

# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

## Let's Go Fly a Kite

**Brookings Kite Festival  
Creates Excitement**

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**Cooperative Metering**

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*Photo Credit: Visit Brookings*

# 10 Things You Might Not Know About Power Restoration



**Matt Eldridge**  
Chief Operations  
Officer

Have you ever watched a video or TV show where a person is cooking a meal, then suddenly, they snap their fingers, and the meal is plated and ready to eat? That's called a jump cut.

While we wish we could "jump cut" from a power outage to power restoration, it can often take a lot more effort and people to make it happen.

As the Chief Operations Officer of Oahe Electric, I'm accustomed to members' questions about power outages and why it can take time to get the lights back on. Given our reliance on electricity, there's simply never a good time to be without it.

This month, I'd like to shed light on our restoration process to help our members understand what may be happening behind the scenes. Here are 10 things you might not know about restoration:

1. **We need you.** When your power goes out, it might be just at your home or small section of a neighborhood. There is a chance we may not know about it, and no one has reported it. We rely on you to let us know if your power is out.
2. **Our employees might be affected too.** Because Oahe Electric is a local electric cooperative owned by the members we serve, our employees are local too. They are your neighbors, friends and familiar community volunteers. When you're without power, our people might be too.
3. **It's a team effort.** Every one of Oahe Electric's employees are working to get your power restored as soon as possible. Our member services representatives are taking your calls, field staff are surveying damage and clearing hazards, dispatchers are organizing crews, and communicators are keeping everyone informed of progress or potential dangers. When your power goes out, we all work together as quickly and safely as possible to get you back to normal.
4. **We assess the situation first.** Every outage is different, and we don't know how dangerous it is or what equipment might need to be replaced. When responding to outages, we first need to see what happened, then figure out what materials we need and a plan for how to fix the problem(s) without compromising electric flow for the rest of our members.
5. **Restoration is normally prioritized by the**

**largest number of members we can get back on in the shortest amount of time.** Our crews focus on responding first to public safety issues and critical services. Then we complete work that impacts the largest of number of people first.

6. **Our employees face many dangers.** Besides working around high voltage electricity, our crews are on alert for wild animals, weather elements, falling trees and fast-moving cars. (If you ever drive past one of our vehicles, please do so slowly.)
7. **Flickering lights are a good thing.** Some folks mistake flickering lights for outages, but these "blinks" are important because they indicate our equipment worked and prevented a possible outage likely caused by wayward animals or stray tree limbs on the lines.
8. **You need a backup plan.** We do our best to help those who need it, but if you depend on electricity for life support purposes, you must have a back-up plan – remember, we don't always know how long restoration efforts will take. If you're unsure what to do, call us so we can help you prepare an emergency location.
9. **Our employees have to plan, and eat.** If you ever see our trucks in a restaurant parking lot while your power is out, know that sometimes our employees huddle in a safe, common area to map out their plan for getting your power back on. Also, our crews work long hard hours during outages and need to take time for meals just like everyone else.
10. **Sometimes it's a waiting game.** Our portion of the power grid is connected to other electric utilities, and we maintain positive relationships with power providers interconnected to our system. If our outage is due to an issue from their feed into our system, we must let them do their repairs and be mindful of what they're going through to fix it.

We do our best to avoid power disruptions, but they are inevitable from time to time. If the lights go out, know that your co-op team is working as quickly and safely as possible to restore power. If you experience an outage, please let us know by calling 1-800-640-6243.



## COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

### OAHE ELECTRIC

(USPS No. 019-042)

#### Board of Directors:

James Feller – Assistant Secretary  
605.962.6207  
Brandon Haag – President  
605.215.6758  
Ryan Noyes – Treasurer  
605.280.3500  
Ross Sperry – Secretary  
605.280.7770  
Kirk Yackley – Vice President  
605.258.2412

#### Employees:

Tyler Arbach – Journeyman Lineman  
Austin Bergeson – Journeyman Lineman  
Mark Bruning – Line Foreman  
Matt Eldridge – Chief Operations Officer  
Trudie Feldman – Custodian  
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Tory Smith – Journeyman Lineman

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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.

# New Faces at Your Cooperative

You may see a couple new faces around the service territory this summer, so we wanted to introduce you to Riley Pfeifer and Bryce Becker! Riley and Bryce are summer interns who are both enrolled in the Power Line Construction and Maintenance course beginning this fall at Mitchell Technical College. You may also recognize Riley, as he was the recipient of this year's Lineman Scholarship from Oahe Electric!

Welcome, Riley and Bryce! We're happy to have you on board!



## Statement of Non-Discrimination

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident. Person with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, 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](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: 1.) mail - U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; 2.) fax: (202) 690-7442; or 3.) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

# Fireworks Safety

Summer is synonymous with barbecues, parades and fireworks. The National Safety Council advises everyone to enjoy fireworks at public displays conducted by professionals, and not to use any fireworks at home. They may be legal but they are not safe.

Every year, thousands of people are injured badly enough to require medical treatment after fireworks-related incidents, with many of the injuries to children and young adults. While the majority of these incidents are due to amateurs attempting to use professional-grade, home-made or other illegal fireworks or explosives, less powerful devices like small firecrackers and sparklers can also cause significant injury.

Additionally, fireworks start an average of 19,000 fires each year.

### Fireworks Safety Tips: If You Choose to Use Legal Fireworks

If consumer fireworks are legal to buy where you live and you choose to use them, be sure to follow the following safety tips:

- Never allow young children to handle fireworks
- Older children should use them only under close adult supervision
- Never use fireworks while impaired by drugs or alcohol
- Anyone using fireworks or standing nearby should wear protective eyewear
- Never hold lighted fireworks in your hands
- Never light them indoors
- Only use them away from people, houses and flammable material
- Never point or throw fireworks at another person
- Only light one device at a time and maintain a safe distance after lighting
- Never ignite devices in a container
- Do not try to re-light or handle malfunctioning fireworks
- Soak both spent and unused fireworks in water for a few hours before discarding
- Keep a bucket of water nearby to fully extinguish fireworks that don't go off or in case of fire
- Never use illegal fireworks

Better yet, grab a blanket and a patch of lawn, kick back and let the experts handle the fireworks show.

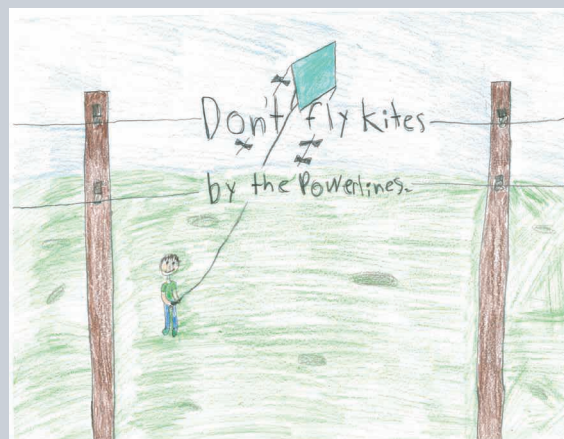
### Sparklers Are Dangerous

Every year, young children can be found along parade routes and at festivals with sparklers in hand, but sparklers are a lot more dangerous than most people think.

Sparklers burn at about 2,000 degrees – hot enough to melt some metals. Sparklers can quickly ignite clothing, and children have received severe burns from dropping sparklers on their feet. According to the National Fire Protection Association, sparklers alone account for more than 25% of emergency room visits for fireworks injuries. For children under five years of age, sparklers accounted for nearly half of the total estimated injuries.

Consider using safer alternatives, such as glow sticks, confetti poppers or colored streamers.

*Source: National Safety Council*



**“Let’s Go Fly a Kite Up to  
the Highest Heights.”**

### Eldon Femrite, Age 12

Eldon Femrite warns readers to not fly kites by power lines this summer. Eldon’s parents are Jody and Rosemary Femrite, members of Codington-Clark Electric.

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



# DELICIOUS Desserts

## NO CHURN ICE CREAM

### Ingredients:

2 cups heavy cream  
14 oz. sweetened condensed milk  
Other mix-ins as desired

### Method

In a mixing bowl, whip heavy cream until stiff peaks form.

Mix in sweetened condensed milk and any flavors/mix-ins you like (strawberries, Oreos, lemon, vanilla extract, etc.).

Pour into loaf pan and freeze until solid (2+ hours).

Kayla Beaner  
Centerville, S.D.

## CINNAMON PECAN PIE

### Ingredients:

1 refrigerated pie crust, (from 14.1-oz. pkg.)  
3 eggs, lightly beaten  
1 cup firmly packed light brown sugar  
1 cup light corn syrup  
2 tbsps. butter, melted  
1 tbsp. cinnamon extract  
1 1/2 cups pecan pieces

### Method

Preheat oven to 350°F. Prepare pie crust as directed on package for one-crust pie using 9-inch pie plate.

Mix eggs, sugar, corn syrup, butter and cinnamon flavor in large bowl until well blended. Stir in pecans.

Pour into crust. Bake 50 to 55 minutes or until knife inserted halfway between center and edge comes out clean. Cool completely on wire rack.

McCormick.com

## RHUBARB PIE

### Ingredients:

#### Crust

1-2 cups flour  
1/2 stick butter or margarine  
1/4 cup water

#### Pie

3 tbsps. butter or margarine  
1 cup sugar  
3 eggs, separated  
2 tbsps. flour  
1/2 tsp. salt  
2 1/2 cups cut rhubarb  
Smucker's caramel sundae syrup

### Method

**Crust:** Add ingredients and knead to complete pie crust. Amounts will vary due to humidity. Knead dough into pie pan and poke holes into the bottom as needed. You may make creative edges as you wish, however it is not necessary.

**Pie:** Soften butter or margarine and stir together with the sugar, egg yolks, flour, and salt. Beat egg whites until stiff. Add rhubarb and fold in the egg whites. Add the filling to the 8-inch, unbaked pie crust. You may add a drizzle of Smucker's sundae syrup for additional flavoring before baking. Bake in oven set at 400 until golden brown. You may also add more caramel syrup to pie after baking for ultimate effect.

Lisa Kummer Soukup  
Tea, S.D.

Please send your favorite recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2024. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

## Operation Round Up® Disburses Funds

Members of Oahe Electric's Operation Round Up® Board of Trustees recently awarded funds to four area organizations.

Operation Round Up® is a fund of money generated by Oahe Electric members and overseen by a four-member Board of Trustees.

Oahe Electric members contribute an average of \$850 a month to the program, with an individual's total contribution ranging from 12 cents a year to \$11.88 a year.

This year, six applications with requests totaling almost \$26,900 were turned in. The Board of Trustees awarded \$11,500 split among the following four organizations:

- **Little Learners Preschool** – General operating expenses and professional development training
- **Onida Fire Department** – Innotex Energy Extrication Gear
- **Pierre Junior Shooting Club** – Targets, pellets, BB's and gun safe
- **The American Legion Post 8 Venturing Crew** – Attend High Adventure Scout Camp

Since this program began making disbursements in 2009, \$151,300 has been given back to our community.



## Cooperative Connections Card Program Vendors

### Automotive

<b>Graham Tire Company</b>	605-224-8643	Pierre	Receive a 10% discount on regularly priced service work. Cannot be combined with any other offer.
<b>Lamb Motor Company</b>	800-952-2222	Onida	Receive a free alignment check with the purchase of 4 new tires.
<b>Napa Auto and Truck Parts/Farnam's Genuine Parts, Inc.</b>	605-224-8624	Pierre	Receive 10-50% off retail price.

### Food/Convenience Store

<b>Branding Iron Bistro</b>	605-494-3333	Pierre	Enjoy \$1 off your order. Limit one per visit.
<b>Grey Goose Store</b>	605-945-0794	Pierre	Receive a free 20 oz. fountain soda or coffee with the minimum of a \$30 gas or diesel purchase.
<b>The Corner</b>	605-258-2400	Onida	Buy one breakfast sandwich at regular price, get second half off.

### Health/Fitness and Beauty

<b>Anytime Fitness</b>	605-224-4011	Pierre	Receive a free two-week mini-membership.
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### Home/Garden

<b>Slumberland Furniture</b>	605-945-1997	Pierre	\$100 off a single item of \$599.99 or more. Some exclusions apply. See store for details.
<b>Lee Real Estate</b>	605-222-6003	Perre	Receive a FREE Comparable Market Analysis for real estate properties, which gives members current market values for home, land and commercial properties.

### Services

<b>Inman's Water Technologies</b>	605-224-5111	Pierre	Receive a 10% 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.
<b>Olson Plumbing Inc.</b>	605-224-6436	Pierre	\$50 discount on any electric boiler, Marathon water heater, or fireplace
<b>Small Engine House</b>	605-224-5815	Pierre	10% off parts and labor

### Sports/Recreation

<b>Teton River Traders Gun Shop LLC</b>	605-224-1371	Ft. Pierre	2% discount. Payments made by credit cards do not qualify for discount.
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### Retail

<b>Fastenal</b>	605-224-4060	Pierre	10% off of fasteners and 5% off on all other products
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# From East River to Missouri River

## Tom Boyko's 2,400-Mile Canoe Journey

Frank Turner

frank.turner@sdrea.coop

What's a former CEO of East River Power Cooperative to do after they retire? For Tom Boyko, retirement after 37 years in the electric industry and serving nine years as East River's chief executive officer meant an opportunity to embark on a well-earned canoe odyssey from the headwaters of the Missouri River in Three Forks, Mont., to St. Louis, Mo., with his son, Jacob Boyko, who accompanied his father for a portion of the journey.

According to Boyko, the 2,400-mile trip had been brewing in his mind for a long time, so when he retired at the end of August 2023, he wasted no time planning and executing his adventure, jumping from his cozy office chair to his canoe in just six months.

"I grew up on the Missouri in Stanton, N.D., so I've been wanting to do this trip forever," said Boyko. "It's just something I've always wanted to do."

Boyko continued, "At first, my family didn't think I would follow through. But through the winter, I built a tank so I could sit and practice paddling, day after day. Then they realized I was going to do it. My wife and daughter actually drove Jacob and I out to Montana. They weren't sure I was going to make it all the way, and they thought we might call it quits, but we didn't."

Having read the journals of Lewis and Clark, Boyko wanted to follow in the pioneering duo's footsteps along the Missouri River. However, instead of relying on the historic travelers' accommodations, Boyko took a more modern approach to his journey with modern provisions, including a canoe packed to the brim with packets of chicken and tuna, boxes of mac and cheese, a valuable cache of instant coffee, a tent, two propane stoves, and many other supplies.

"I got ahold of David Miller's book, *The Complete Paddler*, and he really went through, step-by-step, what he experienced when he went down the Missouri River," said Boyko. "He logged the locations of the campgrounds and included a lot of great information, so it was a great book to have with."

Armed with the knowledge to navigate hordes of flies and mosquitos, unpredictable summer storms, and the channels of the Missouri River, Boyko launched his expedition on May 16 with his son, who had just graduated college with a degree in Journalism from South Dakota State University. Jacob had also just won a Pulitzer fellowship for a writing project about the Matanza Riachuelo River in Buenos Aires, Argentina. As a result, Jacob left the Missouri River expedition in Williston, N.D., to explore his own river-centric journey in Argentina. The rest of the trip, Tom tackled solo.

"When you get to be a dad like me, you just so appreciate the



Tom Boyko stands with his son, Jacob, at Tobacco Gardens Resort & Marina, a campground in McKenzie County, N.D. Photo submitted by Tom Boyko.

opportunity to do something like this with your son," said Boyko. "He enjoyed it, and he plans to finish the trip at some point in his life. And the cool thing is that every guy my age I met on the trip said the same thing, 'I wish I could have done that with my son.' I was very fortunate, and I very much appreciate that he came with me."

Although Boyko tackled most of the trip by himself, he did have help along the way. Boyko received help from family, friends, and co-workers from the co-op industry when portaging his canoe over the many dams along the way.

"My brother portaged me around Garrison Dam," said Boyko. "Jordan Lamb, the general manager of Oahe Electric, helped me portage Oahe Dam. Russell Gall with Charles-Mix Electric and Ervin Fink, a former director of East River, helped me through Fort Randall. Stephanie Horst with Bon Homme Yankton paddled Lewis and Clark Lake with me. Even my family came down and to help me portage Gavin's Point. It was great to see friends and family along the way."

Even bolstered by the help of friends, the trip wasn't always smooth sailing. Over the course of his 98-day journey, Boyko traversed strong winds and high waves on Lake Oahe, which forced him to ground his canoe and camp along the beaches of the reservoir. He drifted through oppressive 114-degree heat in Missouri and navigated past large barge traffic. There was even a rowdy raccoon who helped himself to some mac and cheese – all part of the adventure.

"I started packing the canoe when it became evident that a raccoon had been in my canoe during the night and ate through one of my food dry bags leaving mac and cheese noodles and orange cheese throughout the boat," wrote Boyko in his travel journal. "What a mess."

But it wasn't all bad. Boyko said he met some great people and found some real gems along the way.

"I worked for the Western Area Power Association for many years, so I was very familiar with the river and the dams... but when you are actually canoeing it, you get a different appreciation," said Boyko. "It's a beautiful river."

## KITE FESTIVAL



*Photo Credit: Visit Brookings*

# Let's Go Fly a Kite

**Shannon Marvel**

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The sky becomes more of an art canvas during the Brookings Kite Festival. For the last 25 years, kite fliers from across the country gather to let their art take flight at the festival.

One of those artists is Mike Gee of North Dakota.

"We go down there to Brookings and really like the kite flying field there. It's just nice to come down and fly kites with friends who also enjoy flying kites," Gee said.

Gee flies what's called "show kites", which are big, inflatable kites that can span 20 feet across the sky.

There are other kites flown during the festival, including soft kites, stick kites and sport kites.

A sport kite is one that is attached to two or four lines. Often they'll be flown in teams and perform maneuvers in the sky.

"If you talk about crazy kites, there's a wide variety. There are so many different creative people building things in creative ways," Gee said. "It is definitely an art. It's what you put on the canvas that makes it special."

The kites are typically made with nylon, sail making cloth that doesn't stretch.

"You can't just go to the fabric store and buy tent fabric. We have a couple different weights of fabrics we use. And you need that tail on there to keep the kite stable," Gee said.



*Photo Credit: Brookings Kite Festival*





*Photo Credit: Brookings Register*

Sally Damm Norby, of the Brookings Optimists Club, said the festival got its start when Lynn Versher, former director of the South Dakota Art Museum, approached Optimist member Bill Flynn about creating a joint effort to bring big kites to Brookings.

“This volunteer organization aims to make a positive impact on the lives of youth and communities. The Brookings club’s primary focus is on advancing the opportunities and programs for youth events that are encouraging with exceptional supportive outcomes. The Brookings Optimist Kite Festival offers a comprehensive learning experience that incorporates expressions of culture, science, creativity, civic involvement, and is

environmentally friendly,” Norby said.

Youth are encouraged to come down and learn how to make a kite of their own, with professional guidance.

Gee said he encourages visitors to come up to kite fliers to ask questions or strike up a conversation.

“One thing I really like about kite flying is it seems like no matter who you talk to on the field, someone can relate to an experience of flying a kite,” Gee said. “When we start flying kites, it brings back memories of when other folks were kids flying kites. It’s kind of emotional for some people.”

This year’s event will take place on June 22-23 at the Fishback Soccer Park in Brookings.

Gee said this location is a safe spot to fly kites, and well away from any electrical line hazards.

“If you’ve flown kites long enough, you have a story about power lines. When you hit a line, you call the power company, and they advise you of what to do. The best thing to do is avoid those wires. I always think, ‘If my line breaks, which way is my kite going to go and what’s over there,’” Gee said.

Gee encourages visitors to come down to the Brookings Kite Festival with their lawn chairs and blankets and stay for more than just a half hour.

“The thing is when the wind changes direction or speed, the kites change. There’s just so much going on throughout the day. You’ve really got to sit back and pay attention,” Gee said.



*Photo Credit: Visit Brookings*

## Landscaping Help Wanted

Oahe Electric needs assistance with keeping our rock beds and landscaping in tip-top shape this summer. We are looking for a hardworking group or individual who will periodically weed the areas around our headquarters. Please contact us at 1.800.640.6243 or [oahe@oaheelectric.com](mailto:oahe@oaheelectric.com) with a proposal for yourself or your group.

## COVE HEAT SALE

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

### ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Did you know ceiling fans can help you save energy? Ceiling fans create a windchill effect on your skin to make you feel a few degrees cooler. Raise the thermostat a few degrees and turn on fans to reduce air conditioning costs.

Set fan blades to rotate counterclockwise during summer months and clockwise during winter months. Remember, ceiling fans cool people but don't actually lower the indoor temperature. Turn them off when you leave the room.

# Oahe Electric Director Elections to be Held

The annual meeting of the members of Oahe Electric Cooperative, Inc. will be held on Sept. 21, 2024.

During the annual meeting, the members present will be electing two board members to fill two, three-year position. Any individual who satisfies the qualifications and complies with the nominating procedures set forth below, should be prepared to serve a minimum of 24 to 36 days per year attending meetings on behalf of the cooperative.

Petitions are available at the headquarters in Blunt.

Should there be any questions concerning the bylaw procedures or if you would like to request a petition, feel free to call or stop in at the office. Petitions are due by **Aug. 14, 2024**.

## Bylaws Governing Election of Directors

### Section 3 – Qualifications:

No person shall be eligible to become or remain a director or to hold any position of trust in the Cooperative who: (A) is not a member and bona fide resident in the area served or to be served by the Cooperative; or (B) is in any way employed or financially interested in a competing enterprise or a business selling electrical or plumbing fixtures or supplies to members of the Cooperative; or (C) is an employee of the Cooperative.

Upon establishment of the fact that a director is holding office in violation of any of the foregoing provisions, the Board of Directors, by official motion shall remove such director from office. Nothing contained in this section shall affect in any manner whatever the validity of any action taken at any meetings of the Board of Directors.

### Section 4 – Nominations:

Any fifteen (15) or more members acting together may make nominations by petition not less than forty-five (45) days prior to the meeting and the Secretary shall post such nominations at the principal office of the Cooperative. The Secretary shall mail with the notice of the meeting or separately but at least ten (10) days before the date of the meeting at statement of the number of directors to be elected and the names and addresses of the candidates nominated by petition. There shall be no nominations from the floor unless no petition has been filed for a vacancy. In that event only, nominations shall be taken from the floor for that vacancy, and nominations shall not be closed until at least one minute has passed during which no additional nomination has been made. No member may nominate more than one candidate.



# We Appreciate Our Members!

While the wind and the rain kept some members home during our Member Appreciation Events this year, we were still able to visit with 129 members between our two events! In Blunt, on April 26 (our 78th Birthday), we welcomed 49 members and served 76 meals. At the event held in Pierre on May 6, we met with 80 members and served 138 meals.

Several door prizes were drawn for on a Facebook Live event following both events, and we would like to congratulate the following members:

- \$25 Bill Credits
  - Terry and Mary Ness
  - George Sperry
  - Becky Blume
  - Bruce Helbig
  - Bret Graves

Dave and Kay Like  
 Everett and Bernard Putnam  
 Dave and Judy Davidson

- Capitol Carwash Gift Cards
  - Kerry and Kathy Smith
  - Dale and Donna Sanborn
  - Margo and Matt Northrup
  - Walt and Wilma Heien
- Beef Bucks Gift Certificates
  - Ringneck Energy
  - Ken Korkow
- Dakotamart Gift Cards
  - Derek Gray
  - Dorothy Leigl

Thank you to all our members that attended, it was great getting to visit with you all and share a meal!



# COOPERATIVE METERING

Roger Lawien

More than 40 cooperative linemen and metering specialists gathered in Pierre for South Dakota Rural Electric's Meter School. This two-day gathering offers the opportunity to enhance skills, build a community of professionals, and learn the nuances of metering. As our need for more energy continues to grow, so does how we properly meter consumption.

Modern electric meters do much more than keep track of the electricity we consume. Correct electric metering is also essential for grid reliability and stability. Accurate measurements aid your cooperative in identifying and addressing issues such as voltage fluctuations or load imbalances promptly.

This proactive approach enhances the resilience of the electrical grid, reducing the likelihood of outages and ensuring a continuous and reliable power supply. At its core, accurate metering ensures fair and precise billing, preventing financial disputes and establishing trust between cooperatives and members.

From an economic standpoint, correct electric metering plays a pivotal role in resource allocation allowing member owned cooperatives to better understand consumption patterns, enabling them to optimize energy distribution and invest strategically in infrastructure development. This, in turn, leads to more efficient operations, cost savings, and improved overall service quality.

Precise metering supports energy conservation.

Members can sign into their account online, view consumption. Armed with accurate usage data they are empowered to make informed decisions about their energy consumption. This encourages responsible energy usage practices, reducing waste and lowering overall demand.

Metering guru and instructor John Pollard said it best. "These training schools are important. Metering is a craft handed down from generation to generation. With the advances of solid-state metering, these students are the supreme candidates to lead us into the future."

Your electric cooperative is your partner in getting it done!



2023 SDREA Meter School Instructors Photo by Roger Lawien



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# What is a Smart Meter?

A smart meter is a common term for Automated Metering Infrastructure, or AMI. These are connected devices that transmit information back to the electric utility's meter data management system and the information collected is used primarily for billing and outage response purposes. Smart meters started to be installed about 25 years ago. Individual utilities have different aged systems, but all electric cooperatives in South Dakota have two-way communication with every meter in the system.

## What advantages do Smart Meters bring?

Before smart meters were installed, customers were required to read their own analog meter and report their monthly usage for billing purposes, or a utility employee would physically travel to every home, farm or business in their large service territories to read usage data. Smart Meters take the burden off customers and employees, saving time and money for all consumers. In some cases, the aggregated energy usage information from their home can be visible to the customer via the Internet or a phone application.

- Smart Meters can be used to pinpoint exact locations of power outages more quickly by transmitting an “out of power” notification, meaning a faster response time to outages.
- Smart Meters allow information to be shared with individual consumers about their energy usage – allowing them to find energy efficiency opportunities or potential problems in their home.
- Smart Meters improve electric service reliability and power quality. Information obtained from the automated meters often identifies problems that can be repaired before they cause an outage.
- Information can be used by engineers to more effectively and appropriately size lines and transformers, saving the cooperative and members money.

## What information does a Smart Meter record?

Automated meters record an electronic kilowatt-hour (kWh) reading, the date and time of energy usage, the overall peak demand of the electric account, if the meter has been tampered with, and the number of times the meter has experienced a loss of power.

## Security of information

Electric cooperatives do not sell or share consumer data. Cooperatives abide by all laws regarding the privacy, protection and disclosure of personal information. The meters and associated communications systems are equipped with security features to prevent unauthorized access.

## Are there potential health impacts from a smart meter?

Research conducted by the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI), the Utilities Telecom Council (UTC) and other similar groups have shown no health impacts from automated meters. The radio frequencies emitted by digital meters are well below the maximum recommended in federal guidelines. A digital meter equipped to send and receive data has an RF density hundreds of times lower than the RF density of a cell phone, and the meters are installed on the outside of homes or buildings.



# Paddling to the Arctic

## The Legacy of Dick Davidson and the South Dakota Canoe and Kayak Association

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### GOALS

To travel from South Dakota to the Arctic by canoe in one season. This is obviously no small challenge. If the season is giving, the added goals of reaching Alaska and even reaching both the Arctic Ocean (Beaufort Sea) and the Pacific Ocean (Bering Sea) would be added as noted later in 'Trip Segments'.

### PARTY

A party of one in a solo canoe (at this time and likely during the trip).

### GEAR

All gear will be carried at the start of the trip and only replacement gear (hopefully none) will be purchased in route. The gear must and will serve in all conditions of the trip, including weather ranging from hot, sultry days to possible blizzard conditions, including canoeing circumstances like numerous whitewater ascents and great lakes travel.

### FOOD

Most food will be purchased in route. Resupply points will range from modern to basic. The incidence of points, after Lake Winnipeg, will range from several days to three or four weeks.

### SUPPORT

None.

These are the original notes of outdoor activist and local canoe legend Dick Davidson, detailing his ambitious 1988 journey from South Dakota to the Arctic Circle by canoe. Embarking from Big Stone Lake, the 58-year-old from Sioux Falls attempted to paddle and portage his canoe 4,300 miles over several months through Canadian rivers and streams. Unfortunately, fires and drought in Manitoba prevented him from seeing reaching his goal. Even still, the ambitious journey captured Davidson's commitment to living a life dedicated to outdoor expeditions.

Davidson passed away in Sioux Falls in 2009, but his legacy and passion for canoeing live on through what is now known as the South Dakota Canoe and Kayak Association, a nonprofit



outdoor recreation organization he founded in 1981. Unlike his solo adventures through the Canadian wilderness, Davidson established the association alongside several co-founders, canoe enthusiasts, and friends, including founding member Dave Greenlee of Sioux Falls.

Although the group participated in races, canoe building, and conservation activism, Greenlee noted that the group mainly gathered mostly “for the sheer fun of canoeing.”

But they weren’t just enthusiasts, this group of committed canoers were fanatics, appealing to all types of canoers from time-tested adventurers like Davidson to the casual outdoor enthusiast. Many of the founding members of the club would look for any opportunity to canoe, even taking to streams in near-freezing temperatures.

“Sometimes in the early spring season when the ice was still out, we would check the rain gauges after a quick rain to see if there was enough flow to enable a quick opening run for our canoes over the ice,” said Greenlee.

Another founding member, Tom Behrend, recalled crafting his own canoes and paddles from scratch, often gifting his creations to friends and enthusiasts for just the cost of the supplies.

“I would hold a class every year on how to build a canoe,” said Behrend. “A group of 10 to 15 of our members would meet every Thursday night in the winter time in somebody’s heated garage. We would build these beautiful canoes with caned seats and all the goodies and then raffle them off once they were finished. It was a great way to raise money for the nonprofit.”

For the less devout, the association offered events catered to amateurs, offering downstream floats and river-bound birdwatches. Greenlee recalled organizing an introductory canoeing instructional for blind individuals. The experience, he said, was incredibly rewarding, both the participants and the instructor had something to learn.

“I had been asked a couple of times to lead a canoeing instructional for the Girl Scouts,” said Greenlee. “Then somebody said, ‘We have a group of individuals who are visually impaired who want to learn what canoeing is like.’ I was used to teaching young kids who just want to get out on the water and flail around and paddle, but this group was actually interested in learning about the canoe.”

Greenlee continued, “I remember taking one of the individuals out onto the water and saying ‘I’m going to turn to the left here and now we are facing West.’ He said, ‘I know that.’ So, I asked, ‘How do you know that?’ And he said, ‘I know the direction because I can feel the sun on my face.’ How many times had I been in a canoe, looking at the shore and landmarks, but I never realized that I could close my eyes and tell which direction I was going by feeling the sun on my face... He was teaching me.”

Today, the South Dakota Canoe and Kayak Association is still the state’s premier paddling group, promoting safety,



A photo from an old article in the Argus Leader highlighting the preparations of Davidson’s attempted 4,300 mile trip to the Arctic Circle by canoe.  
*Photo by Mike Roemer, circa 1988. Courtesy of the Argus Leader.*

education, conservation, and paddling outdoors. With roughly 100 members from across the state, the association centers around amateur paddling events, safety and outreach. Recent safety efforts include entry-level canoeing lessons and the association’s recent WEAR IT campaign, which successfully installed more than 50 safety signs along recreation areas of the Missouri River encouraging kayakers and canoers to wear lifejackets.

“We host educational pool sessions across the state in Watertown and Sioux Falls where we practice falling out of the kayak and canoe and getting back in,” said Pat Wellner, the association’s current president. “It’s all about encouraging safe practices while enjoying the outdoors.”

Wellner encouraged outdoor enthusiasts of all levels to join the association by visiting the association’s website at [sdcka.org](http://sdcka.org).

“Having the lakes and rivers of South Dakota is a great way to see the state from a different perspective that many don’t get to see,” said Wellner. “If anyone is interested in becoming a member, I would encourage them to check out the website, and when you are on the water, please wear a life jacket.”

## REGISTER TO WIN!

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

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



**Aug. 24**  
**2024 McCrossan Boys Ranch**  
**Xtreme Event Rodeo**  
McCrossan Boys Ranch Campus  
Sioux Falls, SD  
605-339-1203

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.

**JULY 1-4**  
**Annual Black Hills Roundup**  
7 p.m.  
Black Hills Roundup Grounds  
Belle Fourche, SD  
605-723-2010  
blackhillsroundup.com

**JULY 5-7, 12-14, 19-21**  
**Laura Ingalls Wilder**  
**Pageant**  
Prairie Girl: Laura's Dakota Stories  
Gates open 6 p.m.  
Performance at 8 p.m.  
\$15 adults, \$10 kids 6-12  
Theater on the Prairie  
De Smet, SD

**JULY 5-7**  
**Badlands Astronomy**  
**Festival**  
10 a.m.-11:30 p.m.  
Ben Reifel Visitor Center  
Interior, SD  
605-433-5243

**JULY 7-12**  
**Deadwood 3 Wheeler Rally**  
All day  
Deadwood Event Complex  
Deadwood, SD  
800-274-1876 ext 1103

**JULY 13**  
**Sanford Lab Neutrino Day**  
9 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Sanford Lab Visitor Center  
Lead, SD  
605-722-8650

**JULY 14-18**  
**Dakota 600**  
8 -11 a.m.  
Black Hills National Forest  
Rapid City, SD  
605-645-1756  
dakota600.com

**July 19**  
**Zucchini Fest**  
5 p.m.  
Main Street  
Bristol, SD  
605-590-0000

**JULY 19-20**  
**Storybook Land Festival**  
4-8:30 p.m. on Friday  
10 a.m.-4 p.m. on Saturday  
Storybook Land in Wylie Park  
Aberdeen, SD  
605-626-7015

**JULY 19-20**  
**Farley Fest**  
All day  
Lake Farley Park  
Milbank, SD  
605-432-6656

**JULY 19-20**  
**Cookin' on Kameska**  
All day  
Admission \$10  
Stokes-Thomas Lake City Park  
on Lake Kameska  
Watertown, SD  
605-886-5814

**JULY 26-28**  
**Bruce Honey Days**  
5k walk/run, parade,  
cookouts, craft show, 3-on-3  
basketball tournament, street  
dance and more.  
Jay Street  
Bruce, SD  
605-627-5671

**July 27**  
**South Dakota Chislic**  
**Festival**  
10 a.m.-9 p.m.  
Freeman Prairie Arboretum  
Freeman, SD  
605-496-9946

**AUG. 6-8**  
**IDEAg's Farmfest**  
8 a.m.-4 p.m.  
Redwood County, MN  
651-316-4369

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