



COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Co-ops Power Next Generation

How Co-ops are
Engaging Youth
Pages 8-9

811: Call Before
You Dig
Pages 12-13

Photo by Amanda Haugen

Winners Can Forever Blossom



Jordan Lamb
Chief Executive
Officer

Happy spring to our Oahe Electric members! It has been a busy few months here at Oahe and we look forward to serving both new and existing loads upcoming for year 2025. If you are planning on expanding or building new, please reach out to us as quickly as possible to ensure we continue reliable and affordable electricity to you- our members.

Many people look back to pre and post Covid years and think they have done very well given the circumstances. While I do believe Oahe Electric Cooperative has done well, it is also important to reflect on mistakes we have made or things we have overlooked.

When we originally saw rate implications with upward pressure along with material lead times extending, we amped up our inventory orders and utilized revenue deferral to shield a 6.7% rate increase down to a 2% rate increase. These were great moves to ensure both existing and future members have access

to affordable rates as well as equipment necessary to serve the membership.

One thing we overlooked was equipment lead times on our truck fleet. We are in the process of remediating this issue, but it did set us back several months - or even up to a year- for truck replacements. I never thought it would take over a year to get a replacement truck, which does impact reliability, to our fault.

We do have new trucks on order with arrival of the first tentatively this summer. While this can be a balancing act of budget vs rates, it is imperative we have safe and reliable equipment for our 24/7 crews that work around the clock for our members.

Warren Buffet recently stated - "mistakes fade away- a winner forever blossoms." This holds true for Oahe, and while we may make mistakes, we continue to be driven to serve your current and expanding needs.

Happy Spring to you all and God Bless you all.



Bagging Up Hope

In February, Oahe Electric employees dedicated a day to making a difference, packing bags of frozen food for South Dakotans in need at the Feeding South Dakota facility near Pierre. Together, we packed over 1,300 bags — totaling an incredible 13,000 pounds of food!

Giving back is at the heart of what we do, embodying the Cooperative Principle of Commitment to Community. While we were there, we spoke with their team about the growing need for volunteers. So, we challenge you — can your group beat our 1,306 bags? We'd love to see photos of you making an impact in your community!

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

OAHE ELECTRIC

(USPS No. 019-042)

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605.215.6758

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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.

Appreciation & Celebration: Recognizing Excellence



Valerie Marso
Chief Financial Officer

Appreciation and Celebration: Recognizing Excellence – Valerie Marso

April is a busy month around here - Lineman Appreciation

Day, Administrative Professionals Day, and Oahe Electric's Birthday - and as we celebrate these occasions, we also want to take a moment to express our deepest gratitude to you, our members. It is because of your trust, dedication, involvement and continued support that Oahe has been able to grow and thrive.

Lineman Appreciation Day - April 18

On April 18th, we honor our courageous and dedicated linemen who work tirelessly to keep the lights on and the power flowing to our homes and businesses. Linemen are truly a breed of their own, braving dangerous conditions, working in all kinds of weather and climbing poles to maintain and restore power. Their commitment to keeping us safe and connected deserves recognition year-round. We encourage you to take a moment to #ThankALineman on this day and beyond for their invaluable work.

Administrative Professionals Day - April 23

On April 23rd, we celebrate the heart and soul of our office — our administrative professionals. These

talented individuals are the backbone of our workplace, providing crucial support that keeps everything running smoothly and efficiently. Whether it's managing schedules, organizing events, or handling the behind-the-scenes tasks, our office staff make a difference every day. Let's take time to show our appreciation for their commitment and diligence.

Oahe's Birthday - April 26

Lastly, on April 26th, we celebrate Oahe Electric's 79th Birthday (we invite you to celebrate with us on Friday, April 25). We started with a simple yet powerful vision: to provide reliable and affordable electricity to the communities we serve. It wasn't an easy road at first. We faced challenges, but the commitment of those who believed in our mission kept us going. Thanks to the hard work of our linemen, our office staff, and, of course, our members, we built a foundation that would carry us through the years.

As we enter into this busy month, let's show appreciation for those who go above and beyond. Whether it's honoring a lineman for their courageous work, thanking an administrative professional for their tireless support, or celebrating another year of Oahe's growth, if you appreciate the light turning on when you flip the switch – let someone know!!

Let's continue working together to make the coming years even brighter. Thank you for being a part of the Oahe journey — we couldn't have made it this far without you!

SAVE THE DATE!

Oahe Electric's 79th Birthday Party

Oahe Electric Cooperative will hold its 79th Party on Friday, April 25 at our headquarters in Blunt, S.D. Please join us from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. for lunch and prizes!

Also, be on the lookout for the date of our Member Appreciation Lunch, to be held in Pierre in early May!

Distracted Driving

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Distracted driving is any activity that diverts attention from driving, including talking or texting on your phone, eating and drinking, talking to people in your vehicle, fiddling with the stereo, entertainment or navigation system – anything that takes your attention away from the task of safe driving.

Texting is the most alarming distraction. Sending or reading a text takes your eyes off the road for five seconds. At 55 mph, that's like driving the length of an entire football field with your eyes closed.

You cannot drive safely unless the task of driving has your full attention. Any non-driving activity you engage in is a potential distraction and increases your risk of crashing.

Consequences

Using a cell phone while driving creates enormous potential for deaths and injuries on U.S. roads. In 2022, 3,308 people were killed in motor vehicle crashes involving distracted drivers.

Get Involved

We can all play a part in the fight to save lives by ending distracted driving.

APRIL
Distracted Driving Awareness Month
an **nsc** initiative
National Safety Council

Teens

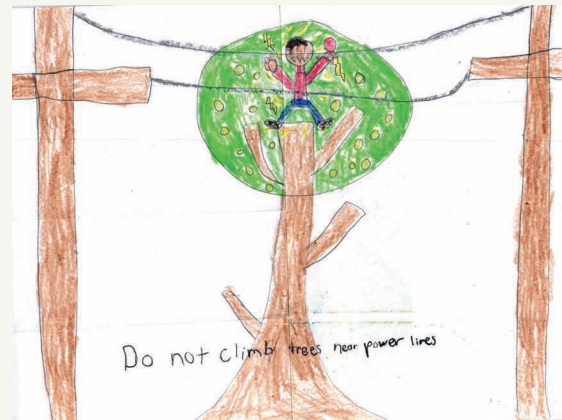
Teens can be the best messengers with their peers, so we encourage them to speak up when they see a friend driving while distracted, to have their friends sign a pledge to never drive distracted, to become involved in their local Students Against Destructive Decisions chapter, and to share messages on social media that remind their friends, family and neighbors not to make the deadly choice to drive distracted.

Parents

Parents first must lead by example – by never driving distracted – as well as have a talk with their young driver about distraction and all of the responsibilities that come with driving. Have everyone in the family sign the pledge to commit to distraction-free driving. Remind your teen driver that in states with graduated driver licensing (GDL), a violation of distracted-driving laws could mean a delayed or suspended license.

Educators and Employers

Educators and employers can play a part, too. Spread the word at your school or workplace about the dangers of distracted driving. Ask your students to commit to distraction-free driving or set a company policy on distracted driving.



“Do not climb trees near power lines.”

Naomi Krcil, Age 7

Naomi cautions readers about the dangers of climbing trees near power lines. Thank you for your picture, Naomi! Naomi's parents are Andrew and Andrea Krcil, members of Charles Mix Electric Association.

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.

Let's Have BRUNCH

EASY BREAKFAST MUFFIN

Ingredients:

2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 cup granulated sugar
2 tsps. baking powder
1/2 tsp. salt
2 eggs (beaten)
1/2 cup vegetable oil
1/2 cup milk

Method

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Line a 12 cup muffin tin with paper liners or spray each cup with cooking spray. In a mixing bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking powder and salt.

Add in eggs, oil and milk and mix only until combined, don't beat or over mix or they will be dry! Fold in 1/2 cup mix-ins if desired.

Scoop into prepared muffin tin and bake for 15 to 18 minutes or just until golden and a toothpick comes clean. Serve with butter and jam.

Lyon-Lincoln Electric Member

UMM BRUNCH

Ingredients:

Scallops
English Muffin
Eggs

Method

Soak scallops in cold water in fridge for two hours, pat dry, sauté in butter and garlic until opaque (approx. 4 min). Put on toasted English muffin. Cook poached eggs in 10-inch skillet with 1 tbsp. vinegar (3-5 mins.) Remove with slotted spoon and drain on paper towel. Add to the scallops and top with Hollandaise Sauce.

Hollandaise Sauce:

Cut 1/2 stick butter into thirds. In double boiler, combine 1 piece of butter and 3 egg yolks, 1 tbsp. lemon juice and 1 tbsp. water. Place it over boiling water and cook while whisking rapidly. Add remaining butter one at a time, continue to cook. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Kari Reder
Northern Electric Member

SAUSAGE AND EGG TACOS

Ingredients:

4 oz. breakfast sausage, casings removed
1 tbsp. perfect pinch roasted garlic bell pepper seasoning
6 eggs
2 tbsps. milk
1 tbsp. butter
6 small flour tortillas, warmed
1/4 cup shredded Mexican cheese blend
1 med. ripe avocado, peeled, pitted and sliced

Method

Heat medium skillet on medium-high heat. Add sausage and Seasoning; cook and stir until sausage is browned and crumbled. Remove sausage from pan; keep warm. Drain fat from pan.

Beat eggs and milk in medium bowl with wire whisk. Melt butter in same skillet on medium heat. Add egg mixture; cook and stir until eggs are firm.

For each taco, place one tortilla on plate. Top with eggs, sausage, cheese and avocado. Sprinkle with additional seasoning, if desired.

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



Lineman Appreciation Day

Mark your calendars — Friday, April 18, is National Lineman Appreciation Day! From hurricanes to ice storms and other extreme weather events, our nation's power lineworkers are always on the front lines, working tirelessly to restore service and keep our communities connected. Their dedication, bravery, and expertise ensure that we have reliable power every day.

At Oahe Electric, we're proud to honor these hardworking men and women who keep the lights on. Join us in celebrating their commitment, innovation and resilience.

Thank a lineman today! #ThankALineman

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.

Interested in Becoming a Lineman?

Have you ever wondered what it takes to be a lineman? Oahe Electric Cooperative has expanded its commitment to community by offering paid 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 incredibly rewarding.

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.



New Face

Please help Oahe Electric welcome new Business Development and Procurement Specialist Austin Hammer!

Austin graduated from South Dakota School of Mines and Technology in 2021 with degrees in metallurgical engineering and business management. Austin was a member of the track and field team while attending college. He is originally from Mission, S.D.

In his free time, Austin enjoys being active by playing golf and basketball. He also enjoys scuba diving in the summer.



Employees Participate in CPR, AED Training

In January, 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, 7:30am-4pm) for any resident that may have need of it.

Operation Round Up Means Small Change Makes 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 are 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¢ 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 Oahe Electric members 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 almost \$150,000. 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, 2025. 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.

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



FROM CELEBRATION TO INSPIRATION

Megawatt welcomes members to the football tailgate party hosted by West River Electric.
Photo by Amanda Haugen

How Electric Co-ops Are Powering the Next Generation

Frank Turner

frank.turner@sdrea.coop

April marks Lineman Appreciation Month, the perfect time to spotlight the essential role that electric cooperative employees play in their communities. In line with their commitment to education and community involvement, electric cooperatives are celebrating lineworkers through youth engagement initiatives, and it all stems from one of the electric cooperatives' seven cooperative principles: concern for community. For years, programs such as Cooperatives in the Classroom have provided schoolchildren with innovative, hands-on learning opportunities, demonstrating the critical work electric cooperatives perform in their communities.

Whether it's engaging youth through a Neon Leon safety demonstration or taking students to explore Basin Electric's energy infrastructure during the SDREA Youth Excursion, electric cooperatives across the state are constantly finding new and exciting ways to engage the youth within their communities and inspire the next generation. Below are two new avenues for spurring youth engagement in cooperatives across the state:

Megawatt Mascot

Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it's Megawatt, Rushmore Electric Power Cooperative's newest lineman mascot. This summer, select electric cooperatives in western South Dakota are suiting up to introduce Megawatt – a friendly-faced lineman adorned with a hard hat, safety gloves and

bright red cape – to their members.

"The goal is to get younger kids to start thinking about linemen in a certain way – almost larger than life and the backbone of the electric cooperative," said Rushmore Electric Chief Marketing Officer Matt Brunner. "The hope is that it translates into them considering the lineman profession when they get older."

Megawatt has already made his debut at several member appreciation events, bringing high-energy fun to parades and tailgates as a true champion of the cooperative spirit. So far, Brunner said the mascot has left a big impression.

"The kids and adults have loved it, and the interactions have been great," Brunner said. "If nothing else, it's unique. People are constantly asking, 'Who is that?' The costume does a great job of starting the conversation: what is a lineman, and what do they do?"

Beyond lineworkers, cooperatives offer a diverse range of career paths.

From engineers to accountants, the cooperative world is full of exciting roles that include opportunities in communications, where professionals share the cooperative's achievements and member services, where employees work directly with the community to meet their needs.

Brunner said he expects the idea to continue gaining momentum over the coming months with new avenues of appreciation for linemen and a better understanding of the day in the life of a lineman, as well as other exciting careers in the electric cooperative industry.

STEM Gains Steam

Jennifer Gross, education and outreach coordinator at East River Electric Power Cooperative, has inspired classrooms for years with a variety of engaging demonstrations, covering everything from science to safety. Last year, Gross introduced a new activity to spark curiosity while incorporating STEM – an approach to education that integrates science, technology, engineering and mathematics into learning. The result led to a crafting activity where kids use simple materials to fashion their own wind turbine.

“We are always trying to come up with new ideas for students,” Gross said. “Incorporating STEM into this project seemed like a natural fit because both teachers and students are very receptive to it.”

The idea is straightforward. Students construct a small-scale turbine from wooden dowels, fins, and a motor capable of generating power. Once completed, they connect their tiny turbine to a multimeter, which measures the energy generated. Instead of relying on natural wind, students use a fan to simulate a windy day. By altering their model turbines, students can find the optimal design for the best output of energy. And just like that, students can step into the role of engineers.



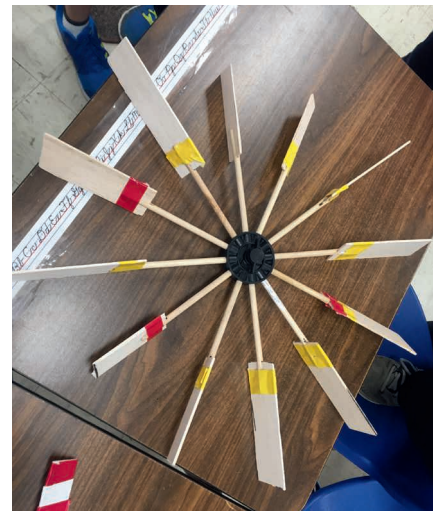
Megawatt is joined by U.S. Air Force personnel enjoying the Annual Base Picnic.
Photo by Amanda Haugen

Gross said the students and the project have a lot in common. Once the building begins, the students' minds begin to whirl – just like a turbine. The activity prompts question after question: Why does the wind blow? How does a wind turbine work? How does the shape and weight of the blade influence the experiment?

“The students enjoy being engineers for this project,” Gross said. “They enjoy having the freedom to choose their materials and design. There's no right or wrong way to do it, and they enjoy that. I mention to the students that careers in wind energy are in high demand and some are 4-year degrees and others are fewer years, but the push for renewable energy sources is growing and our state produces plenty of wind.”

Whether it's through a hands-on activity or an engaging mascot, cooperatives aim to not only educate but inspire, ensuring that today's students can become tomorrow's linemen, engineers, communicators or member service representatives. By

sparkling curiosity and introducing young people to the world of cooperatives early on, they're opening the door to careers that keep communities powered and connected.



This is just one example of how students create wind turbines using materials such as balsa wood, foam, card stock, cardboard and paper cups.
Photo by Jennifer Gross

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc. 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
AGNEAU, WINSTON
ALFREY, COLTON AND ABBIGAIL
ALLEMAN, MARY
AMSDEN, JOHN
ANDERSON, JOHN AND MEGHAN
ANDERSON, SHANE AND JODIE
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BATIZ, LEANN K
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BENNETT, MERLIN O AND SUSAN
BIEBER, BROOKE
BIG BEND DEVELOPMENT C/O LOREN (ROCKY) FALLIS
BIG EAGLE, JAMES
BIG EAGLE, JENNIFER M
BIG EAGLE, WAYNE
BIG EAGLE, THERESA ESTATE
BINGER, BRITTNEY AND TRACY
BINKLEY, RICHARD ESTATE AND ESTHER
BISHOP, THOMAS C
BLUMER, BONNIE
BOLTE, CHAND A AND CONNI A
BONN, CLARK
BOSS HOG FARMS C/O MARK WINKELBAUER
BOWERS, JILL A
BOWERS, KURT J
BOYD, SHANE ESTATE

BOYS & GIRLS CLUB OF THREE DISTRICTS C/O
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BRILEY, MIACHAEL
BROER, MARK AND PATTI C
BROWN, RANDY AND DEANNA LEHRKAMP
BUCHOLZ, MICHAEL AND KRISTIN
BUCHHOLZ, PETER J. ESTATE
BUFFALO, MICHAEL ESTATE
BUMP, VERNON L. ESTATE C/O CRAIG BUMP
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BURKE RE LLC C/O BOB BURKE
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CAMPBELL, STEVEN AND AMANDA SARVIS-CAMPBELL
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GUNN, RON
HAHN, BRIAN
HALL, CODY AND JACQUE
HALL, HALONA M ESTATE
HALL, TYREL
HALLS, BOBBI AND CALVIN RUSSELL
HALLS, STEVEN AND DEIDRE MOLITOR
HANDCOCK, MILTON
HARMON, MICHAEL L AND ASHLEY
HARRELL, WILLIAM
HARRIS, ELIZABETH AND WYATT FRISBY
HARRISON, BEN AND KYRA
HARTFORD, ROBERT H AND SARA K
HARTL, MONTE R AND DAWN
HARVEY, SHANE AND SHARON
HEER, DUANE
HERALD, JODDIE
HILGEMANN, RICK
HILL, LAMONT D ESTATE C/O JODY HILL
HILL, LAMONT D ESTATE C/O KIMBERLY BURGE
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HIRE-A-HUSBAND INC
HOERNER, PAUL AND BRANDI
HOLLINGSWORTH, KYLE AND WREN
HOMAN, TOVA
HOWARD, JAMES AND JEAN ESTATES C/O SUE CICHOS
HUBER, KIM ESTATE
HUGHES, DOUGLAS Q
HUNSLEY, LILLA M
HUTCHISON, GARY
INGRAM, TRAVIS
ITT CORPORATION
JACOBS, VALERIE G
JACOBSON, DONALD D AND GAIL
JOHNSTON, PATRICK R
JONES, CHARLES H AND MICHELE M
JORGENSEN PORK INC C/O KENNETH BOURK
KAMMERER, DONALD ESTATE
KAUP, MARCIA
KEENEY, RONNA
KENNISON, DARRELL L AND MERILEE
KENWORTHY, SHAWN
KENYON, CASEY AND CHRISTINA
KESSLER, BRUCE V AND KAMI MARTS
KESSLER, ROBERT J
KIETZMANN, AARON D
KING, THOMAS
KINSELLA, GUY AND KRISTI
KIRK, DIXIE
KLEIN, MATHIAS AND KATE
KLEINSCHMIDT, GWEN
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 LINDBLOOM, ANDREW AND REBEKEH
 LITTLE BEND RV PARK LLC C/O CLAY A ANDERSON
 LIVINGSTON, MICHAEL G
 LONG CHASE, SHAWN
 LOVELL, BLANCHE ESTATE
 LUCAS, HARLAYNA AND CHRIS JONGEWARD
 LUCERO, ISAAC AND KEELY VINCENT
 LUDEMANN, SHANE AND JESSICA
 LUTZKA, LYLE
 M&T BANK
 MACLEOD, BARRY
 MAGNUSON, JOHN AND JULIE
 MAHNKE, DAVID A
 MAHOWALD, DOUG
 MANNIE, DELARE A. ESTATE C/O MATT OR KIM MANNIE
 MANZ, PAUL AND MARGARET
 MANZ, ROBERT P ESTATE
 MARSH, KEVIN L
 MASSEY, JONNAJ
 MATHEWS, CARL
 MCCARTY, CHRISTOPHER
 MCCREA, DON A AND VICKI
 MCGRAW, HUGH T
 MCKNIGHT, STANLEY AND ROYAL A ESTATE
 MCMAHON, MARTY
 MEAGHER, MAREN
 MERRILL, KEITH B ESTATE
 METZINGER, JANE
 METZINGER, LYNN ESTATE
 MIDDLETON, BRADLEY J
 MIDWEST FEEDERS INC
 MILLARD, ALVIN D ESTATE
 MILLER MATHEWS PARTNERSHIP
 MN WIRELESS LLC C/O STEVE WILLARD OR RON MAKI
 MONCRIEF, KEN ESTATE
 MOORE, MICHAEL R C/O DEANN NYSTROM
 MOORE, THOMAS J
 MORGAN, VICKI H
 MORRIS, TOBIN J AND JAMIE
 MOSIMAN, LARRY
 MUNTEFERING, CHAD AND KERI
 MUNYON, PERRY L
 MUSICK, ROY ESTATE
 MYHRE, STACY A AND DEREK N
 NAUMAN, PATTI
 NAYLOR, ED
 NELSON, WADE AND BECKY
 NOLTE CONSTRUCTION AND STEVE NOLTE
 NORDVOLD, KELCEY AND WHITNEY
 NPP LLC
 NYE, LEROY
 NYGAARD, GERALD C/O JIM OLSON
 OAHE PLAINS SYSTEM CORP
 OAHE SPEEDWAY C/O MILTON MORRIS
 O'DAY, JERRY ESTATE
 OLIVA, STEVE
 OLSON, AMBER

OLSON, CHARLES J ESTATE
 ONDELL, RAY AND LINDA
 ORGANA CORP C/O PATRICK MILLER
 PALACE MOTORS C/O JOHN KRANZ
 PARK APTS - AGAR C/O WEN-MAR MANAGEMENT
 PARKS, PHILLIP
 PAULSEN, BRAD
 PEASE, MICHAEL D ESTATE
 PEDERSON, ROSS AND SAMANTHA
 PETERSON, JEAN
 POKORNY, RYAN E AND MARIAH
 PORTER, STEPHEN W AND KATHERINE P HIEB
 PREISER, SHEILA
 PRENDERGAST, W A
 PRIVETT, JOSEPH H III AND SELAH
 QUAIL PICKARD, SHEENA J
 QUASNEY, MARK AND LAURA
 QUINCY JOHNSTON INC C/O BRIAN OR HOLLY JOHNSTON
 RAMSDELL, DANIEL
 RATH, DYLAN AND CHRISTINA KRUSE
 REALTY CENTER OF SIOUX FALLS
 RED CREEK FARMS C/O DEAN NEWMAN
 REIMDERS, WADE A ESTATE AND BONNIE A
 REMUND NEXGEN LLC C/O PAUL OR BETH REMUND
 RICHARDSON, STEPHEN AND NATALIE
 RILEY, CURTIS
 RIPLEY, MARK AND JOAN C
 RIVENES, MARVIN G ESTATE
 RIVENES, VICKI / RON'S WELDING AND MACHINE
 ROADCAP, LINDA S AND TIM TOBEL
 ROBINSON, GAIN ESATE C/O IVAN VENNER
 RODDEWIG & SON C/O CJ OR CURTIS RODDEWIG
 ROMAN, MIKE AND ANGELA
 ROTH, LOUI ESTATE AND LEANN WAY
 RUDEBUSCH, MICHAEL W AND ANDREA M
 RUS, TROY AND LORI
 RYDEN, VAUGHN D AND LYNNE
 SAND LIVESTOCK ASSOC 1986-1 AND CHUCK SAND ESTATE
 SANDAL, GLENN R AND SHARON C/O TODD SANDAL
 SARAHAN, MICHAEL AND CONNIE
 SCHAEFFER, GERALD ESTATE
 SCHIEVELBEIN, MARK
 SCHIPPER, LLOYD AND JEANNETTE
 SCHMAUTZ, TIM
 SCHROER, JOHN ESTATE C/O JAMES SCHROER
 SCHROER, JUNE ESTATE AND JAMES SCHROER
 SCHROYER, GERALD ESTATE AND ARTALEE ESTATE
 C/O JOHN SCHROYER
 SCHULTZ, CLARK A
 SCHWEISS-WIENBAR, KIM
 SEALE, WILLIAM AND JENNIFER F
 SEALS, RODNEY
 SEGRUD, KEVIN L
 SHARP CHEVROLET C/O DOUGLAS J SHARP
 SHEFFIELD, AARON
 SHEPLEY, SCOTT AND SHERRY
 SHULTZ, ELEANOR ESTATE
 SHUMAN, DANE A AND KELLIE D C/O SUSIE COVOLIK
 SIEFKEN, EARL E JR AND CATHERINE B
 SIEFKEN EARL E III
 SLAMA, RANDY AND DAWN
 SMITH, JEAN A ESTATE
 SMITH LAND TRUST C/O CONNIE MIKKELSEN
 SMITH, RICHARD N

SOMMER, SUE ESTATE
 SPICER, MARSHA
 ST JOHN, ODELL SR
 STAMPE, GENE W AND DARLENE C/O SCOTT STAMPE
 STANISH, DANIEL J AND ANDREA A
 STANLEY, MIKE AND KAYLA
 STANLEY, WILLIAM
 STEELE, KELLY AND JAY
 STEICHEN, WAYNE AND BETTY A
 STEPHENS, MICHAEL R
 STERLING, STANLEY A
 STEWART FARMS C/O VAN STEWART
 STICKNEY, ROBERT W
 STILES, DIANE
 STOESER, HEATH AND KIM
 STRANGE, CHRISTOPHER
 STURM, BRAD W
 STURM, DON A ESTATE C/O BRAD STURM
 SUNSET LODGE C/O LARRY PAULSEN
 SUTTER, CHARLES W AND DEBBIE
 SWENSON, ROBERT A AND JOANN
 TAYS, MATTHEW J
 TCHIDA, JOSH
 TELFORD, LORETTA J ESTATE
 TELKAMP, TYREL AND ASHTON
 TERHAAR, BRIAN M
 THOMPSON, KATIE AND KEMPTON OLNEY
 TUSSING, MARIA E
 VAN HOUTEN, ROGER AND JEANNIE
 VAN WINSEN, SONYA
 VENNER, IVAN G
 VILHAUER, DAVID ESTATE
 VOLKER, RANDY AND NANCY
 VOLLMER, DAVE
 VOTAVA, JEANIE
 W W BUNK GERLACH ESTATE C/O MARY ALLEMAN
 WAGNER, THOMAS ESTATE C/O CAITIE GRAVES
 WARNICK, CHRISTINE M
 WARRINER, RYAN
 WEGNER, MARGARET
 WEINHEIMER, KENNETH
 WEINHEIMER FARMS INC C/O KEN WEINHEIMER
 WEINHEIMER INC C/O KEN WEINHEIMER
 WELLER, RICHARD F AND DERROLYNN D
 WELSH, JAMES T
 WETZEL, HUBERT (BUD) E
 WILCOX, KAREN ESTATE
 WINEGEART, WESTON AND ERYN
 WINSLETT, JACK
 WISEMAN, BRYAN
 WITTLER FARMS JOINT VENTURE
 WORD, DAVE
 YACKLEY, CHRISTINE R
 YACKLEY, STEVE
 YOUNG, RON L
 ZEBROSKI FARM PARTNERSHIP
 ZLUPKO, BILL



DIGGING SAFELY

Call 811 Before You Dig Every Dig. Every Time.

Jocelyn Johnson

jocelyn.johnson@sdra.coop

Every year, underground utility lines are damaged by homeowners and contractors who dig without calling 811. This single call is a crucial step in any project. Striking a water, gas or power line can cause serious injuries, costly repairs and service outages for an entire neighborhood. Whether you're beginning construction on a major project or are simply planting a tree, calling 811 before you dig is a free and simple solution to what could potentially be considerable damage.

What is 811?

The South Dakota One-Call System, or 811, is a mandatory statewide

one-call notification system that was established by South Dakota Statute in 1993. 811 is now recognized as the national "Call Before You Dig" number in the U.S., designed to safeguard people and protect underground utilities. It's a free service that coordinates with your utility providers to help locate and mark underground lines.



Codi Gregg, executive director for South Dakota 811, said, "The main purpose of the program is to avoid digging into any utility and potentially causing a loss of life, loss of property, or any infrastructure buried in the ground."

"We are fully funded by the utilities who want to protect the services they provide," Gregg continued. "It is



GET TO KNOW THE COLOR CODE

Below are The American Public Works Association (APWA) Uniform Color Codes for temporary marking of underground utilities.

 <p>Proposed Excavation</p>	 <p>Electric</p>
 <p>Water</p>	 <p>Communication / CATV</p>
 <p>Reclaimed Water, Irrigation, Slurry</p>	 <p>Temporary Survey Marking</p>
 <p>Gas, Oil, Steam</p>	 <p>Sewer / Storm Drain</p>

South Dakota state law that you contact 811 two business days before you dig.”

South Dakota has underground utility lines for electricity, gas, water, sewage and telecommunications. Inadvertently hitting one of these lines could cause power outages, property damage, water contamination, gas leaks, legal liabilities and injury.

Gregg explained that when an excavator makes the 811 call before they dig, utilities receive the locate and have 48 hours to mark all lines in the designated area with color-coded flags or paint.

“If you happen to dig into a utility or find one that was not located while excavating, you have to report that to 811. If you happen to dig into a gas line or anything toxic, you must call 911 first, then 811.”

How It Works

Contractors, homeowners, ranchers and farmers can easily make a request for underground utility lines to be marked by

following these steps before every project.

1. Call 811 or submit an online request at least 48 hours prior to your project.
 - Information can be found online at www.sdonecall.com.
2. Wait for utility markings.
 - Utility companies will send professionals to mark buried lines using color-coded paint or flags.
3. Get locates on secondary or privately-owned lines if needed.
4. Check markings.
 - Confirm all utility companies listed on your ticket have responded to the request after the two-business days have passed.
5. Dig safely.

Real-Life Examples of Hitting Underground Utility Lines

Contractor Hits Unmarked Secondary Line

Tom Lundberg, member services manager from H-D Electric Cooperative in Clear Lake, S.D., gives the following account of a contact made to a secondary line:

“Normal situations start out like this – South Dakota 811 calls are made from an excavator or member (persons doing the work), and flags and paint go on the ground marking the underground services. This is a normal occurrence. However, some digs are more complicated, and there may be what we call secondary wires, pipes, sewer lines, etc. located in the dig area as well. The words primary and secondary are confusing to some people and they assume that all is well after the 811 call is made. Primary lines are owned and operated by the utility. Secondary lines are member-owned lines that are not marked by any utility. They must be marked by the member-owner of the property.

Unfortunately, we have had many of these lines hit during a dig, which makes it an emergency service call. One example is when we had a 600-amp service for a member that was damaged by a contractor. The call came in to us, and we responded to the site. We realized it could have been a very dangerous situation if the contractor would have entered the dig. Luckily, they guarded the hole until we arrived. The underground wires were extremely damaged, and the contact did not take out the transformer fuse or any kind of overcurrent protection. When I arrived, there was water in the hole, and I could hear the muddy water boiling. At that time, I assumed it was still energized. The first thing I did was turn the power off and assess the extent of the damage. The mud and water were so hot that I had to wait for a while for it to cool off. Repairs were made and everything was put back together. I double checked my work, then turned the power back on. This happened because secondary locates were not completed – resulting

in a three-hour delay for the business and a costly repair.

We have had many of these calls over the years, and we want to communicate that anyone digging for a project must ensure all the dig area is marked for primary and secondary functions (wire, pipe, gas, telephone, sewer).

Long story short, the impact of not marking all the dig area can cost you time, loss of production, money and even worse – injury or death.”

Out-of-State Contractor Hits Underground Power Line

Mike Stadler, manager of electric operations from Grand Electric Cooperative in Bison, S.D., gives the following account of a contact made by company digging gravel:

“We had a dig-in a couple of years ago at a gravel pit. The county contracted a crushing company out of state to mine more gravel from an existing pit they had rights to. The crushing company started by digging test holes with a bulldozer. They would take the bulldozer and dig a hole about eight feet deep, just one dozer width wide, to see how good the gravel was before they committed to mining the whole area. We had underground cable around the pit. When they were exploring new areas to mine, they dug right through our cable and didn’t know it (keep in mind the test holes are 8 feet deep, and our cable is four feet deep). They dug the hole, went in and looked at the gravel, decided it wasn’t worth it, and covered the hole back up. Meanwhile, we had an outage.

When our crew began searching for the cause of the outage, they discovered the fresh dirt which was moved and had to dig it back up to fix it. When I asked the contractor why he didn’t call a locate, he stated the county superintendent said he didn’t have to because there was nothing there. They were very reluctant to pay the bill and thought the county should be liable. When I explained to them it was the law that all contractors are required to call 811, and it didn’t matter what the county told them, they paid the bill. We have since educated the county on 811 laws.”



A Greenhouse Tunnel at Cedar Creek Garden. Photo courtesy of Cedar Creek Garden.

POWERING LOCAL FOOD

Reliable Energy Keeps Greenhouses Growing

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

For agricultural producers in tumultuous climates like South Dakota's, a little bit of electricity goes a long way.

Across rural areas of the state, some producers are using greenhouses as a way to extend their growing season, protect their crops from wind and hail, and provide their communities with fresh produce throughout the year.

Cedar Creek Gardens, co-owned by Cherry-Todd Electric members Bud Manke and Peggy Martin, is one such producer utilizing season-extending greenhouse structures. At the site in Mellette County, Martin is able to grow a

variety of vegetables throughout much of the year by utilizing greenhouse tunnels.

"We're in growing zone 4, but our tunnels add another zone of warmth," Martin explained. "With the thermal mass of the ground, plus with vegetables like cabbage being very cold resistant, we've sometimes harvested after December 1."

Cedar Creek Gardens wasn't always the green prairie oasis it is today, with its dozen greenhouses and more than 1,000 free-range chickens. The operation started off small – just enough to feed the family, but as they discovered their passion for gardening, its scale kept creeping up.

"The demand was there, so the operation just kept getting bigger and

bigger," Martin said.

Local greenhouses like Cedar Creek Gardens play an integral role in communities across South Dakota, ensuring food security for rural communities by providing locally-sourced produce for grocery stores, hospitals and restaurants.

"Local food and direct-to-consumer sales have seen a significant surge in popularity here in South Dakota," Martin added. "There's a clear trend of consumers wanting to know where their food comes from."

But without the extensive systems of grow lights, heating, irrigation – and the electricity that powers all of that – Martin says her operation wouldn't be sustainable.

Cedar Creek Gardens relies on electricity for several key aspects of the operation: irrigation to ensure crops get consistent water, grow lights to create optimal growing environment for transplants in the spring, and cooling

systems and storage facilities for the harvest.

“Reliable electricity from our rural electric cooperative is absolutely essential for Cedar Creek Gardens,” Martin said.

With electricity being so critical in every operation at the greenhouse, so too is the reliability. Any outage – summer or winter – risks an entire season of work.

“Cherry-Todd Electric is very aware of the amount of produce that we have, and they don’t think of us as ‘the middle of nowhere,’” Martin explained. “Cherry-Todd Electric is really good about calling us and saying they’re going to be working and let us know when the power will be off so we know to get stuff in the cooler and not open and close the doors.”

Cherry-Todd Electric’s manager, Tim Grablander, recognizes his members’ need for reliable and continuous energy, noting the co-op’s stringent practices including line patrolling, hazard recognition and line maintenance procedures to avert potential future problems.

“Cherry-Todd Electric’s mission is to not only assure that our power is available to each member, but that we are delivering power at the highest level of reliability as is physically possible,” Grablander said. “Our members depend on a consistent and reliable source of energy when and where it is needed. We also recognize the critical nature of power reliability for our healthcare providers, business owners, and our members with assistive medical needs. Reliability is our mission.”

But not every outage comes with the luxury of an advanced notice. When severe weather strikes, unexpected outages require quick thinking.

“When we had a blizzard and we lost electricity, we put the cows in with the plants to produce enough body heat so the plants didn’t freeze,” Martin recalled. “If we lose power on our electric heaters, we could lose all of our plants and not have anything to put into production. Power outages are also a significant risk to our cold storage facilities in the summer, any disruption can cause

the produce to spoil, which is a financial loss.”

Luckily, those outages are rare; Cherry-Todd Electric and its generation and transmission cooperative, Basin Electric Power Cooperative, emphasize reliable energy generation while other areas of the United States face strain on their electric grid, resorting to costly measures like rolling brown-outs.

“At Basin Electric, our all-of-the-above energy strategy ensures members have reliable, affordable power when they need it most by prioritizing dispatchable resources like coal and natural gas, alongside wind and solar,” said Chris Baumgartner, senior vice president of Member and External Relations for Basin Electric Power Cooperative. “We continue to invest in new generation while maintaining and optimizing our existing resources to meet demand, even during extreme weather conditions. These investments provide the baseload power and stability that businesses like Cedar Creek Gardens depend on – helping to sustain local economies and keep food on tables across the region.”

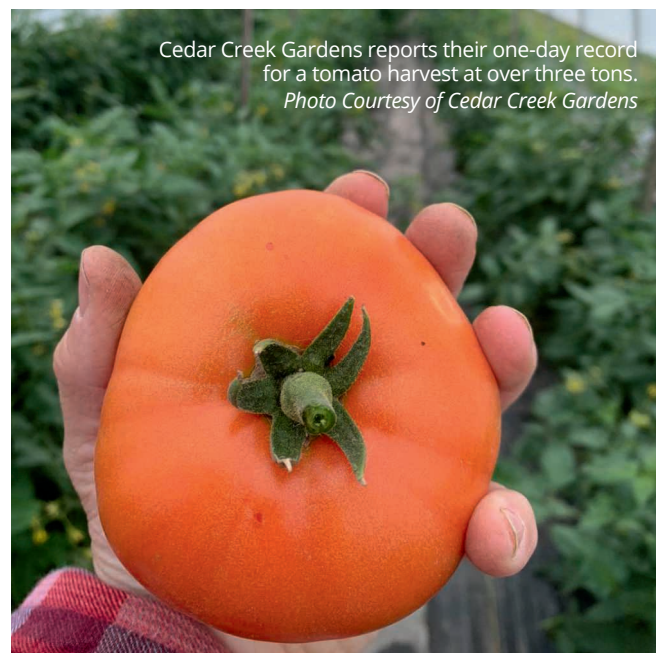
For greenhouses like Cedar Creek Gardens, energy rates directly impact the wholesale cost of her products that businesses and communities rely on. Utilizing efficient LED lighting, temperature sensors, timers and energy-efficient cooling methods help Cedar Creek Gardens further reduce their operational costs, passing the savings onto hungry diners.

By continuing to supply low-cost, reliable energy to producers like Cedar Creek Gardens, co-ops aren’t just powering rural America, but helping ensure food availability for communities across the region.

“People don’t realize we can grow for so long and so early,” Martin said. “We have tomatoes by the Fourth of July and people are shocked because they’re used to getting their tomatoes in August. The greenhouses allow us to do that.”



Peggy Martin, co-owner of Cedar Creek Garden.
Photo courtesy of Cedar Creek Gardens



Cedar Creek Gardens reports their one-day record for a tomato harvest at over three tons.
Photo Courtesy of Cedar Creek Gardens



APRIL 11-12
Forks, Corks & Kegs
Food, Wine & Beer Festival
 Deadwood, SD
 605-578-1876

*Photo courtesy of
 Travel South Dakota*

To have your event listed on this page, send complete information, including date, event, place and contact to your local electric cooperative. Include your name, address and daytime telephone number. Information must be submitted at least eight weeks prior to your event. Please call ahead to confirm date, time and location of event.

APRIL 3
Viva Las Vegas
McCrossan Banquet Auction
 5:30 p.m.
 Sioux Falls Arena
 Single Ticket \$100
 Tables Available
 Sioux Falls, SD
 605-339-1203

APRIL 3
Bachelors of Broadway:
Gentlemen of the Theatre
 7 p.m.
 NSU Johnson Fine Arts Center
 aberdeencommunityconcerts.org

APRIL 4
Mitchell Technical College
2025 Alumni Gathering
Cornhole Tournament
 5 p.m. Social
 6:30 p.m. Tournament
 The World's Only Corn Palace
 Mitchell, SD
 605-995-7342

APRIL 4-5
Annual Schmeckfest
 German Heritage Celebration
 748 S Main St.
 Freeman, SD
 605-925-4237

APRIL 4-6, 11-13
Women Playing Hamlet
 April 4-5, 11-12: 7:30 p.m.
 April 6, 13: 2:30 p.m.
 Mighty Corson Art Players
 Corson, SD
 www.mightycorson.com

APRIL 5-6
Youth & Family Kids Fair
 Sat. 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.
 Sun. 12-4 p.m.
 The Monument
 Rapid City, SD
 605-342-4195

APRIL 6
Hay County Jamboree
 2 p.m. Matinee
 Gayville Music Hall
 Gayville, SD
 605-760-5799

APRIL 11-12
Junkin' Market Days Spring Market
 Fri. 4-7 p.m.
 Sat. 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
 W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds
 Sioux Falls, SD
 www.junkinmarketdays.com

APRIL 24-26
HuntSAFE Course
 Davison County Fairgrounds &
 Mitchell Trap Club
 Mitchell, SD
 605-770-5555
 gfp.sd.gov/hunter-education

APRIL 27
Country Roads
 2 p.m. Matinee
 Gayville Music Hall
 Gayville, SD
 605-760-5799

MAY 2-3
SD Spring Square Dance Festival
 Fri. 7:30-10:30 p.m.
 Sat. 9:30 a.m.-7:30 p.m.
 Faith Lutheran Church
 601 N. Cliff Ave.
 Sioux Falls, SD
 Call for events & times
 605-360-2524

MAY 3-4
Prairie Village Events
 Sat. Consignment Auction
 Sun. Season Opening
 Madison, SD
 www.prairievillage.org

MAY 3
West River Pheasants
Forever Banquet
 5 p.m. Central Time
 Draper Auditorium
 Draper, SD
 605-516-0143

MAY 3
American Legion Post 15
Just Because It's Time to Dance
 6-10:30 p.m.
 Tables Available
 El Riad Shrine
 Sioux Falls, SD
 605-336-3470

MAY 31
Auto Parts Swap Meet & Car Show
 8 a.m.-2 p.m.
 Brown County Fairgrounds
 Aberdeen, SD

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