

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

Keeping the Lights On

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Two Things for Spring

Oahe Electric Cooperative and Weeds Will Both Grow



Jordan Lamb
Chief Executive Officer

Exciting news for your electric cooperative for the upcoming 2024 year as we begin our construction season! The Board of Directors approved a new construction workplan that will highlight the burial of over 75 miles of three phase line along our local roads to improve reliability to our members, protect safety of the public and also increase capacity for you – our member owners – to grow! We are experiencing a high level of load growth that helps to pay off existing facilities our current membership would otherwise bear the cost of.

Oahe will begin construction this spring on new overhead to underground conversions on a large scale across the entire service territory. This requires surveyors to locate and identify existing facilities to prepare for burial of new line to improve our member level of service – we appreciate your cooperation and patience as we move forward to provide better service throughout our membership territory.

I never thought we would be involved in more than just providing services to our local communities as we have done the last 75 years. Your cooperative now actively engages in expanding our horizons with several new loads that range from cryptocurrency mining in a joint effort with Dakota State University out of Madison, S.D., ammonia production, carbon sequestration, ethanol and jet fuel production and housing projects. We continue to see load growth in the north central United States while load growth declines in both the southern central part of the ‘bread basket’. Your staff here at Oahe remains diligent in identifying risks vs rewards of growth and continue to utilize existing infrastructure to keep rates stable for the future of our local areas.

We look forward to providing stable rates to our membership for the future of not only our children, but many generations to come. Continuing to be on the cutting edge of technology, infrastructure, railroads, gas, nuclear and electric industries remains prudent to sustain our current growth rate and provide opportunities for our local communities that many utilities haven't seen the ‘Spring Growth’ in, and we look forward to providing the insight and opportunity for years to come!

Interested in Becoming the Next Generation of Linemen?

Have you ever wondered what it takes to be a lineman? Oahe Electric Cooperative has expanded its commitment to community by offering an internship to students. Interns will have the opportunity to go out in the field with linemen, learning about different wiring and materials as well as how to put it together. The internship is for juniors or seniors interested in pursuing a career in linework.

Linemen complete challenging and oftentimes very dangerous work around high voltage electricity every day to ensure that when you flip a switch, the lights always come on. From blowing snow, fallen tree limbs or heavy rains, linemen work in extreme weather conditions day and

night to safely make repairs and get the power back on for our customers. It's physically demanding work, but also rewarding and prestigious.

It takes a lot to become a lineman, thousands of hours of training and testing happen behind the scenes before they make it into the bucket truck parked in your neighborhood. If you are interested in seeing what a day in the life of a lineman looks like, please contact Chief Operations Officer Matt Eldridge at 1.800.640.6243 or meldridge@oaheelectric.com.

Landscaping Help Wanted

Oahe Electric needs assistance with keeping our rock beds and landscaping in tip-top shape this summer. We are looking for a hardworking group or individual who will periodically weed the areas around our headquarters. Please contact us at 1.800.640.6243 or oahe@oaheelectric.com with a proposal for yourself or your group.

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

OAHE ELECTRIC

(USPS No. 019-042)

Board of Directors:

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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.

National Lineman Appreciation Day

Tuesday, April 18 is National Lineman Appreciation Day! Hurricanes, ice storms and other devastating natural disasters certainly put the spotlight on the nation's power lineworkers.

We're grateful to the courageous, hardworking men and women who work tirelessly to restore service following these difficult events, as well as their daily work to keep power flowing. Oahe Electric is proud to celebrate the hard work, innovation, and dedication of our linemen! #ThankALineman



Left to right: Austin Bergeson, Steve Long, Tyler Arbach, Sid Geigle, Brady Gaer, Tory Smith, Dan Lettau, Mark Bruning, and Les Job

COVE HEAT SALE

Oahe Electric is offering great deals on our remaining Cove Heat inventory!
Call 1.800.640.6243 today to learn more!

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.

Break Dirt Without Breaking the Law

As the warmer spring temperatures cause the ground to thaw, contractors and homeowners alike are likely to begin on projects that require some sort of digging.

By law, anyone who is digging in South Dakota needs to call 811 and have a locate ticket in their hand before moving any ground. If you're not the one that's digging and you've hired a landscaper to do the work instead, that landscaper should have a ticket in their name.

When someone calls 811, the call goes through a center in Dallas, Texas. That call center then notifies utilities in the area, according to South Dakota 811 Executive Director Codi Gregg.

An excavator or digger has to allow 48 hours for the utilities in the area they plan to dig into to come on site and mark the location of those underground utilities. On average, there are five to eight utilities notified per call.

If there's a potential loss of life or property, the allowed response time is shortened to a maximum of two hours during normal business hours.

"When the ticket goes in, the excavator is given a list of the utilities that are involved or are working or that are in that area where they're working," Gregg explained.

Those companies that own the utilities will make marks that identify the location. Those flags are also color coded according to the type of utility. As more and more overhead electrical lines are converted to underground lines, it's imperative that anyone who plans on doing a project that requires digging call 8-1-1 to avoid a dangerous and deadly situation.

"It's a free phone call for the excavator to make. There's no real reason for them not to make the phone call other than not being aware of it," Gregg said.

Kristie Fiegen, South Dakota Public Utilities Commission Chairwoman, echoed Gregg's comments, stating that making the call to 811 is the "most important and easiest call anyone can make before starting a digging project."

"This simple and imperative effort will help to prevent damages to vital underground utilities and safeguard critical services that our residents and economy depend on," Fiegen said. "During the 2024 construction season, I urge everyone to call 811 before you dig and protect all South Dakotans by abiding by our state laws and making safety our highest priority."

- Last year, there were 176,984 notices to the 811 Center of work occurring.
- South Dakota's 811 laws were established in 1993.
- In 2017, South Dakota 811 added damage reporting to our laws, stating if there was a damage, disturbance, or a dislocation of a utility – 811 was to be contacted to report the damage. It was also added that 911 was to be contacted first if there was a leak.
- Free accounts are offered upon request, allowing account holders to enter locate tickets themselves without calling an agent.
- A total of 1,944 utilities were reportedly damaged in 2023. Of that total, 375 excavators did not have a previous ticket.
- According to Common Ground Alliance's Damage Information Reporting Tool (DIRT) Report, the annual rate of damages to buried infrastructure costs the U.S. a staggering \$30 billion every year and 60% of nationwide damages to underground utilities are caused specifically by professional contractors not contacting 811 prior to digging.



Don't Fly Drones Near Power Lines

Lyndon Kaski, Age 8

Lyndon Kaski warns readers to stay away from power lines when flying drones. Great advice! Lyndon's parents are Jonathan and Amanda Kaski, members of Kingsbury Electric Cooperative.

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.

SALSA SAVORY

FRESH SALSA

Ingredients:

4-6 med. to large tomatoes, seeded and chopped
 1 med. onion, chopped
 4 fresh jalapenos, seeded and finely chopped*
 1 clove garlic, crushed
 1 tbsp. dried parsley or fresh cilantro to taste
 1 tsp. salt

Method

*To prevent jalapenos from burning your fingers, lightly rub fingers with shortening, especially around fingernails.
 Serve with tortilla chips.

Linda Hubbard
 Rapid City, S.D.

LUANN'S FRESH SALSA

Ingredients:

4 med. tomatoes, peeled and chopped
 1/4 cup finely chopped onion
 1/4 cup finely chopped green pepper
 1-2 tbsps. jalapeno or other hot pepper, seeded and finely chopped
 1 tsp. salt
 pepper to taste
 1 tbsp. lime juice or red wine vinegar
 1-2 tps. catsup
 dash garlic powder
 dash cayenne pepper
 1-2 tps. sugar
 cilantro (optional)

Method

Mix all ingredients. Serve with any tortilla or corn chips for dipping. Will keep approximately 1 week in the refrigerator.

Nancy Stenson
 Fort Pierre, S.D.

TAMARIND PASILLA MANGO PINEAPPLE SALSA

Ingredients:

1 1/4 cups diced fresh pineapple
 1 large mango, pitted and diced (about 1 1/4 cup)
 1 small red onion, diced
 1 small red bell pepper, diced
 1/4 cup finely chopped fresh cilantro
 1 med. jalapeño pepper, seeded and finely chopped
 2 cloves fresh garlic, minced
 3 tbsps. fresh lime juice
 1 tbsp. honey
 4 1/2 teaspoons Tamarind Naturally Flavored & Pasilla Chile Seasoning

Method

Mix all ingredients in medium bowl. Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes before serving. Stir before serving. Serve with tortilla chips or use to top tacos or nachos.

McCormick

Please send your favorite recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2024. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

We Need Your Help

Oahe Electric's Outstanding Capital Credit Checks

Please notify Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc., in Blunt, SD at 1-800-640-6243 if your name is on this list and you did not receive or have misplaced your check. If you know someone on this list, or their personal representative, please have them contact Oahe Electric. This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Please refer to SDCL 47-16-54 through SDCL 47-16-57 for unclaimed capital credit forfeiture procedures.

Ackert, Carmen and Scott	Campbell, Steven and Amanda Sarvis-Campbell	Eller, Gloria Estate	Hire-A-Husband Inc
Agneau, Winston	Carlton, Michael	Elton Eller Inc	Hoerner, Paul and Brandi
Amsden, John	Carr, Josh and Jessica	Encalada, Madeline and Jaime	Howard, James and Jean Estates
Anderson, John and Meghan	Carpenter, James M	Erickson, Albert Estate	C/O Sue Cichos
Archer, Sheron Estate	Cass, L R And Garnett C/O Larry Cass	Erickson, Larry Estate	Huber, Kim Estate
Arzate, Colista	Celerity Broadband LLC	Evans, Ernest R And Genevieve M	Hughes, Douglas Q
Asbury, William C. Estate	Christopherson, David	Farm And Ranch Solutions C/O Lucas Solberg	Hughes County Cow/Spring Creek Sanitary System
Ashley, Mary	Clark, Howard D. Estate C/O Dale Clark	Fauth, Terry and Sherri	Integrated Tower Networks Inc C/O Dan Korus
At The Straight, Derek	Clark, Zack	Fawcett, Jeremiah and Jessica Tyler	ITT Corporation
Autumn Enterprises Inc C/O Marty Vandeneysel	Clinch, Michael J	Fernandez, David	Iversen, Heather and Francis
Baade Darrell Estate, and Janet	Comer, Dalton	Flying "A" Ranch C/O Lowell C Hansen II	Jacobs, Valerie G
Ball, Russ	Comstock, Jersome Estate	Franke Harvesting C/O Charlie Franke	Jaeger, Raymond L And Kim M
Barnes Baucom, Gerry	Cone, Richard and Janet	Frost, Jeremy and Sherry	Jes Farms
Beastrom, James and Jon	Connecticut Mutual Life Insurance Co.	Galinat, Larry and Nancy	Joachim, Roger Estate
Beck, Russell F. and Betty L. Estates	Connell, Craig A and Kathy J	Garrett, Carl Estate	Johnson, Dave and Connie
Bennett, Merlin O and Susan	Connell, Evan and Sarah Trebesch	Garrett, Ronald J	Jones, Charles H And Michele M
Berry, Mavis L	Cowan, Chad and Jessica	Gavin, Stacey	Jones, Nathan and Marva
Big Bend Development C/O Loren (Rocky) Fallis	Crist, Bruce K Estate	Geffre, Richard	Jones, Trevor and Wendy
Binkley, Richard Estate and Esther	Crosby, Ashley	Gibson, Michael A and Vasthi	Jorgensen Pork Inc C/O Kenneth Bourk
Bishop, Thomas C	Crow Creek Sioux Tribe C/O Lester Thompson	Gingrich, Zach	Jutila, Vernon A and Annetta L
Black Hills Federal Credit Union	Crow Creek Tribal School	Gohl, Derek and Rebecca	Kelley Family Inc
Boehmer, Robert	Cressy, Christopher	Goodman, Alvin	Kempf Construction Inc and Micah Kempf
Bonn, Clark	Curry, Monte and Kitty L C/O Kathy Sarver	Goosen-Goertz, Bonnie J	Kennison, Darrell L and Merilee
Boyd, Shane Estate	Dacotah Farms C/O Wallace Wells	Graf, Karl L And Glen E	Kenyon, Casey and Christina
Boyles, Charles A Estate	Dakota Feeding Company LLC	Grant, Ryan	Kessler, Bruce V and Kami Marts
Boys & Girls Club of Three Districts C/O Ronda Hawk	Darrington, Dennis H and Donna	Hahn, Brian	Kessler, Robert J
Bramblee, Tyson and Jaymason	Davis, Dan D	Hall, Cody and Jacque	Killingsworth, Earl E and Debbie
Breitag, Day	Dean, Terry	Hall, Halona M Estate	King, Thomas
Brewer, Robert W	Dennis, Paul Estate	Hall, Tyrel	Klein, Mathias and Kate
Broer, Wesley A. and Sara S.	Deyonge, William	Halligan, James	Kleinschmidt, Gwen
Brookings, James E Sr Estate C/O Will Harrell	Dilges, Jason C. and Meghan N.	Halls, Steven and Deidre Molitor	Krebs, Gary Estate
Buchholz, Michael and Kristin	Dm&E Railroad Corporation	Handcock, Ben and Patsy	Krull Lodge LLC
Buchholz, Peter J. Estate	Downes, Kevin	Hansen, David K and Fencing & Earthmoving	Kuhl, Jack and Sue
Bump, Vernon L. Estate C/O Craig Bump	Drummond, Elijah and Crystal	Hapney, Susan	Kuipers, Brad and Mandy
Bunn, Carey	Duneman, Crystal M	Harrowa, John Jr and Tina	Lambie, Darrell Estate
Burgher, Chandra and Bret	Ebert, Lucille	Hartl, Monte R and Dawn	Larson, Donley W Estate and Elizabeth Estate
Burke & Associates	Edwards, Charles and Marilyn	Harvey, Shane and Sharon	Larson, James M and M K
Butzman, Norman and Carol	Eich, Frank	Herald, Joddie	Larson, Joshua J and Jami L
		Hill, Lamont D Estate C/O Jody Hill	Leach, Robert W and Diann L

Capital Credits, Continued

Lebeau, Michael	Moore, Michael R C/O Deann Nystrom	Richardson, Stephen and Natalie	Steffen Brothers Inc C/O Dave Steffen
Lee Real Estate	Morgan, David F	Riedel, Duane	Stewart Farms C/O Van Stewart
Left Hand Bull, Ethel Estate	Morgan, Vicki H	Riley, Curtis	Stickney, Robert W
Lewis, Laura A	Morris, Tobin J and Jamie	Ripley, Mark and Joan C	Stiles, Diane
Libby, Patrick	Muntefering, Chad and Keri	Rivenes, Marvin G Estate	Stoeser, Heath and Kim
Lindbloom, Andrew and Rebekeh	Murphy, John B	Rivenes, Vicki/Ron's Welding and Machine	Stoner, Leo Estate and Mary A
Lineburg, Joane	Musick, Roy Estate	Robinson, Bill	Storms, Linus Estate
Lovell, Blanche Estate	Nameniuk, Daniel and Shelly	Robinson, Gain Estate C/O Ivan Venner	Sturm, Brad W
Lucero, Isaac and Keely Vincent	Naughton, David	Roddewig & Son C/O CJ or Curtis Roddewig	Sullivan, Matthew and Bobbie A
Ludemann, Shane and Jessica	Nauman, Patti	Rohlf, John and Ann	Sunset Lodge C/O Larry Paulsen
Lutzka, Ruby Estate	New Era Company	Roman, Mike and Angela	Tangle Tree Lodge C/O Tyler Krober
M&T Bank	Newling, Benjamin and Skye Sharkey	Roth, Lonnie	Tays, Matthew J
Macleod, Barry	Nolte Construction and Steve Nolte	Roth, Lonnie and Cindy	Thomas, Harry and Kay
Maher, Thomas P	Nolz, Francis and Valerie	Roth, Loui Estate and Leann Way	Telford, Loretta J Estate
Mahowald, Doug	Nordstrom, Eric	Schroer, June Estate and James Schroer	Thompson, Barry
Mallo, Richard L and Denise K	Nordvold, Kelcey and Whitney	Russell, Shannon Estate	Todd, Anton Estate C/O Grace Todd
Mann, Sterling A and Desiree R	NPP LLC	Sand Livestock Assoc 1986-1 and Chuck Sand Estate	Tveit, Thomas and Mary
Mannie, Delare A. Estate C/O Matt or Kim Mannie	Oahe Plains System Corp	Schipper, Lloyd and Jeannette	Van Houten, Roger and Jeannie
Manz, Paul and Margaret	O'day, Amber	Schmidt, Clifford and Gloria	Vance, Randy
Manz, Robert P Estate	O'day, Jerry Estate	Schmitgen, Eugina Estate C/O Margaret Pope	Venner, Ivan G
Marsh, Kevin L	Oday, Norma Estate	Schmitz, Marc and Amy	Vermundson, Dale and Barbara
Marsh, William and Jamie	Oliva, Steve	Schroeder, Scott	Volker, Randy and Nancy
Martell, Dan and Becky	Olson, Amber	Schroyer, Gerald Estate and Artalee Estate C/O John Schroyer	Votava, Jeanie
Martin, Sam	Olson, Charles J	Schultz, Clark A	W W Bunk Gerlach Estate C/O Mary Alleman
Mathews, Carl	Olson, Christopher E and Heidi Arithson-Olson	Schumacher, Ervin and Gertrude	Warnick, Christine M
Mccarty, Christopher	Olson, Merrill A and Karen K	Seals, Rodney	Wegner, Margaret
Mccrea, Don A and Vicki	Organa Corp C/O Patrick Miller	Segrud, Kevin L	Weinheimer, Kenneth
Mcgraw, Hugh T	Osterkamp, Jan N	Shultz, Eleanor Estate	Weinheimer Farms Inc C/O Ken Weinheimer
Mcknight, Stanley and Royal A Estate	Park Apts - Agar C/O Wen-Mar Management	Shuman, Dane A and Kellie D C/O Susie Covolik	Weinheimer Inc C/O Ken Weinheimer
Mehrer, David and Jean	Parks, Phillip	Siefken, Earl E Jr and Catherine B	Weller, Richard F and Derrolynn D
Merrill, Keith B Estate	Paulsen, Brad	Simons, Virgil Estate C/O Karen Simons	Weller, Slade
Meyer, Steven J	Pease, Michael D Estate	Slama, Randy and Dawn	Welsh, James T
Middleton, Bradley J	Peterson, Jean	Smith, Alex Estate	West, Lowell D and Catherine Estates
Midwest Feeders Inc	Pierre Concrete C/O Don Christiansen	Smith Land Trust C/O Connie Mikkelsen	Whiskey River Outpost
Millar, James C	Pollman, Lance	Smith Plumbing and Daniel Smith	White Mountain, Hoksila and Memorie Traversie
Millard, Alvin D Estate	Preiser, Sheila	Smith, Richard N	Wiebe Farms
Miller, Allen D and Xu Zou Chen	Quasney, Mark and Laura	Snyder, Troy and Sarah	Wilcox, Karen Estate
Miller, Duane R	Quick, Christopher	Sodak Homes and Richard Geffre	Winegeart, Weston and Eryn
Miller, Gail Estate	Quincy Johnston Inc. C/O Brian or Holly Johnston	Sommer, Sue Estate	Winslett, Jack
Miller, Gail V and Delores Estates	Ramsdell, Daniel	Spring Creek Resort Inc C/O Marlene Brakss	Wolter, Betty
Miller, John E	Rapp, Nicole	St John, Odell Sr	Young, Ron L
Miller Mathews Partnership	Red Creek Farms C/O Dean Newman	Stanley, Mike and Kayla	Zackery, Kandi M and Cory Burtman
Minder Huse, Glenda	Richardson, Charles Jr. and Allison		Zebroski, John C Estate and Madeline
Mitchell, Bob and Emily Townsend Hill			Zebroski, Ronnie
Moncrief, Ken Estate			



Elliot and Janaye Rayman at their second annual Barefoot Fitness Memorial Day fundraiser.

One Lineman's After-hours Outreach

Frank Turner

frank.turner@sdrea.coop

Across the state, linemen are charged with keeping South Dakota's power going. It's a big responsibility: troubleshooting electrical systems, operating heavy equipment, and maintaining power lines. These workers are frequently asked to navigate high voltage and confront dangerous challenges in all kinds of extreme weather. In the face of these challenges, it takes a truly community-minded individual to ensure the community's lights stay on. Many of these crucial workers demonstrate their commitment to their community daily, both during and outside of work hours.

Butte Electric Journeyman Lineman Elliot Rayman, who has been with the cooperative for seven years, serves as just one example of an electric cooperative employee who has pulled extra hours for his local community of Spearfish, S.D. In addition to his role as a lineman, Elliot wears many hats in his community beyond just the hard hat of a co-op employee. He is a veteran of the National Guard, having served a deployment overseas. Elliot and his wife, Janaye, are also deeply involved in their community as the owners of Barefoot Fitness, a gym in the Spearfish community. Janaye, a cancer survivor, operates the gym and is an integral part of their community efforts.

Janaye and Elliot purchased Barefoot Fitness in 2018, fulfilling Janaye's long-standing dream of owning a gym. Shortly after their purchase, the couple learned that Janaye's cancer, previously in remission, had metastasized into Stage 4 breast cancer.

"In 2020, I had reoccurrence everywhere – brain, lungs, liver, bones," said Janaye. "Since then, I have been on a mission every day to heal and recover. It's also been my goal to help others every single day, day in and day out, and that's

what keeps me going. That's my job and it's what I love to do, so I'm not stopping."

"My wife is an inspiration to many people," added Elliot. "She is the strongest person I know."

Undeterred, Elliot and Janaye decided to press on and use their gym as a platform to engage with their local community. Despite Janaye's ongoing battle with breast cancer, the two started a new Barefoot Fitness tradition – an annual Memorial Day fundraiser to benefit South Dakota's gold star families, the families of fallen soldiers.

"After a few years of owning the gym, we decided we needed to give back to the community, because the community had really been there for us through everything," said Elliot. "We knew we had the ability and the platform to give back to the community through Barefoot Fitness, so we settled on a Memorial Day fundraiser that would benefit gold star families in our state."

This May, Elliot and Janaye will host their fourth Barefoot Fitness Memorial Day fundraiser. Like previous years, the event will feature local catering from Spearfish businesses, such as Spearfish Brewing Company and Timmons Market. The event will also include an optional community workout for all ages.

"We kick off our day with the National Guard leading the pledge of allegiance and national anthem," said Janaye. "We do a prayer, and then we do our Memorial Day workout. It's a team workout that people are encouraged to complete with their family or friends."

According to Janaye and Elliot, the team workout is about more than just breaking a sweat. Instead, it's about remembering those who gave their lives for this country.

"You always hear about people doing things for veterans, but you never hear about the story on the other side of

that – the families," Janaye said. "A lot of times the family is forgotten so we really want to honor the families that also made a sacrifice."

At the end of the day, Elliot and Janaye said none of their efforts would be possible without the support they have received from the Spearfish community, the veteran community,

and the electric cooperative community.

"Butte Electric and the co-op world have helped us out so much," said Elliot. "The culture of the co-op community is huge: there is brotherhood – it's the way people help each other out. You just can't ask for a better group of people, and that's the same way with the veteran world."



Janaye and Elliot lead a community workout session, challenging participants to complete 300 weighted ball throws.

Estate Planning is for Everyone



Valerie Marso
Chief Financial
Officer

Estate planning is often thought of as a tool for the wealthy. But that isn't the case at all. In fact, estate planning is a tool that everyone can and should use. It makes it easier to determine your wishes before and after death as well as a useful way for you to deal with your assets and liabilities before and after you die.

Estate planning is also a great way for you to lay out plans for the care of your minor children and pets, and to outline your wishes for your funeral and favorite charities. But don't confuse writing a will with estate planning. A will is just one of the steps you'll need to take in the estate planning process. While you're at it, make sure you appoint a responsible personal representative and review your accounts on a regular basis to ensure you're getting the most bang for your buck.

Estate planning involves determining how your assets that you have worked your entire life for will be preserved, managed, and distributed after death. It also considers the management of an individual's properties and financial obligations if they become incapacitated. Contrary to what most people believe, this isn't a tool meant just for the ultra-wealthy. Everyone should consider estate planning.

We've all heard horror stories or maybe even been through them personally. Someone dies and the war between family members begins over money. One person may think they deserve more than another, or one person may think they should be in charge of the finances even though they're notorious for racking up debt. Such squabbling can get ugly and end up in court, pit family members against one another and/or result in family division.

Stopping fights before they start is yet another reason why an estate plan is necessary. This will enable you to choose who controls your finances and assets if you become mentally incapacitated or after you die and will go a long way toward alleviating family strife and ensuring that your assets are handled in the way that you intended. No guesswork involved!

Deciding how to divide your estate is one of the key tasks you need to think through. And, of course, if you've had more than one spouse – or have children from more than one family – an estate plan is urgent.

The most basic step in estate planning involves writing a will. A will is a legal document that provides instructions on how an individual's property and custody of minor children (if any) should be handled after death. The individual expresses their wishes and names a trustee that they have faith will fulfill their stated intentions.

The authenticity of a will is determined through a legal process known as probate. Probate is the first step taken in administering the estate of a deceased person and distributing assets to the beneficiaries. When an individual dies, the custodian of the will must take the will to the probate court or to the personal representative named in the will.

The probate process is a court-supervised procedure in which the authenticity of the will left behind is proved to be valid and accepted as the true last testament of the deceased. The court officially appoints the personal representative named in the will, which, in turn, gives them the legal power to act on behalf of the deceased.

Other estate planning tasks include the following:

- Limiting estate taxes by setting up trust accounts in the names of beneficiaries
- Establishing a guardian for living dependents
- Naming a personal representative of the estate to oversee the terms of the will
- Creating or updating beneficiaries on plans such as life insurance, IRAs, and 401(k)s
- Setting up funeral arrangements
- Establishing gifting to qualified charitable and non-profit organizations to reduce the taxable estate
- Setting up a durable power of attorney (POA) to direct other assets

The bottom line is, if you want your assets and your loved ones protected, you need an estate plan to keep things orderly. Without one, your heirs could face big tax burdens and the courts could

Estate Planning is for Everyone, Continued

designate how your assets are divided (settle family fights) and even who gets to raise your children. Protect your family and your legacy – get your estate planned. We put off estate planning for any number of reasons – we're young, we don't think we have enough money to mess with, it means we have to think about death, we don't want to hire a lawyer – all valid points but the truth is, you can't afford to wait.

So you may be wondering “what does this have to do with your local electric cooperative and why is this lady trying to help me plan for my future?” I am so glad you asked!!

The simple answer? Since you are a cooperative member, you have capital credits. When you perish, we must know what needs to be done with them. Who is entitled to receive these funds? Where do they need to be sent? Cooperative capital credits are assets that are subject to probate – now it makes sense, right? On average, we have 15-20 estate situations per year that we assist with the payout of Oahe Electric capital credits and each situation is a little different.

We have two options that accommodate most every situation as possible.

Oahe Electric's capital credit payout schedule is approximately equivalent to 20 years. In the case of an estate (natural person only – businesses do not have estates), you have two options. You can petition the board for a lump sum cash payment. If you choose this option, you forfeit a portion of your capital credits due to them being paid all at once vs over the course of 20 years. Reason being, a dollar today is not worth the same as it will be in 20 years. However, you do not have to take the lump sum. Your capital credits can be paid out over the 20 years (or however many years are left before your amount is zero), to your heir(s) without any discount.

Start your estate planning today so your story has a great outcome! And as always, please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions about capital credits or anything else.

Primary vs Secondary Lines

Oahe Electric is a member of South Dakota One Call, a communication link among utilities, contractors, and private individuals who work with or around underground lines or pipes. If you plan to dig a hole or trench more than a foot deep on your property, you must phone South Dakota One Call (811) at least 72 hours before you plan to excavate. They have up-to-date records on electric, gas, phone and other utilities. They can help you avoid loss of service by accidentally severing one of these lines or pipes. Your call may also avert a possible serious incident.

When requesting an underground locate, please be aware of the difference between primary and secondary lines.

Primary lines are the lines owned and maintained by Oahe Electric that lead up to your meter. These lines are located for free and maintained at the cost of the cooperative. These lines are located by calling 811.

Secondary lines are lines after the meter that lead up to your home, shed, barn, wells, etc. The member owns these lines, and these lines are located and repaired at the cost of the member. In order to locate secondary lines, a member will need to hire an electrician. Oahe Electric does not have the equipment to locate these lines.

Employees Receive CPR and AED Training

In February, Oahe Electric employees were certified in CPR, First Aid and AED use. This training is an OSHA requirement and something that Oahe Electric provides every year so that all employees are up to date on these life saving techniques!

This is also a good opportunity for Oahe Electric to remind the community of Blunt and the surrounding area that there is an AED in our social room that is available during business hours (Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.) for any resident that may have need of it.





SDHP Trooper Megan Koch stands by her patrol vehicle. Koch works within the state's Motor Carrier Division. *Photo Credit: Shannon Marvel*

COMMERCIAL MOTOR VEHICLES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Shannon Marvel

shannon.marvel@sdrea.coop

When commercial motor vehicles come into the state of South Dakota, it's the job of the South Dakota Highway Patrol's Motor Carrier Division to ensure the drivers of those vehicles have the necessary paperwork, permits and documents.

The task is one of public safety.

Making sure the carriers are adhering to safe driving practices is just another way to ensure that everyone is as safe as they can be while driving on the state's roadways.

South Dakota Highway Patrol

Trooper Megan Koch is one of the officers who works within the motor carrier division.

"Our main focus is making sure the motor carriers or trucks are safe on the roadways and keeping everybody else safe. It helps them perform their job of carrying their property or passengers across the state lines and within the state. We help make sure that they can do that job," Koch explained.

Mainly, Koch works specifically with commercial motor vehicles that carry over a certain weight or property of monetary value within the state or interstate.

"When we do an inspection on a driver, we're checking a bunch of different things. Weight sometimes is one of them, but not always. It just depends on the situation," Koch said.

"They have to have certain paperwork with them and they are required to follow certain rules. It depends on what they're doing."

The dependent variables include whether a carrier is traveling with goods within the state or going out of the state and how far away they are from the hub, or where they leave every day or go home to every day.

Koch also checks their paperwork to ensure the drivers are within compliance of state law.

"They have to follow certain hours that they can work so that they don't get tired while driving. It's a big thing that we follow for safety," Koch said.

"We also check things like

equipment violations, headlights, taillights, tires, you know, stuff that makes them safe on the roadway and keeps them safe. We'll also check for things such as bad driving behavior, if they're not staying within their own lane, using blinkers, not properly stopping at stop sign – stuff like that. So, if we see something like that, we can initiate an inspection."

Koch, a Plankinton native whose father was a truck driver, said the division is typically checking brake lines and lights.

In South Dakota, there are four main ports of entry. The ports are located along Interstate 29 in Jefferson and Sisseton, and along Interstate 90 in Sioux Falls and Tilford.

Each carrier is issued a "safety score," which is assessed by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

"That's based on whether or not they have the proper paperwork, if they're driving within their hours, if they have the proper equipment and whether or not they've received any driving or alcohol violations," Koch said.

If a driver has a high enough safety score, they aren't required by law to stop at a port for inspection.

Overall, it all comes down to keeping the roadways safe for everyone, regardless of what type of vehicle they are driving.

"These rules and laws are in place for a reason. They have to be extra alert and awake while they're driving and that all of their equipment works properly. If you're driving a very heavy, large vehicle, you need excellent brakes. You have to be able to stop in time. That is the main reason we're checking all these things. It helps everybody on the road."

The division also works

with rural electric cooperatives when oversized loads travel along the state's highway system, according to Lieutenant Austin Schmitz, District Four Assistant Commander with the South Dakota Highway Patrol.

Sometimes oversized loads require that overhead power lines be moved out of the way to let the carrier pass through.

"As a district we do work with a lot of the cooperatives such as East River Electric. We all get together when planning for oversized loads coming through our area," Schmitz said.

"They usually run the route first and let us know what lines they need to move."

That was the case when a massive generator was moved across the state. The generator was so heavy and huge that the truck carrying it could only travel 30 miles per hour. That truck was also equipped with over a hundred tires, Schmitz said.

"That generator came through Watertown a couple of years ago and we've got some more coming in two or

three years," Schmitz said, referring to the multi-million pound machines.

"The planning for those started last year. That equipment will be coming in through the Great Lakes on a ship. They'll pick them up there and then they'll move through our state then Wyoming, Montana, however they can go," Schmitz said.

The truck carrying the heavy equipment is too big to go across most bridges and overpasses, so finding a route that allows the machinery to snake across the country is tricky.

While moving huge pieces of machinery can be one of the more interesting parts of the job, it's the flexibility of the job that Koch enjoys most.

"I get to pick and choose where I want to go for the day. I get to do something a little bit different every day. Because, I mean, nothing is ever the same," Koch said.

"It's kind of nice to be able to do that and make the day what you want of it."



A SDHP officer has the latest technology at his or her fingertips to ensure trucks on South Dakota roads are operating safely. *Photo Credit: South Dakota Highway Patrol*

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

A well-designed landscape can add beauty to your home and reduce home heating and cooling costs. Plant deciduous trees with high, spreading crowns to the south of your home to block sunlight in the summer and reduce the need for air conditioning. Deciduous trees lose their leaves in the winter, allowing sunlight to warm your home.

Plant evergreen trees and shrubs with low crowns to block winter winds. Dense evergreen trees and shrubs planted to the north and northwest are the most common type of windbreak and can help lower energy used for home heating.

Source: energy.gov



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.
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.
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Home/Garden

Slumberland Furniture	605-945-1997	Pierre	\$100 off a single item of \$599.99 or more. Some exclusions apply. See store for details.
Lee Real Estate	605-222-6003	Perre	Receive a FREE Comparable Market Analysis for real estate properties, which gives members current market values for home, land and commercial properties.

Services

Inman's Water Technologies	605-224-5111	Pierre	Receive a 10% 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.
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Retail

Fastenal	605-224-4060	Pierre	10% off of fasteners and 5% off on all other products
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Small Change Can Make a BIG Difference

What is Operation Round Up?

Operation Round Up® is just what the name implies: each month, Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc. simply “rounds up” the electric bills of voluntarily participating members to the next highest dollar. For example, a member’s monthly bill of \$132.68 would automatically be rounded up to \$133, with the additional 32 cents going to the Operation Round Up Fund.

How do I participate?

Oahe Electric’s Operation Round Up® program is an opt-out program – meaning that you are automatically enrolled, with nothing else needing done to participate! If you have not interested in donating, you can call the office at 1-800-640-6243 and request to be removed from the program.

How much will it cost members?

The most a member can contribute is 99 cents per month x 12 months = \$11.88/year – this doesn’t sound like much, but with this small change, thousands of dollars can be generated and will mean a big difference to the people and organizations in our area.

Where will the money go?

All Operation Round Up® donations are placed in a trust and are administered by an independent Board of Trustees. The board is made up of community leaders who serve on a voluntary basis. The board evaluates all requests for funds, determines who will receive funding and how all Operation Round Up® funds will be distributed.

Who is eligible for funds?

The funds are used to address charitable community needs, whether it is disaster relief for an individual, or an organization funding a special project. Since the program’s first disbursement in 2009, the program has distributed over \$108,000. The region served by the fund is primarily the electrical area served by Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc., including Hughes and Sully counties.

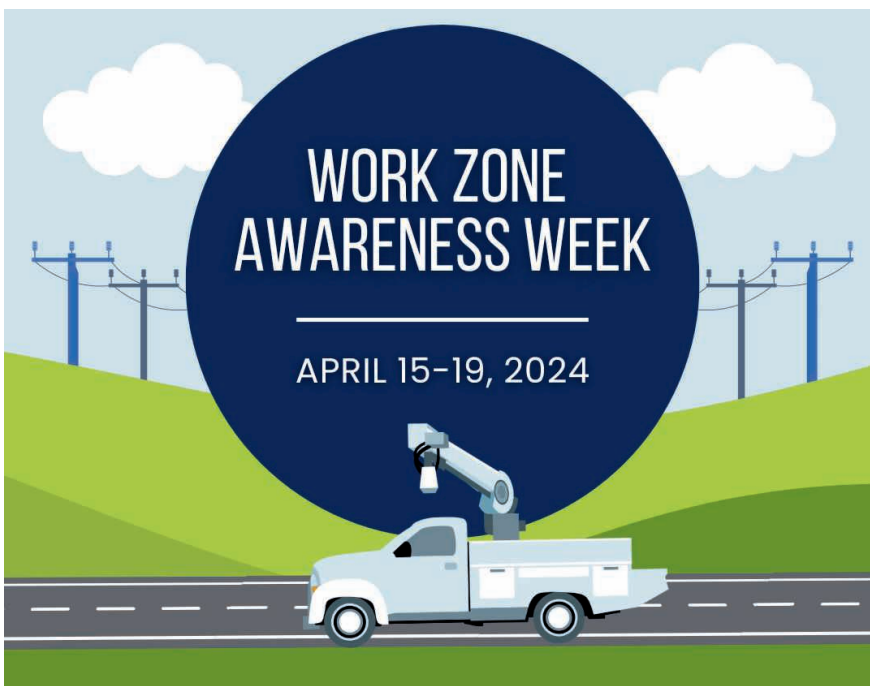
How do I apply for funds?

The easy-to-complete applications for funding are currently available and can be requested by phone at 605-962-6243. Applications can also be found on our website at www.oaheelectric.com. All applications are due by **April 30, 2024**. Completed applications may be mailed to: Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc., P.O. Box 216, Blunt, SD 57522, faxed to: 605-962-6306, or emailed to: oahe@oaheelectric.com. After the deadline, the Board of Trustees will meet and allocate the funds to those they feel are in the most need.

How do I get involved?

There are currently two, five-year Board of Trustees position openings. Trustees normally have to commit one afternoon a year to review fund request applications in person, with the possibility of correspondence regarding emergency fund requests throughout the year. If you are interested in offering your time to this endeavor, please contact Samantha Irvine, Operation Round Up Coordinator, at 1.800.640.6243 or oahe@oaheelectric.com.

Together, by giving a few cents each month, Oahe Electric members can make a big impact on life in our area!





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.

MARCH 30
BHEC Community Easter Egg Hunt
 10 a.m.
 Hermosa Baseball Fields
 Hermosa, SD

MARCH 31
Easter Sunday Sunrise Celebration
 7 a.m.
 Mount Rushmore National Monument
 Keystone, SD

APRIL 2
Clay-Union Electric Ribbon Cutting & Open House
 3 p.m. - 6:15 p.m.
 31321 SD Hwy. 19
 Vermillion, SD

APRIL 5
A Night at the Races fundraiser for Safe Place of Eastern SD
 6:30 p.m.
 Highland Conference Center
 Mitchell, SD

APRIL 5-7
71st Annual Hayes Play: Under a Cowboy Moon
 7 p.m.
 Hayes Community Hall
 Hayes, SD

APRIL 12-14
The Farmer's Daughter 19th Anniversary Celebration
 Hill City, SD

APRIL 13
Front Porch 605 Shop Hop
 9 a.m.
 Groton, SD

APRIL 14
Hill City Senior Sunday Breakfast
 8 a.m.
 Hill City Center
 Hill City, SD

APRIL 20
Healthy Kids Day
 10 a.m.
 Liberty Center YMCA
 Box Elder, SD

APRIL 20
Groton Firemen's Spring Social
 7 p.m.
 Groton Fire Station
 Groton, SD

APRIL 21
Fiddle & Popular Song
 2 p.m.
 Gayville Hall
 Gayville, SD

APRIL 26
Mitchell Technical College Alumni Cornhole Tournament
 6:30 p.m.
 World's Only Corn Palace
 Mitchell, SD

APRIL 27
66th Annual Lions Pancake Jamboree
 7 a.m.
 Masonic Hall
 Mitchell, SD

APRIL 27
Spaghetti Feed & Silent Auction for Black Hills Raptor Center
 4:30 p.m.
 Canyon Lake United Methodist Church
 Rapid City, SD

MAY 5
Opening Day
 Historic Prairie Village
 Madison, SD

MAY 11
Opening Day
 1880 Train
 Hill City, SD

MAY 18
Booth Day
 10 a.m.
 D.C. Booth Fish Hatchery
 Spearfish, SD

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