

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Building a Dream

South Dakota's
Unique Getaway
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CPR & AED
Training
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THE PRICE IS RIGHT



Dick Johnson
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westriver.coop

The Price is Right is a game show that has been on television for years. It is one of my favorite shows. If you aren't familiar with the show the contestants are shown various products and must guess whether the price is higher or lower without going over. Similarly, solar generation involves guessing how much energy will be produced every day. Things such as weather, location, size and efficiency of the panels can make an element of uncertainty and prediction involved. Some days I want to say solar generation is more like the game show, "Whose Line Is It Anyway." That show had improvisational comedy. However, solar is here to stay, so we will need to embrace it and make sure the price is right for all our members.

I have had many questions from people regarding the Wild Springs solar facility being constructed south of New Underwood. This project has been in the works for several years; however, it has finally come to fruition. The first comment I would make is we have very little to do with this. A developer/investor is building the site, and most of the

generation from the facility will be purchased by Basin Electric Power Cooperative, our main power supplier. They were approached and felt the price was right as a part of their all-of-the-above energy strategy. This project will put energy into the grid, so in a sense we will see the electrons flowing to our members. West River will be providing station service to the site. Frankly, it is quite a sight to see as they construct the facility and if you have a few minutes, drive by the site. It is right south of New Underwood.

West River Electric is currently finalizing plans to put several solar panels in front of our Rapid City office. We felt not only was the price right, but the time was right as well. Why? Because this is another way for us to be your "trusted energy advisor". We have discussed for several years about putting in a small array to show our membership how solar really works. To add too that, we will have the data available so our members are able to make informed decisions on installing and owning solar generation. We are finding more and more installers that are not telling the entire story, so we are partnering with Gen-Pro solar on the installation to help tell the full story. They are a local company who have been around for many years and are trusted to tell the right story. We have had internal conversations on having an electronic sign that would show when we are generating electricity. However, that might have to wait; the price just isn't right now! We should have the ability, however, to put a link to our website showing the generation output.

We also have a developer who is installing solar on every home they are building in our area. This array will help us to give the member information they will need as they interconnect into our system and generate their own electricity and put any excess back on our system. 2310500

It is that time of year when everything ramps up outside. Please stay safe and look above and below for power lines. Nationally public contacts with electric lines are running well ahead of average. Please stay safe!

We will be CLOSED Monday,
May 29th, in honor of
Memorial Day

 **West River Electric Association, Inc.**
Your Touchstone Energy Cooperative 
"Powering You For A Brighter Future"

Please call 605.279.2135 or 605.393.1500 to report and outage or in case of an emergency.

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

WEST RIVER ELECTRIC

(USPS No. 675-840)

Our Mission:

We are safety conscious, community oriented, and the trusted energy expert for our member owners.

Our Vision:

We will achieve an ACSI score of 90 by 2024.

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

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 Larry Eisenbraun – Treasurer
 Jerry Hammerquist
 Howard Knuppe
 Marcia Arneson
 Chuck Sloan
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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.

Construction Update



Matt Schmahl
 Construction
 Project Manager

I have had many people who have inquired about why West River Electric doesn't install more underground power lines versus overhead. The answer is not as simple as one may think. A great deal of planning goes into what type of facilities are needed.

Easements, permitting, cost of service analysis, and platting conditions are just a few of the requirements that determine the type of construction West River Electric utilizes on each build.

When a new subdivision is being constructed, we will normally elect to utilize underground power lines to service the lots. This type of construction provides better use of the provided easements and allows easier access for maintenance. Smaller lots make equipment access more challenging and is one of the reasons we tend to avoid using overhead construction for these projects.

In more of a rural setting, overhead line construction has an advantage as the construction cost is significantly less. Outages are typically shorter in duration, as the line crews are able to find the issue(s) quicker and make repairs faster. Overhead construction is more prone to weather related outages, but outage times are normally shorter in duration as compared to underground outages. 1251400

Material costs and lead times are another consideration when deciding to implement overhead or underground construction. With the current supply chain strain, material costs have increased sharply in the last couple of years. Both underground and overhead equipment have witnessed large increases and longer lead times, but comparatively speaking, the cost increases and lead times for overhead materials are slightly lower.

Each situation has its advantages and disadvantages, which the team at West River Electric weighs when deciding on which installation method to plan for. Ultimately, the employees' end goal is to provide safe and reliable electric service for our members.



Home Electrical Safety Tips

Electricity always seeks the easiest path to the ground. It tries to find a conductor, such as metal, wet wood, water – or your body! Your body is 70% water, so if you touch an energized bare wire or faulty equipment while you are grounded, electricity will instantly pass through you to the ground, causing a harmful – or fatal – shock.

The amount of electricity used by one 7.5 watt Christmas tree bulb can kill you if it passes through your chest. Even if it isn't fatal, electrical shock can easily cause serious falls, burns, or internal bleeding.

Your Home Wiring is just a number of loops, or circuits. A “live” wire brings current to a light or an outlet. A “neutral” wire returns current to its source. Between inside wiring and outside power lines is a service panel.

Most service panels have a main switch. Use it to cut all power when changing a fuse or in case of fire or shock. If you don't have a main switch, turn off all circuit breakers. Don't tamper with your electric meter. You'll risk shock, explosion, or fire.

Your service panel contains fuses or circuit breakers which interrupt power to specific circuits in case of a short circuit or overload. If this happens:

- Unplug appliances.
- Switch off power at the main switch.
- Try to determine the cause of the problem and correct it if possible.
- Replace the fuse that has a broken metal strip with a new fuse of the same rating – typically 15 amperes.
- If you have circuit breakers instead, switch the one that's “off” to “on.”
- Restore power.

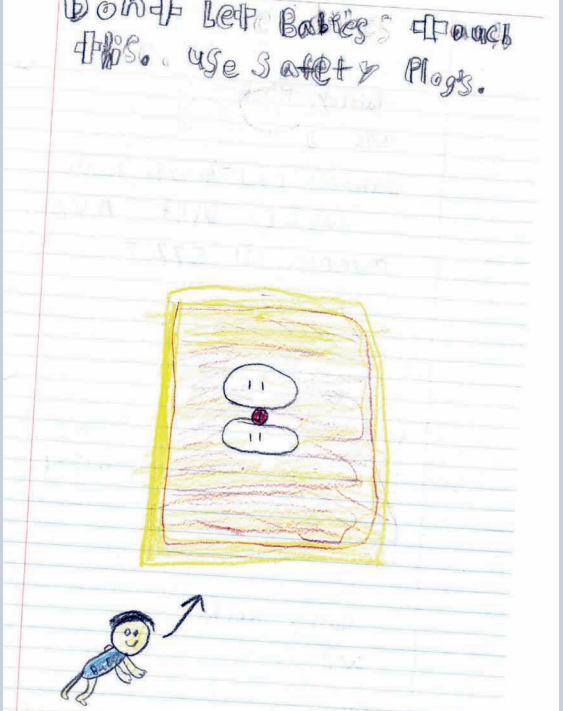
Never use anything other than a fuse to replace a fuse – you could cause a fire. If fuses blow or a circuit breaker trips often, contact a qualified repairman.

Grounding: The Third Prong

When you use a plug with three prongs, the third prong connects inside the outlet with a “ground wire,” which usually connects to a water pipe or a ground rod at the service panel. As a result, in case of a short circuit, electricity should flow through the grounding system instead of through you. Never remove the third prong.

Appliance Safety

Remember the most important rule for appliances – electricity and water don't mix. Keep appliances, especially hair dryers, away from bathtubs, puddles, sinks and wet hands. Wet skin increases the risk of shock, so unplug an appliance before cleaning – even if off, it can shock. Never put metal objects in live parts of appliances or in outlets. If an appliance overheats, unplug it and have it checked. Don't overload outlets. Use only appliances that are approved by a nationally recognized testing laboratory, such as Underwriters Laboratories.



Power Line Safety

Paisley Koch, age 8

Paisley Koch, age 8, warns about the dangers of electrical outlets and babies. She gives great advice on keeping children safe. Paisley is the daughter of Cameron and Kayla Koch from Owanka, S.D., members of West River 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.

DAIRY DESSERTS

RHUBARB STRAWBERRY CHEESECAKE

Ingredients:

Rhubarb Sauce
 2 1/2 cups thinly sliced fresh rhubarb
 1/3 cup sugar
 2 tbsps. orange juice
 Crust
 2 cups finely crushed oreo cookies, (about 18 cookies)
 1/3 cup butter, melted
 Filling
 9 oz. white baking chocolate
 3 packages (8 oz. each) cream cheese, softened
 1 container (7 oz.) sour cream, at room temperature
 1/2 cup sugar
 1 tbsps. cornstarch
 2 tpsps. pure vanilla extract
 1/2 tsp. salt
 3 extra large eggs
 Topping
 1 pint strawberries, remove tops
 1/4 cup strawberry jelly
 2 tbsps. water
 Prepared whipped cream

METHOD

Preheat oven to 350°F. For the Rhubarb Sauce, mix rhubarb, sugar and orange juice in a medium saucepan. Bring just to boil and reduce heat. Cook about 5 minutes or until rhubarb is tender, stirring occasionally. Set aside to cool. For the Crust, mix cookie crumbs and butter in a medium bowl. Press mixture evenly into bottom of 10-inch springform pan sprayed with no stick cooking spray. Set aside. For the Filling, melt chocolate according to package directions and set aside. Beat cream cheese, sour cream, sugar, cornstarch, vanilla and salt on medium-high until well blended (about 5 minutes). Add eggs, 1 at a time, mixing on low speed after each addition just until blended. Gradually beat in chocolate. Add cooled Rhubarb Sauce to the filling mixture, stirring gently to incorporate. Pour Filling mixture over cookie crust. Bake 1 1/2 to 2 hours or until edge of cheesecake is firm and center is almost set. Allow to cool 30 minutes. Refrigerate 4 hours or overnight. When cheesecake is completely cooled, place strawberries on top cut side down. Mix strawberry jelly and water in a small bowl. Brush over strawberries. Pipe whipped cream border around the cheesecake before serving.
mccormick.com

NO-CHURN BLACK FOREST RIPPLE ICE CREAM

Ingredients:

12 oz. Pitted cherries (fresh or frozen) thawed, halved
 1/4 cup sugar
 2 cups very cold heavy cream
 1 14 oz. can sweetened condensed milk
 1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
 4 oz. bittersweet choc. chunks

METHOD

Place the cherries, sugar and 2 tbsps. water in a large sauce pan. Bring the mixture to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer, stirring often, until the cherries break down and the liquid turns to a thick syrup, 10 to 12 minutes. Transfer to a bowl and refrigerate until cool, about 15 minutes. Using an electric mixer, beat the cream, condensed milk and vanilla in a large bowl on medium/high until stiff peaks form, 3 to 4 minutes. Gently fold in the choc. chunks. Spoon half the cream mixture into a 4 1/2 x 8 1/2 loaf pan or 1 1/2 qt. freezer safe container. Spoon half the cherry mixture on top. Using a knife, swirl the cherry mixture through the cream. Repeat with the remaining cream and cherry mixture. Cover with plastic wrap and freeze until set. Keep frozen for up to 2 weeks.

Sue Hove
 Sioux Falls, S.D.

SWEDISH CREME

Ingredients:

2 cups heavy cream
 1 cup plus 2 tpsps. sugar, divided
 1 envelope unflavored gelatin
 1 tsp. almond extract
 1 tsp. clear imitation vanilla extract
 2 cups sour cream
 1 cup fresh or frozen red raspberries

METHOD

1. In a saucepan, combine cream and 1 cup sugar. Cook and stir constantly over low heat until candy thermometer reads 160 degrees, or steam rises from pan. (Do not boil). Stir in gelatin until dissolved; add extracts. Cool 10 minutes.
2. Whisk in sour cream. Pour into eight dessert glasses or small bowls. Chill at least 1 hour.
3. Before serving, combine raspberries and remaining sugar; spoon over each serving.

Joanne Singrey-Johnson
 Watertown, 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 2023. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

Directors Intend to Seek Re-Election to Board

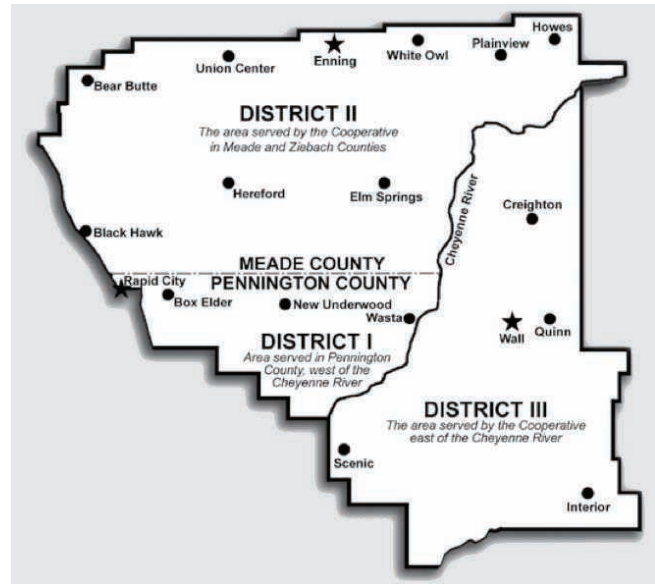
At the April 2023 West River Electric Board of Directors meeting, two incumbent directors, Charles Sloan of Rapid City for District 2 and Larry Eisenbraun of Wall for District 3, have announced their intent to seek re-election to the Board of Directors of West River Electric Association. However, Jerry Hammerquist from District 1 let us know he has elected to not seek re-election.

Therefore, Charles Sloan of Rapid City for District 2 and Larry Eisenbraun of Wall for District 3 will be asking for your vote as they seek re-election at the Oct. 7, 2023, Annual Meeting of the membership of West River Electric. As for who will be the Candidates for the District 1 seat, it is yet to be determined. 1231600

Per Article V Section 4 of the bylaws of West River Electric a member may seek election to the Board of Directors of West River Electric by taking out a petition and have it signed by at least 15 or more members for which an incumbent Director's term is expiring at least 120 day but not less than 60 days prior to the annual meeting. 1254100

The deadline for petitions is Aug. 8, 2023. No nominations are taken from the floor at the annual meeting. Candidates must be members of the cooperative and reside in the district they are seeking election from, be in good standing with the cooperative and not be employed or financially interested in a competing enterprise or major supplier to the cooperative. Petitions may be picked up starting June 9, 2023 for all 3 districts.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not mention our deepest



gratitude for Jerry Hammerquist. Jerry has served as a District 1 Board of Director for West River Electric Association for the past 39 years. He has worked tirelessly to uphold West River Electric's mission of providing reliable, affordable, and sustainable electricity to its members. Jerry's commitment and dedication to the members, employees, organization, and community at large has been nothing short of great and we extend our gratitude and appreciation to Jerry for his many years of service.



Charles Sloan, District 2



Larry Eisenbraun, District 3

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

SHINING THE LIGHT ON WEST RIVER ELECTRICS DEDICATED EMPLOYEES



BRANDON BISGAARD
JOURNEYMAN
LINEMAN

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING WITH WEST RIVER ELECTRIC?

I have been with WREA for 12 years.

WHAT DOES YOUR JOB ENTAIL?

Distribution and maintenance of powerlines.

WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT WEST RIVER ELECTRIC?

The coop is great to its employees and I couldn't ask for better co workers.

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

I'm not sure on this one. Probably getting hired on.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE WEST RIVER ELECTRIC IN THREE WORDS?

Great place to work.

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

I am able to provide for my family at a job I enjoy.



CAROLYN SCHULZ
SOFTWARE & DATABASE
ADMINISTRATOR

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING WITH WEST RIVER ELECTRIC?

I have been working for WREA for almost 5 years.

WHAT DOES YOUR JOB ENTAIL?

My job is in IT, so I do upkeep on computers/printers/iPads, do a lot of reporting with our NISC data via Mosaic, and I schedule our cybersecurity trainings.

WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT WEST RIVER ELECTRIC?

I love how friendly, open, and helpful everyone is at WREA. You know you can ask anyone a question and they will either help you out or point you in the right direction.

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

My favorite memories happen at employee appreciation events when we all get together outside of the office.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE WEST RIVER ELECTRIC IN THREE WORDS?

So much fun!

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

I really enjoy being able to problem solve for our employees and make sure everything works the way they need it to so we can all keep the lights on.



BUILDING A DREAM

J. Dylan Moro and his cousin, Knut Finnevolden, stand outside Moro's family-built treehouse yurt.

Moros' Treehouse Yurt Offers Unique Dakota Getaway

Frank Turner

frank.turner@sdrea.coop

From the vast, open prairies of the east to the towering Black Hills in the west, South Dakota's diverse landscape presents a breathtaking tapestry of natural beauty for camping enthusiasts to explore. With 13 state parks, six national parks, and numerous recreation areas at their disposal, visitors and residents alike are always within arm's reach of a world-class camping experience, complete with the guarantee of an unforgettable sunset.

The allure of South Dakota's outdoors extends well beyond aesthetics. Outdoor enthusiasts can also find a plethora of adventure by rock climbing the steep quartzite cliffs of Palisades State Park or catching a glimpse of a wild buffalo or bighorn sheep in Custer State Park.

Given the abundance of breathtaking

locations, it comes as no surprise that many enthusiasts desire a camping experience that matches the splendor of their natural surroundings. Simply put, sometimes a basic tent just doesn't suffice. Campers have embraced a variety of specialty camping styles, such as staying in treehouses and fully furnished cabins. With options ranging from off-grid yurts to glamping tents outfitted with complimentary Wi-Fi, these innovative accommodations elevate the traditional outdoor experience, catering to each individual's preference, comfort, and style.

J. Dylan Moro and his wife, Keena Byrd-Moro, both residents of Spearfish,



Moro's treehouse yurt is fully furnished, complete with tables, couches and a wood stove.

S.D., erected one such location on the outskirts of Lead, S.D., with the help of their family and neighbors in 2015. After both serving in the military as Army Reserve Nurses, Dylan and Keena saved up enough money to purchase a lot of land and realize their dream of building a treehouse yurt in the Black Hills.

“It was always my dream to build up there,” said Dylan. “We wanted to create an experience where people could escape and reconnect with nature.”

Their dream became a reality thanks to the amazing effort put forward by their family, friends and neighbors. More than 10 individuals contributed to the project, assembling the yurt in just two days despite a snow storm during the construction process.

“I remember being so close to finishing the project in one day,” he recalled. “Despite the snow, I could see the finish line and wanted to keep going, but the conditions were getting slippery. For safety, my wife convinced us to wait, and she was right, of course.”

Even Keena’s late father, who had Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s during

the project, assisted how he could by peeling logs and building railings for the treehouse yurt. Dylan shared that having Keena’s father as part of the project made the experience even more special for their family. The structure now stands as a testament to his memory and provides a connection with their family’s past.

“He loved being up there and part of the project,” he shared. “I can honestly say that we built this structure by hand without any machinery. We relied on the many hands of our friends and family to get the job done.”

When the family finished, the end result was a rustic treehouse yurt perched between two pine trees on a mountain slope, overlooking the Mickelson Trail. Today, the Moros’ treehouse yurt guarantees a remote escape, free from nearby tents or campers. And while it’s only accessible by dirt road, the location still offers easy access to some major attractions of the Black Hills, including Deer Mountain Ski Resort and Pathways Spiritual Sanctuary.

“It’s a really cool spot, and for me, I love having access to the trail for easy

biking and running,” said Dylan. “And it’s not unusual to catch a glimpse of an ongoing bike race or marathon on the Mickelson Trail from the deck of the yurt.”

Listed on Airbnb, the location has garnered over 241 reviews and 4.83 stars from campers from all over the United States, featuring two beds, a wood stove, and an indoor fireplace. Even still, the getaway location isn’t for the faint of heart. With no running water or onsite electricity, campers must rely on the yurt’s amenities, which cater to campers seeking a balance of comfort and authenticity in their outdoor experience.

“Part of the beauty of the yurt is that it’s totally off-grid, but people need to know what they are getting into,” he said. “But that shouldn’t scare anyone away. We have hosted people from all walks of life: people who have never camped before, people who are driving across the country and want a unique stay, and even locals who just want to get away. Everyone finds something here that they enjoy.”



Perched between two trees, the Moro family yurt provides a unique getaway location for visitors to the Black Hills of South Dakota.

5th Coop Principle: Education, Training and Information



Amanda Haugen
Communications
Specialist

Cooperative principles are the guiding values and beliefs that drive the operations of cooperatives worldwide. These principles define what cooperatives stand for and provide a framework for how they conduct their business. The fifth cooperative principle is Education, Training, and Information.

Education, training, and information are critical components to being our members' Trusted Energy Advisors. Just like our CEO, Dick Johnson, mentioned in

his article we want our members to have all the facts to make informed decisions. These decisions can be who they elect as a board member to how they operate their everyday life to help save money on their electric bills. This principle stresses the need for the cooperative to provide relevant information to its members, ensuring they can make informed decisions and manage the cooperative's affairs effectively.

The education and training provided by cooperatives can range from basic literacy and numeracy to specific technical skills related to the cooperative's operations. These training programs can be designed for members, employees, and the wider community, providing an opportunity for continuous learning and skill development. One way West River Electric provides training is through our annual Coop Code Day that is held for electricians seeking to stay up to date on their training and looking to continuing their education in the field.

Cooperatives must also provide relevant information to their members to enable them to make informed decisions about their electrical usage. West River Electric offers two different Energy Audits to see how energy efficient your home really is. The first audit is a simple walk-through of the home pointing out anything visible that needs to be fixed. The second audit is the same as the first but it includes a Blower door test. To schedule your energy audit please call our office.

Education, training, and information also play a crucial role in ensuring the sustainability and growth of cooperatives. Through education and training, members can develop new skills and knowledge that can help the cooperative grow and thrive. West River Electric will be installing a battery storage unit to test new technologies and offer information to our members. Information about new technologies, best practices, and

industry trends can help cooperatives stay ahead of the curve and make strategic decisions.

Additionally, education, training, and information can help cooperatives to address challenges and opportunities in their operating environment. For example, relaying to our members the importance of an all of the above energy portfolio to make sure we are being good stewards of the environment while maintaining cost-effective electricity that is reliable is important. In addition, market disruptions and changes in consumer preferences can all impact the operations of a cooperative. By providing relevant education, training, and information, cooperatives can respond proactively to these challenges and opportunities, ensuring they remain competitive and relevant. 2341801

In conclusion, the fifth cooperative principle emphasizes the importance of education, training, and information in the success of cooperatives. These components are critical for member participation, informed decision-making, and continuous learning and skill development. Cooperatives that prioritize education, training, and information will become the members' Trusted Energy Advisors which helps enhance their members' knowledge and skills, respond proactively to challenges and opportunities, and ensure sustainability and growth.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Looking for additional ways to save energy this summer? Your laundry room is a great place to start. Wash clothes with cold water, which can cut one load's energy use by more than half. Your washing machine will use the same amount of energy no matter the size of the clothes load, so fill it up when you can. When drying clothes, separate the heavier cottons. Loads will dry faster and more evenly if you separate heavier cottons like linens and towels from your lightweight clothing.

Source: Dept. of Energy



SWIMMING POOL SAFETY WORD SEARCH



Water and electricity never mix. Always practice safety when you're near or in the swimming pool this summer. Read the following safety tips, then find and circle the **bolded** words in the puzzle below.

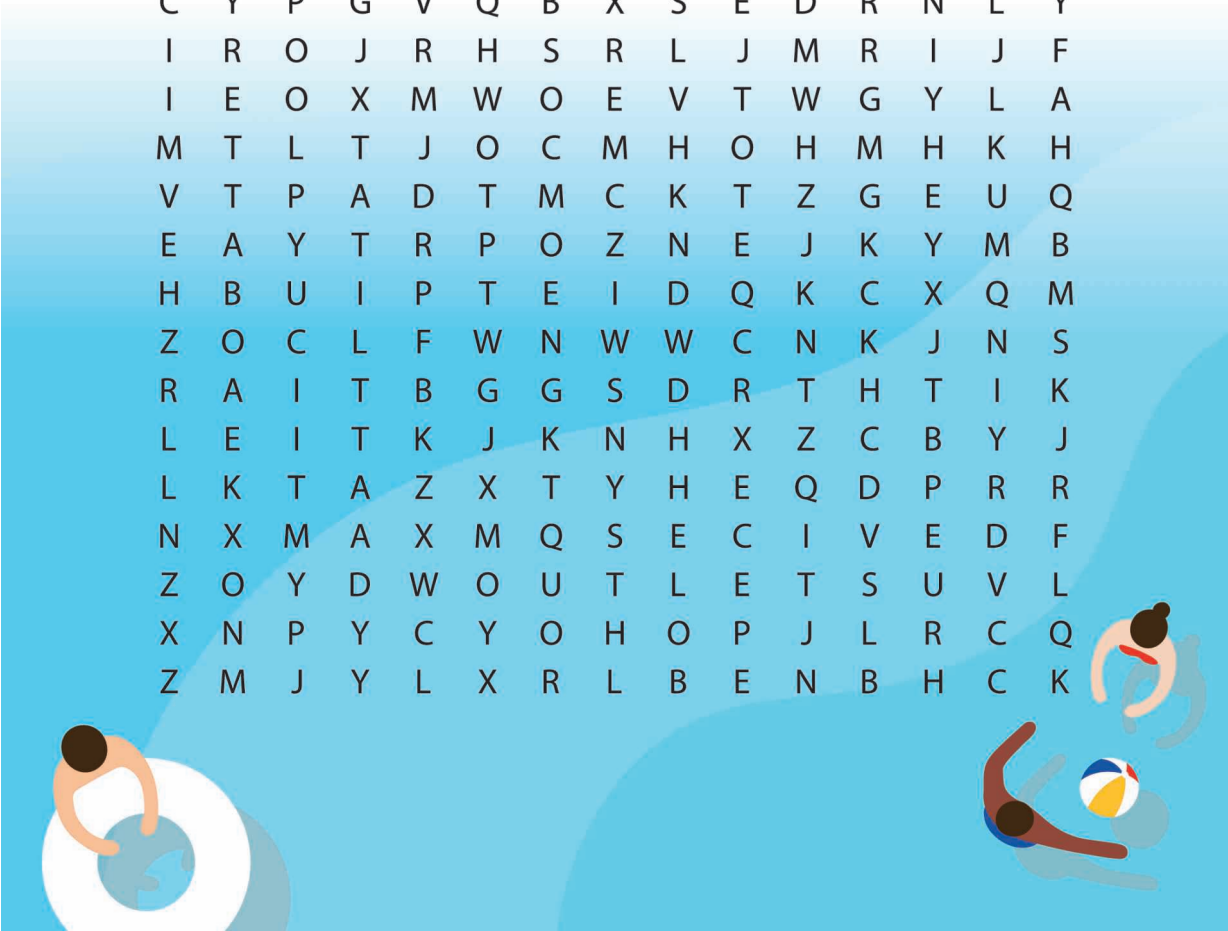
Never bring electrical **devices** near a swimming pool. **Electrical** devices that come in contact with **water** can cause electric shock.

When possible, use **battery**-operated devices when **outdoors** near a swimming pool.

Outdoor electrical **outlets** should be **dry** or covered.

If you hear thunder, immediately exit the swimming **pool**. Thunderstorms and lightning may be near.

C	Y	P	G	V	Q	B	X	S	E	D	R	N	L	Y
I	R	O	J	R	H	S	R	L	J	M	R	I	J	F
I	E	O	X	M	W	O	E	V	T	W	G	Y	L	A
M	T	L	T	J	O	C	M	H	O	H	M	H	K	H
V	T	P	A	D	T	M	C	K	T	Z	G	E	U	Q
E	A	Y	T	R	P	O	Z	N	E	J	K	Y	M	B
H	B	U	I	P	T	E	I	D	Q	K	C	X	Q	M
Z	O	C	L	F	W	N	W	W	C	N	K	J	N	S
R	A	I	T	B	G	G	S	D	R	T	H	T	I	K
L	E	I	T	K	J	K	N	H	X	Z	C	B	Y	J
L	K	T	A	Z	X	T	Y	H	E	Q	D	P	R	R
N	X	M	A	X	M	Q	S	E	C	I	V	E	D	F
Z	O	Y	D	W	O	U	T	L	E	T	S	U	V	L
X	N	P	Y	C	Y	O	H	O	P	J	L	R	C	Q
Z	M	J	Y	L	X	R	L	B	E	N	B	H	C	K





CPR & AED TRAINING

Photo Credit: Nate Breske

Essential No Matter What Field You Work In Or Play On

Laura London

Lake Region Electric Association

Millions of sports fans who tuned into Monday Night Football on January 2nd watched in shock as what had moments before appeared to be a regular night of sporting rivalry, turned into a heroic lifesaving response. Buffalo Bills defensive safety Damar Hamlin, a strong, athletic 25-year-old, suddenly collapsed on the playing field seconds after making a routine play against the Cincinnati Bengals. Almost instantaneously medical personnel sprang into action. The grave situation was reflected in the faces of the players, coaches, staff and fans. While Hamlin had no underlying medical condition, it was later determined that he had

experienced an often-fatal condition called commotio cordis, which is a rare disruption of the heart rhythm caused by a blunt, nonpenetrating impact to the chest that causes arrhythmia without structural damage to the heart. The quick response and administration of CPR saved Hamlin's life.

There are certain professions where the possibility of using life-saving interventions such as CPR and AEDs is more likely than others, and training is necessary. Certain risk factors, whether it be profession, age or health condition, can also increase the likelihood of someone experiencing a cardiac event. The fact is that cardiac arrest can happen anywhere, at any time, to any person.

CPR and AED training is vital regardless of what field you work in or play on.

Nate Breske, a Webster graduate, and member of Lake Region Electric Association is the head athletic trainer for the Buffalo Bills NFL franchise. Breske's affable personality and engaging smile can seem out of place when pictured amongst the hard appearing coaches and personnel of the NFL, but there he is shining bright on the sidelines and behind the scenes to make sure the program runs smoothly. The multi-faceted position of head athletic trainer comes with a load of responsibility, including looking out for the health and safety of the athletes, designing rehabilitation programs for injured players, working closely with the performance and coaching staffs to get the most out of each player on gamedays, managing the medical

staffs, administrating care for injured players, and working with the GM and upper management to bring in players through free agency and the draft. Breske never expected that one of his players would suddenly collapse on the field from cardiac arrest seconds after attempting a tackle, but Breske and his team were prepared.

Breske described what went through his mind when he saw Hamlin collapse on the field, “I instantly knew that it was a major medical issue that would require our assistance and expertise to help. We were prepared, willing and able to help do whatever we could to help save his life.” Lifesaving action was taken and CPR was performed by multiple people on the field in what Breske describes as “a complete team effort.” An AED was also used before Hamlin was transported by ambulance to the hospital. Something that Breske would like others to know: “You have permission to help out to the best of your ability when there is an emergency situation that may make you uncomfortable. Doing something is better than doing nothing at all!”

Breske says the Bills organization requires even non-medical personnel

to have CPR training “Everyone is certified, and we practice our EAP regularly to ensure that we are prepared for emergency situations such as this. The non-medical personnel are educated and will continue to be educated in the importance of knowing what to do in an emergency situation.” Breske has never had to personally perform CPR but recalls performing the Heimlich maneuver on Andy Meek, a high school classmate. Breske said the incident with Hamlin taught the Bills, “It is important to be prepared for situations like this. You never want to be put in this situation, but if you are, being prepared will help to give you the best chances for a good outcome. Not everything was perfect, but we had the best outcome that we could have hoped and prayed for.”

Due to the quick response and efforts by everyone on the field and the medical staff in Cincinnati, Hamlin was recently cleared to return to the game. Breske travelled with him to several heart specialists around the country to make sure all of the doctors were in agreement that Hamlin was physically and mentally healthy enough to return to action.

Damar Hamlin has teamed up with the American Heart Association to encourage people to learn how to perform CPR. Breske calls this a great thing. “The more people that know what to do in this situation will help save lives.” You can join Damar Hamlin’s #3forheart CPR Challenge by visiting the American Heart Association website <https://www.heart.org/en/damar-hamlins-3-for-heart-cpr-challenge>.

Electric Cooperatives in the state of South Dakota require all linemen to be CPR trained and get a refresher every year per OSHA regulations. Mark Patterson, Manager of Loss Control Services at South Dakota Rural Electric Association (SDREA) said that not all co-op staff are required to have the training, but the majority are trained because emergencies don’t just happen in the field.

AED devices are recommended at each work site through the Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program (RESAP.) Patterson concurs with Breske that CPR is a good skill to have and refresh. He said employees go through the training “hoping that you never have to use it but if you do, it will come back to you automatically.” While there have been a number of electrical contacts during Patterson’s 13-year career with SDREA, only one time has CPR been performed and in that case, saved the life of a lineman.



American Heart Association

Damar Hamlin's #3forHeart™ CPR Challenge

Join Damar in taking 3 simple steps to support CPR education and training, research and other lifesaving programs. You can help save lives today.

TAKE THE CHALLENGE

WWW.HEART.ORG/3



BISON CENTER

The annual buffalo roundup is the most popular event each year at Custer State Park. This year's roundup is Sept. 29. Photo courtesy of the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks.

New Attraction Draws in Crowds

Scott Waltman

While spring was delayed across much of South Dakota, the tourist season is nonetheless quickly approaching.

In other words, it's time for families to start planning vacations and for the state to prepare for the millions of visitors who stop in South Dakota when the weather is warm.

While iconic Most Rushmore is immensely popular and the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally draws hundreds of thousands of visitors, there are scores of other places worth visiting for those who live in or travel through the Black Hills region.

One of the newer attractions is

the Custer State Park Bison Center, which opened last year.

When it comes to attendance, the center more than held its own in 2022. About 300,000 people visited, said Lydia Austin, interpretive program manager for Custer State Park.

Part of the draw was that the Bison Center was a new feature and something different, Austin said. But she doesn't expect much of a drop-off in attendance this summer.

Taylor Studios of Indiana, which works to create engaging exhibits for museums, history centers and other facilities, did a great job in creating a "wow moment" with the Bison Center, Austin said.

The first thing most people

notice when they enter is a mural of stampeding buffalo near the back, she said.

Interactive displays were designed to appeal to both kids and adults.

Austin said one display visitors like tracks grass from the time a buffalo eats it to the time it is discarded was waste. She said she has seen both young and old people spend 15 minutes or more at the display chuckling and having a good time.

There's also a feature where a model buffalo pie can be flipped over so visitors can see what's eating it, she said.

People who stop in can also hear the rumble of a buffalo herd as they walk through the center, she said.

The Bison Center is along the Wildlife Loop at the buffalo corrals within the state park. So many visitors used to stop at the corrals, wander around and ask what they are used for that it's nice to have a place that explains not only the

corrals but so much more, Austin said.

She wants people to stop in, visit the displays and learn all of the little stories that comprise the big story of the bison at the park.

Many people stop at the Bison Center when they take the wildlife loop, she said.

It was designed to add context to what visitors see as they drive through the southern part of the park where they can spot the bison that roam the South Dakota prairie.

Custer State Park's buffalo herd is estimated to be around 1,400, according to information from the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks.

The biggest day of the year for the Bison Center comes in September during Custer State Park's annual Buffalo Roundup and Arts Festival. This year's event is scheduled for Sept. 28-30. The roundup itself is Sept. 29. Parking lots will open at 6:15 a.m. Mountain Time for people



The Custer State Park Bison Center helps educate visitors about the history and importance of the herd of 1,400 buffalo that live in the park. Photo courtesy of the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks.

who would like to watch the animals get tested, branded and sorted.

A main purpose of the roundup is to manage the health of the herd.

Austin said about 20,000 people visit the park the day of the roundup, easily making it the busiest day of the year.

Now, those folks can visit the Bison Center to learn more about the herd and educate themselves on the importance of the massive, brown, fur-bearing bovine.

Feedback from the center's first year has been very positive, Austin said.

"Wow, this is great. Glad you built it," or some variation thereof, is a common response from visitors, she said.

Austin said there have been no regrets about building the Bison Center. It fits the family attraction niche other visitor centers do, she said.

The aim is for the center is to tell the story of the bison and keep it fresh and dynamic. She wants visitors to learn something new whether it's their first stop or their 10th.

Austin said the goal is to have the Bison Center open from April through November.

The cost of the center was \$5.5 million, Austin said, with \$4 million coming from a grant from The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust. Another \$500,000 came from the South Dakota Legislature, while \$500,000 was raised by the South Dakota Parks and Wildlife Foundation.

To learn more about the Custer State Park Bison Center, visit gfp.sd.gov/csp-bison-center/.



The Custer State Park Buffalo Roundup each September is popular with tourists and helps the state manage the bison that live in the park. Photo courtesy of the South Dakota Department of Tourism.



June 3-4, 2023
Siouxland Renaissance Festival
 100 N Lyon Boulevard
 Sioux Falls, SD
 866-489-9241

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 3
Health Connect of South Dakota: The Human Race 5K
 9 a.m.
 Sertoma Park
 Sioux Falls, SD

JUNE 3
Lunafest Zonta Women's Art, Music & Film Festival
 2:30 p.m.
 Custer Beacon
 Custer, SD

JUNE 3-4
Siouxland Renaissance Festival
 100 N Lyon Boulevard
 Sioux Falls, SD
 866-489-9241

JUNE 8-10
Black Hills Quilt Show
 2:30 p.m.
 The Monument
 Rapid City, SD
 info@bhquilters.org

JUNE 11
River Honoring Community Potluck
 5 p.m.
 Clay County Park River Shelter
 Vermillion, SD

JUNE 16-17
Czech Days
 All Day Events
 Tabor, SD

JUNE 16-18
Fine Arts In The Hills Show & Sale
 Main Street
 Hill City, SD

JUNE 21
2023 McCrossan Boys Ranch Golf Classic for Kids
 Central Valley Golf Course
 Hartford, SD
 605-339-1203

JUNE 21-24
Crystal Springs Rodeo
 Clear Lake, SD
 605-874-2996

JUNE 23
Flandreau Fridays
 5 p.m.
 Downtown Flandreau
 Flandreau, SD

JUNE 24
Vendor Fair & Farmer's Market
 8 a.m.
 122 Vilas St
 Hermosa, SD

JUNE 30
Gregory Community Foundation Polka Fest Fundraiser
 6 p.m.
 Gregory 4H Building
 Gregory, SD

JULY 4
Philip VFD Firework Display
 Lake Waggoner
 Philip, SD
 605-685-3082

JULY 12
Tracy Area Gardens & Quilts Tour
 2 p.m.
 Tracy, MN

JULY 15
Huron MS Walk/Run
 8 a.m.
 Lake Byron
 Huron, SD
 605-350-5922

JULY 15-16
Charles Mix Saddle Club SDRA Rodeo
 Geddes, SD
 605-680-2763

JULY 28-29
Farley Fest
 Lake Farley Park
 Milbank, SD
 www.farleyfest.com

AUG 13-14
Twin Brooks Threshing Show
 Featuring Allis Chalmers
 Twin Brooks, SD
 605-880-2884

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