

# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



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# A Balanced Fuel Mix Promotes Power Reliability



**Matt Hotzler**  
Manager

The energy industry is undergoing a dramatic transformation as consumer demand for more renewable energy sources grows, and innovation and technology continue to advance exponentially. You're likely witnessing this energy evolution firsthand.

In driving across the region, you may have noticed some of the renewable energy projects. In 2020, three wind companies put up several wind towers throughout Deuel County. You may be surprised to hear that Basin Electric does not directly buy from any of these towers, so H-D does not get power from these wind towers. However, that doesn't mean that H-D Electric's wholesale power supplier is not getting power from wind. At the end of 2020, Basin Electric has 1,760 MW of wind in its portfolio. To put that in perspective of how much 1,760 MW is, H-D Electric has a peak of 25 MW. In addition to wind, Basin has committed to buy the output of 278 MW of two large utility-scale sized projects to be built in Western South Dakota and Montana. Basin also gets nearly 44 MW from eight recovered energy generation projects. These projects demonstrates our commitment to renewables.

While renewables are important, it's also important to recognize the value of other energy sources besides renewables. February's extremely cold weather showed how important it is to have a diverse portfolio of energy and why Basin Electric maintains many sources of generation. When one generation fuel source isn't available there are options. While coal and gas have gotten a bad environmental reputation in recent years, I can say without hesitation I'm sure glad we have coal plants as a reliable power source for the extreme cold we get here in South Dakota. With the number of improvements made to the coal power plants over the years they don't have the same negative environmental impacts of the early built coal plants.

Basin's generation portfolio fuel mix has

changed dramatically over the last few years, in the year 2000 Basin Electric had 85 percent of its generation capacity from coal, 11 percent from hydro and 4 percent for oil and diesel. Now 20 years later, Basin's 2020 generation capacity mix has only 40 percent from coal, 25 percent from wind, 19 percent from natural gas, 7 percent from market purchases, 5 percent from hydro, 3 percent from oil and diesel and 1 percent from recovered energy.

However, to borrow a nautical analogy, it takes a long time to turn the direction of a large ship – and changing the energy mix we use to power homes and businesses doesn't happen overnight.

While renewable energy use is increasing, we will still depend on traditional forms of energy to keep power flowing reliably to your home. After all, solar and wind energy are referred to as "intermittent" power since the sun does not always shine and the wind does not always blow. This fact coupled with the growing demand for renewables creates its own challenges. That's why there is real value in maintaining a balanced mixture of fuel types to ensure reliability, resiliency and meet the growing demand for electricity.

As the energy industry continues to evolve, H-D Electric is striving to take advantage of technology advances and market opportunities as they become available. This means H-D Electric works to continue to bring safe, reliable and affordable power to our community.

Albert Einstein once observed that, "Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving." In order for H-D Electric to meet the growing demand for renewable energy and ensure the reliability of our power supply, we must constantly work with Basin Electric to strive for balance and a brighter future for our members.

You may notice this month's magazine looks different. It is different because the publication has gotten a makeover, and this is the first issue the modern design is being unveiled to you - our readers. There have been many of the state's electric cooperatives editors working on this for several months. The last redesign of this publication was about four years ago. We thought it was time for another refresh because the world continues to change at a rapid pace. We want to keep our communication channels clear, concise, and up to the modern-day design standards that our members expect. We hope the simple design brings a more modern look to the magazine and incorporates design elements that make the pictures pop and the articles effortless to read.

**COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS**

**H-D ELECTRIC**

(USPS No. 018-905)

**General Manager:** Matt Hotzler

**Headquarters Employees:**

Annie Aberle –

Finance and Administration Manager

Michelle Prins – Billing Clerk

Heidi Brewer-Grimlie – Accounting Clerk

Jami Bolden – Receptionist/Cashier

Roger Cutshaw – Engineer

Darren Matthies –

Building Property Worker

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Todd Sprang – Line Foreman

Line Crew:

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Cody Scarrott – Lineworker

Derek Bille – Lineworker

Kevin Holida – Lead Lineworker

Matt Miller – Equipment Operator/  
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# H-D ELECTRIC'S NEWEST EMPLOYEE BIO



Hello Everyone! I am Colette Gannon and I am the marketing intern for H-D Electric Cooperative. St. Paul, Minn., is where I call home. I am currently attending South Dakota State University majoring in public relations and minoring in legal studies. I also participate in writing for the university student newspaper.

Some of my hobbies are working out (cycling, lifting and sometimes yoga) and reading a good book. I also am a volunteer guide at the Historical Village Museum in Farmington, Minn. When I am not working, I enjoy being outside, going on road trips and being with my family.

I started working at H-D Electric in the middle of May and am looking forward to being part of a great organization and great staff for my internship.

## Operating Statistics

|                               | April 2020 | April 2021 |
|-------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Customers .....               | 3,663      | 3,719      |
| Amount Collected.....         | \$867,184  | \$906,114  |
| Average Bill .....            | \$236.75   | \$243.64   |
| Average Kilowatt-Hour .....   | 2,127      | 2,192      |
| Kilowatt-Hours Purchased..... | 8,264,266  | 8,768,358  |
| Kilowatt-Hours Sold .....     | 7,791,845  | 8,151,279  |

## Happy Independence Day!

Our office will be closed Monday, July 5, in celebration of Independence Day.

We will resume normal business hours the following day. Have a safe and enjoyable holiday!



# Handling food safely when grilling outdoors

One of America's favorite summer pastimes is grilling, and safe grilling starts with proper food handling. Here are a few simple guidelines for grilling food safely:

- Wash away harmful bacteria. Avoid providing a hotbed for bacteria. Unwashed hands are a prime cause of foodborne illness, also known as food poisoning, as are unwashed perishable foods such as meat, seafood, and peeled or cut fruits and vegetables.

- Keep perishable foods cold. If you'll be meeting up with friends away from your backyard grill, it's best to transport all perishables in an insulated cooler kept cold with ice or frozen gel packs.

- Throw away any perishable leftovers that have been out of a refrigerator or cooler for more than two hours—one hour if the temperature is above 90 degrees.

- Keep coolers out of direct sunlight and avoid opening them frequently, to keep the cold air inside.

- Marinate safely. Marinated meats should be stored immediately in a refrigerator or cooler, not on the kitchen counter or outside next to the grill. As long as a marinade is stored in a cool environment, it can remain there safely for several hours or days.

- Do not use marinade from a raw meat/marinade mixture as a sauce on cooked meat, unless you first cook the

sauce to a boil for at least three minutes to kill harmful bacteria.

- Use grilling shortcuts.

Pre-cooking food partially indoors before putting it on a preheated grill will give you quick results when your friends are hungry or your grill is slow or small. Conversely, flame-grill meat for a smoky, charbroiled flavor, then bake in an oven until it's cooked properly.

- Cook thoroughly and use a meat thermometer. It's best to cook food to the safe minimum internal temperature to destroy harmful bacteria. On the grill, meat and poultry will brown quickly, but the inside might only be cooked partially. To be sure the food has reached a safe internal temperature, use a meat thermometer.

Here are some safe minimum internal temperatures:

- Chicken: 165 degrees
- Beef hamburgers: 160 degrees
- Beef, veal and lamb (steaks, roasts and chops): medium-rare 145 degrees, medium 160 degrees
- Pork: 165 degrees

With proper refrigeration and thorough cooking, your backyard barbecue will be a tasty success.

**AVOID UTILITY SCAMS**

Scammers will threaten you with everything from shutting off power to your home to legal action. Don't fall victim to these types of scams.

- Our employees will never show up at your door to demand payment.
- Never give personal information to an unknown caller or visitor. Our representatives have access

- to the details they need to service your account.
- Demands for immediate payment by wire transfer, cryptocurrency, gift cards or cash reload cards should immediately raise red flags.



## Don't fly kites near trees and power lines

**Annette Tschetter, 7 years old**

Annette is the daughter of Elaine and Ryan Tschetter of Revillo. They are members of Whetstone Valley Electric based in Milbank.

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.



# SUMMERTIME DESSERTS

## WHOOPIE PIES

Ingredients:

- 1 box spice cake mix
- 1 1/2 cups apple butter
- 1/2 cup canola oil
- 2 eggs
- 8 ounces cream cheese
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 3 cups powdered sugar
- 2 tablespoons milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

### METHOD

Heat oven to 350 F. Line baking sheet with parchment paper. In large bowl, whisk spice cake mix, apple butter, oil and eggs. With ice cream scoop or large tablespoon, spoon batter into rounded heaps, about 2-3 inches in diameter, onto parchment paper. Space spooned batter 2 inches apart. Bake 14 minutes. Let cool. In large bowl, beat cream cheese, butter and powdered sugar until smooth. Add milk and vanilla; beat until blended. Frost flat sides of pie halves and place halves together. Refrigerate and store in sealed container.

Culinary.net

## ROCKY ROAD ICE CREAM

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup cocoa powder
- 1 -14 oz. can sweetened condensed milk
- 2 cup heavy cream
- 1 cup half & half
- 1 TBS vanilla
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans
- 1 cup miniature marshmallows

### METHOD

In a small saucepan put in cocoa and whisk in sweetened condensed milk until smooth. Cook over low heat, whisking constantly until slightly thickened, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat. Transfer to a bowl and stir in both creams and vanilla. Pour mixture into ice cream maker and freeze. Stir in pecans and marshmallows halfway through freezing process. Transfer to airtight container and put in freezer to harden, about an hour. Makes 2 quarts.

Joan Antonen, Arlington, SD

## PRALINE PECAN CRUNCH

Ingredients:

- 1 21 oz. box Quaker Oat Squares cereal (about 8 cups)
- 2 cups pecans
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1/2 cup light corn syrup
- 1/4 cup margarine
- 1/2 tsps baking soda

### METHOD

Heat oven to 250 degrees. Mix cereal and pecans in 9"x13" pan. Set aside. Mix corn syrup, brown sugar and margarine in glass bowl. Microwave on high 1-1/2 minutes. Stir, microwave 1 to 1-1/2 minutes more or until boiling. Stir in vanilla and baking soda and pour over cereal mixture. Stir to coat evenly. Bake 1 hour, stirring every 20 minutes. Spread on baking sheet to cool. Break into pieces and store in air tight container.

NANCY STENSON, FORT PIERRE

## MAMA'S CARAMEL PUDDING

Ingredients:

- 1 cup sugar - melt in skillet until golden brown
- 2 cups milk - stir until sugar is dissolved
- 4 tsps. corn starch stirred into a little milk

### METHOD

Cook until thickened. Serve with whipped cream.

Elaine Rowett, Sturgis, SD

Please send your favorite dairy 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 2021. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

## Dear Pat and Brad: We just purchased a home and noticed the previous owner installed an electric wall heater in the outdoor shed. How much will our electric bill go up if we use this heater next winter? Should we consider insulating the shed? – Lloyd



**Pat Keegan**  
Collaborative  
Efficiency



**Brad Thiessen**  
Collaborative  
Efficiency

Good questions! An uninsulated outbuilding can be quite expensive to heat (or cool) depending on where you live. Even though we're currently experiencing July's warmer temperatures, I'll focus on heating since your shed includes the wall heater.

Years ago, I worked on a home energy contest that selected homes with the highest energy bills and helped the owners make efficiency improvements. One year, the home with the highest energy use had an uninsulated shed that was heated in order to keep several cans of leftover paint from freezing. The cost of heating the shed each winter was more than it would have cost to

### The cost of heating and cooling an outbuilding can be much lower if the thermostat is carefully controlled.

replace the paint.

The cost to heat or cool your outdoor shed depends on your climate, the size of the outbuilding and the price you pay for electricity. I conducted a quick calculation that showed heating an uninsulated 6 ft. by 8 ft. shed could cost twice as much as heating an insulated 900 sq. ft. home. Wow!

Some outbuildings are heated with wood, which is a sound choice if you have a free source of firewood. Another strategy often seen in workshops is a radiant heater directed at the work area, perhaps in front of a workbench. But if you're paying for your fuel and decide to keep an outbuilding heated, you

should definitely insulate it.

An important consideration, unless you live in a desert-dry climate, is the effect moisture can have in an outbuilding. Moisture enables rot, insects and mold to wreak havoc on your structure, and rust to degrade tools and other metals. Heating and insulating an outbuilding, if done right, can reduce or eliminate a moisture problem. But insulation installed incorrectly can trap moisture and foster mold growth.

Moisture in an outbuilding is usually caused by three things: leaks where water can get through (typically through the roof, windows and doorway); seepage through floors and walls; or condensation when nighttime temperatures drop. To prevent moisture buildup, you need to eliminate moisture sources and prevent condensation.

As air cools, it cannot carry as much moisture, and condensation occurs, usually on the coolest object at hand. Insulating walls and ceilings can keep the interior wall or ceiling surface from getting cold enough for condensation to occur. Insulated wall or ceiling cavities need to be carefully air sealed so that condensation does not occur inside the cavity.

I should also note that the cost of heating and cooling an outbuilding can be much lower if the thermostat is carefully controlled.

Only you can decide if the value of heating and cooling your outbuilding is worth the cost and effort to properly insulate and seal. Even if your shed is not heated or insulated, it's worth keeping an eye out for mold and mildew.

We hope you enjoy your new home and your outdoor shed!

Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen of Collaborative Efficiency write on energy efficiency topics for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. For additional energy tips and information on Collaborative Efficiency visit: [www.collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips](http://www.collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips).



Logan Storley of Roslyn, SD, lands a kick against opponent Yaroslav Amosov at Bellator MMA 252 last November. It was Storley's first Bellator loss against 11 wins. *Photo courtesy of BELLATOR MMA/Lucas Noonan*

# LOGAN STORLEY

## Former state champion wrestler seeks to make his mark in mixed martial arts

**Billy Gibson**

[billy.gibson@sdrea.coop](mailto:billy.gibson@sdrea.coop)

There are many who know what it's like to experience difficult emotional blows in life: broken relationships, medical afflictions, financial hardships and other misfortune. There are fewer who know what it's like to get physically punched in the face, choked, kicked in the jaw and thrown to the ground with violent force.

And still fewer who have experienced both. That's Logan Storley.

Folks around Webster know Storley as a six-time state high school wrestling champion and four-time all-American at the University of Minnesota. The 28-year-old is currently carving out a career in mixed martial arts, fashioning

a record of 11-1 as a competitor in the Bellator MMA program.

And while he's used to punching and being punched, Storley said he recruits the same mental and emotional fortitude to deal with any test of adversity whether it comes in the cage of combat or in the cage of life.

Storley suffered his first loss last November when he dropped a split decision to Yaroslav Amosov, a defeat that was difficult for him to bear. The post-fight video segment shows Storley ripping his hand away from the referee after the verdict was announced.

But the blows to the forehead and kicks to the ribs that rocked his body that evening paled in comparison to the pain of watching his beloved uncle battle ALS for 10 years before finally

succumbing to the dreaded disease in 2019.

"It really hurts to see someone you've love and cared about all your life being sick like that and withering away," Storley said. "But he did a great job keeping his spirits up. He never groaned about how unlucky he was or how unfair it was. He lived a great life, he had a lot of good people around him and I was fortunate to know him. Now he's in a much better place."

Storley said that while hardships in life and contrived combat in the confines of a cage may be different types of challenges, they require the same determined mindset to overcome and move beyond.

"When there's a death in the family, or a heartbreak or financial problems, you have to keep showing up no matter what life throws at you. You have to take the time to deal with it, control what you can control and then continue to go on with life."

As far as what it's like to get physically punched in the head and body during the heat of competition, Storley said it's important to first understand, as in real life, there is going to be some adversity and pain.

"You go into the cage expecting that you're going to get cracked. You know you're going to be in a fight," he said. "It's a shock to your system when you feel that thud, but you know you have to respond and keep on fighting. You realize you can get past it and fight on."

Storley's loss in November hasn't deterred him in the least. He stays focused on completing a task left undone when he failed to win a national title in college. His goal is to become the "best fighter in the world."

"It's important to me. My whole life has been wrestling and competing," he said. "I want to win a title, defend it a couple of times and then move on."





# Summer fun awaits off the beaten path

Off-road enthusiasts from far and wide come to ride the Black Hills. Photos by Billy Gibson

## From the Black Hills to Avon, off-road ATV trails attract outdoor enthusiasts

**Billy Gibson**  
billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Generations ago, folks flocked to the tiny hamlet of Nemo to search for gold buried deep in the nooks and crannies of the Black Hills region.

Today they come in search of family outdoor fun and adventure along the hundreds of miles of nature trails that course throughout the craggy terrain.

During most months of the year, Nemo is a quiet outpost with a

smattering of permanent residents who spend their days in unhurried leisure. But the warm summer months bring thousands of visitors seeking to explore the undulating wooded landscape on foot or on horseback, but most of all nestled in the seat of a side-by-side.

The Black Hills area is widely regarded as the state's top draw for all-terrain adventurers, and Nemo stands smack dab at the center of the action.

One of the town's busiest denizens during the summer crush is Dane Hilger, who runs D&K ATV

Rentals in Nemo. Hilger does a brisk business pairing up riders with fully licensed and permitted machines that allow visitors to free-range along the trails and take in the breathtaking vistas. His fleet of more than a dozen two-seaters and four-seaters gets snapped up quickly as the town is completely transformed during the summer season, which typically kicks off with the annual Black Hills ATV/UTV Rally held in mid-June.

"There are so many people in town it seems like it's hard to get around sometimes, but it's very family-oriented and everybody gets along and has a good time getting out and enjoying the great outdoors."



Vacationers and even day-trippers have access to everything they need during a visit to Nemo with the Brandin’ Iron restaurant, camping sites, a general store and lodging.

Adam Rice, a native of Rapid City, owns and operates the Brandin’ Iron in addition to another restaurant in Arizona. Soon after high school, he headed to Arizona for culinary school and later opened his business there. But two years ago, Rice was lured back to South Dakota and decided to resettle in Nemo.

“The town just has an aura about it. It’s pristine and gorgeous. There’s no better way to see the Black Hills. You can get to a lot of cool places through the trail system that goes literally thousands of miles and you never have to get on the road. You can get to Deadwood, you can get to Mount Rushmore, you can get to Sturgis. I go out into the woods just about every day. There’s always something interesting to see.”

Larry Kaiser owns the Nemo Merchantile store where visitors will find fuel, snacks, beverages, clothing and an assortment of dry goods.

He laments that during the summer he is often too busy to ride the trails, but he enjoys supplying the provisions visitors need.

“It’s just a lot of fun. You meet the most interesting people and everybody’s having a good time.”

**“It’s just a lot of fun. You meet the most interesting people and everybody’s having a good time.”**



## TOP ATV TRAILS IN SD

- 1. Centennial Trail**  
West of Rapid City
- 2. Northern Black Hills**  
West of Rapid City
- 3. Southern Black Hills**  
Southwest of Rapid City
- 4. Buffalo Gap National Grassland**  
Southeast of Farmingdale
- 5. Bear Lodge Mountains**  
North of Sundance
- 6. Oahe Downstream OHV Area**  
North of Pierre
- 7. Talsmas ATV Trail Park**  
South of Avon
- 8. Reveheim Bay OHV Area**  
Southeast of Mobridge

They bring their kids, the grand parents and the dog and they just relax, unwind and have fun.”

While Nemo may be considered the mecca of ATV riders, there are several other prime spots in South Dakota open to the public.

In the southeastern region of the state near Avon, Jerry and Tina Talsma welcome ATV riders to their Trails End Ranch situated alongside the Missouri River.

The third-generation land owners opened Talsma’s Trail Park in 2005 with several hundred acres open to the public and trails that range from novice to extreme.

There are climbing hills, creek crossings, deep brush, open prairie land, river bottom terrain and expansive scenic bluffs overlooking the Missouri. There are also several play areas for riders to kick up some mud.

There are different fees to enter the park depending on the mode of transportation and special discounts for groups of 10 or more machines



Many ATV trails across the state have access to fishing, scenic vistas and places to pull over for refreshments such as the Merchantile store in Nemo shown above.

as well as multi-day and seasonal passes. Camp sites are available at a rate of \$20 per night with electricity and \$10 without.

The Talsmas have big plans for the summer with a Customer Appreciation Day on Aug. 14, a fundraising event for Horse Haven on Sept. 11 and a Halloween Scare Ride on Oct. 9.

For more information on the private park, visit [talsmastrailpark.com](http://talsmastrailpark.com). For more information about riding in the Black Hills, visit [blackhillsatvally.com](http://blackhillsatvally.com) and [custersd.com](http://custersd.com) where you’ll find details about ATV activities in the Custer area.

# Workforce Grows for the Summer

With summer construction project in full swing for H-D Electric Co-op, three men joined the operation department in May.

**Josh Hoeke** is a 1,000-hour employee from Milbank, S.D. He graduated from Mitchell Technical College this spring in power line construction and maintenance.

One of Hoeke's special skills is to whistle the Andy Griffith theme song. Some of his hobbies are fishing, hunting, welding and riding snowmobile in the winter. When not at work, he enjoys working on a project truck or three-wheeler, hanging out with buddies and trap shooting.

**Nick Kasten** is a 1,000-hour employee from Clear Lake, S.D. He graduated from Mitchell

## Temporary 1,000-hour Lineworkers Join Crews

Technical College this spring in power line construction and maintenance. Some of Kasten's hobbies are hunting and hanging out with friends. When not at work, he enjoys riding motorcycle and watching movies.

**Joseph Jordan** is also a 1,000-hour employee from Clear Lake,

S.D. He graduated from Mitchell Technical College this spring in power line construction and maintenance. A special skill Jordan has is working well with others. When not at work, he enjoys fishing and hunting.



Left to right: Josh Hoeke, Nick Kasten and Joseph Jordan

## 7 ESSENTIAL TIPS FOR CONSTRUCTION SAFETY NEAR POWER LINES

Construction workers often work in dangerous settings. Follow these essential tips to stay safe when working near electrical equipment.

### 1. Call 811

A few days before the start of any digging project, be sure to call 811 to prevent damage to underground lines.

### 2. Assess the Worksite

Take inventory of any potential hazards, making sure to look up and around to determine the location of overhead power lines. Take extra precautions when operating heavy equipment that may interfere with the overhead lines.

### 3. Contact the Electric Co-op

Always contact the local electric co-op before working near overhead power lines. The utility will coordinate with you to ensure it's safe to work around their electrical equipment.

### 4. Be Proactive

Treat all power lines as energized. Work with the local electric co-op to safely operate equipment near power lines.

### 5. Know What to Do

If your equipment contacts a power line, stay in the cab and call 911. If you must exit due to a fire, fold your arms across your chest and jump

out, taking care to not touch the ground and the equipment at the same time. Shuffle or hop with your feet together until you're at least 40 feet away.

### 6. Keep a Look-Out

Always use a spotter when operating heavy equipment near overhead power lines. This spotter should have no responsibilities other than keeping a look out for safety concerns.

### 7. Follow OSHA Guidelines

Comply with all OSHA requirements and applicable state and federal safety regulations.



## Taxes Support Local Schools

H-D Electric, along with our power suppliers, Basin Electric Power Cooperative and East River Electric Power Cooperative, paid \$325,726.21 in gross kilowatt hour taxes for the schools in Hamlin, Deuel, Brookings, Grant, Clark and Codington counties.

### Breakdown of taxes paid are as follows:

- Hamlin County Schools – \$177,319.12
- Deuel County Schools – \$128,791.50
- Brookings County Schools – \$11,032.74
- Codington County Schools – \$8,165.43
- Clark County Schools – \$310.74
- Grant County Schools – \$106.68

These taxes are in addition to property and payroll taxes paid by your cooperative. Despite being a nonprofit organization, your cooperative has many tax obligations. However, it enables us to demonstrate one of our core values and have a positive impact in the communities we serve.

### Water Heater Program Marathon® Water Heaters

H-D Electric sells three sizes (50, 85 and 100 gallons) of high-efficiency, lifetime warranty Marathon water heaters. We have rebate and discount programs for our members.

#### Replacing an old water heater?

Call H-D Electric and you may qualify for a new 50-, 85- or 100-gallon lifetime water heater from H-D Electric and after rebates, pay only \$500 (tax included) for a 50-gallon unit or \$750 for an 85- or 100-gallon unit.

#### New Construction or Gas Water Heater Conversion?

Check out what H-D Electric has to offer for the lifetime warranty water heaters for you. If you qualify a new 50 gallon would only be \$300 and a 85-, 100 gallon would only be \$500 (tax included).

Call H-D Electric office during normal business hours to find out the complete list of qualifications.

To receive the rebates noted above, a controller must be installed within 90 days of purchase. If a member chooses to not have a controller installed, they must pay the full amount with no rebates. The cost with no rebates is as follows: 50 gallon - \$1,200, 85 gallon - \$1450 and 185 gallon - \$1,550.

### MILITARY APPRECIATION AT CRYSTAL SPRINGS RODEO, JUNE 26

Seventy-six years ago in 1945, Clear Lake Rancher E.W. Wiesel had a dream. He wanted to turn a duck pond on his Crystal Springs Ranch into a rodeo arena. The sloping hills surrounding the pond would be perfect seating for spectators. The duck pond was drained of the water and the arena was built.

The first performance was held the next year in 1946 and there has been a performance every year since. The Crystal Springs Rodeo is part of the Badlands Rodeo Circuit which Touchstone Energy® is a major sponsor of.

On Saturday, June 26, Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives H-D Electric, Codington-Clark Electric, Whetstone Valley Electric, Lyon-Lincoln Electric and East River Electric Power Cooperative will be sponsoring the Touchstone Energy® Military Appreciation Night.

Employees and directors from local electric cooperatives will be greeting rodeo guests at the gates during Saturday's Military Appreciation Night performance and will hand out special gifts to the children.

We look forward to seeing you!

July 5 is International  
Cooperative Day





# SENSIBLE SOLAR

## South Dakota's electric cooperatives promote fair, sensible solar policies

**Billy Gibson**

[billy.gibson@sdrea.coop](mailto:billy.gibson@sdrea.coop)

With summer in full swing, the sun is bearing down on South Dakotans. But that wasn't the case just five months ago when an unexpected polar vortex covered much of the country in a blanket of snow and ice.

As co-op members now reach for the sunscreen and a cold beverage, it's easy to forget that back in February the same solar panels that are streaming torrents of ions today were reduced to a trickle when a convergence of circumstances caused a series of rolling blackouts.

That historic event alerted policymakers from Texas to the Canadian border to hit the pause button and take another look at how renewable power fits into the national grid-based energy picture.

Across the country, the solar market is facing what can be described as growing pains. Those pains stem from the fact that the nascent stages of solar energy were heavily subsidized through taxpayer dollars, as early adopters benefited from an array of state, federal and municipal government tax credits, exemptions, incentives, rebates and subsidies designed to get the industry off the ground. Tapping into these programs, owners of solar installations have been able to deduct up to half of their costs.

But as more homeowners and businesses opt for solar and as the cost of solar has dropped 80 percent since 2010, those subsidies are shrinking and the industry is in the process of having to eventually stand on its own feet. At the federal level, for instance, the Investment Tax Credit (ITC) established in 2005

has allowed new residential and commercial solar owners to deduct 26 percent of their installation costs from their federal taxes. The ITC is set to be reduced to 23 percent in 2023 and eliminated for homeowners by 2024. The Biden Administration has proposed extending the program for another two years.

According to the Energy Information Administration, direct federal government subsidies for solar alone totaled \$34.4 billion between 2010 and 2019.

As solar subsidies decline, the true costs for ratepayers to have 24-hour access to both intermittent renewable power and more reliable traditional power at the same time are coming to bear.

In Nevada, for example, incentives for homeowners were phased out in 2016 after the state's largest energy company argued that its costs of creating and delivering power weren't being fully covered and the expenses of serving every home and business in the system were being shifted to those exercising their right not to have rooftop panels placed on their homes.

Predictably, once the incentives



*Sensible Solutions for Our Energy Future*



South Dakota's electric cooperatives support reasonable strategies for our energy future that make sense for our members:

- Renewable energy solutions that are both productive and practical
- Rate structures that take affordability into account
- Balanced strategies centered on the best interests of co-op consumers
- Technology-based policies that promote economic development

## **“WE RELY ON INTERMITTENT RENEWABLE SOURCES TO CURB EMISSIONS AND MORE RELIABLE FOSSIL FUELS TO DELIVER THE BASELOAD POWER OUR MEMBERS NEED.”**

ROBERT RAKER

West River Electric, characterized the state's electric cooperatives as being neither pro-renewable energy nor anti-renewable energy.

“We're pro-reliability and pro-affordability for our members,” he explained. “We rely on intermittent renewable sources to curb emissions and more reliable fossil fuels to deliver the baseload power our members

to communicate with one another as each cooperative in the state has its own set of interconnection requirements and policies determined by their management.

“If one of our members wants to get involved in renewable energy, we need to know about it so we can work with the member to make sure the process goes as smoothly as possible,” Raker said.

Chris Studer, chief member and public relations officer at East River Electric, echoed Raker's comments and emphasized another important factor in open member-to-cooperative communication: safety.

“Just make sure to call your co-op. It's a safety issue. Improperly installed equipment could put the homeowner's property and co-op employees who work on the infrastructure at risk and that's what we want to prevent.”

Studer said the state's cooperatives will continue to play an active role as the renewable market evolves.

“At this stage in the emergence of the distributed generation market, the fixed costs that electric utilities have invested in their infrastructure needs to be taken under consideration as more members bring localized solar installations into the system,” he said.

“Other states have addressed this issue by establishing fixed charges for distributed generation owners in a way that was fair for everyone, while also setting up a system to streamline the resolution of any disputes that may arise. We'll continue to serve as an advocate for all co-op consumers.”

were sun-setted and solar owners had to pay for maintaining the same grid that they depend on when their panels aren't producing power, demand decreased.

In South Dakota, where there are no state government subsidies, investor-owned Black Hills Energy has followed Nevada's lead by proposing that the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission institute tariffs on homeowners to compensate the power company for those fixed costs required to keep the system functioning for all ratepayers who use it.

Opponents argue that the tariffs could potentially obliterate the state's growing solar market, which saw 462 MW installed through the first quarter of 2021.

As for South Dakota's electric cooperatives, the system's leaders paid close attention to the polar vortex event and the lessons learned in the aftermath. Robert Raker, public relations manager at

need. It's like a parent trying to determine which is their favorite kid. We favor both of them because we need to help protect the planet but we also need to fulfill our obligation to serve our members whether it's day or night, hot or cold, sunny or cloudy, windy or calm.”

Raker noted that co-ops have embraced the integration of renewable power into the state's fuel mix. Electric co-ops were leaders in introducing wind power, which now makes up roughly 25 percent of the supply while 17 percent comes from hydroelectric dams along the Missouri River. Co-ops are also involved in the construction of Wild Springs solar farm, which is expected to go on-line next year as the largest solar array in the western part of the state.

Without a clear and complete set of rules in place for distributed generation, Raker said it's paramount that members and their cooperatives work together

LET THE GAMES BEGIN



# LET THE GAMES BEGIN

## SDHSAA plans to resume normal activities when the fall semester begins

**Billy Gibson**

[billy.gibson@sdrea.coop](mailto:billy.gibson@sdrea.coop)

Success on the field of play often hinges on putting together a solid playbook to prepare for the rigors of competition. Like many organizations, the South Dakota High School Activities Association (SDHSAA) didn't have a playbook designed to deal with the coronavirus pandemic that interrupted the slate of sporting events mid-stream in the spring of 2020.

But just as it teaches student athletes the merits of teamwork and perseverance, the association

executed a quick response by pulling together a premier task force with a variety of participants to determine an effective plan of attack against the global menace.

The A-team included officials from the state Department of Health, Department of Education, local school administrators, private medical practitioners, teachers, coaches and parents. After using the balance of the spring season to reset and regroup, members of the task force spent last summer pursuing their work without any preconceived notions of where their efforts would lead or how the future would look. All were in agreement, however,

that the primary goal would be to protect the health of the students, parents, coaches, referees and others involved in youth activities under the association's purview.

It was the responsibility of Executive Director Dan Swartos to serve as head coach of the campaign to draft and execute a game plan before the fall 2020 season commenced even as many restrictions were still in force. He credited all involved in the effort for recognizing the importance of "keeping kids active" while staying focused on the goal of returning to sports and extracurricular activities in a safe manner.

"There was never any pressure placed on anyone to decide to play sports or not to play sports. Our goal was to keep everyone safe as we dealt with the pandemic and determined the best way to respond and return to normal activities





Officials at the SDHSAA say they plan to resume a normal slate of events this fall. *Photos by South Dakota Public Broadcasting*

as the pandemic ran its course,” he said. “We listened to those in the health profession for their recommendations based on what they were experiencing and balanced that with recommendations and observations that were coming from other quarters. The governor’s office trusted us and gave us the space we needed to make the best decisions.”

Swartos also gave high praise to leaders of the local school systems for being flexible as the chain of events unfolded. As an example, he referred to Lance Christianson, the 2019 state golf champion. Christianson was a student at Little Wound on the Pine Ridge Reservation when the school was forced to shut down due to the pandemic. Christianson was faced with the prospect of not being able to compete for another golf title in 2020.

Swartos explained that meetings were held and an agreement was hammered out to issue a waiver and allow Christianson to participate in the state tournament competition.

That kind of flexibility and adaptability was paramount, Swartos said, as the pandemic was impacting local schools in different ways in various parts of the state.

“The situation was different from east to west, rural and urban,

## “SOMETIMES YOU DON’T FULLY APPRECIATE WHAT YOU HAVE UNTIL IT’S TAKEN AWAY FROM YOU.”

DR. DAN SWARTOS

school population sizes and other variables,” Swartos said. “Things were happening differently in Sioux Falls compared to Lemmon. It was breaking out in some parts of the state, but in Harding County they didn’t have any coronavirus cases until the fall. We had to look at things like some small schools having 500-seat arenas and others having 5,000-seat arenas. We decided not to place restrictions on attendance and leave it up to the systems to make those kinds of decisions. The way our members responded, it was extraordinary.”

Swartos said he looks forward

to a fall 2021 semester that will seem close to normal for students, parents, teachers and administrators.

“Our plan right now is to go full speed ahead as normal, but we’re continuing to meet and take assessments of how things are going and receive the recommendations of the task force,” Swartos said.

“One of the things we learned is how important our sports and activities are to the development of our students. Sometimes you don’t fully appreciate what you have until it’s taken away from you. It’s important physically, mentally and socially.”



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**July 4**  
Independence Day

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.

**JUNE 19-20**  
**Aberdeen Arts in the Park**  
Melgaard Park, Aberdeen,  
SD, 605-226-1557

**JUNE 25-27**  
**Annual Main Street Arts  
and Crafts Festival**  
N River Street, Hot Springs,  
SD, 605-440-2738

**JUNE 30-JULY 4**  
**Annual Black Hills Roundup**  
300 Roundup Street, Belle  
Fourche, SD, 605-723-2010

**JULY 2-4**  
**Custer's Old Time Country  
Fourth of July**  
Various Locations, Custer,  
SD, 605-673-2244

**JULY 2-4**  
**Gold Camp Jubilee Days**  
Various Locations, Lead,  
SD, 605-584-1100

**JULY 2-4**  
**Sitting Bull Stampede Rodeo**  
Rodeo Grounds, Mobridge,  
SD, 605-845-2387

**JULY 4**  
**Fall River Fourth of July**  
Various Locations, Hot Springs,  
SD, 605-745-4140

**JULY 4**  
**Fourth of July Celebration**  
703 Main Street, Deadwood,  
SD, 800-344-8826

**JULY 4**  
**Fourth of July Parade**  
Kemp Avenue, Watertown,  
SD, 605-886-5814

**JULY 9-11, 16-18, 23-25**  
**Laura Ingalls Wilder Pageant**  
43379 Rose Lane, De Smet,  
SD, 605-983-5251

**JULY 9-11**  
**Annual Hot Harley Nights**  
J&L Harley-Davidson, Sioux  
Falls, SD, 605-334-2721

**JULY 10-11**  
**50th Annual Brookings  
Summer Arts Festival**  
W Highway 14 and 1st  
Avenue, Brookings,  
SD, 605-692-2787

**JULY 16-17**  
**Storybook Land Festival**  
Wylie Park, Aberdeen,  
SD, 605-626-7015

**JULY 16-18**  
**Gold Discovery Days**  
Various Locations, Custer,  
SD, 605-673-2244

**JULY 16-24**  
**Senior Summer Tournaments**  
Rapid City, SD, Contact Lindsey  
Meyers at 605-394-4175

**JULY 23-25**  
**Arlington Days**  
Various Locations, Arlington,  
SD, 605-983-5251

**JULY 27-31**  
**Days of '76 Rodeo & Parades**  
Various Locations, Deadwood,  
SD, 605-578-1876

**JULY 31**  
**Chislis Festival**  
Freeman's Prairie Arboretum,  
Freeman, SD, 605-496-9946

**AUGUST 5-14**  
**Sioux Empire Fair**  
W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds, Sioux  
Falls, SD, 605-367-7178

**AUGUST 17-19**  
**Dakotafest**  
2300 E Spruce Street, Mitchell,  
SD, 877-611-8161

**SEPTEMBER 10-11**  
**SD Trappers Association  
(SDTA) Fall Rendezvous**  
Fairgrounds, Clark, SD

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