



Cooperative Connections

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We Want to Hear From You



Rodney Haag

rhaag@oaheelectric.com

"We hope you will consider us more than your energy provider, but instead as a local business that supports this community and powers economic development and prosperity for the people."

We live in a device-driven world. Our smartphones, tablets, laptops and an assortment of other devices help us communicate and connect. Companies spend billions pushing out a steady drumbeat of messages and information, and we are constantly bombarded with one-way communication. But is anyone listening on the other end?

At Oahe Electric Cooperative, we are not only listening, we are eager to hear from you. Whether you text us, respond to a survey or social media post, send an email or simply stop by and chat in person, we thrive on your feedback. Connecting with you helps us keep pace with our community's priorities and needs.

Because we are a cooperative, we have a different way of operating. Oahe Electric exists to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to you, the members of the co-op. Equally important is our mission to enrich the lives of the members we serve. We hope you will consider us more than your energy provider, but instead as a local business that supports this community and powers economic development and prosperity for the people.

You will notice that throughout the year, we create opportunities for you and other community members to attend co-op gatherings and events in order to hear from you. These include our annual meeting.

We also conduct surveys to gather feedback so that we can plan for new initiatives, technical upgrades and improvements on existing co-op programs and services. Our planning is led by local members just like you who understand the needs of the community and are looking out for the long-term interests of the larger community.

We are in the midst of significant changes in the energy sector, as technology and the drive for more renewables and a more balanced energy mix is impacting long-term planning. These are complex issues that we will be navigating in the coming months and years. This is why it's so important that we hear from you and other community members as we plot our course for the future.

Oahe Electric works to continually learn from our members about their priorities so that we can better serve you – because your electric co-op was built by the community, for the community. But we can only improve, adapt and effectively plan for the future if we have two-way communication.

For our co-op and community to thrive now and in the future, we depend on hearing from you. I hope you will connect with us and let us know your perspective. You can always reach us directly at 1-800-640-6243 – we're listening.

CLOSED

Oahe Electric's offices will be closed on Dec. 24-25 for the Christmas holiday and Jan. 1 for the New Years holiday.

Everyone at Oahe Electric wishes you a joyous holiday season and a happy and peaceful new year!

Oahe Electric Cooperative Connections

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Editors

Russ Hohn and Sam Irvine

General Manager

Rodney Haag

Oahe Electric Board of Directors

President

Ken Gillaspie, 280-5015

Vice President

James Feller, 962-6207

Secretary

Ross Sperry, 962-6141

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Blaine Livermont, 945-2910

Assistant Secretary

Kirk Yackley, 605-258-2412

Attorney

David Larson

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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.

Oahe Electric Now Accepting Applications for 2020 Scholarships

Oahe Electric, in conjunction with Basin Electric Power Cooperative, is offering **one \$1,000** college scholarship to one lucky student in the Hughes and Sully County area. In addition to this scholarship, Oahe Electric is offering **three \$500** college scholarships.

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

Applicants for the scholarships must be a U.S. citizen and a dependent of Oahe Electric consumers. Applicants also must be students enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time undergraduate course of study at an accredited two-year or four-year college, university or vocational/technical school.

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

Also, if you apply for a scholarship, the essay included with your application automatically gets you entered in to the essay contest as well!

Applicants for the 2020-2021 academic year are being accepted until **Feb. 14, 2020**.

For more information, contact Samantha at Oahe Electric in Blunt, S.D., at 1-800-640-6243 or oahe@oaheelectric.com. Applications can also be downloaded by visiting our website at www.oaheelectric.com.

Write an Essay, Win a Trip to D.C.

Each year, Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc. selects a high school junior or senior student from one of our area schools to accompany several other students from South Dakota on an all-expenses-paid trip to our nation's Capitol.

While in Washington, D.C., these students learn how our government operates and have the opportunity to visit several of our nation's landmarks. They also learn how rural electric cooperatives were formed and the partnership between the rural electrics and the federal government.

It's easy to enter. Just compose an essay of at least 500 words describing how cooperatives can be economic engines for their local communities. Submit it to Oahe Electric by **Feb. 14, 2020**. Applicants must be a dependent of an Oahe Electric consumer.

Don't miss out on this great opportunity!

Oahe Electric Accepting Lineman's Scholarship Applications

Oahe Electric Cooperative is offering a **\$500** scholarship for a full-time student registered or planning to register in a power line construction and maintenance program.

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

electric cooperatives in the area.

Applicants for the scholarship must be a member or a member dependent of Oahe Electric. Applications for the 2020-2021 academic year are being accepted until **Feb. 14, 2020**.

For more information, contact Samantha at Oahe Electric in Blunt at 1-800-640-6243 or oahe@oaheelectric.com. Applications can also be downloaded by visiting our website at www.oaheelectric.com.

Winter Electrical Safety Tips

In South Dakota and western Minnesota, December through March is a particularly hazardous time of year for storms and electrical power outages. Heavy snow, ice and wind can ravage power lines, both on the main power grid and at home. Add to that the increased use of home heating equipment such as space heaters and electric blankets and the potential for dangerous electrical hazards and home fires only intensifies.

Keep your home and loved ones safe this season by following these important winter electrical safety tips:

- **Use space heaters safely.** Keep them a minimum of three feet from furniture, bedsprads, drapes or clothes and never leave them unattended when they're on. Don't use extension cords with your space heaters and always unplug the heaters when they're not in use. Keep space heaters away from wet or damp areas and never touch a heater when your body is wet.
- **Use caution with electric blankets.** Never use an electric blanket while you're sleeping. Make sure the plug and cord are in good shape; otherwise it can pose a fire hazard. Be sure to dispose of electric blankets that have worn or damaged areas.
- **Be careful with your kitchen appliances.** While crockpots and other slow-cooking devices get a lot of use in the winter, you should never leave them turned on when no one is home. Leaving them unattended is a major fire risk. And be sure to check electrical kitchen appliances for frayed or damaged cords and plugs before use.
- **Make sure your home is equipped with functioning carbon monoxide detectors.** Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless gas that kills at high concentrations and causes serious and irreversible injuries at lower levels. Deaths from carbon monoxide poisoning increase during the winter months due to the use of common fuels like natural gas, wood and coal. Installing an inexpensive carbon monoxide detector can save your family's life.
- **Are your smoke alarms in working order?** It's important to make sure that you have an adequate number of smoke alarms throughout your home and that they are functioning properly. Simply push the test button to make sure it beeps and replace the batteries if needed.
- **Don't overload circuits or wattage.** Despite the shorter, darker days of winter, don't go above the recommended wattage for your light fixtures. Don't overload wall outlets either and only plug three-prong cords into three-prong outlets. Use extension cords sparingly and only for temporary purposes.
- **Have your home's electrical panel inspected by a licensed electrician.** Because electric usage goes up significantly in winter, you may need an upgrade in order to meet this increased demand.
- **Keep outdoor outlets closed.** Check your outdoor outlets regularly to ensure that they don't have an accumulation of ice and snow on them. Keep them cleared off and closed to avoid moisture from invading the receptacle box and causing an outage.

Source: www.mrelectricians.us/best-winter-electrical-safety-tips

✓ STOP AT THE BANK

✓ GRAB THE GROCERIES

✓ FIND MY POLLING PLACE

✓ REMEMBER TO VOTE

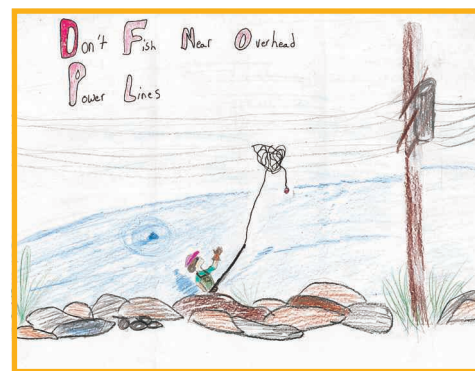


CO-OPS VOTE

A PROGRAM OF AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES
WWW.VOTE.COOP

**ELECTION DAY
NOVEMBER 3, 2020**

KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



"Don't fish near overhead power lines"

Lily Gums, 14 years old

Lily is the daughter of Dave and Kathy Gums, Clear Lake, S.D. They are members of H-D Electric Cooperative, Clear Lake.

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.

Super Soups

Leftover Turkey Chowder

4 slices bacon, chopped	1/4 cup flour
1/2 cup chopped onion	2 cups half-and-half
2 cups water	2 cups cubed cooked turkey
4 medium red potatoes, cut in 1/2-inch cubes (about 2 cups)	1 (8 3/4 oz.) can whole kernel corn, undrained
1 pkg. McCormick® Turkey Gravy Mix	1 tsp. McCormick® Sage, Rubbed

Cook bacon in large saucepan on medium heat until crisp. Add onion; cook and stir 3 minutes. Add water and potatoes. Bring to boil. Reduce heat to low; cover and simmer 5 minutes or until potatoes are tender. Stir gravy mix and flour in medium bowl. Stir in half-and-half with wire whisk until smooth. Stir mixture into saucepan. Add turkey, corn and sage. Bring to boil on medium heat. Reduce heat to low; cover and simmer 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Makes 8 (1 cup) servings.

Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 258, Fiber 1g, Protein 16g, Cholesterol 68mg, Total Fat 14g, Sodium 427mg, Carbohydrates 17g

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Crockpot Potato Soup

1 (30 oz.) bag hash browns	1/2 cup chopped onion
3 (14 oz.) cans chicken broth	1/4 tsp. pepper
1 can cream of chicken soup	1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese

Combine first 5 ingredients in crockpot. Cook on LOW 6 to 8 hours. Add cream cheese 1 hour before serving.

Bonnie Weber, Aberdeen, SD

Taco Soup

1 lb. ground beef, browned and drained	1 (10.75 oz.) can tomato soup
1 can chili beans, undrained	1 soup can water
1 pkg. taco seasoning	Tomato juice

Combine all ingredients; heat through. Serve with shredded cheese, corn chips or crackers if desired.

Velma Schmitz, Bonesteel, SD

Curried Pumpkin Soup

8 oz. sliced fresh or canned mushrooms	1 (15 oz.) can pumpkin
1/2 cup chopped onion	1 (12 oz.) can evaporated milk
2 T. butter	2 T. honey
2 T. flour	1/4 tsp. ground nutmeg
1 tsp. curry powder	Salt and pepper
3 cups vegetable broth	

In a large saucepan, saute mushrooms and onions in butter until tender. Stir in flour and curry powder until blended. Gradually add broth. Bring to a boil; cook and stir 2 minutes or until thickened. Add pumpkin, milk, honey, nutmeg, salt and pepper. Heat through.

White Tail Ridge Bed & Breakfast, Hermosa, SD

Cheddar-Ham Chowder

2 cups water	1/4 cup butter
2 cups cubed potatoes	1/4 cup flour
1/2 cup sliced carrots	2 cups milk
1/2 cup sliced celery	2 cups shredded Cheddar cheese
1/4 cup chopped onion	1 (16 oz.) can corn, drained
1 tsp. salt	1-1/2 cups cubed, cooked ham
1/4 tsp. pepper	

In a large saucepan, bring first 7 ingredients to a boil; reduce heat. Cover and simmer for 8 to 10 minutes or until vegetables are just tender; remove from heat but do not drain. Meanwhile, in a medium saucepan, melt butter and blend in flour. Add milk all at once, cooking and stirring until thickened and bubbly. Add cheese, stirring until melted. Stir into undrained vegetable mixture. Return large saucepan to heat; add corn and ham. Heat through, stirring occasionally.

Diane Fode, Rapid City, SD

Please send your favorite brunch, seafood or appetizer/ beverage recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3).

Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in June 2020. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

Majority of U.S. House Lawmakers Cosponsor Bill to Solve Congressional Taxing Problem for Electric Co-ops



Russ Hohn

rhohn@oaheelectric.com

A bipartisan majority in the U.S. House of Representatives has cosponsored legislation to fix an unintended consequence for electric cooperatives from the 2017 federal tax law changes.

The RURAL Act, sponsored by Reps. Terri Sewell and Adrian Smith and Sens. Tina Smith and Rob Portman, currently has 230 cosponsors in the House and 29 in the Senate.

Changes to federal tax laws in 2017 created severe unintended consequences for electric cooperatives and millions of American families and businesses they serve. Under the revised law, co-ops that receive federal, state or local government grants face an existential issue and are at risk of losing their tax-exempt status.

“This growing bipartisan support is critical as we work to reverse the impact of tax law changes that create significant uncertainty for electric co-ops across the nation,” said NRECA CEO Jim Matheson. “As stewards of America’s rural communities, electric co-ops work hard to secure grants to recover from fires, floods, hurricanes and winter storms, or jump-start local economic development projects like building out a broadband network. But those efforts are in jeopardy unless Congress fixes this mistake.”

The 2017 federal tax law changes impact all grants to co-ops, including those designated for storm recovery, broadband deployment or economic development. If grants push a co-op’s non-member income over 15 percent, it will be forced to pay federal taxes.

Sen. Rob Portman, R-Ohio – “In today’s technology-dependent world, we must do more to bring high-speed internet and stronger grid infrastructure to the rural areas of our country. Tax-exempt rural co-ops provide these important services to parts of the country where access to reliable electricity and high-speed internet is the most limited, and they rely heavily on grants to perform these services. Without this legislation, many co-ops may miss out on grant income or disaster assistance, hurting our efforts to promote economic development and job creation in these rural areas.”

Rep. Terri Sewell, D-Ala. – “I serve communities across Alabama’s Black Belt that face persistent poverty. They depend on these rural cooperatives for reliable electricity and broadband service, and they are particularly vulnerable to anything that would increase price. These things are basic necessities. The tax-exempt status of the co-ops really ensures that these families get the critical services that they need. People across the spectrum recognize how important this is, and that it was not the intended effect of the 2017 tax law.”

Sen. Tina Smith, D-Minn. – “Because of the mistake in the 2017 tax law, many cooperatives in Minnesota and across the country are in danger of being forced to choose between keeping their tax exemptions and accepting an important grant to clean up a disaster, or to expand much needed broadband services in a rural community. That uncertainty is making it difficult for them to effectively plan for the future – and it’s unnecessary.”

Rep. Adrian Smith, R-Neb. – “Access to affordable power is an issue important in every state, county, city and town. While there may not be broad agreement on issues like tax rates, there is strong agreement on the value electric cooperatives provide their members and their place in the tax code.”

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association is the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56 percent of the nation’s landscape. As local businesses built by the consumers they serve, electric cooperatives have meaningful ties to rural America and invest \$12 billion annually in their communities.

Co-op Connections Card		Cooperative Connections Card Program Vendors	
			
Automotive			
Graham Tire Company	605-224-8643	Pierre	Receive a 10% discount on regularly priced service work. Cannot be combined with any other offer.
Lamb Motor Company	800-952-2222	Onida	Receive a free alignment check with the purchase of 4 new tires.
Napa Auto and Truck Parts/Farnam's Genuine Parts, Inc.	605-224-8624	Pierre	Receive 10-50% off retail price.
Food/Convenience Store			
Branding Iron Bistro	605-494-3333	Pierre	Enjoy \$1 off your order. Limit one per visit.
Gator's Pizza Pasta and Subs	605-224-6262	Pierre	Purchase any large pizza at regular price and receive a FREE order of breadsticks.
Grey Goose Store	605-945-0794	Pierre	Receive a free 20 oz. fountain soda or coffee with the minimum of a \$30 gas or diesel purchase.
The Corner	605-258-2400	Onida	Buy one breakfast sandwich at regular price, get second half off.
Health/Fitness and Beauty			
Anytime Fitness	605-224-4011	Pierre	Receive a free two-week mini-membership.
Home/Garden			
The Pink Petal	605-224-1775	Pierre	10% discount on cash and carry purchases - fresh floral only.
Slumberland Furniture	605-945-1997	Pierre	20% off any regular priced Lazy Boy items. Excluding special orders.
Services			
Airtech Heating and Cooling	605-945-0160	Pierre	\$50 discount on any new heat pump OR \$15 discount on any service call
Apryl's Animal House	605-224-9203	Pierre	10% off a grooming or boarding
Inman's Water Technologies	605-224-5111	Pierre	Receive a 15% discount on the rental price of a water softener and/or reverse osmosis drinking water system by paying a year in advance. Receive 10% off of the purchase price of a new Water Softener or reverse osmosis drinking water system when you mention this ad. Payments made by credit cards do not qualify for discounts/specials.
Olson Plumbing Inc.	605-224-6436	Pierre	\$50 discount on any electric boiler, Marathon water heater, or fireplace
Small Engine House	605-224-5815	Pierre	10% off parts and labor
Sports/Recreation			
Teton River Traders Gun Shop LLC	605-224-1371	Ft. Pierre	2% discount. Payments made by credit cards do not qualify for discount.
Retail			
Fastenal	605-224-4060	Pierre	10% off of fasteners and 5% off on all other products

Winner of Question of the Month

The Question of the Month winners for the November 2019 publication were Monte and Rose Gregg. They correctly answered the question, "What is the combined Years of Services awards that were given for at the 68th annual meeting?" The correct answer was 40 years.

Congratulations for providing the correct answer! They received an insulated grocery tote full of great prizes!

Question of the Month!

This month's question is:

How many TOTAL scholarships is Oahe Electric presenting to local students this coming year?

Please submit your answer via e-mail to oahe@oaheelectric.com with the subject line reading: Question of the Month. A winner will be chosen and surprise gift will be sent to them.

Like Us!

You can now keep in touch with your cooperative on Facebook!



We will share with you the latest news, events, power outage updates, energy efficiency tips, money-saving rebates, load management information, legislative alerts, safety tips and much more!

We hope you "like" Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc. on Facebook.



Electric cooperatives are offering more than \$100,000 in scholarships for area students.

COLLEGE AHEAD?

Electric Cooperatives Offer Scholarships to Fuel College, Technical School Aspirations

Brenda Kleinjan

editor@sdrea.coop

For more than 30 years, South Dakota's electric cooperatives have been helping fund the continuing education dreams of students planning to attend four-year colleges or technical schools.

Over the decades, the scholarships have funded students on their way to careers in education, medicine, government, energy and everything in between.

Through the Basin Electric Power Cooperative Scholarship Program, each cooperative that is a Basin Electric member cooperative awards a \$1,000 scholarship to the dependent of a co-op member. Additional scholarships through the program are available to the dependents of co-op employees

Several cooperatives offer scholarships to individuals to become electric line workers or electricians. These scholarships, in addition to those awarded by the South Dakota Rural Electric Line Superintendents Association, amount to more than \$10,000.



Future Engineer?

Nationwide Scholarship Available

Since its inception three years ago, the Glenn English National Cooperative Leadership Foundation Scholarship Committee has awarded almost \$10,000 in scholarships to individuals pursuing a career in engineering.

This annual opportunity would not be possible without the foresight and generous contributions of the IEEE: Rural Electric Power Committee (REPC). Together, we hope to support future engineers with an interest and passion for defining and solving the electric utility challenges of the future, specifically in the rural parts of America.

Dates & Deadlines:

- Applications will be accepted starting on Dec. 14, 2019.
- The deadline for application submission is 11:59 p.m. EST on May 15, 2020.
- Winners are selected by a scholarship committee and announced after the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association summer board meeting in Mid-July, 2020.
- Awards are distributed in August/September, 2020.

Eligibility Requirements

- Must be a US Citizen
- Applicant must be enrolled in an ABET, four-year program of electrical engineering or electrical engineering technology, and have at least a 'B' average in major subjects.
- Applicant must be enrolled as a full-time student.
- Applicant must have already received academic credits equal to at least one year of college.

Essay Requirement Information

- To be considered for the Engineers of the Future Scholarship, you must submit an essay using the following requirements as your guide:
 - Essays need to be between 1,000 and 1,500 words.
 - Essays must describe, in detail, plans to pursue a career as an electrical engineer, with an emphasis in electric power, in an electrical utility serving a rural area.
 - Essays must demonstrate knowledge of the unique challenges facing the electric industry in Rural America and describe how you might address these issues as an engineer.

But, the majority of scholarship money available from the region's electric cooperatives are not tied to a specific program of study.

A study released this summer by WalletHub.com found that South Dakota has the highest rate of student loan debt of any state in the country while Minnesota finished sixth on the list.

The study, performed by consumer finance website WalletHub.com, had researchers analyze 12 different measures of indebtedness, including average student debt, number of students with debt, and unemployment rate.

South Dakota had the highest proportion of students with debt, and was fourth highest when it

came to percentage of student loan borrowers over age 50.

Some of the scholarships offered by electric cooperatives require that students be in high school, while other scholarships are designed for students that may be returning to school.

Additionally,

students selected to represent their local electric cooperative on the Rural Electric Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., are eligible for a \$10,000 Glenn English Foundation Scholarship. Students can apply for the undergraduate scholarship once they have completed one semester of college or technical school.

Deadlines for local scholarships vary, so check with your local electric cooperative for details.

South Dakota led the nation in student loan debt, according to a national study.

Of the scholarships being offered by electric cooperatives, more than \$10,000 is dedicated to students seeking energy-related careers.



Statement of nondiscrimination

USDA, its agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Person with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202)720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800)877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) **mail:** U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) **fax:** (202) 690-7442; or (3) **email:** program.intake@usda.gov

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Let the sunshine in! For additional warmth, open drapes over windows that receive sunlight during the day. Close them at night, which can reduce heat loss from a warm room up to 10 percent.

Source: energy.gov



Member Messages Thank You



10 Tips to Make Your Farm Energy Efficient

- Replace your incandescent bulbs with LED bulbs or an appropriate linear fluorescent lamp. Mercury vapor lamps can be replaced with high pressure sodium lamps.
- If you need more light, consider pulse-start metal halide lamps or linear fluorescent lamps.
- Insulate your barn or machine shed with an R-30 to R-40 value in the ceiling and R-18 value in the sidewalls. Doors should have an R-value of 10 to 12, or 2 inches of foam insulation.
- Even doing simple things like minimizing drafts by aligning doors and windows pays off.
- Running hot water in your livestock buildings? Save as much as 50 percent on water heating costs by using a heat recovery system.
- Your grain drying system may be using the most energy on your farm. Consider replacing your current high-temperature cross-flow dryer with a continuous-flow in-bin dryer and mixed flow dryer. It could be up to 20 percent more efficient.
- Install zone climate control for your machine shed or outbuildings. The savings come from heating or ventilating only rooms or areas of buildings that are used or need more climate control.
- Do fans in your buildings have diffuser or discharge cones? They are about 26 percent more efficient than fans without them.
- Clean your fan blades regularly. Dirt, chaff and animal hair can significantly reduce air flow. Make sure you dust off all the fan components, too. It will help the motors operate cooler and prolong their life.
- While you're at it, you should clean those dirty louvers and shutters that don't open fully. That could be reducing air flow by 40 percent.

STAY WARM. SAVE MORE.

Here are a few heating tips to help keep both you and your bank account feeling warm and fuzzy this winter.

Open curtains on south-facing windows during the day.

Close vents in unused rooms.

Lower the temperature when away and during the night to save 10-20% with a new smart thermostat.

Keep your furnace working smoothly by changing air filters frequently and hiring a pro for tune-ups.



Together we are

RE-ENERGIZING EFFICIENCY

Technical Schools, Colleges Ready the Workforce

Variety of programs offered for in-demand careers

Brenda Kleinjan

editor@sdrea.coop

Each year, more than 10,000 people head to area technical schools and technical colleges to develop the skills employers in the region are seeking.

South Dakota's four technical schools – Lake Area Technical Institute in Watertown, Mitchell Technical Institute in Mitchell, Southeast Technical Institute in Sioux Falls and Western Dakota Technical Institute in Rapid City – have been serving students in the region for the last century, with three of the schools starting in 1968 and the fourth starting in 1969. Neighboring states have similar offerings at schools within easy driving distance of South Dakota.

This fall, Lake Area's campus at Watertown, S.D., was at capacity with 2,228 students. The school notes that students have a 99 percent placement rate after graduation.

Nearly 1,200 students attend Mitchell Tech which notes that 99 percent of its graduates find employment or continue their education. The school also notes that 82 percent of its grads stay in the Rushmore State.

For Southeast Tech's 2017-2018 graduates, the school said that 95 percent are employed or continuing their education, with 95 percent of those employed were employed in a field related to their Southeast Tech program.

Western Dakota Tech is the only technical college serving the western half of the state. It notes that 96 percent of its most recent graduates are working, continuing their education or enlisting in the military.



Among the programs offered at Mitchell Technical Institute in Mitchell, S.D., is South Dakota's only power line program for training future line workers.

National Leaders

Technical colleges across the region have been recognized for excellence in their field.

The \$1 million Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence, awarded every two years, is the nation's signature recognition of high achievement and performance among America's community colleges. With a singular focus on student success, the Prize highlights institutions with outstanding achievements in four areas: student learning, certificate and degree completion, employment and earnings, and high-levels of access and success for students of color and low-income students.

In November, the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program named the nation's top 150 community colleges eligible to compete for the \$1 million Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence, the nation's signature recognition of high achievement and performance among America's community colleges.

Eleven schools based in Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota made the list:

Minnesota West Community & Technical College

Technical education needs in southwestern Minnesota have been served by the campuses of Minnesota West Community and Technical College for more than 75 years.

The college has five campuses: Canby, Granite Falls, Jackson, Pipestone and Worthington in addition to centers in Luverne and Marshall.

The college offers a wide array of ever-changing programs and services, including career and transfer preparation, industry and customized training, community education, athletics, performing arts, student organizations, clubs, and personal enrichment. The school provides students opportunities to earn an associate degree, diploma or certificate in more than 60 disciplines, plus convenient campus locations throughout southwest Minnesota as well as online learning opportunities.

The school boasts of its small class sizes, personalized attention and focused, hands-on learning. Its technical programs provide students with the practical skills to begin successful careers in a variety of industries immediately upon graduation. Liberal arts programs at Minnesota West are a great starting point for careers or further study in numerous fields. Credits earned in our associate of arts and associate of science programs are designed for seamless transfer to other Minnesota State institutions.



Lake Area Tech in Watertown was nationally recognized as a top community college.

■ MINNESOTA

- Alexandria Technical and Community College
- Minnesota State Community and Technical College
- Northland Community and Technical College
- Ridgewater College
- Saint Paul College

■ NEBRASKA

- Central Community College
- Northeast Community College

■ NORTH DAKOTA

- Bismarck State College
- North Dakota State College of Science

■ SOUTH DAKOTA

- Mitchell Technical Institute
- Southeast Technical Institute

Based on strong and improving student outcomes – including in learning, completion rates, employment rates and earnings, and equity – 15 percent of community colleges nationwide have been invited to apply for the Aspen Prize. Data show that over the last two years, student retention, graduation rates, and degree completion have improved at the top tier of 150 Aspen Prize-eligible colleges.

The 150 community colleges named in November 2019 as eligible to compete for the 2021 Prize were selected from a pool of nearly 1,000 public two-year colleges nationwide using publicly available data on student outcomes. Located in 39 states in urban, rural, and suburban areas,

serving as few as 500 students and as many as 75,000 students, these colleges represent the diversity and depth of the community college sector.

The top 10 finalists for the 2021 Aspen Prize will be named in May 2020. The Aspen Institute will then conduct site visits to each of the finalists and collect additional quantitative data, including employment and earnings data. A distinguished jury will make award decisions in

Lake Area Technical School in Watertown, S.D., was the 2017 Aspen Prize winner, the nation's signature recognition of high achievement and performance among America's community colleges.

spring 2021.

Lake Area Technical School in Watertown, South Dakota, was the 2017 Aspen Prize winner. In the 2017-2018 school year, Minnesota West was one of 150 top community colleges nationwide competing for the Aspen Prize while MTI was a 2019 Top 10 finalist.



When the South Dakota Legislature convenes in January, it will transform several ideas into legislative bills, some of which will become state law.

WHERE DOES A BILL COME FROM

Legislative Research Council

<http://sdlegislature.gov>

When state legislators are in Pierre every year for the annual legislative session, the majority of their time is spent discussing ideas for changes in state law. Ideas vary from changing only a word or two of a current law, an entire section of law, getting rid of a current state law, or creating a new law.

All of the ideas, regardless of their size or scope, must be presented to the Legislature in the form of bills. Bills are simply the ideas recorded on paper in a prescribed format.

Only legislators and legislative committees may present or introduce bills to the Legislature. However, ideas for bills come from a multitude of sources. First, legislators have their own ideas for bills stemming from their expertise in certain fields, experiences they have had, or observations they have made. Special interest groups are another source of ideas. Members of these groups often ask legislators to sponsor bills promoting their interests.

Many ideas for bills come from government agencies. Each year several bills are introduced at the request of the Governor or on behalf of a department in state government. Those who work closely with state law are often able to

recommend ways to improve it.

Finally, ideas for bills come from those individuals represented by the legislators, the constituents who live in their districts. The next step is to put an idea into the form of a bill. Anyone can draft a bill, but the rules of the Legislature require that all bills be in the proper form and style.

A legislator wishing to introduce a bill generally brings the idea or a draft of the proposed bill to the Legislative Research Council, where staff members will either draft the bill or make final preparations on the bill drafted by others.

The legislator who begins to move the bill through the legislative process is known as the prime sponsor. The prime sponsor may introduce the bill independently or seek other legislators to act as co-sponsors of the bill. Senate bills have senators as prime sponsors, and House bills have house members as prime sponsors. However, members of either house may co-sponsor any bill.

Bills may not be introduced until the first day of a legislative session. However, those elected to serve in the upcoming Legislature may pre-file bills with the Legislative Research Council, up to 30 days in advance of the first legislative day. Interim committees may pre-file legislation under the names of individual legislators who served on the committee.

The rules require executive agencies to pre-file any legislation they wish to have considered. A bill in proper form consists of three main parts: the title, the enacting clause, and the body.

- The title gives the reader a brief summary of the subject of the bill. The SD Constitution dictates that bills embrace only one subject, and that subject must be expressed in the title.
- The enacting clause, “BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA,” is also required by the SD Constitution and indicates that everything listed below it is to become the law of the state.
- The body is the remainder of the bill, the part that will actually become law, if passed. It is divided into sections to make it easier to read and to reference.

In addition to the three main parts, a bill also includes a list of sponsors and a number. The name of the prime sponsor always appears first on the bill and then the co-sponsors are alphabetically listed. If a committee is sponsoring a bill, then only the name of the committee is listed. A number is assigned to the bill upon introduction and is used to identify the bill as it works its way through the process.

During session, legislators spend a majority of their time discussing bills, but bills are not the only proposals that come before the Legislature. Legislators may introduce commemorations and resolutions. Commemorations express legislative recognition and listed below are four types of resolutions that may be introduced:

- A simple resolution is unique in that it pertains to and is acted on by only one house. It is used primarily to express an opinion, gratitude, or condolences, or to make a request of the other house.
- A concurrent resolution expresses an opinion of the Legislature, but it has no force of law. Often it is used to persuade Congress to act in a certain way or to make a request of the Governor or a government agency.
- A joint resolution is, by law, used to propose changes to the SD Constitution and submit them to the voters at the next election. It is also used to ratify or propose amendments to the United States Constitution. Unlike the previous two types of resolutions, a joint resolution only contains matters of legislation.
- A resolution of disapproval allows the Legislature to disapprove of any reorganization of the executive branch done by the Governor during the preceding year. It is the newest type of resolution and used less frequently than the others.

How An Idea Becomes Law in South Dakota

Idea

- A bill is simply an idea that someone would like to see become law.
- It could be anything from the penalty for committing a crime to the amount of money that can be spent on a state program.
- The idea can come from anyone, but only a State Representative or State Senator can take the idea and guide it to final passage through the State Legislature.

Drafting

- The drafting of the idea into a bill is done by the Legislative Research Council, the permanent, non-partisan staff of the Legislature.
- A bill may be filed by any member of the House or Senate, and generally more than one legislator will sponsor a bill. The legislator whose name appears first on the bill is the “prime sponsor.”

Introduction

- A bill is given to the Chief Clerk of the House or the Secretary of the Senate and is assigned a number. If the bill is sponsored by a Senator, it is a Senate Bill. If the bill is sponsored by a Representative, it is a House Bill.
- The bill is given a First Reading in the “House of Origin.” The “House of Origin” is the chamber that sponsored the bill.
- At a First Reading the bill’s number and title are read aloud.
- The Senate President Pro Tempore or Speaker of the House then assigns the bill to a committee.

Committee

- A committee’s responsibility is to examine a bill carefully, take testimony for and against the bill, and decide what to do with the bill.
- The committee has the following options:
 - Send the bill to the floor with a “Do Pass” recommendation,
 - Amend
 - “Table” the bill, which kills the bill, unless the full body orders the committee to send the bill to the floor (“Smoke-Out”), or
 - Defer the bill to the day after the last Legislative Day, which also kills the bill.

Debate

- If a bill reaches the floor, it is debated and voted on by the body.
- If it passes, the bill is sent to the other body, where it goes through the same introduction and committee processes.

Law

- If a bill passes both the House and Senate, it is sent to the Governor.
- If signed by the Governor, the bill becomes law.
- If vetoed by the Governor, the Legislature has an opportunity to decide whether to override or uphold the veto.
- If the Legislature succeeds in overriding the veto, the bill becomes law.

<http://sdlegislature.gov/docs/studentpage/idealaw.pdf>

October 19-January 5

Pheasant Hunting Season, Statewide, Pierre, SD, 605-223-7660

November 22-January 5

Winter Wonderland, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-275-6060

November 26-December 26

Christmas at the Capitol, Pierre, SD, 605-773-3178

December 15-March 31

South Dakota snowmobile trails season, Lead, SD, 605-584-3896

December 19-21

Strawbale Winery Twilight Flights, Renner, SD, 605-543-5071

December 21-24, 27-28

1880 Train Holiday Express, Hill City, SD, 605-574-2222

December 31

Make-A-Wish New Year's Eve Benefit and Dance, Ramkota Hotel & Convention Center, Doors Open at 7 p.m., Aberdeen, SD, 605-370-4588

January 10

Taste of Sturgis, Sturgis City Auditorium, Sturgis, SD, 605-347-3233

January 12

Yoga on the Ice, Main Street Square, Rapid City, SD, 605-716-7979

January 14-15

Paw Patrol Live! Race to the Rescue, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Barnett Arena, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4111

January 16-17

Media One Funski, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-339-0000

January 24-25: Pro Snocross Races, Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

Photo courtesy: travelsouthdakota.com

January 17

Justin Moore & Tracy Lawrence, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Barnett Arena, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4111

January 18

Lakota Games on Ice, Prehistoric Indian Village, Mitchell SD, 605-996-5473

January 18

Heroes Skate Day, Main Street Square, Rapid City, SD, 605-716-7979

January 31-February 2

12th Annual Winterfest of Wheels, Convention Center, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-231-3100

January 31-February 2

Winterfest, Lead, SD, 605-584-1100

January 31-February 9

Annual Black Hills Stock Show & Rodeo, Rapid City, SD, 605-355-3861

February 1

Lake Hendricks Fishing Derby, Hendricks, MN, 507-828-2113

February 1

Living History Fair, Brookings Renegades, Lake Area Technical Institute, Watertown, SD, 605-693-4589, dhuebner@itctel.com

February 10-16

Frost Fest, Brookings, SD, 605-692-6125

February 14

Snow Ball, Brookings, SD, 605-692-6700

February 21

KORN and Breaking Benjamin, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4111

February 21-22

Mardi Gras Weekend, Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

February 26

The Harlem Globetrotters, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center Barnett Arena, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4111

February 27-March 1

SD State Dart Tournament, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4111

March 3

RCCA presents Young Irelanders, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4111

March 14

28 Below Fatbike Race, Ride and Tour, Lead, SD, 605-641-4963

March 20-21, 27-28

Annual Schmeckfest, Freeman, SD, 605-925-4237

March 28

Annual Ag Day at the Washington Pavilion, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-6000

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.