

Cooperative Connections



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Electricity Brings Everyday Value



Laura London

Administrative Assistant
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Even though I work in the energy industry, like most people, I still don't think much about the electricity I use. I expect the lights to turn on when I flip the switch and the coffeemaker to work each morning. Because electricity is so abundant, we don't think much about it. Since many of us have been spending more time at home over the past few months, we have likely been using more energy. And yet, we still expect an endless supply of power with uninterrupted service 24/7. The only time we really think about electricity is when the power goes out or perhaps when the monthly bill arrives.

Given how electricity powers our modern lifestyle every day, it's a great value, especially when compared to other common services and expenses. For example, think back to the cost of a gallon of gasoline 20 years ago. Consider the cost of groceries or a cup of your favorite specialty coffee from a few years back. In comparison, the cost of electricity has remained largely flat, unlike most other consumer goods.

Like many of you, I have a cell phone to stay connected, and I subscribe to cable channels so I can enjoy more viewing options. Many of us consider these necessities for modern day life. We can see what we're getting for our money, and we pay the price for those services. In contrast, when we use electricity, we don't necessarily "see" all that we're getting for our money.

Considering what electricity does for us, it is a tremendous value for our quality of life as well as our budgets. For comparison, consider that the average rent increase was nearly 4 percent (from 2014-2019) according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index (CPI). The cost of medical care was increased 3 percent during this time, and education was not too far behind at 2.6 percent. So, where did electricity rank? According to the CPI, electricity increased by less than half a percentage point, 0.4 percent.

The bottom line: electricity brings everyday value. Lake Region Electric Association's mission is "To provide the highest quality services and products to its members while maintaining competitive rates." We are continuously striving to increase our service reliability, reduce those brief interruptions and reduce costs. We are continually working to improve our operations to ensure a smarter grid and exploring more renewable energy options where possible.

Lake Region Electric Association provides the reliable service you expect and deserve as valued members of the co-op. As your trusted energy advisor, we want to help save you energy and money.

We recognize that the past few months have been challenging for many of our members and we're here to help. If you have questions about your account, or are looking for ways to save energy at home, please give us a call. Lake Region Electric Association is your electric co-op and our sole purpose is to serve you and the needs of our community. That's everyday value.

**The bottom line:
electricity brings
everyday value.**



Welcome New LREA Members

- Dillon West
- Kristine Walden
- Roy Humphreys
- John Christensen
- Rick & Meredith Frisch
- Calvin & Bailey Meyer
- Lance & Sheila Bein
- Stacey Warner

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Cooperative Connections

(USPS 018-904)

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LAKE REGION RIPPLES COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is the monthly publication for the members of Lake Region Electric Association, Inc., PO Box 341, 1212 N Main St., Webster, SD 57274. Lake Region Electric Cooperative Connections' purpose is to provide reliable, helpful information to members on electric cooperative matters and better living.

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FROM FARM TO TABLE



SUNSET FARMERS MARKET and bake sale

August 21- 22, 2020

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6 miles west and 1 mile north of Britton

Focus on These Safe Practices Away From the Workplace

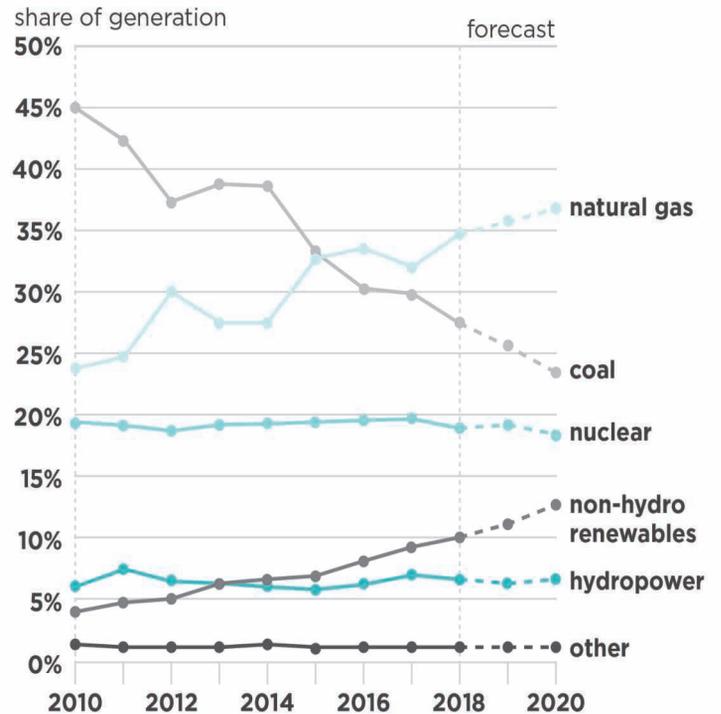
While your local electric cooperative often focuses on electrical safety and provides reminders to keep you free from harm, there are many other dangers lurking out there that don't necessarily pertain to electrical power.

Read on to see the National Safety Council's list of the top causes of preventable injuries and death away from the workplace. Keep these in mind and help protect you and your family from danger.

- **Poisoning.** In 2011, accidental poisonings overtook car crashes for the first time as the leading cause of unintentional injury-related death for all ages combined. Poisoning deaths are caused by gases, chemicals and other substances, but prescription drug overdose is by far the leading cause.
- **Vehicle crashes.** Roadway crashes are the second-leading cause of unintentional injury-related death overall in the U.S. Impaired driving, distracted driving, exceeding the speed limit and inexperience can often cause a life to be cut tragically short in the blink of an eye.
- **Falls.** Falling is the third-leading cause of unintentional injury-related death over all age groups across the country, but it's the No. 1 cause of death for those who are 65 and older who sometimes have health complications and problems with balancing.
- **Choking and suffocation.** Choking on food or other objects is a primary cause. Suffocation and choking rank higher among the elderly and infants.
- **Drowning.** This is the No. 1 cause of death for children ages 1-4, mostly due to children falling into pools or being left alone unattended in bathtubs.
- **Fires and burns.** Fires often start at night, when families are asleep and most vulnerable. A working smoke alarm will cut in half the chances of dying in a fire.
- **Natural and environmental incidents.** Weather-related disasters claim hundreds of lives per year. You should learn all you can about emergency preparedness and always have an emergency kit on hand.

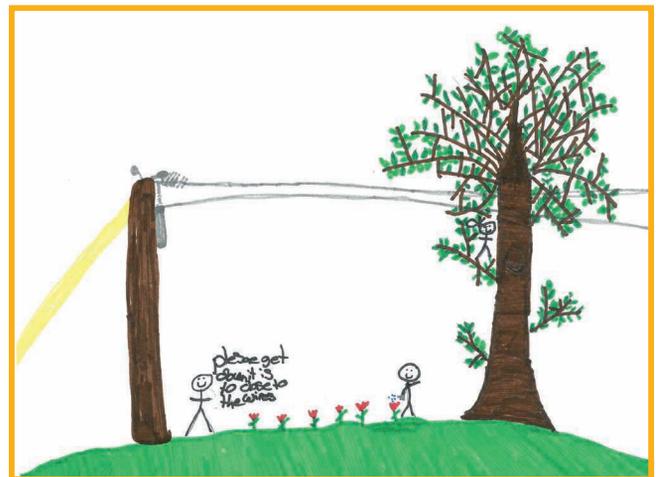
Source: National Safety Council

U.S. ELECTRICITY GENERATION BY ENERGY SOURCE (2010-2020)



Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, *Short-Term Energy Outlook*, January 2019
 Note: Confidence interval derived from NYMEX options market information

KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



"Please get down - it is too close to the wires!"

Forrest Hawk, 9 years old

Forrest Hawk is the grandson of Steve and Pru Hawk. They are members of Lacreek Electric Association, Inc., Martin, 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.



Protein-Packed Salads

Ranch, Bacon, Parmesan Salad

1 16 oz. Farfalle (bowtie) pasta	½ cup shredded Parmesan cheese
1 cup prepared ranch dressing	1 carrot, peeled and diced
6 slices bacon	1 stalk celery, diced
	1 red onion, diced

Fill large pot with lightly salted water, bring to rolling boil over high heat. Once water is boiling, stir in bow tie pasta and return to boil. Cook pasta uncovered, stirring occasionally, until pasta has cooked through, but still firm to the bite, about 12 mins. Drain well in a colander set in the sink. Transfer to a bowl, refrigerate until cool, at least 30 mins. Place bacon in a large, deep skillet, cook over med.-high heat, turning occasionally, until evenly browned, about 10 mins. Drain bacon slices on a paper towel-lined plate, let cool, and chop. In a large salad bowl, stir together the ranch dressing, bacon, Parmesan cheese, carrot, celery, and red onion. Lightly stir in cooled pasta to coat with dressing, and refrigerate 2 hours.

Cortney Reedy, Tea, SD

Rotini Salad

1 box rotini	sliced turkey, deli style
celery, green pepper, radishes, cucumber, onion, carrots	mushrooms, chopped
	cheddar cheese, shredded

Cook rotini as directed on package. Chop vegetables. Put all ingredients into a large bowl. Add 1 bottle zesty Italian dressing. Let chill, enjoy. Can add almost any fresh vegetable.

Mary Jessen, Holabird, SD

Broccoli Bacon Salad

Dressing:	2 T. vinegar
1 cup real mayo	Brown 1 pkg. bacon, break into pieces
¼ cup sugar	

Wash two fresh heads of broccoli and cut into bite size pieces. Add ½ cup raisins, ¼ cup purple onion, 1 cup shredded cheese, pepper to taste. Mix well.

Karen Jacobs, Tolstoy, SD

Ring Tuna Salad

1 pkg. ring macaroni cooked and drained	1 cup green olives sliced
4 green onions chopped	2 6 oz. cans Albacore tuna
1 cup frozen peas cooked and drained	2 T. salad dressing mixed with 1 tsp. olive oil

Cook, drain and cool macaroni. Mix first 5 ingredients then add salad dressing and olive oil, which has been whipped together. Store in refrigerator.

Darlene Price, Prairie City, SD

Chicken, Onion, Quinoa Salad

Dressing:	1 tsp. canola oil
¼ cup apple cider vinegar	1 white onion, sliced
2 T. olive oil	3 cups baby kale
1 T. lemon juice	1 red skinned apple, chopped
1 tsp. honey	2 cups cooked chicken, chopped
1 tsp. Dijon mustard	½ tsp. salt
1-½ cups red quinoa, rinsed	¼ tsp. pepper
2-½ cups vegetable broth	

To make the dressing: In a large bowl, whisk vinegar, olive oil, lemon juice, honey and Dijon mustard until well combined. Set aside. In a saucepan, bring quinoa and broth to boil. Simmer, covered, for 12-15 minutes, or until all of the broth has been absorbed. Let cool completely. In a medium skillet, heat canola oil over medium-high heat. Saute onion for 3-5 minutes, or until it is softened and translucent. Remove from heat; let cool completely. In a large bowl, toss onion, kale, apple, chicken, salt and pepper with dressing. Stir in cooled quinoa. www.onions-usa.org.

Please send your favorite vegetarian, garden produce and pasta 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 2020. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

Lake Region Electric Annual Meeting Rescheduled for Aug. 6 at Fort Sisseton

Laura London

LLondon@lakeregion.coop

Lake Region Electric Association's 79th Annual Meeting was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The meeting was originally scheduled to be held in Langford on June 4. The management and board of directors decided, in the interest of health and safety for our members and employees, that it would be best to postpone the meeting until a later date. Since that decision, a lot of thought and work has gone into planning the meeting. While some cooperatives decided to cancel their meetings altogether, Lake Region chose to postpone the meeting to give us more time to make arrangements that would help us all get together, while respecting social distancing boundaries. Our meeting will definitely be different this year, but it will still go on!

Time & Place

The meeting will take place at the Historic Fort Sisseton State Park. The business meeting will begin at 4:00 PM, gates will be open at 3:00 PM so that staff can assist members with parking. The good people at Fort Sisseton State Park have agreed to let us use the SOUTH parking area for the meeting. A park sticker will not be required for admittance. Members will be allowed to tour the buildings and exhibits if they like. Restrooms will be open in the South Barracks.

Drive-in Style

The meeting will have a different set up than in years past. This meeting will be like the old-style movie drive-in. You can attend from the comfort of your own vehicle with your AC going or your windows open, whichever you prefer. Attendees will remain in their cars and will listen to the meeting by tuning in on

LREA's 79th ANNUAL MEETING

SHAPING A STRONGER TOMORROW

Thursday, August 6th

Fort Sisseton State Park
11907 434th Ave. – Lake City, SD

Gates open at 3 p.m.
Business meeting begins at 4.

Free Admission – Enter thru South Gate.
◆ Each Food Pantry Item Donated ◆
Enters Drawing for a \$50 Gift Card!

Join us !

Snacks & Cold Drinks
(due to COVID, there will be no meal)

- Plus -

Voucher to a Participating Restaurant of Your Choice
(One per membership. Must be present.)

JOIN US FROM YOUR CAR! TUNE IN ON YOUR CAR RADIO!

their FM radio. Members will be notified of the FM radio frequency prior to the meeting. Any necessary voting will take place by honking your car horn. Chairs will not be available, as we are trying to help everyone keep their distance.

Meal

We will not be serving a hot meal at this event. Snacks and cold beverages will be distributed. Members attending the event will receive a meal voucher to a participating local restaurant. Due to the uncertainty of the pandemic, and the alternative venue, it was decided that serving a hot meal may not be in everyone's best interest. The alternative gives our members the opportunity to chose one of several participating local restaurants to redeem their meal voucher. Local restaurants who have been impacted by COVID-19 are eager to participate in this event and look forward to seeing our members.

Registration Card

Members received a Notice of Meeting in the mail, this is your registration for the event. You must bring that with you to the meeting. Registration forms will be scanned so that your attendance can

be counted, and you can be entered into drawings.

Donations

We will be accepting food pantry donations. Canned goods are preferable, so that they can easily be sanitized. Members will receive one entry, for a \$50 Gift Card prize drawing, for each food item donated.



Contact Us

Contact us if you have any questions about the Annual Meeting: 605-345-3379 or 1-800-657-5869.

Incumbent Directors Run Unopposed

Two Director seats will be up for election at the LREA Annual Meeting to be held, drive-in style, at the Historic Fort Sisseton State Park on Aug. 6, 2020. The seats up for election are District 2 and District 4. Both Incumbent Directors had submitted petitions prior to the deadline set for the Annual Meeting, originally scheduled to take place in Langford June 4. No other petitions were submitted.

Serving on the Board of Directors is a commitment that requires representatives to attend local meetings on a monthly basis as well as state and national meetings. Candidates must be active members of Lake Region Electric Association and must agree to attend all meetings. Board members attend trainings and pursue educational opportunities so that they are well informed on regulations and industry trends in order to best serve the members of Lake Region Electric Association.

Members wishing to make a nomination from the floor must call the office in advance of the annual meeting to pre-check the candidate for eligibility: 605-345-3379 or 1-800-657-5869. Qualifications and all other guidelines



Mark Wismer
District 2

can be found in the Lake Region Electric Association, Inc. Bylaws. A copy of the current approved bylaws can be obtained by calling the LREA office. A digital copy is also available for viewing or printing on the website: www.lakeregion.coop

District 2 Representative Mark Wismer is from rural Britton. He began serving the members of Lake Region Electric

Association as a director on the LREA Board of Directors in 2017. He has done consulting and engineering work both locally and internationally for many years. Wismer has been a co-inventor on eleven patents for Truss Industry Production Systems, including a system that is used to manufacture roof trusses all over the United States and Canada.

Wismer has great interest in changing technology and how it will provide countless advancements for the electrical generation and distribution industry. While serving on the board, he

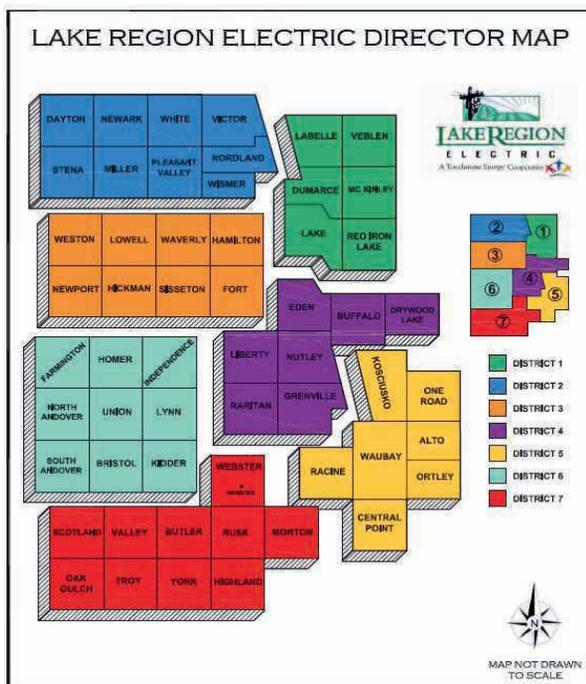


Tom Steiner
District 4

has continued his education to become a credentialed director. His experience has lent great insights and knowledge to the LREA Board of Directors and management.

District 4 Representative Thomas Steiner farms near Eden. He has served on the Lake Region Electric Association Board of Directors since 2003; he currently serves as the board secretary. Steiner feels that serving on the LREA board for nearly 18 years has been a privilege. "One of the core principles of co-ops is Concern for Community. As directors for LREA we have the opportunity to work for the development of our communities by implementing policies supported by our members."

Steiner recognizes how advancements in technology continue to change and wants to continue to serve the members of Lake Region: "It is amazing to see the changes taking place in the electrical business. Technology is racing forward, and it is a challenge to try to keep up with all of the changes. As a Director, it is our duty to provide reliable energy at a reasonable price and if I am re-elected, I will continue to work for that goal."





Wild Springs Solar Farm will capture the sun's rays to produce electrical power for South Dakota homes, farms and businesses.

CATCHING RAYS

Wild Springs Solar Farm to Produce Renewable Power

Billy Gibson

Contributing Writer

Business leaders know that diversification is the key to containing costs and surviving sharp economic slumps over the long haul.

That's especially true when it comes to producing the power that keeps South Dakotans supplied with the juice they need to run their homes, farms, irrigation pumps, offices and shops.

Those utilities tasked with keeping the power flowing day and night look for diversification when determining the raw materials they'll use to generate electricity.

The ability to draw from a variety of available resources – coal, natural gas, solar, wind, hydro, biomass, etc. – stabilizes the production process and helps to levelize costs as market rates for any or all of these resources rise and fall over time. This “all-of-the-above” strategy, in turn, makes it easier for producers to engage in long-range forecasting, planning and purchasing for the ultimate benefit of consumers.

That's why it made perfect financial sense for Basin Electric to strike a power purchase agreement with Geronimo Energy, a renewable power generation developer based in Minnesota.

Geronimo Energy is in the early phases of constructing a solar farm called Wild Springs that is expected to generate 128 megawatts (MW) of clean renewable power. When construction is completed in 2022, the \$190 million facility will be the largest grid-scale solar installation in South Dakota.

According to Basin Electric officials, the not-for-profit wholesale power provider jumped at the opportunity to join forces with Geronimo Energy and expand its renewable power portfolio.

“We are excited about adding large-scale solar to our already



Vic Simmons, CEO of Rushmore Electric, delivers a presentation on the Wild Springs Solar Farm.

diverse generation mix,” said Basin CEO and General Manager Paul Sukut. “The board’s decision to add solar to our resource portfolio is to continue with our all-of-the-above strategy, as well as solar generation becoming a more economic energy source.”

Basin Electric transmits electricity to 141 member co-op distribution systems in nine states. It also transmits wholesale power to two South Dakota generation and transmission (G&T) co-ops: Rushmore Electric and East River Electric. Those two G&Ts then transmit the power supply to their respective distribution cooperatives. Rushmore Electric is the power provider for West River Electric, which is the closest distribution co-op in proximity to the solar farm. West River Electric owns more than 2,500 miles of power lines and poles in western South Dakota.

Wild Springs will be built on more than 1,000 acres within West River’s service area near the town of New Underwood in Pennington County and will help stabilize costs for thousands of

ratepayers throughout the region.

West River CEO/General Manager Dick Johnson said he's happy to have a new neighbor and that the project has garnered the support of community leaders as it will create roughly 150 construction jobs. But he said he's even happier for the members who will benefit from the renewable power generated by the solar farm.

The facility is expected to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 85,000 metric tons annually, which is the equivalent of taking 18,000 cars off the road every year.

"We're excited that West River's service area will be home to the Wild Springs Solar Project," said Johnson. "This solar energy project will benefit our cooperative family, as well as our local communities. As not-for-profit co-ops that are owned by our members, everything we do goes back to the people we serve."

Johnson pointed out that the project is expected to produce \$17 million in economic benefits through its first 20 years in terms of tax revenue, job creation and contributions to charitable funds. The list of benefits also includes an education fund that plans to donate \$500,000 to local school districts.

Officials at Rushmore Electric said the power purchase agreement is a perfect fit in line with the cooperative's mission and long-term strategy.

"Our cooperative network is always looking to ensure we have a mix of power resources to meet the needs of our membership and renewable energy is an important part of that strategy," said General Manager Vic Simmons. "This project is an important strategic step as we look to the future in continuing our strong history of providing safe, affordable and reliable power."

Geronimo Energy recently completed the 200 MW Crocker Wind Farm in Clark County and also developed the Pierre Solar Project, a joint effort with the City of Pierre and Missouri River Energy Services in Hughes County.

Geronimo Energy President David Reamer said industry analysts often tend to doubt the viability of solar power in the region, but he said the Wild Springs project shows that consumers in more northern climates can also benefit from the renewable resource.

7 Efficient Home Improvement Projects to Help Save Money

The best home upgrades make spaces more livable and energy-efficient and are also cost-effective. Making energy-efficient improvements is a savvy way to save money on utility bills, curb energy consumption and add to the house's value. Consider a variety of home improvement projects, both big and small, that can reduce the financial burden of maintaining your home throughout the year and improve energy efficiency.

Add Insulation - A cost-effective way to save on heating and cooling bills is adding a layer of insulation in the attic where heat loss is typically greatest due to hot air rising. While many newer homes are adequately insulated, those that are several decades old (or older) may benefit from an upgrade in not only the attic but other common problem areas where air can escape such as basements, crawl spaces, fireplaces and ductwork.

Seal Doors and Windows - Windows and doors are common culprits for energy loss. While a complete replacement of doors and windows can be pricey, adding exterior caulk and weather stripping to fill in gaps where air can escape around these openings can make a noticeable difference for a fraction of the cost and make it cheaper to heat and cool your home.

Install Skylights - Skylights are a cost-effective option for transforming any room with natural light while also saving energy. For example, Sun Tunnel Skylights can be installed in 90 minutes and funnel natural light from the roof through the attic and into the room below with an aesthetic that resembles recessed lighting. Customizable with six diffuser film styles to complement interior design, the skylights can make a home more energy-efficient by reducing reliance on artificial lighting.



Reflective Window Film - When the sun shines through windows, it can heat up the home's interior quickly and trigger the air conditioner to turn on. Window coverings, such as blackout curtains, can help, but adding low-e reflective window film to your windowpanes, particularly southern-facing ones, can provide an additional shield from the sun and reduce energy costs.

Install a Programmable Thermostat - A programmable thermostat is an efficient way to control the climate inside your home. Today's smart thermostats not only let homeowners control temperatures from their smart devices but can also learn daily habits and adjust the temperature accordingly with no other manual adjustments necessary.

Replace Appliances - Because appliances like refrigerators and ovens are major energy users, investing in more efficient models provides both cost and energy savings. Additionally, homes more than 15 years old could benefit from updates to the air conditioner or heater as systems 15-20 years old or older may be candidates for replacement.

Ceiling Fans - In comparison to running your air conditioner consistently, the cost of running a ceiling fan (or several) is significantly less. Particularly on days that may not require cooling the entire house completely, fans can provide a gentle breeze and circulate air in the spaces you use most often. Simply adjust the switch to the counterclockwise position to ensure it's pushing air downward during warmer months.

For more information and home improvement ideas, visit whyskylights.com/livelifghter.



Mary Chilton D.A.R. Foundation

The Symbol of Freedom: The American Flag

June 1– September 7th | 10am-4pm

*Our flag is a symbol of everything that is America...
...but how did it get to be what it is?*

*Come visit Fort Sisseton Historic State Park and discover
how the American Flag has evolved throughout history.*

Park License is Required.

Contact Information:

Fort Sisseton Historic State Park
11907 434th Ave, Lake City, SD

605.448.5474 | FortSisseton@state.sd.us



Capital Credits Refunded Early to Members

One thing that sets Lake Region Electric Association apart from other electric companies is that we are a member-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperative. LREA allocates any excess margins to our consumers after paying all the bills and reinvesting what we need to keep electric costs as low as possible. Lake Region tracks the allocations and refunds the money as cash positions allow, back to you, our member-owners.



75 percent of 1993; last year the first 25 percent was disbursed. Also included in this year's approved retirement was 20 percent of 1994 capital credit and 25 percent of 2019. The amount that each member is refunded is based on the amount of electricity purchased in the years for which capital credits are being paid.

Members should have noticed the credit on their April billing.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic causing financial difficulties for many of our members in the spring, it was decided that the capital credits would be disbursed early to current, active members. Members should have noticed the credit on their April billing that is sent out at the beginning of May. The bill clearly showed the capital credit as a deduction and

should be kept for tax purposes. Inactive members were mailed a check in June.

The Lake Region Electric Association board of directors approved approximately \$515,000 in capital credit retirements at their regular meeting in March. The amount retired consisted of the remaining

A complete explanation of the cooperative's capital credits, patronage capital, can be found in the LREA Bylaws. A copy of the LREA Bylaws is available in digital format at www.lakeregion.coop. Anyone who needs a new, paper copy, of the Bylaws can contact our office by calling 605-345-3379 or toll free 1-800-657-8569 or by emailing your request to lakeregion@lakeregion.coop.

LREA's 79th ANNUAL MEETING

SHAPING A STRONGER TOMORROW

DESIGNATION OF REPRESENTATIVE

If you are a member corporation, cooperative, school, church, township or partnership of Lake Region Electric Association, Inc., and want to be represented at the Annual Membership Meeting at Fort Sisseton State Park on Aug. 6, 2020, please complete this form and have it signed by an official of your organization. Your official representative will have to present this form at the Annual Meeting registration stop in order to take part in the business matters on behalf of the organization.

This is to certify that _____ is authorized to represent
(Print name of voting delegate)

our organization _____ at the Annual Membership
(print name of organization)

Meeting of Lake Region Electric Association, Inc., at Fort Sisseton State Park on August 6, 2020, in any and all business, including voting, that may be conducted at said meeting.

Signature of Organization President

Date



Due to recent unusual weather patterns, grain bin safety is more important than ever.

GRAIN BIN SAFETY

Unusually wet year makes grain bin safety on the farm more important than ever

Susan Smith

Contributing Writer

Wet conditions during last year's harvest meant grain went into bins under conditions that aren't ideal.

Wet grain can cause crusting or bridging in bins. Producers try to scrape the crust away from the side, causing a landslide of grain sucking the producer in as it falls. Or they could be working in a bin not realizing they are standing on a bridge of grain that when it falls has nothing beneath it but air. This can also cause entrapment.

Many of these accidents happen in winter and early spring, said Beth Locken, director of safety and environmental at Agtegra Cooperative in Aberdeen. She calls that time period the second harvest when farmers are cleaning out bins for the coming year's crops. While South Dakota and North Dakota don't see the number of entrapment accidents as corn-belt states like Iowa and Illinois, grain bin entrapments are not picky, Locken said.

"We've already seen one (death in South Dakota) in 2020 already and that's too many," she said.

During the third week in February 2020, decreed by U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue as National Grain Bin Safety Week, Christopher Bauman died at his farm near Elkton while emptying corn. Bauman had a wife and three children.

After Bauman died, Locken and Scott Wheelhouse, safety director of the Agfirst Farmers Cooperative in Aurora, began



Training is an important element in responding to grain bin accidents on the farm.

talking about creating a local day-long seminar on grain bin safety. The morning would focus on a refresher course for first responders who already are trained to rescue someone trapped in a grain bin but maybe haven't had hands-on experience recently, Wheelhouse said. In the afternoon, producers from the area would get information on general grain bin safety and use of rescue equipment.

"We really want to emphasize we don't just want your business, we want your friendship," Wheelhouse said. "We want you alive."

AgTegra sold grain bin entry kits at cost to local producers this year, a service Wheelhouse would like to offer his customers as well. The kits sell for \$460 and include resources on how to use them.

"Mostly the benefit we get out of it is hoping we can educate the family and keep them safe," Locken said.

Purdue University releases an annual report on entrapment injuries and fatalities. The number increased by 9.8 percent in 2019. From 2017 to 2018 the number jumped 23 percent. In the last decade, 370 people died in grain bin accidents.



About 10 years ago, Agtegra donated to fire departments in its coverage area grain bin rescue tubes that fit around a submerged person. That includes about 70 departments in northeast and northwest North Dakota and areas along Highways 12 and 281 and I-90. Agtegra deployed a technical rescue team for the last 10 years.



Training paid off during a March grain entrapment.

The team membership and training is widespread for Agtegra employees and first responders.

"Immediate response is of the essence," Locken said. "If something happens on a farmer's bin site, they're not going to call AgTegra, they're going to call the fire department," Locken said.

That widespread training paid off during a March grain entrapment near Pierre.

"We were there providing guidance and additional equipment. We were inside the bin with the fire department just trying to get the victim out of there," she said. "We worked for about five hours and that was a successful response. Not all of them are like that, unfortunately."

The first rule of grain bin safety is not to go into the bin in the first place.

"We always say any time someone needs to go into a bin, stop and talk about it," Locken said. "Have absolutely more than one person there. Make sure the person has a harness and rope attached to the harness and to something attached to the bin that's not going to move."

Locken said turning off equipment like an auger is another good rule of thumb. That way grain isn't being pulled out of the bin as a person works in it.

John Keimig, SDSU Extension Youth Safety Field Specialist, conducts safety programs for 4-H youth. He educates children of producers so they know the rules and can keep an eye on their parents. Most producers know the risks of working around grain bins, he said, but might not consider them during the high pressure of a typical farm day.

"Adults know better," he said. "We get in a hurry. We don't always think and particularly in grain storage that can become very bad very quickly. By working together, we can help each other out if we have to go into a bin and we can save lives."

METH. WE TREAT IT.

Front line treatment providers stay focused on their goal

By Billy Gibson

Contributing Writer

To a public growing desensitized to increasingly sensational news accounts, one particular police report stood out.

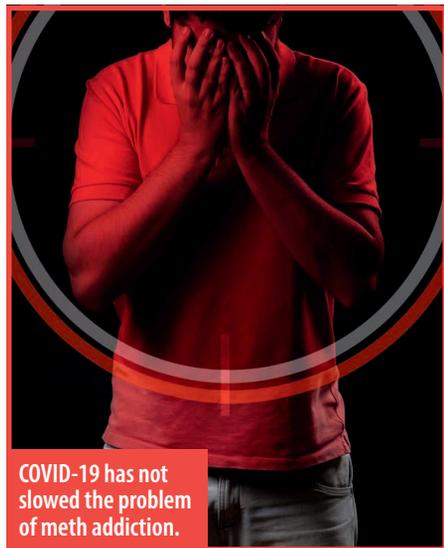
Probably because of the cattle prod.

Back in June, Sioux Falls police arrested a couple accused of using a cattle prod to discipline their four children, ages 11 to 17. The astonishing accusations also included the couple giving methamphetamine and marijuana to the youngsters in their charge.

It was another in a steady stream of stories serving as an indication of the widespread use of methamphetamine and the deleterious effects of drug abuse in the state.

Meth, especially, is a social and public health menace that has not mysteriously disappeared since the coronavirus outbreak, although it has morphed a bit as the pandemic has spread.

State and federal officials report that the impact of the virus has brought both good news and bad news.



COVID-19 has not slowed the problem of meth addiction.

On one hand, the curtailing of international and national travel, the economic downturn and the tightening of borders have all combined to reduce the supply of the powerful drug on city and rural streets.

On the other hand, the street price for the drug is escalating due to increased demand. As those hooked on the drug seek any

means of securing it and as general anxiety levels rise, officials fear that a jump in criminal activity is inevitable.

In Los Angeles, for example, meth prices doubled recently as narcotic traffic from Mexican cartels slowed down significantly. Price increases were also seen in states like Virginia, West Virginia, New Mexico, Kentucky, Tennessee and many others.

While the world turned its attention to the coronavirus earlier this year and now braces for a second wave, others dedicated to battling meth abuse over the long haul have never steered their focus away from their goals.

A statewide campaign to raise awareness of the meth problem was launched last fall as officials began recognizing that the manufacture, distribution and consumption of meth was becoming a plague



for far too many South Dakotans. The troubling trend was placing both rural towns and the larger population centers at risk.

The campaign was in response to disturbing figures that painted the picture of a national and international progression that was finally at the point of breaching the state's borders in record numbers.

For instance, officials reported that in 2018 more than 3,600 individuals were arrested in the state for possessing, transporting or distributing a collective 100 lbs. of methamphetamine. The Centers for Disease Control proclaimed that meth was taking the lives of more South Dakotans than any other illegal drug and that twice as many teens from 12 to 17 years old were using meth compared to the national average.

Additionally, 83 percent of court admissions for controlled substances in 2019 involved meth, as the state saw a 200 percent increase in people seeking treatment with the primary diagnosis of meth addiction between 2014 and 2018.

Meanwhile, law enforcement seized 24 lbs. of meth in the Rapid City area in 2018, over 20 lbs. in Sioux Falls, and almost 1 lb. in Pierre. It takes just .0003 lb. of the drug to cause a fatal overdose. From January to August of 2019, there were 2,243 meth-related arrests across 50 counties. In 2002, that number was just 467.

More recently, figures show that meth is impacting Native American and female populations at a disproportionate level.

For instance, officials report that more than 90 percent of inmates at the South Dakota Women's Prison in Pierre are substance abusers. Overall, roughly one-third of those inmates incarcerated in the state prison system are there because of drug addiction.

Recently, the female inmates have campaigned to push for more programs to help addicts within the system.

Inmate Heather Shooter, who belongs to the Cheyenne River Sioux tribe, is one of several convicts who have been instrumental in an initiative called Sober is Sacred, in which inspirational speakers, performers and other guests call for additional counseling and treatment programs to help those hooked on meth. The program follows a similar one launched at the Mike Durfee State Prison for

men in Springfield called Fathers Against Meth.

Dave Flute, state Secretary of Tribal Affairs and former Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux Tribal chairman, has described the scourge as having reached epidemic proportions on the state's reservations. He spoke last fall at the second State-Tribal Meth Summit and said the governor's administration is working closely with tribal leaders to combat the problem.

Carol Regier, CEO of the Keystone Treatment Center with facilities in Canton and Sioux Falls, said her program often works with tribal communities in South Dakota and surrounding states. She echoed Flute's comments that the governor's office has been deeply engaged.

"We've had discussions with the governor and the state has been very supportive of

our work, really going back to the Rounds administration," she said, noting, "But we did make up our own catch phrase: 'Meth. We Treat It.'"

She pegged meth abuse as "by far" the most toxic culprit when it comes to addiction and the social maladies that spring from it.

"Besides alcohol, meth is our number one problem. It's very addictive and caustic and people who get hooked rarely defeat it without qualified help," she said.

Regier said the in-patient program offered at Keystone typically lasts a month to 45 days and includes components of the 12-step Narcotics Anonymous plan. It also focuses on spiritual, physical and mental health, she said. After therapy, patients are supported and encouraged to participate in after-care and continued counseling.

Keystone has 126 beds, and Regier said

there is a steady stream of patients seeking treatment for their addiction. The pace hasn't slowed with the coronavirus.

"There was a period where it seemed people were afraid to come in, but they've started to come in now," she said. "We've seen an escalation in alcohol and drug abuse during the pandemic as people are having to deal with loneliness, joblessness, personal relationships and other drastic changes in their lives and in the country."

From her vantage point on the front lines, Regier strikes a positive tone. She encourages those who feel they need treatment to get it. She assures that most treatment plans are covered by insurance and that grants and other resources are available.

"Don't think you can't get help, because there are options. We see people turn their lives around," she said. "Treatment works."

LREA Unclaimed Capital Credits

The following members were unable to receive their Capital Credit refund checks. If you know the current address or phone number of anyone listed here, please let them know or contact Lake Region Electric Association by calling 605-345-3379 or 1-800-657-5869 or by sending an email to lakeregion@lakeregion.coop. Thank you for your help!

First Name	Last Name	City/State
Paul or Barbara	Ackerman	Philipsburg, MT
Mike or Becky	Bergquist	Bemidji, MN
Melorene	Black Thunder	Waubay, SD
Lake County Sports	C/O Robert Boever	Waubay, SD
Joseph	Bosmoe	Aberdeen, SD
Bonnie	Buhl	Lake City, SD
Dakota Nation Broadcasting	C/O Tom Wilson	Sisseton, SD
Mike	Dargatz	Watertown, SD
Karen	Davis	Redfield, SD
Lisa	Forcier	Sisseton, SD
Sandy	Hannasch	Sisseton, SD
Ruth	Hill	Sisseton, SD
Lavonne	Helmer	Groton, SD
Janie	Holm	Britton, SD
Angela	Johnson	Sisseton, SD
Tom	Johnson	Shakopee, MN
Joan	Jones	Rolla, MO
John Kraft Estate	C/O Marge Kraft	Britton, SD
Gene	Kolkman	Wabasha, MN
Patti	Kurschadt	Kallispell, MT
Alfred	Lamee	Britton, SD
James	Larson	Breckenridge, MN
Donald	Monson	Hecla, SD
Richard C. Morris Estate	C/O Barbara Morris	Britton, SD
Doug or Cindy	Nelson	Webster, SD
Jim or Camille	Nickeson	Big Stone City, SD
Nickeson Farms	C/O Jim Nickeson	Big Stone City, SD
Donald or Corrine	Nordling	Aberdeen, SD
James or Viola	Nordquist	Lake City, SD
Jody	Owen	Waubay, SD
John	Owen	Watertown, SD
James W. or Susan	Parker	Sioux Falls, SD
Dennis Parrow	Or Mike or Leona Parrow	Britton, SD
Stefanie	Piel	Lake City, SD
Paul	Pitkin	Saint Paul, MN
Carl	Privatt	Advance, MO
Paul or Marie	Rickert	Sioux Falls, SD
Linda Stanfill	or Robert or Delores Rosand	Gainsville, FL
Gaylon G. or Patsy	Scotting	Baltic, SD
Mark	Selzer, Jr	Groton, SD
Jeff	Thayer	Britton, SD
Larry	Trygstad	Bay City, TX
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September 3-5

South Dakota State Fair:
Perfect Vision of Fun,
1060 3rd St. SW, Huron, SD
800-529-0900
www.sdstatefair.com

July 21-25

98th Annual Days of '76 PRCA
Rodeo, Arena, Deadwood,
SD, 1-888-838-BULL,
www.DAYSOF76.com

July 26

15th Annual Car Show
Langford, SD, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
605-493-6597

July 31-August 1

Senior Games, Yankton,
SD, Contact Kristi Hauer at
605-665-4685

July 31-August 1

Plein Air & Arts in the Garden,
Wessington Springs, SD,
605-354-3826

August 1

Rockin' Ribfest BBQ
Competition, Wessington
Springs, SD, 605-505-1135

August 1

Foothills Classic, Wessington
Springs, SD, 605-350-1687

August 1, 22

The Murder of Miss Kitty
Comedy Mystery Dinner
Theatre, Holiday Inn Express
& Suites, Deadwood, SD,
605-580-5799

August 8-9

Threshing Show, Twin Brooks,
SD, www.threshingshow.com



August 8-10:
Red Power Round Up
Fairgrounds, Huron, SD
605-460-0197

Photo courtesy: South Dakota Department of Agriculture

August 8-10

Red Power Round Up,
Fairgrounds, Huron, SD,
605-460-0197

August 9

Online Only Bechyn Czech
Festival, Online Concert,
7 p.m., Bechyn,
Minn., 320-522-1218
www.facebook.com/Bechyn-
MinnesotaWorld

August 14-16

Astronomy Festival, Badlands
National Park, Wall, SD,
605-433-5241

August 21-22

Harvest Festival, Elkton, SD,
605-524-2681

August 22

World of Outlaw Sprint Car
Races plus Wissota MWM,
Dakota State Fair Speedway,
Huron, SD, 605-352-4848

September 7

Hidewood Valley Steam
Threshing Show, 1 p.m.,
47326 183rd Ave., Clear Lake,
SD, 605-881-8405

September 12-13

Fall Harvest Festival,
Delmont, SD, 605-928-3792,
www.twinriversoldiron.org

September 13

20th Annual Antique Tractor
and Car Parade, 1 p.m.,
Farmer, SD, 605-239-4498

September 25-27

Coal Springs Threshing
Bee Featuring Massy Harris
Tractors, Meadow, SD,
605-788-2229

September 26

10th Annual ROCS Fall
Festival, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.,
Springfield, SD,
605-464-7379

September 26

Wheelin' to Wall, Wall
Community Center, Wall, SD

October 7-8

Energize! Explore Innovative
Rural Communities
Conference, Milbank, SD,
<https://extension.sdstate.edu>

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.