

# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



## Rural Electrification

**West Central - The Last  
Co-op to Incorporate**  
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**Generational Farmers**  
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Rural Electrification served even  
the most rural communities.



# Four Key Drivers of Basin Electric's Rate Increase



**Tim McCarthy**  
General Manager/  
Chief Executive  
Officer

Tim.McCarthy@  
siouxvalleyenergy.  
com

When it comes to electricity, there are a lot of moving parts and pieces (both literally and figuratively). To continue our 'Electricity 101' series, you can find a story about how electricity is produced on Pages 10 and 11. That complex system needs to be maintained and upgraded to continue the reliability you expect today, and that work comes at a cost.

Sioux Valley Energy is one of many electric utilities throughout the nation that are facing increasing rate pressures this year and likely into future years. Nationally, according to the Energy Information Administration, electricity prices have increased between 13 and 18% since 2022 and that trend is expected to continue.

When you peel away all the complexities and unique situations present with each electric utility, you will get to the core of the issue, and that stems from skyrocketing electrical demand from consumers. Many (if not most) electric utilities do not have the needed generation and transmission to support that demand for a variety of reasons. One of the causes is that traditional baseload

generation (think coal plants) have been shut down in different parts of the country with no commensurate replacement. Of course, that is a vast simplification of the issue but hits at the core because generation and transmission must be built to support the demand and that comes at a cost.

We are anticipating a fairly significant cost increase from our wholesale power supplier, Basin Electric Power Cooperative. There are four basic drivers of that increase:

## 1. Higher demand for electricity -

There is a lot of talk about huge data centers sucking up all the electricity...and while they certainly do use a lot of energy, this isn't the load growth I am referring to. The electricity demand that our power suppliers are working to support is from our traditional membership – residential, farm, commercial, and industrial. Not megaload data centers. To meet this need Basin Electric will need to invest \$10.6 billion in the next 10 years.

## 2. Anticipated losses by Dakota Gasification Company (DGC) -

DGC is a for-profit subsidiary of

Sioux Valley Energy  
is one of many electric  
utilities throughout the  
nation facing increasing  
**rate  
pressures.**



## COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

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Basin Electric Power Cooperative; it owns and operates the Great Plains Synfuels Plant near Beulah, North Dakota. The Synfuels Plant gasifies lignite coal to produce gases and liquids. It produces fertilizers, solvents, phenol, carbon dioxide, and other chemical products for sale. Commodity prices are down in 2025 and are expected to stay that way for some time, which impacts the demand for the inputs and products that DGC produces – suppressing profits.

**3. The need to build extra generation and transmission to meet higher resource adequacy requirements for the Southwest Power Pool** – That is a mouthful, but in essence, it means that Basin Electric is required to build extra generation and transmission in case of an emergency. Think back to the unexpected winter outages in February of 2021. A lot of things went wrong...extreme cold that spread down to Texas along with generating plant outages at the same time. There simply wasn't enough electricity being generated to meet the demand, which is why our transmission operators had to shut off power to some of our members. This is why all Regional Transmission Organizations (RTOs), like SPP, are requiring extra generation and transmission be built as a reserve (above and beyond what is needed for existing members and anticipated growth).

**4. Investments in reliability** – Basin Electric will need to make significant investments in existing facilities to make sure they can continue to generate electricity and have enough capacity in the system to serve today's members along with expected growth.

This is a lot to digest, but as I mentioned, our goal is to provide you with as much up-to-date information about the 2026 rate increase as we can. Basin Electric's Board of Directors will meet in September to set rates, which will provide us with the details we need to set our budget here at the local level, and give you a better idea of what next year's rates will look like.



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Don't miss  
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# Go Above and Beyond for a Safe Harvest

Anne Prince  
NRECA

Modern farming often relies on data and equipment with GPS and auto-guidance systems. However, even with these modern conveniences, farm workers must remain vigilant. That's because farming is considered one of the most dangerous jobs.

Massive machinery is indispensable to farming, but the same impressive size, height and extensions make them particularly vulnerable to contacting power lines. That's why staying alert, focused and knowledgeable about potential hazards and safety procedures is crucial.

During a busy harvest season, the familiar sights around the farm can easily fade into the background, and farm workers can overlook the power lines overhead. However, failing to notice them can lead to deadly accidents.

### 360 Awareness

Awareness of your surroundings, around, above and below, and planning safe equipment routes can significantly reduce the risk of accidents. Even with GPS and auto-steering, it's imperative that farm workers keep a close eye on the equipment's location and are ready to take action if necessary.

Exposed underground powerlines, defective wiring in farm buildings and extension cords are also hazards. Grain bins can pose a potential danger as well. The National Electrical Safety Code requires power lines to be at least 18 feet above the highest point on any grain bin with which portable augers or other portable filling equipment are used.

### Smart Harvest Safety Tips

To ensure a safer harvest season, SafeElectricity.org recommends the following tips to avoid electrical accidents on the farm:

- Exercise caution near power lines. Be careful when raising augers or the bed of grain trucks around power lines.
- Use spotters when operating large machinery near power lines. Ensure the spotters do not touch the machinery while it is moving near power lines.

- Lower equipment extensions, portable augers or elevators before moving or transporting equipment. Do not raise equipment, such as ladders, poles or rods into power lines. Remember that non-metallic materials like lumber, tree limbs, ropes and hay can conduct electricity, especially when damp, dusty or dirty.
- Never attempt to raise or move power lines to clear a path. Doing so could result in electric shock or death.
- Avoid using metal poles inside bins. Don't use metal poles to break up bridged grain inside or around bins.
- Hire qualified electricians. Ensure that qualified electricians handle work on drying equipment and other farm electrical systems.

While rare, the only reason to exit equipment that has come into contact with overhead lines is if the equipment is on fire. However, if it happens, jump off the equipment with your feet together and without touching the machinery and the ground at the same time. Then, still keeping your feet together, hop to safety as you leave the area.



### "Don't play with outlets!"

#### Kinzlee Klomp, Age 12

Kinzlee warns readers not to play with power outlets. Great advice, Kinzlee! Kinzlee's parents are Kaitlin and Austin Klomp from Box Elder, S.D.

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



# Fresh BREADS

## ZUCCHINI BREAD

### Ingredients:

3 eggs  
2 cups sugar  
1 cup oil  
2 tsps. vanilla  
3 cups flour  
1 tsp. baking soda  
1/2 tsp. baking powder  
1 tsp. salt  
1 tsp. cinnamon  
3 cups zucchini (shredded)

### Method

Cream together eggs, sugar and oil. Then add the vanilla. Mix together the flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt, cinnamon and add to the egg mixture. Stir in zucchini. Pour into two loaf pans. Bake at 325°F for approximately one hour.

**Kimberly Grimm**  
Southeastern Electric

## GLUTEN FREE OATMEAL PANCAKES

### Ingredients:

2 1/2 cups oats  
1 tsp. baking powder  
1 tsp. baking soda  
1 tsp. cinnamon  
1/2 tsp. salt  
2 eggs  
1/2 cup milk  
3/4 cup applesauce  
3 tsps. maple syrup  
2 tsps. apple cider vinegar  
2 tsps. vanilla

### Method

Grind 2 1/2 cups oats in blender until turned into flour. In large bowl, whisk together oats, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon and salt. Form a bowl in center, add eggs and whisk them. Then, add milk, applesauce, maple syrup, apple cider vinegar and vanilla. Stir to combine. Wait five minutes to thicken batter. Cook in oiled pan.

**Jean Beauchamp**  
Southeastern Electric

## KUNSI' FRY BREAD

### Ingredients:

1 tbsp. yeast (quick rise)  
2 tsps. sugar  
1 qt. warm water  
1 tbsp. oil/melted butter  
1/2 tsp. salt  
6 cups all-purpose flour  
2 tsps. powdered dry milk  
4 cups oil for frying

### Method

Mix yeast, sugar, salt, warm water, oil/melted butter and let proof for 15 minutes. Mix flour and powdered dry milk. Make a well in the flour mixture and add yeast mixture. Gradually add warm water until dough comes together and is no longer sticky. Cover and let rise until doubled in size. Heat oil to fry dough. Separate dough into 10 to 12 baseball-size dough balls (or smaller if you want smaller pieces). Stretch dough balls and shape into oval discs or round discs approximately 1/4 inch thick. Test the oil to see if it's hot enough by dropping a small pea size piece of the dough in the oil. If it floats it's ready. Flatten the disc between your hands and stretch it again. Fry the bread until both sides are golden brown. Transfer to paper towel lined plate to drain. Continue until all the dough is fried. Enjoy with soup or a Spam and egg sandwich or taco toppings.

**Sheila Ironheart**  
Whetstone Valley Electric

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.

## Where Do You Find Everyday Value?



**Sheila Gross**  
Energy Services  
Specialist

**For info on beneficial electrification programs, contact Sheila Gross at [sheila.gross@siouxvalleyenergy.com](mailto:sheila.gross@siouxvalleyenergy.com) to learn more.**

For more information on SVE's programs, scan the code below or call 1-877-511-8062.

October is National Cooperative Month, a time to celebrate you, our members, and serving our members, always!

As a member-owned cooperative, Sioux Valley Energy works hard to keep rates as reasonable as possible and ensure electricity remains a strong value for the people we serve. That's not always easy. Many factors beyond inflation influence the cost of electricity, and several of them are outside our control. Even so, electricity continues to be one of the best values in your household budget. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, the average electric bill in the United States is \$149.37 per month, which breaks down to about \$4.82 per day. Sioux Valley Energy's residential rate is even lower at \$4.57 a day on average (about \$142 a month).

If you're like me, you might be looking for ways to save money and stretch your monthly budget a little further. It's surprising how much the small, everyday conveniences we enjoy, like takeout meals or coffee stops, can add up. For example, spending around \$120 a month on a daily latte might not offer the same value as the cost of electricity that can power your entire home.

The way we view value often depends not

just on cost, but also on what we get in return. Electricity is something we tend to take for granted because it's always available. But when you stop and think about everything that comes from a single flip of a switch or plugging in a device, it's pretty incredible.

My own electric bill happens to fall close to the national average. Yours may be a little higher or lower depending on your household size, energy efficiency, and lifestyle. But for about \$5 a day, I'm able to run a heat pump, water heater, washer, dryer, dishwasher, refrigerator, freezer, microwave, TVs, computers, lighting, and much more.

I've even decided to dust off the coffee pot and start brewing at home again. It costs less than a dollar per month in electricity to brew two cups of coffee a day in a single-serve coffee maker. That's real value.

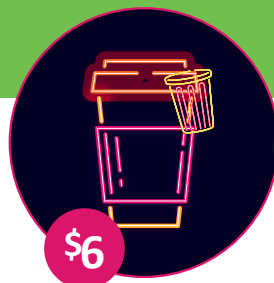
At Sioux Valley Energy, we're always working to bring you everyday value. If you'd like to learn more about how to save energy and money, we're here to help. Give us a call at 800-234-1960, or visit our website for energy-saving tips and our *Use Energy Wisely* booklet, which includes a helpful guide to how much energy common appliances use.



## Where Do You Find Value?

Did you know the national average daily cost of electricity is \$4.82, or about \$150 per month?

Electricity fuels our daily life essentials, from heating/cooling equipment to entertainment devices and appliances. Think of how vital power is compared to other everyday purchases. **That's real value.**



**Morning To-Go Latte**



**Fast-Food Combo Lunch**



**All-Day Power**

*Sources: Energy Information Administration, MoneyGeek and CNET*



# CELEBRATE WITH US

Join Sioux Valley Energy and Alliance Communications as we celebrate National Cooperative Month at Cherry Rock Farms on Saturday, October 18, from 9 a.m. to noon.

Members of the cooperatives will be able to pick a pumpkin, and (one per household/membership) enjoy warm cocoa and donuts as we celebrate the cooperative difference and the members who make up the cooperatives.

We'll see you at Cherry Rock Farms' pumpkin patch at 48105 264th St., Brandon, on Saturday, October 18.



October is Co-op Month

# CO-OP MONTH

*Celebration*

## at Cherry Rock Farms

48105 264th Street  Brandon, SD 57005  
Saturday, October 18, 2025  9 a.m.-noon

*Come pick a pumpkin on us!*

*We're also serving* Cocoa & Donuts.

# UTILITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

If you are having trouble paying your electric bill, the following assistance programs may be able to help. Members need to call the agencies directly to apply for assistance. Sioux Valley Energy's goal is to help you avoid disconnection of electric service, so please call us at 1-877-511-8062 so we can work together to develop an acceptable payment plan.

## BROOKINGS COUNTY SOUTH DAKOTA

LIEAP, Low Income Energy Assistance Program .. 1-800-233-8503  
Brookings County Welfare Office.....605-696-8261  
Brookings County Community Action.....605-692-6391  
Brookings County Salvation Army .....605-219-8970  
My Neighbor.....605-691-3225  
First Call for Help ..... 211

## KINGSBURY COUNTY SOUTH DAKOTA

LIEAP, Low Income Energy Assistance Program . 1-800-233-8503  
Interlakes Community Action ..... 1-605-854-3701  
First Call for Help ..... 211

## LAKE COUNTY SOUTH DAKOTA

LIEAP, Low Income Energy Assistance Program .. 1-800-233-8503  
Interlakes Community Action .....605-256-6518  
Lake County Welfare.....605-256-7619  
First Call for Help ..... 211

## MOODY COUNTY SOUTH DAKOTA

LIEAP, Low Income Energy Assistance Program .. 1-800-233-8503  
Interlakes Community Action ..... 1-605-256-6518  
Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribal Office .....605-997-3891  
First Call for Help ..... 211

## MINNEHAHA COUNTY SOUTH DAKOTA

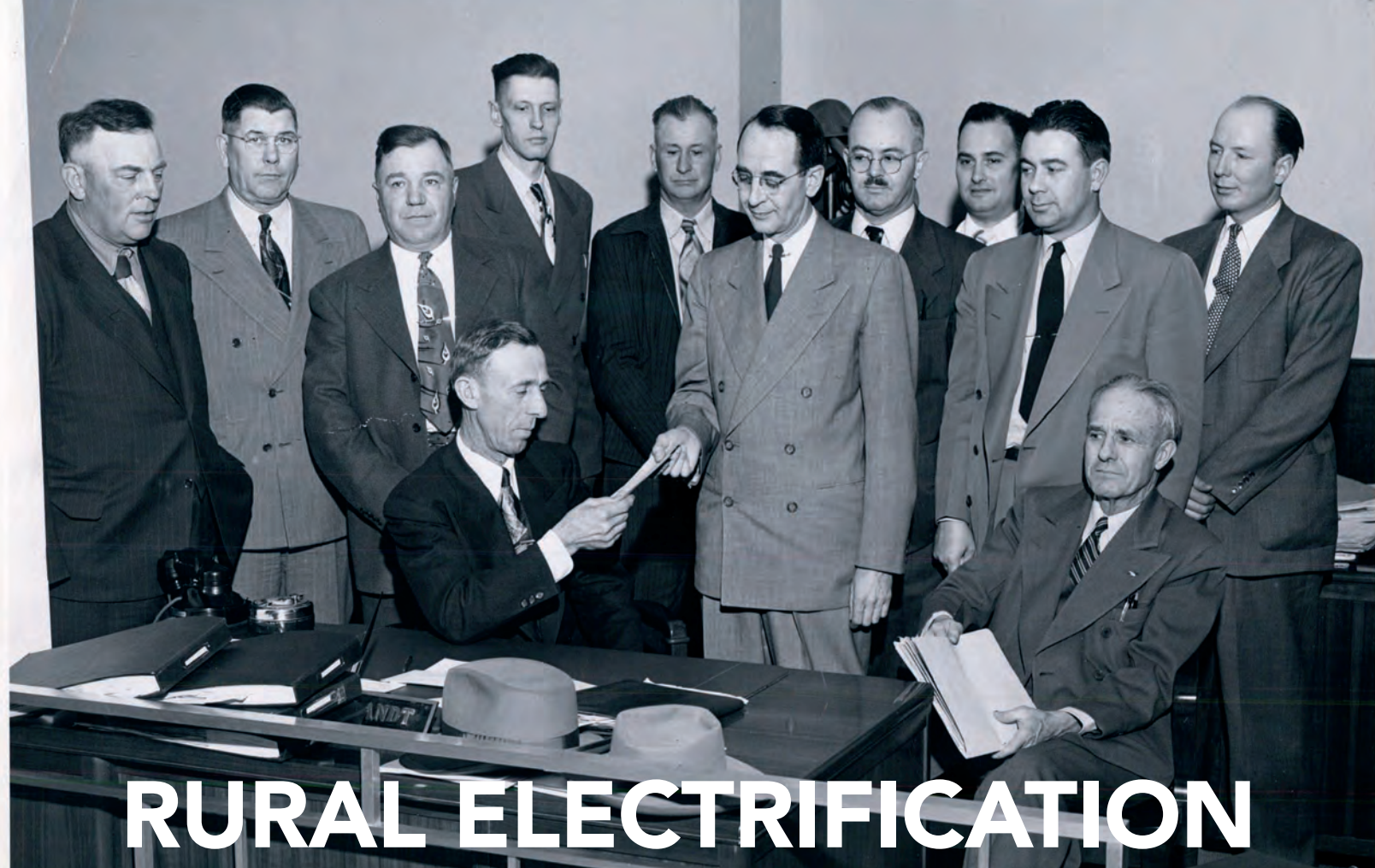
LIEAP, Low Income Energy Assistance Program . 1-800-233-8503  
Minnehaha County Human Services ..... 605-367-4217  
Minnehaha Community Outreach ..... 605-331-3935  
Minnehaha County Salvation Army ..... 605-332-2331  
Sioux Falls Interlakes Community Action ..... 605-334-2808  
First Call for Help ..... 211

## PIPESTONE COUNTY MINNESOTA

Southwestern MN Opportunity Council ..... 1-800-658-2444  
Southwest Health & Human Services..... 1-888-837-6713  
The Salvation Army Heat Share ..... 800-842-7279  
Pipestone County Veterans Administration ..... 507-825-1171  
MN Department of Energy Services ..... 800-657-3710  
First Call for Help ..... 211

## ROCK COUNTY MINNESOTA

Southwestern MN Opportunity Council ..... 1-800-658-2444  
Southwest Health & Human Services..... 1-888-837-6713  
The Salvation Army Heat Share ..... 800-842-7279  
Rock County Veterans Administration ..... 507-283-5061  
MN Department of Energy Services ..... 800-657-3710  
First Call for Help ..... 211



# RURAL ELECTRIFICATION

## WEST CENTRAL

### Last to Incorporate, Lasting in Impact

**Frank Turner**

[frank.turner@sdrea.coop](mailto:frank.turner@sdrea.coop)

Before rural electrification, South Dakota's farmsteads ended the day in silence. There was no music from the radio playing in the living room or hum of an electric refrigerator in the kitchen. Over decades of work, power lines would stretch across the prairie through President Franklin Roosevelt's vision of rural electrification, carrying not only electricity but also a new way of life.

In 1935, President Roosevelt created the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) as part of his New Deal policies to revive a nation struggling through the Great Depression and bring electricity to

America's rural communities, something that private and investor-owned utilities refused to do.

Clay-Union Electric was the first rural community in South Dakota to adopt the cooperative model in 1937, and West Central was the last in 1949. But as former West Central Electric CEO Steve Reed can attest, being the last to adopt the cooperative way didn't hinder their success. Once the path to forming a cooperative was established, the members of West Central benefitted from electricity's transformation from a luxury into a necessity with the rest of rural South Dakota.

"We couldn't rely on the power

West Central Electric board directors present a check to a representative of Central Electric and Gas in 1951, finalizing the cooperative's purchase of the private utility system. *Photo submitted by West Central Electric.*

companies to come out to serve rural South Dakota," said Reed, a 42-year cooperative veteran who joined West Central Electric as a lineman and worked his way up to CEO. "They were never going to do it at price that was affordable, so rural electric has been great for not only the members of West Central but the entire country."

So why was West Central the last to form a cooperative? According to Reed, the rural communities that organized West Central Electric in 1949 had several hurdles to clear. The first was overcoming the sheer remoteness of the territory, which then had a system that averaged 1.5 members per mile of line constructed, even including towns and



cities. Because members were few and far between, the REA needed the towns in the proposed West Central territory to become members: from Philip to Hayes and Murdo to Kennebec, where West Central Electric was incorporated.

That led to the next problem: the towns and cities in the proposed West Central Electric's service territory were already being served by Central Electric and Gas, a private company based out of Philadelphia. This obstacle didn't stop the people who had a vision of what rural electrification could accomplish. Following lengthy discussion in 1951, West Central Electric purchased systems from Central Electric and Gas for \$850,000 using low-interest REA federal funds.

Former West Central Electric Attorney John Larson outlined the discussions in his 50th Annual Meeting Speech: "There was no choice but to buy out the private supplier, Central Electric and Gas, and that was accomplished... (Former South Dakota Governor M. Q. Sharpe, who served as West Central Electric's attorney), showed up for the meeting that morning unshaven and unkempt, with a threadbare shirt and suit. For the entire morning, he listened with his head down and eyes shut to the Philadelphia lawyer types who represented the power company. After the dinner break, however, he showed up in a new suit, shaved, and took over the meeting by dictating exactly what West Central would do and what we would pay. During an afternoon break, one of the Philadelphia types was heard to mutter, 'You want to watch that old guy. When he's got his head down and eyes shut, he's not sleeping!'"

West Central Electric's 1951 purchase included all the electrical infrastructure within the town boundaries, as well as the diesel generation system extending west from Chamberlain. Shortly after, the evolution of West Central Electric progressed with the construction of distribution systems to farms and reconstructing the systems of various

towns, including the installation of street lights.

Since that iconic moment, West Central has continued to grow with its membership, meeting more demand for electrical energy than had been previously thought possible, a reflection of just how integral electricity has

become in day-to-day living for business owners, ag producers, and rural folk alike.

"That moment modernized us," said Reed. "It just did so much for everything – and without it, where would we be?"



(Top) A West Central Electric Annual Meeting.  
(Bottom) A West Central Electric Board Meeting with the REA.  
*Photos submitted by West Central Electric*





# Electricity 101:

## How Is Electricity Produced and How Does it Get to Me?

It's named after those little pieces of atoms called electrons, and that's the place to start in understanding how power plants make something that reliably lights your home with the flip of a switch.

Getting all those electrons to march together inside a wire has been described as one of civilization's greatest and most complex engineering feats.

The journey of electricity begins at power plants. Just about all of your electricity starts with the scientific phenomenon that spinning a magnet inside a coil of wires will generate electricity. So, deep inside most power plants are large turbines that are turned in different ways: falling water at a hydroelectric dam; burning coal or natural gas at a fossil fuel station; atomic energy at a nuclear power plant; or the rotating blades of a wind turbine. One exception is solar energy, which uses materials that produce electricity when they're activated by sunlight.

Sioux Valley Energy receives power from its wholesale generation and transmission (G&T) cooperative, Basin Electric Power Cooperative, and the Western Area Power Administration.

To get the electricity from the generating source to you, there needs to be a transportation system, which is where Sioux Valley Energy's transmission cooperatives, East River Electric Power Cooperative and L&O Power Cooperative, come in.

High-voltage transmission lines, owned by our power suppliers, act as the highways for electricity, transporting power over long distances. These lines are supported by massive towers and travel through vast landscapes, connecting power plants to electric substations.



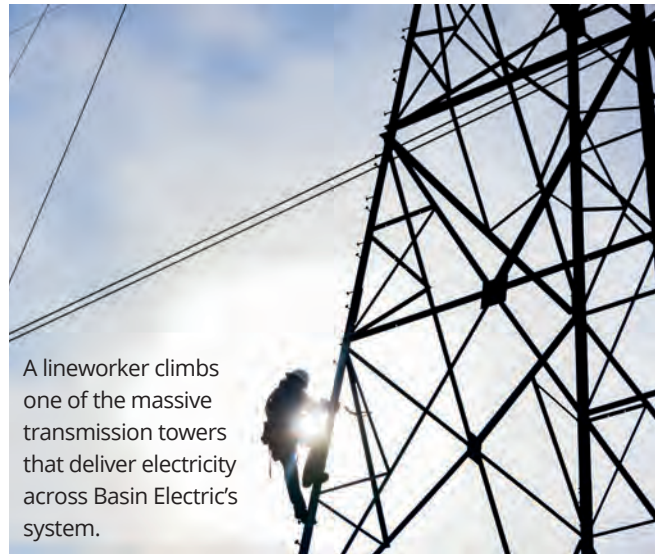
The turbine floor at Antelope Valley Station at Beulah, N.D., (pictured above) shows one of the facility's two turbines which generate electricity.



Substations, also owned by our power suppliers, are like pit stops along the highway, where the voltage of electricity is adjusted. They play a crucial role in managing power flow and ensuring that electricity is safe for use in homes and businesses.

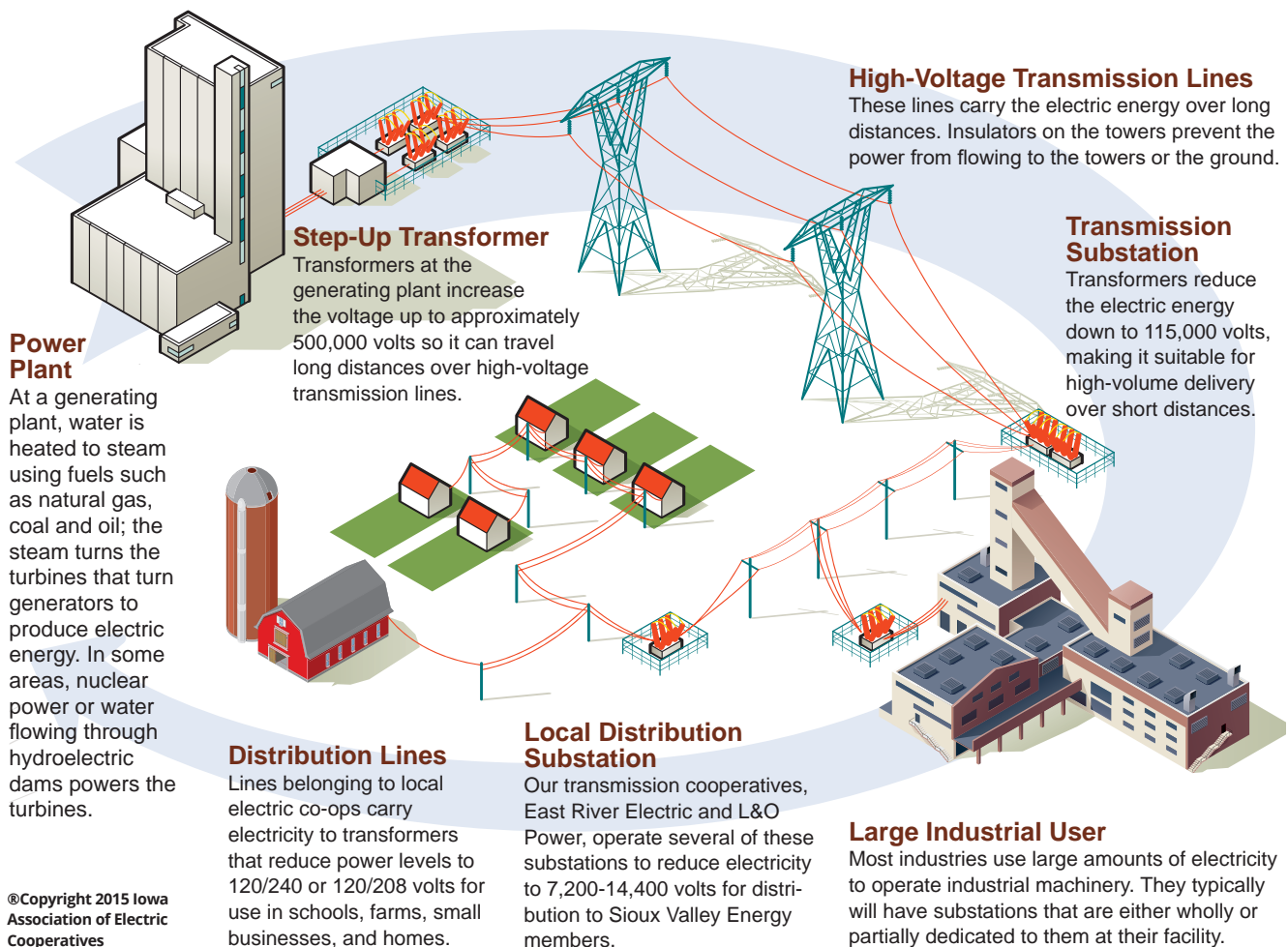
Once the electricity is reduced to the proper voltage, it travels through distribution power lines which are owned by Sioux Valley Energy, like the smaller ones you typically see on the side of the road. Distribution lines carry electricity from substations to homes, schools and businesses. Distribution transformers, which look like metal buckets on the tops of power poles or large green boxes on the ground, further reduce the voltage to levels suitable for household appliances and electronic devices.

After traveling through transformers, electricity reaches the member – to power everyday life.



A lineworker climbs one of the massive transmission towers that deliver electricity across Basin Electric's system.

## HOW DEPENDABLE ELECTRICITY REACHES YOU



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Photo submitted by JT and Luann Weber.

# GENERATIONAL FARMERS

## Four Generations of Lyon-Lincoln Electric Members Ranch on Lake Benton-Area Land

**Jacob Boyko**

[jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop](mailto:jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop)

Nestled amongst the rolling green pastures of western Minnesota, there's a generations-old farm worked by one family for over three quarters of a century.

From their Lincoln County property, the Weber family watched rural electrification improve the prairie, connect neighbors and bring reliability to farmsteads. Now they watch precision agriculture guide planting, bovine genetics strengthen herds, and social media and the internet connect their business to the wider world.

It all started in 1947, when John and Marie Weber moved into the old three-bedroom farmhouse from nearby

Elkton, S.D. Luckily, the move came six years after Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative energized lines in the area, so the Weber home enjoyed many of the modern amenities brought on by rural electrification, including electric lights, kitchen appliances and a washing machine.

"I know I had the best mom and dad in the world," said JT, one of John and Marie's eight children, who today helps run the ranch with his wife, Luann, their three sons and their families. "Dad was very community-oriented. He was on the school board, the elevator board and the rural water board. In fact, he was instrumental in starting rural water. He went from place to place, talking people

into getting rural water."

JT was born on the farm in 1957 during a blizzard that left his parents unable to reach the hospital in town. As a boy, he remembers collecting rainwater in a cistern and using it for cooking, cleaning and baths. Even as rural electrification began to transform the countryside, life on the farm remained far different – and often harder – than life in town.

"When I grew up, back in the 60s and 70s, if you milked 40 cows that was quite a few," JT said. "We were milking about 100 cows – we were kind of ahead of our time. But we had a big family, and us boys, we got right in there."

He continued, "We were hauling silage, hauling manure, milking cows and doing chores. But Dad never told us to do anything. He always asked us if we wanted to, and there's a difference. You wanted to work for him. He made you want to work for him, and it was never a burden."

That was a quality JT kept in mind with his own seven children on that same



ranch where he grew up. Today, JT and Luann's sons Jake, Garret, and Matt all stay involved in the ranch, now Weber Bros. Cattle.

"Growing up, I kind of always had that bug to get in the tractor, chase cows, put up fence, and do what needs to be done," explained Jake, the oldest son.

Today, they specialize in raising purebred Angus bulls and Simmental-Angus crosses, while also producing corn silage and alfalfa to help sustain the operation. While the operation may be old, it's not at all low-tech.

"Our main thing is our bull program," Jake said. "We sell about 50 registered Angus and Simmental bulls by private treaty every spring, and we also develop 50 replacement and bred heifers, and market a portion of them. We do a lot of artificial insemination and embryo transfer. Some of the more elite donor cows we can get our hands on by buying females and buying embryos. We're just trying to make good cows."

Jake, like his dad, graduated from South Dakota State University with an animal science degree, and was excited to return to the ranch to incorporate some of his new skills into the operation.

"When I got back from school, we really amped up our embryo transfer program with different ideas and stuff I learned about genetics from contacts and producers we've met over the years," Jake continued. "We went from selling 10 bulls per year to selling close to 50 bulls."

Jake's younger brother and fellow SDSU animal science graduate, Garret, keeps involved on the family's ranch as well. Though he works full time as swine genetic company Hypor's US Sales Manager, he helps out with the operation and finds the time to run Weber Bros. Cattle's social media pages, which he says has successfully expanded their presence in the market.

"Whether it's Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat or our company website, we're able to hit such a broad spectrum of people, and it's a great way to tell the story of our operation, what we're doing year-in and year-out and advertise the



genetics of the cattle that we're showing and selling," Garret explained. "We're able to have a much greater touch point of individuals that we can reach out to and market our livestock."

JT, Jake and Garret all credit their spouses and families for supporting them as they work to grow the operation.

"It took a long time and a lot of support for us to get established and get to where we are today," JT said.

Looking toward the future – and the next generation, their goals are to make an already successful operation even better.

"We'll keep working with the cow herd, continue to make improvements and make better genetics every year," Jake said. "I want this opportunity to be available to my kids, so that if they want to be able to do this, they'll have the same chance we did."

Garret added, "It's something that I hope my sons can do someday if we're able to continue to grow the operation. I hope it's something they're going to be able to share and cherish with their own kids, because those are the memories that stick with you forever."

JT and Luann Weber with their adult children, Jake, Garret, Matt and Sara Weber, Liz Mergen, and Maria Opheim, and families.

Back, from left: Garret Weber, Levi Weber, Kailey Weber, Jake Weber, Amanda Weber, Sara Weber, Cade Opheim, Maria Opheim, Tawnee Opheim, JT Weber, Luann Weber, Brent Mergen, Liz Mergen, Davie Fiedler, Matt Weber, Racheal Krog.  
Front, from left: Adam Weber, Chisum Weber, Abeline Weber, Vidalia Fiedler.  
Not pictured: Talon Weber



Photo submitted by JT and Luanne Weber.



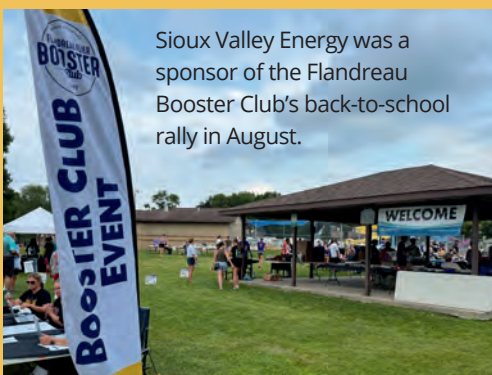
A purebred Angus Heifer.  
Photo by Garret Weber



# SEEN AND NOTED



Sioux Valley Energy employees conducted safety demonstrations during West Central's back-to-school bash in August.



Sioux Valley Energy was a sponsor of the Flandreau Booster Club's back-to-school rally in August.

## REVIVE 2030 Partner In Progress Community Dialogue Meetings Held

In August, Sioux Valley Energy hosted the REVIVE 2030 Partner in Progress Community Dialogue gatherings with 18 participants in Hardwick, Minnesota, and 17 in Colton, South Dakota. The events welcomed county commissioners, mayors, city council members, township leaders, state agencies, and area legislators for constructive discussions on the future of our region. Conversations focused on the current economic landscape, opportunities for growth, and how SVE can be a resource in achieving these milestones. The gatherings underscored the power of collaboration across all levels of leadership to help ensure strong, thriving communities for years to come. SVE is committed to building on this momentum and collaborating with our partners to advance the vision of REVIVE 2030.



Sioux Valley Energy's Brandon Lane, Economic Development and Community Relations Executive, starts the discussions in Colton.

Right: Community leaders gathered in Colton, S.D., discuss challenges and opportunities. Below: Paula Jensen of Dakota Resources leads discussions in Hardwick, Minn.





## Plan on Safety This Harvest Season

Harvest is upon us and Sioux Valley Energy would like to remind local farmers to review these important tips.

**BE ALERT:** Look up and look out for power lines this harvest season. Follow these Four S's to Stay Safe.

**STAY ALERT.** Avoid distractions when operating farm equipment. While harvest days can run long, failure to be aware of your surroundings can lead to power line contacts and other accidents.

**SLOW DOWN.** Cold weather often delays harvest in our region. If you get in the fields later than you had hoped, avoid the temptation to rush through your work. Slow down and stay safe.

**STUDY.** Educate yourself on any new equipment you may have purchased recently. New equipment has higher antennas and attachments than ever before. What cleared power lines in previous years may not in your

new ride. Know what you're working with.

**SEARCH.** Sometimes trees or brush can make power lines difficult to see. Take a minute to search your surroundings when moving equipment.

**BE PREPARED:** Hitting a power line can be scary. Do you know what to do if you come in contact with a power line?

**STAY PUT.** Unless there is a fire, you need to stay calm and stay in the vehicle. Touching the ground and the vehicle at the same time (i.e. stepping out of the equipment) can be deadly. Don't risk becoming a conduit for the electricity to move from the vehicle to the ground through you, stay put. Even if it's loud.

**CALL FOR HELP.** Call for help from the vehicle if possible. 911 is a good place to start. If you don't have

your phone, try radioing for help. If someone comes to assist you, they need to stay at least 40 feet away from the vehicle until professional help has arrived.

**JUMP CLEAR.** If there is a fire forcing you to leave, jump clear of the equipment. Jump with your feet together, as far away from the vehicle as possible. Be sure that no part of your body touches the equipment and the ground at the same time. Then, shuffle (tiny, quick steps) or hop with your feet together at least 40 feet away. Electricity spreads through the ground in ripples. Keeping your feet together prevents one foot from stepping into a higher voltage zone than the other foot, which could cause electrocution. Stay away from the equipment and keep others away until the authorities tell you it's safe to return.

Remember these life-saving tips.



## TAKE THE TIME, EVERY TIME YOU HEAD TO THE FIELD.

Look for electrical equipment such as power lines and green boxes. Check clearances and keep your distance from potential danger.



**SIoux VALLEY**  
ENERGY A Touchstone Energy Cooperative



Sioux Valley Energy members who make the pledge of safety to "TAKE THE TIME. EVERY TIME." can receive a free pair of work gloves. \*

Sign up at [siouxvalleyenergy.com](http://siouxvalleyenergy.com)

\* Only Sioux Valley Energy members are eligible; must pick up gloves after October 1 at any Sioux Valley Energy office (Colman, Brandon, Pipestone, or Hartford). Supplies are limited.



## TAKE THE TIME. EVERY TIME.



**OCT. 10-12**  
**Black Hills Powwow**  
 Rapid City, SD  
 605-341-0925

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.

**UNTIL OCT. 31**  
**Wallace Dow, Prairie Architect**  
**Traveling Exhibit**  
 Lake County Museum  
 Madison, SD  
 605-256-5308

**SEPT. 27**  
**Harvest Festival Supper**  
 West Nidaros Lutheran Church  
 25403 471 Ave.  
 Crooks, SD  
 605-212-5730

**OCT. 3**  
**DSU Architecture Walking Tour**  
 3-4 p.m.  
 Lake County Museum  
 Madison, SD

**OCT. 4**  
**Pumpkin Train, Vendor Showcase**  
 Prairie Village  
 Madison, SD

**OCT. 4-5**  
**Sioux Falls Quilt Guild**  
 Sat. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.  
 Sun. 11 a.m.-4 p.m.  
 Sioux Falls Convention Center  
 Sioux Falls, SD  
 605-951-2034

**OCT. 4-5**  
**The Black Market**  
 Sat. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.  
 Sun. 10 a.m.-3 p.m.  
 W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds  
 Sioux Falls, SD  
 605-332-6004

**OCT. 11**  
**A Celebration of Classic Hits**  
 7p.m.  
 Gayville Music Hall  
 Gayville, SD  
 605-760-5799

**OCT. 11**  
**Howard Fall Festival**  
 10 a.m.-4 p.m.  
 Miner County 4-H Grounds  
 Howard, SD

**OCT. 15**  
**Soup & Pie Day, Country Store**  
 4:30-7:30 p.m.  
 105 N. State St  
 Viborg, SD

**OCT. 18**  
**Northern Prairie Arts**  
**Barn Quilt Class**  
 Highland Conference Center  
 Register by Oct. 6  
 Watertown, SD

**OCT. 18-19**  
**Heartland Quilting Stars Show**  
 Highland Conference Center  
 Mitchell, SD  
 605-770-1551

**OCT. 19**  
**Helping With Horsepower**  
**Year-End Horse Show**  
 10 a.m.  
 Reclamation Ranch  
 Mitchell, SD

**OCT. 24**  
**Humor for Heroes**  
**Comedy Night Fundraiser**  
 Comedians, Silent Auction  
 Tickets \$15, two for \$25  
 1600 W. Russell St.  
 Sioux Falls, SD  
 605-336-3470

**OCT. 25**  
**Trick or Treat Trails**  
 3-6:30 p.m.  
 Big Sioux Recreation Area  
 Brandon, SD

**OCT. 25**  
**The Greats of Country**  
 7p.m.  
 Gayville Music Hall  
 Gayville, SD  
 605-760-5799

**OCT. 31-NOV. 2**  
**Haunted Trail at**  
**Reclamation Ranch**  
 7-10 p.m.  
 Reclamation Ranch  
 Mitchell, SD

**NOV. 1**  
**Fall Fling Craft/Vendor Show**  
 10 a.m.-2p.m.  
 Dakota Christian School  
 Corsica, SD  
 605-366-7940

**NOV. 1**  
**Scandinavian Buffet**  
**& Annual Bazaar**  
 9 a.m.-3 p.m.  
 First Lutheran Church  
 12th Street & Dakota Ave.  
 Sioux Falls, SD  
 605-336-3735

**Note: We publish contact information as provided. If no phone number is given, none will be listed. Please call ahead to verify the event is still being held.**