

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

Caring for Caregivers

Exploring Family
Caregiving Services
Pages 8-9

Emergency Training
Pages 12-13

Co-op Budget: Controllable Costs



Tim McCarthy
General Manager/
Chief Executive
Officer

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siouxvalleyenergy.
com

For several months, we have been addressing a coming rate increase scheduled for this January due primarily to increasing power supply costs. (Drivers shown to right.)

Sioux Valley Energy's operating budget in 2025 was set at nearly \$115 million, this number will need to be increased in 2026. Over 60% of the organization's operating budget goes towards paying for wholesale power; approximately 20% goes towards what we consider "set" expenses or uncontrollable costs such as taxes, interest, and depreciation. That leaves just under 20% of the budget that is considered "controllable." A significant portion of that percentage is allocated towards labor expenses, which is needed to ensure the continuation of reliable power and services to our members. In the end, only about 6% of the Cooperative's operating budget is truly controllable. While all controllable costs will be scrutinized heavily to mitigate what we can, significant cuts in this portion of the budget would have a negative impact on the service you receive today. To learn more about how your energy dollars are spent, see the story on Pages 10 and 11.

As we work through our operating and capital budgets to develop rates, please know the Cooperative's Strategic Leadership Team, Board of Directors, and employees are all focused on you, the member. That focus is based on our organizational commitment. Scan the QR code at left to learn more about the Sioux Valley Energy Commitment.

What members really want to know is how much their rates will increase in 2026. As I write this, we are still over three months

Drivers of Wholesale Power Increases



Growth in traditional load

To serve this growth, Basin Electric is investing in new generation and transmission projects, which are at higher costs than its existing fleet.



Commodity price variability

Fluctuations in commodity prices affect the cost of fuel for Basin Electric and sales revenue at its subsidiaries.



Increase in planning reserve margins

Southwest Power Pool requires Basin Electric to have higher capacity reserves, increasing capital expenditures, operating costs, and purchase power.



Investments in reliability

Basin Electric will continue to make investments in system reliability, including upgrading existing facilities and reducing outage cycle times.

away from year-end and weather could have either a positive or negative impact on electric sales for the remainder of 2025 which can influence 2026 rates. However, given what we know now and the expected rate increase from our power suppliers (approximately 11%), we are anticipating an average rate increase to members of approximately 9%. Again, as I said these are not final numbers as we still have almost three months left this year. The Board will be reviewing rates in November and we hope to provide you with the final rate adjustments at that time.

In closing, farmers are out in the field...and it is a busy time of year as harvesting swings into full gear. Please remember to Take the Time. Every Time. Look up and around for power lines to make sure you have plenty of room to move your equipment.

Watch The
Sioux Valley
Energy
Commitment
video
by scanning
this code.

HOLIDAY

OFFICE CLOSINGS

Sioux Valley Energy's offices will be closed on the following dates for the holidays:

THANKSGIVING – Thursday, November 27 and Friday, November 28

CHRISTMAS – Wednesday, December 24 and Thursday, December 25

NEW YEARS – Thursday, January 1

Please report outages to our 24-hour dispatch center at 800-234-1960 or through the Smart Hub® app.

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

SIoux VALLEY ENERGY

(USPS No. 497-440)

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Sioux Valley Energy Cooperative Connections is the monthly publication for the members of Sioux Valley Energy, PO Box 216, Colman, SD 57017. Families subscribe to *Sioux Valley Energy Cooperative Connections* as part of their electric cooperative membership. The purpose of *Sioux Valley Energy Cooperative Connections* is to provide reliable, helpful information to Sioux Valley Energy members on electric cooperative matters and better living.

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How to contact us: Phone: 1-800-234-1960
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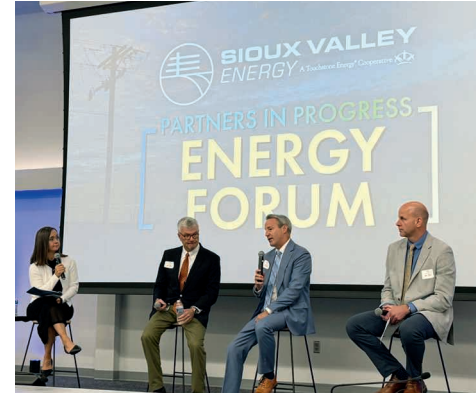
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- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov

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

Partners in Progress Energy Forum Gives Leaders Insights

In September, Sioux Valley Energy hosted the "Partners in Progress" Energy Forum with nearly 100 individuals in attendance. Attendees included legislators, mayors, city council members, county commissioners, economic development professionals, South Dakota Public Utilities Commissioners, and cooperative partners. The full day included discussion on economic growth, power supply, the three-tier infrastructure system, and impacts on the rate payers.



Planned Flandreau Community Recreation Facility Gets Financial Boost

Sioux Valley Energy recently partnered with its wholesale power supplier, Basin Electric Power Cooperative, and financing partner, CoBank, to donate a combined \$15,000 to the Flandreau Sports Association. The group is raising funds for a community recreational facility and gym. Take a virtual tour of the planned facility at <https://vimeo.com/1105599816>.

These partnerships are a testament to your electric cooperative's commitment to building stronger, more vibrant rural communities.



Stay Safe This Holiday Season:

Tips for a Merry and Accident-Free Celebration

The holidays bring families together with twinkling lights, festive meals and cozy traditions. But they also bring seasonal risks that can turn celebrations into emergencies if precautions aren't taken. Local safety officials are reminding residents to keep safety in mind when cooking, decorating, and entertaining this year.

Extension Cords

With more lights and electronics plugged in during the holidays, extension cords are often stretched to their limits. Experts urge homeowners not to overload outlets and to replace any cords that are frayed or damaged. Only outdoor-rated cords should be used outside, especially in snowy or wet conditions.

Families should avoid running cords under rugs or across doorways where they can overheat or become tripping hazards.

Turkey Fryers

Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners have grown to include deep-fried turkeys, but safety must come first. Fryers should only be used outdoors, on a flat surface and far away from buildings, garages or wooden decks. Fire officials caution that a partially frozen or wet turkey can cause oil to boil over and ignite, leading to severe burns or home fires.

A fire extinguisher rated for grease fires should always be kept nearby, and fryers should never be left unattended while in use. One distracted moment can cause a disaster.

Ladders

From hanging lights to topping off the tree, ladders are part of the holiday routine. Falls are among the most common seasonal injuries, so ladders should be set on level ground and never leaned against unstable surfaces. Having another person hold the ladder is strongly advised.

Candles and Fireplaces

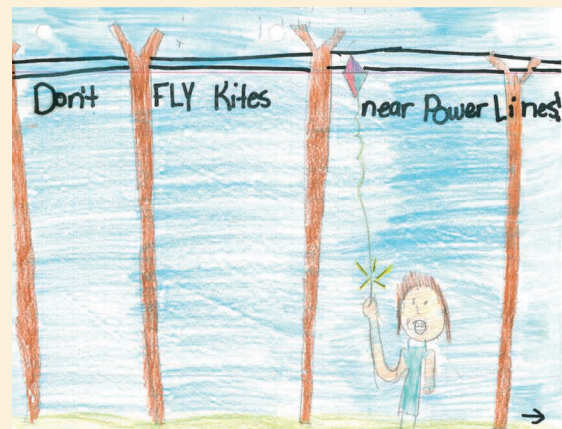
Candles and fireplaces are popular during the holiday season, but they also raise the risk of home fires, especially when combined with the extra decorations and greenery that fill many homes in December. According to the National Fire Protection Association, candles cause an average of

46% of fires in December each year. Never leaving a flame unattended and incorporating a few safety rules can prevent a devastating fire.

Lights and Decorations

Before hanging holiday lights, inspect strands for cracked socket, frayed wires or loose connections, and replace any damaged sets. Outdoor lights should always be weather-rated, and lights should be turned off before bedtime or when leaving the house. Timers and smart plugs can help make this easier.

Decorations should be securely fastened to prevent them from tipping or falling, especially in homes with children or pets. Heavy ornaments should be placed higher on the tree, out of reach of small hands and wagging tails. Fire officials also recommend choosing flame-resistant or non-combustible decor whenever possible and keeping all decorations away from heaters, fireplaces or open flames.



"Don't fly kites near power lines!"

Kristen Vanden Berg, Age 11

Kristen cautions readers on the dangers of flying kites near power lines. Great picture, Kristen! Kristen's parents are Andy and Geraldine Vanden Berg from Corsica, 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.

Holiday SIDE DISHES

CORN CASSEROLE

Ingredients:

2 15 oz. cans whole kernel corn, drained
15 oz. can cream corn
1/2 cup butter, melted
1 box Jiffy cornbread mix
1/2 pt. whipped cream

Method

Combine whole kernel corn, cream corn, butter, Jiffy cornbread mix and whipping cream. Mix thoroughly. Pour into greased 8.5"x11" pan and bake at 350°F for 40-45 minutes.

Sharon Houchin
Central Electric

BETTER THAN STUFFING

Ingredients:

1 box chicken/turkey stuffing mix
Chicken broth
Celery
Carrots
Onions
1 stick herbed butter (or make your own)
2 cups chicken/turkey gravy

Method

Prepare stuffing according to directions but substitute water with broth. Dice and sauté celery, carrots (total of two cups) and onions in herbed butter. Fold into stuffing. Put into baking pan and top with gravy. Poke gravy into stuffing – just a little bit. Don't completely mix. Bake at 350°F for 20 minutes and broil briefly at the end.

Valerie Marso
Oahe Electric

RAW VEGETABLE SALSA

Ingredients:

2-4 medium cucumbers, cubed
2-4 medium tomatoes, cubed
1 small onion or 1/2 of a white or yellow onion sliced
1 tsp. salt
1 tbsp. sugar
2 tbsps. apple cider vinegar
Additions: black pepper to taste, chopped basil, or chopped green bell pepper.

Method

Place cubed tomatoes and peeled cucumbers into a bowl. Add sliced onion.

Mix in remaining ingredients and stir. Marinate for several hours or overnight.

This salad keeps for 3-4 days refrigerated.

Raw Vegetable salads full of electrolytes, vitamin C and fiber.

Laurie Wernke
Southeastern 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.

Trying to Save?



Sheila Gross
Energy Services
Specialist

For more info on SVE programs, contact Sheila Gross at sheila.gross@siouxvalleyenergy.com to learn more.

Need More Help?

Click on the QR code for contact information for local assistance agencies or reach out to SVE's Member Services Department at 877-511-8062.



Fall is a great time to focus on energy-saving efforts to prepare for colder weather and avoid higher utility bills. A do-it yourself walk-through of your home can reveal many simple, low-cost opportunities to save energy. Seal air leaks with caulk, weatherstripping, and insulation. Schedule a tune up of your HVAC equipment and replace air filters. Reverse ceiling fans to rotate clockwise. Adjust your thermostat – save up to 3% in heating costs by lowering one degree for an eight-hour period. Unplug unnecessary electronics and appliances or use power strips that can be switched off. If you have significant concerns about your home's efficiency and don't know where to start, a professional energy audit through Sioux Valley Energy might be your solution. Our energy auditor will identify inefficiencies and make recommendations for weatherization projects that decrease energy waste and lead to increased comfort and savings on utility bills.

Contact us at 800-234-1960 for more information.



SIoux VALLEY
ENERGY A Tecknoco Energy Cooperative

Fall Savings Checklist

- ☒ **Shift and Save with Sioux Valley Energy's Time of Use Rate.** Rearranging tasks and conserving energy to take advantage of reduced off-peak rates is good for both the member and the Cooperative! Learn how you can save **every day** with **16 hours** of off-peak rates. Contact the Member Services Department at 877-511-8062 to sign up for a three-month risk-free trial. 
- ☒ **Schedule an energy audit.** Contact the Beneficial Electrification team at 800-234-1960 to schedule a weatherization energy audit for a fee of \$100. The third-party audit includes a visual inspection of windows, doors, and insulation along with the use of infrared camera imaging and blower door testing. Participants will receive an audit report. 
- ☒ **Do a home walk through focusing on potential energy savings.** A do-it yourself walk-through of your home can reveal many simple, low-cost opportunities to save energy. Check out a useful guide, our Use Energy Wisely booklet. It offers tips to lower your energy usage and will help you estimate energy consumption and its associated cost for common household appliances. 
- ☒ **Check out Sioux Valley Energy's reduced electric heat rate.** If you have a heat pump or electric resistance heat and are not receiving a reduced electric heat rate, be sure to contact Sioux Valley Energy at 800-234-1960. We can determine if your heating equipment qualifies for a free submeter installation that allows a lower rate October through April billing cycles. 

Sign up to WIN in our Energy Makeover Contest!

Register to win a free weatherization energy audit provided by our third-party auditor along with a complimentary weatherization kit (valued at \$400). The audit will include a visual inspection of windows, doors, and insulation along with infrared camera imaging and blower door testing. Contest entries must be received by November 30.

Register by **November 30, 2025.**

Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State, ZIP: _____
Account #: _____
Phone #: _____
Email: _____

Mail this form to: Sioux Valley Energy, PO Box 216, Colman, SD 57017

Statement of Ownership

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Full Name: **Rural Utilities Service (USDA)** Complete Mailing Address: **1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250**
National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation: **20701 Cooperative Way, Dulles, VA 20166**
CoBank: **6340 S Fiddlers Green Circle, Greenwood Village, CO 80111**

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☒ Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months
☐ Has Changed During Preceding 12 Months (Publisher must submit explanation of change with this statement)

PS Form 3526, July 2014 Page 1 of 4 (see instructions page 4) PSN: 7530-01-000-9031 PRIVACY NOTICE: See our privacy policy on www.usps.com

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		17048	16603
b. Paid Circulation (By Mail and Outside the Mail)			
(1)	Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	16628	16379
(2)	Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)		
(3)	Paid Distribution Outside the Mail Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS®		
(4)	Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail®)		
c. Total Paid Distribution (Sum of 15b (1), (2), (3), and (4))		16628	16379
d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (By Mail and Outside the Mail)			
(1)	Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541	370	174
(2)	Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541		
(3)	Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail®)		
(4)	Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means)		
e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 15d (1), (2), (3) and (4))		370	174
f. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and 15e)		16998	16553
g. Copies not Distributed (See Instructions to Publishers #4 (page #3))		50	50
h. Total (Sum of 15f and g)		17048	16603
i. Percent Paid (15c divided by 15f times 100)		97.83%	98.95%

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c. Total Print Distribution (Line 15f) + Paid Electronic Copies (Line 16a)		23825	23949
d. Percent Paid (Both Print & Electronic Copies) (16b divided by 15f times 100)		96.45%	99.27%

☒ I certify that 50% of all my distributed copies (electronic and print) are paid above a nominal price.

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Carrie Yugeveen Date: **9-26-2025**

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including civil penalties).

Fish Elected to CFC Board

Gary Fish, a Sioux Valley Energy director representing members in the Brandon area since 2014, has been elected to the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) board of directors.

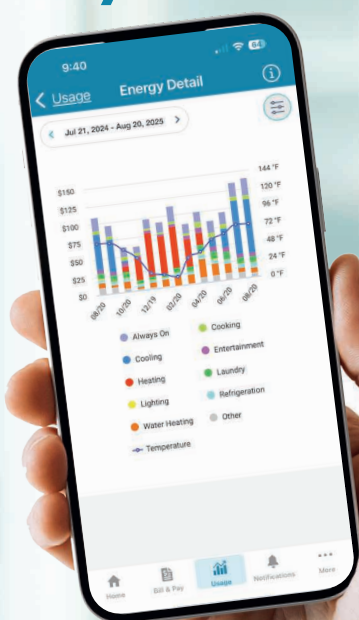
CFC is guided by a 23-member board of directors that represent 10 geographically defined districts, the electric cooperatives' national trade association, and an at-large director. The board sets overall policy, establishes programs, and develops strategies for CFC. Each of the board's directors is elected for a three-year term and can serve two consecutive terms.

Created and owned by America's electric cooperative network, CFC – a nonprofit finance cooperative with more than \$38 billion in assets – provides unparalleled industry expertise, flexibility, and responsiveness to serve the needs of member-cooperatives across 50 states.



Gary Fish
District 6 Director

Want more information on your electricity use?



Check out
**Sioux Valley Energy's
Consumer Analytics
option on SmartHub!**

💡 Insights into energy usage

💡 Energy savings tips

💡 Build a home
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www.siouxvalleyenergy.com



CARING FOR CAREGIVERS

Exploring Structured Family Caregiving Services for South Dakota's Caregivers

Frank Turner

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November is recognized nationally as Family Caregivers Month, a time to honor the essential role of caregivers and highlight the resources available to them and the loved ones they support.

Yet, families face a growing challenge: how to care for aging loved ones when services are often far from home. Nursing homes or assisted living centers may be located hours away, and even when they are nearby, the cost or availability of space can present real barriers.

One answer has been the Structured Family Caregiving program, launched by the South Dakota Department of Human Services (DHS) in 2019.

According to Heather Krzmarzick, Director of the Division of Long-Term Services and Supports within DHS, the program is one of many resources at DHS that are

Several resources are available for caregivers in South Dakota through the Department of Human Services.

Photos by Homecare Services.

available to help older adults and their caregivers. It provides training, coaching, ongoing support and even a modest stipend to those offering significant care for an older adult in the home.

“Structured Family Caregiving serves caregivers who live with their family member and provide substantial care for them, including personal care, supervision, medication management and other things, such as managing finances and transportation for necessary appointments and community activities,” Krzmarzick said.

In many ways, the program echoes the electric cooperative story. Just as co-ops once brought electricity to rural areas that were otherwise overlooked, the program helps families meet a need that might otherwise go unserved. In places where nursing homes or assisted living centers are many miles away, the program gives families a practical way to continue care at home, often the place where people feel most comfortable.

“Structured Family Caregiving is important because it

supports the vital work of family caregivers, strengthens families and improves outcomes, especially in underserved or isolated regions,” she said. “The program honors South Dakota’s values of strong families, independence and community.”

In addition to expanding community-based care options to rural areas, the program allows families to potentially prevent or delay the move to a nursing home and reduce the economic burden that often comes with that transition. Krzmarzick said DHS also offers other programs for those that may need a little extra assistance to remain safely in their homes but don’t require the intensive services of a nursing facility.

“Each caregiver has unique needs and preferences,” she said. “As such, the services and supports are designed to meet the varying needs of each caregiver and help care for a person at home as long as possible.”

To be eligible for the program, the care recipient must be 65 or older or

18 or older with a qualifying disability and meet both functional and financial criteria to qualify for the program.

Since its creation, the program has grown steadily, giving more families the tools to succeed. Krzmarzick said it has allowed many older adults and adults with disabilities to remain in their homes while supporting family caregivers with knowledge, training and a small amount of financial assistance.

Agency Director Steven Novotny with Homecare Services of South Dakota, Inc., one of many in-home care providers in the state, said that few other programs reach and serve those who need care quite like the program.

“Structured Family Caregiving has the unique ability to serve consumers in every community across our state, large or small. Under this program, individuals can receive care from a trusted family member or friend, which allows them to remain independent and living in their community,” he said. “Our caring staff at Homecare Services of South Dakota have seen

firsthand the positive impact on families when we are able to provide support and training to the caregivers that are stepping into what is often a challenging role caring for a loved one.”

Krzmarzick said the Structured Family Caregiving program is just one of many support options that DHS offers individuals and their caregivers in South Dakota. Resources are available online at dhs.sd.gov or through Dakota at Home, South Dakota’s Aging and Disability Resource Center, at 1-833-663-9673.

“All caregivers, not just those utilizing the Structured Family Caregiving Program, may access free training and resources to help improve confidence in their caregiving abilities, reduce stress and prevent burnout,” Krzmarzick said. “Caregivers may also be eligible for other programs that offer respite options. Our Dakota at Home specialists are dedicated to helping you find services and supports to meet your specific needs or the needs of a family member.”



How your Energy Dollars are Spent

Every dollar of your monthly payment to Sioux Valley Energy goes towards a specific purpose – the majority is used to pay for power. A good chunk goes towards indirect expenses while the remainder of it pays for salaries and benefits for Sioux Valley Energy employees, system maintenance, programming, and operating margins.

What's included in your energy dollar?

POWER SUPPLY

Approximately 61 cents of each dollar you pay to Sioux Valley Energy is used to purchase power. There are two major components within this portion of your electric rate: the generation of electricity and the

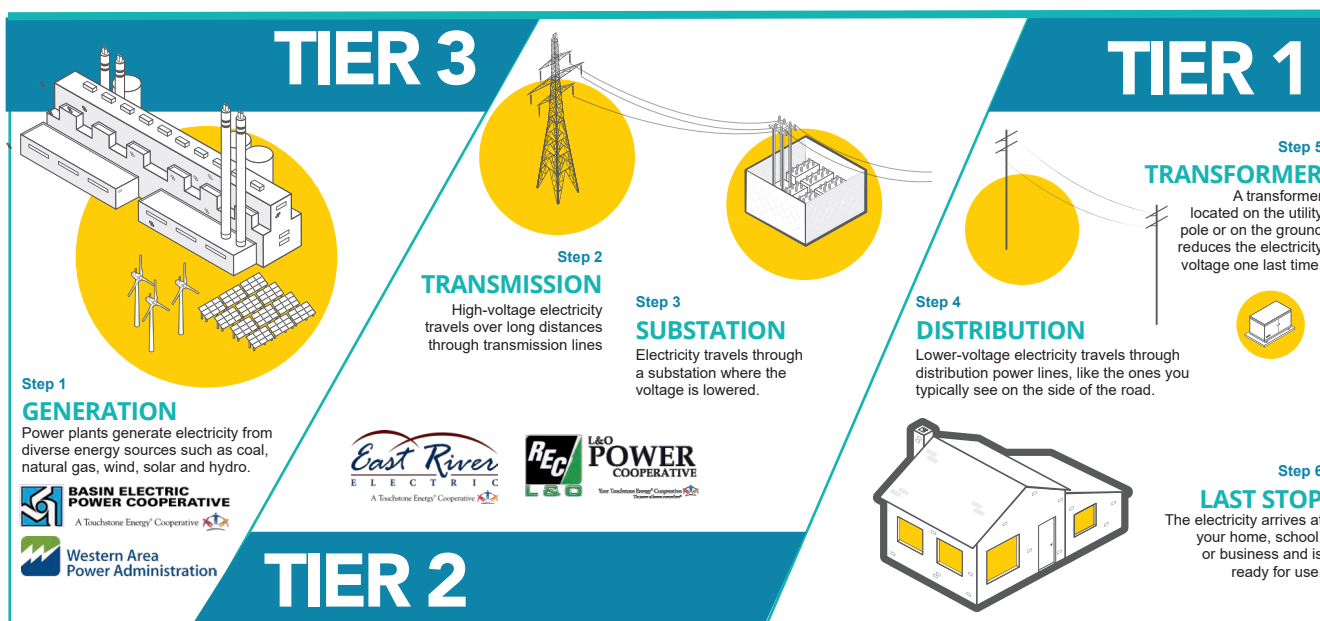
transmission of that power. Sioux Valley Energy is part of a three-tiered power delivery system (shown below).

There is a significant investment needed from each electric cooperative member that goes towards the generation and transmission of electricity. Included in that equation is the construction, maintenance, and operation of power plants, large steel transmission towers that cross the landscape, intermediate wooden transmission structures lining the side of the road, substations, as well as corresponding labor costs.

INDIRECT EXPENSES

Indirect expenses comprise 17 cents of each energy dollar. These are expenses that Sioux Valley Energy has no control over and include depreciation, interest, and taxes.

The business of providing electric service to members is a very capital-intensive industry – as an



example, the average cost to construct just one mile of three-phase underground electric line is \$210,000. To put that in perspective, Sioux Valley Energy owns over 6,200 miles of line on its system.

Electric cooperatives, like Sioux Valley Energy, utilize long-term loans to finance the construction of the electric grid (capital projects). That strategy helps to spread costs over time and ensures that the infrastructure that typically lasts 30-plus years is paid for by all the members who will use it – past, current, and future.

LABOR

As with any business, there is a cost to labor including wages and benefits. For Sioux Valley Energy, 13 cents of each energy dollar pays for labor. The Cooperative employs 115 individuals who fill essential roles in operations, engineering, technology, dispatching, finance and accounting, billing, administrative services, public relations, safety, human resources, member services, beneficial electrification, and strategic leadership.

DIRECT EXPENSES

Just six cents of each energy dollar is utilized for direct expenses. These are the expenses that are controllable. However, significant cuts in these areas would impact the exceptional service you have come to expect from the Cooperative.

What services and expenses are included in direct expenses? The most significant costs in this area are cable locating, right-of-way clearing, and pole and ground testing. All of these services play a major part in both safety and reliability. Other expenses under this category include consumer billing and postage, member meetings, software, outside services, director expenses,

dues, building maintenance, safety education, member educational materials, and youth and community investment.

OPERATING MARGIN

Sioux Valley Energy budgets three cents towards its operating margins. This allocation is needed to meet the Cooperative's lender requirements. And while the operating margins are collected in the rates you pay and reinvested back into the system – those dollars are eventually returned to the membership in the form of capital credit retirements.





LINEMENS' TRAINING READYED CREW FOR CHAINSAW ACCIDENT

(From left) When Brandon Schmiege cut his forearm, fellow linemen Tristan Hall, Luke Koval and Brian Davis knew exactly how to respond.
Photo submitted by Whetstone Valley Electric Cooperative.

When a Routine Day of Trimming Trees Turned Critical, Cooperative Employees Were Prepared to Help

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

Perched within the manlift on a bucket truck, Brandon Schmiege methodically sawed away large tree branches near overhead power lines, dropping them to the ground more than 50 feet below.

It's nothing out of the ordinary, explained the 19-year veteran lineman from Whetstone Valley Electric Cooperative in Milbank, South Dakota. After a while, you become accustomed to the work – and its hazards.

From the bucket he was standing in, Brandon reached with

his chainsaw for one of the last few cuts he'd need to make. But as he began the cut, the chainsaw kicked up and he lost control. Steadying himself and throwing the brake on the saw, Brandon looked down at his left arm. He'd been badly cut.

"I saw quite a bit of blood right away," Brandon said. "My first thought was that I needed to get down fast."

Gathering his strength and trying his best to stay calm, Brandon maneuvered his bucket down through the tree limbs back to the ground where linemen Brian Davis, Luke Koval and Tristan Hall noticed something wasn't right.

"I think we all sensed something happened," Brian explained. "The way he was coming down like that, and he'd just fueled up the saw, so we were wondering what had happened."

Luke ran to go shut off the woodchipper, which was drowning out Brandon's yelling. As the engine died, they finally heard Brandon yell, "Call for help!"

Brian raced to the truck to radio back to the office in Milbank, calling in a “Mayday” along with the crew’s location.

With a first-aid and tourniquet kit in hand, Brian sprinted toward Brandon, where Tristan and Luke had removed Brandon’s safety harness and wrapped a towel over the wound on Brandon’s forearm and applied pressure to slow the bleeding.

As the team secured a tourniquet tightly around Brandon’s upper arm, the crew kept in touch with the office by cell phone. The office staff, having called 911 as soon as they heard ‘Mayday,’ worked together to relay the street address and details of the injury to emergency dispatchers.

Seeing the urgency of the situation, the team placed Brandon in the service pickup and Tristan began driving him to the hospital. As the linemen were driving back into town, the ambulance met them and took Brandon to the hospital in Milbank where they stabilized him and discovered he’d severed two arteries in his forearm. He was then transferred to

Sioux Falls and underwent surgery.

Luckily, Whetstone Valley Electric and the South Dakota Rural Electric Association had conducted first-aid training for linemen just several weeks before. The instruction included CPR, AEDs, tourniquets and wound care.

“Regular first-aid training and keeping first-aid supplies on hand is so important because our linemen are often out somewhere rural,” explained Joe Denison, SDREA’s loss control professional and certified paramedic for the Arlington and Lake Norden ambulances. “If we have to wait 30 minutes for an ambulance, that can be too late.”

Whetstone Valley Electric General Manager Dave Page says despite the incident, he finds it encouraging that the employees followed procedure — maintaining clear communication with each other and with 911, administering first aid on site, and knowing exactly what to do each step of the way.

“It wasn’t only the training that was provided, but it was the attention that

these guys gave to that training - where it stuck, and their response was automatic,” Dave said. “In addition, the Mayday training that we do here at Whetstone went a long way to help us all stick to the plan and see a successful outcome.”

Now back on the job, Brandon credits his safe outcome to the co-op’s focus on regular safety training and having first aid supplies in the vehicles.

“I don’t think the makeshift towel tourniquet would have stopped the bleeding,” Brandon said, looking down at the scar on his forearm.

Brian added, “I don’t want to think about the outcome if we didn’t have a plan in place.”

To help prevent those worst case scenarios, electric cooperatives continually scrutinize safety training and workplace incidents. Whetstone Valley Electric Cooperative is sharing this story with its members-owners and fellow cooperatives to promote preparedness for unexpected incidents like this one, and overall encourage a culture of safety awareness.

3 Ways to Help Limit Tree Trimming

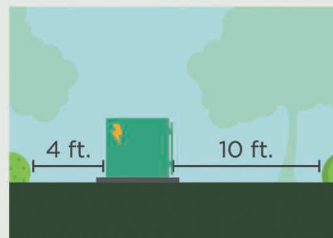
Did you know electric utilities are required to trim trees and other types of vegetation that grow too close to overhead power lines? We know you love your trees, and we will do everything we can to avoid trimming them.

Here’s how you can help:

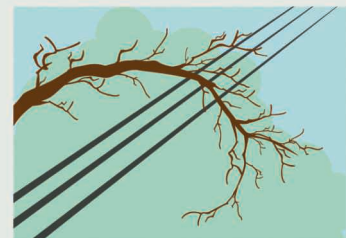
1. Plant trees in the right place. Trees that will be <40 ft. should be planted at least 25 ft. away from power lines (>40ft. should be at least 50 ft. away).



2. Don’t block pad-mounted transformers. Plant shrubs at least 10 ft. away from transformer doors and 4 ft. from transformer sides.



3. Report dangerous branches. If you spot a tree or branch that is dangerously close to power lines, please let us know.



Trimming improves safety for all.

Let’s work together to enjoy the beauty of trees and reliable electricity.

Area Organizations Receive Operation Round Up® Grants

Sioux Valley Energy and its members are making an impact in their local communities. During the most recent quarterly meeting of the Sioux Valley Energy Customers' Trust Board of Directors, \$20,300 in grants were awarded by the Cooperative's Operation Round Up® program. An additional \$5,000 was reserved for scholarships.

Recipients, by town, included:

Arlington, South Dakota

- Arlington Area Chamber of Commerce – \$750

Brandon, South Dakota

- Allison's Dance Academy – \$500
- Brandon Volunteer Fire Department – \$1,500

Brookings, South Dakota

- Brookings Behavioral Health & Wellness at the Ivy Center – \$1,000
- Family Back 2 School Project – \$1,500

Flandreau, South Dakota

- Flandreau Elementary PBIS – \$1,000

Hills, Minnesota

- Rock Ranch – \$700

Madison, South Dakota

- Inter-Lakes Community Action Partnership, Inc. – \$1,000
- Lake Madison Development Association – \$1,000

Rock and Pipestone Counties, Minnesota

- SWWC Foundation for Innovation in Education – \$1,000



Pipestone, Minnesota

- Pipestone Senior Citizens Center – \$1,000
- Progress, Inc – \$1,000
- The Al Opland Singers – \$500

Sioux Falls, South Dakota

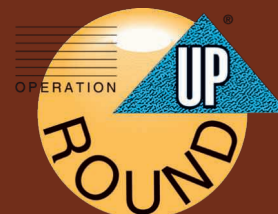
- Junior Achievement of South Dakota – \$2,100
- Catholic Community Foundation for Eastern SD – \$1,250
- Girl Scouts Dakota Horizons – \$1,000
- Health Connect of South Dakota – \$1,000
- The Community Outreach – \$1,000
- Veterans Community Project of Sioux Falls – \$1,500

More than \$2.5 million has been donated to area non-profits, schools, and communities since the year 2000 when Sioux Valley Energy started its Operation Round Up® (ORU) program. The program is simple – participating members “round up” their electric bill to the next high dollar and those “rounded up” funds are placed into a trust. Additionally, many Sioux Valley Energy employees donate from their paycheck each month. Each quarter the Operation Round Up Board of Trustees meets to review applications and consider grant requests.

A list of recent grant recipients, as well as information on how local organizations can apply for funding, can be found at <https://www.siouxvalleyenergy.com/operation-round-up>

The next deadline to apply for funding is November 20 with grants being awarded in December.

Operation Round Up® is administered by a non-profit trust, the Sioux Valley Energy Customers' Trust, which was initiated in the fall of 2000. The purpose of the trust is to acquire, accumulate and disburse funds for charitable and educational purposes as permitted by Section 501 (c) (3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code. Your community, your school, and/or your nonprofit organization may be eligible for funding. Each quarter, the Board of Directors, volunteer representatives of each county, meet to review grant applications and make awards based on criteria guidelines of the Trust. Not all proposals are funded, and not all applications are funded at the full funding request.



2026 DISTRICT MEETINGS SET

The Sioux Valley Energy Board of Directors approved the 2026 District Meeting schedule during their September meeting. Four elections will take place in Districts 5, 6, 7, and 9.

Members interested in running for the Board must submit a Director Petition, Conflict of Interest Statement, and Qualification Certification 60 days prior to the meeting date. Petitions must be delivered to a Sioux Valley Energy office location or postmarked by the petition deadline. Sioux Valley Energy encourages members to gather extra member signatures and to deliver or mail completed petitions in advance of the petition deadline to ensure time for member verification.

PETITION DEADLINES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- District 9 – Friday, January 23, 2026
- District 6 – Friday, January 30, 2026
- District 5 – Friday, February 20, 2026
- District 7 – Sunday, March 1, 2026

Petitions can be obtained at www.siouxvalleyenergy.com or by calling 800-234-1960. The Cooperative Bylaws state the qualifications needed to be a director (see below). Interested members are encouraged to contact Brenda Schelhaas, Executive Assistant. All Board seats elected in 2026 will serve three-year terms. Election meetings are noted at right.

Sioux Valley Energy
2026 District Meeting Schedule

DISTRICT 1	ELKTON, SD Community Center THURSDAY APRIL 23
DISTRICT 2	VOLGA, SD Sioux Valley High School THURSDAY APRIL 16
DISTRICT 3	FLANDREAU, SD William J. Janklow Center THURSDAY APRIL 9
DISTRICT 4	MADISON, SD Dakota Prairie Playhouse TUESDAY APRIL 14
DISTRICT 5 Director Election	COLTON, SD Tri-Valley High School TUESDAY APRIL 21
DISTRICT 6 Director Election	BRANDON, SD Brandon Valley High School TUESDAY MARCH 31
DISTRICT 7 Director Election	HARTFORD, SD West Central High School THURSDAY APRIL 30
DISTRICT 8	LUVERNE, MN Generations Event Center TUESDAY MARCH 3
DISTRICT 9 Director Election	PIPESTONE, MN Pipestone Area School TUESDAY MARCH 24
DISTRICT 10	EDGERTON, MN Edgerton Public School THURSDAY MARCH 26

SVE Bylaws: Director Qualifications

ARTICLE IV: SECTION 5. Qualifications. Any member shall be eligible to be nominated or elected or to remain a Director, provided that: (a) They are a natural person receiving electric service from the Cooperative at their primary residence or meet the qualifications for corporate representation; (b) They have the capacity to enter legally binding contracts; (c) They have been and shall remain a resident of the district for which they are or were nominated or elected for at least one (1) year prior to nomination, and continue to reside therein during their entire term as Director; (d) While a Director and during the five (5) years immediately prior to becoming a Director, they have not been convicted of a felony; (e) They or their spouse are not employed by, materially affiliated with or have a material financial interest in any individual or entity which either is: (i) Directly and substantially competing with the Cooperative, or any of its subsidiaries; or (ii) Selling goods and services in substantial quantity to the Cooperative or its subsidiaries; or having sold goods or services in substantial quantity to the Cooperative or its subsidiaries within three (3) years of seeking nomination. (iii) Possessing a substantial conflict of interest with the Cooperative or any of its subsidiaries; or (iv) They are not in any way employed by the Cooper-

ative or any of its subsidiaries nor have they been employed by the Cooperative or its subsidiaries within three (3) years of the directors nomination, and (v) They are not a close relative of any existing Director or existing employee of the Cooperative or its subsidiaries. For the purpose of this section only “close relative” shall mean a person who is either a child, grandchild, stepchild, parent, grandparent, stepparent, brother or sister, by blood or in-law, of the principal. (f) A designated representative of any non-human member such as a corporation, shall, notwithstanding that he or she does not receive service from the Cooperative at their primary residential abode, be eligible to become a Director, if: 1) He or she is an officer of said non-human member; and 2) He or she is in substantial permanent occupancy, direction or use of the premises served by the Cooperative; and 3) He or she is a permanent year round resident within the district for which the Corporation or non-human member is receiving service, and 4) Otherwise meets the qualifications set forth herein, provided, however, that no more than one (1) such person as the designated representative may serve on the Board at the same time and in the event that he or she should resign or is unwilling to so act, the directorship shall become vacant.



NOV 22, 26, 28-29

Christmas Tree Sales

Nov. 22: 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Nov. 26: 5-8 p.m.

Nov. 28-29: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

6B Seed And Supplies

Alpena, SD

www.6Bseedandsupplies.com

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.

NOV. 1

Fall Fling Craft/Vendor Show

10 a.m.-2 p.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

NOV. 1

Black Hills Meat Fest

2-4 p.m.

Nerdy Nuts Expo Hall

Rapid City, SD

NOV. 1-2

The Black Market/ Formerly Benson's Flea Market

Sat. 9 a.m.-5 p.m..

Sun. 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds Expo Bldg.

Sioux Falls, SD

NOV. 1-2

Tour of Homes

12-4 p.m.

Benefitting Mitchell Tennis Assoc.

mitchelltourofhomes.com

NOV. 3

American Legion Pancake Breakfast

8:30 a.m.-12 p.m.

1600 W. Russell St.

Sioux Falls, SD

605-336-3470

NOV. 7-8

Sioux Empire Arts & Crafts Show

Fri. 12 p.m.-8 p.m.

Sat. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Handmade-Only Show

W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds Expo Bldg.

Sioux Falls, SD

605-332-6004

NOV. 8

Lutefisk Supper

4:30 p.m., 5:45 p.m., 7 p.m.

Call for Reservations

Lake Campbell Lutheran Church

Volga, SD

605-690-4868 - Cheryl

605-693-4325 - Charlotte

NOV. 14-15

Junkin' Market Days

Fri. 4-7 p.m., Sat. 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Ramkota Exhibit Hall

Sioux Falls, SD

NOV. 15

Club 14 Craft + Vendor Fair

9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Hendricks Public School

Hendricks, MN

605-690-5586

NOV. 16

Good Samaritan Society Fall Vendor Fair

2-6 p.m.

411 Calumet Ave. NW

De Smet, SD

NOV. 16

An Old-Fashioned Thanksgiving

2 p.m.

Gayville Music Hall

Gayville, SD

605-760-5799

NOV. 29

How the Grinch Stole Christmas Holiday Parade

6 p.m.

Flandreau, SD

605-864-1200

DEC. 5-7, 12-14

Mighty Corson Art Players: Humbug

Dec. 5-6, 12-13: 7:30 p.m.

Dec. 7, 14: 2:30 p.m.

Corson, SD

www.mightycorson.com

DEC. 13

Cookie Walk

9 a.m.

Lake Campbell Lutheran Church

Volga, SD

605-864-9907

DEC. 31

American to the Heart New Year's Eve Bash

Doors Open at 5:30 p.m.

American Legion

Sioux Falls, SD

Tickets: 605-336-3470

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.