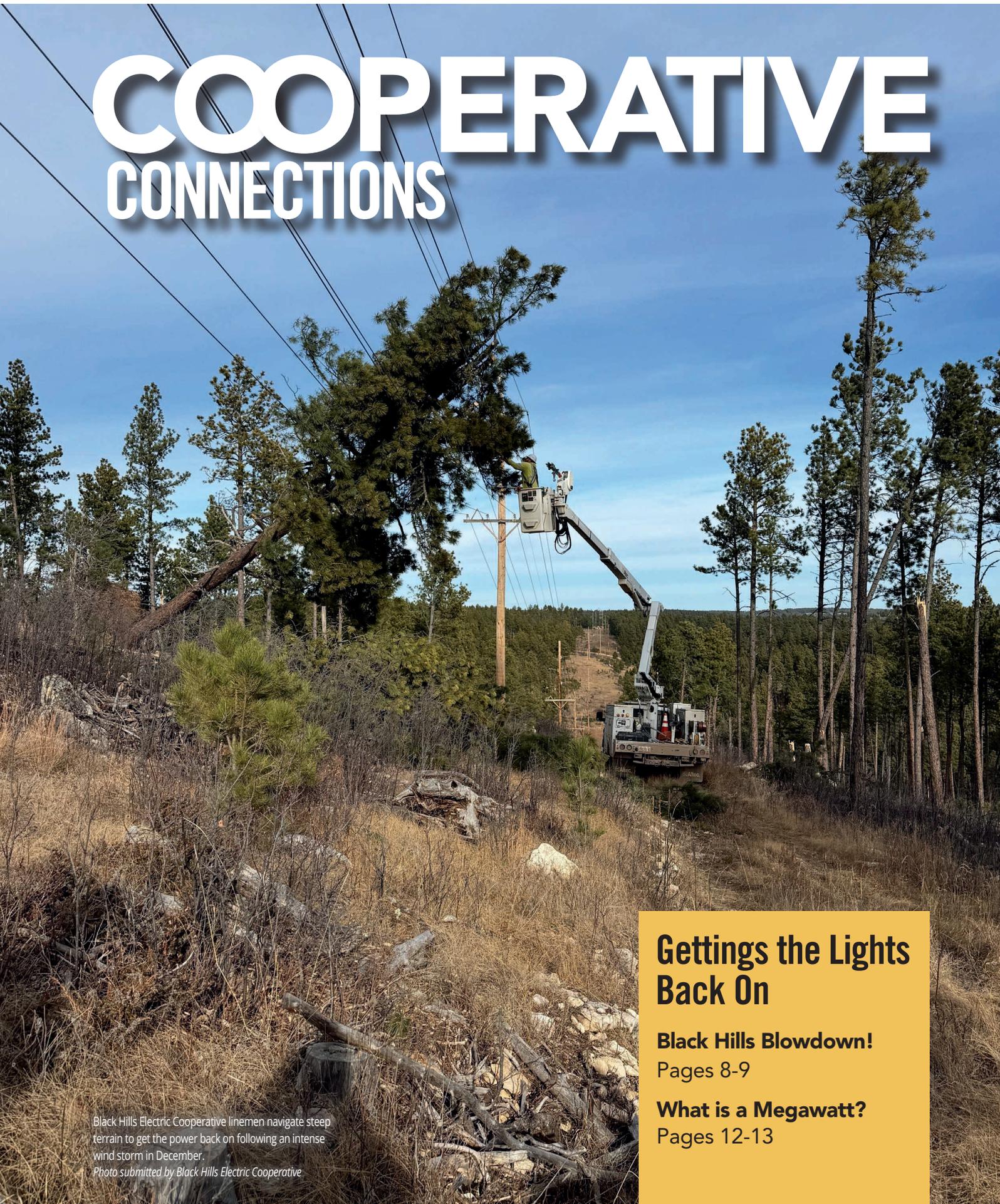




COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Black Hills Electric Cooperative linemen navigate steep terrain to get the power back on following an intense wind storm in December.
Photo submitted by Black Hills Electric Cooperative

Gettings the Lights Back On

Black Hills Blowdown!
Pages 8-9

What is a Megawatt?
Pages 12-13

Staying on Track – Even as Mail Delivery Changes



Valerie Marso
CFO

We understand that change isn't always easy. Many of our members have relied on paper bills and mailed payments for years, and that routine has worked well. Recently, however, changes at the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) may be affecting how quickly mail – including billing statements and payments – is delivered.

We've seen an increase in members receiving their bills late, or in some cases not at all. We've also heard from members who mail their payments that it can take 7–10 days for payments to reach our office after being sent.

What's Causing the Delays?

The USPS is implementing a long-term plan called Delivering for America. As part of this plan, mail is now processed through fewer, larger facilities, and delivery routes have been adjusted. While these changes are intended to improve efficiency overall, they can result in longer delivery times – particularly in rural areas where mail may need to travel farther than it did in the past.

Why Timely Payments Matter

Getting bills delivered and payments received on time is important for everyone involved. Just like households, your cooperative has everyday operating expenses to cover. When payments are delayed due to mail issues, it can create cash flow challenges and may require the cooperative to borrow funds to cover costs – adding unnecessary expense.

Ways to Avoid Mail Delays

To help eliminate issues caused by slower mail delivery, we offer convenient alternatives:

- Paperless Billing – Receive your bill electronically as soon as it's ready – no waiting for the mail. As a bonus, you'll receive a \$5 credit for signing up.
- Autopay – AutoPay ensures your payment is made on time each month, regardless of mail delays. In fact, 63% of Oahe Electric accounts already use AutoPay, and it has proven to be a safe, reliable option with a strong track record. As a thank-you, members who enroll receive an additional \$5 credit.

How to Sign Up

Signing up is easy, and you can choose the option that works best for you:

- SmartHub – Enroll online or through the SmartHub mobile app. SmartHub can be accessed directly from our website and allows you to manage your account anytime, anywhere.
- Online Form – A Paperless Billing and AutoPay enrollment form is available on our website.
- Call Our Office – Prefer personal assistance? Give us a call, and our friendly staff will be happy to help you get signed up.

These options remove the uncertainty of when your bill will arrive – or when your payment will reach us. We're here to help make managing your electric account as easy and reliable as possible.

Thank you, Oahe Electric!

Oahe Electric Cooperative Operation Round Up,

On behalf of C.O.R.E. – Community Organized Resources for Educating our youth and the Freshman Impact program, we wish to thank you for your generous donation. Your full donation was used to support the 2025 Freshman Impact programs in your area – Onida.

C.O.R.E., a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, coordinates the Freshman Impact programs to educate local freshman students in the real-life consequences of teen risk-taking behaviors. The program covers a range of topics facing our young teens today, such as underage drinking and driving, texting and driving, seatbelt use, teenage drug abuse, mental health issues, healthy relationships, bullying and social media dangers. C.O.R.E.'s goal is to save teen lives by reducing the number of risky behaviors amongst our teens.

Thanks again for giving us the opportunity to provide the Freshman Impact experience to our young teens, but most importantly thank you for thinking of our teens. Your generosity is very important and deeply appreciated.

Sincerely,

*Rich McPherson
Executive Director*

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS
OAHE ELECTRIC

(USPS No. 019-042)

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605.962.6207
Brandon Haag – President
605.215.6758
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605.280.3500
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605.222.1328

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Austin Bergeson – Journeyman Lineman
Mark Bruning – Line Foreman
Matt Eldridge – Chief Operations Officer
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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.

Powering Education Through Local Tax Support

Each year, electric cooperatives play an important behind-the-scenes role in supporting local schools – and Oahe Electric is proud to be part of that impact.

In February, Oahe Electric, along with electric cooperatives across South Dakota, submitted its annual Kilowatt Hour Tax Liability report to the South Dakota Department of Revenue. This tax is based on the electricity delivered to members and is dedicated to supporting public education.

In early June, those tax dollars are distributed to each county treasurer's office, where they become available for local school districts. This year, the

ABO Schools, Pierre School District, and Highmore-Harold School District will collectively receive more than \$1 million in education funding generated by Oahe Electric and our wholesale power suppliers, Basin Electric Power Cooperative and East River Electric Power Cooperative.

This contribution helps fund classrooms, resources, and opportunities for students across our service area – reinforcing the cooperative commitment to community that sets electric cooperatives apart.

Supporting education is just one more way your electric cooperative is working to strengthen the communities we serve.

School District	Total Consumers	KWH Sold	Tax Liability
Agar-Blunt-Onida	1,416	286,707,871	\$893,855.00
Pierre	1,758	46,322,674	\$144,417.92
Highmore-Harold	283	8,296,117	\$25,864.39
Gettysburg	3	10,264	\$32.00

Thank you, Oahe Electric!

Oahe Electric Crew,

We are truly blessed to have your continued support year after year. We helped over 22 warriors last year. With your support we reached a new record.

Thank you,

Bras for a Cause

Ensuring Drone Safety Near Power Lines

As drones continue to gain popularity for recreational and commercial use, their integration into our daily lives should not lessen the consideration of safety – particularly when it comes to flying near power lines. The intersection of drone technology and electrical infrastructure necessitates adherence to safety protocols, regulations, and best practices to protect both pilots and the integrity of electrical systems.

Power lines are essential components of our electrical grid, delivering energy to homes and businesses. However, they can pose serious hazards for drone operators. Collisions with power lines can cause significant equipment damage, leading to costly repairs or replacements. More critically, such incidents can disrupt service for hundreds of members, creating outages that could last for hours or even days.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has established regulations governing drone use, including restrictions on flying in proximity to power lines. According to FAA guidelines, drone pilots must always maintain a visual line of sight with their aircraft and avoid flying over people. When operating near electrical infrastructure, it is crucial to adhere to the regulations pertaining to altitude and no-fly zones.

Drone operators should also be familiar with state and local laws, as some municipalities have designated specific areas as no-fly zones, particularly near critical infrastructure like power facilities. Understanding these regulations is not only a legal requirement but also an essential step in ensuring the safety of all involved.

Best Practices for Safe Operations

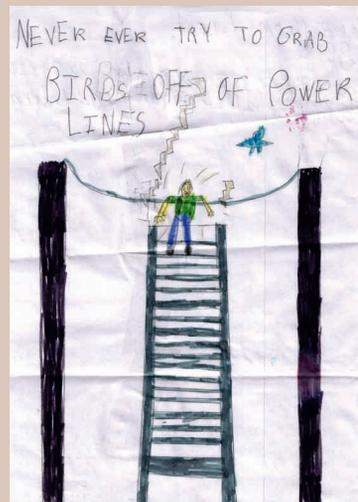
To minimize risks when flying drones near power lines, operators should adopt several best practices:

1. **Pre-Flight Planning:** Before taking off, thoroughly assess the flight area. Identify the location of power lines, potential obstacles, and any relevant no-fly zones. Consulting local maps and aerial photography can aid in understanding the landscape.
2. **Maintain Safe Distances:** When operating near power lines, always keep a safe distance. The FAA recommends a separation of at least 500 feet from energized power lines to avoid potential collisions. Keeping a safe buffer not only protects the drone but also mitigates risks to nearby electrical infrastructure.

3. **Use Technology Wisely:** Many modern drones come equipped with GPS and obstacle avoidance systems that can aid in safe navigation. Utilize these features and ensure that your drone's software is updated to reduce the likelihood of malfunction.
4. **Operating in Controlled Conditions:** Avoid flying drones in poor weather conditions such as high winds, rain, or reduced visibility. Harsh weather not only affects flight stability but can also lead to loss of control over the drone, increasing the risk of accidents.
5. **Emergency Procedures:** In case of a malfunction or loss of control, having an emergency plan in place is vital. Be prepared to communicate with local authorities if a drone becomes entangled in power lines or presents a safety concern.

As the popularity of drones continues to soar, awareness around safety protocols, especially near power lines, has become increasingly critical. By understanding the risks involved, adhering to regulations, and implementing best practices for safe drone operations, pilots can ensure the protection of themselves, others, and vital electrical infrastructure. Responsible drone use fosters innovation while ensuring safety remains paramount in our evolving technological landscape.

"Never ever try to grab birds off of power lines!"



**Naomi Krcil,
Age 8**

Naomi warns readers to never EVER grab birds off of a power line. Great picture, Naomi! Naomi's parents are Andrew and Andrea Krcil from Dante, S.D.

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.

Scrumptious SALADS

MACARONI SALAD

Ingredients:

2 cups macaroni (cooked, drained, rinsed and cooled)
 2 or more cups of carrots (chopped or shredded)
 1 small chopped onion (optional)
 1 cup chopped green pepper (optional)

Dressing

1 cup mayonnaise (Hellmans)
 1/4 cup vinegar
 1/2 cup sugar
 7 oz. sweetened condensed milk
 1/4 tsp. salt
 1/4 tsp. pepper

R. Gregg Fritz
 H-D Electric

KARI REDER'S POTATO SALAD

Ingredients:

7-8 lbs. potatoes, Yukon gold or red
 1 dozen eggs
 1 med. sweet onion
 2 cups Mayo
 1 tbsp. cream
 1/4 cup of apple cider vinegar
 1/2 cup of sugar or splenda
 1 1/2 tbsps. mustard
 2 tbsps. celery seed
 Celery salt, salt and pepper to taste

Method

Boil potatoes and eggs, peel and dice. Add the chopped onion. Mix together mayo, cream, apple cider vinegar, sugar, mustard, celery seed, celery salt, salt and pepper. Mix all together well and refrigerate.

Kari Reder
 Northern Electric

SUMMER GARDEN PASTA SALAD

Ingredients:

1 lb. thin spaghetti, broken into 1" pieces
 1 pt. cherry tomatoes, halved
 2 med. zucchini, peeled & diced
 2 med. cucumbers, diced
 1 green pepper, diced
 1 red pepper, diced
 1 - 16 oz. can sliced black olives, drained

Dressing:

1 - 16 oz. bottle Italian dressing
 1/4 cup parmesan cheese
 1 tbsp. sesame seeds
 1 tsp. paprika
 1/2 tsp. celery seed
 1/2 tsp. garlic salt

Method

Cook pasta; drain. Drizzle with 1-2 tsps. olive oil. In large bowl, combine pasta, tomatoes, zucchini, cucumber, peppers and olives.

Whisk dressing ingredients together. Pour over salad ingredients and toss to coat.

Cover and refrigerate for three hours.

Jane Ham
 Cam Wal Electric

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.

Operation Round Up®

Small Change Makes 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¢ 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 over \$160,000. 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, 2026. Completed applications may be mailed to: Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc., P.O. Box 216, Blunt, S.D. 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 is currently one, 2-year Board of Trustees position open. 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!

Your Co-op Advantage: Capital Credits Returned to Members

One of the benefits that truly sets your electric cooperative apart is membership. Unlike investor-owned utilities, Oahe Electric exists to serve you – not to generate profits for shareholders. When the cooperative has margins remaining after covering expenses, those funds belong to the members. As a member-owner, you share in those margins through capital credits.

Each year, Oahe Electric carefully manages costs to keep electric rates as affordable as possible. When financial conditions allow, the cooperative returns a portion of prior-year margins to members through a capital credit retirement. It’s one more way your co-op puts members first.

After reviewing the cooperative’s financial condition, the Oahe Electric Board of Directors approved a capital credit retirement of \$200,000.

As a nonprofit electric cooperative, Oahe Electric allocates annual operating margins to members who received electric service during the year. These allocations are based on each member’s share of total electric usage – calculated proportionally

using the dollar amount of electricity purchased. These allocated margins are called capital credits. They help fund ongoing operations and system improvements and are returned to members when the cooperative’s financial position and bylaws allow.

This year, capital credits were again returned in the most efficient way possible – as a bill credit. Members saw the credit applied to the bill they received in February 2026, with the amount listed in the Detail of Charges section.

In some cases, checks are still issued. This includes former members who no longer have an active account, as well as current members whose capital credit amounts are large enough that applying them as a bill credit would create an ongoing balance.

If you move or discontinue electric service with Oahe Electric, please be sure to keep your contact information up to date. This ensures we can reach you when future capital credits are retired.

Your electric cooperative is committed to reinvesting in the communities we serve. In an electric co-op, the people truly have the power.

The People Who Keep The Lights On

How Member Services Staff Connect Co-ops With Communities

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

There's more than meets the eye when it comes to providing safe and reliable electricity to co-op members in South Dakota. One of the key cooperative principles is commitment to community, and for co-ops' member services staff, it's all in a day's work.

Community Impact

Mike Dangel is the member services advisor for Charles Mix Electric Association, an electric cooperative based in Lake Andes serving members across Charles Mix County in southeast South Dakota. For Dangel, getting out in the community and being the face of the co-op comes naturally; he helps with 4-H, volunteers for the fire department and serves on the local school board.

"Concern for Community is one of cooperatives' core values, and it is part of my role to promote that," Dangel said. "Our participation in community events and charity fund-raisers gives our co-op more of a 'human' feel. It's important to be visible within the community so the co-op has a face and is not just another generic corporate entity."

Dangel started at the co-op in 1994 shortly after earning his power line construction diploma from Mitchell Technical College. He started as a 1,000-hour temporary worker, and after proving himself in the field, Dangel was hired full-time in 1997 as a journeyman lineman. His new role taught him all about energy, utilities and the electric grid we all depend on every day to keep the lights on. Dangel was a lineman for 18 years before being promoted to member services advisor after the previous person in the role, Russell Gall, took on the general manager title at Charles Mix Electric.

Along with his years of diverse experience, Dangel's expertise is further strengthened as a member of the cooperative, making him a valuable resource to answer members' questions and promote the responsible and efficient use of electricity.

"I find the most rewarding part of my job is communicating with our members and helping them understand how their wise use of electricity can make a big difference in their lives," he said.

Co-ops in the Classroom

Dangel brings some of that expertise into area classrooms as he talks to students about energy efficiency, safety around electricity and co-ops' Youth Tour, where South Dakota co-ops send qualifying students on a trip to Washington, D.C. There, they network with other young co-op members from around the

country, meet with South Dakota's federal delegation and learn about the people's role in democracy. Dangel finds his efforts to promote Youth Tour especially rewarding.

Addie Walstad, a high school senior from Platte, was Charles Mix Electric's 2025 Youth Tour student. She was selected by the tour chaperones to be the Youth Leadership Council representative from South Dakota, an honor which brought her back to the nation's capital to learn more about the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association and participate in professional development courses. She was also selected to give the opening address at NRECA's annual conference in front of hundreds of co-op leaders from around the country.

Dangel said stories like Walstad's remind him of the outsized impact co-ops can have within their communities.

Member Services Career

Electric cooperatives offer many rewarding, purposeful careers, and member service roles are no exception. Dangel recommends the role to organized, patient and communicative individuals who want to make a positive impact within their community.

"Co-op employees talk about being part of a family, and it's definitely true," Dangel said. "I'd recommend this career path to anyone with a desire to help others. That's really the heart of it."

As a member services professional, You may be asked to:

- Be the face of your co-op in the community and at events.
- Answer members' questions and assist them with issues.
- Be an expert in the field – attend conferences and seminars to increase your knowledge and understanding.
- Cooperate among cooperatives; co-ops work together statewide and nationally to share knowledge and experience.
- Educate members on electrical safety and the co-op mission to provide safe, reliable and affordable power.
- Assist your co-op in a range of areas, like IT support, event planning, newsletter writing, marketing and educating the next generation of co-op members and leaders.



Mike Dangel gives an energy safety demonstration to the Platte/Geddes FFA.
Photo submitted by Charles Mix Electric



Intense wind left the crossarm of a broken three-phase pole hanging after a holiday storm.
Photos submitted by Black Hills Electric Cooperative

GETTING THE LIGHTS BACK ON

Black Hills Electric Cooperative Works Tirelessly Following Holiday Storm

Frank Turner

frank.turner@sdrea.coop

In the early morning hours of Dec. 18, powerful winds swept across western South Dakota, leaving much of the Black Hills without electricity. The outage included the home of Bill Brisk, manager of operations at Black Hills Electric Cooperative.

Through wild winds, Brisk set out for his office at the cooperative at 3 a.m., where he discovered that the windstorm was unlike anything he had seen in his 36 years with the cooperative.

“We get wind in the Hills,” Brisk said. “But nothing like that. In all of the time that I’ve been at the cooperative, I’ve never seen wind that strong.”

Wind gusts were later estimated at more than 100 mph, tearing through the Black

Hills with unprecedented force.

When Brisk arrived, the scope of the damage became clear. Nearly the entire system was down, and more than 11,000 of the co-op’s approximately 11,500 meters were without power. By daybreak, more than 96% of Black Hills Electric Cooperative’s system was dark, the largest outage event in the cooperative’s history.

Although an influx of outage calls from members came in around midnight, Brisk made an early and critical decision; crews would not be sent out while the storm was still raging.

“We began receiving calls around midnight, but I did not have our crews go out, just for the fact that it was just too dangerous,” Brisk said. “Trees were breaking off, conditions were hazardous, and I didn’t want to put our crews in any

dangerous situations.”

Instead, crews waited for daylight, when conditions allowed for safe assessment – the first step of getting the lights back on.

Assessment almost always begins with reporting from the community. Due to an overwhelming call volume during storm events, local reports of outages are forwarded to Basin Electric Power Cooperative’s Security and Response Services. These services relay important updates to electric cooperatives. Dispatchers communicate with linemen via push-to-talk radios and cell phones, tracking linemen from the time they leave the shop until the outage has been restored.

In addition to local reports, linemen also conduct their own assessments. That morning, linemen reported countless uprooted and snapped trees, downed poles and even wires lay broken across forest floors and roadways. In some areas, trees fell into other trees, creating dangerous conditions for anyone working below.

“I believe this was one of the worst storms in our cooperative’s history, including winter storm Atlas,” said Brisk.

As the assessment was underway, line

crews worked to bring downed substations back online first, then main three-phase feeders, followed by smaller distribution lines that bring power directly to homes and businesses. That order helps restore electricity to the greatest number of members as quickly as possible.

In the Black Hills, terrain adds another layer of complexity. Many lines run through dense forest, steep canyons and areas far from maintained roads.

“This isn’t square-mile territory,” Brisk said. “You might have to drive five or six miles just to get around a canyon.”

By midday Dec. 18, it was decided the damage was too widespread for Black Hills Electric to tackle alone. Brisk reached out to Mark Patterson, South Dakota Rural Electric Association’s manager of loss control, to request mutual aid from neighboring cooperatives – reinforcing a long-standing cooperative tradition built on neighbors helping neighbors.

Within hours, assistance began mobilizing. Crews, trucks and equipment arrived from across western South Dakota. Six electric cooperatives and a contractor ultimately sent help, bringing 55 additional linemen to the Black Hills. Those crews came from Butte Electric Cooperative, Cherry-Todd Electric Cooperative, Lacreek Electric Association, West Central Electric Cooperative, West River Electric Association, Rushmore Electric Power Cooperative and Kainz Power Lines, a local contractor based out of Custer.

“I had each operations manager of the responding cooperatives call me and ask what we needed,” Brisk said. “We asked for bucket trucks, digger trucks, chainsaws, attachments for skid steers, and extra line crews, and they sent everything we asked for.”

Days began early and ended late with crews often working 12 to 16-hour shifts. Brisk emphasized safety repeatedly to the crews as they worked among unstable trees, high winds and rugged terrain.

Behind the scenes, the restoration effort extended beyond the field. Office staff coordinated logistics and prepared meals. Lunches were packed daily for crews heading out before dawn. Supplies

were tracked, equipment was staged and communication updates were shared with members.

“It wasn’t just the line crews,” Brisk said. “Everybody stepped up.”

As crews continued working and Christmas approached, it appeared unlikely that power would be fully restored in time for the holiday. The visiting crews made it clear they were willing to stay through the holiday.

“All the outside crews said they weren’t leaving,” Brisk said. “They stayed to help us finish.”

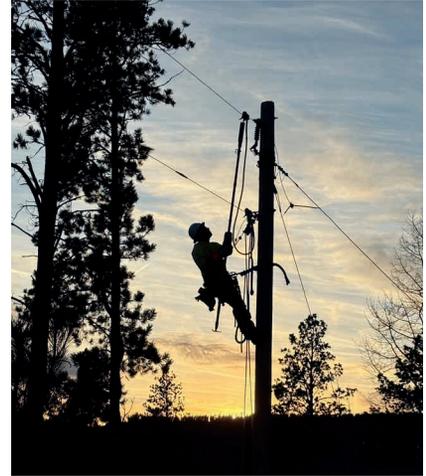
By Christmas Eve, most members had power for the holiday and visiting crews were able to return home. Even still, Black Hills Electric crews continued limited work through the holiday, work that continues today.

“To be truthful, we are still cutting trees, setting poles and repairing lines from this storm,” said Brisk.

The storm was later designated a FEMA-eligible event, requiring detailed tracking of labor, equipment and materials.

Looking back, Brisk said the restoration efforts relied heavily on cooperation and dedication among crews from the assisting cooperatives.

“It’s good to know you’ve got great neighbors,” he said. “When you need help, they come.”



An assisting lineman from West River Electric Cooperative installs a ground on the line to be further worked on.



Damage from the storm not only affected poles, but also uprooted trees.



Bill Brisk, manager of operations at Black Hills Electric Cooperative, gives a morning briefing, updating the cooperative and assisting crews with storm recovery assignments.



GREY GOOSE STORE & SOCIAL CLUB

Austin Hammer

Business Development & Procurement Specialist

More Than a Store

Located just north of Pierre – about two songs on the radio – the Grey Goose Store & Social Club has built a reputation for being more than just a bar or restaurant – and more than a convenience store. Under the leadership of General Manager Ryan Riedy, who has been at the helm for the past 15 years, the business has grown far beyond its original footprint. While the Grey Goose Store was already a busy destination when Ryan took over, he saw opportunities to expand its offerings and create a space that truly served the community.

Despite being warned that growth would come with challenges, Ryan pushed forward, adding new ideas and experiences that have helped keep the Grey Goose Store a popular destination in the Pierre area. One of the most notable expansions was the creation of the Roadhouse, an event venue connected to the store. What was once a grass field behind the building has been transformed into a space designed to host larger community events.

The Grey Goose Store also remains proud to be a full-service restaurant, offering breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Feature meals of the day or week are regularly shared on the Grey Goose Store's social media pages.

Entertainment with a Purpose

As part of the vision to make the Grey Goose Store & Social Club a well-rounded destination, Ryan began exploring entertainment options that filled a need in the Pierre area. One of those needs was comedy. The Grey Goose Store now hosts regular

comedy nights in its Speakeasy, an intimate venue that seats up to 70 people per show.

Comedy acts – ranging from regional to national performers – take the stage every third Friday of the month throughout the winter. These shows have been well received, and Ryan plans to continue welcoming comedians while maintaining the Grey Goose Social Club's reputation as the Pierre area's premier comedy destination.

In addition to professional performances, the Grey Goose Social Club has hosted open mic comedy nights, giving local community members the chance to step on stage and showcase their talents. Participation and feedback have been positive, and the team hopes to continue offering these opportunities in the future.

Live Music and Signature Events

Live music has also become a staple at the Grey Goose Store. Over the years, the venue has hosted numerous concerts featuring both local and national artists. These outdoor concerts are held in the Roadhouse, which can accommodate over 300 people. "It has been an amazing experience to host some of the best musicians in the country, right here!"

During the summer months, the Grey Goose Store hosts Bike Nights every Thursday, featuring music and other activities. One of their largest annual events is Oahe Blues Fest; this year marks the 11th anniversary of Blues Fest and is scheduled for August 1.

Looking ahead, Ryan hopes to find even more ways to utilize the Roadhouse space and welcomes collaboration with businesses, promoters, and event coordinators. As Ryan puts it, "We would love to work with people, businesses, promoters, or event coordinators looking for a unique venue to host their soiree."

Community Celebrations

Throughout the year, the Grey Goose Store hosts several additional events that draw strong community participation. One upcoming highlight is the Big Wheels Rollin' Slow tractor event, scheduled for May 16. This unique tractor show includes a scenic dam run, where participants will cruise their tractors from the store to the Oahe Dam and back.

The Grey Goose Store will also host a Fourth of July celebration in honor of the USA's semi-quincentennial, featuring a neighborhood parade and festivities throughout the day.

Another popular tradition is the spring and fall flea market and yard sale, which offers free space for neighbors to sell garage sale items, handmade goods or collected treasures. Ryan describes the event as a way to support creativity, reuse and community connection.

Beyond the Store

Ryan and the Grey Goose Store have also found ways to take their offerings beyond their own property. During Pierre's Oahe Days celebration, the Grey Goose Store sets up a drink stand serving mocktails and classic soda shop drinks. A shaded seating tent allows visitors to relax, enjoy their drinks, and escape the sun. These efforts have been well received, and Ryan plans to continue participating in community-sponsored events whenever possible.

Strong Community and Cooperative Roots

Community involvement is important to Ryan, both personally and professionally. Over the years, he has supported the Pierre

Players theater as an actor and membership supporter, and has been a longtime advocate of Pierre's club hockey and figure skating programs. When his sister played hockey, Ryan volunteered as a game announcer – a role he continued even after her playing days ended. He has also had the honor of announcing several boys' and girls' state hockey tournaments. Today, the Grey Goose Store maintains a board sponsorship at local hockey games.

Ryan also shares a strong connection to the electric cooperative family. His grandfather, John Riedy, was one of the founders of Grand Electric in Bison, S.D. In 1982, the J.R. Riedy Substation was named in his honor, and John was issued meter number one when he retired from the board. Ryan still holds onto that original meter today.

Grateful for the Support

With its wide range of offerings, the Grey Goose Store & Social Club has become a standout destination in the Pierre area. Ryan credits much of that success to his team of 25 employees – six of whom are full-time – who help keep daily operations and special events running smoothly. He is also grateful for the broader community support, from neighbors lending a guitar for a concert to volunteers helping with sound and setup.

Ryan believes success in business requires more support than many people realize, and he is deeply appreciative of the people who continue to help the Grey Goose Store & Social Club thrive.

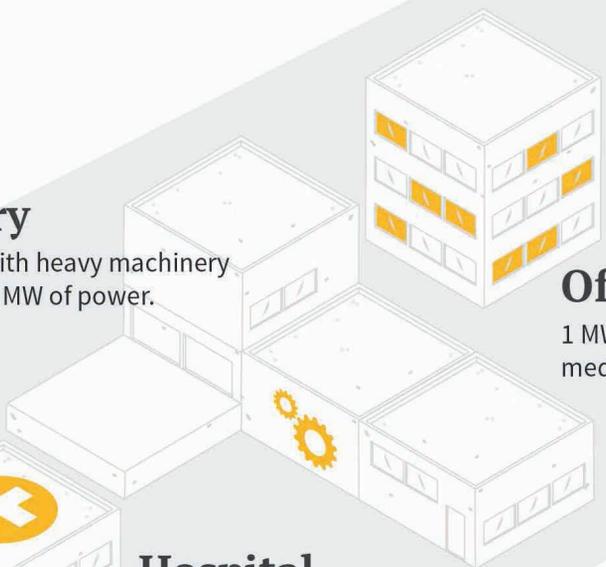
Facebook: Grey Goose Store & Social Club
Instagram: @greygoosessc



What Can You Do With 1 Megawatt?

Factory

Facilities with heavy machinery can draw 1 MW of power.



Big Box Stores

1 MW will power a typical large retail store.



Office Building

1 MW can power several medium-sized office buildings.

Hospital

1 MW will power a small hospital.



Power Plant

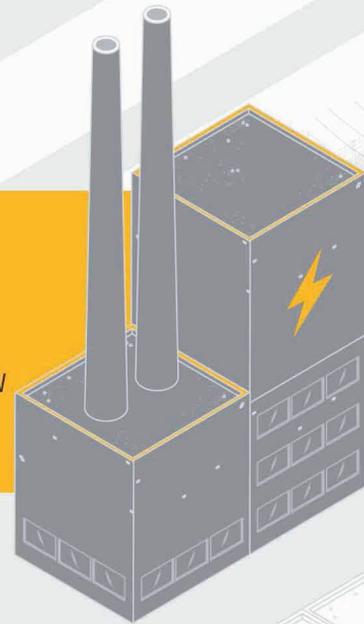
Typical outputs:

Coal: 500 MW to 1 GW

Gas: 50 MW to 1 GW

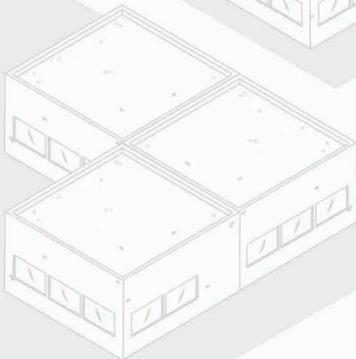
Nuclear: 500 MW to 1.5 GW

1 MW is 1 million watts of power.



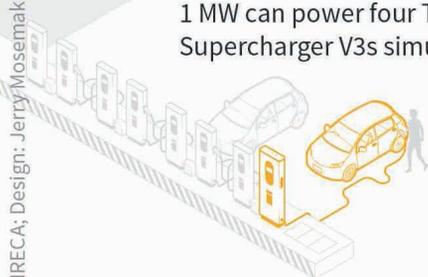
School

0.5 MW will power a medium-size public school.



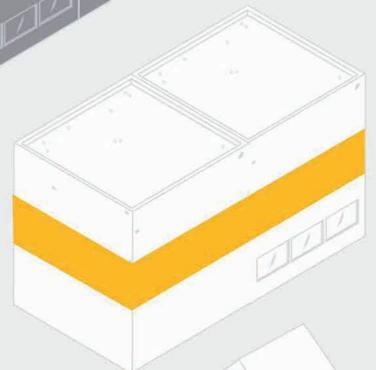
EV Charging

1 MW can power four Tesla Supercharger V3s simultaneously.



Data Center

1 MW will power one small data center.

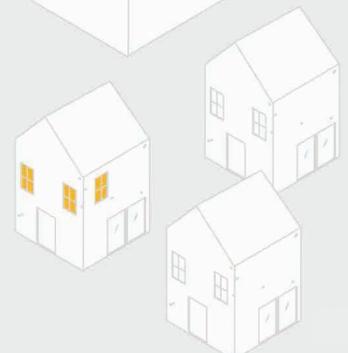


Other facilities that can draw up to 1 MW of power:

- High-speed rail
- Large farms
- Wastewater treatment
- Stadiums

Residential

1 MW can power 750 to 1,000 homes.



WHAT IS A MEGAWATT?

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

If you're a regular Cooperative Connections reader, you've probably seen the term "megawatt" countless times. From articles about new power generation facilities, energy-saving tips, major infrastructure projects or energy policy, megawatts come up again and again. But what does a megawatt actually mean?

Watts, Kilowatts, Megawatts & More

A megawatt is a unit of power that measures the speed at which energy is generated or used at a given time. A megawatt is 1,000 kilowatts (KW), or 1 million watts.

You may recognize watts from the labels on everyday household items like light bulbs and phone chargers. These numbers indicate the amount of power the device draws while operating.

Here are the wattages for some common household items:

- LED Light bulb – 5-20 Watts
- Refrigerator – 350-800 Watts
- Desktop PC – 100-800 Watts
- LED Television: 30-300 Watts
- Microwave – 700-1,200 Watts
- Hair Dryer – 1,500-2,000 Watts
- Clothes Dryer – 1,800-5,000 Watts

At East River Electric Power Cooperative, the generation and transmission cooperative that sells power to member co-ops in Eastern South Dakota and Western Minnesota, Jennifer Gross uses a modified bicycle to help put power into perspective.

The bike is stationary – the pedals power a small generator wired to several different kinds of light bulbs. Gross, who is East River's education and outreach coordinator, says the "pedal power bike" demonstrates energy use in a tangible way and highlights the difference of energy-efficient products.

"It's actually quite difficult for the person pedaling to generate electricity consistently for more than a few minutes," Gross said.



"When they're pedaling to power the inefficient, old-school incandescent light bulbs, they can pedal for about one minute and not even keep it at 200 watts the whole time."

The electric grid experiences the most strain during peak demand times – the hours before and after work and school when most people are home doing laundry, watching TV etc.

In communities with hundreds to thousands of homes and businesses, electricity demand grows large enough to be measured in megawatts – the unit equal to 1,000 KW.

Your electric co-op's electricity is generated by Basin Electric Power Cooperative, which was formed in the 1960s by electric co-ops in the upper Midwest to generate electricity for co-ops. Serving over 3 million consumers across nine states, Basin generates power from its owned and leased assets, which include coal, natural gas, solar and wind. Basin's generation capability is so massive that it's measured in gigawatts – the unit equal to 1,000 MW.

Basin reports a maximum generating capacity of about 8,427 MW – or 8.427 GW. That figure reflects every available generation resource running at full output, including the oil-fueled peaking units used during times of high demand, along with purchases from the Western Area Power Administration and the Southwest Power Pool energy market.

On an even larger scale, the total installed generation capacity in the U.S. reaches the terawatt level, totalling about 1.3 TW, which is equal to 1,300 GW, 1.3 million MW or 1.3 billion KW – enough to simultaneously run about 1 billion hair dryers!

$$\begin{aligned}
 &1 \text{ Million Watts} \\
 &= \\
 &1,000 \text{ Kilowatts} \\
 &= \\
 &1 \text{ Megawatt} \\
 &= \\
 &1/1,000 \text{ Gigawatt}
 \end{aligned}$$

Your Co-op's Megawatts

As a co-op member, you're a part-owner of Basin Electric's generation resources. Here's a look at several of those facilities.



Antelope Valley Station
Beulah, N.D. • 1984
900 MW • Coal



Bison Gen. Station
Epping, N.D. • 2030
1,490 MW • Nat. Gas



Pioneer Gen. Station
Williston, N.D. • 2013
822 MW • Nat. Gas



Crow Lake Wind
White Lake, S.D. • 2011
172 MW • Wind



Wild Springs Solar
New Underwood, S.D.
2024 • 114 MW • Solar



MOVING A MOUNTAIN

Dakota Energy Cooperative raises line so the home can pass underneath.
Photo submitted by Dakota Energy Cooperative

Co-ops Assist Historic Home On Trek Through Rural South Dakota

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

Jeff and Sherri Johnson had been waiting for years to build their dream home on their McCook County land, but with ongoing supply chain challenges, it was becoming increasingly difficult – and expensive – to build on their rural acreage.

When Sherri saw the sale listing for a beautiful historic home in northwest South Dakota, she knew that it was more than a house; it was a dream come true.

"I had a dream a few years ago about a blue house moving, and I saw this house that had been on the market for a while in Lemmon," Johnson recalled. "I saw the house, and then I remembered the dream, because when God gives us a dream, it just goes deep in there and you remember."

She knew she had to act, and soon after, the Johnsons were the proud owners of the 1910 prairie-style home. All they had to do was get it to their land north of Montrose.

Sherri and Jeff contacted Milbank House Movers to figure out just how exactly to transport a 100-ton house over 400 miles.

"For a 37-foot tall loaded, 2 ½ story house, this was one of the longest moves we have done," explained Josh Wendland from Milbank House Movers. "We had to reach

out to all of the power companies along the moving route to get their input as to how far they felt we could travel each day with how many power lines we would have to deal with on any give segment of the route. It was determined that the total move of 421 miles should be segmented into seven travel days on the road ranging from 14 miles the first day up to 98 miles on the furthest traveled day."

At Moreau-Grand Electric, crews found the house was too tall to pass under their lines even if they raised them up with their bucket trucks.

"We had to totally just cut some of the lines, the structure was so tall we couldn't lift them up high enough," said JJ Martin, the co-op's member services director.

Martin said power outages were pretty minor in the service territory until the house reached the US 212/SD 63 junction west of Eagle Butte, where the Western Area Power Administration had to cut its transmission line taking the southern portion of Moreau-Grand Electric's service territory offline.

"Once the structure moved through, we put the lines back up, and the outage only took about an hour or two in total," Martin said. "After that, there were a few minor distribution outages until they finally

crossed the Cheyenne River."

At East River Electric, the generation and transmission cooperative serving co-ops in eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota, operations dispatch worked in advance to identify power line crossings along the route that would need to be lifted or disconnected.

"We have a lot of our line measurements for these situations, but if it's an odd route, we go and get new measurements of lines that we may not have measured – like if they're trying to go through an area to avoid bigger infrastructure or bridges," explained Clayton Tanner, East River's system operations superintendent. "Depending on how close the load will get to our infrastructure, we decide whether we have to have our guys on scene to watch it go through, or if we have to switch that line out and ground it because there's a chance of it arcing over. There have even been cases where we've dropped the line to the ground and had them drive over it."

The house crossed 12 of East River Electric's transmission lines; nine of the lines had to be de-energized, three of the lines were lifted, and crews watched the house pass underneath in two other locations.

Despite the home's unprecedented journey, spending a week trekking 421 miles across rural highways through eight electric cooperatives, the house arrived in one piece.

The house joins another historic building on Jeff and Sherri's land: a 1903 rural schoolhouse that sat in Turner County for much of its life before being moved to Minnehaha County to serve as a Methodist Church, and finally to McCook County in 2011 when Sherri and Jeff purchased the building to move it and restore it to its former turn-of-the-century glory.

When asked if she had ever thought she'd get this far along with the house moving project, Sherri nodded an affirmative yes.

"We already did it once with the church," she said. "I wished we could have been able to do this about 10 years ago, since it probably would have fit a little better. But you know what? Things work out exactly the way they are supposed to."

History of the House

Known as the Ole Quamman house, the 1910 prairie style foursquare house spent the last 115 years on 2nd Avenue in Lemmon. Ole Quamman was one of the first businessmen to arrive in Lemmon, which was founded just three years before in 1907. Quamman created the town's Petrified Wood Park & Museum in 1933 to showcase petrified wood from Perkins County. At its Lemmon address, the house featured two flowerpots decorated with petrified wood on its walkway – those traveled with the home to McCook County.

The South Dakota State Historical Society writes that the interior of the home is "lavishly styled" and features some of the latest design ideology of the time.

It was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2015, but lost its eligibility after the move. Sherri is applying to get the house back on the list for its architectural significance and level of preservation. She also plans to do the same with her historic church.

Sherri and Jeff Johnson with their new home on its foundation in McCook County. It sits on land that has been in Sherri's family for generations.

Photo by Jacob Boyko



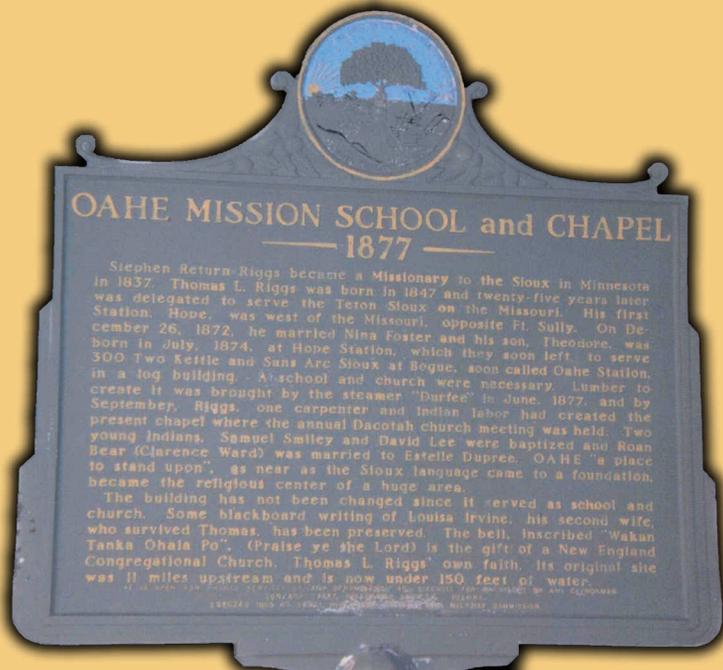
The house crosses the Oahe Dam – officially entering east river South Dakota.
Submitted Photo



The house rounds one of the final corners. Southeastern Electric Cooperative was on the scene to connect power.
Submitted Photo



In the application to add the house to the National Register of Historic Places, the South Dakota State Historical Society writes that the interior of the home has an "elegant Arts and Crafts design."
Submitted Photo



FROM SHERRI'S JOURNAL

The only place I wanted a picture of the house moving along its 400-mile journey was at the Missouri River crossing. I was plenty early on the morning of Nov. 17, 2025, when I parked my car at Oahe Dam Visitor Center. It was cold, windy, and still dark outside as I aimed my headlights at the Oahe Mission School and Chapel historical marker. I started reading the sign, but abruptly stopped when I read '...at Bogue...' Bogue was the maiden name of my 3x great grandma. Not only was I reading a sign about a building being moved as I waited for my historic house to move across the dam, but the name on the sign perfectly connected to a name in my ancestry. Daylight eventually dawned, the clouds broke, and sunlight lit up the house as it crossed the river. I had planned a picture, but God did so much more that morning. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than we all ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us. (Ephesians 3:20)



MARCH 7
Ag Day
 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
 Washington Pavilion
 Sioux Falls, SD
 605-367-6000

Washington Pavilion Photo

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 5
SD Jazz Festival
 7:30 p.m.
 Johnson Fine Arts Center
 Aberdeen, SD

MARCH 7
Free Christian Men's Event
 The Barn at Aspen Acres
 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
 Spearfish, SD
 Register: RiseUpMen.com

MARCH 7
Southern Hills Holistic Fair
 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
 Mueller Civic Center
 Hot Springs, SD

MARCH 7-8
The Black Market
 Sat. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
 Sun. 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
 W.H. Lyon Expo Building
 Sioux Falls, SD
 605-332-6004

MARCH 14-15
Philip Area Annual Rod & Gun Show
 Sat. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
 Sun. 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
 American Legion Hall
 Philip, SD
 605-859-2135

MARCH 14
St. Uhro Finnish Festival
 11 a.m. Main Street Parade
 12 p.m. Community Ctr. Lunch
 Lake Norden, SD
 605-881-1758

MARCH 14
SNOLF (Snow Golf) Tournament
 Webster, SD
 Contact: Buster's Resort
 605-345-2787

MARCH 20-21
Badlands Quilters Getaway
 Fri. 5:30 p.m. Start
 Sat. 8 a.m. Start
 Wall Community Center
 Wall, SD
 605-279-2807

MARCH 20-22, 27-29
Mighty Corson Art Players
 March 20-21, 27-28: 7:30 p.m.
 March 22, 29: 2:30 p.m.
 Corson Playhouse
 Corson, SD
 www.mightycorson.com

MARCH 21
Central SD Skate Club Presents Ice Jam Drop the Beat
 4:30 p.m.
 Expo Center
 Fort Pierre, SD

MARCH 27
East Dakota Chapter NWTF 33rd Annual Banquet
 Ramkota Expo Hall
 Sioux Falls, SD
 605-940-0702

MARCH 28
Coteau Prairie Masters Gardeners Ready, Set, Grow
 9 a.m.-12 p.m.
 Codington Cty. Extension Cplx.
 Watertown, SD

MARCH 28
VFW Teener Baseball Benefit Vegas Night
 Social: 4:30 p.m., Meal: 6 p.m.
 Tyndall, SD

APRIL 3
Bachelors of Broadway: Gentlemen of the Theatre
 7 p.m.
 Johnson Fine Arts Center
 Aberdeen, SD

APRIL 5
Easter Sunrise Service
 7 a.m.
 Mount Rushmore
 605-391-9156

APRIL 9
McCrossan Wildest Banquet Auction in the Midwest
 Jimmy Buffett Tribute
 Polynesian Paradise Dancers
 Sioux Falls, SD
 www.mccrossan.org

APRIL 9-11
Annual Schmeckfest
 German Heritage Celebration
 Freeman, SD
 605-925-4237
 www.schmeckfest.com

APRIL 18
Brookings Quilt Show XII
 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
 Admission: \$10
 Dakota Bank Center
 Brookings, SD
 605-690-3246

Note: We publish contact information as provided. If no phone number is given, none will be listed. Please call ahead to verify the event is still being held.