

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

Invasive Species

**Zebra Mussels
on the Missouri**
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Solar Update



Dick Johnson
dick.johnson@
westriver.coop

I have had a couple of opportunities in the last month to tour the new Wild Springs solar facility south of New Underwood as well as attend an open house they held. Regardless of how you feel about the project, it is amazing what they have done. I will offer a few facts and maybe, just maybe, a few opinions. Most of the facts I have gleaned through the tours and from their information, so I hope I am correct.

The company doing the project is National Grid Renewables. My feeling overall looking from the outside is that they work hard to make sure they are good neighbors to the community, landowners, and neighbors. This project will be the largest utility scale solar project in South Dakota, and we are fortunate enough to have it here. There is not any generation, I do not believe, on the western side of the state.

Here are a few items of interest:

- The site is 1,200 acres leased from three area landowners. There are several protected environmental areas.
- 128 megawatts (MW) of solar - enough to provide energy to about 37,000 homes.
- The generation will flow into a substation on the northeast side of the site. That energy will go across the road to intertie into the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) substation.
- Basin Electric, our wholesale power provider, will purchase about 90% of the output. That energy will stay in Western South Dakota.
- Direct economic impact of \$29.5 million over 20 years
- \$12 million in tax revenue over 20 years with about one-third each to the state for school taxes,

the State of South Dakota, and Pennington County.

- Three full-time jobs will be added permanently. There are currently about 250 workers on site.
- The project will avoid approximately 190,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide annually which is the equivalent of 42,000 cars taken off the road.
- There will be just shy of 350,000 solar panels on the site and miles of electric and fiber optic cable.
- The panels rotate on an axis from east to west each day tracking the path of the sun.
- If it looks like it might hail, they can rotate the panels to face away from the storm. They can do this locally or from their office in Minneapolis, Minn.
- When there is snow forecast, they can rotate the panels to let the snow fall off. (Opinion – what will happen in a good ol' Western South Dakota blizzard?)
- They will contribute annually \$25,000 to an education fund at the New Underwood School District that is above and beyond the tax revenues I stated above. Frankly, I think this is one of the biggest things I see from them that shows their commitment to being good stewards.
- West River will be providing station power to the site to provide energy when they cannot self-generate.

Now, onto my opinions. As you know, they will generate electricity when the sun shines. My understanding is the panels will have approximately a 25% capacity factor. That really means that unlike a baseload unit that can provide close to a 100% capacity, this will only provide 25% of the time. We will have to rely on other resources when the sun does not shine. I find it intriguing on our solar panels in front of our Rapid office how the generation just crashes when a cloud comes across the sky.

One member was concerned about the amount of land taken out of production. I agree but also that would happen for a large base load unit. However, a unit like that provides 100% capacity as I stated above.

You can be for or against the project and renewable energy. However, I feel with this project they are a good company and solar is going to happen whether we like it or not. We just as well have the economic impacts here vs. other places around the region. I am certain we will see more solar soon with all the incentives out there right now. 128600



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.

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Value of Electricity



Amanda Haugen
 Communications Specialist

In an ever-changing world, not much remains the same. What once worked for a marketing plan 20 years ago may not work anymore in today's times. Or something that may have once cost \$1.29 five years ago may cost \$3.89 now. While inflation has led to increasing costs in many areas of our lives, the cost of powering your home rises slowly when compared to other common goods. When looking at price increases over the last five years, electricity remains good value.

Whether you are a teen, parent, or grandparent reading this, you can all agree that you use electricity at some point every day, right? But where you may differ from one another is what electricity means to each of you. For the teen, it is safe to say that it is expected to have electricity. When you wake up and turn the light switch the lights come on. Or when you plug something into an outlet, you expect it to charge your phone, light up the Christmas tree, or power the TV. It's always been there for you and without it, you don't know what to do.

From the parent's perspective, you may have had electricity your whole life as well, but you were maybe more conservative with how you used it when you were younger. During the day, you allowed the sunlight to light your homes and left your house lights off. You most likely didn't have all of the electronics you do now and the ones you did have didn't have rechargeable batteries. While electricity has been around your whole life, you may remember back to how different it was compared to today. 3448300

Finally, from the grandparent's perspective, you can probably remember when electricity was invented and you were no longer going to have to use candles to light your way around your homes. You can recall the excitement it brought you when you found out it would make your life just a little more enjoyable and easier. You understood the appreciation it brought you and how to use electricity mindfully.

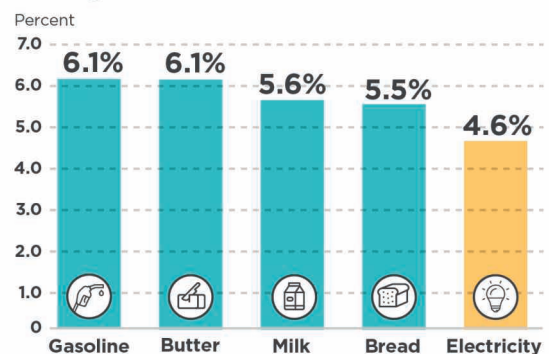
Overall, electricity goes back generations holding different meanings for each all. To teenagers, it opens doors to a world of knowledge and connectivity always being right at their fingertips. For parents, it offers efficiency and a sense of security for their families. For grandparents, it symbolizes progress and convenience, having witnessed life without electricity firsthand.

Across generations, one common thread remains: the need to use electricity responsibly and sustainably. As we move forward, embracing new technologies and advancements, it is vital to acknowledge and respect the value of electricity, preserving it for future generations to come.

ELECTRICITY REMAINS A GOOD VALUE

Inflation has led to increasing costs in many areas of our lives, but the cost of powering your home rises slowly when compared to other common goods.

Average Annual Price Increase 2017-2022



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index

No One Can Take Your Place

National Farm Safety and Health Week Sept. 17-23, 2023

The 2019 data for the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates that the agricultural sector is still the most dangerous in America with 573 fatalities, or an equivalent of 23.1 deaths per 100,000 workers.

Fall harvest time can be one of the busiest and most dangerous seasons of the year for the agriculture industry. For this reason, the third week of September has been recognized as National Farm Safety and Health Week.

This annual promotion initiated by the National Safety Council has been proclaimed as such by each sitting U.S. President since Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1944. National Farm Safety and Health Week is led by the National Education Center for Agricultural Safety (NECAS), the agricultural partner of the National Safety Council.

Did you know?

- Rural roads pose special dangers especially during harvest season. Watch out for slow-moving farm vehicles and be informed, aware, and patient while sharing rural roadways.
- Farm stress is real, and many things like weather events, tragedies, market uncertainty, or diseases can tip us out of our comfort zone.
- Every day, about 33 children are seriously injured in agricultural-related incidents.
- Hazardous gasses on farms can be found in silos, manure storages, grain bins, and other confined spaces. Be in the know about hazardous gasses and where they can be found on farms.

Farm and ranch life can be demanding and stressful. Over the past several years, it has reached a critical stage for the folks who grow America's food with COVID-19 pandemic impacts on top of natural disasters, extreme weather events, financial pressures due to fluctuating commodity prices, labor shortages, trade disruptions and a

long list of other factors. Given these ongoing challenges, it's no surprise that more farmers and farm families are experiencing stress and mental health concerns.

Today, safety professionals still use this promotional week to remind those working in our nation's most dangerous industry to be careful. Agriculture's death rate is why farmers and ranchers must use safe farming practices during harvest and throughout the year.

South Dakota's electric cooperatives urge our agricultural producers to make better safety and health decisions this harvest season and during the next year. Join us in promoting safety during the 80th annual **National Farm Safety and Health Week Sept. 17-23, 2023**.

During this time, please encourage others to adopt safe practices and behaviors as we prepare to prevent injuries during this harvest season.



Call 811!

Evey Hinrichs, Age 9 3/4

Evey Hinrichs advises people it's not safe to dig before calling 811. Evey is the daughter of Kelby and Carrie Fey from Aberdeen, S.D., members of Northern Electric Cooperative.

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.

DIPS AND SPREADS

SPINACH DIP

Ingredients:

- 16 oz. sour cream
- 1 cup mayonnaise (must be mayo)
- 1 pkg. frozen chopped spinach, thawed and drained
- 1 can water chestnuts, chopped
- 1 tbsp. minced onion
- 1 tsp. season salt
- 1/2 tsp. Accent
- Dash of Worcestershire sauce
- 2 dashes of hot sauce

METHOD

Serve with Club or Ritz crackers.

Linda Hubbard
Rapid City, S.D.

CREAMY CINNAMON DIP

Ingredients:

- 1 pkg. (8 oz.) cream cheese, softened
- 1 container (8 oz.) sour cream
- 1/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 2 tbsps. milk
- 2 tps. ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp. all natural pure vanilla extract

METHOD

Beat all ingredients in medium bowl with electric mixer on medium speed until well blended. Spoon into serving bowl. Cover.

Refrigerate until ready to serve. Serve with fresh fruit slices, cookies or pound cake or angel food cubes.

mccormick.com

CARAWAY CHEESE SPREAD

Ingredients:

- 1 container (12 oz.) Cheddar cheese spread, at room temperature
- 2 tps. minced onions
- 1 1/2 tps. whole caraway seed
- 1/2 tsp. Lawry's® Seasoned Salt

METHOD

Mix cheese spread and seasonings in medium bowl. Cover. Refrigerate at least 2 hours to blend flavors.

Serving Suggestion: Serve with assorted vegetables such as celery sticks, cherry tomatoes, jicama sticks, carrot sticks, endive leaves, and/or assorted crackers.

mccormick.com

Please send your favorite recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2023. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

Heat Season Begins Oct. 1st

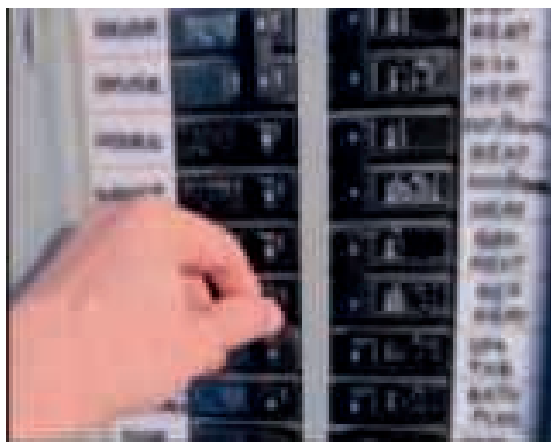
Please make sure your heat meter breaker is turned on before Oct. 1st. The discounted heat rate will begin then and go until May 1st. Any usage between those two dates on the heat meter will receive the heat rate discount. If you have any questions please call our office. 4641500

How To Tell If Your Heat Meter Is Off?

First, locate your heat meter. This is the second meter with a smaller enclosure than your main meter.



Next, look at the digital display. If there is not a blinking display, it is off and the meter does not have power.



Locate your electrical panel and look for a 2-pole breaker that is labeled “heat meter.” Then turn that breaker back on.

Finally, verify that your meter display is now on and rest easy knowing you will be getting a discount on your electric heat when the time comes! If you are not comfortable performing this process, consult with an electrician. You can also call our office and a member

services representative can verify your heat meter is communicating.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Did you know fall is the perfect time to schedule a tune-up for your heating system? Home heating accounts for a large portion of winter energy bills, and no matter what kind of system you have, you can save energy and money by regularly maintaining your equipment.

Combining proper equipment maintenance and upgrades with recommended insulation, air sealing and thermostat settings can save about 30% on your energy bills.

Source: Dept. of Energy



The Evolution of Roles

From Attending to Chaperoning



Amanda Haugen
Communications
Specialist

As I stood looking at my almost packed suitcase for the 2023 Youth Excursion, the memories started coming back to when I was packing to attend the same Youth Excursion as a participant eight years ago through my electric cooperative, Sioux Valley Energy. Little did I know then that this experience would come back full circle, presenting me with the opportunity to give back as a chaperone for the same event that had once sparked my interest in an Electric Cooperative career.

Having grown up in the cooperative family, I knew I wanted to work at one because I was able to see and experience first-hand just how great they are. From watching them give back to the community, promoting electrical safety, to watching the linemen not bat an eye to go out and restore power no matter the weather conditions, they have shown me they serve their members not because they have to, but because they want to. They provide multiple avenues and experiences, one being leadership opportunities for the future generation of leaders coming forward. And they will do their very best to go above and beyond for their members, which is why I chose to come back and work at one.

The Youth Excursion, organized and sponsored by electric cooperatives across the state, has become a yearly tradition of bringing like-minded, young individuals together to embark on a promising trip filled with fun, educational tours, and long-lasting friendships. And, I can attest that it fulfills that promise whole-



heartedly.

Having benefitted so much from my own participation, it was only fitting for me to volunteer as a chaperone when the opportunity presented itself. During the trip, my focus shifted from just simply enjoying the activities and learning as much as possible, to providing guidance and support to the students attending. I watched as they soaked up all the knowledge they were gaining, eager to learn how they could make a difference in their communities.

I was able to witness the shy, timid, nervous first day transform into friendships and relationships that these young individuals created. I provided advice and offered my own experiences as each one of them molded into their own leader over the short four-day trip.

As the Youth Excursion drew to a close, I realized that this really has come back full circle. I had not only gone back to where it all began for me but also witnessed the next generation of passionate, driven leaders stepping forward. 9889700





State run boat checks and washing stations aim to reduce the spread of aquatic invasive species, such as zebra mussels, in South Dakota.

Zebra Mussels and Their Impact on the Missouri River

Frank Turner

frank.turner@sdra.coop

The Missouri River in South Dakota, renowned for its outstanding recreational areas, fishing holes and scenic campgrounds, draws a wide swath of tourists from around the world. However, these welcoming public waters have become the home of one unwelcome intruder—the infamous zebra mussel.

Endemic to southeastern Europe, the zebra mussel made its journey to the United States Great Lakes in the '80s as an unlikely stowaway, clinging to the hulls of large ships and barges. Since their arrival, the mussels have proliferated across the Midwest, spreading from one river system to the next.

So how can a mollusk, merely the size of a fingernail, inflict millions of

dollars in economic damage to local recreation, agriculture and hydroelectric power generation? Martin Goding, Gavins Point Dam maintenance and operations manager with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, explains that one zebra mussel can spawn more than a million eggs in a season, overrunning the local ecosystem. Once established, the mussels latch onto every viable surface in the water—they envelop pipes, ruin beaches and disrupt hydroelectric dams.

In 2015, local governments detected South Dakota's first infestation of zebra mussels in Lewis and Clark Lake. Goding says this discovery ignited a fierce battle against the invasive species.

“We are in the war to eradicate the zebra mussel, but I don't think we're ever going to completely eliminate them,” said Goding. “They are multiplying faster than we can get rid of them.”



Zebra Mussels completely envelop Gavins Point Dam's water gates, adding up to an additional 30 tons of weight.



With few effective treatments at their disposal, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been forced to adjust to operating within a river infested with mussels. The change has significantly

increased the maintenance costs associated with running Gavins Point Dam. Pipes, essential for cooling the dam as it produces electricity, now require routine disassembly and cleaning. Over the course of six months of warm weather, the dam's lakeside gates collect an additional 30 tons of weight from the relentless accumulation of zebra mussel shells and the debris they carry.

"We have spent a million and a half dollars over the last five years just in maintenance to deal with this invasive species—and that's not even counting the cost of materials," said Goding. "Zebra mussels have really impacted the operation and turned maintenance into a nightmare."

Beyond maintenance, zebra mussels have also disrupted power generation. Outbreaks of zebra mussels within

the dam's infrastructure have resulted in unscheduled and forced outages, interrupting an energy source that has been historically reliable.

"One could safely say that Gavin Point Dam has lost a million dollars in power generation over the last five years," said Goding.

Since the initial invasion in 2015, some strategies have emerged to mitigate damage from the invasive species. The introduction of UV lights and the addition of strainers have curbed the presence of zebra mussels within the dam. Even still, the mussels have continued their spread northward through the Missouri River to Lake Sharpe near Pierre, S.D.

According to Goding, the experiences at Gavins Point Dam serve as a stark warning for dams and water systems yet to face infestation.

"Lewis and Clark Lake is beyond prevention," said Goding. "We have crossed that bridge and they are not going away."



2023 Scholarship Recipients

West River Electric awarded \$8,000 in scholarships to 15 area students this spring. Recipient of the Basin Electric \$1,000 scholarship was Landry Haugen. Recipients of the \$500 scholarships are listed below.



Scholarship recipients: Pictured (from left to right, top to bottom): Dakota Burke, Kyla Sawvell, Landry Haugen, Blair Blasius, Shelby Derner, Thane Radke, Skylie Wagner, Samantha Kukla, Cole Knuppe. **Not pictured:** Jett Mohr, William Houseman, Deyton Skillingstad, Breinn Richter, Jorge Ucan, Tristen Anderson.

West River Electric's Pole Testing Program Ensures Safety and Reliability



Matt Schmahl
Construction
Project Manager

West River Electric Cooperative is proud to announce the successful completion of our annual pole testing program. This year, we partnered with EXO Pole Testing to conduct comprehensive inspections in the Enning, Howes, and Elm Springs areas. With nearly 3,000 poles inspected, we are fully prepared to replace any poles showing signs of decay, ensuring the continued delivery of safe and reliable service to our valued members.

The Importance of Pole Testing:

Regular pole testing plays a vital role in identifying and addressing potential hazards before they escalate into safety concerns or service disruptions. Poles are the backbone of our electrical distribution system, providing support for power lines and equipment. Over time, environmental factors such as weather, pests, and aging can cause poles to deteriorate, compromising their structural integrity.

Partnering with EXO Pole Testing:

To ensure thorough inspections, West River Electric partnered with EXO Pole Testing, a renowned provider of advanced pole inspection services. Leveraging their expertise and cutting-edge technology, we conducted assessments of our pole infrastructure.

The Inspection Process:

EXO Pole Testing technicians inspected nearly

3,000 poles in the Enning, Howes, and Elm Springs areas. Using specialized equipment, they measured the internal strength of each pole, detecting any signs of decay or weakness that may not be visible to the naked eye. This detailed analysis allowed us to identify poles requiring replacement. 11827100

Replacing Decaying Poles:

West River Electric is committed to promptly replacing any poles that exhibit signs of decay or weakness. Our dedicated team will work diligently to ensure that these replacements are carried out efficiently and with minimal disruption to our members' service. By proactively addressing decaying poles, we enhance the overall safety and reliability of our electrical infrastructure.

Enhancing Safety and Reliability:

The successful Pole Testing program underscores our unwavering commitment to member safety and reliable service. By identifying and replacing decaying poles, we minimize the risk of pole failure, potential hazards, and service interruptions. This proactive approach ensures the continued delivery of safe and reliable electricity to our members.

Continued Commitment to Members:

West River Electric remains dedicated to providing exceptional service to our members. Our annual pole testing program with EXO Pole Testing is just one of the many ways we prioritize safety and reliability. Regular maintenance, testing, and infrastructure upgrades are essential to ensure uninterrupted power supply and minimize the potential for service disruptions.

In conclusion, West River Electric's successful Pole Testing program demonstrates our commitment to maintaining a safe and reliable electrical grid. By partnering with EXO Pole Testing and replacing decaying poles, we enhance member safety and minimize the risk of power outages. West River Electric continues to provide exceptional service, ensuring a brighter future for the communities we serve.



Drone Spraying

A Modern Tool in Today's Agriculture

Scott Waltman

As modern agriculture continues to evolve, drones are one of the newer tools farmers can use to help their land and crops.

The hovering, unmanned aircraft can be handy for small areas and places it's difficult for traditional spraying options to get to, according to those who offer the service to those in the ag sector.

Drones aren't the weapon of choice to spray chemicals on 1,500 acres of corn or soybeans, but that day is likely coming, said Derek Ver Helst, who operates Dakota Unmanned Aerial in Brandt.

Closer to the coasts, drones are already used for a multitude of purposes that aren't just fun and shooting videos. They are only going to become more prominent in ag-heavy states like the Dakotas, he said.

"The possibilities are pretty much

just limited by your imagination," Ver Helst said.

He said his background as an agronomist piqued his interest in spraying with drones. Dakota Unmanned Aerial is a side hustle he started about two years ago. He works as a senior conservation agronomist for AgSpire.

Nick Williams had a background in agriculture working for CHS Cooperative and selling farm equipment before starting Williams Drones southeast of Parkston in August 2020. Business has been good, he said, estimating that it has doubled each year.

"It's really taken off, it continues to grow," Williams said.

He and Ver Helst agree that farmers have been receptive to the relatively new option, willing to give it a try when the project isn't too big.

Williams said he does mostly ag-related work. In late July, he was staying busy with fungicide applications.

Drones are great near shelter belts and around wet areas. Those are places



that are hard for a land rig or spray plane to get to. Drones work better because they are smaller and more agile, he said.

A route is mapped out and the drone reads that information and flies mostly autonomously, Williams said.

He sets the height, speed, gallons of application per acre and swath width. Once a drone is in the air, it does almost all of the work, though Williams said he can control the height a little, if needed.

Drones have sensors and other features so they don't run into trees, equipment, wind turbines or structures, he said.

Depending on the amount of land to be sprayed, it can take longer to map a field than to spray it, Ver Helst said.

His drones carry 10 liters, but others have a capacity of 40 liters, he said. When a drone runs out of chemical, it returns back to the operator, who puts on a new tank, changes the battery and sends it back out, Ver Helst said. The drone will pick up spraying right where it left off, he said.

In 2016, land-grant university researchers and educators started work to increase the use of drones in agriculture, according to information from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

That work continues today. It includes identifying and evaluating the most user-friendly and cost-effective drone platforms and sensors, according to the USDA.

Some drone operators offer swarm spraying, Van Helst and Williams said.

For instance, there could be five drones programmed to follow the same grid over a field, pasture or slough working in unison, Van Helst said. As one runs out of spray, it returns for a new tank of chemical and battery until the job is finished.

Van Helst said he doesn't do a lot of spraying. Most of it is on pastures.

But, he said, he has done some work in orchards and vineyards where grapes are grown.

Williams has branched out a little more. Last year, he said, he was hired to do a dust-control project at the Sanford Underground Research Facility in the Black Hills. That is the former Homestake gold mine near Lead.

And both men say drones can be used to combat one of South Dakota's least-popular commodities – mosquitos.

Drones can be used to spray for skeeters on fairgrounds, when there's a big city gathering and even in a residential area.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, they were even used to shower stadiums with antibacterial spray, Van Helst said.

One drone operator in Texas was contacted to see if drones could be used to drop fish food into a pond, Williams said.

He said his drones can cover about 20 acres an hour, though some can do 30 hours an acre. And he expects the new drones released next year will be able to spray 40 hours in an acre.

For large fields, a land rig or a spray plane is still a better bet, Williams said. A traditional ground sprayer can probably cover 70 acres an hour, he said.

Van Helt said his T-40 drone can handle about 100 acres a day.

One challenge in getting started is getting all of the licensing needed from the Federal Aviation Administration.

He spent about two years testing and writing exemptions and working through the legalities.

Commercial drone operators need a remote pilot certificate from the FAA. Another license is needed to dispense chemicals from a flying aircraft, Van Helst said.

He said he has procured 14 FAA exemptions and will need two more next year.

That's why some drone operators hire a business to navigate that process. That's the route Williams took.

Being a drone operator can be fun or frustrating, just like any other job, he said. He just checks the forecast and hopes it holds. Trying to spray when the wind is 20 mph or more just isn't going to work, he said.

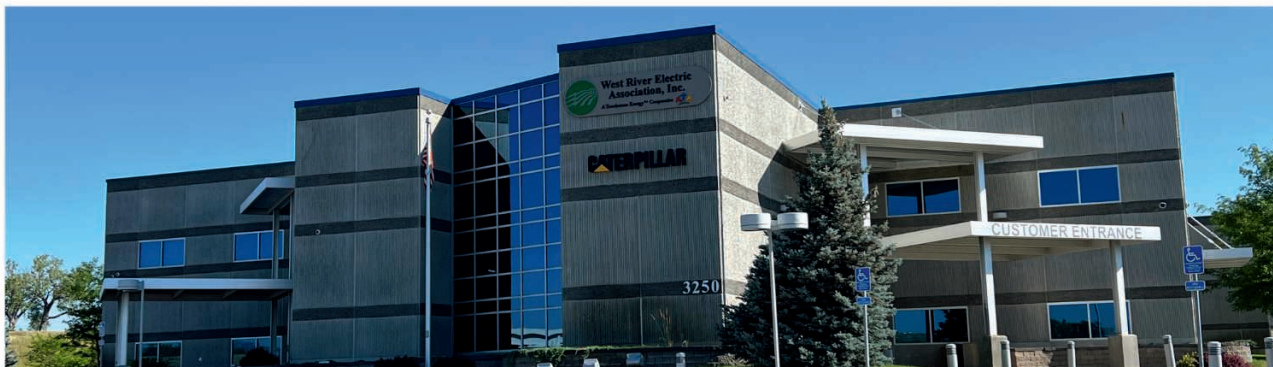
Even so, Van Helst said, drones are a fantastic tool. Ground rigs and spray planes will always be needed, and drones are just one more option for farmers to tap.

"There's a right time and a right place for everything," he said.



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

SHINING THE LIGHT ON WEST RIVER ELECTRICS DEDICATED EMPLOYEES



MATT SCHMAHL
CONSTRUCTION
PROJECT MANAGER

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING WITH WEST RIVER ELECTRIC?

I have been with WREA for 24 years.

WHAT DOES YOUR JOB ENTAIL?

Working with members and assisting them with achieving their goals.

WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT WEST RIVER ELECTRIC?

The family atmosphere.

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

This is hard to name just one as there have been many memories made with my fellow colleagues and members.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE WEST RIVER ELECTRIC IN THREE WORDS?

Member-focused, community-oriented, forward-thinking

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

Helping the members achieve their goals. Every day provides new opportunities as no consecutive days are alike.



AMANDA HAUGEN
COMMUNICATIONS
SPECIALIST

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING WITH WEST RIVER ELECTRIC?

I have been with West River Electric for 2.5 years.

WHAT DOES YOUR JOB ENTAIL?

My job consists of editing the monthly cooperative connections, running our social media, getting footage of employees and different events, and public relations.

WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT WEST RIVER ELECTRIC?

The family atmosphere and how community oriented we are.

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

So far my favorite memory would be presenting scholarships to the seniors at our local schools. Providing them with funding to further their education and seeing the gratitude on their faces is so heartwarming.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE WEST RIVER ELECTRIC IN THREE WORDS?

Reliable, dependable, and community oriented.

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

Being able to provide helpful knowledge to our members about the electric cooperative and bouncing ideas off my teammates.



Have You Received a Survey?

Have you recently signed up for service? Experienced an outage? Or maybe you stopped by the office to make a payment. After any three of the occurrences listed above, you may have noticed a survey pop into your email inbox. These surveys are for us as a cooperative to better understand where we are falling short and what we are excelling in. If you have experienced any of the three topics above but didn't see a survey in your email, 1) check your junk folder, and if you still don't see one, 2) make sure your email address is up to date in our system by giving our office a call or updating it through the Smart Hub app.



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 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 31-Sept 4
South Dakota State Fair
SD State Fairgrounds

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.

AUG 27
SGT. Colton Levi Derr Foundation Fundraiser
Barrels, Poles, Breakaway, Team Roping
New Underwood, SD
605-391-8733

SEPT 2
Hidewood Valley Barn Dance
7 p.m.
47236 183rd St
Clear Lake, SD

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

SEPT 9-10
Old Iron - Fall Harvest Festival
Delmont, SD

SEPT 10

10th Annual Black Hill Beer Run
Spearfish Campground Pavilion
Spearfish, SD
605-642-7730

SEPT 10
100th Anniversary of Little Brown Church
11 a.m.
Service, Potluck & Auction
West of Hayes
Hayes, SD

SEPT 11-17
Traditions & Olivia American Legion
Olivia, MN
320-523-1000

SEPT 17
St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church
Church Bazaar
12 p.m.
Hoven, SD
SEPT 22-24

Coal Springs Threshing Bee
Meadow, SD

SEPT 23
Springfield Dakota Senior Meals Fall Festival
9 a.m.
Springfield Community Building
Springfield, SD

SEPT 23
Rushmore Sportsman Banquet
5 p.m.
Shriner Center-4091 Sturgis Rd.
Sturgis, SD

SEPT 30
Day of Wellness
10 a.m.
Sturgis Armory
Sturgis, SD

SEPT 30
2nd Annual Suicide Fundraiser
Robinsdale Lounge
805 E St. Patrick St.
Rapid City, SD
605-787-2290

OCT 7
Harvest Festival
10 a.m.
RVUMC
Rapid City, SD

OCT 7-31
Pumpkin Patch
RVUMC
Rapid City, SD

OCT 21
Rummage and Bake Sale
8 a.m.
RVUMC
Rapid City, SD

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