participating in SWWC enrichment programs

SWWC Foundation

We are thrilled to announce that the SWWC Foundation was able to raise over \$45,000 to support the 2023-24 Student Enrichment Program thanks in part to Operation RoundUp!

Some events held in April in May included the Creative Writing Contest that hosted 90 students from across the region and was judged by the SMSU Creative Writing Department. The Schwan Culinary Skills Challenge was held on April 18 at SMSU in Marshall with over 275 students participating in interactive sessions and/or competitions. The Science and Nature Conference was held on May 7 at SMSU in Marshall with over 930 K-8 students in attendance. We are thankful for all the businesses, foundations and individuals who support our mission.

-Shelly Maes, Executive Director

Tracy Elementary School

The project result was a huge success for all of Tracy Elementary and its students. The Operation RoundUp Grant dollars were used to buy a class set of the kid-friendly robot "Sphero Indi". These robots used color sensors to code. The robots were first used by our 6th-grade students who taught themselves how to program and use them, and then over three months, January-March, went to kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd-grade classrooms to help teach a small group of students in each classroom!

These thirty-one 6th-grade students were known around our school as the "Geek Squad". These students not only taught coding and engineering skills but built a "big-buddy" relationship with many of their students! The leadership skills these students exemplified were inspiring to me and so many others around our school!

This grant and purchase of these robots were also combined with other robot projects the Geek Squad has started over the past three years. Over the school year, the students were able to teach close to 200 students!

This was just one example of the many positives we had throughout the year of our 6th-grade students being leaders and teaching the valuable skills of engineering and coding! Without your support and funding, this project would not be where it is today.

Lucas Novosad, Tracy Elementary School Teacher



Pictured: Tracy Elementary Students participating in the robotic program.



Balaton Fire Department

With Operation RoundUp grant funds, the Balaton Fire Department was able to complete the purchase of a set of turnout gear. The new gear meets all current OSHA standards, providing safe and effective equipment. We appreciate the generous support of Operation RoundUp. With this donation, we will continue to respond to fire and emergency situations safely.

-Kasey Holm, Chief



Pictured: Firefighter, Josh Torgeson, in new turnout gear

Child Care & Nutrition, Inc.

The Weekend Winners Backpack Program provides meals to children in Lincoln County, MN. This program was created to ensure that children do not meet a "food deficit" on weekends when school provided meals are not available. Weekend Winners is in its 7th school year and services all 4 schools in Lincoln County.

With Operation RoundUp Grant funds, we have been able to provide weekend meals to approximately 150 children. The community benefits when our children are healthy. Providing nutritious meal options to the kids who need them ensures that they do not go hungry and continue to grow strong both mentally and physically. Thank you for your continued support!

-Nicole Rasmussen, Executive Director

REGISTER TO WIN!

Bring this coupon and mailing label to the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives booth at Dakotafest or the South Dakota State Fair to win a prize!

Your Phone Number: _____

Your E-mail Address: _____



Aug. 24
2024 McCrossan Boys Ranch
Xtreme Event Rodeo
McCrossan Boys Ranch Campus
Sioux Falls, SD
605-339-1203

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.

JULY 1-4
Annual Black Hills Roundup
7 p.m.
Black Hills Roundup Grounds
Belle Fourche, SD
605-723-2010
blackhillsroundup.com

JULY 5-7, 12-14, 19-21
Laura Ingalls Wilder Pageant
Prairie Girl: Laura's Dakota Stories
Gates open 6 p.m.
Performance at 8 p.m.
\$15 adults, \$10 kids 6-12
Theater on the Prairie
De Smet, SD

JULY 5-7
Badlands Astronomy Festival
10 a.m.-11:30 p.m.
Ben Reifel Visitor Center
Interior, SD
605-433-5243

JULY 7-12
Deadwood 3 Wheeler Rally
All day
Deadwood Event Complex
Deadwood, SD
800-274-1876 ext 1103

JULY 10
Tracy Area Garden & Quilts Tour
2-7:30 p.m.
Tracy, MN
507-629-3252

JULY 14-18
Dakota 600
8 -11 a.m.
Black Hills National Forest
Rapid City, SD
605-645-1756
dakota600.com

JULY 19-20
Storybook Land Festival
4-8:30 p.m. on Friday
10 a.m.-4 p.m. on Saturday
Storybook Land in Wylie Park
Aberdeen, SD
605-626-7015

JULY 19-20
Farley Fest
All day
Lake Farley Park
Milbank, SD
605-432-6656

JULY 19-20
Cookin' on Kameska
All day
Admission \$10
Stokes-Thomas Lake City Park
on Lake Kameska
Watertown, SD
605-886-5814

JULY 26-28
Bruce Honey Days
5k walk/run, parade, cookouts, craft show, 3-on-3 basketball tournament, street dance and more.
Jay Street
Bruce, SD
605-627-5671

AUG. 3
Bloomin' Quilt Party
12-5 p.m.
Bennett Barn
Aurora, SD

AUG. 6-8
IDEAg's Farmfest
8 a.m.-4 p.m.
Redwood County, MN
651-316-4369

AUG. 14-18
Lyon County Fair
Rodeo on Thur. & Fri.
Demo Derby on Sat.
Marshall, MN

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