

# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

## Let's Go Fly a Kite

**Brookings Kite Festival  
Creates Excitement**  
Pages 8-9

**Cooperative Metering**  
Pages 12-13

*Photo Credit: Visit Brookings*



# Powering Progress: Energizing Growth and Managing Challenges



**Dick Johnson**  
CEO/GM

It is shocking (pardon the pun) to me that we are halfway through 2024. I thought I would bring you up to date on where we are at mid-year. It has been another hectic year (or maybe that is just my age) but we continue to hustle and bustle each day serving our members' best interests. 11999400

I had a member comment to me the other day that they saw our Rapid City crew leaving with six transformers on a trailer. One would think that trailer might be headed for another coop or warehouse, when in reality that was headed to another development needing electricity. We continue to see the building of new homes, apartments, commercial businesses along with a good clip of new rural services. Our staking crews are seeing a slowdown in requests for new developments, but the existing ones are cranking out new houses every day. We have seen several new businesses coming to our services such as a new Starbucks, a hotel, an Amazon distribution facility, RESPEC addition, RPM addition, McDonalds, Rapid Trailers and Muth Electric just to name a few. The retail stores are to service the community members but several of the businesses that are new or expanding in our area are providing much needed, good jobs, to our area. This raises the bar for everyone living here. I am proud of our team of employees who are working hard to make sure we get these services installed in time to get them up and running. Our front office people are scrambling as well to make sure all the paperwork is completed to ensure the member is billed correctly and on time. 11215300

There is one development that is installing solar panels and battery storage in each of their houses in a 500-home development. We are

waiting to see how that all plays out for future sales. We also must watch closely on sunny days when it is still cool out, how much energy is being put back on the circuit as we need to monitor the substations those houses feed from to be certain there are not any power issues.

Our work in progress account is the highest I think I have ever seen it. It is about three times normal. Part of the issue is we have some high dollar items like substations and transmission lines in that account, but much of it is increased costs of material. Our material inventory is at an all-time high as well. A couple of weeks ago, I had to approve a purchase order for some underground cable we use on a regular basis for line rebuilds. It was over \$10.00 per foot. I was dumbfounded, so I glanced at the cost in 2021; \$5.00 per foot! It had doubled in cost in 3 years. That continues to put pressure on us to work hard to manage our costs. 3430900

A happier note for the member is the average cost of our members' bills for the year. I have noticed sales have been sluggish with the nicer than normal winter. The number of new services is over 4% but our sales are down 1.25%. Looking at the numbers, our average residential members' bill is down \$13.75 per month. That is great news as our members keep more money in their pockets each month to be able to put elsewhere. It stinks for our sales, but hey, if the member is happy, I am great with that. As a sidelight, our power costs are down approximately 5.3%. Good news as well.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Dick Johnson".

**COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS**

**WEST RIVER ELECTRIC**

(USPS No. 675-840)

**Our Mission:**

To serve our members' best interest.

**Our Vision:**

We will be a high performing co-op.

**Our Values:**

- 1. Safety
- 2. Accountability
- 3. Integrity
- 4. Innovation
- 5. Commitment to Community

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

**Board President:** Andy Moon

**Board of Directors**

- Stan Anders – Vice President
- Jamie Lewis – Secretary
- Chuck Sloan – Treasurer
- Larry Eisenbraun
- Peter Blake
- Marcia Arneson
- Howard Knuppe
- Sue Peters

**CEO and General Manager:**

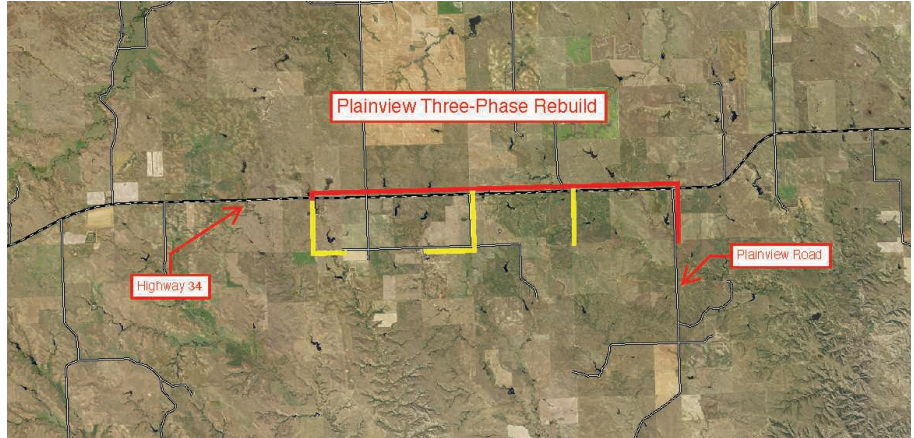
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dick.johnson@westriver.coop

**Editor**

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WEST RIVER ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is the monthly publication for the members of West River Electric Association. Members subscribe to *Cooperative Connections* as part of their electric cooperative membership for \$6 a year. West River Electric Cooperative Connections purpose is to provide reliable, helpful information to electric cooperative members on matters pertaining to rural electrification and better living. Nonmember subscriptions are available for \$12 per year. Periodicals Postage paid at Wall, S.D., and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to West River Electric Cooperative Connections, PO Box 412, Wall, SD 57790-0412.

Other correspondence to: West River Electric Cooperative Connections, 3250 E Hwy 44, Rapid City, SD 57703; telephone (605)393-1500, Exts. 6519, 6531 or 6522; fax (605)393-0275; e-mail robert.raker@westriver.coop.



# Improving Reliability by Enhancing our Infrastructure



**Matt Schmah**  
Construction  
Project Manager

This month, our focus shifts to the northeastern part of our system, specifically along Highway 34. We will be rebuilding 12.6 miles of both three-phase line and single-phase overhead line.

This infrastructure enhancement project will help to enhance the reliability you as member-owners deserve. 3010000

We've elected to change the route of the main line with this rebuild due to the routing that traversed across the country, making the accessibility of the equipment challenging if not impossible during adverse weather events. The new route will have the overhead lines positioned next to the highway for the main three-phase line, while the single-phase "tap" lines will be reconfigured to align with rural roadways for better access.

The conventional design of the three-phase distribution line closely follows the traditional approach that has been in use in recent years. In contrast to the previous design, which featured distances between poles exceeding 300 feet, the new design incorporates significantly shorter

distances. This current design incorporates a maximum span limit, or spacing between poles of 250 feet, resulting in enhanced strength and durability.

In addition to the decreased span length, we have opted to a twisted pair wire, or conductor, which has been our preferred choice for this type of application for many years. After implementing these design considerations, the dependability and resiliency of this particular segment of infrastructure is expected to be greatly enhanced.

Given the extensive nature of the project, we anticipate that construction activities will continue throughout the summer months and potentially extend into the fall timeframe. As with any construction project, weather conditions will have a role in determining the completion timelines. 2704401

Please refer to the accompanying map that displays the areas designated for the rebuild. The red line indicates the location of the main three-phase line, while the yellow line represents the single-phase rebuilds. This map serves as a visual aid in understanding the scope of the reconstruction project. Should you have any questions, please give our office a call at 605-393-1500. 11489000

Until next month!

# 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, homemade 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.

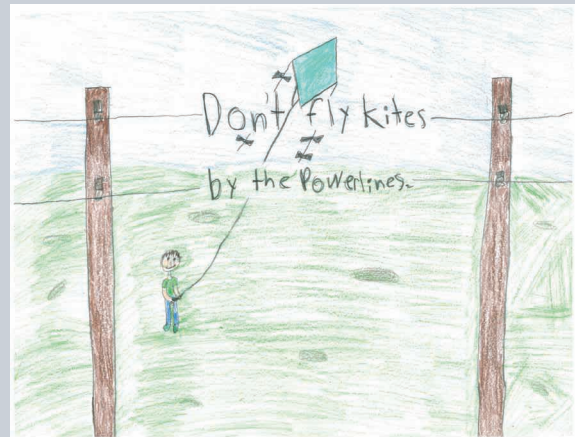
### Sparklers Are Dangerous

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 tsp. 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.

# AG APPRECIATION EVENT AT THE CENTRAL STATES FAIR

Please come show your support in honoring these individuals for their dedication to the rural community.

An Ag Appreciation Meal and short program will be August 20th from 5-6:30pm at the Monument Health Community Stage inside the fairgrounds.

Enjoy a free meal, free fair entrance\* and a night out at the rodeo\*!

## 2024 RURAL NEIGHBOR NOMINEES



**Roy Ireland**

2024 Rural Neighbor Award

**Sponsored by:**

Touchstone Energy Cooperatives



**Joy Falkenburg, M.D.**

2024 Rural Health Care Neighbor Award

**Sponsored by:**

Monument Health



**In memory of**

**Jerry Cope**

2024 Rural Neighbor Award

**Sponsored by:**

Central States Fair



# BREADROOT

## NATURAL FOODS CO-OP

Breadroot Natural Foods co-op

2024 Agribusiness Award

**Sponsored by:**

Elevate Rapid City

\*MORE DETAILS TO COME  
\*RODEO TICKETS SOLD SEPARATELY



# COMMON CAUSES OF POWER OUTAGES

There is never a good time for the power to go out, but if it happens on a sunny day, you might be left wondering why. Here are the most common causes of a power outage.

## WEATHER

High winds, snow and ice can cause tree limbs to fall on power lines. Other weather effects, like wildfires and lightning strikes, can cause major damage to equipment.

## CRITTERS

Squirrels, birds, snakes and other animals can inadvertently contact power lines, causing short circuits and disruptions to electrical supply.

## Scheduled MAINTENANCE

Occasionally, we plan outages to perform upgrades or repairs to parts of the local grid.

## ACCIDENTS

Vehicles can crash into utility poles, bringing down power lines. Construction and excavation work can also result in disruptions to underground lines.

# Ag Appreciation Event Ticket

### WHEN:

AUGUST  
20TH  
5-6:30PM

### WHERE:

MONUMENT  
HEALTH  
STAGE

\*LOCATED INSIDE THE  
FAIRGROUNDS

### WHAT:

- FREE MEAL
- FREE FAIR ENTRANCE\*
- NIGHT AT THE RODEO\*

\*MORE DETAILS TO COME  
\*RODEO TICKETS SOLD SEPARATELY



\*Must present to gate attendee and event entrance for free fair entrance and meal.

## KITE FESTIVAL



*Photo Credit: Visit Brookings*

# Let's Go Fly a Kite

**Shannon Marvel**

shannon.marvel@sdrea.coop

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.

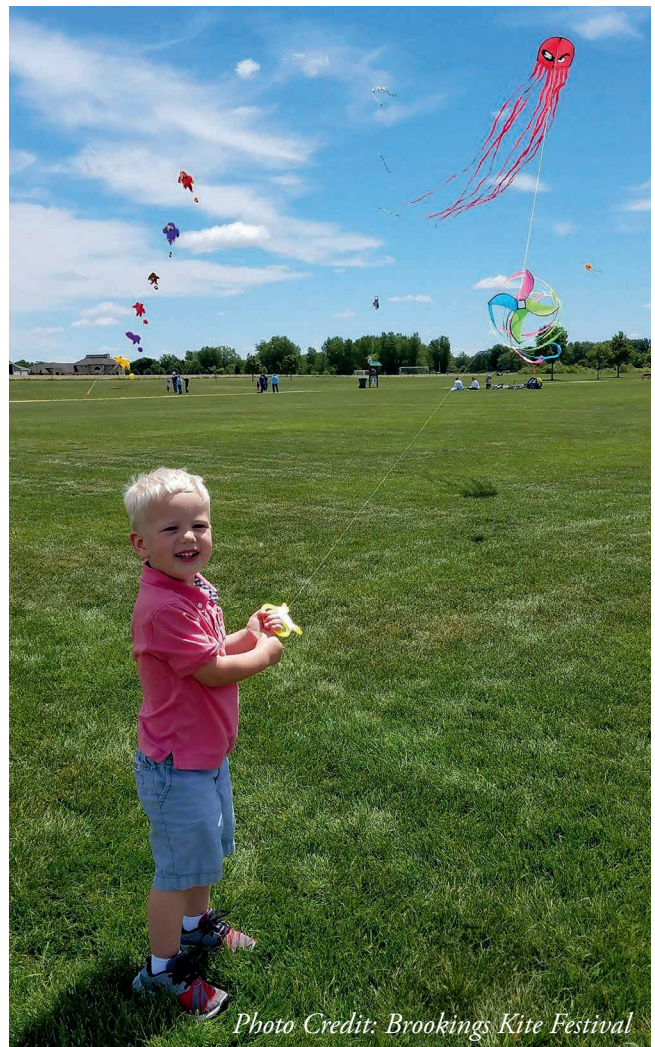
There are other kites flown during the festival, including soft kites, stick kites and sport kites.

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*

# The Power of Smart Home Technologies

Smart home technologies are transforming how we live, making our homes more comfortable, convenient and energy efficient than ever before.

Smart home technologies are devices that communicate with each other to automate everyday tasks and functions around the home, like heating and cooling, lighting and security. In addition to convenience, smart technologies enable consumers to manage and monitor their energy consumption through device scheduling and control.

With just a tap on your phone or a voice command to your virtual assistant (like Alexa or Siri), you can conveniently control many aspects of your home environment. If you're new to the smart tech world, there are several cost-effective devices you can try as you explore ways to make your home smarter.

One of the best and most inexpensive places to start is with a smart bulb or plug. Smart LED bulbs allow you to control home lighting remotely through a smartphone app or voice commands. You can set schedules to automatically turn lights off or on, which can help you save energy and boost home security.

Smart plugs are another inexpensive way to give electronics and small appliances the smart home treatment. Smart plugs allow you to set schedules and remotely control power to lamps, small appliances and electronics, minimizing standby energy consumption and maximizing convenience. For example, you can sync the timing of your bedside lamp, alarm, speakers and coffee maker to turn on at the same time each morning.

If Alexa or Siri is already part of your household, you can build on your existing "tech ecosystem" by adding a smart hub, like Amazon Echo or Apple HomePod. Voice assistants that are synced to smart devices like bulbs and plugs provide

additional options for device management and allow family members to interact with the various devices through voice control rather than individual apps.

Home heating and cooling account for a significant portion of energy use, so one of the best investments you can make in smart tech is a smart thermostat. While traditional programmable thermostats can be set to your schedule and preferences, a smart thermostat takes this one step further by learning and adjusting to your routine and building a schedule around it.

Smart security systems are popular options for homeowners looking for advanced security solutions that incorporate cameras, sensors and cloud-based video recordings. As with other smart technologies, smart security systems provide convenient, flexible ways to monitor homes (and businesses), giving you peace of mind even when you're away.

If you're considering smart tech for your home, start by defining your goals. Is saving energy your top priority, or are you aiming to improve home security? Smart home technologies provide great convenience—but remember, they are internet-connected devices. That means you'll need a stable Wi-Fi connection to ensure devices are working properly, and you'll need strong passwords for your router and individual devices.

Whether you're looking to automate every aspect of your home or simply want to try a device or two, smart technologies have the power to transform your living space into a home where comfort and convenience reign supreme.

**TIPS FOR INTEGRATING SMART HOME TECH**

If you're new to smart home technologies, keep the following tips in mind as you explore home automation options.

- 1. Define goals.** Determine the areas in your home you want to make smart, like lighting, security and entertainment systems.
- 2. Choose compatible devices.** A smart hub can make integration easier with a central device to control multiple smart technologies.
- 3. Check Wi-Fi strength.** Smart home technologies require a stable internet connection to function properly, so consider factors like router placement and signal strength.
- 4. Prioritize security.** Set strong, unique passwords for your Wi-Fi network, set devices to update automatically and limit personal data collection.

# SAVE THE DATE

## Member Appreciation Day

- kids zone
- trivia
- safety demos
- SO MUCH MORE!

Sept. 27, 2024  
11am-7pm





# 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

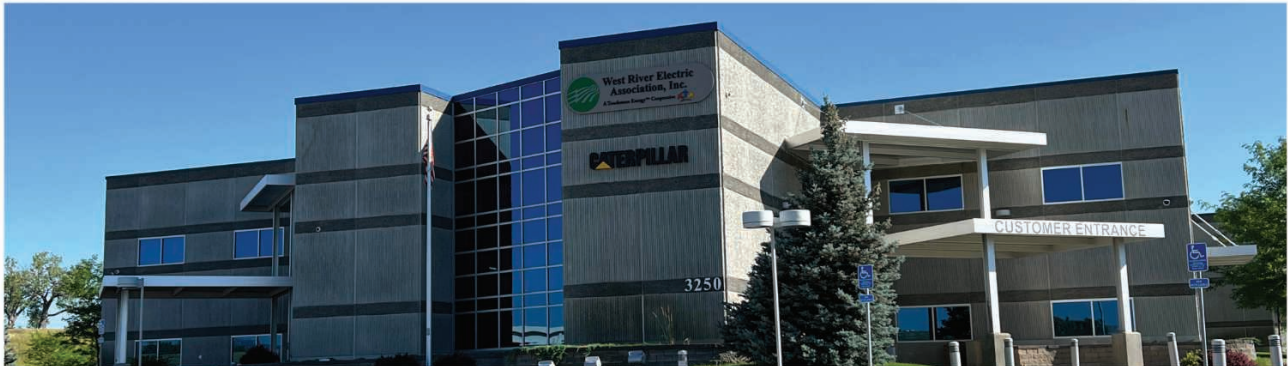
Electric cooperatives do not sell or share consumer data. Cooperatives abide by all laws regarding the privacy, protection and disclosure of personal information. The meters and associated communications systems are equipped with security features to prevent unauthorized access.

## 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.

# EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

SHINING THE LIGHT ON WEST RIVER ELECTRICS DEDICATED EMPLOYEES



**DAWN HILGENKAMP**  
CFO/MANAGER OF  
FINANCE

**HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING WITH WEST RIVER ELECTRIC?**

I have been with WREA for 24 years.

**WHAT DOES YOUR JOB ENTAIL?**

I do the budgeting, financial forecasting, financing and lots of analytical analysis and projects.

**WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT WEST RIVER ELECTRIC?**

The people I work with. My co-workers are great to work with and when things get tough, such as a big outage, everyone pulls together to get the job done. They are very supportive of each other and have the members best interests in mind. I love my cooperative family.

**WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE MEMORY SINCE STARTING WORK AT WEST RIVER ELECTRIC?**

I have many memories, but some of my favorites are the small pranks that we would play on each other. Whether it is jumping out of a closet when a co-worker goes to put their coat away or at Christmas time seeing several linemen come down the hall hitched to a roller creeper and the lead linemen with a red nose posing as Rudolph with Christmas bells and Santa hats. I will never forget it.

**HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE WEST RIVER ELECTRIC IN THREE WORDS?**

Do the right thing always. It is more than three words, but it is a mindset our CEO Dick Johnson has instilled in all of us.

**WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO GET UP AND GO TO WORK EVERY DAY?**

I enjoy working with my co-workers and the people that work in this industry. The people that work in the rural electric cooperative industry are very helpful of each other. Whether you are working at the local, state or national level, I can reach out for help to any rural electric cooperative across the united states and I tell them who I am and where I work and they always bend over backwards to answer my question and help me out. The cooperative industry puts its members first before profits.



**TUCKER HOHN**  
JOURNEYMAN  
LINEMAN

**HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING WITH WEST RIVER ELECTRIC?**

I have been with WREA for 6 years.

**WHAT DOES YOUR JOB ENTAIL?**

My job entails building and maintaining the power grid.

**WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT WEST RIVER ELECTRIC?**

What I love most about West River is the environment at the coop and the work we do.

**WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE MEMORY SINCE STARTING WORK AT WEST RIVER ELECTRIC?**

My favorite memory since beginning here is working storm jobs with the crews.

**HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE WEST RIVER ELECTRIC IN THREE WORDS?**

Innovative, Loyal and Positive.

**WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO GET UP AND GO TO WORK EVERY DAY?**

What motivates me to go to work everyday is the company as well as the people I work with and the type of work we do throughout the day.



# HAPPY FOURTH OF JULY!



**WE WILL BE CLOSED THURSDAY JULY 4TH**

Report an outage via SmartHub or by calling our office.



**West River Electric  
Association, Inc.**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

"Powering You For A Brighter Future"

## LOCATE YOUR ACCOUNT NUMBER

If you locate your account number anywhere in this issue of West River Electric's *Cooperative Connections*, you will be a winner. There will be five account numbers placed randomly throughout the publication. If you spot your account number and notify our office before the 10th of the next month, you will receive a \$10 credit on your next bill.

## WEST RIVER ELECTRIC OFFICE HOURS

### RAPID CITY OFFICE

3250 E Hwy 44, Rapid City, SD  
Monday-Friday 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
605-393-1500

### WALL OFFICE

1200 W 4th Ave, Wall, SD  
Monday-Friday 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
605-279-2135

A night depository is available at both offices for your convenience.

## SERVICE AND BILLING QUESTIONS?

Contact 605-279-2135 or 605-393-1500 during office hours. E-mail us at [info@westriver.coop](mailto:info@westriver.coop) for questions on your account.

## OUTAGE OR EMERGENCY?

Contact 605-279-2135 or 605-393-1500 in the event of an outage or other emergency. Our calls are answered 24/7.

## 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: \_\_\_\_\_



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

**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**  
**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 8-11**  
**Vacation Bible School "Camp Firelight"**  
5:30-8 p.m.  
Meal provided  
RVUMC  
5103 Longview Rd.  
Rapid City, SD  
605-393-1526

**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 19-20**  
**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**  
**Disability Resource Fair**  
11 a.m.-2 p.m.  
Main Street Square  
Rapid City, SD

**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

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.

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