

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Co-ops Power Next Generation

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Engaging Youth**
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**811: Call Before
You Dig**
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District Meetings - Rates and Growth



Tim McCarthy
General Manager/
Chief Executive
Officer

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com

Throughout late winter and early spring, thousands of Sioux Valley Energy members attend one of our 10 district meetings. As part of the program, both your local director and I present information about what is happening at the Cooperative. We understand that not everyone can attend one of the meetings, so we have condensed some of the program for this column. If you are able to attend a meeting – we encourage you to do so, if not – here is the information we are presenting:

As many of you know, the Sioux Valley Energy Board of Directors approved an overall 4.9% rate increase to the membership beginning in January.

The Cooperative's operating budget will reach nearly \$115 million this year. The biggest part of the budget is power supply costs – paying around \$70 million for purchased power in 2025, which is \$4.3 million higher than last year. Power supply makes up over 60% of the budget. Our power supply costs increased by over 7% – which is the driver of the recently implemented rate adjustment.

Sioux Valley Energy is just one of many electric utilities in this region that needed to adjust rates. We have seen rate increases that range anywhere from 6% to 15% at other utilities in this region. While our increase from our suppliers was 7%, we were able to mitigate that increase to an overall 4.9% for our members through several measures we took locally.

First, we considered our direct expenses, which only make up 6% of the budget. These costs include day-to-day activities such as cable locating, right-of-way clearing, pole testing, consumer billing and postage, member meetings, community development, software, director expenses, building expenses, dues, and outside services. We have budgeted a reduction for direct costs in 2025.

Second, we are planning to use \$2.9 million in deferred revenue, which also helps lessen the need for a more significant increase.

One consideration when looking at rates is our indirect expenses, which make up about

17% of the budget. This part of the budget reflects additional investments in distribution and general plant, along with interest and depreciation. Last year we reduced the number of miles of line that was constructed, however, that line replacement schedule is not sustainable if we want to maintain reliability in the future. We decided that it was not in the Co-op's best interest to reduce this part of the budget and plan to continue our aggressive work plan – replacing 125 miles of aging line this year.

At the rate of 125 miles of line per year, it will take us another 20 or so years to replace all the old overhead infrastructure. We also have a lot of underground cable that is getting close to 40 years old. We must plan for the end of useful life on these assets and begin incorporating their replacement into our work plan rotation in the years to come.

Sioux Valley Energy is budgeting to sell more than 960 million kilowatt-hours in 2025 – it won't be long before we hit the milestone of 1 billion kilowatt-hours. To put that in perspective, we sold 500 million kilowatt-hours of electricity in 2004. It took our

Co-op over 65 years to get to 500 million kilowatt-hours per year and only 20 years to double that. We are estimating that our members will increase their kilowatt-hour use per year by another 500 million in less than 15 years. Those numbers make it clear that the demand for electricity is rapidly increasing amongst our membership, and we must be ready.

So how does this increased demand impact you? Well, it means that our power supplier needs to build more generation and transmission at the cost of nearly \$12 billion over the next 10 years.

Electric system investment is not limited to the wholesale power supply level. There are significant investments being made in the transmission and distribution system as well.

The numbers are staggering if you look at the planned 10-year investments for just Sioux Valley Energy members. To support the future load growth of our individual cooperative,

It will
take us another
20 years
or so to replace all
the old overhead
infrastructure.

Continued on Page 3

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

SIoux VALLEY ENERGY

(USPS No. 497-440)

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**Sioux Valley Energy is an
equal opportunity provider and employer.**

Manager's Column

Continued from Page 2

approximately \$440 million will be invested at the generation, transmission, and distribution levels to support just Sioux Valley members. Let that sink in for a moment...that's nearly half a billion dollars. Those numbers add up to an additional \$15,000 invested for each Sioux Valley member on top of the nearly \$18,000 that is already invested per member!

While it is a heavy lift, we are ready for the challenge and are making long-term plans to meet member demand for electricity. The well-planned investments I just mentioned will help us get to where we need to be in the future, which maintains a system that currently delivers 99.989% reliability for our members.

Will there be challenges? Yes. Will there be a rate impact? Unfortunately, yes. Will we work to mitigate impacts to the best of our ability? ABSOLUTELY! Don't get me wrong – while there is a cost to load growth, there are also significant benefits for all our members...present and future. The costs of today's infrastructure investments are spread out over 30 years, so future members will help pay for it. Load growth is good. It signals strong economic development – which is important for communities, businesses, and individuals. But most of all, growth helps generate revenue, spread costs, and hold rates down in the long run.

We sometimes get questions asking why we don't use more coal to generate electricity given there is an abundance of it, and it's recognized as an affordable resource. Sioux Valley Energy doesn't generate electricity or decide what resources to use. Having said that, we DO believe an "all of the above" energy generation strategy is the most prudent and effective approach. This strategy ensures a diversified energy mix, avoiding reliance on a single source. We want to avoid "putting all our eggs in one basket."

For several years there has been discussion on something called the "energy transition." This essentially refers to the transition from fossil fuel generation resources to renewables. While there has been some transition, the fact remains that we need to be able to provide power to our members 24 hours a day, seven days a week and that requires baseload or dispatchable resources such as coal and natural gas. Nuclear is another option that can run 24/7 but there are significant costs and regulatory issues associated with it. Right now, natural gas is the most economical dispatchable power generation available to finance, permit, and operate.

If you attend one of the District Meetings that are planned for March or April – there are a few extra elements that you will learn about through additional narrative and videos, but we hope this synopsis gives you an idea of the issues we are discussing.

Just one last note – as we enter the spring season, watch for our crews on the side of the road – move over and slow down for their safety. Hope to see you soon!

Sioux Valley Energy
maintains a system
that delivers
99.989%
reliability for our
members.

Distracted Driving

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Distracted driving is any activity that diverts attention from driving, including talking or texting on your phone, eating and drinking, talking to people in your vehicle, fiddling with the stereo, entertainment or navigation system – anything that takes your attention away from the task of safe driving.

Texting is the most alarming distraction. Sending or reading a text takes your eyes off the road for five seconds. At 55 mph, that's like driving the length of an entire football field with your eyes closed.

You cannot drive safely unless the task of driving has your full attention. Any non-driving activity you engage in is a potential distraction and increases your risk of crashing.

Consequences

Using a cell phone while driving creates enormous potential for deaths and injuries on U.S. roads. In 2022, 3,308 people were killed in motor vehicle crashes involving distracted drivers.

Get Involved

We can all play a part in the fight to save lives by ending distracted driving.

APRIL
Distracted Driving Awareness Month
an **nsc** initiative
National Safety Council

Teens

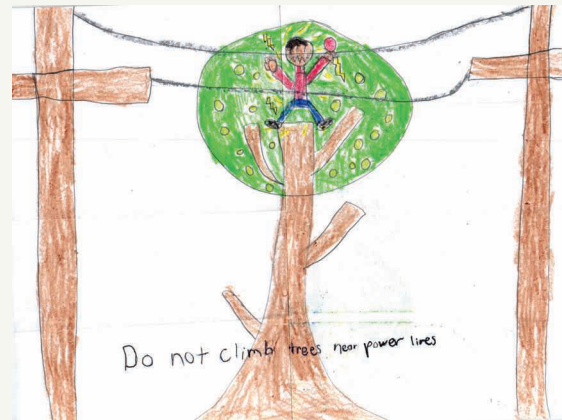
Teens can be the best messengers with their peers, so we encourage them to speak up when they see a friend driving while distracted, to have their friends sign a pledge to never drive distracted, to become involved in their local Students Against Destructive Decisions chapter, and to share messages on social media that remind their friends, family and neighbors not to make the deadly choice to drive distracted.

Parents

Parents first must lead by example – by never driving distracted – as well as have a talk with their young driver about distraction and all of the responsibilities that come with driving. Have everyone in the family sign the pledge to commit to distraction-free driving. Remind your teen driver that in states with graduated driver licensing (GDL), a violation of distracted-driving laws could mean a delayed or suspended license.

Educators and Employers

Educators and employers can play a part, too. Spread the word at your school or workplace about the dangers of distracted driving. Ask your students to commit to distraction-free driving or set a company policy on distracted driving.



“Do not climb trees near power lines.”

Naomi Krcil, Age 7

Naomi cautions readers about the dangers of climbing trees near power lines. Thank you for your picture, Naomi! Naomi's parents are Andrew and Andrea Krcil, members of Charles Mix Electric Association.

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.

Let's Have BRUNCH

EASY BREAKFAST MUFFIN

Ingredients:

2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 cup granulated sugar
2 tsps. baking powder
1/2 tsp. salt
2 eggs (beaten)
1/2 cup vegetable oil
1/2 cup milk

Method

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Line a 12 cup muffin tin with paper liners or spray each cup with cooking spray. In a mixing bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking powder and salt.

Add in eggs, oil and milk and mix only until combined, don't beat or over mix or they will be dry! Fold in 1/2 cup mix-ins if desired.

Scoop into prepared muffin tin and bake for 15 to 18 minutes or just until golden and a toothpick comes clean. Serve with butter and jam.

Lyon-Lincoln Electric Member

UMM BRUNCH

Ingredients:

Scallops
English Muffin
Eggs

Method

Soak scallops in cold water in fridge for two hours, pat dry, sauté in butter and garlic until opaque (approx. 4 min). Put on toasted English muffin. Cook poached eggs in 10-inch skillet with 1 tbsp. vinegar (3-5 mins.) Remove with slotted spoon and drain on paper towel. Add to the scallops and top with Hollandaise Sauce.

Hollandaise Sauce:

Cut 1/2 stick butter into thirds. In double boiler, combine 1 piece of butter and 3 egg yolks, 1 tbsp. lemon juice and 1 tbsp. water. Place it over boiling water and cook while whisking rapidly. Add remaining butter one at a time, continue to cook. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Kari Reder
Northern Electric Member

SAUSAGE AND EGG TACOS

Ingredients:

4 oz. breakfast sausage, casings removed
1 tbsp. perfect pinch roasted garlic bell pepper seasoning
6 eggs
2 tbsps. milk
1 tbsp. butter
6 small flour tortillas, warmed
1/4 cup shredded Mexican cheese blend
1 med. ripe avocado, peeled, pitted and sliced

Method

Heat medium skillet on medium-high heat. Add sausage and Seasoning; cook and stir until sausage is browned and crumbled. Remove sausage from pan; keep warm. Drain fat from pan.

Beat eggs and milk in medium bowl with wire whisk. Melt butter in same skillet on medium heat. Add egg mixture; cook and stir until eggs are firm.

For each taco, place one tortilla on plate. Top with eggs, sausage, cheese and avocado. Sprinkle with additional seasoning, if desired.

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 2025. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

Beneficial Electrification: A Smarter Path



Nathan Zimmerman
Manager of
Beneficial
Electrification

Key Takeaways:

- Controllable electric water heaters reduce demand during peak times.
- Smart thermostats and appliances allow for flexible energy use, saving money while supporting grid reliability.
- Incentives (including rebates and financing options) can help you upgrade to energy-efficient systems.
- Beneficial electrification helps manage energy use, improve reliability, and lower costs in a changing energy landscape.

Learn more at:



If there's one thing we know about living in the Upper Midwest, it's that we're tough. Blizzards? Sure, we'll get the shovel. Sub-zero temps? Bring them on. But one thing we don't want to deal with? Unpredictable power bills when the next polar vortex hits or the summer sun turns our homes into ovens.

Thankfully, as an electric co-op in this region, we have access to a stable and reliable power supply. Our wholesale power provider, Basin Electric, has a diverse energy portfolio and will be adding to that as the demand for electricity increases. This will likely result in some rate increases and SVE will work to mitigate these as much as possible. But in the meantime, what energy-saving resources are available to you right now?

Enter beneficial electrification – the practical, cost-saving strategy to help our members be as efficient as possible. It's not the savior of our energy future, but it's an effective tool.

Smart Strategy for Savings

How can we, as a distribution cooperative, use beneficial electrification to help lower costs, improve efficiency, and keep the lights on – without relying on expensive backup resources or pushing unnecessary rate hikes onto our members?

One of the best examples of beneficial electrification in action is our **controllable electric water heater program**. With this program, we can control when water heaters run – usually during off-peak hours – when demand is lower and costs for power generation are less expensive. It's a simple, effective solution that manages demand while giving you hot water when you need it, no matter what the weather is doing outside.

It's not the flashiest technology, but it works. And it can save you real money – especially when demand charges from our power suppliers increase during peak usage times. (Contact us to learn how a Rheem® Marathon water heater on load control can help you start saving money.)

Another beneficial electrification tool

that can make a difference is the humble **smart thermostat**. These devices allow you to program your heating and cooling to only run when you need it, reducing unnecessary energy consumption. Smart thermostats also allow for flexible load management that you control, which can help shift energy use to off-peak times when rates are lower. When combined with energy-efficient appliances, this creates an easy way to cut costs without sacrificing comfort.

Off-peak charging (I like to call it smart charging) for technologies such as electric vehicles (EVs) can also save both the co-op and the member money and reduce grid stress by avoiding costly high demand periods. SVE has programs available for members who are interested in that, including our Time of Use Rate. Give our Member Services Department a call to learn more about special rates.

If you're ready to start upgrading your home or business with energy-efficient technologies, you're in luck. SVE offers financial incentives, including rebates and low-interest financing, for a variety of **energy-efficient upgrades**. These programs are designed to help lower upfront costs and make the transition to more efficient systems easier and more affordable.

Smarter Choices for a More Reliable Future

Beneficial electrification is about using smart, strategic technologies to help manage energy use, improve reliability, and lower costs in a changing energy landscape. While we can't control all the factors at the wholesale level, we can control how we use energy at the distribution level.

Through smart choices – like upgrading to controllable electric water heaters, using smart appliances, and taking advantage of incentives – we can lower costs, reduce demand during peak periods, and keep reliability high. It's not about throwing away the old system and going all-in on the latest technology; it's about using the tools available to save money, keep the lights on, and help our community thrive.

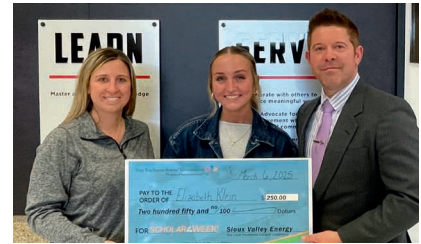
TAKE THE TIME. EVERY TIME.

This spring, check your clearances and keep your distance from electrical equipment.




BVHS'S KLEIN NAMED SCHOLAR OF THE WEEK

Brandon Valley High School's Elizabeth Klein was the Touchstone Energy Scholar of the Week for the week of March 31 to April 5.



"I have been Elizabeth's counselor for the past four years admiring her intelligence, creativity, and commitment to service," wrote BVHS Counselor Michelle Stemwedel. "She will not be the student that strives to get your attention or wants her name in lights, but she will be one of your hardest workers and most dedicated members."

Klein has a 4.0 GPA and has taken honors classes as well as college credits.

Stemwedel added, "She excels academically while remaining grounded. Within this balance she has also been involved in powerlifting, track and field, SALSA, student council, orchestra, environmental club, and the Lynx Lookout (school newspaper). Her leadership has spread among all areas in our building. She was even chosen as cello section leader in orchestra where she was able to show her true leadership potential. Just as important as school involvement, Elizabeth has also volunteered and worked within our community. She has volunteered at the Humane Society and Sioux Falls Butterfly House and Aquarium. She also started her own online home bakery in addition to offering private piano lessons and has also worked for the Cliff Avenue Greenhouse since April 2023."

She is the daughter of Jason and Jennifer Klein of Sioux Falls.

The Scholar of the Week program is a partnership between Dakota News Now Television, Sioux Valley Energy, and other local Touchstone Energy Cooperatives that honors accomplished high school students. As a Scholar of the Week, Klein will be featured the week of March 31 on Dakota News Now and will receive a scholarship from Sioux Valley Energy. She is also now eligible for a chance to win a scholarship that will be given away this spring at the annual Scholar of the Year banquet.



STEP UP AND STAND OUT!
Leadership, learning, friendships and challenges. Energize your potential through the EmPOWER Youth Leadership Program!

This inspiring, interactive program will help you discover personal strengths, build & improve leadership skills, link up with peers & professionals, and explore career paths.

Have a chance at: SCHOLARSHIPS! TRIPS!

FOUR FUN-FILLED, PEER-ADVISED PROGRAM DAYS FOCUS ON:

- Leadership Skills
- Cooperatives
- Personal Strengths
- Communication Skills
- Team Building
- Health & Wellness
- Electrical Safety/CPR
- Networking
- Career Options

TO APPLY:
The 12-month program is open to upcoming juniors who are ready to commit to fully EmPOWER themselves with fun, positive, open minds. Applications are available from your school counselor or on the Sioux Valley Energy website. Submit via email to Chinelle.Christensen@siouxvalleyenergy.com.



EMPOWERYOUTHLEADERSHIP.COM

This 12-month program is open to upcoming juniors who are ready to commit to fully EmPOWER themselves with fun, positive, open minds. Applications are available from school counselors or by scanning the code above. Apply by May 9.



FROM CELEBRATION TO INSPIRATION

Megawatt welcomes members to the football tailgate party hosted by West River Electric.
Photo by Amanda Haugen

How Electric Co-ops Are Powering the Next Generation

Frank Turner

frank.turner@sdrea.coop

April marks Lineman Appreciation Month, the perfect time to spotlight the essential role that electric cooperative employees play in their communities. In line with their commitment to education and community involvement, electric cooperatives are celebrating lineworkers through youth engagement initiatives, and it all stems from one of the electric cooperatives' seven cooperative principles: concern for community. For years, programs such as Cooperatives in the Classroom have provided schoolchildren with innovative, hands-on learning opportunities, demonstrating the critical work electric cooperatives perform in their communities.

Whether it's engaging youth through a Neon Leon safety demonstration or taking students to explore Basin Electric's energy infrastructure during the SDREA Youth Excursion, electric cooperatives across the state are constantly finding new and exciting ways to engage the youth within their communities and inspire the next generation. Below are two new avenues for spurring youth engagement in cooperatives across the state:

Megawatt Mascot

Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it's Megawatt, Rushmore Electric Power Cooperative's newest lineman mascot. This summer, select electric cooperatives in western South Dakota are suiting up to introduce Megawatt – a friendly-faced lineman adorned with a hard hat, safety gloves and

bright red cape – to their members.

“The goal is to get younger kids to start thinking about linemen in a certain way – almost larger than life and the backbone of the electric cooperative,” said Rushmore Electric Chief Marketing Officer Matt Brunner. “The hope is that it translates into them considering the lineman profession when they get older.”

Megawatt has already made his debut at several member appreciation events, bringing high-energy fun to parades and tailgates as a true champion of the cooperative spirit. So far, Brunner said the mascot has left a big impression.

“The kids and adults have loved it, and the interactions have been great,” Brunner said. “If nothing else, it's unique. People are constantly asking, ‘Who is that?’ The costume does a great job of starting the conversation: what is a lineman, and what do they do?”

Beyond lineworkers, cooperatives offer a diverse range of career paths.

From engineers to accountants, the cooperative world is full of exciting roles that include opportunities in communications, where professionals share the cooperative's achievements and member services, where employees work directly with the community to meet their needs.

Brunner said he expects the idea to continue gaining momentum over the coming months with new avenues of appreciation for linemen and a better understanding of the day in the life of a lineman, as well as other exciting careers in the electric cooperative industry.

STEM Gains Steam

Jennifer Gross, education and outreach coordinator at East River Electric Power Cooperative, has inspired classrooms for years with a variety of engaging demonstrations, covering everything from science to safety. Last year, Gross introduced a new activity to spark curiosity while incorporating STEM – an approach to education that integrates science, technology, engineering and mathematics into learning. The result led to a crafting activity where kids use simple materials to fashion their own wind turbine.

“We are always trying to come up with new ideas for students,” Gross said. “Incorporating STEM into this project seemed like a natural fit because both teachers and students are very receptive to it.”

The idea is straightforward. Students construct a small-scale turbine from wooden dowels, fins, and a motor capable of generating power. Once completed, they connect their tiny turbine to a multimeter, which measures the energy generated. Instead of relying on natural wind, students use a fan to simulate a windy day. By altering their model turbines, students can find the optimal design for the best output of energy. And just like that, students can step into the role of engineers.



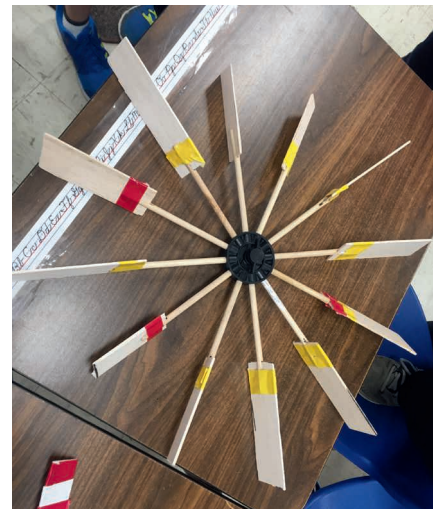
Megawatt is joined by U.S. Air Force personnel enjoying the Annual Base Picnic.
Photo by Amanda Haugen

Gross said the students and the project have a lot in common. Once the building begins, the students' minds begin to whirl – just like a turbine. The activity prompts question after question: Why does the wind blow? How does a wind turbine work? How does the shape and weight of the blade influence the experiment?

“The students enjoy being engineers for this project,” Gross said. “They enjoy having the freedom to choose their materials and design. There's no right or wrong way to do it, and they enjoy that. I mention to the students that careers in wind energy are in high demand and some are 4-year degrees and others are fewer years, but the push for renewable energy sources is growing and our state produces plenty of wind.”

Whether it's through a hands-on activity or an engaging mascot, cooperatives aim to not only educate but inspire, ensuring that today's students can become tomorrow's linemen, engineers, communicators or member service representatives. By

sparkling curiosity and introducing young people to the world of cooperatives early on, they're opening the door to careers that keep communities powered and connected.



This is just one example of how students create wind turbines using materials such as balsa wood, foam, card stock, cardboard and paper cups.
Photo by Jennifer Gross

'WHO POWERS YOU' CONTEST NOMINATIONS NOW BEING ACCEPTED

Nominations are now open for the "Who Powers You," contest being hosted by Sioux Valley Energy and the region's other Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives. The fourth annual Who Powers You contest seeks to highlight local figures who are making a difference in their communities.

"No one succeeds alone, and that is especially true in rural areas, where friends and neighbors in tight-knit communities support, encourage and inspire each other," said Carrie Vugteveen, Sioux Valley Energy Vice President of Public Relations. "Those people don't do it for the recognition, but they deserve to be recognized, and we'd like to help make that happen."

Member-owners, employees, and

residents who live or work within the service territory of the region's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives are eligible to be nominated. Nominations will be accepted through April 11, 2025. Three final winners will be selected by a panel of judges based on the impact that they have on the community. Weekly finalists will be announced and featured on *Keloland Living* starting March 13, and the three contest winners will be announced on *Keloland Living* on May 22.

The Who Powers You contest grand prize winner will receive a \$3,000 prize. A second place winner will receive \$1,500 and the contest's third place winner will receive \$500.

"As an electric cooperative, our services extend beyond delivering

safe, affordable and reliable power to our member-owners," said Vugteveen. "The Who Powers You contest highlights the commitment of our co-op to the communities and member-owners that we serve. We know that our co-op community is filled with people making a difference. Let's celebrate them!"

To learn more about the Who Powers You contest and to nominate someone in your community, visit WhoPowersYouContest.com.



TELL US WHO POWERS YOU!

Let's celebrate a member or employee you know who goes above and beyond to help others. **They could win up to \$3,000!**

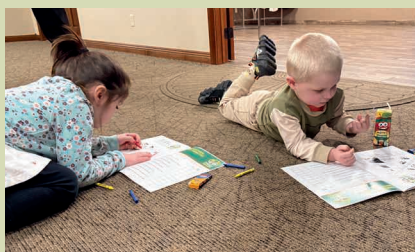
Nominate your local hero at WHOPOWERSYOUCONTEST.COM



District Meetings Begin

Between February 25 and April 21, Sioux Valley Energy will hold 10 district meetings throughout the Co-op's territory. To find the next meeting, scan the QR code below.

During the meeting, members will hear a report from Co-op management and the district director, elect directors in Districts 2, 4, 6 and 10, and enjoy a complimentary meal. They'll also register to win a bus trip to Basin Electric, and enter a drawing for a smart watch. Co-op scholarship recipients will also be recognized.





Electric Education

Co-ops in the Classroom Visits Area Elementary Schools

What do socks, flashlights, and bicycles have in common? All these materials were used to teach more than 820 children in 10 schools throughout Sioux Valley Energy's service territory this winter.

Co-ops in the Classroom is a program offered by Sioux Valley Energy's wholesale power provider, East River Electric Power Cooperative. Jennifer Gross, Education & Outreach Coordinator for East River, travels throughout East River's service territory in eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota to teach children about electrical safety, generation, conservation, and economics.



During the course of the hour long presentations, Gross took the students on the journey of electricity at the atomic level, all the way to the hundreds of miles it travels from the power plant to our homes.

A variety of hands-on demonstrations engaged the students. A Van de Graaff generator demonstrated the

movement of electrons with some hair-raising results. "That one is always a crowd-pleaser," said Gross. "Not only does it provide a visible and audible example of how electricity moves, students also get a kick out of seeing their hair stand up and shocking their friends. Sometimes we even get the teachers to join in."

Another device that invokes a lot of excitement is the Pedal Power bicycle generator. Students are asked to become power plants as they provide the energy that produces electricity for lights and small household devices. "The Pedal Power turns the concept of electricity from something abstract into something tangible. By providing the energy needed to make a light bulb turn on, the students are able to quantify just how much more energy an incandescent light bulb requires than a CFL or LED," said Gross.



Using a Van de Graaf generator, students experiment with static electricity at Sioux Valley Elementary (top), Garretson Elementary, above middle and left (note the spark between the elbows), Tri-Valley Elementary and Hills-Beaver Creek Elementary. Below, students at Brandon Valley Elementary and Edgerton Elementary pedal to generate electricity.





DIGGING SAFELY

Call 811 Before You Dig Every Dig. Every Time.

Jocelyn Johnson

jocelyn.johnson@sdra.coop

Every year, underground utility lines are damaged by homeowners and contractors who dig without calling 811. This single call is a crucial step in any project. Striking a water, gas or power line can cause serious injuries, costly repairs and service outages for an entire neighborhood. Whether you're beginning construction on a major project or are simply planting a tree, calling 811 before you dig is a free and simple solution to what could potentially be considerable damage.


What is 811?

The South Dakota One-Call System, or 811, is a mandatory statewide

one-call notification system that was established by South Dakota Statute in 1993. 811 is now recognized as the national "Call Before You Dig" number in the U.S., designed to safeguard people and protect underground utilities. It's a free service that coordinates with your utility providers to help locate and mark underground lines.



Codi Gregg, executive director for South Dakota 811, said, "The main purpose of the program is to avoid digging into any utility and potentially causing a loss of life, loss of property, or any infrastructure buried in the ground."

"We are fully funded by the utilities who want to protect the services they provide," Gregg continued. "It is



GET TO KNOW THE COLOR CODE

Below are The American Public Works Association (APWA) Uniform Color Codes for temporary marking of underground utilities.

 <p>Proposed Excavation</p>	 <p>Electric</p>
 <p>Water</p>	 <p>Communication / CATV</p>
 <p>Reclaimed Water, Irrigation, Slurry</p>	 <p>Temporary Survey Marking</p>
 <p>Gas, Oil, Steam</p>	 <p>Sewer / Storm Drain</p>

South Dakota state law that you contact 811 two business days before you dig.”

South Dakota has underground utility lines for electricity, gas, water, sewage and telecommunications. Inadvertently hitting one of these lines could cause power outages, property damage, water contamination, gas leaks, legal liabilities and injury.

Gregg explained that when an excavator makes the 811 call before they dig, utilities receive the locate and have 48 hours to mark all lines in the designated area with color-coded flags or paint.

“If you happen to dig into a utility or find one that was not located while excavating, you have to report that to 811. If you happen to dig into a gas line or anything toxic, you must call 911 first, then 811.”

How It Works

Contractors, homeowners, ranchers and farmers can easily make a request for underground utility lines to be marked by

following these steps before every project.

1. Call 811 or submit an online request at least 48 hours prior to your project.
 - Information can be found online at www.sdonecall.com.
2. Wait for utility markings.
 - Utility companies will send professionals to mark buried lines using color-coded paint or flags.
3. Get locates on secondary or privately-owned lines if needed.
4. Check markings.
 - Confirm all utility companies listed on your ticket have responded to the request after the two-business days have passed.
5. Dig safely.

Real-Life Examples of Hitting Underground Utility Lines

Contractor Hits Unmarked Secondary Line

Tom Lundberg, member services manager from H-D Electric Cooperative in Clear Lake, S.D., gives the following account of a contact made to a secondary line:

“Normal situations start out like this – South Dakota 811 calls are made from an excavator or member (persons doing the work), and flags and paint go on the ground marking the underground services. This is a normal occurrence. However, some digs are more complicated, and there may be what we call secondary wires, pipes, sewer lines, etc. located in the dig area as well. The words primary and secondary are confusing to some people and they assume that all is well after the 811 call is made. Primary lines are owned and operated by the utility. Secondary lines are member-owned lines that are not marked by any utility. They must be marked by the member-owner of the property.

Unfortunately, we have had many of these lines hit during a dig, which makes it an emergency service call. One example is when we had a 600-amp service for a member that was damaged by a contractor. The call came in to us, and we responded to the site. We realized it could have been a very dangerous situation if the contractor would have entered the dig. Luckily, they guarded the hole until we arrived. The underground wires were extremely damaged, and the contact did not take out the transformer fuse or any kind of overcurrent protection. When I arrived, there was water in the hole, and I could hear the muddy water boiling. At that time, I assumed it was still energized. The first thing I did was turn the power off and assess the extent of the damage. The mud and water were so hot that I had to wait for a while for it to cool off. Repairs were made and everything was put back together. I double checked my work, then turned the power back on. This happened because secondary locates were not completed – resulting

in a three-hour delay for the business and a costly repair.

We have had many of these calls over the years, and we want to communicate that anyone digging for a project must ensure all the dig area is marked for primary and secondary functions (wire, pipe, gas, telephone, sewer).

Long story short, the impact of not marking all the dig area can cost you time, loss of production, money and even worse – injury or death.”

Out-of-State Contractor Hits Underground Power Line

Mike Stadler, manager of electric operations from Grand Electric Cooperative in Bison, S.D., gives the following account of a contact made by company digging gravel:

“We had a dig-in a couple of years ago at a gravel pit. The county contracted a crushing company out of state to mine more gravel from an existing pit they had rights to. The crushing company started by digging test holes with a bulldozer. They would take the bulldozer and dig a hole about eight feet deep, just one dozer width wide, to see how good the gravel was before they committed to mining the whole area. We had underground cable around the pit. When they were exploring new areas to mine, they dug right through our cable and didn’t know it (keep in mind the test holes are 8 feet deep, and our cable is four feet deep). They dug the hole, went in and looked at the gravel, decided it wasn’t worth it, and covered the hole back up. Meanwhile, we had an outage.

When our crew began searching for the cause of the outage, they discovered the fresh dirt which was moved and had to dig it back up to fix it. When I asked the contractor why he didn’t call a locate, he stated the county superintendent said he didn’t have to because there was nothing there. They were very reluctant to pay the bill and thought the county should be liable. When I explained to them it was the law that all contractors are required to call 811, and it didn’t matter what the county told them, they paid the bill. We have since educated the county on 811 laws.”

Capital Credits

Each year when Sioux Valley Energy mails capital credit checks to former members, some are returned because the person has moved.

Jody Lebahn, Manager of Accounting
jody.lebahn@siouxvalleyenergy.com

These checks were sent in December 2024 to members from 2001 and 2023. If you know any of the people on this list, please tell them to contact Sioux Valley Energy at 800-234-1960 or email capitalcredits@siouxvalleyenergy.com to claim their capital credit check.

ARIZONA TO KANSAS

Bjerke, Elaine Apache Junction, AZ
Karmazin, Scott Glendale, AZ
Anderson, Ronald A. Sun City West, AZ
Murray Companies Vail, AZ
Schincke, Robbin Flagler, CO
Winkowitsch, Darwin Arnolds Park, IA
Postma, David Boone, IA
Quade, Wayne Dyersville, IA
Vesey, Marilyn A. Grimes, IA
Hinnners, Tim Pomeroy, IA
Studer, John Rolfe, IA

SOUTH DAKOTA

ABERDEEN

Felix, Frank

ARLINGTON

Woods, Kerry

AURORA

Schlobohm, Judy

BALTIC

Harrington, Horace
Siems, Richard

BRANDON

Bauer, Allen
Behrend, Brant
Conlon, Thomas
Ernst, Mark A.
Johnson, Taylor
Karns, Linda
Murphy, James
Patrick, Kevin W.
Rabenberg, Glen
Schmidt, Anna E.

BRANDT

Sides, Billy R.

BROOKINGS

Andera, Rebecca
Belt, Robert
Janish, Bryan
Nelson, Jared

Peterson, Sherry

Pitts, Melissa

Raatz, Jeff

Rasmussen, Dara

Reiser, Danielle

Ritterhouse, Yvonne

Schafer, Linda

Sprange, Jon

Sundet, Robert

Thomas, Bruce

CHESTER

Weinand, Earl T.
Weinand, Paul &
Peggy

COLMAN

Anderson, Kevin
Lee, Randall
Mohon, Bryan
Sinkey, Anita

DE SMET

Korn, Kevin

ELKTON

Hanson, Bruce

EMERY

Carl, Gerald E.

FREEMAN

Wall, Harvey

Farrell, Ed Sanborn, IA
Noble, Chris Alma, KS
Miles, Holly Meade, KS
Kling, Seth Fort Knox, KY

MINNESOTA

Lehnhoff, Jill Adrian, MN
Hanson, Allen Andover, MN
Petersen, Daniel M. Apple Valley, MN
Johnson, Mitch Blackduck, MN
Boerger, Jon Brooklyn Park, MN
Yackley, Sandy Canby, MN
Barstad, Jade Ivanhoe, MN
Vacek, Lisa Jackson, MN

HARRISBURG

Nelson, Charles

HARTFORD

Helton, Kerry

HOT SPRINGS

Eckholt, Jeffrey

HUDSON

Noeller, Theresa

HUMBOLDT

Glaus, Troy
Midwest Sales Inc.

KIMBALL

Sterud, Suzette

LENNOX

Cenex Harvest States

MADISON

Hallan, Ginger
Hass, Ralph
Kaiser, Lonnie W.
Legan, Bruce J.
Pearson, Maynard M.
Reiners, Nicole
Thomson, Jack
Wilkinson, Jeri

MITCHELL

Galbreath, Todd
Lafortune, Melanie

Peterson, Travis

MONTROSE

Gunn, Mike

PARKER

Lynde, Kari

PIERRE

Langdeau, Marcia A.

RAPID CITY

Feistner, Kelly
Hardesty, Audra

RENNER

Miller, Leon A.

SIoux FALLS

Andrews, Gerald
Bedow, Bryan
Berg, Jim
Blouin, Larry
Bose, Staci S.
Brekke, Ruth
Brown, Jacoba
Clark, Dwight
Clausen, Howard
Deneui Properties
Dickerson, Don
Dodd, Lynn
Dyce, Shannon
Fier, Jacquelin
Fowler, Samantha

DeLeon, Alvino Magnolia, MN
Conseco Finance Mendota Heights, MN
Nicholsen, Harold Pipestone, MN
Schmidt, Douglas Pipestone, MN
Huizenga Estate, Al Prinsburg, MN
Fischer, Deke Saint Cloud, MN
Wensings-Oberembt,

Pamela Shakopee, MN
Kelly, Stacy Steen, MN
Shamatt, Deb Walnut Grove, MN
Meehan, Tom Wayzata, MN
Henderson, Steve J. Windom, MN
Irwin, Tim Winnebago, MN
Meno, Jim Winona, MN

MISSOURI TO OHIO

Wilson, Theresa K. Kansas City, MO
Schoon, Mark Weston, MO
Stapert, Duane J. Florence, MT
Winter, Gary Apex, NC
Griesenbrock, Brian Jamestown, ND
Heldt, Allen Fremont, NE
Hartsuiker, Heather Kearney, NE
Walter, Mark D. North Platte, NE
Reinhart, Anthony L. Omaha, NE
Solheim, Roger Omaha, NE
Tjardes, Kent Omaha, NE
Panning, Phil Napoleon, OH
Riley, Robert L. Saint Clairsville, OH

Fox, Kari

Froslic, Gary

Gelderman,

Jeanette M.

Halcomb, Ralston C.

Hatle, Dennis

Herding Estate, Tom

Hofts, John J.

Houser, Barbara

Huizenga, Kent

Hunnell, Jim

Hunter, Eugene

Jaques, Ritch

Jervik, Audrey

Jungen, Travis

Kroon, Marvin

Kruger, Kevin V.

Larson, Derrick

Marotz, Gary

Marshall, Calvin

Mitchell, Wayland

Mutchler, Connie

Nygaard, Randy

Olson, Debbie

Oravetz, Karl

Rau, Myron

Reeder, William A.

Ronning, Slate

Schaefer, Kyle

Sigler, Milton

Sommervold, Brent

Spain, Suzette

Spilde, Hans G.

Steever, Matt

Vanderpan, Norma

Walsh, Kathy

Watt, Bruce A.

Weber, Mark

White, Elaine

TEA

Flaskey, Chad
Shultis, Shevon

VALLEY SPRINGS

Fisher, John
Solberg, Bernice

VOLGA

SiouxValleyRealEstate

WATERTOWN

Halverson, Thomas M.
Johnson, Sandy

WHITE RIVER

Mallory, Tate

WORTHING

Heaton, Darcy M.
Maxfield, Carol

YANKTON

Hansen, Robert J.

TENNESSEE TO WASHINGTON

Heist, Chris Chattanooga, TN
Rowzee, William Columbia, TN
Kasma, Troy Vancouver, WA

*If you know any of the people on this list, please tell them to contact
Sioux Valley Energy at 800-234-1960 or
email capitalcredits@siouxvalleyenergy.com to claim their capital credit check.*



Call Before You Dig

Digging without locating underground utilities, even the smallest digging projects, could leave you and your neighbors in the dark, cause thousands of dollars in damages, or result in severe electrical shock. To stay safe, make use of the free national underground utility locating service by calling 811 at least two working days before you dig.

The 811 “Call Before You Dig” number will route your dig ticket request to Sioux Valley Energy, and all other utilities within your dig area. Be prepared to tell 811 operators where and when you plan to dig and what type of work you will be doing. From there, it takes a few business days for SVE’s contractor, **Summit Utility Services**, to come mark electric underground cable with flags and/or spray paint.

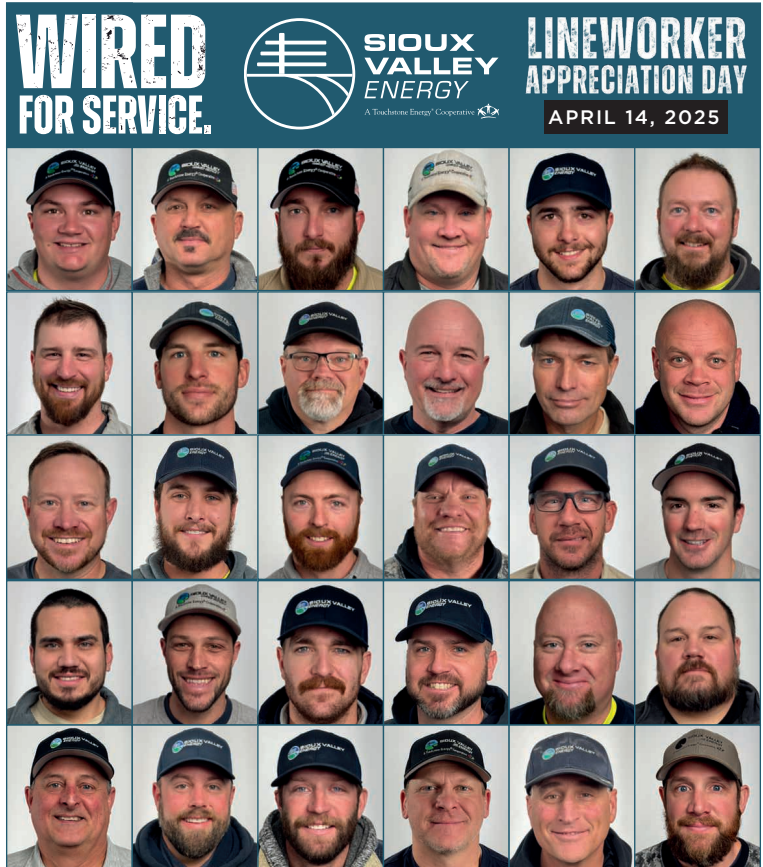


There are different colors of paint and flags that mark the underground utilities, and each color is universal to what utility is buried.

- Red - Electric**
- Orange - Communications, Telephone/CATV**
- Blue - Potable Water**
- Green - Sewer/Drainage**
- Yellow - Gas/Petroleum Pipe Line**
- Purple - Reclaimed Water**
- White - Premark site of intended excavation**

Even if you previously had utilities located by calling 811, it is best to call before every digging project. Underground utilities can shift, and it is important to be certain of where they are before ever putting a shovel in the ground.

For more information about 811 and digging safety, visit Call811.com and SafeElectricity.org.



Bare-root Seedling

FREE ^ TREE GIVEAWAY

(while supplies last)

April 17 • 8:30 am-4 pm

Brandon, Colman,
Hartford & Pipestone
Offices

*Tree trio will be a mix of:
Freeman Maple &
Black Hills Spruce*



APRIL 11-12
Forks, Corks & Kegs
Food, Wine & Beer Festival
 Deadwood, SD
 605-578-1876

*Photo courtesy of
 Travel South Dakota*

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.

APRIL 3
Viva Las Vegas
McCrossan Banquet Auction
 5:30 p.m.
 Sioux Falls Arena
 Sioux Falls, SD
 605-339-1203

APRIL 4
Mitchell Technical College
2025 Alumni Gathering
Cornhole Tournament
 5 p.m. Social
 6:30 p.m. Tournament
 The World's Only Corn Palace
 Mitchell, SD
 605-995-7342

APRIL 4-5
Annual Schmeckfest
 German Heritage Celebration
 748 S Main St.
 Freeman, SD
 605-925-4237

APRIL 4-6, 11-13
Women Playing Hamlet
 April 4-5, 11-12: 7:30 p.m.
 April 6, 13: 2:30 p.m.
 Mighty Corson Art Players
 Corson, SD
 www.mightycorson.com

APRIL 6
Hay County Jamboree
 2 p.m. Matinee
 Gayville Music Hall
 Gayville, SD
 605-760-5799

APRIL 11-12
Junkin' Market Days Spring Market
 Fri. 4-7 p.m.
 Sat. 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
 W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds
 Sioux Falls, SD
 www.junkinmarketdays.com

APRIL 24-26
HuntSAFE Course
 Davison County Fairgrounds
 & Mitchell Trap Club
 Mitchell, SD
 605-770-5555
 gfp.sd.gov/hunter-education

APRIL 27
Country Roads
 2 p.m. Matinee
 Gayville Music Hall
 Gayville, SD
 605-760-5799

SAVE THE DATE
1-800-234-1960

APRIL 17
Bare-root Seedling Tree Give Away
 8 a.m.-4 p.m.
 Sioux Valley Energy Offices
 Brandon, Colman, Hartford SD
 & Pipestone MN

JUNE 10
Sioux Valley Energy Annual Meeting
 Hartford, Volga, Pipestone

AUG. 9
Safety Day
 8 a.m.-12 p.m.
 Sioux Valley Energy
 Brandon Service Center
 108 N Heritage Rd, Brandon, SD

MAY 2-3
SD Spring Square Dance Festival
 Fri. 7:30-10:30 p.m.
 Sat. 9:30 a.m.-7:30 p.m.
 Faith Lutheran Church
 601 N. Cliff Ave.
 Sioux Falls, SD
 Call for events & times
 605-360-2524

MAY 3-4
Prairie Village Events
 Sat. Consignment Auction
 Sun. Season Opening
 Madison, SD
 www.prairievillage.org

MAY 3
American Legion Post 15
Just Because It's Time to Dance
 6-10:30 p.m.
 Tables Available
 El Riad Shrine
 Sioux Falls, SD
 605-336-3470

JUNE 19-22
Hartford Jamboree Days
 Hartford City Park
 Hartford, SD
 605-941-0809

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