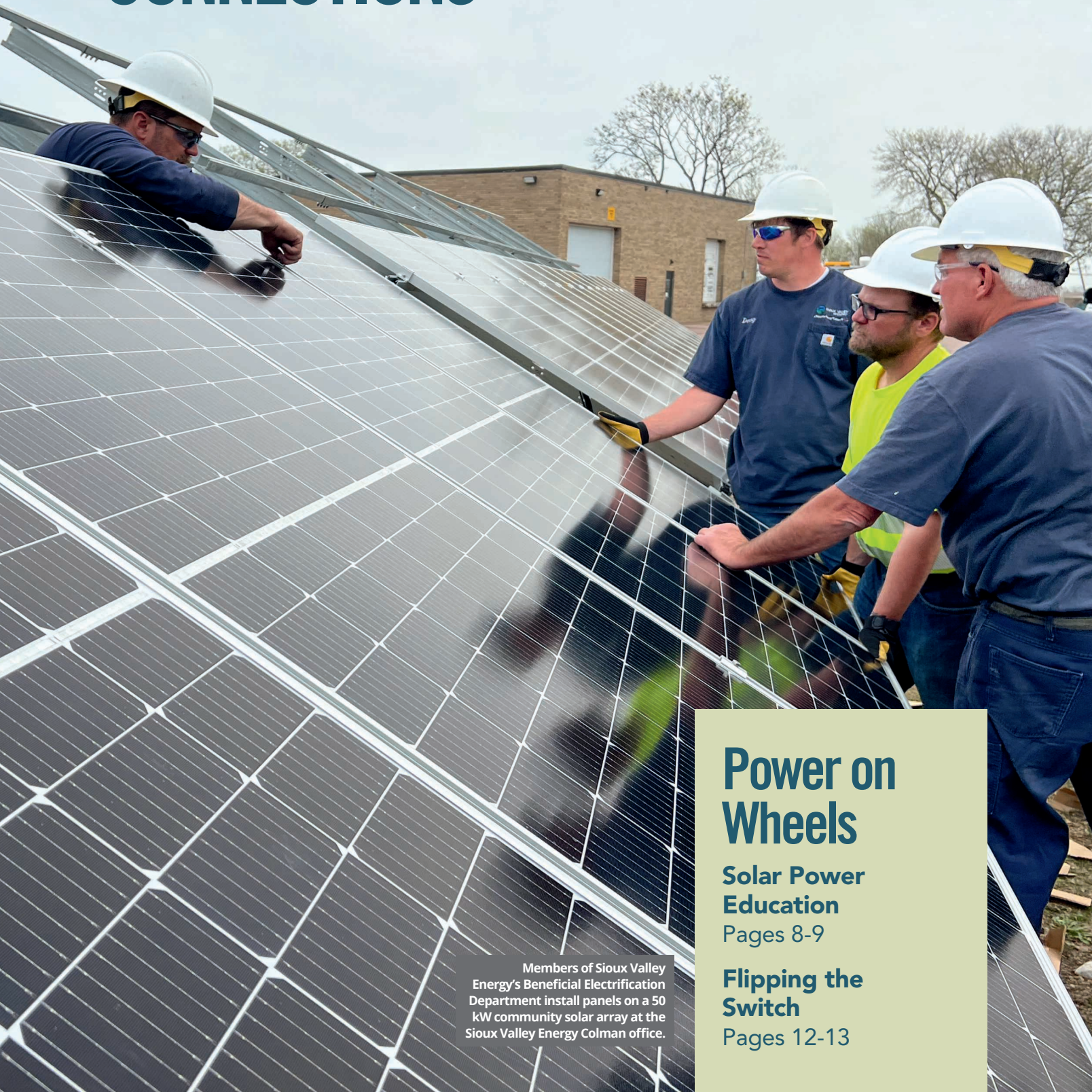


# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



## Power on Wheels

Solar Power  
Education

Pages 8-9

## Flipping the Switch

Pages 12-13

Members of Sioux Valley Energy's Beneficial Electrification Department install panels on a 50 kW community solar array at the Sioux Valley Energy Colman office.



# How Far Does Your Dollar Go?



**Valerie Marso**  
Office Manager

Have you ever thought about WHERE and HOW you pay for things affects your community? Small businesses are the heart of any hometown. Thriving small businesses create local jobs, support local charities, and have many goods and services to choose from.

Let's be honest: sometimes supporting a local business is just an excuse to buy something you really want. There's nothing wrong with that! But emptying your wallet isn't the only way to show some appreciation to the small businesses you love.

Your town's character comes from the coffee shops, restaurants, and stores in it. Without them, the soul of your community is missing. Supporting local businesses ensures that you'll have storefronts alive in your local neighborhood, instead of hollow commercial space available for rent.

The money you spend at local businesses pours back into your community. Small businesses donate a whopping 250% more than big businesses to local charities, youth organizations, and other nonprofits. Plus, the money you spend at a local business will stick around. On average, 48% of each purchase at a local business is recirculated through the local economy.

So back to HOW you pay these small businesses. Maybe you use your credit card to get those points. Maybe you use cash because it's king. Obviously small businesses will accept either form of payment. But let's take a look at a scenario. If I pay for your dinner with \$50 cash, the restaurant owner then uses that to pay for the laundry. The laundry owner then uses the bill to pay the barber. The barber will use the bill for shopping. After an unlimited number of payments, it will still remain a \$50 bill, which has fulfilled its purpose to everyone who used it for payment. But if I pay for that same dinner digitally, fees are charged to that establishment. Generally those are around 3% or \$1.50 on a \$50 transaction. So after 30 digital transactions, of the initial \$50 only \$5 will remain and the rest has been eaten up by fees. Just a little something to keep in mind.

BUT - You don't have to spend money to support local businesses! Here are some different ways to support local businesses.

## 1. Buy and gift local artwork and decor

Rather than decking out your home with prints from retail stores, search for artwork at your local stores. You'll find the perfect piece of art to brighten up your plain wall.

## 2. Order takeout and delivery

You could probably use an evening off from cooking and they could really use your orders!

## 3. Take a class or watch a live stream

Small businesses will often offer classes to supplement their offerings. Local gyms will have classes on different exercises, while some eateries offer cooking classes. Hardware stores may have do-it-yourself workshops. Gardening businesses may offer classes.

## 4. Tag local businesses on social media

Supporting local businesses can be as simple as sharing photos of them on social media. The next time you're at your local farmer's market, snap a photo of the produce! Make a quick post featuring your favorite items at your local store! This will mean the world to the store. The more people hear about them, the more sales they can make.

## 5. Leave a positive review or give a recommendation

When was the last time you bought a product without checking online reviews? If you're having a hard time remembering, you're not alone. People worldwide check out reviews before making a purchase. Reviews generate word-of-mouth marketing and add credibility to a small business's reputation. Leave an honest review about the company's excellent staff members, the quality of its products, or just your thoughts on its vibe. Or try recommending local businesses. Your friends, family members and colleagues are more likely to support a local business after your recommendation.

## 6. Comment, like, subscribe and share

One of the best ways to support a business you believe in is by amplifying its message on social media. Small businesses put a lot of work into posting on social media, even though most business owners have many other responsibilities to tend to. It's a job that takes a lot of time and strategy, you can boost their engagement by liking posts, commenting and sharing posts into your feed.

## 7. Buy gift cards

You might not use a gift card immediately, but the immediate revenue can really help a small business stay alive. A gift card is a physical promise that you'll support that store later. Plus, it's a wonderful present to give someone.

## 8. Buy logo merchandise

How to support local businesses without constantly buying products? Buy and wear its merch. Businesses often have t-shirts, hats, mugs, stickers, and sweatshirts branded with the business logo. Support local businesses by purchasing a piece of merch, and then support them again and again by wearing or using it.

## 9. Sign up for newsletters

Signing up for newsletters may not seem super supportive, but it's a free way to show your appreciation.

## COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

### OAHE ELECTRIC

(USPS No. 019-042)

#### Board of Directors:

James Feller – Vice President  
605.962.6207

Brandon Haag – Assistant Secretary  
605.215.6758

Ryan Noyes – Treasurer  
605.280.3500

Ross Sperry – Secretary  
605.280.7770

Kirk Yackley – President  
605.258.2412

#### Employees:

Tyler Arbach – Journeyman Lineman

Austin Bergeson – Journeyman Lineman

Mark Bruning – Line Foreman

Matt Eldridge – Chief Operations Officer

Trudie Feldman – Custodian

Brady Gaer – Journeyman Lineman

Sidney Geigle – Journeyman Lineman

Sam Irvine – Administrative Services Specialist

Megan Jaeger – Membership Director

Les Job – Journeyman Lineman

Jordan Lamb – Chief Executive Officer

Dan Lettau – Journeyman Lineman

Steve Long – Power Supply Specialist

Valerie Marso – Chief Financial Officer

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.

Small businesses often run promotions that newsletter subscribers hear about first, so you'll hear about special sales before others do.

#### 10. Change your online ordering habits

This is the WHERE!! Stop filling up your cart on Amazon! Opt instead for small independent stores that ship products right to your door. Most small businesses have an online shop you can browse. The next time you're shopping online, pause before purchasing your cart. Many of the items you'd like to buy are available at your local stores and you won't have to deal with long shipping times. Do your research and see if you can spend your money locally.

#### 11. Pay attention to what local businesses need

Sometimes local businesses will put out calls for help. The business might be collecting donations for a worthy cause, or need supplies for a project. The business might need volunteers for a beautification project or volunteers for an ongoing program like tutoring. If there's a need you can meet, get involved! Volunteering with a local business is a wonderful way to make connections in your community.

#### 12. Hire small businesses

Choosing to hire a small business professional supports their work and saves you time. Try making a list of tasks that you spend too much time on. Can you outsource any of that work?

#### 13. Treat local business workers with respect

Many small businesses are run by a small crew, and they have a lot on their plates. Try to be patient.

You may not have to change many of your shopping habits to support small businesses. Any support you give local businesses will be deeply appreciated. Try implementing just one change at a time. Start with something easy. Before you know it, more of your time and money will be spent at local businesses.

Please make room for roadside crews – Matt Eldridge

When the power goes out, so do Oahe Electric's line crews. Lineworkers are the first to respond after an outage occurs, and they work tirelessly to restore power to the communities we serve.

If you're traveling and see one of our crews on the side of the road, we kindly ask that you move over if possible and give them a little extra space to work. We deeply care about the safety of all, and this extra precaution ensures just that.

If you approach a crew while traveling on a two-lane road, moving over to the next lane might not be an option. In this case, we simply ask that you slow down when approaching roadside crews. If you approach a crew while traveling on a four-lane road, and safety and traffic conditions allow, we ask that you move over into the far lane.

Utility crews aren't the only ones who could use the extra space. Emergency responders, such as police officers, firefighters and emergency medical technicians, often find themselves responding to emergency situations near busy roadways. We ask that you follow the same procedures mentioned above to help keep these crews safe.

There's plenty of room for all. Let's work together to keep everyone safe on our local roadways.

## 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](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](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

# Fireworks Safety Tips

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

In 2017, eight people died and over 12,000 were injured badly enough to require medical treatment after fireworks-related incidents. Of these, 50% of the injuries were to children and young adults under age 20. Over two-thirds (67%) of injuries took place from June 16 to July 16. And while the majority of these incidents were due to amateurs attempting to use professional-grade, homemade or other illegal fireworks or explosives, an estimated 1,200 injuries were from less powerful devices like small firecrackers and sparklers.

Additionally, fireworks start an average of 18,500 fires each year, including 1,300 structure fires, 300 vehicle fires and nearly 17,000 other fires.

## Fireworks Safety Tips: If You Choose to Use Legal Fireworks

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

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

- Keep a bucket of water nearby to fully extinguish fireworks that don't go off or in case of fire
- Never use illegal fireworks

## Sparklers Are Dangerous

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

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



## Call Before You Dig!

### Dixie Koistinen

Dixie Koistinen advises diggers to call 811 before digging. This is a great tip for anyone doing construction or yard work this summer. Dixie is the daughter of Jerome and Lisa Koistinen from Lake Norden, S.D., members of H-D 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.





# Summer DESSERTS

## VICKY'S RHUBARB CAKE

Ingredients:

- 1 egg
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup cream (sweet or sour)
- 1 1/2 cups flour
- 1 tsp. soda
- 1/4 tsp. cinnamon
- 2 cups rhubarb (slice thin)

**METHOD**

Mix in order. Grease and flour pan. Pour batter into pan and sprinkle 1 cup brown sugar, 1/2 cup nuts, and 1/2 cup chocolate chips over the top. Bake at 350°F for 50 minutes.

**Vicky Hoffman**  
South Dakota

## CHERRY CLOUD 9 DESSERT

Ingredients:

- 1 white cake mix
- 1 (3 oz.) pkg. cherry jello
- 1 (8 oz.) carton of Cool Whip
- 1 (24 oz.) can cherry pie filling

**METHOD**

Bake 1 white cake mix in 9x13" pan according to directions.

Poke holes in cake and pour in 1 (3 oz.) pkg. cherry jello made with only 1 1/2 cups water. Refrigerate.

When this is cool, cover with 1 (8 oz.) carton of Cool Whip. Gently spoon on 1 (24 oz.) can of cherry pie filling. Refrigerate and serve.

This is a pretty red and white dessert to serve during holiday gatherings.

**Jane Ham**  
Rapid City, S.D.

## EASY RASPBERRY MOLTEN CAKES

Ingredients:

- 4 oz. semi-sweet chocolate
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) butter
- 4 tsps. raspberry extract
- 1 cup confectioners' sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 egg yolk
- 6 tbsp. flour
- Raspberry Sauce (recipe follows)

**Raspberry Sauce:**

- 1 package (10 ounces) frozen raspberries in juice, thawed
- 1/2 teaspoon raspberry extract

**METHOD**

Preheat oven to 425°F. Butter 6 (6 oz.) custard cups or soufflé dishes. Place on baking sheet.

Microwave chocolate and butter in large microwavable bowl on HIGH 1 minute or until butter is melted. Stir with wire whisk until chocolate is completely melted. Stir in raspberry flavor and vanilla. Stir in sugar until well blended. Whisk in eggs and yolk. Stir in flour. Pour batter into prepared custard cups.

Bake 10 to 14 minutes or until sides are firm but centers are soft. Let stand 1 minute. Carefully loosen edges with small knife. Invert cakes onto serving plates.

For the Raspberry Sauce, mix raspberries and raspberry extract until well blended. Serve with cakes.

[mccormick.com](http://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 2023. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

# Operation Round Up® Disburses Funds

Members of Oahe Electric's Operation Round Up® Board of Trustees recently awarded funds to eight area organizations.

Operation Round Up® is a fund of money generated by Oahe Electric members and overseen by a four-member Board of Trustees.

Oahe Electric members contribute an average of \$835 a month to the program, with an individual's total contribution ranging from 12 cents a year to \$11.88 a year.

This year, 8 applications with requests totaling almost \$28,500 were turned in. The Board of Trustees awarded \$9,000 split among the following organizations:

- Beyond the Classroom Inc. – playground equipment.
- Blunt Rural Fire Department – battery powered combination tool.
- Community Coordinated Transportation Systems – transport veterans in rural areas of Hughes and Sully counties to medical appointments at veteran facilities.
- Onida Post 79 Baseball – help pay tournament entry fees, update equipment, update uniforms/hats, and field maintenance.
- Sleep in Heavenly Peace South Dakota – Pierre Chapter – build and deliver twin-size beds to children in need.
- South Dakota Guardianship Program – provide guardianship services to South Dakotans with disabilities and with no means to pay for services.
- Sully County Historical Society – restore county courthouse.
- The Ranch Ministries – Update ranch fencing, electric and water to improve habitat for pheasants.

## Oahe Electric to Host Tour

Members of Oahe Electric Cooperative have the opportunity to tour our transmission cooperative, East River Electric Cooperative, as well as Dakota State University's (DSU) Connected Home Research Project.

East River Electric is a wholesale power supply cooperative headquartered in Madison, S.D., which serves 24 distribution cooperatives and one municipal electric system across eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota.

The Connected Home project is a partnership between East River Electric Cooperative, DSU and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association and is exploring technologies that will be included in the next generation of rural homes. It is also working to find solutions that will allow electric cooperatives to play an integral role in helping consumers optimize their energy use. The project's research space resembles a smart home kitchen with additional appliances including a washer, dryer and water heater.

Twenty-five lucky Oahe Electric members will travel to and from Madison, SD on a bus service on October 12. Lunch will be provided on the tour. High school students – accompanied by a parent or legal guardian – are encouraged to attend. At least one registrant must be an active member of Oahe Electric to be eligible. The cost is \$25 per person. Registrations will be accepted on a "first-come, first-served" basis. Portions of the tour require walking, so wear comfortable shoes.

If you would like to attend, please send your name, address, phone number, and \$25 to Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc., PO Box 216, Blunt, SD 57522. For more information, please call 1-800-640-6243.

# Please Make Room for Roadside Crews



**Matt Eldridge**  
Operations  
Manager

When the power goes out, so do Oahe Electric's line crews. Lineworkers are the first to respond after an outage occurs, and they work tirelessly to restore power to the communities we serve.

If you're traveling and see one of our crews on the side of the road, we kindly ask that you move over if possible and give them a little extra space to work. We deeply care about

the safety of all, and this extra precaution ensures just that.

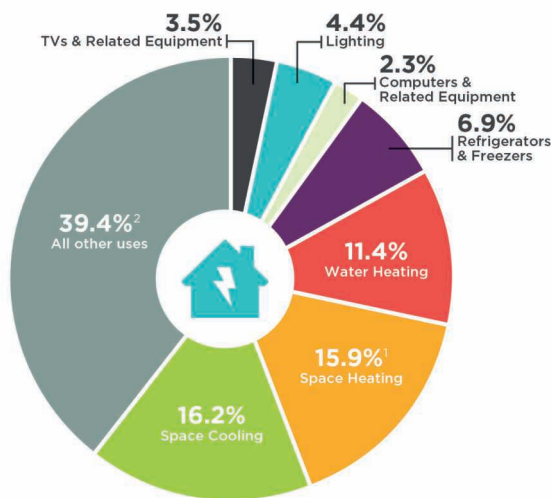
If you approach a crew while traveling on a two-lane road, moving over to the next lane might not be an option. In this case, we simply ask that you slow down when approaching roadside crews. If you approach a crew while traveling on a four-lane road, and safety and traffic conditions allow, we ask that you move over into the far lane.

Utility crews aren't the only ones who could use the extra space. Emergency responders, such as police officers, firefighters and emergency medical technicians, often find themselves responding to emergency situations near busy roadways. We ask that you follow the same procedures mentioned above to help keep these crews safe.

There's plenty of room for all. Let's work together to keep everyone safe on our local roadways.

## How Americans Use Electricity

The latest data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration shows the combined use of clothes washers and dryers, dishwashers, small appliances and other electrical equipment (noted as "all other uses" below) accounts for the largest percentage of electricity consumption in American homes.



Source: Energy Information Administration 2022

<sup>1</sup>Includes consumption for heat and operating furnace fans and boiler pumps.  
<sup>2</sup>Includes miscellaneous electronics, clothes washers and dryers, cooking equipment, dishwashers, heating elements, and motors.

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Summer is a prime opportunity to enjoy the great outdoors. To reduce home energy use, avoid using your oven and use a grill instead. Not only will cooking outdoors eliminate the electricity used to power the stove, but it will also avoid raising the temperature inside your home, reducing the need for air conditioning or cooling.

You can also avoid using the oven with tasty no-bake recipes. Get creative in the kitchen (or the backyard) and find new ways to save energy!

Source: Dept. of Energy







# POWER ON WHEELS

West Central Electric Cooperative's solar trailer serves as an interactive exhibit showcasing solar power generation in action for members. Equipped with a built-in generator, battery storage unit, inverter, and six rooftop solar arrays, the trailer is a great resource for public outreach and education efforts in South Dakota.

## Solar trailer takes renewable education on the road

**Frank Turner**

frank.turner@sdra.coop

Solar panels are creating a buzz in the energy industry. Every day, co-op employees around the state answer an ever-growing list of questions, such as “Can solar save me money on my energy bill?” and “Are solar panels a reliable source of energy?”

Addressing increasing public interest, West Central Electric Co-op, serving towns such as Murdo and Kennebec, has developed an innovative approach to public outreach regarding solar panels. Their solution: a solar trailer — a portable structure designed to inform the public about the efficiency, pros and cons of solar panels.

“West Central Electric has approxi-

mately 3,700 members and I get two or three calls a month from our members asking about solar power,” said Jessie Tucker, the co-op’s member services manager.

Tucker noted that the recent surge in solar power interest isn’t limited to West Central. Co-ops throughout the state have been fielding similar inquiries. So, when the concept of a solar trailer was introduced in 2021, several nearby co-ops, including Rushmore Electric Power, were quick to get on board.

“We thought, wouldn’t it be great if we had something that we could show to the membership and explain how solar panels work and go from there,” said Tucker. “We envisioned the trailer as a resource that could be utilized throughout western South Dakota, if not the entire state.”

With support from surrounding co-ops, the trailer was completed in June 2022. Although the trailer is a work in progress, it has already been showcased at several co-op outreach events over the past year, including Black Hills Electric’s Co-op Day and more.

The solar trailer serves as an interactive exhibit where members can step inside for a first-hand experience. Upon pressing a button, the six rooftop solar arrays activate and start generating a total of 1.92 kilowatts of energy directly from the trailer’s roof. Apart from solar panels, the trailer is equipped with a built-in generator, a battery storage unit, and an inverter that converts power from direct current (DC) to alternating current (AC).

The trailer, according to Tucker, highlights the benefits of a diversified approach to South Dakota’s energy mix. For a reliable and dependable energy grid, renewable sources such as solar need to be paired with other forms of power generation.

“What we are really trying to com-



municate is that you can't fully rely on distributed generation, whether it's solar or wind," Tucker explained. "For reliability and safety, it's important to consider all available energy sources. Solar power has its limitations, especially when the sun isn't shining or during the night."

The introduction of a solar trailer comes as co-ops across the state are in the midst of their own solar initiatives. Just last month, Sioux Valley Energy completed its own solar project that permits its members to purchase a 20-year subscription to the power output from a newly constructed 140-panel solar array located in Colman, S.D. The project allows members who are passionate about renewable energy a direct route to purchase solar power through their local co-op.

"A lot of people are very interested in solar power, but they don't want to go through the process of using up land and roof space," said Ben Pierson, manager of beneficial electrification for Sioux Valley. "Members aren't interested in constructing these projects themselves, so our solar

project offers those members an alternative way to get involved in solar."

More than 30 members participate in the subscription program, and because the project was entirely financed by the participating members, it won't impact other members of the co-op.

"This project was one hundred percent funded by the members that are purchasing the output of those panels," said Pierson. "This project allows these members to see a local, physical solar asset in their community that is working for them and is credited on their bill each. So really



The solar trailer has been featured at several co-op public outreach events.

our focus with renewable is really about member choice."

The landscape of renewable energy is vast and ever-changing and every co-op is planning their own approach, but with resources like the solar trailer, tools for education and engagement are within reach for members wanting to learn more.



The interior of the solar trailer is equipped with battery storage and outlets – powering everyday electrical appliances, such as a hairdryer.

# OAHE ELECTRIC DIRECTOR ELECTIONS TO BE HELD

During your 72nd annual meeting, members 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 **Wednesday, Aug. 2, 2023.**

## 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.

## Thank You Messages

Dear Oahe Electric Cooperative,  
Thank you for selecting me as a recipient for your scholarship. Your support of my education means a lot to me. I am excited to start studying animal science and ag business this fall at the University of Minnesota Crookston. Thank you so much!!

**Sincerely,  
Jenna Kruger**

Dear Oahe Electric,  
Thank you for selecting me for the Oahe Electric/Basin Electric scholarship. This scholarship will help me work towards my dreams in college. I am very excited to attend SDSU in the fall!

**Thanks again,  
Autumn Iverson**

## ACH Winners Named

Congratulations to Scott Remington and Alan and Jean Peterson!

Their names were drawn from the numerous members who either had ACH or signed up for ACH during our promotional period, so they're each taking home \$100! Oahe Electric's ACH Program allows consumers to pay their electric bill directly for their checking or savings account or with a recurring credit card payment. They don't have to worry about mailing their electric bills ever again and they won some extra cash. Can't beat that!

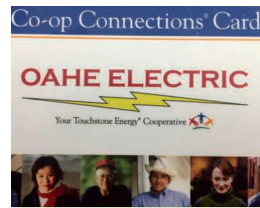


## Allocation Notice Sent to Oahe Electric Co-op Owners

Each year, your electric cooperative returns their profits back to you – the member owners. Any margins (what is left after all the bills are paid) get distributed to the members back in the same fashion it was contributed. For instance, if I paid \$1,000 for electricity for the year and Jane paid \$10,000, Jane would receive a larger allocation than me because she contributed more towards the margins.

Oahe Electric allocated 2022 margins of just over \$1.3 million to its member owners. While Oahe Electric had a positive year, Basin and East River Electric Power Cooperative also had financially successful years, which accounted for just over \$1 million of the total allocation.

Oahe Electric member owners will receive their notices of capital credit earnings for 2022 on their June statement that is received at the beginning of July.



## Cooperative Connections Card Program Vendors

### Automotive

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

### Food/Convenience Store

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

### Health/Fitness and Beauty

<b>Anytime Fitness</b>	605-224-4011	Pierre	Receive a free two-week mini-membership.
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### Home/Garden

<b>Slumberland Furniture</b>	605-945-1997	Pierre	20% off any regular priced Lazy Boy items. Excluding special orders.
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<b>Small Engine House</b>	605-224-5815	Pierre	10% off parts and labor

### Sports/Recreation

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

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# FLIPPING THE SWITCH

Third generation ranchers Ken and Kathleen Meier stand by one of the first electric utility pole installed on their ranch.

## The Meier Family and Illuminating Rural South Dakota

**Frank Turner**  
frank.turner@sdrea.coop

In the rural heartland of Firesteel, S.D., a transformational moment still echoes in the minds of third-generation ranchers Ken and Kathleen Meier. Over a span of 56 years on their farmstead, they have run cattle, reared horses, and even raised two children. After all

of those years, however, they still vividly remember the moment when electricity illuminated their rural community for the first time in the early 50s.

It's safe to say, their memories go back a long way. And yet, their bond with their home extends even further, reaching back a century to when their families were still

establishing roots in the frontier of the rural prairie.

Ken recalls the unlikely story which brought his grandpa, Anton Meier, from Iowa to the captivating, rolling landscape near Timber Lake, S.D., in 1923.

“Well, my grandpa was ornery when he had a bit too much to drink,” said Ken. “Anyway, after a night of drinking, they threw him out of a bar in Iowa, so he crawled into a train car for a nap. When he woke up, he was in South Dakota.”

According to Meier, his grandpa Anton quickly fell in love with the state and decided to relocate his



family to a new frontier near Timber Lake. In a coincidental twist of fate, Kathleen's family also settled in the same area around the same time. Unlike Anton's serendipitous journey,

Kathleen's grandfather, Frank Holzer, had a more traditional approach.

"My grandpa didn't get a free ride," laughed Kathleen. "He came down with our family from North Dakota with a horse and a milk cow tied to the back of the family's covered wagon."

When their families first settled the area, it was the era of kerosene lamps, horses and hard work. Yet in their childhood, both Ken and Kathleen witnessed the transition from kerosene lamps to electric light bulbs, a change that would propel their families and their communities forward.

"I must have been 9 or 10, but I remember when Moreau-Grand put our line up," Ken reminisced. "The memory of those first poles being driven into the ground by a couple of guys with an old International Truck has stuck with me. It was just something you don't forget."

Today, those original poles placed in the ground more than 70 years ago still stand tall on their ranch. Kathleen, too, recalls the transformative impact they had.

"I was about the same age when we first wired our house," said

Kathleen. "I remember how fun it was to just turn the lights on and have bright lights."

However, the electrification of their neighborhood brought more than just the novelty of flipping a switch. Kathleen's family promptly modernized their home. Their stove and fridge transitioned from kerosene to electric, and they even invested in a milking machine. The arrival of electricity didn't just bring about change; it revolutionized daily life on the ranch, making it cleaner and more efficient.

"Our old washing machine ran on a gas engine," said Kathleen. "You had to stomp on a pedal to get that motor started. It smoked up the entire house. Once we had electricity all we had to do was plug it in."

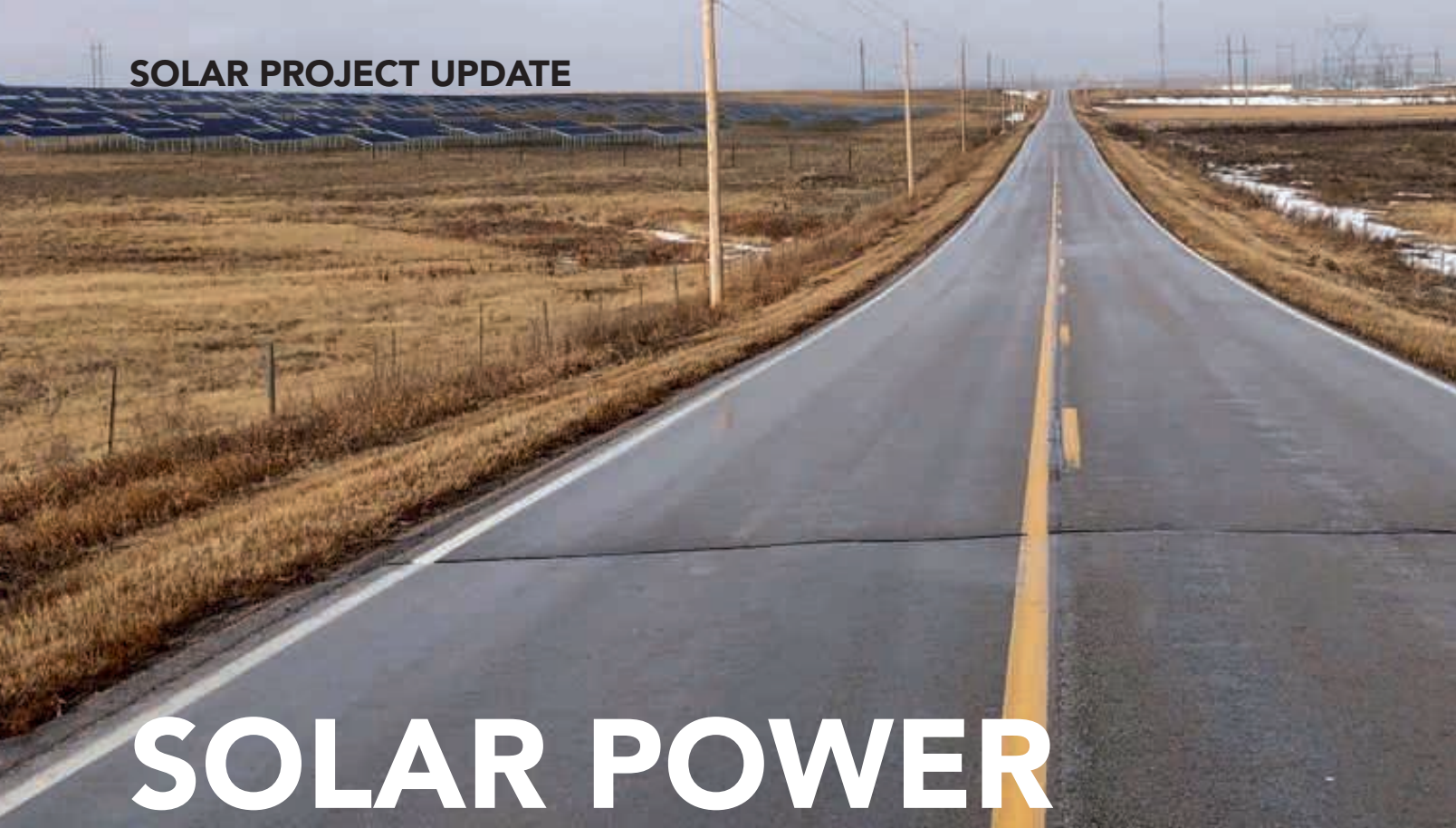
Progress didn't stop at the washing machine. "It didn't take long for things to change," added Ken. "I remember when I was about thirteen, my neighbor purchased the first television in the neighborhood, so everything happened fast. We would all go to watch whatever was on."

The transition has continued to benefit the Meier family. Today, their son, Kent Meier, works in the power industry with Border States Electric, a company that sells electrical equipment, tools and appliances. Their daughter, Cindy Lindskov has carried on the family tradition as a fourth-generation rancher in Isabelle, S.D., a town conveniently located just a stone's throw away from her parents.

It's amazing how much has changed over the years," said Ken. "Since the day we first got electricity, Moreau-Grand has done a great job of keeping our light on and burning bright."



One of the original utility poles on Ken and Kathleen Meier's land was created in 1950, yet it still functions to this day.



# SOLAR POWER

National Grid Renewables is building a solar farm next to an existing substation near New Underwood. Photo courtesy of Western Area Power Administration

## New Underwood Solar Power Update

**Scott Waltman**

Next year, a new solar farm near New Underwood should be providing power for homes and businesses in South Dakota and beyond.

Wild Springs Solar is being developed by Minnesota-based National Grid Renewables. The same company already operates a wind farm in Clark County, so it might already be familiar to some residents.

The solar farm is projected to be the biggest one in the state, according to National Grid Renewables. It's being built on roughly 1,000 acres.

Plans call for it to produce 128 megawatts a year. That could power 16,000 South Dakota homes, though some of the electricity will also be sent

out of state.

The solar farm is being built near an existing Western Area Power Administration substation, making for easier power distribution to groups like Basin Electric Power Cooperative, one of the largest providers of electricity in the Dakotas.

“When determining where to site renewable energy projects, things we consider include but are not limited to accessibility to transmission, land availability, resource, customer demand and community support,” a Wild Springs Solar representative. “The Wild Springs project area was selected for proximity to the electrical transmission system, New Underwood substation, land suitable for a solar project from an environmental, regulatory/permitting,

design perspective and cooperative landowners.”

Construction on the solar farm began in January.

Basin Electric, which is based in Bismarck, N.D., is a transmission cooperative that serves about 3 million customers in nine states. It has an agreement with National Grid Renewables to purchase 114 megawatts of electricity.

For Basin Electric, the agreement amounts to the first time it has agreed to buy solar power on a large scale. The cooperative has plans to bring on more than 150 megawatts of solar capability in the next two years.

Andy Buntrock, Basin Electric's vice president of strategic planning and communications, said stressing reliability is a priority for the cooperative this year.

“When we communicate on renewables we emphasize that they are just part of an all-of-the-above energy strategy that ensures reliable and



affordable power for our membership,” he said. “It’s important that we maintain dispatchable generation that has a reliable fuel source, while taking advantage of non-dispatchable generation like our first-ever solar project in South Dakota.”

Coal and natural gas are examples of dispatchable generation. They are fuels that are highly dependable because they are in constant supply.

“The construction of the Wild Springs Solar Project in South Dakota represents our commitment to bringing clean, renewable energy and economic development to the state of South Dakota. The project will contribute significantly to the tax base, as well as the local communities,” the National Grid Renewables spokesperson said.

In 2020, the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission approved a construction permit for Wild Springs Solar. That procedure set out what’s being built near New Underwood, including:

- 340,000 solar panels.
- A tracking system.
- Access roads.
- A substation.
- An operation and maintenance building and parking lot.
- Electric collection lines.

The plant will use solar panels that have been developed by First Solar.

National Grid Renewables is establishing a charitable fund for the New Underwood School District with plans to donate more than \$500,000 in the

first plant’s first two decades.

“Our National Grid Renewables onsite team has also worked closely with the school board and district to provide additional education about solar energy and the Wild Springs Solar project to some of the local high school classes, including a personalized tour of the site,” the company representative said.

But National Grid sees benefits that extend far beyond the Pennington County community. The upside, according to National Grid Renewables, will also include:

- Offsetting 193,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions each year.
- A \$22 million economic impact in the project’s first 20 years of operation.
- \$12 in new tax revenue in the first two decades.
- 225 new construction and operation jobs.

And when the plant is producing power, that should equate to the removal of 41,000 vehicles from roads in a year’s time.

WAPA helped clear the way for the project in 2021, finding the solar farm would have no significant impact on environmental resources or humans, said Eric Barendsen, public affairs specialist for WAPA.

That’s also when WAPA entered into an agreement with Wild Springs Solar and the Southwest Power Pool allowing the solar farm to be connected to WAPA’s New Underwood Substation.

Ultimately, that will help Basin Electric power South Dakota.

The cooperative transmits power to two generation and transmission cooperatives in the state – Rushmore Electric Power Cooperative and East River Electric Cooperative. Those co-ops then send electricity to their distribution cooperatives, which provide electricity to homes, schools and businesses across South Dakota.

The Clark County wind farm uses 77 turbines to create 200 megawatts of power, the National Grid Renewables representative said. It began operation in 2019 and employs 10 people.



Construction began earlier this year on a large solar farm near New Underwood in Pennington County. Some of the power will be purchased by Basin Electric and be distributed to cooperatives in South Dakota.

## REGISTER TO WIN!

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**July 14-16**  
**Badlands Astronomy Festival**  
25216 Ben Reifel Road  
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**JUNE 23-25**  
**46th Annual Main Street Arts & Crafts Festival**  
Centennial Park  
Hot Springs, SD

**JULY 1**  
**Hill City's Annual Star-Spangled Celebration**  
8 a.m.  
Hill City, SD  
605-574-2368

**JULY 4**  
**Philip VFD Firework Display**  
Lake Waggoner  
Philip, SD

**JULY 7-8**  
**Buffalo Gap Blow Out Rodeo**  
6 p.m.  
Buffalo Gap, SD  
605-890-1533

**JULY 8-9**  
**Brookings Summer Arts Festival**  
Brookings, SD  
605-692-2787

**JULY 12**  
**Tracy Area Gardens & Quilts Tour**  
2 p.m.  
Tracy, MN

**JULY 13-16**  
**Pioneer Days**  
White, SD  
605-690-4458

**JULY 14-16**  
**Burke Stampede PRCA Rodeo**  
Burke, SD  
605-830-2083

**JULY 15**  
**Huron MS Walk/Run**  
8 a.m.  
Lake Byron  
Huron, SD  
605-350-5922

**JULY 15-16**  
**Charles Mix Saddle Club SDRA Rodeo**  
Geddes, SD  
605-680-2763

**JULY 21-23**  
**Winner Elks 54th Annual Rodeo**  
Winner, SD

**JULY 28-29**  
**Farley Fest**  
Lake Farley Park  
Milbank, SD  
www.farleyfest.com

**JULY 29**  
**BBQ Pit Row and Car Show**  
Winner, SD  
605-842-1533

**JULY 30**  
**Bergen Threshing Bee**  
9 a.m.  
Bristol, SD  
605-237-0310

**AUG 13-14**  
**Twin Brooks Threshing Show**  
Featuring Allis Chalmers  
Twin Brooks, SD  
605-880-2884

**AUG 21**  
**30th Annual Bishop's Cup Golf Tournament**  
Minnehaha Country Club and  
The Country Club of Sioux Falls  
Sioux Falls, SD  
605-988-3765

**SEPT 4**  
**Hidewood Valley Stream Threshing Show**  
Steam Whistle Blows  
1 p.m.  
47236 183rd St  
Clear Lake, SD

**SEPT 29-30**  
**Junkin' Market Days**  
Ramkota Exhibit Hall  
Sioux Falls, SD  
605-941-4958

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.

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