

# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



## Forecasting the Future

**Basin Electric's Vision  
for Reliable Energy**

Pages 8-9

**Wind Energy  
Association Changes  
Name, Advocates For  
All Renewables**

Pages 12-13

# Member-Driven Into 2025



**Jordan Lamb**  
Chief Executive  
Officer

**Dear Member-Owners,**

As 2024 comes to a close and the holiday season is upon us, I want to take a moment to reflect on the past year and share my gratitude for each of you who make up the heart of Oahe Electric Cooperative.

This year has been one including growth, adaptation, and collaboration not only with our staff but also within our membership. Together, we've weathered challenges including interest rate and price volatility, equipment shortfall, shipping constraints and overall higher equipment and electricity costs. In the same tone, we have celebrated successes and continued to deliver reliable and affordable energy to our rural communities. None of this would be possible without the unwavering commitment and support of our member-owners, board of directors, and dedicated employees.

At Oahe Electric, we are proud to be more than a utility provider. We are a partner in your success and an advocate for the communities we serve. Whether

it's improving infrastructure, supporting local businesses, or advancing renewable energy initiatives, our cooperative remains focused on powering your lives—today and into the future.

As we celebrate the joys of Christmas and look ahead to the promise of a new year, I want to thank you for your trust and partnership. Your engagement and support inspire us to continue striving for excellence.

From all of us at Oahe Electric Cooperative, I wish you and your family a Merry Christmas filled with peace, love, and happiness. May 2025 bring good health, prosperity, and success to you and yours.

Thank you for being an integral part of our cooperative family. We look forward to serving you in the year ahead!

Warm regards,  
Jordan Lamb  
CEO, Oahe Electric Cooperative



## Lineman's Lens

Linemen recently discovered that a member had set up an antelope target and was using a transformer box as a backstop. This presents serious safety concerns and could lead to significant damage to our equipment, potentially resulting in power outages.

# Oahe Electric Accepting Lineman's Scholarship Applications

Oahe Electric Cooperative is offering a \$1,000 scholarship for a full-time student registered or planning to register in a power line construction and maintenance program.

The purpose of this scholarship is to emphasize and support the education of future power line workers in South Dakota. Oahe Electric has committed to providing funds for financial assistance to students enrolled in power line maintenance programs with the hopes that graduates of that program will pursue

a career with rural electric cooperatives in the area.

Applicants for the scholarship must be a member or a member dependent of Oahe Electric. Applications for the 2025-2026 academic year are being accepted until February 14, 2025.

For more information, contact Oahe Electric at 1-800-640-6243 or [oahe@oaheelectric.com](mailto:oahe@oaheelectric.com). Applications can also be downloaded by visiting our website at [www.oaheelectric.com](http://www.oaheelectric.com).

# Oahe Electric Accepting Applications for 2025 Scholarships

Oahe Electric, in conjunction with Basin Electric Power Cooperative, is offering one \$2,000 college scholarship to a lucky student in the Hughes and Sully County area. In addition to this scholarship, Oahe Electric is offering four \$1,000 college scholarships.

The scholarship program recognizes and encourages the academic achievements of students in our region. It also serves as an investment in the economic future of rural areas.

Applicants for the scholarships must be a U.S. citizen and a member or member dependent of Oahe Electric. Applicants also must be students enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time undergraduate course

of study at an accredited two-year or four-year college, university or vocational/technical school.

The scholarship recipients are chosen based on a combination of a written essay, SAT/ACT scores, overall grade-point average, work experience, participation in school and community activities, a personal statement of career goals and a written recommendation by a third party.

Applicants for the 2025-2026 academic year are being accepted until February 14, 2025.

For more information, contact Oahe Electric at 1-800-640-6243 or [oahe@oaheelectric.com](mailto:oahe@oaheelectric.com). Applications can also be downloaded by visiting our website at [www.oaheelectric.com](http://www.oaheelectric.com).

## COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

### OAHE ELECTRIC

(USPS No. 019-042)

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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.

# Snow Safety

There is no end to the terms for “really big snowstorm,” and those terms come in handy, particularly in America’s snowiest cities. Just check out these average annual snowfall totals in towns of at least 10,000 residents, according to the Farmer’s Almanac:

Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan – 119.3 inches  
Syracuse, New York – 114.3 inches  
Juneau, Alaska – 93.6 inches  
Flagstaff, Arizona – 87.6 inches  
Duluth, Minnesota – 83.5 inches  
Erie, Pennsylvania – 80.9 inches  
Burlington, Vermont – 80.2 inches  
Muskegon, Michigan – 79.3 inches  
Casper, Wyoming – 77 inches  
Portland, Maine – 70 inches

But with really big snow storms – and even everyday, run-of-the-mill snowfalls – comes a risk of death by shoveling. Nationwide, snow shoveling is responsible for thousands of injuries and as many as 100 deaths each year.

So, why so many deaths? Shoveling snow is just another household chore, right?

Not really, says the American Heart Association. While most people won’t have a problem, shoveling snow can put some people at risk of heart attack. Sudden exertion, like moving hundreds of pounds of snow after being sedentary for several months, can put a big strain on the heart. Pushing a heavy snow blower also can cause injury.

And, there’s the cold factor. Cold weather can increase heart rate and blood pressure. It can make blood clot more easily and constrict arteries, which decreases blood supply. This is true even in healthy people. Individuals over the age of 40 or who are relatively inactive should be particularly careful.

**National Safety Council recommends the following tips to shovel safely:**

- Do not shovel after eating or while smoking.
- Take it slow and stretch out before you begin.
- Shovel only fresh, powdery snow; it’s lighter.
- Push the snow rather than lifting it.
- If you do lift it, use a small shovel or only partially fill the shovel.

- Lift with your legs, not your back.
- Do not work to the point of exhaustion.
- Know the signs of a heart attack, stop immediately and call 911 if you’re experiencing any of them; every minute counts.

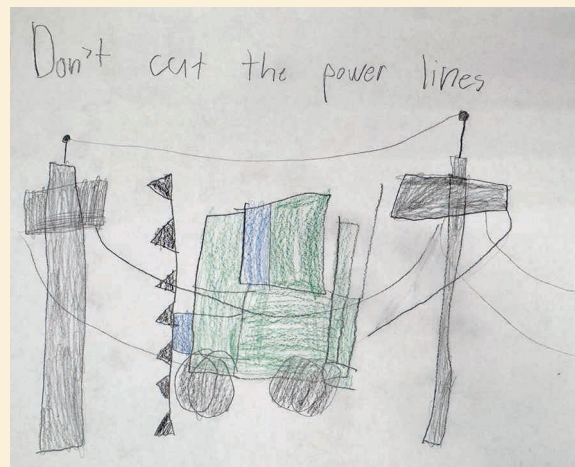
Don’t pick up that shovel without a doctor’s permission if you have a history of heart disease. A clear driveway is not worth your life.

### Snow Blower Safety

In addition to possible heart strain from pushing a heavy snow blower, stay safe with these tips:

- If the blower jams, turn it off.
- Keep your hands away from the moving parts.
- Be aware of the carbon monoxide risk of running a snow blower in an enclosed space.
- Add fuel outdoors, before starting, and never add fuel when it is running.
- Never leave it unattended when it is running.

*Source: National Safety Council*



### “Don’t Cut the Power Lines!”

#### David Raak, Age 7 ½

David Raak cautions readers to be careful when working around power lines. Thank you for your picture, David! David’s parents are Nathaniel and Katie Raak, members of Central Electric.

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

# Crockpot GREATNESS

## CROCKPOT CORN

### Ingredients:

3 16-oz. packages frozen corn  
8 oz. cream cheese  
1/2 cup (1 stick) butter  
2 tbsps. sugar  
2 tbsps. water

### Method

Place corn in crockpot. Cut cream cheese and butter into small cubes. Add cream cheese, butter, sugar and water to corn. Stir. Cook on high for 45 minutes. Stir. Turn to low and cook for three more hours, stirring occasionally.

**Elaine Rieck**  
Harrisburg, S.D.

## CROCKPOT BAKED BEANS

### Ingredients:

2 cans black beans  
2 cans red beans (drained)  
2 cans great northern  
1 can baked beans with brown sugar  
1 lb. diced ham  
1 heaping tsp. mustard (regular)  
2 full tbsps. ketchup  
Garlic powder (optional)  
1 small onion (chopped)

### Method

Mix all ingredients in crockpot except ham. Cook 2 hours on high. Mix in ham and cook another hour on high. Enjoy!

**Rose Tucker**  
Hot Springs, S.D.

## CHICKEN FIESTA SLOW COOKER RECIPE

### Ingredients:

2 lbs. boneless skinless chicken breasts  
1 package slow cooker fiesta chicken seasoning mix  
2 cans (14 1/2 oz. each) diced tomatoes, undrained  
1 can (15 3/4 oz.) whole kernel corn, drained  
1 can (15 oz.) black beans, drained and rinsed

### Method

Place chicken in slow cooker. Mix seasoning, tomatoes, corn and beans until blended. Pour over chicken. Cover. Cook eight hours on LOW or four hours on HIGH. Remove chicken from slow cooker. Shred chicken, using two forks. Return chicken to slow cooker; mix well. Serve over cooked rice with assorted toppings, 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 2024. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

# Rural Mail Service Delays Cause Headaches



**Valerie Marso**  
Chief Financial Officer

## With Continued Delays In Rural Mail Delivery and Increased Postage, Oahe Electric and Smarthub Are Here to Help

Many Oahe Electric members have experienced delays in their mail service, and possible future changes may not only increase delays, but increase the cost to deliver mail.

While this situation is not ideal, there are several solutions Oahe Electric has available to members. The first is signing up for ACH payments. Oahe Electric members can have their bill paid automatically from their checking/savings account or their debit/credit card. As an added bonus, members will receive a one-time \$5 bill credit for signing up for automatic payments!

An alternate solution also available to members is SmartHub. SmartHub is Oahe Electric's online payment portal available through our website or as an app for smart phones. Through SmartHub, members can make payments, setup automatic payments, view usage, or receive notifications when their bill is available. Bill available notifications are sent the same day that bills

are generated. Members can also choose to go paperless through SmartHub, which would earn them another one-time \$5 bill credit!

For a quick way to pay, members can use the "Make One Time Payment" option at [oaheelectric.com](http://oaheelectric.com). They will need their account number and last name to make a payment on their account, but it is designed to be fast and easy to use.

For those members who may not be as "tech savvy" as others, you can always reach us at 1.800.640.6243 or [oahe@oaheelectric.com](mailto:oahe@oaheelectric.com) for assistance with making payments or getting signed up for automatic payments. We also encourage you to reach out to us if you have any questions or concerns regarding your bill.

If members are in the area, they can drop their payment off if the office is open, or in the payment drop box in the entryway. Payments are processed the following business day.

With all these options available, Oahe Electric is working to help members avoid late fees and mail delays.

### Statement of Non-Discrimination

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

# Five Ways to Safeguard Your Home This Winter



**Matt Eldridge**  
Chief Operations  
Officer

As the temperatures drop and the days grow shorter, there's a natural inclination to create a warm and cozy haven at home. Unfortunately, as we see increased use of heating equipment, candles and electrical items, the number of home fires tends to increase during winter months.

Here are five ways you can safeguard your home for the winter season.

1. **Ensure carbon monoxide and smoke detectors are working properly.** If your detectors are battery-operated, replace the batteries annually. Test the detectors once a month and give them a good dusting to ensure the sensors are clear of dirt and debris.

2. **Inspect electrical cords.** We depend on more cords during winter, whether for holiday lighting, extension cords or portable heaters. Before using any corded items, double check to make sure cords aren't frayed or cracked. If you use portable space heaters, remember to keep them at least 3 feet away from flammable items. Use models that include an auto shut-off feature and overheat protection. Space heaters can take a toll on your energy bills. Use them efficiently (to heat smaller spaces) and safely. Never plug a space heater into a power strip. Speaking of power strips...

3. **Avoid overloading electrical outlets and power strips.** When overloaded with electrical items, outlets and power strips can overheat and catch fire. If you use power strips for multiple devices, make sure the strip can handle the electrical load. For a safer bet, look for power strips that include surge protection.

4. **Clean the fireplace to improve safety and efficiency.** There's nothing better than a warm fire on a chilly night, but it's important to maintain your fireplace for safety. As wood burns, a sticky substance known as creosote builds up in the chimney. When creosote buildup becomes too thick, a chimney fire can ignite. The chimney should be cleaned at least once a year to reduce fire risks. Regular cleaning also improves air flow and limits the amount of carbon monoxide that seeps indoors.

5. **Practice safety in the kitchen.** As we spend more time in the kitchen during the holiday season, be mindful of potential fire hazards. Never leave food that's cooking on the stovetop unattended. Clean and remove spilled foods from cooking surfaces and be mindful of where you place flammable items like dish towels.

Oahe Electric wants you and your family to stay safe during the winter season.

## COVE HEAT SALE

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

PLANNING AHEAD



An aerial view of the Pioneer Generation Station Phase IV near Williston, N.D. Photo submitted by Basin Electric Power Cooperative.

# FORECASTING THE FUTURE

## Basin Electric's Vision for Reliable Energy

**Frank Turner**

frank.turner@sdrea.coop

Keeping the lights on in a dynamic world isn't as simple as flipping a switch. It requires a forward-thinking approach, almost like gazing into a crystal ball, to anticipate future energy demand. Energy infrastructure projects begin long before the first shovel breaks ground, and it's a challenge that Basin Electric Power Cooperative confronts every day to ensure consistent and

reliable power amid an ever-changing landscape of new technologies and growing membership.

A new plant or transmission line can take years of planning and coordination by Basin Electric and its member cooperatives. The process is similar to predicting the weather; it all begins with a forecast to determine what energy demand is brewing on the horizon.

Basin Electric works with the members and other stakeholders to

develop highly accurate load forecasts. Those load forecasts are then compared against our existing resource portfolio. If any gaps are identified, resource alternatives are identified and reviewed against each other to arrive at the best resource portfolio outcome.

"Once a need for a new generation project or transmission project has been identified, Basin Electric assembles a project team," explained Matt Ehrman, vice president of engineering and construction at Basin Electric.

"Developing and defining project scope is vital to project success as it's really the foundation for the project," Ehrman continued. "Good upfront planning minimizes project execution



risks later, so Basin places a lot of emphasis on the development work that happens before any detailed engineering design can begin.”

Basin Electric is currently undertaking one of its largest single-site electric generation projects in the last 40 years near Williston, North Dakota, known as Pioneer Generation Station Phase IV. Once completed, this project will add 580 megawatts of natural gas generation capacity to Basin Electric’s energy portfolio. Although the project broke ground in March 2023, planning for the project began in 2021, standing as a testament to the cooperative’s long-term mindset and commitment to meeting its load forecast.

So what goes into the planning of such a major project? Ehrman says everything from identifying project objectives to permitting and contracting strategies to engineering studies all take place within the years leading up to new infrastructure.

“In the case of a generation project, the project site, fuel, water, and transmission sources are identified during the project development phase,” Ehrman said. “After the development phase is complete, the more detailed engineering design work can begin. This is when the engineers really begin to dig into the details of how to arrange and interconnect all of the many different types of equipment



The first gas turbine delivery for Pioneer Generation Station Phase IV. Photo submitted by Basin Electric Power Cooperative.

required for a given project. Eventually, those design details are used to develop construction specifications, contractors are selected and construction begins.”

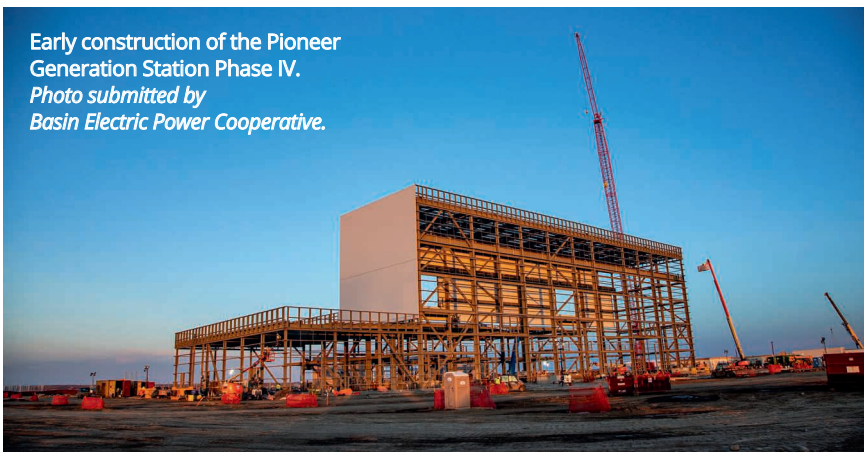
Beyond the demanding complexity of the project itself, Basin Electric’s project team must also navigate regulatory matters and policy. While many projects share similarities, no two are identical when navigating federal, state, and local permitting requirements.

“Large generation and transmission projects can take years to permit, and the permitting duration depends on the project,” Ehrman said. “Basin’s

teams have successfully permitted and executed many projects over the years and as a result have learned a lot about those processes in our service territory.”

Slated to be operational in 2025, Pioneer Generation Station Phase IV will come on board during a time when electricity demand is increasing significantly. The completion of the project will expand Basin Electric’s resource portfolio, which uses a vast diversity of generation resources to serve its member cooperatives. Even still, Ehrman said it still takes a massive effort to stay prepared for what the future may bring.

“Planning and building energy infrastructure is a massive team effort that involves teams from Basin and its membership,” he said. “These are complex projects, and there are challenges involved in all phases of the projects. Basin has extremely talented, dedicated and hard-working teams developing these projects that really enjoy working out all the technical and non-technical details while mitigating risks to achieve success and deliver the best possible outcome for the membership.”

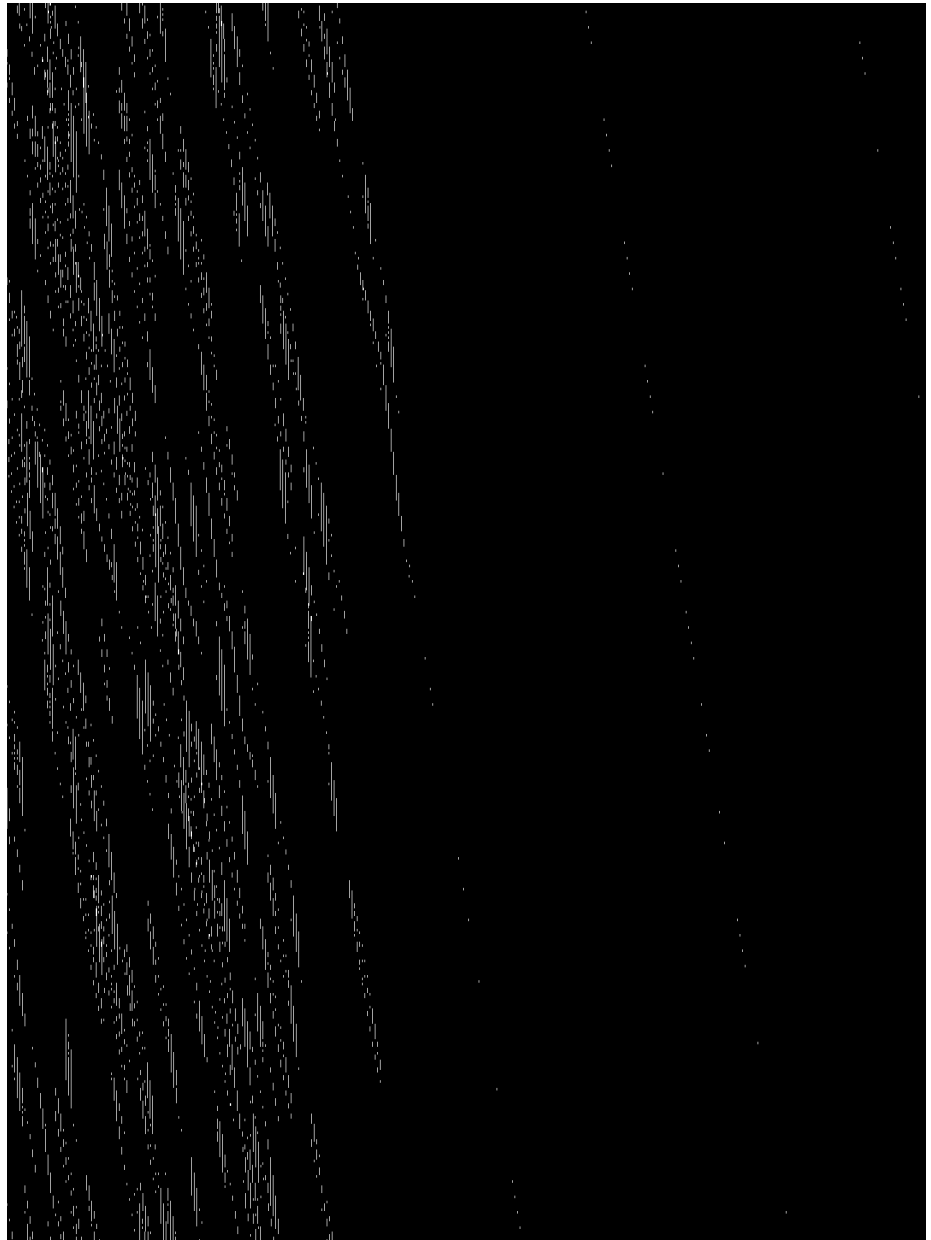


Early construction of the Pioneer Generation Station Phase IV. Photo submitted by Basin Electric Power Cooperative.

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Taking steps to help your home heating system run more efficiently can reduce energy use and lower your winter bills. Check to see if any air vents around your home are blocked by furniture, curtains or other items. Obstructed vents force your heating system to work harder than necessary and can increase pressure in the ductwork, causing cracks and leaks to form. If necessary, consider purchasing a vent extender, which can be placed over a vent to redirect air flow from underneath furniture or other obstructions.

*Source: energy.gov*



## HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

Christmas - Tuesday and Wednesday,  
December 24-25, 2025

New Years Day - Wednesday, January 1, 2025

# Thank you, Oahe Electric Linemen!

Thank you both for all you do!  
My dad was a lineman with  
Pike Electric for over 20 years  
and my son is a lineman  
with Blue Ridge Electric here in  
Ashe County, NC. Keep up the  
great work, and stay safe!

Janet Adams  
Pre-Employment Specialist  
Ashe County High School

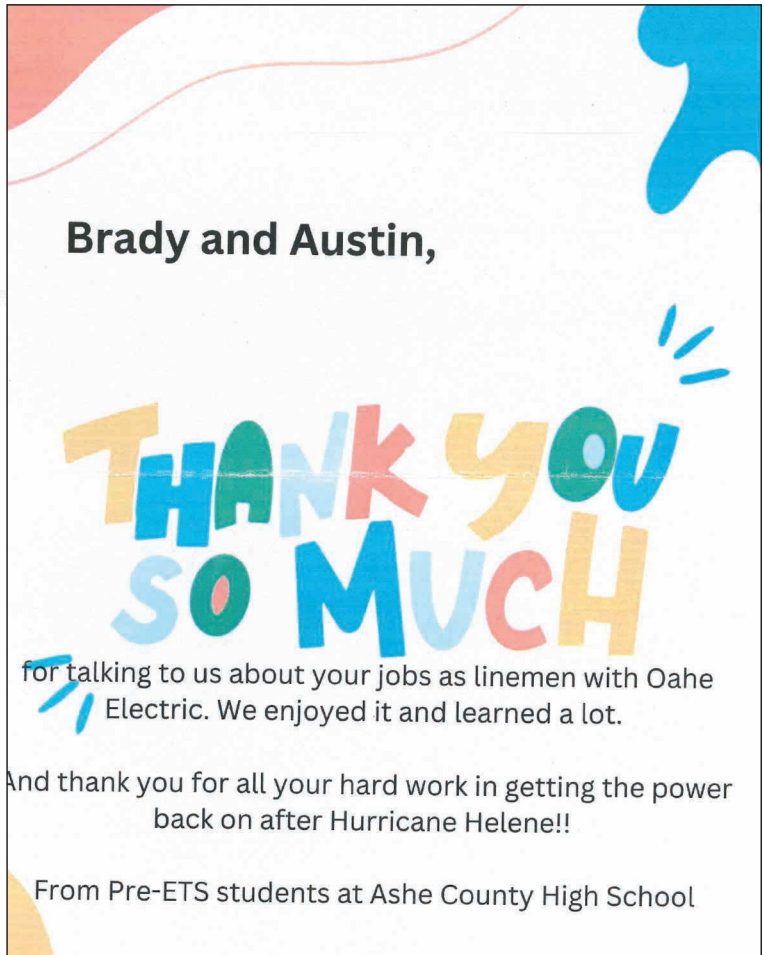
P.S. Thank you for the great  
advice to the students  
about high school!!  
😊

Thank you for your time  
and all you do ❤️  
Yamir Jimenez

Worselina  
T-M  
AYC Jimill

Thank you guys-  
Eriberto. ✓

candi PROFF  
Jay  
Eli  
Rachel  
Alana  
Connor  
Hunter  
Wallie  
Gael  
Jasselin  
Brian  
Kenton  
Lara  
Kelsi  
Cora



## Oahe Electric Assisted Co-op in Power Restoration After Storm

Oahe Electric Cooperative Journeymen Linemen Austin Bergeson and Brady Gaer left with one of Oahe Electric's bucket trucks the morning of Oct. 2, 2024, for Pickens, South Carolina, to assist with the power restoration efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene.

After the power had been restored for the majority of Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative members, the South Dakota linemen traveled to Wrens, Georgia, to assist Jefferson Energy Cooperative with their efforts.

The linemen returned home Oct. 17 after nearly two weeks in the field.

See the thank you notes Austin and Brady received and a resolution of appreciation for Oahe Electric on pages 10 and 11.



## LOOKING AHEAD

An aerial view of the Wild Springs Solar Project near New Underwood, S.D. Photo submitted by East River Electric

### Wind Energy Association Changes Name, Advocates For All Renewables

**Jacob Boyko**  
jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

The South Dakota Wind Energy Association is getting a fresh coat of paint this year with a rebrand that will expand the association’s advocacy mission to include more forms of renewable energy.

As solar energy generation in the state increases with new and upcoming projects, expanding the association — now called the South Dakota Renewable Energy Association — to include other forms of renewable energy and battery storage was the clear way forward according to association president and Sioux Valley Energy Director Gary Fish.

“The association started out as being very wind oriented, and that’s our legacy,” Fish explained. “But we also have somewhat migrated to having an energy portfolio where wind coexists

with coal, natural gas and solar, and that was the driver behind changing our name.”

The change comes in the wake of South Dakota’s first large-scale solar farm near New Underwood, which began commercial operation in March 2024. Basin Electric Power Cooperative will purchase 114 megawatts of the 128-megawatt renewable project.

The association began with the

leadership of East River Electric Power Cooperative in the mid-2000s as the generation and transmission co-op looked for ways to develop wind generation in the state to serve its growing member utilities and bring economic development and job opportunities to the state.

“Wind energy was at that time starting to become a more viable utility-scale source of power generation,” said Chris Studer, chief member and public relations officer at East River Electric.

A look on the ground as crews prepare the Wild Springs Solar Project for power generation. Photo submitted by East River Electric



“East River led an effort to build an association of stakeholders in South Dakota that can help advocate for the wind industry.”

It’s a mission that’s propelled South Dakota to being the state with the third highest renewable energy makeup, with more than 54% of in-state power generated from renewable wind and solar resources.

“We’ve gone from essentially zero wind energy to more than 3,000 megawatts of installed capacity in the state,” Studer said. “We have far surpassed what our original goal was.”

In the South Dakota Wind Energy Association’s initial stages, the board was composed mostly of utilities and developers focused on studying potential economic benefits and the infrastructure needs that come with increasing generation.

“I think everyone knew we had a great wind resource, but the real issue was having additional transmission to get the power out,” Fish said. “Could we build

the towers? Yes. Could we get the power to market? That was the challenge.”

As the association successfully made the case for wind energy, the membership grew to include other G&Ts and investor-owned utilities, landowner groups, turbine manufacturers, servicing companies and others from the wind energy supply chain.

One of the first large-scale renewable energy wins for the South Dakota Wind Energy Association and rural electric cooperatives was the 2011 commissioning of the 172-megawatt Crow Lake Project north of White Lake, South Dakota. The association membership helped support the launch of South Dakota Wind Partners to bring local residents an opportunity to invest in and own several turbines in the project.

According to East River Electric, the program generated about \$16 million worth of local investment.

“It was a very unique and successful

project that the South Dakota Wind Energy Association had involvement in and advocated for,” Studer said. “The people that invested got tax equity benefits over time, and after about 10 years they sold it back to Basin Electric and got their investments back.”

Moving forward, the association will continue to advocate for a renewable energy-friendly business environment to propel South Dakota energy projects forward.

“South Dakota Renewable Energy Association is here to make sure our state’s tax policies are fair, that developers still want to come here and develop renewable energy projects, and that there’s a market for all of the supply chain that’s needed for wind energy and now for solar, as well as the necessary transmission,” Studer continued.

A new South Dakota Renewable Energy Association website and promotional material will debut within the next several months.



The Crow Lake Wind Project near White Lake, S.D., is the largest wind project owned solely by a cooperative in the United States. The \$363 million wind project went into operation in 2011.  
*Photo submitted by East River Electric*



# RENEWABLE ENERGY

## Purchasing Credits Means Renewable Energy Anywhere

**Jacob Boyko**

[jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop](mailto:jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop)

Did you know there's a way your home or business can operate with 100% renewable energy?

With renewable energy credits, or RECs, electric cooperative members can purchase the renewable aspects of their utility's energy and run on 100% green energy without needing to install on-site solar panels or wind generation.

"A REC is a renewable attribute of a megawatt hour of electricity," explained

Ted Smith, vice president of engineering and operations at Sioux Valley Energy. "One megawatt hour produced by any renewable generator provides one REC."

Basin Electric Power Cooperative – the generation and transmission cooperative that sells electricity to South Dakota's rural electric cooperatives – reported about 21% of its energy sales in 2023 was renewable energy. Since it's impossible to pinpoint the exact generation origin of each individual electron moving along a distribution line and entering a home or business, there's no way to tell what

is actually being powered by renewable energy and what isn't.

However, by having a renewable energy credit program where members can claim rights to the renewable energy generated, members who participate can affirm they are being powered by renewable energy. It's kind of like "calling dibs" on something; everybody is purchasing reliable power, but the members who "call dibs" are purchasing the renewable power.

One Sioux Valley Energy member that makes use of the renewable energy credit program is Marmen Energy in Brandon, South Dakota. Through the program, the wind tower manufacturer's operations are powered 100% by renewable energy.

"We get all renewable energy to power our facility," Marmen Energy Plant Manager Danny Lueders said. "We build renewable energy wind towers – how

could we not get the renewable energy credit program?”

At a scale like Marmen’s, which produces between 300 and 400 wind towers annually, being 100% renewable is a statistic that not only makes a statement, but increases demand for more renewable energy.

“It makes sense for us to have it and support that industry all the way through,” Lueders continued. “It’s an industry we’re heavily involved with and we want to do everything we can to support and promote that industry.”

Support for renewable energy through the REC program has other benefits; the extra funds Rushmore Electric Power Cooperative generated from selling allocated RECs made it possible to purchase a solar demonstration trailer to educate the public about the benefits and drawbacks of solar energy and the need for a diversified mix of energy resources.

“We sell the RECs on the open market so others can satisfy their renewable mandates and so we can fund future renewable energy projects,” Rushmore Electric CFO Mark Miller added.

On the market, RECs vary in price, usually between \$1 and \$3. The generation source – wind, solar, hydro, geothermal, waste heat recovery – as well as the year the REC’s production year affect the commodity’s value.

“They have a shelf life,” Miller explained. “They’re valuable in the first year because some states mandate RECs that are current.”

States like Minnesota with renewable energy standards require utilities to retire their RECs to meet the energy standards, or buy

credits on the market to reach the mandated renewable energy percentage of their energy mix.

In South Dakota, a state without renewable energy mandates but with more than 54% of in-state power generated by renewable resources, the Marmen Energy CEO simply believes continuing to support renewable energy is the right thing to do.

“South Dakota is a strong proponent of renewable energy,” Lueders said. “The amount of industry renewables are supporting throughout the state of South Dakota is a strong issue, from an economic footprint and continuing to grow South Dakota’s self-reliance on homemade energy.”

(Right) Jay Buchholz, Key Account & Community Relations Executive for Sioux Valley Energy, presents Marmen Energy employees Vincent Trudel, Chief Operating Officer, Yannick Laroche, Fabrication Manager, with renewable energy credit certificates.



(Below) Marmen Energy’s Brandon, S.D., manufacturing plant purchases renewable energy credits to cover 100% of its operations, meaning all wind towers produced here are built using 100% renewable energy. *Images submitted by Sioux Valley Energy*



## REGISTER TO WIN!

Bring this coupon and mailing label to the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives booth at Black Hills Stock Show & Rodeo to win a Blackstone electric grill!

Your Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Your E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_



**JAN. 11**  
**Snow Queen Coronation**  
7 p.m.  
Aberdeen Civic Theater  
Aberdeen, SD  
SDSnowQueen.com

Photo courtesy of South Dakota Snow Queen Festival

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.

**UNTIL DEC. 26**  
**Christmas at the Capitol**  
8 a.m.-10 p.m.  
Pierre, SD  
605-773-3178

**UNTIL DEC. 29**  
**Trees & Trains Exhibit at SD State Railroad Museum**  
Hill City, SD  
605-665-3636

**UNTIL DEC. 31**  
**Olde Tyme Christmas at participating businesses, Lane of Lights Viewing**  
Hill City, SD

**UNTIL DEC. 31**  
**Garden Glow at McCrory Gardens**  
5-9 p.m.  
Brookings, SD

**UNTIL DEC. 31**  
**Hall of Trees**  
12-4 p.m. Mon.-Sat.  
The Mead Museum  
Yankton, SD

**DEC. 31**  
**American Legion Post 15 Save the Last Dance 2024**  
8 p.m.-12:30 a.m.  
El Riad Shrine  
Sioux Falls, SD  
605-336-3470

**DEC. 31-JAN. 1**  
**New Year's Eve in Deadwood**  
Deadwood, SD  
800-999-1876

**JAN. 5, FEB. 2**  
**American Legion Post 15 Pancake Breakfast**  
8:30 a.m.-12 p.m.  
1600 W. Russel St.  
Sioux Falls, SD  
605-336-3470

**JAN. 7-9**  
**Dakota Farm Show**  
Tue. & Wed. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Thurs. 9 a.m.-3 p.m.  
USD DakotaDome  
Vermillion, SD

**JAN. 11.**  
**Coats for Kids Bowling Tournament**  
Meadowood Lanes  
Rapid City, SD  
605-393-2081

**JAN. 15**  
**46th Ranchers Workshop**  
9 a.m.-3 p.m.  
Community Events Center  
White River, SD  
605-259-3252 ext. 3

**JAN. 18**  
**Breakin' the Winter Blues Chili Cookoff**  
Main Street  
Hill City, SD

**JAN. 26**  
**Souper Supper Fundraiser Rapid Valley United Methodist Church**  
5:30-7:30 p.m.  
Tickets \$6  
5103 Longview Dr.  
Rapid City, SD

**JAN. 31-FEB. 8**  
**Black Hills Stock Show & Rodeo**  
Central States Fairground  
Rapid City, SD  
605-355-3861

**FEB. 14-17**  
**11th Annual Frost Fest**  
9 a.m.-3 p.m.  
Brookings, SD  
605-692-7444

**FEB. 22**  
**Bellator Titans Charter Casino Night Fundraiser**  
6-11 p.m.  
316 2nd St.  
Aberdeen, SD

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