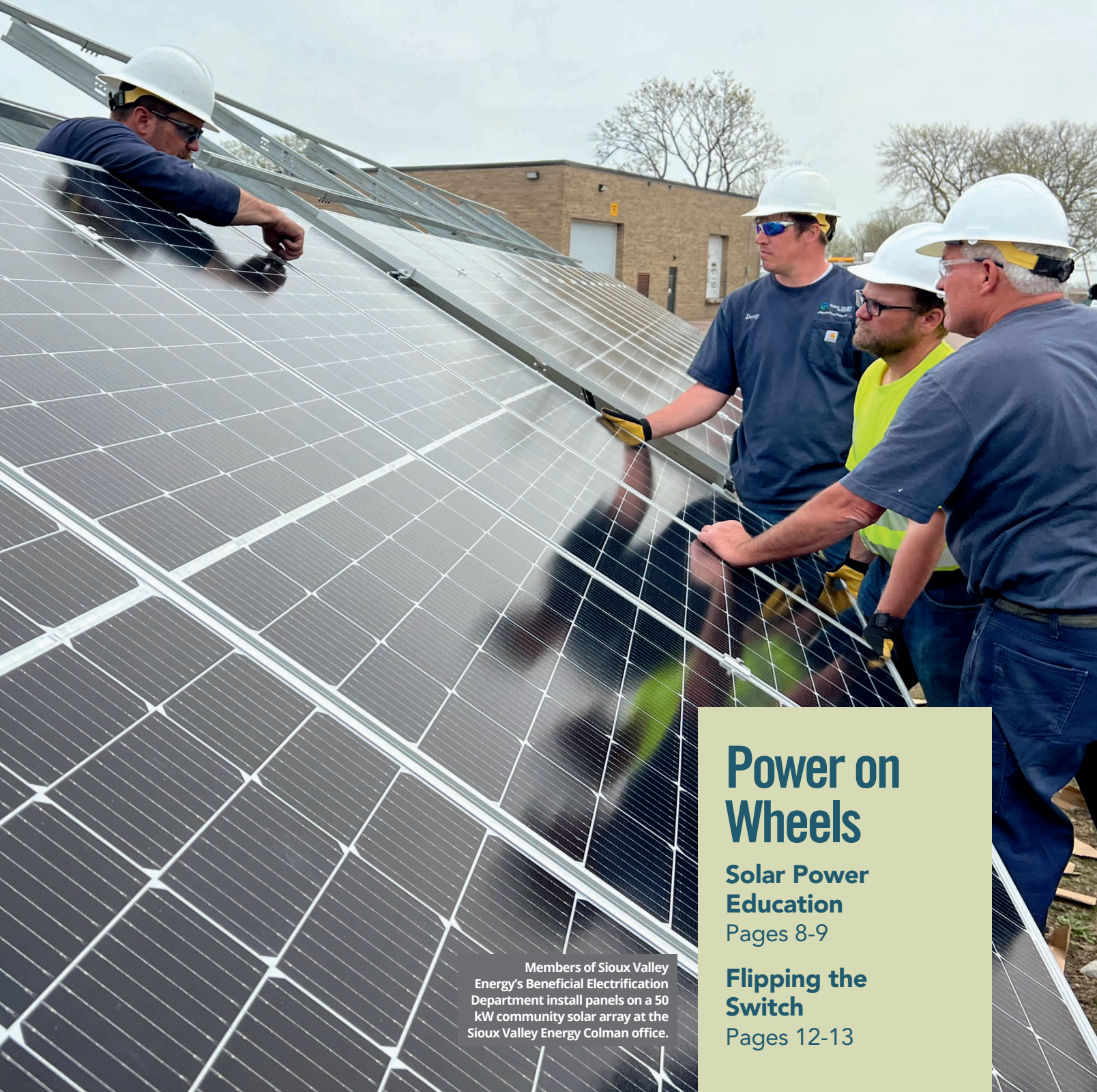


# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



## Power on Wheels

**Solar Power  
Education**  
Pages 8-9

**Flipping the  
Switch**  
Pages 12-13

Members of Sioux Valley Energy's Beneficial Electrification Department install panels on a 50 kW community solar array at the Sioux Valley Energy Colman office.



# Electrical Safety in the Home Should be Top of Mind.



**Kelly Brandlee**  
Editor

When I think about the word safety, my mind goes to buckling my seat belt, looking both ways before I cross the road, and having my phone fully charged on long road trips. Not often does electrical safety in the home cross a person's mind. But it should!

We all take for granted that our homes are electrically sound and safe or that we can plug in "just one more thing." The results of overloading a circuit could range from a damaged appliance to starting a fire. Things can overheat when too much electrical current flows through a circuit. Whether it is a wire, an outlet, or any other part along the electrical path, excess heat can cause serious problems.

Safe Electricity has some helpful electrical safety tips for the home and to help prevent overloading a circuit:

- Only plug a few things into one outlet, extension cord, power strip, multi-outlet device, or outlets on the same circuit.
- Look for loose connections or damaged or corroded wires, which can cause an overload.
- If you continually upgrade your home with more electrical demands (lighting, appliances, electronics, etc.), your home's circuits may not handle the increased load.
- Plug in a space heater to a dedicated outlet (with nothing else plugged in), and do not plug a space heater into an extension cord.
- Major appliances (e.g., refrigerator, stove, washing machine) should be

plugged into their own outlet since they draw a lot of power. For smaller appliances, do not plug more than two into one outlet.

- Know how much power you draw on an outlet or circuit; some experts recommend no more than 1,500 watts per outlet or circuit.
- Consult a qualified electrician to assess your home's electrical system, especially if you have an older home.

When in doubt, have a qualified electrician assess your home and mention any odd symptoms you may notice, like flickering or dimming lights, warm or discolored outlets or cover plates, and frequently blown fuses or tripped circuits.

For more information about electrical safety, visit [www.SafeElectricity.org](http://www.SafeElectricity.org).

A promotional poster for a Member Appreciation Pancake Breakfast. The background is a warm orange-brown. At the top, it says "Member Appreciation" in a script font, followed by "PANCAKE BREAKFAST" in large, bold, white capital letters. Below that, it says "During the Spink County Achievement Days". In the center, there is a green four-leaf clover logo with "Good Luck!" written above it and "Participants" written below it. To the right of the clover is a stack of pancakes with butter melting on top. Below the clover, it says "Spink County Fairgrounds Redfield, SD". At the bottom left, it says "Friday, July 21 7:00am - 9:30am". At the bottom right, it says "This event is FREE and open to the public." and features the logo for Northern Electric Cooperative, which includes a stylized 'E' and the text "Northern Electric Cooperative" and "A Touchstone Energy Cooperative".

## COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

### NORTHERN ELECTRIC

(USPS 396-040)

**Board President:** Nolan Wipf

#### Board of Directors

Todd Hettich - Vice President  
Ron Kaaz - Secretary  
Josh Larson - Treasurer  
Fran Esser  
B.J. Hansen  
Kirk Schaunaman  
Scott Sperry  
Mike Traxinger

**CEO/General Manager:** Char Hager  
info@northernelectric.coop

**Chief Financial Officer:** Lorisa Rudolph

**Operations Manager:** Jerry Weber

**Manager of Member Services:** Russel Ulmer

**Manager of Information Technology:** Derek Gorecki

**Communications Director:** Kelly Brandlee  
kbrandlee@northernelectric.coop

**Executive Secretary:** Kay Albrecht

Northern Electric Cooperative Connections is the monthly publication for the members of Northern Electric Cooperative, PO Box 457, Bath, SD 57427. Families subscribe to Cooperative Connections as part of their electric cooperative membership. The purpose of Northern Electric Cooperative Connections is to provide reliable, helpful information to electric cooperative members on electric cooperative matters and better rural living.

**Subscription information:** Northern Electric Cooperative members devote 50 cents from their monthly electric payments for a subscription. Non-member subscriptions are available for \$12 annually. Periodicals postage paid at Bath, SD 57427.

Postmaster: Please send address changes to Northern Electric Cooperative Connections, PO Box 457, Bath, SD 57427; telephone (605) 225-0310; fax (605) 225-1684

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www.northernelectric.coop



Northern Electric Cooperative's regular board meeting was held May 18, 2023, at the headquarters in Bath, with all directors present. As the first order of business, the board held an executive session. Following the executive session, the board approved the April 24, 2023, minutes and April expenditures. The board then reviewed and accepted monthly reports by management. East River Director Kirk Schaunaman reported on actions taken by the East River Board at the May 4, 2023, board meeting. The next South Dakota Rural Electric Association board meeting will be June 29-30, 2023, in Pierre. Vice President Todd Hettich informed the board he has been selected to interview with Rural Electric Supply Cooperative (RESCO) as a Board of Directors candidate.

### MANAGER'S REPORT

General Manager Char Hager's report to the board included the following items:

- Update on Rural Electric Economic Development (REED) revolving loan fund activities.
- Informed the board of FEMA's consideration of two burial projects for Northern Electric.
- Reminded the board of the CFC Forum, June 19-21, 2023, in Seattle, WA.
- Reminded the board of the 2023 Basin VIP Tour, June 21 & 22, to Bismarck and Beulah, ND.
- Informed the board of the 36th American Coalition for Ethanol Conference, August 23-25, 2023 in Minneapolis, MN.

### BOARD REPORT

The board considered and/or acted upon the following:

1. Approved the date and time of the next regular board meeting for 8:30 am on Friday, June 23, 2023.
2. Approved Work Order Inventory #23-04 for \$19,814.75 to be submitted to Rural Utilities Service (RUS) for reimbursement from loan funds for electric plant construction already completed.
3. Authorized retirement of East River Electric capital credits in the amount of \$190,869.96 based on first in, first out, methodology.
4. Appointed Kirk Schaunaman as a delegate for the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC). Nolan Wipf was appointed delegate for National Cooperative Services Corporation (NCSC). Francis Esser was appointed as alternate for both CFC and NCSC meetings to take place on June 19 in Seattle, Washington.
5. Appointed Todd Hettich as a delegate and William (B.J.) Hansen as alternate for the East River Annual Meeting to be held September 6 in Sioux Falls.
6. Adopted director boundaries as they exist, excluding any area not within the assigned boundaries of Northern Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Talk to your director or co-op manager if you have questions on these matters.

### FINANCIAL REPORT

	April-23	April-22
kWh Sales .....	22,534,635kWh	25,401,113 kWh
Electric Revenues .....	\$2,166,583	\$2,427,233
Total Cost of Service .....	\$2,214,271	\$2,345,420
Operating Margins.....	-\$47,688	\$81,813
Year to Date Margins .....	\$259,265	\$434,453

### RESIDENTIAL AVERAGE MONTHLY USAGE AND BILL

APRIL-2023.....	2,086 kWh.....	\$226.24 .....	0.1085 per kWh
APRIL-2022.....	2,165 kWh.....	\$231.34 .....	0.1069 per kWh

Wholesale power cost, taxes, interest, and depreciation account for 79.8% of NEC's total cost of service.

# Fireworks Safety Tips

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.

In 2017, eight people died and over 12,000 were injured badly enough to require medical treatment after fireworks-related incidents. Of these, 50% of the injuries were to children and young adults under age 20. Over two-thirds (67%) of injuries took place from June 16 to July 16. And while the majority of these incidents were due to amateurs attempting to use professional-grade, homemade or other illegal fireworks or explosives, an estimated 1,200 injuries were from less powerful devices like small firecrackers and sparklers.

Additionally, fireworks start an average of 18,500 fires each year, including 1,300 structure fires, 300 vehicle fires and nearly 17,000 other fires.

## 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

## 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.



## Call Before You Dig!

### Dixie Koistinen

Dixie Koistinen advises diggers to call 811 before digging. This is a great tip for anyone doing construction or yard work this summer. Dixie is the daughter of Jerome and Lisa Koistinen from Lake Norden, S.D., members of H-D 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.





# Summer DESSERTS

**VICKY'S RHUBARB CAKE****Ingredients:**

1 egg  
1 cup sugar  
1 cup cream (sweet or sour)  
1 1/2 cups flour  
1 tsp. soda  
1/4 tsp. cinnamon  
2 cups rhubarb (slice thin)

**METHOD**

Mix in order. Grease and flour pan. Pour batter into pan and sprinkle 1 cup brown sugar, 1/2 cup nuts, and 1/2 cup chocolate chips over the top. Bake at 350°F for 50 minutes.

**Vicky Hoffman**  
South Dakota

**CHERRY CLOUD 9 DESSERT****Ingredients:**

1 white cake mix  
1 (3 oz.) pkg. cherry jello  
1 (8 oz.) carton of Cool Whip  
1 (24 oz.) can cherry pie filling

**METHOD**

Bake 1 white cake mix in 9x13" pan according to directions. Poke holes in cake and pour in 1 (3 oz.) pkg. cherry jello made with only 1 1/2 cups water. Refrigerate.

When this is cool, cover with 1 (8 oz.) carton of Cool Whip. Gently spoon on 1 (24 oz.) can of cherry pie filling. Refrigerate and serve.

This is a pretty red and white dessert to serve during holiday gatherings.

**Jane Ham**  
Rapid City, S.D.

**EASY RASPBERRY MOLTEN CAKES****Ingredients:**

4 oz. semi-sweet chocolate  
1/2 cup (1 stick) butter  
4 tsps. raspberry extract  
1 cup confectioners' sugar  
2 eggs  
1 egg yolk  
6 tbsp. flour  
Raspberry Sauce (recipe follows)

**Raspberry Sauce:**

1 package (10 ounces) frozen raspberries in juice, thawed  
1/2 teaspoon raspberry extract

**METHOD**

Preheat oven to 425°F. Butter 6 (6 oz.) custard cups or soufflé dishes. Place on baking sheet.

Microwave chocolate and butter in large microwavable bowl on HIGH 1 minute or until butter is melted. Stir with wire whisk until chocolate is completely melted. Stir in raspberry flavor and vanilla. Stir in sugar until well blended. Whisk in eggs and yolk. Stir in flour. Pour batter into prepared custard cups.

Bake 10 to 14 minutes or until sides are firm but centers are soft. Let stand 1 minute. Carefully loosen edges with small knife. Invert cakes onto serving plates.

For the Raspberry Sauce, mix raspberries and raspberry extract until well blended. Serve with cakes.

[mccormick.com](http://mccormick.com)

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 2023. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.



# SMART HUB

**Update your account easily, online.**

Did you know it is easy to view your electric use, pay bills and manage your account all in one place? If you still need to register on SmartHub, now would be a great time to get signed up. SmartHub can help you take control of your electricity and your account.

SmartHub has several features that make managing your account as easy as possible. Whether through the Web, or your smartphone or tablet (Android or iOS), pay your bill, view your electricity use, contact customer service, update your information, and much more. View your billing history and make a payment with just a couple of clicks...or taps if you're using the app! Through SmartHub, view your current bill, along with statements

from the previous month or even the last summer, to compare costs. Not only can you see your billing history, but you can view your actual electricity use. See how your electricity use is trending over time, which will allow you to take steps to reduce your consumption and lower your bill.

Another important feature of SmartHub is your ability to update your contact information.

Making payments through SmartHub is fast and easy. The first time you make a payment through the Web or your mobile device, you can securely store your payment information for future transactions. The next time you need to pay your bill, it will only take a couple of clicks.

Another benefit of having a SmartHub account is managing your account notifications. By logging in to SmartHub on the Web, you can select how you want to be notified about your bill, including email and text messaging. SmartHub allows users to set usage thresholds to be notified when those thresholds are met to help keep your electricity bill as low as possible.

View your electric use, pay bills, set up automatic payments, and manage your account through SmartHub.



Want to get the latest news and information from Northern Electric? Stay connected with us through SmartHub. With the SmartHub news feed, you'll receive the latest news, updates, and more from Northern Electric, all without leaving the app or the web page.

Access SmartHub by visiting [www.northernelectric.coop](http://www.northernelectric.coop) or by downloading the app on your mobile device through the Apple App Store (iPhone or iPad) or Google Play Marketplace (Android phone or tablet).

**UNDER**  
CONSTRUCTION

**HIGHWAY 12 CONSTRUCTION**  
**HAS STARTED IN FRONT OF OUR**  
**BATH OFFICE.**

**PLEASE USE CAUTION!**

**TO AVOID CONSTRUCTION, YOU CAN**  
**UTILIZE THE SMART HUB FOR BILL**  
**PAYMENTS.**



Pearl Holt pictured with Northern Electric General Manager Char Hager. Pearl will receive a \$500 check as the third-place winner in the "Who Powers You" contest. Pearl's story was featured on Keloland Living on April 20, 2023. A recap of the segment is also available on the contest's webpage at [WhoPowersYouContest.com](http://WhoPowersYouContest.com).

## HOLT THIRD PLACE WINNER

### Pearl Holt named a winner in Touchstone Energy Cooperative "Who Powers You" contest.

Pearl Holt believes in helping her community, youth, and volunteering. This selfless dedication first earned her recognition as a Northern Electric finalist in the second annual regional "Who Powers You" contest. Pearl then finished third overall from a group of 20 finalists from across the state.

"Pearl works with youth in 4-H, at the Aberdeen Area Horseman's Association, and at her Church. She is an active member of the Brown County Fair Foundation, which supports and promotes the Fairgrounds. Pearl is also a volunteer at SPURS Therapeutic Riding Center, and she helps take care of the horses and special projects, including the organization's "Barn Dance" fundraiser. In addition, she also helps at the Special Olympics,

wrote JoAnn Williams, who nominated Pearl for the contest.

"Pearl is a person who gives her time, talents, and energy to help youth and organizations in the community," stated JoAnn. "There are many other benefits and individuals in the area, and community Pearl has dedicated her time and efforts to helping. They are too numerous to list. Where there is a benefit being hosted or a need, she jumps in and does whatever needs to be done."

"As an electric cooperative, our services extend beyond delivering safe, affordable, and reliable power to our member-owners," stated Northern Electric General Manager Char Hager. "We know our co-op community is filled with people



making a difference, and we are honored to celebrate them. Pearl is an excellent example of someone who goes above and beyond, often doing what is needed without ever asking. She is a doer who sees a need in her community and works hard to fill that need."

Who Powers You is an exciting contest hosted by the region's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives to highlight local figures making a difference in their communities. Pearl has a passion for horses and helping people. In retirement, combining these passions in her volunteer work center around great organizations she wants to give back to. "I feel like I have some time to give," said Pearl. "Volunteering my time to a phenomenal organizations like SPURS, the Brown County Fair, and the Open Horse Shows are all organizations that are very meaningful to me."

Pearl encourages others to find their passion, look out into their community, and share that passion with others. "Giving to others will give back to you more than you are giving to someone else."

"When I heard about the nomination, I was very humbled and honored someone took the initiative to do this for me," said Pearl. "Everywhere I work or volunteer at, I am alongside other great volunteers. If you have the heart for volunteering, the people you work with are above and beyond the best people in the community."





# POWER ON WHEELS

West Central Electric Cooperative's solar trailer serves as an interactive exhibit showcasing solar power generation in action for members. Equipped with a built-in generator, battery storage unit, inverter, and six rooftop solar arrays, the trailer is a great resource for public outreach and education efforts in South Dakota.

## Solar trailer takes renewable education on the road

**Frank Turner**

frank.turner@sdrea.coop

Solar panels are creating a buzz in the energy industry. Every day, co-op employees around the state answer an ever-growing list of questions, such as “Can solar save me money on my energy bill?” and “Are solar panels a reliable source of energy?”

Addressing increasing public interest, West Central Electric Co-op, serving towns such as Murdo and Kennebec, has developed an innovative approach to public outreach regarding solar panels. Their solution: a solar trailer — a portable structure designed to inform the public about the efficiency, pros and cons of solar panels.

“West Central Electric has approxi-

mately 3,700 members and I get two or three calls a month from our members asking about solar power,” said Jessie Tucker, the co-op’s member services manager.

Tucker noted that the recent surge in solar power interest isn’t limited to West Central. Co-ops throughout the state have been fielding similar inquiries. So, when the concept of a solar trailer was introduced in 2021, several nearby co-ops, including Rushmore Electric Power, were quick to get on board.

“We thought, wouldn’t it be great if we had something that we could show to the membership and explain how solar panels work and go from there,” said Tucker. “We envisioned the trailer as a resource that could be utilized throughout western South Dakota, if not the entire state.”

With support from surrounding co-ops, the trailer was completed in June 2022. Although the trailer is a work in progress, it has already been showcased at several co-op outreach events over the past year, including Black Hills Electric’s Co-op Day and more.

The solar trailer serves as an interactive exhibit where members can step inside for a first-hand experience. Upon pressing a button, the six rooftop solar arrays activate and start generating a total of 1.92 kilowatts of energy directly from the trailer’s roof. Apart from solar panels, the trailer is equipped with a built-in generator, a battery storage unit, and an inverter that converts power from direct current (DC) to alternating current (AC).

The trailer, according to Tucker, highlights the benefits of a diversified approach to South Dakota’s energy mix. For a reliable and dependable energy grid, renewable sources such as solar need to be paired with other forms of power generation.

“What we are really trying to com-



municate is that you can't fully rely on distributed generation, whether it's solar or wind," Tucker explained. "For reliability and safety, it's important to consider all available energy sources. Solar power has its limitations, especially when the sun isn't shining or during the night."

The introduction of a solar trailer comes as co-ops across the state are in the midst of their own solar initiatives. Just last month, Sioux Valley Energy completed its own solar project that permits its members to purchase a 20-year subscription to the power output from a newly constructed 140-panel solar array located in Colman, S.D. The project allows members who are passionate about renewable energy a direct route to purchase solar power through their local co-op.

"A lot of people are very interested in solar power, but they don't want to go through the process of using up land and roof space," said Ben Pierson, manager of beneficial electrification for Sioux Valley. "Members aren't interested in constructing these projects themselves, so our solar

project offers those members an alternative way to get involved in solar."

More than 30 members participate in the subscription program, and because the project was entirely financed by the participating members, it won't impact other members of the co-op.

"This project was one hundred percent funded by the members that are purchasing the output of those panels," said Pierson. "This project allows these members to see a local, physical solar asset in their community that is working for them and is credited on their bill each. So really



The solar trailer has been featured at several co-op public outreach events.

our focus with renewable is really about member choice."

The landscape of renewable energy is vast and ever-changing and every co-op is planning their own approach, but with resources like the solar trailer, tools for education and engagement are within reach for members wanting to learn more.



The interior of the solar trailer is equipped with battery storage and outlets – powering everyday electrical appliances, such as a hairdryer.

# Petitions are now available for 2023 board of directors seats

## Nominating Petitions Due By August 4.

During Northern Electric Cooperative's 2023 Annual Meeting (Tuesday, September 19, 2023) members will elect Directors for Districts 4, 6, and 7.

Incumbent directors Josh Larson, Columbia (Dist. 4), Kirk Schaunaman, Aberdeen (Dist. 6), and William (B.J.) Hansen, Turton (Dist. 7) are all eligible to run again and are up for re-election.

Northern Electric Cooperative uses a petition process to nominate directors. A petition must be circulated for each candidate. Candidates must be cooperative members and reside in the district they wish to represent. A designated representative of an entity may seek election. The representative must reside within the district in which they would represent. Each petition must be signed by at least ten (10) cooperative members residing in that candidate's specific district.

Only one party of a joint membership may sign a petition; but not both.

Petitions are available at the Northern Electric offices in Bath and Redfield. Director petitions must be submitted not more than one hundred-twenty (120) nor less than forty-five (45) days before the Annual Meeting to have names placed on the official ballot and the Notice of the Meeting.

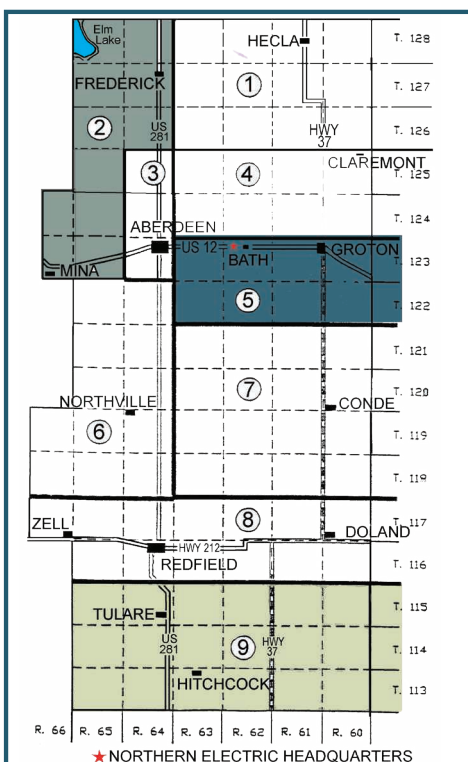
Petitions must be filed at a Northern Electric Cooperative office by close of business (4:30

p.m.) Friday, August 4, 2023. No petitions filed after August 4, 2023 shall be considered valid.

Nominations are not permitted from the floor during the meeting.

Members may only sign ONE nominating petition for a director candidate from their district of record.

**For a complete copy of the Northern Electric Cooperative Bylaws contact Northern Electric at 605-225-0310 or stop by one of the offices in Bath or Redfield. The bylaws are also available online at [www.northernelectric.coop/cooperative-bylaws](http://www.northernelectric.coop/cooperative-bylaws)**



CONGRATULATIONS  
**WHO POWERS YOU**  
CONTEST FINALIST



Honoring inspirational residents who reside within the service territory of the East River Electric Power Cooperative systems who are making a difference in their community. Pearl and the Clebergs were nominated by others in their communities.

Pearl is active in the Aberdeen community volunteering her time with SPURS, 4-H, The Brown County Fair Foundation, Aberdeen Area Horseman's Association, and her church.



Pearl Holt



Dan & Angie Cleberg

Dan and Angie have used creative arts to build community at the Red Rooster Coffee House. The non-profit Fallout Creative Community benefits many, including those with developmental disabilities.







# DIRECTOR NOMINATION AND ELECTION PROCESS

## DIRECTOR QUALIFICATIONS

Northern Electric Cooperative Bylaws  
Article IV Section 4

No person shall be eligible to become or remain a director who:

1. Is an employee of the Cooperative.
2. Is not a member and bona fide resident of the service area served by the Cooperative located within the particular District provided that if the member is an entity other than a natural person then such person must be the Designated Representative of the entity, and such Designated Representative must reside within the district they represent.
3. Is in any way employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise or business selling electric energy or supplies to the Cooperative or a business primarily engaged in selling electrical or plumbing appliances, fixtures or supplies to the members of the Cooperative.
4. Has been previously removed as a Director in accordance with the procedures provided for removal in these Bylaws.
5. Has failed to attend at least 2/3 of all regular board meetings during any consecutive twelve (12) month period.
6. Has been employed by the Cooperative in the past five (5) years.
7. Has pled guilty or has been convicted of: a felony, any crime involving dishonesty, or any crime involving moral turpitude.
8. Does not have the capacity to enter into legally binding contracts.

## 2023 Annual Meeting Scheduled For Tuesday, September 19

### NORTHERN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE BYLAWS ARTICLE IV SECTION 6

Section 6. Nomination of Directors. Any ten (10) or more members including a Designated Representative of an entity, in such District may file or sign a nominating petition, in the form provided by the Cooperative, with the Secretary placing in nomination any qualified member from such District. Each signatory shall place the date of signing and the member's address on said petition. No member may sign a petition to nominate more than one candidate, and to do so shall invalidate the member's signature on the petition signed on the latest date.

This procedure shall be followed in each director district in which the director term shall expire. Upon receipt of such petition and having found the same to be in order, the Secretary shall post such nomination in the principal office of the Cooperative. Candidates so nominated shall be identified in the Notice of the Meeting and shall also be named on the official ballot.

Such Petition for Nomination shall be filed with the Cooperative not more than one hundred-twenty (120) nor less than forty-five (45) days before the membership meeting. The order in which the

nominees shall appear on the printed ballot shall be determined by lot under the supervision of the Secretary. If any nominee should refuse to become a candidate or is not qualified, in accordance with the requirements of these Bylaws, the Secretary of the Cooperative is authorized and directed to remove the name or names from the list of posted nominees and/or from the ballot.

The Secretary shall be responsible for mailing with the notice of the annual meeting, or separately, but at least ten (10) days before the date of the meeting, a statement of the number of directors to be elected and the names and addresses of the candidates nominated. No nominations shall be permitted from the floor. Each member of the Cooperative present at the meeting shall be entitled to vote for one candidate from their specific district from which a director is to be elected. Upon establishment of a quorum the annual member meeting shall be deemed convened. Voting may occur in accordance with the procedure established by the Board. The candidate from each district receiving the highest number of votes at the meeting shall be considered elected as a director.



# FLIPPING THE SWITCH

Third generation ranchers Ken and Kathleen Meier stand by one of the first electric utility pole installed on their ranch.

## The Meier Family and Illuminating Rural South Dakota

**Frank Turner**

[frank.turner@sdrea.coop](mailto:frank.turner@sdrea.coop)

In the rural heartland of Firesteel, S.D., a transformational moment still echoes in the minds of third-generation ranchers Ken and Kathleen Meier. Over a span of 56 years on their farmstead, they have run cattle, reared horses, and even raised two children. After all

of those years, however, they still vividly remember the moment when electricity illuminated their rural community for the first time in the early 50s.

It's safe to say, their memories go back a long way. And yet, their bond with their home extends even further, reaching back a century to when their families were still

establishing roots in the frontier of the rural prairie.

Ken recalls the unlikely story which brought his grandpa, Anton Meier, from Iowa to the captivating, rolling landscape near Timber Lake, S.D., in 1923.

"Well, my grandpa was ornery when he had a bit too much to drink," said Ken. "Anyway, after a night of drinking, they threw him out of a bar in Iowa, so he crawled into a train car for a nap. When he woke up, he was in South Dakota."

According to Meier, his grandpa Anton quickly fell in love with the state and decided to relocate his



family to a new frontier near Timber Lake. In a coincidental twist of fate, Kathleen's family also settled in the same area around the same time. Unlike Anton's serendipitous journey,

Kathleen's grandfather, Frank Holzer, had a more traditional approach.

"My grandpa didn't get a free ride," laughed Kathleen. "He came down with our family from North Dakota with a horse and a milk cow tied to the back of the family's covered wagon."

When their families first settled the area, it was the era of kerosene lamps, horses and hard work. Yet in their childhood, both Ken and Kathleen witnessed the transition from kerosene lamps to electric light bulbs, a change that would propel their families and their communities forward.

"I must have been 9 or 10, but I remember when Moreau-Grand put our line up," Ken reminisced. "The memory of those first poles being driven into the ground by a couple of guys with an old International Truck has stuck with me. It was just something you don't forget."

Today, those original poles placed in the ground more than 70 years ago still stand tall on their ranch. Kathleen, too, recalls the transformative impact they had.

"I was about the same age when we first wired our house," said

Kathleen. "I remember how fun it was to just turn the lights on and have bright lights."

However, the electrification of their neighborhood brought more than just the novelty of flipping a switch. Kathleen's family promptly modernized their home. Their stove and fridge transitioned from kerosene to electric, and they even invested in a milking machine. The arrival of electricity didn't just bring about change; it revolutionized daily life on the ranch, making it cleaner and more efficient.

"Our old washing machine ran on a gas engine," said Kathleen. "You had to stomp on a pedal to get that motor started. It smoked up the entire house. Once we had electricity all we had to do was plug it in."

Progress didn't stop at the washing machine. "It didn't take long for things to change," added Ken. "I remember when I was about thirteen, my neighbor purchased the first television in the neighborhood, so everything happened fast. We would all go to watch whatever was on."

The transition has continued to benefit the Meier family. Today, their son, Kent Meier, works in the power industry with Border States Electric, a company that sells electrical equipment, tools and appliances. Their daughter, Cindy Lindskov has carried on the family tradition as a fourth-generation rancher in Isabelle, S.D., a town conveniently located just a stone's throw away from her parents.

It's amazing how much has changed over the years," said Ken. "Since the day we first got electricity, Moreau-Grand has done a great job of keeping our light on and burning bright."



One of the original utility poles on Ken and Kathleen Meier's land was created in 1950, yet it still functions to this day.



# GRAIN BIN PREPERATION

**Are you building a new grain bin? Here are a few tips from your local electric cooperative.**

**Kelly Brandlee**

[kbrandlee@northernelectric.coop](mailto:kbrandlee@northernelectric.coop)

If you are building a new grain bin, you likely have thought of everything. You've quoted different companies for the best price, lined up the concrete work, dirt work, and even the electrician. But have you talked to your power company?

Calling the power company is often a missed step and thought about after the grain bin is just about ready for the season. Northern Electric Cooperative would like to encourage farmers to call us as soon as they

decide to build a new grain bin.

There are many things to consider when powering a new grain bin. As your power provider, we can help talk through what may be needed to ensure a successful startup.

Over the years, the size of the equipment and grain bins has grown. As the equipment and size of grain bins increase, so do the electrical requirements. Knowing the load needs beforehand can help in service. If the current electrical equipment is not adequate when the grain bin is ready, that could lead to various issues, including power

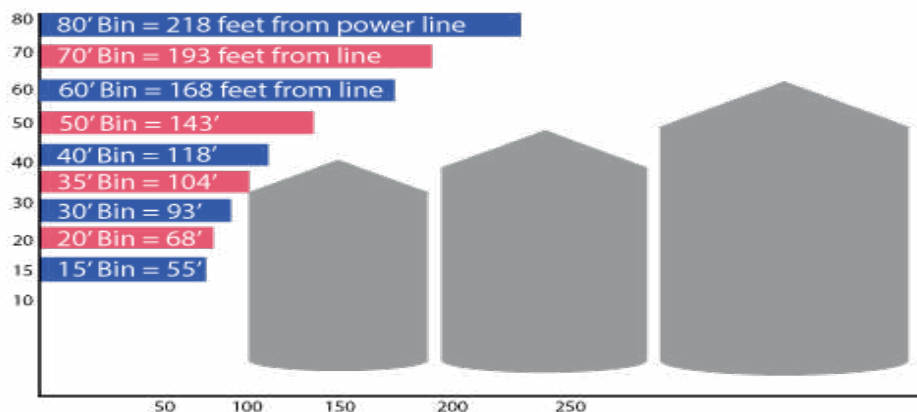
outages, voltage fluctuations, and equipment failure.

In today's climate, supplies such as transformers and metering equipment can have extended lead times. If a site needs service upgrades, this will require more planning to ensure supplies arrive in time and labor is available for installation. Many electrical service projects may require an extended lead time during peak construction season.

Planning ahead will help avoid future access and safety issues. Here are a few tips from Northern Electric to consider as you prepare to add a new grain bin to your site.



## Grain Bin Distance From Power Lines



\*For bins filled by portable augers, conveyors or elevators

Based on a typical power line having a vertical clearance of 18.5 feet above the ground and a supply line phase to ground voltage of more than 750 V to 22KV; National Electrical Safety Code Rule 232.

- Consider current and future auger and conveyor heights. When moving equipment, remember you should maintain a safe working clearance to ensure safety for everyone on the farm.
- Be sure to think ahead about how you may move equipment around your site. We have seen farms install grain bins only to realize later the challenges of maneuvering augers around because insufficient space was left from powerlines or other equipment.
- Transformers are getting larger along with the cranes to place and service this equipment. Be sure to leave plenty of space for service equipment to easily maneuver around the site to access transformers, panels, and other equipment.
- Think ahead and inform Northern Electric staff of site plans. If adding more grain bins, dryers, or buildings, are in the future, the team can place transformers and equipment in the best location to accommodate future projects.

**Calling the power company is often a missed step and thought about after the grain bin is just about ready for the season. Northern Electric Cooperative would like to encourage farmers to call us as soon as they decide to build a new grain bin.**

Northern Electric has load management options available to help reduce monthly electrical expenses. Please get in touch with the member services department for more information.



Interested in more information?  
Call Northern Electric Cooperative  
Member Services at 605-225-0310.



**ADDING A NEW  
GRAIN BIN?  
MAKE THE  
SAFE CALL.**

Contact your local  
Touchstone Energy  
Cooperative before you  
add, move or upgrade  
any building on your farm.  
It's the best way to stay  
safe around power lines  
and comply with any  
regulations.

**RE-ENERGIZING  
FARM SAFETY**



## REGISTER TO WIN!

Bring this coupon and mailing label to the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives booth at Dakotafest or the South Dakota State Fair to win a prize!

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

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



**July 14-16**  
**Badlands Astronomy Festival**  
25216 Ben Reifel Road  
Interior, SD  
605-433-5243

To have your event listed on this page, send complete information, including date, event, place and contact to your local electric cooperative. Include your name, address and daytime telephone number. Information must be submitted at least eight weeks prior to your event. Please call ahead to confirm date, time and location of event.

**JUNE 23-25**  
**46th Annual Main Street Arts & Crafts Festival**  
Centennial Park  
Hot Springs, SD

**JULY 1**  
**Hill City's Annual Star-Spangled Celebration**  
8 a.m.  
Hill City, SD  
605-574-2368

**JULY 4**  
**Firecracker Couples Tourney**  
Olive Grove Golf Course  
9 a.m.  
Groton, SD

**JULY 12**  
**Lion's Club Summer Fest/Car Show**  
City Park  
9 a.m.  
Groton, MN

**JULY 22**  
**Richmond Lake Association's Annual Pontoon Poker Run**  
Richmond Lake  
Aberdeen, SD  
605-225-0609

**JULY 22**  
**20th Annual Make-A-Wish Poker Run**  
C&S Motorsports  
Aberdeen, SD  
605-216-6638

**JULY 21-23**  
**Winner Elks 54th Annual Rodeo**  
Winner, SD  
605-842-5830

**JULY 26**  
**Groton Golf Association Fundraiser Lunch**  
Olive Grove Golf Course  
11:30 a.m.  
Groton, SD

**JULY 28-29**  
**Farley Fest**  
Lake Farley Park  
Milbank, SD

**JULY 29**  
**BBQ Pit Row and Car Show**  
Winner, SD

**JULY 30**  
**Bergen Threshing Bee**  
9 a.m.  
Bristol, SD

**AUG 5**  
**Taste the Goodness**  
5 p.m.  
Sioux Falls, SD

**AUG 13-14**  
**Twin Brooks Threshing Show**  
Featuring Allis Chalmers  
Twin Brooks, SD

**AUG 21**  
**30th Annual Bishop's Cup Golf Tournament**  
Minnehaha Country Club and  
The Country Club of Sioux Falls  
Sioux Falls, SD

**SEPT 4**  
**Hidewood Valley Stream Threshing Show**  
Steam Whistle Blows  
1 p.m.  
47236 183rd St  
Clear Lake, SD

**SEPT 9-OCT 29**  
**Back Forty Beef Corn Maze & Adventure Farm**  
Every weekend (Sept 9-Oct 29)  
10 a.m.  
Pierpont, SD  
605-941-2615

**SEPT 29-30**  
**Junkin' Market Days**  
Ramkota Exhibit Hall  
Sioux Falls, SD

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