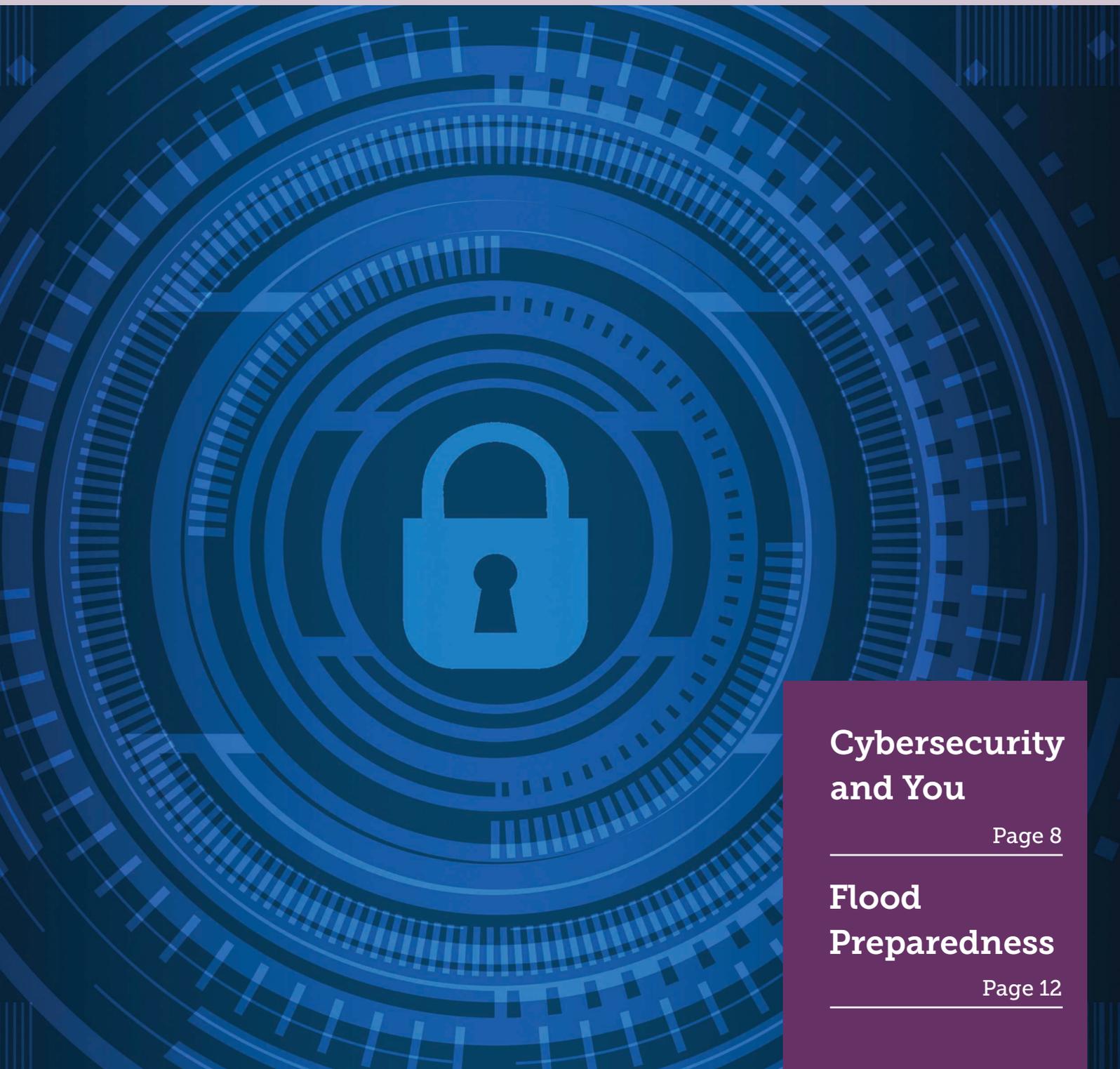


# Cooperative Connections



**Cybersecurity  
and You**

Page 8

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**Flood  
Preparedness**

Page 12

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## Electric Cooperatives Celebrate Linemen on April 13

# Thank A Lineman Any Day



**Ben Dunsmoor**

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

**Many organizations have designated a day to celebrate the 75,000 electrical lineworkers across the country who are dedicated to keeping the lights on.**

When most people think about an electric utility, they often think about the linemen who work out in the elements to restore power during an outage. Linemen play an important role in maintaining and building the infrastructure that brings electricity to your homes, farms, and businesses. It is the reason many organizations have designated a day to celebrate the 75,000 electrical lineworkers across the country who are dedicated to keeping the lights on.

Electric cooperatives are getting ready to celebrate Lineworker Appreciation Day on April 13. In 2015, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) designated the second Monday of April as a day to recognize linemen for the important work they do to serve the members of their cooperatives. The designation came after the United States Senate passed a resolution which singled out one day - April 18, 2013 - as Lineworker Appreciation Day.

The resolution passed by the U.S. Senate recognized linemen as the 'first responders during storms and other catastrophic events' who work 'to make the scene safe for other public safety heroes.' Following the passage of that resolution, cooperatives realized that celebrating lineworkers on April 18 every year would conflict with holidays and other events. It is the reason the NRECA board designated the second Monday of April as a day to pause and thank linemen.

However, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), the Utility Workers Union of America (UWUA), and the Edison Electric Institute (EEI) celebrate linemen on July 10. These groups started recognizing lineworkers on this day because IBEW's first president was a lineman and July 10 is the anniversary of the day he was killed on the job. July 10 serves as a sobering reminder of the dangerous work linemen face every day.

Over the next few months, you may see organizations celebrating Lineworker Appreciation Day on April 13, April 18, or July 10. Every organization has its reasons for celebrating linemen on those days. The most important thing, however, is that we take a moment to thank linemen for their work.

Every day linemen work with heavy equipment around high-voltage power lines to ensure the members and consumers at the end of the line have a safe and reliable source of electricity. When storms roll through the area the job becomes even more difficult as linemen must venture out into harsh conditions to work with high-voltage electricity and restore power. So, if you see a lineman working out in the field or they restore your power following an outage, a quick thank you or a note mailed to the office is all it takes to show your appreciation. And, it doesn't matter what day you do it.



(USPS 396-040)

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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.

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Northern Electric Cooperative's regular board meeting was held February 20, 2020, at the headquarters in Bath with all directors present. As the first order of business, the board approved the January 23, 2020, minutes and January expenditures. The board then reviewed and accepted monthly reports by management.

Directors viewed the East River Electric Power Cooperative video report. East River Director Mark Sumption reported on actions taken by the East River Board at its February 6, 2020, meeting. General Manager Char Hager reported on the East River MAC meeting which she attended February 5, 2020, in Sioux Falls. South Dakota Rural Electric Association Director Nolan Wipf reported that the next SDREA board meeting will be held March 26-27, 2020, in Pierre. Directors Mark Sumption, Nolan Wipf, General Manager Char Hager and Communications Director Ben Dunsmoor reported on the East River Electric Energize Forum which they attended February 5-6, 2020, in Sioux Falls. Communications Director Ben Dunsmoor reported on Co-op Day at the Capitol which he attended February 18, 2020, in Pierre.

## Manager's Report

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

- Update on development projects.
- Update on Rural Electric Economic Development (REED) revolving loan fund.

- Legal and Legislative Report
- Reminded the board of the 2020 NRECA Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) Certificate Courses, March 9-11, 2020, in Pierre.
- Reminded the board of the New Director Orientation, March 17-19, 2020, in Arlington, VA.
- Reminded the board of the 2020 NRECA Legislative Conference, April 26-28, in Washington, D.C.

## 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 A.M. on Thursday, March 26, 2020.
2. Approved payment of legal fees for Harvey Oliver in the amount of \$2,357.13.
3. Approved Work Order Inventories #20-01 for \$431,484.37 and #20-01MC, \$52,595.64 to be submitted to Rural Utilities Service (RUS) for reimbursement from loan funds for electric plant construction already completed.
4. Authorized board attendance to the 2020 CFC Forum, June 15-17, in Salt Lake City, UT.
5. Approved updates to existing policies.

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

Financial Report	January 2020	January 2019
kWh Sales	33,455,279 kWh	34,000,480 kWh
Electric Revenues	\$2,751,937	\$2,771,994
Total Cost of Service	\$2,644,768	\$2,541,125
Operating Margins	\$107,169	\$230,870
Year To Date Margins	\$114,876	\$240,312

## Residential Average Monthly Usage and Bill

January 2020	3,743 kWh	\$305.58	.0816 per kWh
January 2019	3,710 kWh	\$300.21	.0809 per kWh

Wholesale power cost, taxes, interest, and depreciation accounted for 84.5% of NEC's total cost of service.

# Springtime Electrical Safety Tips

Now that the weather is warmer and people are spending more time outside, it's important to make sure certain electrical components are functioning properly and you are practicing good habits around electrical items both inside and outside of the home.

Focusing on electrical safety awareness can help ensure you are not injured due to an electrical malfunction.

According to the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI), thousands of people in the United States are critically injured or electrocuted as a result of electrical fires and accidents in their own homes.

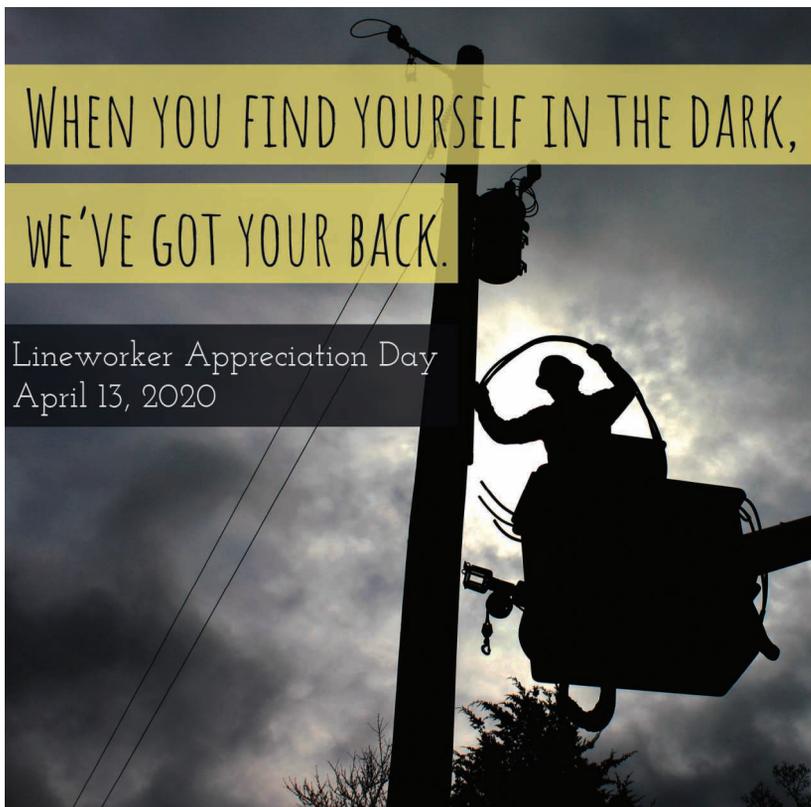
Here are some simple safety rules to remember:

- Ladders of every material should not come in contact with a power line, as it may result in a serious injury or death. Keeping a 10 feet distance from an overhead power line is a good rule of measure.
- If your power tools are not being used, make sure to unplug everything. If not, it's possible for the tools to overheat and cause a fire.
- Check for damaged cords on power tools. It is important to check if the cord is frayed or the plug is broken. This makes the tool dangerous to operate.
- Avoid wet areas while using any electrical item. Be aware of your surroundings, being sure to check for a running hose or sprinkler. Wet grass is particularly an issue.
- Teach kids to never fly a kite or climb a tree near a power line. If a kite gets tangled in overhead power lines, don't try to remove it yourself. Kite string can conduct an electrical current, which can cause serious injuries or death.
- Call 811 before you dig so underground utility lines can be properly marked. This free service is required by state law and should be done at least two business days before the digging begins.

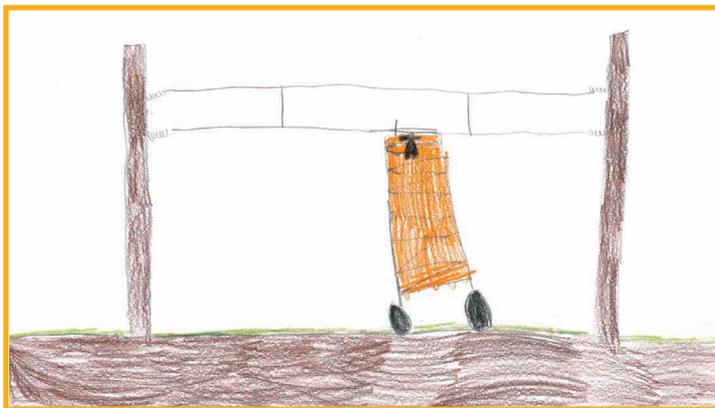
All electrical lines and equipment should be treated seriously and with caution.

Use these simple and easy to follow tips to stay safe this summer.

Source: [www.mrelectric.com](http://www.mrelectric.com)



## KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



**"Do not cut power lines in half."**

**Annette Tschetter, 6 years old**

Annette is the daughter of Ryan and Elaine Tschetter, Revillo, S.D. They are members of Whetstone Valley Electric Cooperative, Milbank, S.D.

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

# Appetizers and Beverages

## Pink Rhubarb Punch

8 cups chopped rhubarb	2 cups boiling water
8 cups water	2 cups pineapple juice
2 cups sugar	1/4 cup lemon juice
3 T. strawberry gelatin	Lemon-lime soda

In large saucepan, bring rhubarb and water to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer for 10 minutes. Drain, reserving liquid. In a large bowl, combine sugar, gelatin and boiling water until dissolved. Add pineapple and lemon juices. Stir in rhubarb liquid; chill. Just before serving, add soda or ginger ale as desired.

**Joyce Romkema, Springfield, S.D.**

## Jalapeño/Bacon Poppers

10 jalapeños	1-1/2 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
1/2 tsp. garlic powder	1/2 lb. bacon, cooked and crumbled
1/2 tsp. salt	1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, softened
1/4 tsp. pepper	
1/4 cup sliced green onions	

Slice each jalapeño in half lengthwise and use spoon to remove seeds and veins. Combine garlic powder, salt, pepper, green onions, Cheddar cheese, bacon and cream cheese. Spoon the mixture evenly in jalapeños and place on baking sheet. Bake at 400°F. for 20 minutes or until jalapeños are tender. Very flavorful but not hot to taste.

**Tina Haug, Pierre, S.D.**

## Spring Radish-Onion Spread

1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, softened	1/4 tsp. paprika
1/4 cup butter, softened	1 cup shredded radishes
1/2 tsp. celery salt	1/4 cup finely chopped green onions
1/2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce	Assorted crackers, chips or fresh veggies

Combine first 5 ingredients. Fold in radishes and onions. Cover and chill before serving.

**Elaine Rowett, Sturgis, S.D.**

## Jalapeño Cheddar Biscuits

2 cups flour	1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
1 T. baking powder	2 green onions, thinly sliced
1 tsp. baking soda	<b>Honey Butter:</b>
2 tsp. McCormick Gourmet™ Jalapeño Pepper, Ground	1/2 cup (1 stick) butter, softened
1 cup buttermilk	3 T. honey
1/2 cup (1 stick) cold butter, cut into chunks	

For the biscuits, mix flour, baking powder, baking soda and jalapeño pepper in large bowl. Cut in butter with pastry blender or 2 knives until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Add buttermilk; stir to form a soft dough. Stir in cheese and green onions. Drop dough by rounded 1/4 cupfuls about 2 inches apart onto parchment paper-lined baking sheet, forming 12 biscuits. Bake at 375°F. for 18 to 20 minutes or until golden brown. Cool on wire rack. Meanwhile, for the honey butter, mix butter and honey in small bowl until smooth. Serve with biscuits. Makes 12 servings.

*Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 270, Total Fat 18g, Fiber 1g, Cholesterol 51mg, Sodium 414mg, Carbohydrates 22g, Protein 5g*

**Pictured, Cooperative Connections**

## Mocha Freeze

2 cups vanilla ice cream, softened	1 T. chocolate syrup
1/4 cup cold strong coffee	1/2 cup crushed ice

In blender, combine all ingredients. Cover; blend until of desired consistency. Pour into glasses and serve immediately. Makes 4 servings.

**Becki Hauser, Tripp, S.D.**

Please send your favorite casserole, dairy or dessert 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, phone number and co-op name.

# Flood Outlook Focus Of Weather Team Meeting

The James River Has Been Above Flood Stage For More Than A Year

**Ben Dunsmoor**

bdunsmoor@northernelectric.coop

The James River has been above flood stage for more than 365 days and there are no signs the water will recede to normal levels any time soon. That was the message Aberdeen city officials, local National Weather Service forecasters and emergency managers from more than a half dozen counties heard during the third annual Integrated Weather Team (IWT) meeting held on February 27.

Julie Meyer, a senior hydrologist for the Missouri Basin River Forecast Center in Kansas City, Missouri, said the James River at Columbia and Stratford will remain at flood stage well into the spring.

“I do not expect these two locations to be below flood stage before the 2020 snowmelt kicks off,” Meyer told the group via a video presentation during the IWT meeting hosted by the National Weather Service office in Aberdeen.

Meyer even said the James River is so full of water, and the flow of the river is so slow, that it will likely remain above flood stage into the fall of 2020 even if northeast South Dakota experiences a dry spring and summer.

“It’s going to be ugly, but less rain is better,” Meyer told the group gathered at the K.O. Lee Library in downtown Aberdeen.

Meyer was just one of the presenters for the third annual meeting of the IWT. The IWT is a collection of emergency managers, National Weather Service



Nearly 30 local and state officials attended the third annual IWT meeting at the K.O. Lee Library in downtown Aberdeen on February 27.

forecasters, local county and city officials, and private sector organizations, such as Northern Electric Cooperative, who gather once a year to discuss weather events, reporting, and response. The goal of the one-day workshop is to discuss best practices to improve communications with the public before, during and after high-impact weather events. The morning session focused on snowfall forecasting and the afternoon session focused on the flooding risk for northeast South Dakota.

Mike Gillispie, the National Weather Service Hydrologist for Eastern South Dakota, also presented to the group via video conference. Gillispie said soil moisture is at the highest level it has ever been in eastern South Dakota heading into the spring.

“We’re starting out (the spring) in really bad shape,” Gillispie said.

However, Gillispie offered a bit of good news. He said the snowpack is ‘not terrible’ across eastern South Dakota as the spring melt begins.

Attendees say the snapshot of the current flooding situation and meeting with officials and forecasters from across the region is beneficial.



The spring flood outlook was the main topic during the afternoon session of the IWT meeting.

“We are always gathering new information from all types of sources,” Brown County Assistant Emergency Management Director Patti Woods said. “Meeting with other local agencies along with our state partners is a benefit to understanding what we are doing to prepare and also understanding what resources we have.”

And the annual IWT meeting is just one more resource to ensure officials can prepare, communicate, and respond to weather events when they impact the area.



# Plan On Safety During Planting

Spring planting is upon us and Northern Electric Cooperative would like to remind local farmers to stay safe this season. Overhead power lines can be easily overlooked, and deadly if ignored. While you focus on putting those seeds in the ground, Northern Electric urges you to review these important tips.

## Be Alert

Awareness doesn't spread as fast as an electrical current, but a little goes a long way. Remember to look up and look out for power lines this planting season. Follow these 'Four S's' to stay safe.

- **SPOTTER** Get a spotter to be sure your are staying at least 10 feet away from power lines on all sides, keeping in mind that field cultivators and sprayers can reach as high as 12 feet.
- **STUDY** Educate yourself on any new equipment you may have purchased recently. New equipment has higher antennas and attachments than ever before. What cleared in previous years may not in your new unit. Know what

you're working with.

- **SAGGING** If you see a power line sagging on your property, contact Northern Electric Cooperative at 605-225-0310 to fix it.
- **SEARCH** Sometimes trees or brush can make power lines difficult to see. Don't just glance up, really take a minute to search your surroundings when moving equipment.

## Be Prepared

Hitting a power line can be scary. In certain situations, there may be a lot of noise, which will likely cause you to instinctively run—you've got seconds to understand what's happening and respond appropriately. Do you know what to do if you come in contact with a power line?

- **STAY PUT** Unless there is a fire, you need to stay calm and stay in the vehicle. Touching the ground and the vehicle at the same time (i.e. stepping out of the equipment) can be deadly. Don't risk becoming a conduit for the

electricity to move from the vehicle to the ground through you, stay put. Even if it's loud.

- **CALL FOR HELP** Call for help from the vehicle if possible. 911 is a good place to start, especially if you don't know your local electric cooperative's number. If you don't have your phone, try radioing for help. If someone comes to assist you, they need to stay away from the vehicle until professional help has arrived.
- **JUMP CLEAR** If there is a fire forcing you to leave, or you have no way of calling for help, jump clear of the equipment. Jump with your feet together and with your arms folded across your chest, as far away from the vehicle as possible. Be sure you are not touching the equipment and the ground at the same time. Then, shuffle (tiny, quick steps) away. The ground may be electrically charged in varying points surrounding the vehicle so quick, short steps are important.

## WATCH THE VIDEO

When farm equipment contacts a power line the results can be deadly. A Yankton-area farmer lost his son in a farm accident when the boom of the sprayer he was operating contacted an overhead power line. Watch his powerful message by visiting [www.northernelectric.coop](http://www.northernelectric.coop) and clicking the 'Watch The Video' button on the homepage.





# COOPERATIVE CYBERSECURITY

**Kaley Lockwood**

NRECA

Digital technologies and smart devices are facilitating greater information sharing by allowing people (and devices) to more efficiently communicate with each other. Internet-connected devices not only better enable us to stay in touch with loved ones, they simplify and streamline our lives by communicating with each other.

But greater connectivity comes with a cost.

Addressing the persistent and evolving reality of cyber threats is important for individuals and organizations alike. As people become increasingly interconnected and reliant on digital technologies, there are more opportunities for cyber threats that need to be addressed.

To this end, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) launched RC3, the Rural Cooperative Cybersecurity Capabilities program, to help electric cooperatives build stronger cybersecurity programs. With funding from the U.S. Department of Energy, RC3 is developing tools to help cooperatives develop a culture of cybersecurity.

Electric cooperatives, large and small, are investing time and

resources to build stronger cyber defenses and increase their resiliency to cyberattacks. As co-ops ramp up capabilities in the beneficial use of digital technologies, they are integrating best practices to safeguard consumer data and grid operations from cyberattacks.

Electric co-ops are responding to the challenge, but are you? Cybercrime affects everyone – organizations, businesses and even individuals. Taking steps to protect your home network and devices from cyberattacks now will save you time and money in the long run.

## Here are a few tips to beef up your personal cybersecurity:

- Make sure you have antivirus software installed on your computer, and remember to keep it updated.
- Don't send e-mails containing personal information, like your date of birth or Social Security Number, because that increases opportunities for mal-actors to steal your identify. Be careful when entering a credit card number into a website – if you do, make sure that it's a secure website. You can tell if it's secure by looking for the "s" at the beginning of the website address. Most begin with "http://." A secure site will begin with "https://."

- Attachments or links in an email can contain malware that can infect your computer. Never open an e-mail attachment or click a link unless you know the person sending it, and you were expecting them to send it to you (hackers can take over an account and make it look like it's from a friend.)
- Monitor children's online activity, and make sure they know how to practice good cyber security. Visit the U.S. Computer Emergency Readiness Team's (UC-CERT) website for security tips on how to keep children safe online (<https://www.us-cert.gov/ncas/tips/ST05-002>).

- Always use a different password for each account. Stick to longer passwords that include a combination of numbers, special characters, with both lowercase and capital letters.

*Kaley Lockwood writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, 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.*

## Everyone plays a role in their organization's online safety and security, whether that be at home, school or work. You are the first line of defense.

### Think Before You Click

- Always hover over a link first to be sure it is safe.
- Report suspicious emails or emails from an unknown sender to your spam filter and delete them from your inbox.



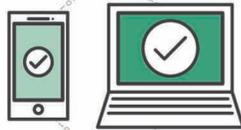
### Defend Your Computer

- The best defense against viruses, malware and other online threats is keeping your equipment up to date.
- Work with our IT staff (or provider) to keep your software, including your web browser, and operating systems current.



### Lockdown Your Log-in

- Create long and unique passwords. Use familiar phrases or song lyrics you'll remember.
- When possible, use 2-factor authentication as a second layer of defense.
- Change passwords regularly, and do not share them.



### Protect Sensitive Information

- Use encryption to protect sensitive data.
- Limit the spread of any attack by only accessing files and folders you need.
- Do not put confidential information in emails, or instant and text messages.



### Watch for Red Flags to Identify Potential Phish Attacks

- Phishing attempts seek to steal or compromise data and will often mimic a known sender.

#### Look for red flags:

1. the email is unexpected;
2. there is a sense of urgency conveyed;
3. there is an offer that seems too good to be true; and/or
4. there are typos and misspellings.



### Practice Good Cyber Hygiene On the Go

- Treat all public Wi-Fi networks as a security risk, and don't make financial or other sensitive transactions over public networks.



Want more tips to improve your cyber hygiene?  
Visit [www.staysafeonline.org](http://www.staysafeonline.org).

# Stoltenberg and Sperry Receive Co-op Scholarships



**Christine Stoltenberg**  
Northwestern High School  
\$1,000

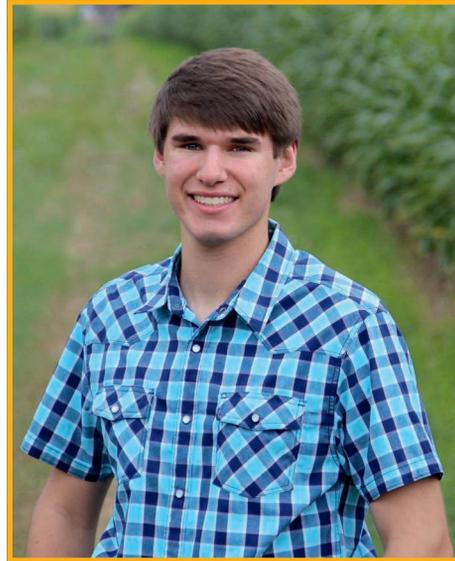
Two local students who hope to build their careers in northeast South Dakota have been selected as the recipients of two co-op-sponsored scholarships.

Northwestern High School senior Christine Stoltenberg was selected to receive the \$1,000 Basin Electric Power Cooperative Scholarship and third-year South Dakota State University student Matthew Sperry will receive the \$500 Northern Electric Scholarship.

## Christine Stoltenberg

Stoltenberg is from Stratford and ranks number one in her class at Northwestern High School. She is also a four-year participant in volleyball, basketball, track, Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), Future Farmers of America (FFA), student government, science bowl, and the BEST robotics team. Stoltenberg is currently the student body president and the president of the Northwestern FFA chapter.

Stoltenberg is going to pursue an accounting degree at Northern State



**Matthew Sperry**  
South Dakota State University  
\$500

University in the fall.

“This scholarship will allow me to pursue a major in accounting and a minor in agribusiness,” Stoltenberg said.

Stoltenberg would also like to pursue a master’s degree and become a Certified Public Accountant (CPA). After she graduates, she wants to stay close to home and begin her career.

**“I would like to work with local farmers and ranchers to help them optimize their operation’s finances.”**

“My current career goal is to become an accountant in the Aberdeen area,” Stoltenberg said. “I would like to work with local farmers and ranchers to help them optimize their operation’s finances.”

## Matthew Sperry

Matthew Sperry of Bath is currently in his third year at South Dakota State University and he is pursuing two majors in precision agriculture, and agronomy and soil science. Sperry is also pursuing a minor in agricultural business. He currently has a 4.0 grade-point average at SDSU and is involved in nine different collegiate organizations. He serves as the secretary of the SDSU Agronomy Club and he is the fundraising/points director of the Golden Key International Honor Society. Sperry is also an adult leader for Brown County 4-H and was one of two winners in the 4-H Farmfluencer video contest in 2019.

**“Technology in agriculture is the future and my goal is to be a part of it.”**

“This scholarship will enable me to continue my college education and achieve my career goal of becoming an efficient, productive, and profitable steward of the land,” Sperry said.

Sperry plans on moving back to his family’s farm near Bath when he graduates from SDSU. He plans to use his degree in precision agriculture to infuse technology into the family farming operation.

“Technology in agriculture is the future and my goal is to be a part of it, not for my sake, but for the responsibility of feeding an ever-growing worldwide population,” Sperry said.

Sperry and Stoltenberg will receive their scholarships when they enroll in classes in the fall.



# 2020 YOUTH EXCURSION

## YOU WILL TOUR:

Basin Electric Headquarters

Antelope Valley Station

Great Plains Synfuels  
Plant

Freedom Mine

Bismarck State College

## 2020 Youth Excursion to Bismarck, ND July 27-30

### 2020 YOUTH EXCURSION

South Dakota rural electric cooperatives and Northern Electric Cooperative are proud to sponsor high school students on a **FREE** four-day trip to North Dakota.

During the South Dakota Rural Electric Youth Excursion students will stay at Bismarck State College and learn about electric generation, cooperatives, and energy careers.

Students will tour Basin Electric Power Cooperative power plants and electric-generation resources.

Youth Excursion attendees will also spend their evenings swimming, shopping, and cruising down the Missouri River on the Lewis and Clark Riverboat.

**APPLY ONLINE**  
@

[www.northernelectric.coop/youthexcursion](http://www.northernelectric.coop/youthexcursion)

# Are You Flood Ready?

**Brenda Kleinjan**

editor@sdrea.coop

Wisdom has it that April showers bring May flowers, but in much of South Dakota, April showers may bring more water woes to areas that exited 2019 with saturated soils.

In late February, the National Weather Service issued its spring flood outlook for rivers and streams in eastern South Dakota, portions of central South Dakota, and portions of west central Minnesota.

“Due to the very wet conditions across the area late last summer and into last fall, the chances for minor, moderate, or major flooding are above normal across the eastern and central parts of the area, with lesser chances across the west,” the NWS office in Aberdeen wrote in its release.

Of the 68 river gauges located in South Dakota, 37 show more than 50 percent chance of minor, moderate or major flooding in April and May. The areas shown at risk are in central and eastern South Dakota along the James, Big Sioux, Vermillion and White rivers. (View the map at [https://water.weather.gov/ahps/region\\_long\\_range.php?state=sd&percent=50](https://water.weather.gov/ahps/region_long_range.php?state=sd&percent=50))

The flood threat through this spring, both in location and severity, will be determined by future rain or snowfall, and how fast the melting of snowpack occurs. In late February, the 90-day outlook through the end of May contained no strong indication of any abnormally warm/cold or moist/dry trends.

The chances for river flooding are near to above normal, with well above normal chances for the James River and Big Sioux River basins.

There is a wide range of snow depths across the area. Most areas west of the Missouri River have a trace to 2 inches, while east of the James River Valley is a thicker snow pack generally ranging from 8 to 20 inches.

With wet conditions last fall heading into the freeze-up, the soils were fairly well saturated as they froze, which will make them much more impervious to soaking up much of the snow melt as it occurs.



Flooding in southeastern South Dakota last fall, which followed spring flooding, inundated roads and farmland.

## Flooding 411

Flooding is the nation’s most common natural disaster. Flooding can happen in every U.S. state and territory. However, all floods are not alike. Some can develop slowly during an extended period of rain, or in a warming trend following a heavy snow. Others, such as flash floods, can occur quickly, even without any visible signs of rain. Be prepared for flooding no matter where you live, but particularly if you are in a low-lying area, near water or downstream from a dam. Even a very small stream or dry creek bed can overflow and create flooding.

### Prepare for Flooding

- Elevate the furnace, water heater, and electric panel in your home if you live in an area that has a high flood risk.
- Consider installing “check valves” to prevent flood water from backing up into the drains of your home.
- If feasible, construct barriers to stop floodwater from entering the building and seal walls in basements with waterproofing compounds.
- Property insurance does not typically cover flood damage. Talk to your insurance provider about your policy and consider if you need additional coverage.
- Get a kit of emergency supplies and prepare a portable kit in case you have to evacuate.
- Familiarize yourself with the terms that are used to identify a thunderstorm hazard, including understanding the difference between a severe thunderstorm watch and a severe thunderstorm warning.
- A flood watch or flash flood warning means there is a possibility of flooding or a flash flood in your area.

### Be Prepared to Evacuate

- If time allows, bring in outside furniture and move your

# 3 SIMPLE STEPS FOR FLASH FLOOD SAFETY

During a flood, water levels and the rate at which the water is flowing can quickly change. Remain aware and monitor local radio and television.



[weather.gov/flood](https://www.weather.gov/flood)

## 1 GET TO HIGHER GROUND

Get out of the areas subject to flooding

## 2 DO NOT DRIVE INTO WATER

Do NOT drive or walk into flooded areas. It only takes 6" of water to knock you off your feet.

## 3 STAY INFORMED

Monitor local radar, television, weather radio, internet or social media for updates.

valuables to higher places in your home. Unplug electrical appliances, moving them to higher levels, if possible. However, do not touch an electric appliance if you are wet or standing in water.

- If you have a car, fill the gas tank in case you have to evacuate.
- A flood warning means a flood is occurring or will likely occur soon. If you are advised to evacuate do so immediately.
- A flash flood warning means a flash flood is occurring. Seek higher ground immediately; do not wait for instructions.
- Visit NOAA Watch for more weather-related information.

### Plan to Evacuate

- Plan how you will leave and where you will go if you are advised to evacuate.
- If you do not have a car, plan alternate means of evacuating.
- Plan places where your family will meet, both within and outside of your immediate neighborhood.
- Identify several places you could go in an emergency, a friend's home in another town, a motel or public shelter.
- If you have a car, keep a half tank of gas in it at all times in case you need to evacuate.

- Become familiar with alternate routes and other means of transportation out of your area.
- Take your emergency supply kit.
- Lock the door behind you.
- Listen to NOAA Weather Radio for information.
- Take your pets with you, but understand that only service animals may be permitted in public shelters. Plan how you will care for your pets in an emergency.
- Call or email the "out-of-state" contact in your family communications plan.
- Tell them where you are going.
- Leave a note telling others when you left and where you are going.
- Check with neighbors who may need a ride.
- Do not walk through moving water, if possible. Look for areas where the water is not moving. What might seem like a small amount of moving water can easily knock you down.
- Do not drive into flooded areas. If your vehicle becomes surrounded by rising water, get out quickly and move to higher ground, if possible.

### Stay Informed

- Local authorities may not immediately be able to provide information on what is happening and what you should do. However,

you should listen to NOAA Weather Radio, watch TV, listen to the radio or check the Internet often for official news and instructions as they become available.

- If it has been raining hard for several hours or if it has been raining steadily for days there may be the potential for flooding. Use common sense and available information. If water is rising quickly or you see a moving wall of mud or debris, immediately move to higher ground.
- Stay out of flood waters, if possible. The water may be contaminated or electrically charged. However, should you find yourself trapped in your vehicle in rising water get out immediately and seek higher ground.
- Stay away from downed power lines to avoid the risk of electric shock or electrocution.
- Do not return to your home until local authorities say it is safe. Even after flood waters recede, roads may be weakened and could collapse. Buildings may be unstable, and drinking water may be contaminated.
- Use common sense and exercise caution.

For more information on how you can be prepared for a flood, visit <https://www.floodsmart.gov/>.



White loose-fill fiberglass insulation is being blown into an attic. It must be installed properly to attain the desired R-value per inch thickness.

# ENERGY TAX CREDITS

## Tax Credits May Be Available for Your Projects

**Brenda Kleinjan**

editor@sdrea.coop

According to ENERGY STAR®’s website, the Non-Business Energy Property Tax Credits have been retroactively extended from Dec. 31, 2017, through Dec. 31, 2020.

The tax credit is 10 percent of the cost up to \$500 or a specific amount between \$50 and \$300, depending on the qualifying upgrade.

The credits expire Dec. 31, 2020, and must be made to an existing home and your principal residence.

The tax credits for residential renewable energy products are also still available through Dec. 31, 2021. This tax credit provides:

- 30 percent for systems placed in service by Dec. 31, 2019;
- 26 percent for systems placed in service after Dec. 31, 2019, and before Jan. 1, 2021;
- 22 percent for systems placed in service after Dec. 31, 2020 and before Jan. 1, 2022.

There are tax credits for certain:

- Geothermal Heat Pumps
- Small wind turbines (residential)
- Solar Energy Systems (including solar water heaters)
- Fuel Cells

The tax credit for builders of energy efficient homes and tax deductions for energy efficient commercial buildings have also been retroactively extended, through Dec. 31, 2020.



## Residential Energy Property Costs:

### Air-Source Heat Pumps

Heat pumps that are ENERGY STAR® certified meet the requirements for this tax credit.

Tax Credit Amount: \$300

#### Requirements

- Split Systems:
  - HSPF  $\geq$  8.5
  - EER  $\geq$  12.5
  - SEER  $\geq$  15
- Package systems:
  - HSPF  $\geq$  8
  - EER  $\geq$  12
  - SEER  $\geq$  14

### Central Air Conditioning

Air conditioners recognized as ENERGY STAR® Most Efficient meet the requirements for this tax credit. To verify tax credit eligibility, ask your HVAC contractor to provide the Manufacturer Certification Statement for the equipment you plan to purchase.

Tax Credit Amount: \$300

#### Requirements

- Split Systems:
  - SEER  $\geq$  16

- EER  $\geq$  13

#### Package systems:

- SEER  $\geq$  14
- EER  $\geq$  12

### Electric Heat Pump Water Heater

Most ENERGY STAR certified water heaters meet the requirements of this tax credit. Water heaters account for 12 percent of the energy consumed in your home.

Tax Credit Amount: \$300

#### Requirements

- Energy factor  $\geq$  2.2

### Advanced Main Air Circulating Fan

An Advanced Main Air Circulating Fan is an efficient fan, or blower motor which blows the air that your furnace heats up through the duct system.

Tax Credit Amount: \$50

#### Requirements

Must use no more than 2 percent of the furnace's total energy.

## Qualified Energy Efficiency Improvements:

**Please note:** Tax credit DOES NOT INCLUDE INSTALLATION for the following products.

### Insulation

Adding adequate insulation is one of the most cost-effective home improvements that you can do.

Tax Credit Amount: 10 percent of the cost, up to \$500 (not including installation)

#### Requirements

- Typical bulk insulation products can qualify, such as batts, rolls, blow-in fibers, rigid boards, expanding spray, and pour-in-place.
- Products that air seal (reduce air

leaks) can also qualify, as long as they come with a Manufacturer's Certification Statement, including:

- Weather stripping
- Spray foam in a can, designed to air seal
- Caulk designed to air seal
- House wrap

**NOTE:** Tax Credit does NOT include installation costs.

### Roofs: Metal and Asphalt

This tax credit is for ENERGY STAR certified metal and asphalt roofs with pigmented coatings or cooling granules designed to reduce heat gain. Certified roof products reflect more of the sun's rays, which can lower roof

surface temperature by up to 100° F, decreasing the amount of heat transferred into your home.

Tax Credit Amount: 10 percent of the cost, up to \$500 (Not including installation.)

#### Requirements

- "Metal roofs with appropriate pigmented coatings" and "asphalt roofs with appropriate cooling granules" that also meet ENERGY STAR requirements.

**NOTE:** Tax Credit does NOT include installation costs.

### Windows, Doors and Skylights

Windows, doors and skylights that earn the ENERGY STAR save energy, improve comfort and help protect the environment.

Tax Credit Amount: 10 percent of the cost, up to \$500, but windows are capped at \$200. (Not including installation)

#### Requirements

- Must be ENERGY STAR certified.
- You do not have to replace all the windows/doors/skylights in your home to qualify. And it doesn't need to be a replacement either - installing a new window where there wasn't one previously (like in an addition) qualifies.

**NOTE:** Tax Credit does NOT include installation costs.



Photo Credit: Rare Form Properties

Photo Credit: CertainTeed

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**December 15-March 31**

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

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**March 19-21**

SD State A High School Boys and Girls Basketball Tournament, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD, 605-224-9261

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**March 19-21**

SD State AA High School Boys and Girls Basketball Tournament, Sanford Premier Center, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-224-9261

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**March 19-21**

SD State B High School Boys Basketball Tournament, Barnett Center, Aberdeen, SD, 605-224-9261

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**March 20-21, 27-28**

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

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**March 21-22**

Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Gun Show, Gun Show, Codington County Ag Building, Watertown, SD, 701-361-9215

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**March 28**

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

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**March 28**

SD High School All-State Band Concert, Mitchell Fine Arts Center, Mitchell, SD, 605-224-9261

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**April 3-4**

Forks, Corks and Kegs Food, Wine and Beer Festival, Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876 or 800-999-1876

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**March 18,  
June 11,  
Aug. 13 and  
Oct. 8**

Kids Mystery Dinner Theater, Brookings, SD, 605-692-6700



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**April 4-5**

Annual USD Wacipi, Vermillion, SD

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**April 11**

Eggstravaganza, Rapid City, SD, 605-716-7979

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**April 17-19**

First Dakota Classic Archery Tournament, Yankton, SD, 605-260-9282

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**April 18**

Black Hills Gold & Treasure Show, Rapid City, SD

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**April 25**

River Rat Marathon, Yankton, SD, 605-660-9483

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**May 5-6**

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

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**May 29-30**

South Dakota Regional Senior Games, Sioux Falls, SD, Contact Nick Brady at 605-978-6924

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**June 5-7**

Regional Qualifying High School Rodeos:

- Rodeo Grounds, Wall, SD, 605-529-5868
- Rodeo Grounds, Highmore, SD, 605-529-5868
- Tipperary Arena, Buffalo, SD, 605-529-5868
- Heartland Arena, Huron, SD, 605-529-5868

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**June 12-14**

Regional Qualifying High School Rodeos:

- Tripp County Fairgrounds, Winner, SD, 605-529-5868
- Rodeo Grounds, Sturgis, SD, 605-529-5868
- Rodeo Grounds, Dupree, SD, 605-529-5868
- Derby Downs Arena, Watertown, SD, 605-529-5868

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**June 16-21**

SD State High School Finals Rodeo, Stanley County Fairgrounds, Fort Pierre, SD, 605-529-5868

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**June 25-27**

31st Annual Red Power Round Up, Fairgrounds, Huron, SD, Contact Steve Masat at 605-460-0197 or Dennis Schilling at 605-354-2867, [redpowerroundup2020.com](http://redpowerroundup2020.com)

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**July 11**

6th Annual Auto Value Car Show, Hav-A-Rest Campground, Redfield, SD, 605-450-0332

**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.**