

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

Local art teacher's mural
commemorates dedicated
Burke lineman.
Photo by Jacob Boyko

Rural Murals

Small Communities
Showcase History
and Culture Through
Mural Art

Pages 8-9

Blizzard Bags

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Forecasting the Future



Tim O'Leary

General Manager

We are starting the time of year where we begin to look at next year's budget and any impacts that we may see when it comes to electric rates. We did have a rate increase in May of this year, and we have noticed a change in revenues, even though electric sales are 5% below budget for the year.

One of the biggest impacts on our local budget is power costs. Power costs make up nearly 60% of our costs and they make up the largest part of our uncontrollable costs. What I mean by uncontrollable costs, is that these costs are based on the amount of and when power is needed by our members. While we have some control over amount through the load management of water heaters and air conditioners, for the most part our members decide when and how much power they need around their homes and businesses.

When we looked at what we needed for a rate increase earlier this year, we based that decision on what was known at the time. We knew that we could expect a small increase in power costs from the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) for the power that we receive from the hydroelectric dams on the Missouri River. WAPA supplies around 17% of the cooperative's power needs throughout the year. This was taken into consideration and rates were set with the idea that we would be able to maintain them for a couple of years. As a reminder, our previous rate increase was done on January 1, 2017, and we were able to hold rates steady until earlier this year or around 7 ½ years.

The other 83% of our power needs are supplied by Basin Electric and each year Basin staff provides its members with an updated financial forecast. The forecast is used to determine what rates may look like over the next 10 years. Just like any forecast, the information provided at the beginning of the forecast can be relied upon more than what may happen in 10 years. The forecast that we relied on indicated that Basin wasn't expecting to change rates in the next few years. However, this information has changed as new information was put into their forecast for 2025. Basin announced a 6.5% rate increase at their Annual Meeting in August. Basin indicated that the primary drivers impacting the rates were: load growth and investments

in reliability which will require them to invest \$8 billion in new generation and transmission facilities over the next 10 years, decreased sales to non-members, the impacts of inflation on all costs of doing business and the overall volatility in the power markets.

The impact of the rate increases by WAPA and Basin will be put into East River's, our transmission and power supplier, 2025 budget and we will see how this impacts their rate to Lyon-Lincoln at their budget presentation at the beginning of October. We will then take that information and apply it to our budget numbers. Our budget will be shared with the board of directors at our December board meeting and decisions will be made at that time on what will need to be done with our local electric rates.

We understand that this isn't the news you wanted to read about this month, but we will do our best at mitigating the rate increases the best we can moving forward. We will be providing updates on our budgeting process over the next several months and then again at our yearly district meetings in April.



COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

LYON-LINCOLN ELECTRIC

(ISSN 1540-6989)

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Jared Dritz, Porter
Galen Grant, Russell
Mary Gunnink, Lake Benton
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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

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

www.llec.coop

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Jessica Gums, Editor



SEPTEMBER 2024 GRANTEES

Master Gardeners of Lyon County

\$500 towards the Lyon Co. Children's Garden

Tracy Area Medical Foundation

\$500 towards Children's toys for Clinic Rooms & Lobbies

Tracy Area Elementary School

\$1,500 towards the "Thinking Like a Historian" Classroom Library

Tracy Lion's Club

\$1,000 towards the "Help Tuck Them In" Project

The next round of grant applications must be received by: February 21st, 2025

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.

MARCH BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Lyon-Lincoln Electric Trust, Inc. was held September 9th, 2024. The board reviewed applications and grant requests were approved. Thank you notes and final reports from grant recipients were reviewed. The next meeting will be held March 3rd, 2025. Do you know a nonprofit organization in our service territory that would benefit from a grant from Operation RoundUp? Community organizations and nonprofit groups may apply by completing and returning an application form. Duane Weedman - 730201. Applications for grants can be found at www.llec.coop under the "Your Cooperative" tab.

2024-2025 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 Belaeen, Director

HOLIDAY FOOD SAFETY TIPS

Rachel Dotson

USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture

It's the time of year when many families will be gathering around the dining room table savoring the flavors of their favorite holiday meals. Check out how to keep your holiday meals safe this season with a few tips from Land-grant University Extension Services.

Shopping Safely

Before shopping, check the ingredients you have at home and verify their expiration date. It is helpful to prepare a shopping list before going shopping. Make sure you have sufficient room in your refrigerator for all purchased food items. Cold foods that need refrigeration or freezing should be purchased last.

Oklahoma State University Extension advises while shopping, keep raw meat, poultry and seafood away from other foods in your grocery cart. Placing raw meat, poultry and seafood in plastic bags can be a good method to separate them from other foods. Ask a cashier to place your raw meat, poultry and seafood in a separate bag.

Safe Food Handling Practices

- When it comes to preparing meats, washing poultry and meats at home is no longer necessary and is not recommended by the USDA. University of Connecticut Extension recommends thawing meat in a refrigerator or in a cold-water bath.
- Defrost meats in the refrigerator for approximately 24 hours, depending on size, or submerge meat in its original package in cold water and allow 30 minutes of thawing time for every pound.
- Rinse fruits and vegetables thoroughly under cool running water and use a produce brush to remove surface dirt. Even wash prepackaged greens to minimize bacterial contamination.
- While preparing food, use two cutting boards: one for preparing raw meat, poultry and fish, and the other for cutting fruits and vegetables, cooked food or preparing salads.
- Don't forget to also wash hands with soap and water before and after handling food.

Storing Leftovers

Bacteria grows when the food is left out for more than

two hours at room temperature. Divide leftovers into smaller portions and store in shallow containers in the refrigerator. University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension advises reheating cooked leftovers to 165 degrees. Use a food thermometer to measure temperature accurately. Sauces, soups and gravies should be reheated by bringing them to a boil. When microwaving leftovers, make sure there are no cold spots in food where bacteria can survive.

Multistate Approach for Food Safety

Food-borne illnesses affect 48 million Americans each year. Research and education have led to major advances in food safety; however, challenges remain. Many methods that use heat or chemicals to ensure food safety are not 100% effective and can damage food color, texture, flavor and nutrients.

Researchers at 32 Land-grant Universities are collaborating on innovative solutions for food safety and quality.

Their work is helping meet consumer demand for minimally processed, additive-free food items with longer shelf lives, higher nutrient content and less potential to cause food-borne illnesses.



Farm Safety "Always Be Alert"

Clyde Manas, Age 8

Clyde Manas warns farmers and ranchers to be careful with their equipment around power lines. Thank you for your picture, Clyde! Clyde's parents are Terry and Lacey Manas, members of Bon Homme Yankton 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.



Holiday DELIGHTS

EASY CRANBERRY SALAD

Ingredients:

12 oz. fresh cranberries
20 oz. crushed pineapple,
drained (reserve juice)
1/2 cup pineapple juice
(from reserved juice)
2 cups sugar
3 oz. pkg cranberry jello
(may also use cherry jello)
1/4 cup maraschino cherries,
finely chopped

Method

Boil cranberries with pineapple juice and sugar. When berries pop, remove from heat. Add dry jello, pineapple and cherries. Refrigerate. Keeps for up to two weeks in the refrigerator.

Elaine Rieck
Harrisburg, S.D.

CAKE BATTER DIP

Ingredients:

8 oz. softened cream cheese
8 oz. thawed cool whip
1/3-2/3 cup milk
1 box Funfetti cake mix
(unprepared)
Sprinkles

Method

Add whipped topping and cream cheese to a large mixing bowl and beat with a hand mixer until smooth and creamy.

Add cake mix and 1/3 cup milk and stir with a wooden spoon until combined. Dip will be very thick, so add more milk, a little at a time, until you get to your desired consistency. I used about 2/3 cup for my dip.

Garnish with sprinkles and serve with whatever dippers you prefer (graham crackers, animal crackers, vanilla wafers, pretzels, fresh fruit, etc.)

Kayla Beaner
Centerville, S.D.

OPEN-FACED HOT TURKEY SANDWICHES

Ingredients:

1 container (12 oz.) turkey
gravy
8 slices cooked turkey
1 loaf baguette bread,
(12 in. long)
1 cup fresh spinach leaves
1 cup prepared stuffing,
warmed
1/2 cup cranberry sauce

Method

Cook gravy and turkey slices in large skillet on medium-high heat until heated through.

Cut baguette in half lengthwise, then cut each piece in half. Place bread, cut-side up, onto four serving plates.

Top bread evenly with spinach, turkey, stuffing, any remaining gravy and cranberry sauce.

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

August 2024 Board Meeting Minutes

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Directors of Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative was held on Monday, August 26, 2024. Directors present James Rokeh, Kathy Schreurs, Scott Johnson, Dale Fier, Mike Longtin, Jared Dritz, Joel Buyck, Galen Grant, and Mary Gunnink. Also present: Finance Manager, Kristi Jensen, and Attorney, Michael W. Cable. General Manager, Timothy O'Leary, was not present at the Board Meeting.

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 July 22, 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 June 30, 2024. The Board also reviewed a letter that had been received from NRTC disclosing the Patronage Capital Balance and also reviewed the Rate Adjustment Revenue Worksheets for May and June of 2024.

Lyle Lamote, Line Superintendent, gave the Outage Report for the month of July, 2024. He also indicated that the linemen were doing the following: working on converting overhead lines to underground lines at 10 more locations and working South of Lake Benton to replace an overhead line with an underground line. Mr. Lamote indicated that Firma Tech, which provides a drone service to inspect poles, inspected 100 poles taking two pictures on each side and one on top. The reason Firma Tech did this was to present

their service to the Cooperative because they were in the area but have not yet been contracted through the Cooperative.

Brian Jeremiason, Manager of Marketing and External Relations, gave his report as follows: Lyon-Lincoln Electric. partnered with 11 other Touchstone Energy Cooperatives again this year to host a booth at FarmFest. Working together allows the Cooperatives to easily staff the booth and put on a quality display. Mr. Jeremiason advised the Board that as a group they had 612 members drop off coupons for the drawings this year. Prizes included E-go electric yard tools. Sioux Valley Energy is planning an EV Event at the Sioux Empire Fairgrounds in Sioux Falls, South Dakota on September 17, 2024. Mr. Jeremiason indicated that he offered to bring the Tesla owned by the Cooperative.

Kristi Jensen, Finance Manager, gave the General Manager's Report and said report was as follows: the Board reviewed the July power bill and sales to members and compared those figures to budgeted amounts, looked at line loss for the system, reported on the East River MAC Meeting, and provided a review of upcoming meetings and notices.

The Board reviewed the July 2024 Cyber Security Program Report presented by the East River Cyber Security Department.

Vice-President, Mike Longtin, discussed with the Board the meeting he had attended for East River Electric Power Cooperative, Inc.

The Board reviewed Policy 107-Whistle Blower, Policy 108-Indemnification,

Policy 109-Controlled Substance & Alcohol Use Testing, Policy 201-General Manager, and Policy 202-Fiduciary Duties. After discussion there were no changes recommended by the Board.

The Board was advised that there needed to be a delegate and alternate designated for the NRECA Regional Meeting 6 and a motion was made by Mr. Rokeh, seconded by Mr. Longtin, and carried to designate Secretary/Treasurer, Kathy Schreurs, as the delegate and Director, James Rokeh, as the alternate. There was also discussion concerning the necessity of having a delegate for the RESCO meeting and a motion was made by Mr. Buyck, seconded by Mr. Longtin, and carried to designate Director, James Rokeh, as the voting delegate.

The Board recessed for lunch at 11:45am and watched the East River Electric Power Cooperative, Inc. monthly video report which included the Basin Summary.

There being no further business to come before the Board, President, Dale Fier, adjourned the meeting at 12:14pm.

AUGUST OUTAGE REPORT 10 OR MORE CONSUMERS

8/8/24- 146 consumers were off 20 minutes in Coon Creek and Marshfield Townships. The cause was East River Electric not being informed to tie their subs together when switching.

8/21/24- 30 consumers were off 6 hours and 30 minutes in Lynd Township. The cause was an underground fault.

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	3232	3245	
l. Percent Paid (3217 divided by 3245 times 100)			
	98.61%	98.51%	

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PS Form 3526, July 2014 (Page 2 of 6)

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	98.61%	98.51%	

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Jessica Gums Date: **09/30/2024**

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

PS Form 3526, July 2014 (Page 3 of 6)

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, David & Samantha Groenhoff and Matthew & Emily Boerboom 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

If you're heading out of town during the holiday season, remember to set your home to vacation mode. You can save energy while you're away by lowering your thermostat a few degrees or creating an "away" schedule with a smart or programmable thermostat. Newer water heaters include a vacation mode setting to help you save on water heating costs, or you can simply lower the temperature manually. Small actions can also stack up to energy savings. Unplug devices that consume energy when they're not in use, including phone chargers, toothbrush chargers, TVs and gaming consoles.

Source: energystar.gov

YEAR-TO-DATE COMPARISON JULY 2024

	July- 2023	July- 2024
Total Revenue	\$6,347,374	\$6,207,904
Cost of Power	\$3,490,933	\$3,574,352
Operating Expenses	\$2,631,327	\$2,822,250
Operating Margins	\$225,114	\$(188,698)
KWH's Purchased	59,952,695	55,289,461
Services in Place	4,125	4,130
Miles of Line	1,671	1,671
Revenue per Mile	\$3,799	\$3,715



Small Communities Showcase History and Culture Through Mural Art

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

Lemmon

Visitors from all over the map flock to Lemmon each year to explore the town's plethora of fascinating exhibits, from the Petrified Wood Park to the life-size steampunk-style sculptures by local artist John Lopez.

But of all the town's unique offerings, there's one stand-out exhibit that ties everything together: Boss Cowman Square.

Lopez's lifesize metal sculpture of cowboy legend George Edward Lemmon is the focal point of the square. The Boss Cowman clutches the reins of his steampunk stallion, his eyes fixed on the horizon watching for stray cattle.

"Dad Lemmon," as the town's founder is so fondly known among locals, settled the town in 1906 between the Grand River and North Dakota border. It would soon be a stop along the incoming Chicago Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad, which Dad Lemmon had been recruited to platte westward.

The sculpture is accompanied by a background mural depicting a scene far away from the bustling saloons and general stores of early Lemmon. In the scene, saddled-up cowboys under the careful

watch of the Boss Cowman sculpture guide a meandering herd hundreds of heads long across a river – no problem for Dad Lemmon, whose roundup skills and knowledge of the land were legendary across the West.

In 2015, as Lopez dreamt of what would one day be Boss Cowman Square, he recruited the help of two Nigerian artists, Dotun Popoola and Jonathan Imafidor, to help bring the vision to life.

"We studied a few materials and made sure all the elements were well captured, like the kinds of trees, the way the river looks and the butte in the background," Imafidor recalled about the 2016 project.

One obstacle that posed a challenge for the traveling artists – beside the shock of South Dakota's cold spring weather – was the slight differences between the cattle they knew in Nigeria and the cattle of the American West.

"We are representational artists and we've done a lot of drawings of cows, so we kind of had an idea of what the cattle should look like," Imafidor explained. "But in Lemmon, the kind of cattle that are found in the region are a little different than what we have in Nigeria. I remember when we started painting the cattle ... John Lopez told us, 'I don't think you can find those here.' Then he brought some material for

Cowboys keep a herd of longhorns moving at the bank of the Missouri River. Visitors will notice the sculpture of Dad Lemmon turned around to keep an eye on the progress. *Photo provided by John Lopez.*

us so we were able to see the difference and then we made the corrections."

After about a month of work, the mural was completed and the Boss Cowman Square was unveiled to the public in July 2016.

Burke

In Burke, K-12 art teacher Kate Witt isn't shy about brightening up her community. The mom of four has designed and painted four murals around town, including one depicting the town's beloved utility worker, Rich Bailey.

Rich's wife, Margaret Ann Bailey, commissioned the mural after Rich's passing in 2023. The mural shows the lineman hanging onto a utility pole as he works on the power lines.

"When we came here in 1970, there wasn't a bucket truck or anything," recalled Margaret Ann. "So he climbed everything, whether it was blizzarding or lightning, and he made sure people had electricity."

The mural also features emergency vehicles, as Rich served for decades as a volunteer firefighter and an emergency medical technician. Parked beneath the lines, the rusted white pickup truck Rich drove around town that over the years became synonymous with himself.

"With this mural specifically, I felt I had

a big important job,” Witt said. “This is a man who the town really loves, and I had a big job to make something beautiful that [Margaret Ann] was going to be proud of.”

Witt incorporated her own signature styles into the mural; her white outlines make the lineman’s silhouette stand out against the more geometrically designed Missouri River bluffs and cloudy sunset in the background.

“That’s where I have a little fun, putting in the modern twist and bold colors,” Witt continued. “I put this white line around everything which made some elements almost look like they’re stickers on a wall.”

Since Witt completed the mural last August, it’s become a point of pride for Margaret Ann who says it’s a testament to her husband’s years of dedication to his community.

“There was an older gal here in town, and she called him at 2 o’clock in the morning and said ‘my air conditioner isn’t working and it’s darn hot in my house,’” Margaret Ann recalled.

She said her husband explained that his job was to fix power lines, not air conditioners. Still, he went to flip the breaker on the woman’s fuse box anyway before going back to sleep.

“That’s the kind of guy he was, and I’m proud,” Margaret Ann said.

Tabor

Where in South Dakota can you find roses, ears of corn, a cardinal and Czech kolaches all in one mural?

Only in Tabor, probably.

Commissioned for the town’s 150th anniversary in 2022, the colorful mural on the sidewall of the local library meanders through the community’s history. From the heavy Czech influence of the earliest settlers represented by pastries and roses to the school’s original mascot, the cardinals, Robbie Jelsma worked very intentionally to portray the town in a way only a knowledgeable local artist could.

Growing up in nearby Springfield, Jelsma is no stranger to Tabor and its famous Czech Days, which draws thousands of people from across the country for the three-day celebration.

“I wanted to represent Czech Days and the Czech culture, so I did my own

research,” Jelsma said.

He incorporated roses, which are the national flower of the Czech Republic, as well as the fluffy pastries with fruit in the middle called kolaches.

He also incorporated local history—Tabor’s school mascot was the cardinal before merging with Springfield and Tyndall to form Bon Homme School District.

When he’s not painting murals, Jelsma is a highly sought-after tattoo artist specializing in more realistic styles. For him, the highlights of the Tabor mural is the level of depth and realism he achieved in his roses and clouds.

The hardest part of painting the mural is working with the elements, as there’s a laundry list of work that needs to be done on the surface before any real painting can begin: washing; smoothing; primer.

On top of that, unpredictable Midwestern weather requires a careful eye on the weather radar for any outdoor painting projects, Jelsma said.

“We started about early October so the fall was just getting started, and you never know in South Dakota if the weather is going to hold out or if you’ll get an early snow or strong wind,” he recalled about his three and a half weeks working on the project.

For Jelsma, the finished mural is as big of a point of pride for him, having been selected and commissioned for the work, as it is for the people of Tabor who get to show it off every summer during Czech Days.

“It’s cool I was thought of for the project,” Jelsma said. “It’s an art project that I think just lights everybody up a little bit when you drive down main street and you see something like that in a small town.”



Artist Robbie Jelsma puts the finishing touches on his mural ahead of the 2022 unveiling.
Photo provided by Robbie Jelsma.

STAY SAFE AND WARM:

Your winter home readiness guide

Preparing your home for winter involves several key steps to ensure safety, efficiency and warmth. Here are top tips to help you prepare before the temperatures drop and a few ways to stay safe if a power outage leaves you snowbound.

Inspect your heating system

- Have your heating system professionally serviced.
- Replace air filters if needed.
- Ensure vents and radiators are unblocked for efficient heat distribution.

Prepare pipes and water supply

- Insulate exposed pipes to prevent freezing.
- Drain and shut off outdoor faucets and irrigation systems.
- Know the location of your water shut-off valve in case of emergencies.

Maintain smoke and carbon monoxide detectors

- Replace batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Test detectors to ensure they are functioning properly.

Prepare your home's exterior

- Clear gutters and downspouts of leaves and debris to prevent ice dams.
- Trim trees and bushes away from the house to prevent damage from heavy snow.
- Ensure downspouts extend away from your home's foundation.
- Drain and store garden hoses to prevent freezing.
- Service and store outdoor equipment such as lawnmowers and trimmers.
- Gather winter tools such as snow shovels and ice melt.

Increase home energy efficiency

- Seal gaps and cracks around windows and doors with weatherstripping or caulk.
- Set ceiling fans to rotate clockwise to circulate warm air.
- Lower your thermostat a few degrees to save on heating costs.

Stock emergency supplies

At home, have enough nonperishable food and water for 72 hours in case of power outages or severe weather. Experts suggest storing one gallon of water per person per day.

Include these essentials in your emergency kit:

- First-aid kit
- Flashlights and batteries
- Warm clothing
- Blankets
- Phone chargers and backup charger sources
- Gather important documents, medical supplies/medicines and medical records.
- Don't forget your pets. Make sure you have enough supplies for them as well.



THE COUNTRY COOKIN' cookbook

RECIPES NEEDED

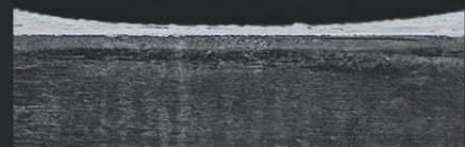
Help us create
another great cookbook
by submitting your
favorite recipes.

Your recipe could be
featured in the
41st volume of
East River Electric's
Country Cookin'
cookbook!



Submit to be entered into
a drawing for 1 of 2
\$100 Visa gift cards

Submit recipes to
graphics@eastriver.coop
or contact your local co-op
for more information.



YOUR WINTER HOME READINESS GUIDE

What to do if the power goes out

Winter weather is unpredictable, with high winds, whiteouts and ice storms. These conditions can cause hazardous roads and power outages.

If the electricity goes out due to a winter storm, you might be in for a prolonged power outage as crews work through the harsh weather to get the power back on.

If this happens, contact your electrical utility as soon as you can so they know you have lost power.

Other actions you can take to stay safe are:

- **Avoid travel.** Stay inside and dress warmly in layered clothing.
- **Place a draft block** at the bottom of doors to minimize cold drafts from entering the house.
- **When using an alternative heat source**, follow operating instructions and be sure to ventilate properly.
- **Keep grills, camp stoves and generators** out of the house, basement and garage.
- **Use a tarp and portable canopy** when using a portable generator if conditions are damp or wet.
- **Move fuel-powered generators** at least 20 feet away from the house.
- **Keep a close eye on the temperature in your home.** Infants and people over the age of 65 are often more susceptible to the cold. You may want to stay with friends or relatives or go to a shelter if you cannot keep your home warm.

For more information on keeping your family safe during and after a winter storm, visit SafeElectricity.org.



PREPARING FOR WINTER WEATHER

Jacob Boyko

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As we near the frigid winter months of South Dakota, it's important for you and loved ones to stay ready for an emergency.

Even though power outages are rare, a loss of electricity can affect modern lives in critical ways; In an instant, you may no longer be able to heat your home, prepare food or access critical information.

It's crucial to prepare for power outages and other general emergencies by keeping supplies in both your home and vehicles as well as making sure you and your loved ones have a plan in place.

Brad Reiners, director of communications for the state Department of Public Safety, encourages South Dakotans to stock

up on essentials like food, water and batteries prior to the winter months.

"Make sure you have enough food and water for at least three days, and each person in the household should have one gallon of water per day," Reiners said.

State DPS recommends keeping non-perishable food items like pasta, canned goods and nutritious snacks that don't require refrigeration and don't need to be heated or cooked before consumption.

"Never use gas powered generators, grills or portable stoves indoors, as they can produce dangerous levels of carbon monoxide," Reiner added.

As you prepare, remember to be proactive about your health. Have your medical prescriptions refilled in advance of a severe storm and keep a battery bank charged so you can power your cell phone in case you need to

access telehealth services, emergency services or access critical information.

In your car, keep warm blankets, winter clothes, snacks, a shovel, flashlight and a set of jumper cables in case you get stranded.

"It's also advisable to check your tires for proper inflation and tread, and make sure your windshield wipers are in good condition with freeze-resistant washer fluid," Reiners added.



Bottles of water and shelf-stable dry foods are perfect long-lasting emergency supplies to keep around.
Photo provided by Meals on Wheels of Western South Dakota.

If you plan to rely on a generator or wood burning stove for heat if the power goes out, check beforehand that your equipment is in safe working order, and you have enough fuel to last several days.

Keeping warm clothes, blankets and sleeping bags at the ready can be lifesaving if you're unable to heat your home.

Meals on Wheels here to help with Blizzard Bags

For senior citizens, some of this advice is easier said than done. Meals on Wheels of Western South Dakota understands that better than anyone, and they have come up with a solution.

"Blizzard Bags" have been a part of the organization's lineup for over 20 years now and include some of the essentials seniors need when hunkering down for severe weather.

"We deliver shelf-stable meals for seniors who, especially in rural areas, may not have access to food for a while if their electricity goes out," said Jennifer Paschke, regional manager for Meals on Wheels of Western South Dakota. "We provide five meals in those bags they can use during a loss of power or being stranded in their homes due to weather."

The food supplied is generally items that don't require a heat source, like packages of tuna salad and crackers, protein bars or cans with a pop-top seal so no can opener is required, Paschke said.

The bags also include water and other donated supplies like batteries and flashlights from local businesses, including some rural electric cooperatives.

"The biggest success story I know in

my area is a couple of years ago when they had tornados in Philip," Paschke remembered. "The water we provided [in the blizzard bags] were some of the only sources of water some of those people had. Just having that food and water can be a godsend for some people."

Blizzard Bags are available to seniors age 60 and up who are a part of the Meals on Wheels program. The bags cost roughly \$20 to put together, according to Paschke, and are funded in part by community donors. The organization provides home deliveries for seniors living in both cities and rural areas.

Anyone interested in getting service or helping with the cause can contact Meals on Wheels of Western South Dakota at (605) 394-6002.



Meals On Wheels of Western South Dakota provides blizzard bags to seniors in case weather conditions affect normal delivery. Photo provided by Meals on Wheels of Western South Dakota.

May Your Holidays Be Merry and Bright

As November kicks off, it's hard to believe we'll soon be gathering with family and friends to celebrate the holiday season. This festive time of year brings joy and warmth, but as the weather gets cooler and we spend more time indoors, the holidays can also bring increased energy use and a higher risk of electrical and fire hazards.

As your local electric cooperative, our team at Lyon-Lincoln Electric cares about your wellbeing. This month, we'd like to share a few practical tips to help you stay safe and efficient during the holiday season.

Safety first

Decorating your home for the holidays can be a joyous experience but before you deck the halls, always check electrical cords and light strands to make sure they aren't frayed or damaged. This gives us peace of mind, knowing our holiday lights are ready to safely brighten our home. Also double check the lights you use outside to make sure they're rated for outdoor use.

Like many households, holiday-scented candles are ever-popular. While festive, candles can create fire hazards and should never be left unattended. One of the best and easiest ways to safeguard your home is to test smoke alarms often. Test on the first of each month, so it's easy to remember. Colin J. Aune - 1210200. Testing smoke alarms only takes a few seconds and could save lives, so make it a habit.

'Tis the season for savings

Spending more time indoors with a few more guests in the home can really impact home energy use. By taking a few small steps to save energy during the holiday season, you can lower your bills.

We like to remind our members to mind the thermostat. Since heating and cooling makes up the majority of home energy consumption, the thermostat is one of the best places for savings. Lower it a few degrees, especially when you have family or friends stopping by. Good company brings additional warmth to your home.

Your family can also save energy by decorating with LED holiday lights. LEDs are the most energy efficient lighting options available, and they last much longer than traditional bulbs.

There's no denying one of the best parts of the holiday season is the food—not just the meals but the time spend together in the kitchen. There are many ways to save in the heart of your home, but one of the best approaches is to cook with smaller countertop appliances, such as air fryers, slow cookers and toaster ovens. These handy appliances consume a fraction of the energy used to heat the oven, creating the perfect recipe for mealtime and energy savings.

I hope you will implement some of these energy-saving and safety tips into your holiday plans. For additional advice, visit our website at www.llec.coop. We're here to help you with safety and savings year-round.

We hope your holiday season is merry & bright.

Tips for a Safe and Efficient Holiday Season

This holiday season, keep energy savings and electrical safety in mind.

Save Energy

- Use smaller appliances like slow cookers instead of the oven
- Lower the thermostat when hosting friends and family
- Decorate with energy-saving LED lights

Prioritize Safety

- Never leave unattended candles burning
- Ensure all smoke alarms are working
- When decorating, inspect all light strands and cords for damage.

Cooperatives work with their members

Let us answer your questions about cold weather shut-off protection for our members



What is the Cold Weather Rule?

The Cold Weather Rule protects some members from having their electricity shut-off due to non-payment between October 1 and April 30.

Can my heat be shut off in the winter?

Yes. The Cold Weather Rule allows electricity to be shut off for non-payment. You will only be protected if electricity provides your primary source of heat AND you have done ALL of the following things:

- Your household income meets the state guidelines (at or less than 50 percent of the state median household income)
- You receive referrals to energy assistance, weatherization, conservation, or other programs likely to reduce your energy bills from LLEC.
- You have a payment arrangement with LLEC for which you make reasonably timely payments.

Will you disconnect me without my knowledge?

No. You will receive a "Notice of Disconnection". There will also be a list of rights and responsibilities for you as well as the Cooperative and a list of agencies that may help you.

If you receive a Notice of Disconnection, you MUST take the next step and call us and the agency that serves your county to see if they can help you.

We will not disconnect electricity without first notifying you by letter. We also attempt to make phone calls if we have correct phone numbers. We will not shut off electricity on a Friday, a weekend, or the day before a holiday.

We don't want to shut off anyone's electricity. We will work with you to set up a payment arrangement or help you to see if you qualify for shut-off protection. Below is a list of providers that can help with your energy bills. It is up to you to contact them for help.

What must I do to receive shut-off protection?

If you are behind in your electricity payments, your first step is to call or email Lyon-Lincoln Electric. Please call (800) 927-6276 or email@llec.coop.

If my electricity has been disconnected, how can I be reconnected?

In order to re-establish power, contact LLEC for the total balance due, which will include additional fees and a deposit.

Energy Assistance Program

The Energy Assistance Program (EAP) is a federally funded program through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which helps low-income renters and homeowners pay for home heating costs and furnace repairs. Household income must be at or below 50% of the state median income (\$43,750 for a family of 4) to qualify for benefits.

To learn more about the EAP program or to apply for assistance:

- Visit the Minnesota Department of Commerce Energy Assistance website, [https://mn.gov/commerce/consumers/consumer-assistance/](https://mn.gov/commerce/consumers/consumer-assistance/energy-assistance/)
- Contact your county EAP service provider (See listing)



Meeting Your Payment Obligation

Please contact our office if you find that you cannot pay your electric bill. We will work with you to set up a payment schedule during the cold weather months if you think you will be unable to pay your bill on time. It is your responsibility to call our office to arrange a payment schedule.

Failure to Respond to a Disconnect Notice May Lead to Shut-off of Service, Even in Winter.

Our members are important! We'd rather work with you to set up a payment plan than shut off your electricity.

If you are in need help, don't delay!

CALL TODAY: 800-927-6276

Active-Duty Military Shut-off Protection

When a household member has been ordered into active duty, for deployment or for a change of permanent duty station, utility disconnection is restricted. Minnesota law protects these military households from shut-off if they cannot pay their utility bills in full.

If the member and Lyon-Lincoln Electric cannot agree on a payment plan, members have the right to appeal to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission. Lyon-Lincoln Electric will not disconnect electric service during the appeal process.

EAP service providers

Southwest Health & Human Services
Ivanhoe, MN Office
(507)694-1452

Southwest Health & Human Services
Marshall, MN Office
(507)537-6747

Prairie Five Community Action Council Inc.
Montevideo, MN
(320)269-7976

United Community Action Program
Marshall, MN
(800)658-2448



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.

OCT. 26
Mortimer's Monstrous Halloween
 3 p.m.-6 p.m.
 Oakwood Lakes State Park
 605-627-5441

NOV. 2
Wall Community Craft Show
 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
 Wall, SD
 605-279-2665

NOV. 2
Fall Fling Craft Show
 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
 Dakota Christian School
 Corsica, SD
 605-366-7940

NOV. 8-9
Sioux Empire Arts & Crafts Show
 Friday, 12 p.m.-8 p.m.
 Saturday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
 Sioux Falls, SD
 605-332-6004

NOV. 9
Deadwood's Big Whiskey Festival
 4 p.m.-8 p.m.
 Main Street
 Deadwood, SD

NOV. 22-JAN.5
Winter Wonderland
 Nightly - 5 p.m.-12 a.m.
 Falls Park
 Sioux Falls, SD
 605-275-6060

NOV. 9
Christmas at the Homestead
 12 p.m.-4 p.m.
 North Sioux City, SD
 605-232-0873

NOV. 9-10
Zonta Craft & Vendor Show
 Saturday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
 Sunday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
 Ramkota Hotel
 Pierre, SD
 605-280-1511

NOV. 16
Festival of Trees
 6 p.m.
 Lead, SD
 605-584-2067

NOV. 23-24
Winterfest: A Winter Arts Festival
 Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
 Sunday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
 Aberdeen, SD

NOV. 30
A Hometown Christmas Market
 2 p.m.-6 p.m.
 Main Street
 Elk Point, SD

NOV. 29-DEC. 29
Trees & Trains Exhibit at SD State Railroad Museum
 Hill City, SD
 605-665-3636

DEC. 1
A Christmas Carol
 2 p.m.
 Gayville Music Hall
 Gayville, SD
 605-624-2859

DEC. 5
Christmas on the Prairie
 4 p.m.
 Main Street
 Miller, SD

DEC. 5
Holiday Festival of Lights
 4 p.m.-7:30 p.m.
 Yankton, SD
 605-665-3636

DEC. 6-8, 13-15
A Sherlock Carol
 Dec. 6-7, 13-14, 7:30 p.m.
 Dec. 8, 15, 2:30 p.m.
 Corson, SD
 mightycorson.com

DEC. 7
KJAM Parade of Lights
 5:30 p.m.
 Madison, SD
 605-256-4514

DEC. 7
Santa Day
 2 p.m.
 Stockholm Buggy Museum
 Stockholm, SD
 605-467-3940

DEC. 7-31
Garden Glow at McCrory Gardens
 5 p.m.-9 p.m.
 Brookings, SD
 605-688-6707

DEC. 14
Parade of Lights
 Wessington, SD
 605-359-2049

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