

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



SOUTH DAKOTA STAR QUILTS

**Honoring Cooperative
Legacy With
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Recent Review of EPA Rules Signal Reliability Wins



Stephanie Horst
horst@byelectric.com

Electric cooperatives are applauding a recent series of actions announced by the Environmental Protection Agency. These actions would alleviate reliability and cost challenges for electric co-ops across the U.S.

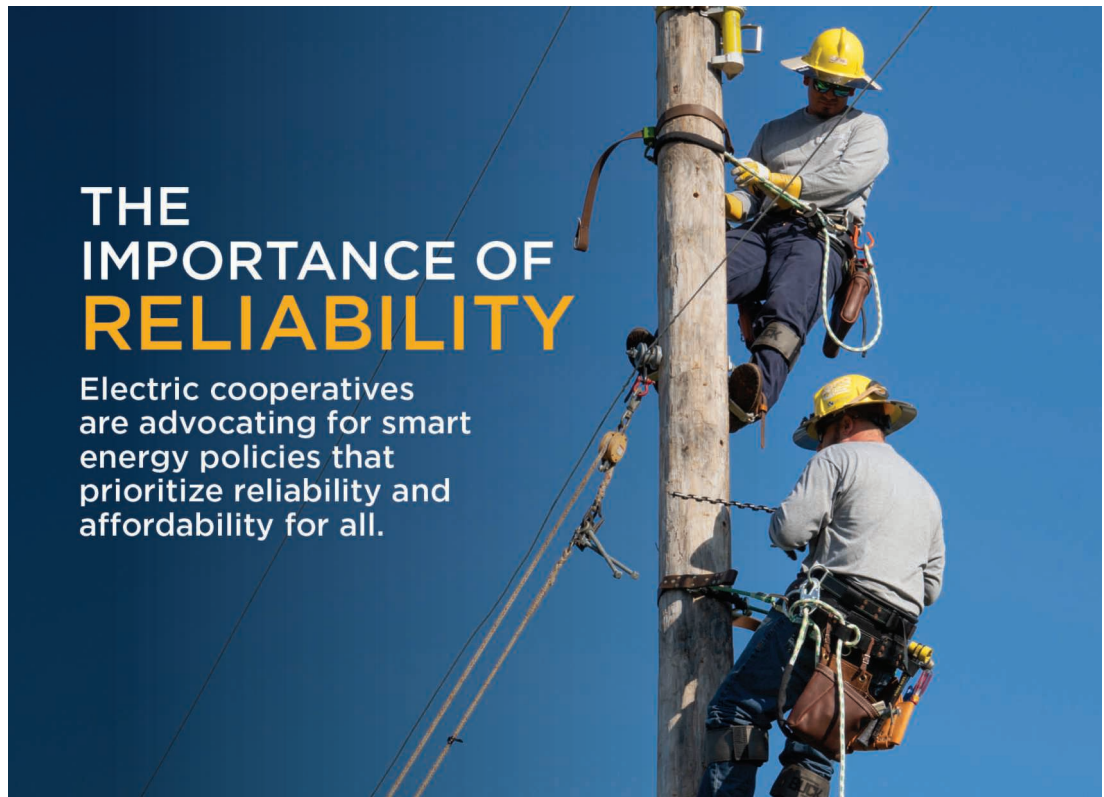
The EPA said it will review and reconsider the Biden administration's power plant greenhouse gas rule. The agency also plans to reconsider other rules hindering America's energy dominance, including the mercury and air rule, ozone transport rule and power plant wastewater rule. The agency will also address a number of fundamental problems with the coal ash program and take other actions to unleash American energy while protecting the environment.

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association that represents electric cooperatives in D.C., flagged concerns with these rules in a letter to EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin in January. NRECA CEO Jim Matheson met with Zeldin at EPA's headquarters to discuss these issues. The letter

served as a policy roadmap recommending ways the EPA could address harmful regulations for electric co-ops while ensuring reliable and affordable power and promoting a healthy environment.

The recent EPA announcements are another critical step that puts our nation on a path towards a more reliable and resilient electric grid—and not a moment too soon. The demand for electricity is skyrocketing, yet unrealistic public policy decisions are forcing always-available generation resources to retire faster than they can be reliably replaced.

Electric cooperatives appreciate the EPA's recent actions that could bolster American energy dominance with sound policies that protect our environment—without leaving American families in the dark.



COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

BON HOMME YANKTON ELECTRIC

(USPS No. 018-973)

Bon Homme Yankton Electric Association, Inc
PO Box 158
134 S. Lidice St.
Tabor, SD 57063

Office Hours:
Monday through Friday
7:30am - 4:00pm

Pay by Phone, call:
1-855-941-3507

To report an outage, call:
Local call from Tabor, Tyndall, and Yankton:
605-463-2507

NOTICE: Electric bills must be paid by 10:00am on the 20th of each month to avoid a \$10 late fee.

Board President: Dean Sternhagen

Board of Directors

- Dave Sykora - Vice President
- Dave Sternhagen - Secretary
- Robert Ruppelt - Treasurer
- Paul Voigt
- Brian Brandt
- Rick Cheloha

General Manager: Stephanie Horst

Operations Manager: Ken Carda

Office Manager: Nicole Einrem

Members Service Advisor: Aaron Melichar

Editor: Chantelle Jungemann

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MAY BOARD MEETING

The May board meeting was held on May 21, 2025 at 8:00 am. Directors present were Dave Sternhagen, Dave Sykora, Dean Sternhagen, Rick Cheloha, Brian Brandt, Robert Ruppelt and Paul Voigt via zoom. Others present were the attorney, management staff and guest employee.

THE BOARD APPROVED THE CONSENT AGENDA:

- April 2025 Board Meeting Minutes
- Capital Credits to Estates - \$4,677.62
- Review New Members & Cancellations
- Review Closed Work Order Inventory - None
- Review Special Equipment Purchases - \$37,436.63

THE BOARD REVIEWED AND ACCEPTED FOLLOWING REPORTS:

- Member Service Report
- Operations & Safety Report
- Emergency Response Training
- Office & Financial Reports
- General Manager Report
- East River Cyber Security/IT Report

- SDREA Board Report
- East River Report
- NRECA Legislative Forum Report

OTHER GOVERNANCE

- Designate SDREA Board Representative (Dean Sternhagen)
- Appoint SD NRECA Director Election Voting Delegate/Alternate (Dave Sternhagen/Dean Sternhagen)
- Appoint CFC and NCSC Voting Delegate (Rick Cheloha)
- Approved Pledge to Mitchell Technical College
- Approved REED Application to the REED Board for consideration
- Enter/Exit Executive Session
- Next Meeting date set for Wednesday, June 18, 2025, at 8:00 am.

FINANCIAL REPORT	APRIL		YTD
	2024	2025	2025
TOTAL ELECTRIC REVENUE	\$827,602	\$865,305	\$4,277,158
COST OF POWER	\$473,157	\$490,298	\$2,481,933
TOTAL COST OF SERVICE	\$882,900	\$914,469	\$4,184,762
KWHS PURCHASED	6,620,650	6,688,533	37,274,216
RESIDENTIAL AVERAGE KWH	1,178	1,158	
RESIDENTIAL AVERAGE BILL	\$154	\$159	

Welcome New Members

Utica

Dayna Frank

Tabor

Katelyn Sternhagen

Lundin Banks

Menno

Kyle Munkvold

Irene

Mary Engen

Yankton

Alexander Auch

Arthur & Cheryl Coley

David Mueller

Katie Fischer

KD Holdings, LLC

Lacey Derby

Michelle & William Andrews

Nelson Progressive Partners

Ross & Timarie Hansen

Wesdon Wortmann

Yanisleidy Padrino

Whitetail Run Shops Owners

Assoc, Inc



Going on now! Single to Joint Membership Conversion at no charge
 Call 605-463-2507 or email ebiz@byelectric.com for more information.

Playground Safety

Source: National Safety Council

According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, each year, more than 200,000 children go to U.S. hospital emergency departments with injuries associated with playground equipment.

As the weather warms up and trips to the park become frequent, take a moment to familiarize yourself with the risks on playgrounds and how you can prevent injuries.

Check for Playground Hazards

Nearly 80% of playground injuries are caused by falls. Watch out for these potential hazards when taking kids to the playground, and report any hazards observed.

Improper ground surfaces: Surfaces around playground equipment should have at least 12 inches of wood chips, mulch, sand or pea gravel, or mats made of safety-tested rubber or rubber-like materials. Playgrounds should be free of exposed concrete footings, rocks or tree stumps.

Overcrowded play areas: The area under and around play equipment should be a minimum of 6 feet in all directions while swing set areas should be twice the height of the suspending bar both in back and front of the swings. Structures more than 30 inches high should be at least 9 feet apart.

Unprotected elevated areas: Platforms higher than 30 inches should have guardrails or barriers.

Head entrapment spaces: Openings between rails, bars, rungs and even ropes of cargo nets should be less than 3 1/2 inches or more than 9 inches.

Sharp points and edges: Playground equipment should be free of protruding bolt ends, “S” hooks, and other sharp points and edges.

Visit the American Academy of Pediatrics webpage on playground safety to learn more.

Avoid Strangulation Hazards

The American Academy of Pediatrics cautions that children should not wear or play with anything that could get caught on equipment and become a strangulation hazard.

- Never attach or allow children to attach ropes, jump ropes, clotheslines or pet leashes to play equipment.
- Leave sweatshirts with drawstrings and necklaces at home.
- Remove bike helmets when playing on the playground.

Be Cautious of Too Much Sun Exposure

Playgrounds should have full or partial sun protection between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., peak exposure time.

- Limit playtime at peak sun exposure time and know the signs of heat illnesses.
- Avoid burns; if playground equipment is hot to the touch, it is too hot for your child’s bare skin.

Allow Only Age-Appropriate Activities

The Consumer Product Safety commission lists age-appropriate equipment in the Public Playground Safety Handbook. There is no substitute for parental supervision, especially for young children.



“Don’t go outside during lightning storms!”

Marah Kinnunen, Age 8

Marah warns readers about the dangers of going outside during a lightning storm. Thank you for your picture, Marah! Marah’s parents are Reuben and Sarine Kinnunen from Hayti, S.D.

Kids, send your drawing with an electrical safety tip to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). If your poster is published, you’ll receive a prize. All entries must include your name, age, mailing address and the names of your parents. Colored drawings are encouraged.

Delectable CHICKEN

CHICKEN MILANESE

Ingredients:

- 1 pkg. McCormick® Chicken Parmesan One Sheet Pan Seasoning Mix
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 lb. thin-sliced boneless skinless chicken breasts
- 1 tbsp. oil

Method

Preheat oven to 400°F. Empty Seasoning Mix into shallow dish. Add Parmesan cheese. Brush chicken with oil. Coat evenly on both sides with Seasoning Mix. Discard any remaining Seasoning Mix.

Place chicken in single layer on foil-lined shallow baking pan sprayed with no stick cooking spray.

Bake 15 minutes or until cooked through, turn chicken halfway through cook time.

McCormick.com

SWEET AND SOUR CHICKEN

Ingredients:

- 3 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 2 tbsps. fat or oil
- 1/4 cup water
- 2 tbsps. cornstarch
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1/4 cup vinegar
- 20 oz. can pineapple chunks (drained, reserving juice)
- 3 tbsps. soy sauce
- 3/4 cup green pepper strips
- 1/4 cup onion (thinly sliced)

Method

Cube chicken into one inch squares; brown in fat. Add water. Cook in water until tender. In another pan combine cornstarch, salt, brown sugar, vinegar, pineapple juice and soy sauce.

Cook until slightly thick, stirring constantly. Pour sauce over hot chicken. Let stand at least 10 minutes. Add green pepper, onion, and pineapple chunks. Cook two to seven minutes until warmed through. Serve over hot rice. *Makes 4 servings.

Jan Grage
Clay-Union Electric Member

CHICKEN POT PIE

Ingredients:

- 1 pkg. prepared pie crust (top and bottom)
- 1/3 cup butter or margarine
- 1/3 cup chopped onion
- 1/3 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. pepper
- 1 3/4 cup Progresso™ chicken broth (from 32 oz. carton)
- 1/2 cup milk
- 2 1/2 cup chicken/turkey (shredded, cooked)
- 2 cups frozen mixed vegetables (thawed)

Method

Heat oven to 425°F. Prepare pie crusts as directed on box for two-crust pie using nine inch glass pie pan. In two quart saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Add onion; cook two minutes, stirring frequently, until tender. Stir in flour, salt and pepper until well blended.

Gradually stir in broth and milk, cooking and stirring until bubbly and thickened. Stir in chicken and mixed vegetables. Remove from heat. Spoon chicken mixture into crust-lined pan. Top with second crust; seal edge and flute. Cut slits in several places in top crust. Bake 30 to 40 minutes or until crust is golden brown. During last 15 to 20 minutes of baking, cover crust edge with strips of foil to prevent excessive browning. Let stand five minutes before serving.

Cindy Foster
Codington-Clark Electric Member

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 2025. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.



We are celebrating 80 years of service!

District 2 Director: Robert Ruppelt



I've had the privilege of serving on the board for the past 9 years. One change I'm especially proud of is how we've transformed our annual meeting by adopting a drive-through format. This adjustment has made it possible for many more members to participate and stay connected, which has been very rewarding to witness.

A personal highlight of being on the board has been the opportunity to travel across the United States, attending meetings and connecting with others involved in the rural electric industry. It truly feels like being part of a large, extended family.

On the personal side, Deb and I will be celebrating our 45th wedding anniversary this year. We've been blessed with four children Laura, Lisa, Brian and Eric and four grandchildren Jacob, Sadie, Evan and Cole.



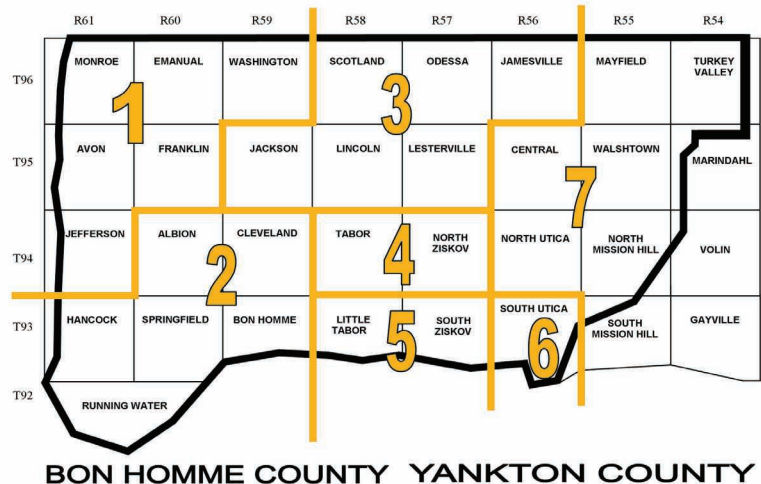
Our faith community is important to us; we're active members of Springfield Bible Church and involved with Bon Homme Bible Camp.

In our free time, we enjoy hiking, biking, and have recently taken up pickleball, which has been a lot of fun! I worked at Mike Durfee Prison for 29 years and have been retired for 9 years now. In retirement, I also drive a school bus part-time for Bon Homme School. Deb spent her career as a paraprofessional at the Bon Homme Hutterite Colony and is now enjoying retirement as well. Together, we love to travel and make the most of our retirement years.

All active members in district 2 were put in a drawing in July for a chance to win an \$80 bill credit. We will apply the \$80 credit to the next months bill.

Schedule for bill credit drawing:

- June - District 1
- July - District 2
- August - District 3
- September - District 4
- October - District 5
- November - District 6
- December - District 7



District 2 \$80 Bill Credit Drawing Winner: William P Minow

Employee Spotlight: Kara Zomer



How long have you been at Bon Homme Yankton Electric?

I have been with B-Y Electric for 18 years.

What does your job entail? My duties have changed over the years. Currently I work with accounts payable, work orders and inventory, as well as billing out any consumer work that is done.

What do you love most about B-Y Electric? The variety of work that I'm able to do on a daily basis.

What is your favorite memory since starting work at B-Y Electric? I can't pick just one in particular. I've been blessed with the best co-workers, and we have a lot of fun together, whether it is pranks pulled in the office or time at Christmas parties and employee picnics.

How would you describe B-Y Electric in three words?

Fun, challenging, and rewarding

A little about you outside of work. My husband and I live just outside of Tabor. We have three children. I enjoy following their activities, traveling, and spending time outside.



80th



You're Invited! Make Plans to Attend 2025 Drive-Thru Annual Meeting

Who: Bon Homme Yankton Electric Members

What: 2025 Bon Homme Yankton Electric Annual Meeting

When: Tuesday, August 19th, 4:00-6:30 PM

Where: Lidice Street (main street) Tabor

Each membership that registers will receive an attendance gift, a \$20 meal certificate to their choice of The Keg in Tabor, Joe's Substation in Lesterville, or The Marina Bar & Grill in Yankton.

All registered members will also be entered for a chance to win one of five \$100 bill credits.

Current Seniors present will be entered to win a \$300 and \$500 scholarship, "The John & Gunda Koble Scholarship".

**Watch your mail in August for your Annual Meeting postcard!
Don't forget to bring it to the meeting for fast and easy registration!
Reminder Voting Delegate for an Organization must be done 24 hours
before the Annual Meeting.**



SOUTH DAKOTA STAR QUILTS

Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative directors present retiring manager Melissa Maher (left) with a star quilt.
Photo by JJ Martin

Honoring Cooperative Legacy With Time-honored Tradition

Frank Turner

frank.turner@sirea.coop

Across the prairie, few gifts carry as much meaning as a star quilt. For many, these quilts are more than just blankets – they are acts of honor. Rooted in Native American culture, particularly among Lakota, Dakota and other tribes of South Dakota, star quilts have long been used to mark some of life’s largest milestones, including graduations, marriages, memorials and moments of deep community respect.

Electric cooperative leaders Donovan Young Man, a former director of Lacreek Electric who was honored shortly before his passing earlier this year, and Melissa Maher, the former manager of Moreau-Grand Electric Cooperative, recently accepted star quilts from their cooperatives in recognition of their many years of service to their member-owners.

So what makes the star quilt such an honor? According to International Quilt Museum Collections Manager Jamie Swartz, the quilts are special because they take an incredible amount of skill and experience to assemble.

Many star quilts are block quilts, constructed from dozens or even hundreds of small fabric pieces carefully cut and stitched together. At the heart of the design is an eight-pointed star, a

shape that demands near-perfect precision.

“There are so many small pieces that make up a star quilt,” Swartz said. “When you are combining so many small pieces together to make a large, over-all design, there is more room for error. A small mismeasurement can create bumps, ripples or puckers in the patchwork.”

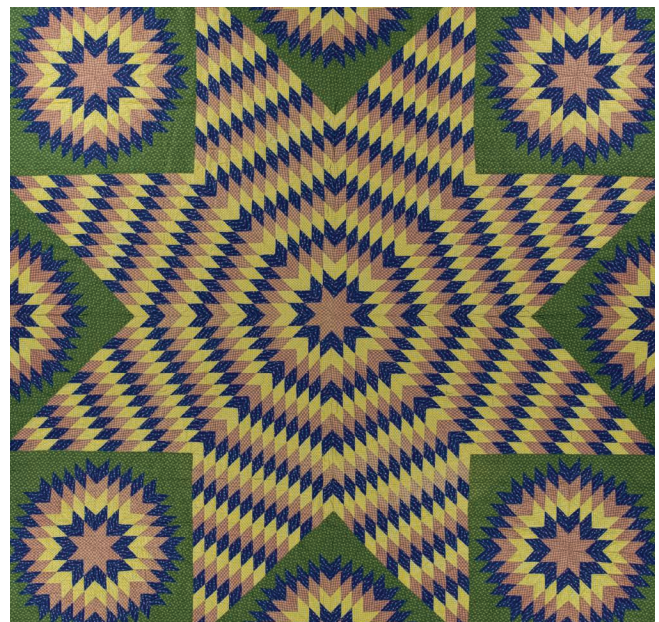


Photo Courtesy of the International Quilt Museum, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 1997.007.0123

That level of precision, care and time-honored tradition a star quilt represents is a part of what makes it such a meaningful gift. In recent years, the practice of gifting star quilts has been embraced by some electric cooperatives as a way to express a deep appreciation for their employees who have dedicated a lifetime of work to their cooperatives and communities.

Remembering Donovan Young Man

Before his passing earlier this year, Donovan Young Man was honored by his cooperative at the Lacreek Electric annual meeting with a star quilt for his 31 years of service to Lacreek Electric, serving as a director for both his cooperative and the South Dakota Rural Electric Association. Specifically, the cooperative honored Donovan’s commitment to both his cooperative and community.

Lacreek Electric CEO Josh Fanning said Young Man was known for both his calm and steady presence, and his exceptional ability to bridge tribal relations, fostering understanding and unity within the community.

In his community, Donovan was known for his profound impact on his community’s youth. For 41 years, he devoted himself to the Oglala Lakota County School District, leaving a lasting legacy of dedication, education, and empowerment for the youth. Beyond education, Donovan served his community in many other ways, including as a member of the Oglala Sioux Tribal Council.

“Donovan had a lasting impact on our cooperative,” Fanning said. “His wisdom, leadership, and steady guidance helped shape its direction and strengthen its foundation. His contributions will be remembered and felt for years to come.”

“We chose a star quilt because gifting one is a deeply meaningful gesture in our area – an expression of profound respect, honor and the warmth of community,” Fanning continued. “In many Indigenous cultures, the star quilt represents the highest form of recognition, symbolizing heartfelt gratitude for the recipient’s enduring contributions. It also serves as a guiding light, reflecting the inspiration and direction they provide for future generations.”

Honoring Melissa Maher

Moreau-Grand Electric honored Melissa Maher with a star quilt at the co-ops annual meeting in October for her 40 years of service at the cooperative. In addition to Maher, the cooperative also presented Larry Hieb with a quilt for his 55 combined years of service as both an employee and director.

Maher joined the cooperative in 1984 as manager’s secretary. Through the years, Maher remained with the cooperative, serving as the member service director and later Moreau-Grand Electric’s manager, the first woman to hold this title.

“I’ve always loved star quilts, what they stand for – the celebration and honoring of someone with an heirloom that they can enjoy for hopefully generations to come,” she said.

Maher first experienced the star quilt tradition through her



Lacreek Electric employees gift director Donovan Young Man a star quilt to celebrate his 31 years of service to the electric cooperative.

Photos by Mandy Scherer



mother, who taught kindergarten at Cheyenne-Eagle Butte School. As a teacher in the Eagle Butte community, her mother received star quilts from several of her students’ families.

Seeing the joy it brought her mother, Maher continued the star quilt tradition into her years at the cooperative, gifting quilts to retirees of the cooperative, gifting dozens of star quilts made by quilt maker Bonnie LeBeaux to employees of the co-op, honoring retirements, directors, and even key members of the construction crew that helped build the new Moreau-Grand Electric office.

“It’s hard to guess how many star quilts I have gifted over the years,” Maher said. “Probably dozens if I had to guess.”

The tradition came full circle at her retirement party when Moreau-Grand Electric presented Mellisa a star quilt of her own.

“We wanted to honor her 40 years of service and highlight abilities as a manager,” said Paul Lawrence, a director of Moreau-Grand Electric. “It’s a way of conveying that she led with honor and integrity, and she did exactly that.”

Powering the Digital Frontier

Allison Hamilton

Data centers are the backbone of the internet. They store and manage everything from social media to cloud computing, AI and our favorite streaming services. As more people and businesses go digital, the number of data centers is quickly growing. While many of these centers were once built near large cities, more are now being sited in rural areas.

Electric cooperatives are receiving regular requests from companies that seek to build large data centers in their service territories. These requests bring both big opportunities and major challenges.

Why are data centers coming to rural areas?

There are several reasons why companies are choosing rural locations for their data centers:

- More land. Rural areas have plenty of space for large buildings.
- Resource diversity. Electric cooperatives own and operate reliable sources of energy.
- Lower costs. Land and labor are usually less expensive outside of cities.
- Tax breaks. Local and state governments may offer tax benefits to attract these businesses.

Data centers can be huge, sometimes requiring more electricity than all the co-op's members combined. This increased demand for electricity brings several new opportunities for electric cooperatives.

- New jobs and growth. Data centers can bring jobs and revenue to small communities. In Virginia, for example, the data center industry supports around 74,000 jobs and adds billions to the state's economy, according to a 2024 report by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC).
- Stable revenue. These centers require a lot of power and usually sign long-term contracts. This provides the co-op with steady income, which can help pay for system upgrades and keep rates lower for other members in the community.
- Improved infrastructure. To serve a large data center, the co-op might need to build new power lines or substations. While this is expensive, it can also improve service for all

co-op members by making the electric system stronger and more reliable.

While data centers create significant opportunities for electric co-ops by driving demand and investment, they also present new challenges in meeting increased electricity needs while maintaining reliable and resilient power delivery.

- High upfront costs. Building the new infrastructure to power a data center can cost millions, which is why co-ops work diligently with data center customers to ensure upfront costs are covered.
- Risk of losing a big customer. If the data center moves away or shuts down, the co-op could be left with expensive equipment it no longer needs. This could negatively impact the co-op's finances.
- Permitting and siting. Acquiring permission to build new power lines and substations takes time. There may be zoning rules, environmental reviews and public meetings that slow things down.

Planning for the future

To manage both the risks and rewards that data centers bring, electric co-op leaders are taking a careful, informed approach. They are working closely with their generation and transmission provider (G&T), economic development offices and financial experts to plan these projects.

Co-ops are also ensuring contracts with data center operators include protections for the co-op. For example, if the data center leaves early, they may be liable for paying part of the infrastructure costs. Forecasting tools are also aiding co-ops in understanding how the new load will impact the local system.

Serving large data centers could be a gamechanger for many electric cooperatives. These projects can bring jobs, revenue and new technology to co-op communities. But they also come with financial risks and planning challenges. By asking the right questions and building smart partnerships, electric cooperatives are poised to make decisions that serve their members well – now and in the future.



Yankton County 4-H Farm Safety Day



On June 6th, Yankton County 4-H put on a Farm Safety Day for the county's youth. B-Y Electric Member Service Advisor, Aaron Melichar and Member Service Representative, Chantelle Jungemann, used Powertown display for the electrical safety demonstration. Powertown is an interactive display that uses real electricity to demonstrate how one could be involved in dangerous situations and how to be safe around electricity and electrical equipment.

Contact our office at (605) 463-2507 if you would like to arrange a safety demonstration.





Cam Wal Electric member Tami Schanzenbach with her dogs Mac, Cash and Blu. *Submitted Photo.*

RESCUING ANIMALS

Co-op Members Foster and Support Pets In Need

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

Tami Schanzenbach has always wanted to help animals.

From her earliest days in Aberdeen where she worked as a veterinary technician and helped start the Aberdeen Area Humane Society, to her later Pets N Stuff store in Mobridge, Tami's focus has always been on humans' furry companions and getting them into loving homes.

And even after a long career and a so-called retirement, she still finds ways to help. Through the Wamakaskan Onisca Humane Society, she opens her home to animals in need.

"I'm a foster failure," Tami laughed, admitting three of her own beloved pet dogs were originally supposed to be adopted out.

Served by Cam Wal Electric, Tami's home near Selby is the halfway point for countless animals on their journey from neglect, abuse and homelessness to their forever homes.

"If I have a person that calls me, if someone has found a dog, I ask initially

if they're able to help me with taking care of that dog for a little bit until we can determine whether it belongs to somebody," she explained.

The pets will go to a foster home for the time being – Tami credits volunteers like her friend Annie Walker, a member of Moreau-Grand Electric from the McIntosh area, for stepping up and opening her home to foster animals.

"One day, Tami had a picture of a litter of puppies that needed to be bottle fed," Walker said about her first fostering experience.



Annie Walker with rescue, Layla. *Submitted Photo.*

"I figured it would be something myself and my children would be up to, and ever since then, I keep taking some animals from time to time."

If the dog isn't claimed, the rehoming process begins, starting with veterinary care.

"We go through and we vaccinate and treat the animal and do what's needed to be able to make that puppy or dog available for adoption," Tami continued.

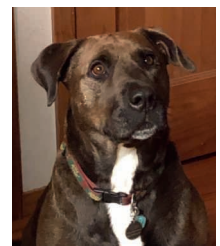
Sadly, the circumstances in which she receives them usually aren't pleasant.

The pets come from around Selby, many from the Standing Rock and Cheyenne River reservations, where they're often found abandoned. Tami recalls coming upon shocking discoveries, like "bait dogs" used to train fighting dogs in the Bismarck area.

"People will steal puppies and kitties and train their pitbulls for fights, and they have a dog that's called a bait dog," she explained. "And that you see in our area as well ... days where [multiple] people are missing their dogs. People are coming in and stealing them and using them as bait dogs."

That's what Tami suspects happened to Cash, a 7-year-old pitbull/lab cross found "in the middle of nowhere" covered in pellet shots and bite marks.

"It took a long time for him to trust and know he's going to be okay here," Tami said. "And I don't



Cash, who was used as a "bait dog," was adopted by Tami. *Submitted Photo*

blame him, because he's never been taken care of.

Tami has made it her mission to end the cycle of animal neglect and abuse where she's able by sterilizing the pets coming into her care before they're adopted out. She also sponsors sterilizations for other peoples' pets.

"We just had about 12 dogs that we sponsored to be spayed at the local vet," she said. "We had a lady that helped me with a donation and wanted it geared toward people that couldn't afford to have their animals spayed and neutered ... We have so many people that always have two litters per year."

Stopping the cycle also means barriers to adoption – if someone isn't a good fit, there's a chance that animal will be surrendered back to the rescue and the process will start from the beginning.

Tami conducts interviews with potential pet owners with hopes of finding a perfect match.

She added that she sometimes steers people with busy and demanding schedules away from getting dogs. A cat – famously independent – is often a better fit, she said.

Tami also employs sustainable adoption practices she says make for better-behaved dogs – eight weeks is generally the earliest age when she'll allow adoptions to occur.

"We have puppy socialization that occurs" when the puppies are little, she explained. "They wrestle and play with their siblings, and they create a lot of socialization that way. And there's a lot of research that has proven that if you keep them with their siblings during that period of time, they make a heck of a lot better dog going forth, because they've been through that socialization."

Jen Uecker, Board President of the Pierre/Fort Pierre Area Humane Society, also known as Paws Animal Rescue, says without volunteers like Tami and Annie, shelters like hers would be overrun and rescuing animals from abandonment wouldn't be possible.

"We rely heavily on volunteers to help ease the burden of our limited staff and resources," Uecker said. "The foster volunteers open their home to these animals not really knowing a whole lot

about them, their demeanor, where they came from, or anything, and they open their homes to help them feel comfortable and confident until they're ready for their new forever family."

Tami encourages people to volunteer, support their local rescues, adopt if they're able and above all, love their pets.

"There are a lot of dogs and cats and it's just not their fault – they get the bad end of things," Walker said. "Tami is super dedicated ... She's always willing to step in and help these animals find a better life."

For Tami, it all comes down to giving that love back.

"They provide unconditional love to humans, and sometimes we forget that," she said. "We work all day ... When you come home, you need to spend some time with your pets."

HUMANE SOCIETY & SANCTUARY DIRECTORY

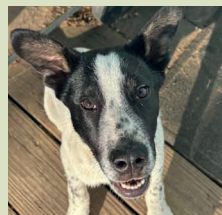
Wamakaskan Onsica (Mobridge).....	(605) 850-8430
Paws Animal Rescue (Pierre).....	(605) 223-2287
Sioux Falls Area Humane Society.....	(605) 338-4441
Humane Society of the Black Hills (Rapid City)....	(605) 394-4170
Battle Mountain Humane Society (Hot Springs)....	(605) 745-7283
Beadle County Humane Society (Huron).....	(605) 352-8955
Aberdeen Area Humane Society.....	(605) 226-1200
Glacial Lakes Humane Society (Watertown).....	(605) 882-2247
Brookings Regional Humane Society.....	(605) 697-7387
Western Hills Humane Society (Spearfish).....	(605) 642-1576
Heartland Humane Society (Yankton).....	(605) 664-4244
Siouxland Humane Society (Sioux City).....	(712) 252-2614
Mitchell Animal Rescue.....	(605) 770-2170
Oglala Pet Project (Kyle).....	(605) 455-1518
Wakpá Wašté Animal Shelter (Eagle Butte).....	(605) 964-7387
Fur and Purr Cat Shelter (Milbank).....	(605) 432-4505
Lake Traverse Animal Rescue (Sisseton).....	(605) 742-0219

Tami says her most rewarding rescue was Fez, an 8-week-old shepherd/collie cross found with mange, a skin disease caused by mites. She said she refused to give on Fez, who is now a healthy dog with a full coat of hair.
Submitted Photo.

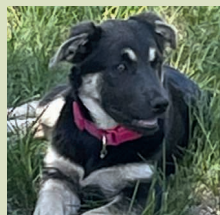


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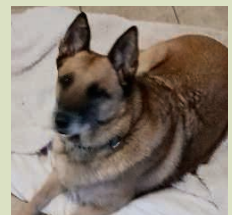
Buddy



Margot



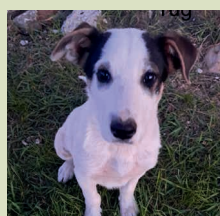
Chopper



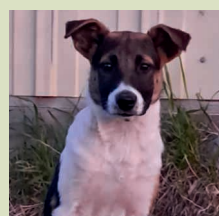
Eliza



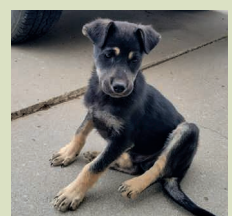
Agnes



Tug



Scooter



Leo



Central Electric Cooperative's distribution lines power members' farms and ranches throughout much of Central South Dakota.
Photo by Jacob Boyko

REMEMBERING WHEN THE LIGHTS CAME ON

Central South Dakota Rancher Looks Back to Days Before Power

Jacob Boyko
jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

Near Big Bend Dam in central South Dakota, farmer and rancher Clayton Knippling works the same land his father and grandfather had decades before. The work he and his wife, Evelyn, and two sons do on the sprawling acre family ranch looks very different than it did back then, though. That's because today the ranch has electricity. Back in the 1940s and early 1950s,

having electricity was a luxury enjoyed almost exclusively by people in towns and cities, or rural folks who happened to live along major highways. With their homestead several miles northeast of Fort Thompson, the Knippings understood their odds of getting connected to a utility were slim for the time being. Their lives were powered by an old diesel generator out in the barn – enough to keep the kitchen refrigerator humming and a couple of light bulbs lit. “I remember being told, ‘Shut that

refrigerator door! You're wasting cold air!’” Knippling laughed, thinking back to that overworked generator. But as soon as the electric cooperative crews visited the ranch, that generator was permanently retired and would never run again. Knippling thought back to that day in the early 1950s when he was about six years old. He remembers watching the trench-diggers from Tri-County Electric – merged into Central Electric in 2000 – trench their way to each outbuilding. Hours later, he would see those buildings shining bright in the darkness for the first time ever. Having electricity didn't change the work out in the fields. Knippling said a lot of the work is the same in 2025 as it was in 1955. But back at the homestead, Tri-County Electric brought the Knippling ranch into the

20th century.

“We even had a welder after that,” Knippling recalled. “That took 220 volts, and I don’t think our old generator was putting off that. We could then fix our own iron.”

Electricity was a game-changer for the Knippings’ water needs. Seizing the opportunity, they dug a new, deeper well with an electric pump for better quality water and ran lines out to each building.

“[Before we had electricity] there was a stool and a nail where a tin cup sat, and there was a bucket of water and everybody that came through would drink out of that cup, so if somebody got a cold, we all got it,” Knippling laughed.

“Electricity allowed us to put in a pressure tank and then run the water lines to every house so we weren’t carrying a bucket anymore.”

The ranch also transitioned to all-electric pivot irrigation and pumps along the Missouri River. Today, Knippling Land and Cattle

irrigates 1,300 acres of farm land – an unimaginable figure before there was co-op power.

In the winter, the new electric block heaters for the diesel engines ensured there was always at least one tractor that would start up.

Life was just a little bit brighter, warmer and simpler with co-op power.

An advocate for rural life and progression, Clayton has also served the last 42 years on the board of directors for Midstate Communications, the local member-owned telecom cooperative, in an effort to equalize the disparities between urban and rural life.

“It changed the world back in the ‘50s when electricity came,” Clayton said. “A lot of kids left the farm because it was too rural. If you came from a farm, you didn’t want to come back. After electricity came, it became easier for younger people to stay on the farm.”



Clayton Knippling farms and raises cattle southeast of Fort Thompson on the same ranchland where he grew up, just 15 miles from his childhood home where Tri-County Electric first hooked up their power in the early 1950s.

Photo by Jacob Boyko



Pivot irrigation systems, like the one shown here along S.D. Highway 50 southeast of Fort Thompson, use electricity to rotate on a center pivot. Use of the systems can increase yields while reducing wasted water.

Photo by Jacob Boyko

REGISTER TO WIN!

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JULY 16-20

Danish Days

Dancing, food, parade, etc.
Viborg, SD

Photo courtesy of Travel South Dakota

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.

JUNE 20-21

Czech Days

Fun, Music, Entertainment,
Dancing, Czech Food
Tabor, SD
www.taborczechdays.com

JUNE 20-21

Volunteer Fire Dept. Car Show

Fri. Cruise Night, Sat. Car Show
Marion, SD
Brad Schardin
605-413-5653

JUNE 28

A Celebration of Tom Peterson & Bruce Preheim

7 p.m.
Gayville Music Hall
Gayville, SD
605-760-5799

JULY 1-5

106th Annual Black Hills Roundup

Rodeo, Parades, Concerts & Fun
Belle Fourche, SD

JULY 9-12

Aberdeen Senior Games

605-626-7015

JULY 11-12

Frontier Days

White River, SD

JULY 12

39th Annual Spearfish Canyon Half Marathon & 5K

7 a.m.
Spearfish, SD
605-722-4558

JULY 12

Friendship Days Vendor Market

BBQ Cook Off, Prize Raffle
10 a.m.-4 p.m.
White Lake, SD

JULY 12

Fedora Fire Department Annual Appreciation Day

5 p.m.
Meal, Pie Auction & Bingo
Fedora, SD

JULY 17-20

Danish Days

Daneville Heritage Museum
Viborg, SD
danevilleheritage.com

JULY 19

6th Annual Wakonda American Legion Tractor Pull

3 p.m. Start
4 p.m. Kids Pedal Pull
Wakonda, SD

JULY 19-21

Burke Stampede Rodeo

Stampede Arena
Burke, SD
605-840-0824

JULY 25-27

Winner Elk's 56th Annual Rodeo to Benefit LifeScape

Tripp Co. Fairgrounds
Winner, SD
605-842-5830

JULY 25-27

Clear Lake Days

Clear Lake, SD
ClearLakeDays.com

JULY 26

Planes, Trains, & Automobiles

Car Show, Train Rides, Flyovers
10 a.m.-5 p.m.
Prairie Village
Madison, SD

JULY 26

South Dakota Chislic Festival

10 a.m.-9 p.m.
Freeman, SD
www.sdchislicfestival.com

JULY 26

Richmond Lake Association's Annual Pontoon Poker Run

Aberdeen, SD
605-225-0609

Note: We publish contact information as provided. If no phone number is given, none will be listed. Please call ahead to verify the event is still being held.