



COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

In pursuit of Walleye

SD anglers on the
prowl for Walleye
Page 8

Living the RV
lifestyle
Page 12



Heat up the Savings



Jordan Lamb
jlamb@
oaheelectric.com

I hope you all are enjoying your summer and had a great Independence Day reflecting on the many liberties provided in this great country!

One of the best parts about living in America is the opportunity and ability to have choices. Being able to choose whether you would like a new or old vehicle, fresh or frozen produce, high speed or slower internet or even what community you live in is a luxury offered to us through our independence.

The electric utility industry is different compared to our day-to-day independence. Electric service territories are permanently bound to their existing areas and people that choose what community or county to live in do not get the choice on their electric service provider. Here at Oahe Electric Cooperative, we are proud to have low electric rates compared to a large majority of other utilities, but we still want to provide our member-owners with additional value through several choices of service.

Utilizing rate structures that align with an individual's energy usage patterns saves Oahe Electric Cooperative and its member-owners money!

Oahe Electric Cooperative monitors energy usage trends and investigates ways that would allow our members to choose what type of rate fits their energy consumption patterns best. Time-of-use rates monitor which periods throughout a day that energy is consumed most – whether

it be in your home, at your shop or even a bin site or commercial business property. By offering these future rate types, this allows a consumer to save money by choosing to use more energy during off-peak hours and to limit excessive usage during peak.

If implemented correctly, time-of-use rates could be utilized in almost every application of energy consumption. This would allow all members a choice on how they prefer to be served and billed for their energy consumption! Utilizing rate structures that align with an individual's energy usage patterns saves Oahe Electric Cooperative and its member-owners money! We are here to serve our members and add value through choice and savings while continuing to provide safe, affordable and reliable electricity.

Thank you for being our member-owners and have a great rest of your summer!

Annual Meeting Update

This year's annual meeting has been scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 18, in Onida, S.D.

We are trying something new again this year! After reviewing feedback from our 2020 meeting, we are doing a hybrid style meeting – meaning you can either come inside and enjoy a more traditional style meeting, or if your busy schedule doesn't allow that, you will be able to drive thru instead.

Please check future issues of this newsletter for more information, as well as keeping an eye on our Facebook page for updates. We hope to see you all at your 70th Annual Meeting!

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

OAHE ELECTRIC

(USPS No. 019-042)

Board of Directors:

James Feller – President
605-962-6207

Blaine Livermont – Treasurer
605-945-2910

Ryan Noyes – Assistant Secretary
605-280-3500

Ross Sperry – Secretary
605-280-7770

Kirk Yackley – Vice President
605-258-2412

Employees:

Tyler Arbach – Journeyman Lineman

Mark Bruning – Line Foreman

Matt Eldridge – Operations Manager

Trudie Feldman – Custodian

Brady Gaer – Journeyman Lineman

Duane Hjelm – Journeyman Lineman

Russ Hohn – Member Services Mgr.

Sam Irvine – Office Services

Megan Jaeger – Billing Clerk

Jordan Lamb – General Manager

Dan Lettau – Journeyman Lineman

Steve Long – Material/Work Order/AMR
Agent

Valerie Marso – Office Manager

Tory Smith – Journeyman Lineman

OAHE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is published monthly by Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc., PO Box 216, 102 S. Canford, Blunt, SD 57522, for its members. Families subscribe to Oahe Electric Cooperative Connections as part of their electric cooperative membership. Oahe Electric Cooperative Connections' purpose is to provide reliable, helpful information to Oahe Electric Cooperative members on matters pertaining to rural electrification and better rural living. Subscription information: Electric cooperative members devote 50 cents from their monthly electric payments for a subscription. Nonmember subscriptions are available for \$12 annually. Periodicals Postage Paid at Blunt, SD 57522 and at additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Oahe Electric Cooperative Connections, PO Box 216, Blunt, SD 57522-0216; telephone (605) 962-6243; fax (605) 962-6306; e-mail oahe@oaheelectric.com; www.oaheelectric.com

Our Mission

Oahe Electric delivers high quality, low-cost electric service to our local member-owners. As a Touchstone Energy® Cooperative, we are committed to meeting the highest standards of customer satisfaction. We do business with accountability, integrity, innovation and commitment to community. As an electric co-op, we are part of America's most trusted network of high quality energy providers.

OUTAGE AND LIFE SUPPORT EQUIPMENT

If someone in your household depends on in-home life support equipment, please notify us immediately. Oahe Electric maintains a record of members who use devices such as respirators, supplemental oxygen, heart assistance devices, etc. These consumers are high priority during power restoration.

Because we cannot guarantee uninterrupted service, we strongly recommend these consumers have a backup power source and an emergency plan for extended power outages.

Members with special life-support needs should contact our office at 1-800-640-6243 and inform us of their situation so they can be included on our list.

A NOTE ON KWH TAXES

Oahe Electric, along with all the other cooperatives throughout the state, pay a kilowatt hour tax to the South Dakota Department of Revenue. This is a tax that is unique only to cooperatives. The money is then sent on to our local school districts. ABO Schools and Pierre School District will receive a combined total of over **\$450,000** in tax revenue from Oahe Electric and our power suppliers, Basin Electric Power Cooperative and East River Electric Power Cooperative.

Commitment to Community – just another important aspect that sets your electric cooperative apart.

-Valerie Morso, Office Manager

Statement of Non-Discrimination

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident. Person with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202)720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800)877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: 1.) mail - U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; 2.) fax: (202) 690-7442; or 3.) email: program.intake@usda.gov. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Prepare to protect your devices from power surges

A power surge, or transient voltage, is a sudden and unwanted increase in voltage that can damage, degrade or destroy sensitive electronic equipment in your home or business.

The National Electrical Manufacturers Association estimates that 60–80 percent of power surges are created within a building, such as when large appliances, like air conditioners, turn on and off. Far less common are surges that originate from an electric utility during power grid switching. The most powerful surges can be caused by lightning.

A spike in voltage can be harmful to electrical devices in your home if the increase is above a device's intended operating voltage. This excess voltage can cause an arc of electrical current resulting in heat that damages electrical components. Repeated small-scale surges may slowly damage your electronic equipment and shorten its life span.

Surge Protection Options - Consider protecting your devices and appliances with surge protection. Several levels of protection are available to consumers.

Point-of-use surge protectors protect only the items that are directly plugged into the device. They do not suppress or arrest a surge but divert the

surge to ground. Use point-of-use surge protectors that have an indicator light or audible alarm that alerts you when the surge protector needs replacement.

Service entrance surge protection devices are mounted in or on your main electrical panel or at the base of the electric meter and provide protection for your entire electrical system. These devices cover components that cannot be connected to a point-of-use device, such as outlets and light switches.

Power strips do NOT provide surge protection. Be sure you are relying on the appropriate device for protection.

And remember, power strips and surge suppressors don't provide more power to a location, only more access to the same limited capacity of the circuit into which it is connected. Be careful not to overload the circuit.

Unfortunately, no surge protection device on the market can handle a direct lightning strike. The best way to gird against surges caused by storms is to unplug devices.

SUMMER MEMORIES

Send us your favorite summer photos!



As we approach the end of summer, *Cooperative Connections* would love to see your favorite memories of the season captured in pixels.

We're holding a photo contest called "Summer Memories." Send us your top shot and you could be eligible to win a \$50 gift card!

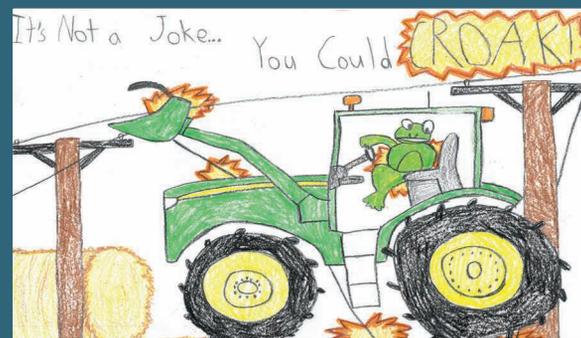
Here are the rules:

- One photo per entrant;
 - The deadline for entry is Aug. 27;
 - Finalist photos will appear in the October issue of *Cooperative Connections*;
 - Send your entry to editor@sdrea.coop.
- Good luck!

Hope Haven fundraising event Sept. 11

Hope Haven will hold a fundraising event on Sept. 11 at Talsma's Trail Park in Avon. The organization offers services and support for children, adults and families, including physical, mental, intellectual, residential, vocational and spiritual needs. For more information, visit www.hopehaven.org.

Hope Haven was misidentified in the July issue of *Cooperative Connections*.



It's not a joke...you could croak!

Creighton Werning, 4th Grade

Creighton is a fourth grade student at Parkston. He and his family live in Emery and are members of Southeastern 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.

PERFECT PASTA

PAPPARDELLE

Ingredients:

Salted water
 3 tbsp olive oil
 3 tbsp shallots, minced
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1/4 tsp chili flakes
 1 cup white wine
 2 cups pappardelle noodles
 3/4 cup vegetable stock
 3 tbsp capers (optional)
 2 vine-ripened tomatoes, sliced in wedges
 1 handful baby kale
 1 fresh lemon, juice only
 2 tbsp butter (optional)
 sea salt, to taste
 fresh ground black pepper, to taste
 1 handful fresh basil, torn

METHOD

Bring large pot of salted water to boil. In fry pan on medium-high heat, add olive oil and onions; saute 2 minutes. Lower heat slightly and add garlic and chili flakes. Saute on medium heat 2-3 minutes. Add white wine and deglaze pan. Cook 3 minutes. Remove from heat, keep warm until ready to add freshly cooked pasta. In pot of boiling water, add pappardelle. Cook according to instructions then drain. Place fry pan back on medium heat. Add drained pasta; vegetable stock; capers, if desired; tomatoes; baby kale; and lemon juice. Add butter, if desired, toss well. Cook 2-3 minutes, tossing occasionally, and season with salt and pepper, to taste, and basil. Toss again, remove from heat and serve.

Rouxbe.com

SUMMER GARDEN PASTA SALAD

1 # thin spaghetti, broken into 1" pieces
 1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved
 2 zucchini, peeled & diced
 2 cucumbers, diced
 1 green pepper, diced
 1 red pepper, diced
 1 (16 oz.) can sliced black olives, drained

Dressing:

1 (16 oz.) bottle Italian dressing
 1/4 c parmesan cheese
 1 T sesame seeds
 1 tsp paprika
 1/2 tsp celery seed
 1/2 tsp garlic salt

METHOD

Cook pasta and drain. Drizzle with small amount of olive oil to prevent sticking and stir to combine. Combine pasta with veggies and black olives. Whisk dressing ingredients together. Pour over salad ingredients and toss until coated. Cover and refrigerate 3 hours or overnight.
Jane Ham, Rapid City

PIZZA NOODLE HOT DISH

Ingredients:

1 lb. ground beef, browned and drained
 1/2 c. chopped onion
 1 jar pizza sauce
 Salt and pepper to taste
 3 c. noodles, cooked and drained
 1 jar spaghetti sauce
 1 pkg. pepperoni slices
 Mozzarella cheese for top

METHOD

Mix ingredients together and put in a greased 9 x 13 pan. Bake at 350* for 20 minutes. Sprinkle 8 oz. of mozzarella cheese on top and place back in oven to melt.

JOAN ANTONEN, ARLINGTON

SPAGHETTI PIZZA

Ingredients:

1/2 lb spaghetti
 4 eggs
 1 c. milk
 Salt & pepper
 7 oz. pepperoni
 1/2 lb hamburger
 1/2 lb pork sausage
 1 onion
 1 lg jar spaghetti sauce
 2 c. mozzarella cheese

METHOD

Cook spaghetti, drain, and put in the bottom of a 9x13 casserole dish. Mix eggs, milk, salt, and pepper to taste and pour over noodles. Spread pepperoni over the above. Brown hamburger, sausage, and onion and put over pepperoni. Pour spaghetti sauce over all. Sprinkle mozzarella on top. Bake at 350° for 45 min.

Ruth Morman, Volin

Please send your favorite dairy 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 2021. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

FWS Proposes Endangered Species Listing for Lesser Prairie-Chicken in Southwest



Photo By: R. Douglas Holt/FWS



Russ Hohn
rhohn@
oaheelectric.com

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposes to list two populations of the lesser prairie-chicken for greater protection under the Endangered Species Act, a move that could impact

the operations, construction, and maintenance work of electric cooperatives in five western states.

The agency is recommending the lesser prairie-chicken's southern distinct population segments for a listing as endangered, and its northern segments as threatened with a special rule to exempt routine agricultural activities on existing farmland and prescribed fire for grassland management.

The proposed rule was published in the Federal Register on June 1, launching a 60-day public comment period. FWS will hold two virtual public hearings, July 8 and July 14, and a final rule is expected in May 2022.

The bird's southern population is found in the sand shinnery oak prairies of eastern New Mexico and the western Texas panhandle. The northern populations live in the short grass, sand sagebrush and mixed grass ecoregions of eastern Colorado,

western Kansas and Oklahoma, and the northeast panhandle of Texas.

The FWS estimates that the species' average population has dropped to 27,384 birds across its five-state range, based on aerial surveys from 2012 to 2020. Declines are due to the loss of 90 percent of its habitat across its historical range.

The FWS specifically identifies transmission and distribution lines as impacting the lesser prairie-chicken's habitat. How the agency will treat impacts from existing power lines remains unknown.

New electric infrastructure could face case-by-case reviews by the FWS for potential impacts, and conservation measures to protect the bird could be required. This would add time and costs to project development.

The lesser prairie-chicken's range is overwhelmingly served by electric co-ops. Four generation and transmission co-ops – Sunflower Power Corp., Western Farmers Electric Cooperative, Golden Spread Electric Cooperative and Tri-State G&T Association – operate in the northern range and serve 19 distribution co-ops. Eight distribution co-ops are in parts of the southern range.

NRECA and electric co-ops have a long history of advocating conservation of the lesser prairie-chicken that is balanced with

their mission of providing reliable, affordable electricity. Many co-ops implement measures to protect the bird and other members of the grouse family, including voluntary participation in conservation agreements with commitments recognized by the FWS.

“We encourage co-ops in the lesser prairie-chicken's rangeland to consider enrolling in an existing conservation agreement or creating one for your territory before this rule is finalized,” said Janelle Lemen, senior regulatory director at NRECA. “This can provide a pathway to support the bird's habitat, streamline conservation efforts and avoid project delays.”

NRECA will be sending comments to the FWS highlighting co-ops' obligation to serve remote and economically challenged communities and their longtime participation in species conservation.

“The service has acknowledged the importance of voluntary conservation efforts and a willingness to work with stakeholders – including electric co-ops – to ensure lesser prairie-chicken conservation while allowing continued economic activities,” Lemen said. “This is a complex listing, and Fish and Wildlife is seeking public input to help inform the final decision. We will welcome co-op member input as we bring our concerns about this proposal to the agency.”

WINNER OF QUESTION OF THE MONTH

The Question of the Month winners for the June 2021 publication were Rene and Dorothy Liegl. They correctly answered the question "When is this year's annual meeting?" with the answer being Saturday, Sept. 18, 2021!

Congratulations and we hope you enjoyed your prizes!

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

This month's question is:

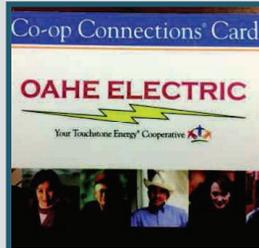
How is your KWH charge calculated on your monthly bill?

Please submit your answer via email to oahe@oaheelectric.com with the subject line of "Question of the Month." A surprise gift will be sent to the winner!

LIKE US!

You can now keep in touch with your cooperative on Facebook! We will share with you the latest news, events, power outage updates, energy efficiency tips, money-saving rebates, load management information, legislative alerts, safety tips and much more!

We hope you "like" Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc. on Facebook!



Cooperative Connections Card Program Vendors

Automotive

Graham Tire Company	605-224-8643	Pierre	Receive a 10% discount on regularly priced service work. Cannot be combined with any other offer.
Lamb Motor Company	800-952-2222	Onida	Receive a free alignment check with the purchase of 4 new tires.
Napa Auto and Truck Parts/Farnam's Genuine Parts, Inc.	605-224-8624	Pierre	Receive 10-50% off retail price.

Food/Convenience Store

Branding Iron Bistro	605-494-3333	Pierre	Enjoy \$1 off your order. Limit one per visit.
Gator's Pizza Pasta and Subs	605-224-6262	Pierre	Purchase any large pizza at regular price and receive a FREE order of breadsticks.
Grey Goose Store	605-945-0794	Pierre	Receive a free 20 oz. fountain soda or coffee with the minimum of a \$30 gas or diesel purchase.
The Corner	605-258-2400	Onida	Buy one breakfast sandwich at regular price, get second half off.

Health/Fitness and Beauty

Anytime Fitness	605-224-4011	Pierre	Receive a free two-week mini-membership.
------------------------	--------------	--------	--

Home/Garden

Slumberland Furniture	605-945-1997	Pierre	20% off any regular priced Lazy Boy items. Excluding special orders.
------------------------------	--------------	--------	--

Services

Apryl's Animal House	605-224-9203	Pierre	10% off a grooming or boarding
Inman's Water Technologies	605-224-5111	Pierre	Receive a 15% discount on the rental price of a water softener and/or reverse osmosis drinking water system by paying a year in advance. Receive 10% off of the purchase price of a new Water Softener or reverse osmosis drinking water system when you mention this ad. Payments made by credit cards do not qualify for discounts/specials.
Olson Plumbing Inc.	605-224-6436	Pierre	\$50 discount on any electric boiler, Marathon water heater, or fireplace
Small Engine House	605-224-5815	Pierre	10% off parts and labor

Sports/Recreation

Teton River Traders Gun Shop LLC	605-224-1371	Ft. Pierre	2% discount. Payments made by credit cards do not qualify for discount.
---	--------------	------------	---

Retail

Fastenal	605-224-4060	Pierre	10% off of fasteners and 5% off on all other products
-----------------	--------------	--------	---

In hot pursuit of Walleye



Aydan Johnson landed this Walleye on his 12th birthday at Cow Creek north of Pierre. Photos by Billy Gibson

SD anglers pursue walleye for fun and charity

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Walleye fishing isn't always all about fishing for walleye.

That was the case at the annual SDREC Employee and Vendor Walleye Fishing Tournament held earlier this summer at the Cow Creek Recreation Area north of Pierre. For most of the more than 100 walleye whisperers who participated, the event was mostly about hanging out together, swapping fish tales - some of them true - and catching up with one another.

The tournament also raised \$500 for the state's rural electric cooperative Line Patrol charity.

For Evan Buckmiller, general manager at Kingsbury Electric Cooperative in DeSmet, the tournament presented a prime opportunity to spend time with family and interact with his cooperative colleagues. While his team failed to place, he enjoyed being out on the water with his wife and dad.

"It was a little hot, but we had beautiful weather and caught a lot of fish...just not as many as we wanted," said Buckmiller. "I'd never been a part of this event, so it was fun seeing all the boats taking off at the same time. It was also good to see people you don't normally get to see, or you haven't seen since you worked a storm together years ago. You get to connect with your friends and linemen you went to school with. That's the fun part about events like this."

Roger Crom, former manager of loss control services at the South Dakota Rural Electric Association in Pierre, served as a volunteer to help coordinate the event. Crom said while he likes to fish, he takes satisfaction with staying on dry land and meeting the competitors as they come in to weigh their catch and tell of their exploits on the lake.



The dawning of a new summer day brings the promise of fun and a full string of walleye by the afternoon.

“I just enjoy being a part of it every year,” Crom said. “It’s a lot of fun getting together with old friends and meeting new friends and getting to know the young linemen that are now part of the program. It’s not just one or two co-ops, it’s like a big family that comes out year after year. There’s a lot of camaraderie. Everybody works together and we also have a lot of fun together.”

For the record, the winning team of Roger Squires, Ryan Squires and Ron Koosman took top honors, despite temperatures soaring into the 90s and water levels that were unusually low. The crew representing H-D Electric and Dueco prevailed over a field of more than 30 teams with a total weight of 18.03 lbs. Their largest walleye weighed in at 3.05 lbs.

The East River Electric team of Tim Dockendorf, Doug Engbrecht



Crew members of the Captain Crawdaddy prepare to launch at Cow Creek.

and Robert Hanson landed the largest walleye at 4.04 lbs. (Search YouTube for Cooperative Connections Plus to see a video of the event.)

It’s no secret that the Missouri River system boasts some of the best walleye fishing in North America and is one of the top walleye habitats on the continent.

While there are many other walleye fishing tournaments held throughout the state in the spring and fall, one that stands out is the Tom and Matt Hill Memorial Tournament.

The fifth annual event, set for July 31 at the West Whitlock Recreation Area near Gettysburg, is held each year in honor of the Hill brothers who died in a boating accident on Brush Lake in December of 2016.

Born and reared in Volga, the siblings were avid hunters and fishermen. They were finishing up a day of duck hunting and were heading back to the landing to meet their father when their boat suddenly capsized.

The tournament is held to raise funds to support local youth outdoor programs in honor of the brothers. Proceeds have gone toward purchasing safety hunting vests for youngsters, hunting gear and safety training.

Sheila Gross, Energy Services Specialist at Sioux Valley Energy in

It’s no secret that the Missouri River system boasts some of the best walleye fishing in North America.

Colman, lost her brother and great-nephew in a fishing accident in January. As word spread, friends and family of the Hill Memorial Tournament and Fishing 4 Miracles jumped into action with an outpouring of support to the Berwald family. To express their gratitude, several of Gross’ family members plan to participate in the tournament to help contribute to the safe enjoyment of fishing and hunting.

“The Hill Brothers Committee is an amazing group of people and they do so much to support the community and those who have been impacted by tragedy. They have blessed my family in our time of loss and have brought great comfort,” she said.

A rules meeting will take place on Friday, July 30, at the Whitlock Bay Supper Club. An open house will be held from 1-5 p.m. with a meal from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Understanding Your Electric Bill



Valerie Marso
vmarso@oaheelectric.com

Every member of Oahe Electric is sent a bill for their electricity usage on a monthly basis. We bill from the first day of the month through the last day of the month. Your bill is computed and generated approximately 10 days later then due 10 business days after it is generated.

Let's talk about what all those numbers and labels on your bill mean. To the lower right is a relatively standard bill for a residential service. In the top right-hand corner, there is a summary of all your charges for the previous and present month. Any out of the ordinary

adjustments show here as well, such as deposit charges/refunds and billing corrections. The body of the bill shows your billing details. The bottom portion is to be returned with your payment. Pretty straight forward, right? Let's dig a little deeper, and see what else we can find.

For the most part, everyone's bills are pretty similar. Even if you don't have a security light, or water heater credit, you will still have KWH charge. This charge includes your billed usage (on the left side under the blue description bar) times the KWH rate plus the monthly minimum.

If you take advantage of our budget billing program, your bill will look a little different than what is shown on the adjacent graphic. Every month in the messages section, it will show your actual accounts receivable (what you have used versus what you have paid for your budget bill amount). When it is your true up month, your new budget bill amount will be computed based on your previous years usage and the new amount will also show in the messages.

Other messages may include notices about when the board of directors retires capital credits or when margins are allocated each year.

Also, if you have electric heat and/or air conditioning you will have a separate meter that keeps track of that usage because it is billed at a different/lesser rate. You can differentiate between each meter by looking at the description in the blue box above each meter – normally, one will be listed as “main” while the other will be listed as “EH-Sub” or something similar. An option that not everyone may be aware of, is that you have the flexibility to change the description used to define your meter. For example, if you have a well that is on the “old Olson place,” we can put that on the blue line.

Bottom line, your monthly electric bill contains some very important information. If you have any questions or concerns about its content, please don't hesitate to call our office at 1.800.640.6243 or email oahe@oaheelectric.com.

Use this guide to better understand the information found on your monthly electric bill.

Questions?
Call Oahe Electric at the number indicated or stop by the office.

Our service location, meter and submeter information
We don't use physical addresses but use our own mapping system. This location identifies where your meters are located. The main meter accumulates the usage of your lights, electric water heater, stove and such. The submeter (located on page two of your bill) tracks the usage of heating and air conditioning in order to be billed at the special rate.

Did OEC receive my last payment?
This section shows total activity since your last bill, ending with your balance forward, if any. If any of this information does not match your records, call the Oahe Electric office.

Operation Round Up*
For those who participate, this is your contribution into the Operation Round Up fund. Each month, your bill is rounded up to the nearest dollar, so the maximum contribution would be less than \$11.88 annually.

Account Information: Account Number: [Redacted], Statement Date 05/07/2020, Due Date: 05/23/2020

Billing Summary:

Balance From Last Billing	2014.00
Payment Received 04/23/2020	2014.00 CR
Balance Forward	0.00
Current Charges	1866.99
Round-Up Contribution	0.91
Amount Due	1866.99

Information and messages issues pertaining to you and your cooperative will be found in this area.

Messages: Statement reflects payments received through 5/7/20. Delinquent & subject to penalties if not paid by 5/22/20. Access SmartHub on our website @ www.oaheelectric.com to manage your account, bill notifications, payments and more.

Service Details:

Meter Reading Details	Meter 95882274	Detail of Charges	Rate	Amount
Current Reading:	04/30/2020	400M MV Security Light (Qty: 1)		10.00
Previous Reading:	03/31/2020	Water Heater Credit		-4.00
Total Usage		South Dakota Tax		-10.48
Billed Usage	2879	KWH Charge		172.48
	17.2	Meter 1 of 16		143.96

Usage graph: Monthly Usage bar chart showing usage from April to May.

Period	Daily kWh	Cash kWh	kWh	Daily Cost
This Year	85	80.0071	2879	37.88
Last Year	91	80.0056	3952	41.24

What do I owe and when is it due?
The total amount due upon receipt of this bill is shown. If this amount is not paid, your account is subject to disconnect.

Amount Due: \$1,866.99

Additional messages: This section shows additional messages regarding your bill, such as whether it is being paid via ACH or if you have a credit and do not need to remit a payment.

Security Light
If you have a security light, this area indicates the size (175 watts or 400 watts) and whether it is metered or unmetered. Metered means that all kilo-watts used are billed to the member.

Water Heater Credit
This is a flat monthly \$4 credit for participating in the load management program with your electric water heater.

More Information... Other important information is noted on the reverse side of the bill.

Thank Yous

“Thank you for choosing me to receive the Oahe Electric Scholarship. The money will greatly help me as I continue my education.

Thanks,
Trenton Ramsey”

“The Post Prom Committee and Highmore-Harrold Sophomore class would like to thank you for your generous donation to the Post Prom fun night event. With the help of your contribution the event turned out to be a great success and fun was had by all. Thank you for supporting the students of Highmore-Harrold High School.”

“Dear Oahe Electric Neighbors,
Many thanks for your very generous donation to the Sully County Historical Society. We appreciate your support!

Lew Robbennolt, Treasurer
Sully County Historical Society”

“Dear Operation Round Up Board of Trustees,
Thank you so much for approving our request. We are very excited. WE really appreciate your consideration and are thrilled for this opportunity.

Thanks again,
the South Dakota Discovery Center staff”

“Oahe Electric,
I would like to thank you for choosing me as the recipient of the \$500 scholarship. This money will help further my education at the University of South Dakota.

-Raegan Wiebe”

“On behalf of LifeScape, the employees of East River Electric Power Cooperative would like to thank you for your support and generous donation for the 57th Annual LifeScape Benefit. This year was a great success! The support and dedication of businesses like yours is truly appreciated, not only by the East River Employees, but also your community. With your help, over \$32,000 will be donated to LifeScape.

We love forward to your continued support for this worthy organization. The funds we raise help local children lead normal lives. We are looking forward to next year’s 58th annual benefit!

Sincerely,
East River Employees’ Committee”

Oahe Electric Director Elections to be Held

The annual meeting of the members of Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc. will be held in Onida, S.D., on **Sept. 18, 2021.**

During the annual meeting, the members present will be electing two board members to fill two, three-year position. Any individual who satisfies the qualifications and complies with the nominating procedures set forth below, should be prepared to serve a minimum of 24 to 36 days per year attending meetings on behalf of the cooperative.

Petitions are available at the headquarters in Blunt. Should there be any questions concerning the bylaw procedures or if you would like to request a petition, feel free to call or stop in at the office. Petitions are due by **Aug. 4, 2021.**

Bylaws Governing Election of Directors

Section 3 – Qualifications: No person shall be eligible to become or remain a director or to hold any position of trust in the Cooperative who: (A) is not a member and bona fide resident in the area served or to be served by the Cooperative; or (B) is in any way employed or financially interested in a competing enterprise or a business selling electrical or plumbing fixtures or supplies to members of the Cooperative; or (C) is an employee of the Cooperative.

Upon establishment of the fact that a director is holding office in violation of any of the foregoing provisions, the Board of Directors, by official motion shall remove such director from office. Nothing contained in this section shall affect in any manner whatever the validity of any action taken at any meetings of the Board of Directors.

Section 4 – Nominations: Any fifteen (15) or more members acting together may make nominations by petition not less than forty-five (45) days prior to the meeting and the Secretary shall post such nominations at the principal office of the Cooperative. The Secretary shall mail with the notice of the meeting or separately but at least ten (10) days before the date of the meeting at statement of the number of directors to be elected and the names and addresses of the candidates nominated by petition. There shall be no nominations from the floor unless no petition has been filed for a vacancy. In that event only, nominations shall be taken from the floor for that vacancy, and nominations shall not be closed until at least one minute has passed during which no additional nomination has been made. No member may nominate more than one candidate.

RV TRIPPING



RV campers make new friends and enjoy new experiences on the open road. *Photo by South Dakota Travel*

Vic and Barb Simmons adopt the RV lifestyle when visiting new places and creating lasting memories on the road

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Decisions, decisions...

When Vic Simmons starts to sense the allure of the open road, he has some decisions to make. He can crank up his Jeep Cherokee and join all the brand loyalists out there who rally around the phrase, "It's a Jeep thing: You wouldn't understand."

Or he could go grab his gloves and his riding gear, fire up his orange 2017 Harley-Davidson Street Glide and experience the wind rush and beauty of the natural landscape on two wheels. Or he can climb into the command-and-control center of his massive 40-foot Meridian "diesel pusher" motor coach.

But who wants to be burdened by making tough decisions when the highway is calling? Most of the time he makes it a little easier by attaching the bike or the Jeep and

heading out into the great wide open.

Simmons, who just turned 65, serves as general manager of Rushmore Electric in Rapid City. But he has plans of retiring early next year and that means lots of travel time in the future with his wife Barb and whoever else wants to join the adventure.

The passenger list usually includes a host of grandchildren as it has from the beginning of Simmons' foray into the world of recreational vehicles and RV life.

He and Barb invested in their first RV about 12 years ago by purchasing a pre-owned 32-foot Class C model Jamboree, the kind that's built on a truck chassis and resembles a van with a large camper shell and a sleeping chamber over the roof.

"When our three girls were little, Barb's parents used to take them

camping, and to this day they always talk about how much they enjoyed those trips," Simmons said. "So, when it came time for us to have grandkids, we wanted to have a way to create those same kinds of memories for our own grandchildren."

Inevitably, as the family grew the smaller that 32-foot camper became. Besides, the vehicle was a bit top-heavy and caused some white-knuckle driving in high winds, and according to Vic, "Barb's idea of roughing it is staying at a hotel without a swimming pool." So, after three summers an upgrade with more space and more amenities was in order, and Simmons graduated to a 37-foot motor coach.

After a few years, he sold that RV to Lacreek General Manager Josh Fanning, who used it for family vacations and to take his daughter to weightlifting and track competitions in far-flung places.

Soon afterwards, Vic and Barb acquired their "forever RV," a 40-foot Meridian they purchased



Vic Simmons of Rushmore Electric enjoys climbing behind the wheel and piloting his 40-foot recreational vehicle.

a few years ago when Vic began planning out his retirement.

Simmons, who prides himself on always buying pre-owned vehicles, purchased the RV sight-unseen... well almost.

"I found it at a dealership in Lincoln," he recalled. "It had 17,000 miles on it and looked like it was in good shape. My son-in-law was in Lincoln, so he went to the dealership and Facetimed me and walked through it and it looked nice. It was set up to pull the Jeep or the trailer for the motorcycle, so we got it. I don't usually do business like that, but..."

With Vic soon retiring and Barb already retired from her



Vic and Barb Simmons use their RV to visit new places and create lasting memories.

job as the pharmacy technician program director at Western Dakota Technical Institute, the two have lots of traveling plans in their future.

One hitch, however, is finding places to park. RV sales shot through the roof nationally last year as people sought to escape the confines of their homes under lock down conditions and explore the outdoors.

"You can hardly find any good camping spots," Simmons said. "Camping just became something that people felt safe doing, and it got them out of their homes. A neighbor of mine had a travel trailer for sale and it sold in just a few minutes after he posted it."

Simmons said his travel adventures have taken him from North Carolina on the eastern seaboard to Washington state on the Pacific, and also all the way down to El Paso.

His plan is to "go to places I haven't been," although when asked if there's one place he would like to re-visit he's quick with an answer.

"Door County in eastern Wisconsin. I just fell in love with the place," he said. "It's on the peninsula above Green Bay and is just gorgeous

'GREAT 8' UNIQUE RV CAMPGROUNDS IN SD

Here are the state's top eight unique campgrounds, according to the state Department of Tourism:

Wessington Springs City Park Campground

Wessington Springs

Castlewood City Park Municipal Campground

Castlewood

Lake Carthage Campground

Carthage

Custer's Gulch RV Park

Custer

Cedar Pass Campground

Badlands National Park

Rafter J Bar Ranch

Hill City

Fish 'N Fry Campground & RV Park

Deadwood

Rocky Point Recreation Area

Belle Fourche

with a beautiful campground and a friendly community and shops and restaurants on Sturgeon Bay. The sunrises and sunsets are awesome."

His plans for himself and Barb are the same he had for his grandchildren when he invested in his first RV: meet new people, explore new places and make lasting memories.

Oddly enough, many of those new people are encountered not at state parks, camp sites or in restaurants, but at the fuel pump.

"When you're driving a car and stop for gas, nobody will come up and talk to you," he said. "But if you're on a motorcycle or in an RV, it's amazing how many people want to come up and talk to you all the time about where you're going and where you've been. They also like to talk a lot about gas mileage."



South Dakota trucking industry keeps rolling along despite challenges

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

While the two major political parties bicker back and forth about addressing the nation's crumbling infrastructure, substandard roads and other federal issues can be a real problem for people like Mick O'Connor.

Owner of Mick O'Connor and Son Trucking operating out of Mitchell, he oversees a fleet of 11 haulers and dump trucks along with his wife, Carla, and his son, Mike.

Mick launched the business in 1972 and has faced all manner of obstacles and challenges dating back to the Middle East oil embargo back in the 1970s that brought fuel shortages and high prices.

Over the years, there have been strict permitting regulations, soaring insurance premiums and economic downturns. Having cleared all of those hurdles in the past, he was braced to contend with any problems brought by last year's global pandemic. Fortunately for O'Connor and others in the trucking industry in South Dakota, there were a few figurative bumps in the road but business soon kept rolling right along.

"We kept people socially distanced like everybody else," O'Connor said. "Our business wasn't impacted as negatively as some industries, so we were lucky in that regard."

The industry hasn't been completely unscathed, however. Like other business owners navigating

through the post-pandemic environment, O'Connor is having to face challenges such as finding qualified employees and dealing with supply shortages and kinks in the supply chain.

Specifically, O'Connor is keeping his attention focused on the tire market. With big rigs that have up to 18 axles and can weigh up to 195,000 lbs., O'Connor and other trucking company owners purchase plenty of tires.

For Barry Selland, owner of the family-owned Selland Trucking company out of Woonsocket, the immediate need is for vehicle parts. Looking to expand his fleet of 30 flatbed and step-deck rigs, Selland is awaiting delivery on three new Kenworth trucks.

"We're waiting on certain parts to arrive before we can get them here," said Selland, whose company specializes in hauling structural steel



More than 8 million workers are employed in the U.S. trucking industry.

and manufactured goods all across the country and into Canada. “A representative at Kenworth told me there are some headlight parts that have been on order since the first of the year. We had a water pump go out and there was only one pump in the six-state area.”

Selland admitted being surprised that the pandemic wasn’t more disruptive to his industry. At first, he said, he felt the situation was going to impact trucking as heavily as the economic recession did in 2008.

“Things quickly started to slow down and it felt like another recession was coming,” he said. “But

then, just as quickly as it slowed down, it picked back up again and just took off. And it’s been going great ever since. We’re getting good loads and doing a lot of business.”

Both O’Connor and Selland said a national dearth of qualified drivers and general labor shortages are problems not particular to the post-pandemic business world. One concern they share, however, is that the average age of available drivers is rising. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the median age of a private fleet driver is 57 years old while drivers in training are at a median age of 35.

More than 3.5 million U.S. workers are employed as professional drivers with nearly 8 million employees in the industry, accounting for almost 6 percent of the workforce. Truckers log a combined 300 billion miles every year.

“There are always things to deal with,” Selland said. “But we’re optimistic about the future. People in this industry in South Dakota all work well together. We work with our state officials, law enforcement and others involved to make sure we continue to get products delivered where they need to be as safely and as efficiently as we can.”

QUESTIONS ABOUT SOLAR ENERGY? THE PUC HAS ANSWERS

Seeking answers about state laws and regulatory policies regarding solar energy and electric vehicles?

The South Dakota Public Service Commission (PUC) has put together a list of frequently asked questions on these topics and more.

PUC officials have indicated that ratepayer inquiries on these topics have increased over the past several months, so they drafted a document entitled “South Dakota Electric Service Laws” to edify utility customers and cooperative members.

Under the heading “Solar Energy” some of the subjects include:

- Solar leasing
- Solar power for your home

- What are the benefits of solar energy?

- What challenges does solar energy face?

- What do I need to know when considering or installing a solar energy system?

- What will I get paid for my solar generation?

The document also provides information on electric vehicle charging, such as where existing EV charging stations are located throughout the state and a summary of rules governing the establishment of charging stations by independent business owners.

According to Trevor Jones, general manager of the South Dakota Rural

Electric Association in Pierre, the PUC’s document will help deliver useful information to electric cooperative members.

“The legislature and the PUC are working very hard to establish rules and regulations in an industry that’s continuing to evolve at a very rapid pace,” he said. “They’re focused on making sure the guidelines are fair and consistent and take into consideration the challenges faced by utility providers to deliver affordable, accessible power balanced against the needs and expectations of consumers.”

The document can be found at <https://puc.sd.gov/Publications/electricsolarfaq.aspx>.

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: _____

August 26-29
58th Annual Steam
Threshing Jamboree
Photo by Travel South Dakota



JULY 23-25
Arlington Days
Various Locations, Arlington,
SD, 605-983-5251

JULY 27-31
Days of '76 Rodeo & Parades
Various Locations, Deadwood,
SD, 605-578-1876

JULY 29-AUGUST 1
Bruce Honey Days
City-wide, Bruce, SD,
605-627-5671

JULY 29, AUGUST 5, 19
The 1880 Train Old West
Shootout
222 Railroad Avenue,
Hill City, SD, 605-574-2222

JULY 31
Chislic Festival
Freeman's Prairie Arboretum,
Freeman, SD, 605-496-9946

AUGUST 5-7
90th Anniversary Union
County Fair
The Fairgrounds, Alcester, SD,
605-356-2321

AUGUST 5-14
Sioux Empire Fair
W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds,
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7178

AUGUST 6-7
Huron Senior Games
Various Locations, Huron, SD,
605-491-0635 or 605-353-8533

AUGUST 6-7
Sully County Historical
Society Fishing Tournament
West Prairie Resort, Onida, SD,
605-258-2541

AUGUST 6-8
Annual Sioux River Folk
Festival
Newton Hills State Park,
Canton, SD, 605-261-7414

AUGUST 6-15
Sturgis Motorcycle Rally
Citywide, Sturgis, SD,
605-720-0800

AUGUST 11
Willie Nelson & Family
824 32nd Avenue, Brookings,
SD, 605-692-7539

AUGUST 12-15
Annual Custer County Fair
Custer County Fairgrounds,
Hermosa, SD, 605-255-4145
or 605-393-7055

AUGUST 13-15
Fort Pierre Trader Days &
Backyard BBQ Competition
Various Locations, Fort Pierre,
SD, 605-223-7603

AUGUST 14
Sully County Historical
Society 5K Fun Run/Walk
Sully County Courthouse,
Onida, SD, 605-258-2541

AUGUST 17-19
Dakotafest
2300 E Spruce Street,
Mitchell, SD, 877-611-8161

AUGUST 20-22
Yankton Riverboat Days
City-wide, Yankton, SD,
605-665-1657

AUGUST 21
Dakota State Fair Speedway
Stock Car Races
South Dakota State
Fairgrounds, Huron, SD,
605-352-4848

AUGUST 25-29
Corn Palace Festival
604 N Main Street,
Mitchell, SD, 605-995-8430

AUGUST 26-29
58th Annual Steam
Threshing Jamboree
Prairie Village, Madison, SD,
605-256-3644

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

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.