

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Preserving Our Past

**Historical Society Unveils
New Cultural Heritage Center**
Pages 8-9

Co-op Summer Outreach
Pages 12-13

The Cooperative Advantage of Our Business Model



Tim McCarthy
General Manager/
Chief Executive
Officer

Tim.McCarthy@
siouxvalleyenergy.
com



We encourage you to scan this code to watch a video to learn more about electrical demand and how it may impact your bill.

<https://www.siuuxvalleyenergy.com/electric-demand-charge>

Sioux Valley Energy is an electric cooperative, which means we operate differently than most businesses. We are a not-for-profit organization owned by the members we serve. Our Board of Directors is made up of members elected by their fellow members, and every decision is made with the best interests of the entire membership in mind, not outside investors.

One of the things that makes cooperatives unique is that we exist to provide reliable service at cost-based rates, not to generate profits. If revenues exceed expenses at the end of the year, the Co-op earns margins. These margins are assigned to members as capital credits based on the amount they are billed for electricity during that year. The Cooperative uses those capital credits to help fund operations and reduce borrowing costs, with the goal of returning those funds to members in the future.

The cooperative model helps ensure that the costs of building and maintaining the electric system are shared fairly between today's members and future members. Significant investments are being made across the electric grid – including power plants, substations, poles, wires, transformers, and other equipment – to meet growing energy needs of our legacy membership. The Cooperative and its transmission and power suppliers take out long-term loans to help pay for this. These investments benefit members for decades, so it is important that the costs are shared across

generations of members.

Another distinguishing principle of the co-op business model is making sure costs are assigned fairly to the members who create them. This is called cost causation. The electric system must be built to handle the highest level of demand placed on it at any given time. When members use many large appliances and devices at the same time, it increases demand on the system and requires additional infrastructure. Those costs can be significant. On the other hand, members who spread out their electricity use throughout the day place less strain on the system and help reduce the need for future expansion. That's why it is important that the members who create higher demand help cover the costs associated with it. This approach works to keep rates fair for everyone while ensuring we can continue providing reliable electric service.

Sioux Valley Energy plans to host a series of educational meetings in each of our Cooperative's districts, along with an online webinar, to educate members about the rate changes coming in 2027. We hope to see you at one of those events. You can find the listing of the in-person events on Page 11.

As I close this month, I just want to remind everyone that summertime is a busy time of year for our lineworkers and contractors. Please remember they often work along the roadside so keep your eyes on the road, hands on the wheel, and distractions to the side!



COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

SIoux VALLEY ENERGY

(USPS No. 497-440)

Board President: Dan Leuthold

Board of Directors

Dave Daniel - Vice President	Gregg Johnson
Don DeGreef - Secretary	Chris Rieff
Ann Vostad - Treasurer	Mark Rogen
Gary Fish	Lucas Roskamp
Dr. Leslie Heinemann	Allan Weinacht

CEO/General Manager: Tim McCarthy

Chief Financial Officer: Jason Maxwell

V.P. of Engineering & Operations: Ted Smith

V.P. of Human Resources

& Member Services: Kimberlee Hansen

V.P. of Public Relations: Carrie Vugteveen, Editor

V.P. of Technology: Justin Moose

Executive Assistant: Brenda Schelhaas

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.

Subscription information: Sioux Valley Energy members devote 50 cents from their monthly electric payments for a subscription. Non-member subscriptions are available for \$12 annually. Periodicals Postage Paid at Colman, SD 57017 and at additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to *Sioux Valley Energy Cooperative Connections*, PO Box 216, Colman, SD 57017; telephone 605-534-3535; toll free 800-234-1960.

How to contact us: Phone: 1-800-234-1960
e-mail: sve@siouxvalleyenergy.com
Website: www.siouxvalleyenergy.com

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, age or disability. Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found on-line at https://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed complaint form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov

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

Goodbye, paper.

Hello, convenience and savings!



Join the paperless movement to avoid postal delays!

Sioux Valley Energy offers a convenient paperless billing option, reducing postage and printing costs for the Cooperative and saving members the ever-increasing price of a stamp. **To sign up for the paperless option, scan the QR code or log into the SmartHub website or mobile app.**



siouxvalleyenergy.smarthub.coop

Swap out your paper newsletter with the **electronic version**.
Email us at info@siouxvalleyenergy.com to make the switch!

Your Questions Answered

Question: *Would our rates be lower without investing in solar power? Doesn't it produce little power compared to its cost?*

Answer: No. Utility-scale solar power does not increase electric rates. Its cost is similar to other types of power generation, making it a cost-effective source of electricity. On the other hand, solar power does have limitations because it's considered an intermittent source of electricity – only producing power when the sun is shining.

Approximately 0.05% of the power Sioux Valley Energy members receive is produced through utility-scale solar generation. Sioux Valley Energy's wholesale bulk power supplier, Basin Electric Power Cooperative, purchases power from Wild Springs Solar, located in Pennington County, South Dakota. This 128-megawatt (MW) project became operational in 2024, making it the largest solar project in South Dakota's history.

Basin Electric's utility-scale solar purchases are part of an all-of-the-above energy approach. Solar adds value to the electric cooperative network because it complements existing Basin Electric generating resources such as natural gas.

Have a question about electricity or Sioux Valley Energy?

Mail it to P.O. Box 216, Colman, SD 57017 or e-mail info@siouxvalleyenergy.com. Your question may be selected as the 'Question of the Month' and answered in an upcoming edition of the newsletter.



As unmanned aerial systems (UAS) increasingly populate recreational and professional skies, safety remains paramount – especially near critical infrastructure such as overhead power lines. Today we reaffirm that drones should be flown in open spaces away from electrical lines and substations to prevent power outages and dangerous debris that can threaten public safety.

A drone colliding with a power line can cause outages and, if lines are downed, create serious electrical hazards for anyone nearby. Touching downed lines or debris that has fallen on fences, trees or other objects can result in severe injury or death. If you encounter downed power lines, immediately call 911 and notify emergency personnel and the utility company.

To ensure safe and compliant drone operations, follow federal registration and business-approval requirements, and stay informed about local, state and community regulations. FAA safety guidelines remain essential: Inspect your drone for damage before each flight and repair any issues prior to use. Fly at or below 400 feet unless FAA authorization or an allowed exception applies. Maintain visual line of sight; do not fly beyond it. Avoid airports, manned aircraft, stadiums and crowds of people. Do not fly for unapproved commercial purposes without FAA authorization. Refrain from flying in bad weather, including low visibility or high winds. Never fly recklessly or endanger others; violations can result in fines and penalties.

It is encouraged that drone operators plan routes

that maximize safety and minimize proximity to power infrastructure. Responsible pilots, adherence to FAA guidelines and awareness of local rules can prevent outages, injuries and potentially tragic consequences. For more information on legal requirements and best practices, consult FAA resources and your local utility providers.

Together, we can enjoy the benefits of drone technology while safeguarding our communities and critical electrical infrastructure.

As drone use expands, operators should build safety into every mission from the outset. Calibration, pre-flight checklists, and robust maintenance programs help catch issues before takeoff. Operators are encouraged to use situational awareness tools, such as real-time weather updates and wind assessments, to adjust flight plans accordingly. Community education events and outreach can foster a responsible culture among hobbyists and professionals alike, reinforcing the shared responsibility to protect power networks and nearby residents. By prioritizing safety, we preserve access to this transformative technology for all.



"Call 811 before you dig – always."

Laina Nelson, age 10

Laina reminds members to always call 811 before digging. Thank you for sharing your picture, Laina! Laina's parents are Nathan and Kristen Nelson – members of H-D Electric.

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



Family FAVORITES

PARTY IN A PAN

Ingredients:

1 1/2 lbs. hamburger, browned
1 can cream of celery soup
1 can cream of chicken soup
1 box Stove Top Stuffing Mix
1 can corn, drained
3 cups mozzarella cheese,
shredded

Method

Combine the hamburger, celery soup and chicken soup in a bowl and set aside. Prepare the Stove Top Stuffing as directed on the box. Layer half the hamburger mixture, half the corn, half the stuffing and half the cheese; repeat layers again. Bake 30-40 minutes at 350°F or until cheese is melted. Makes 9x13 inch pan.

Kathy Zomer
Douglas Electric

WALLEYE WITH HORSERADISH SAUCE

Ingredients:

2 lbs. walleye fillets
1 cup Lawry's Herb & Garlic
marinade
1 tsp. Lawry's Season Salt
1 tsp. lemon pepper
1/4 cup butter
2 tbsp. horseradish
2 tsp. dill

Method

Marinate fish in herb & garlic marinade for 30 minutes. Drain. Sprinkle with season salt and lemon pepper. Bake fish until it flakes. Melt butter in saucepan. Remove from heat and add horseradish. Spoon onto fillet after cooked. Sprinkle on dill and serve.

Valerie Marso
Oahe Electric

BBQ MEATBALLS

Ingredients:

Meatballs

3# ground beef
1 can (12 oz.) evaporated milk
1 cup oatmeal
1 cup cracker crumbs
2 eggs
1/2 cup finely chopped onion
1/2 tsp. garlic powder
1 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. pepper
2 tsp. chili powder

Sauce

2 cups ketchup
1 cup brown sugar
1/2 tsp. liquid smoke, or to taste
1/2 tsp. garlic powder
1/4 cup finely chopped onion

Method

Mix all meatball ingredients together and shape into meatballs. Place meatballs in a baking dish.

Mix all sauce ingredients together and pour over meatballs. Cover and bake at 350°F for one hour. The meatballs can be made ahead of time and frozen for several weeks. This makes a large batch, so it can be divided into smaller batches and frozen.

Karen Soulek
Charles Mix 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 2026. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

Signing Off after 25 Years



Sheila Gross
Energy Services
Specialist

To learn more about efficiency programs and rates that can help you save money call SVE at 800-234-1960, visit www.siouxvalley-energy.com/energy-efficiency-tools or sign up for SmartHub, our online account management tool.



Editor's Note:

Sheila Gross retired July 10 after 25 years of service to the Cooperative and its members.

Writing my last column is certainly bittersweet as I prepare for retirement from Sioux Valley Energy. Working with members on solutions to improve the efficiency of their homes and strategies to save money has been the most rewarding aspect of my career. I feel so incredibly fortunate to have worked alongside so many members and dedicated cooperative employees throughout my 25-year career. While retirement marks the end of one chapter, it also opens the door to new adventures and more time to focus on what matters most at this point in my life – my family.

As SVE prepares for demand rate billing, I want to leave you with a few final considerations to help you plan efficiency improvement projects before winter. Weatherizing your home can help reduce the impact of utility demand and energy usage charges by lowering overall energy consumption.

Common weatherization improvements include:

- Air sealing (caulking and weatherstripping)
- Adding insulation to attics, walls, and crawlspaces
- Sealing ductwork
- Upgrading windows or adding storm windows
- Maintenance of your heating and cooling system

In addition to lowering energy costs, proper weatherization improves year-round comfort and helps reduce wear and tear on heating

and cooling equipment. Air sealing and attic insulation often provides some of the quickest returns on investment because heating and cooling account for a significant portion of annual energy expenses. Poorly insulated homes allow heat to escape during the winter and unwanted heat to enter during the summer through attics, walls, and windows. This causes your equipment to work harder and run longer to maintain indoor comfort, leading to increased energy consumption, and higher utility bills.

If you are considering replacing HVAC equipment, an energy-efficient heat pump may help reduce heating and cooling costs throughout the year. SVE offers heat pump rebates.

If your main source of heating is electric, you may want to visit with us to review your usage patterns to help determine which rate option best meets your needs. Residential members have an optional rate available to them called Time of Use. For more information, please plan to attend an upcoming 'Brats and Kilowatts' informational meeting.

As I close, I want to thank the members for being such an important part of my career at SVE. It's been a privilege serving you! There's a great team of employees that will continue to assist members in navigating rate options, understanding your demand, and sharing ways to improve efficiency.

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 profile for greater accuracy



www.siouxvalleyenergy.com/download-app

CO-OP FAMILY LEGACY

Mother & Daughter Duo Find Careers in Co-ops

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

Ask any longtime electric cooperative employee what makes the co-op network special, and the answers often sound the same: It feels like family. For Sharla and Amanda Haugen, that's more than a figure of speech. Working for electric cooperatives on opposite ends of South Dakota, the mother and daughter pair share a commitment to service and community.

Sharla is the manager of dispatch at Sioux Valley Energy in Colman, overseeing 24-hour radio dispatch for line crews from Sioux Valley Energy, Kingsbury Electric Cooperative, Codington-Clark Electric Cooperative, Union County Electric Cooperative, Nobles Cooperative Electric and the City of Brookings.

Sharla has worked at Sioux Valley Energy for 35 years, starting as a dispatcher nearly a decade before Amanda was born. Amanda understood at a young age that whenever there was a severe snow, wind, or ice storm, her mom would be out the door and off to work to help get the lights back on.

"Seeing how my mom dropped everything to serve the members and go above and beyond, and my dad supporting her role, it really opened my eyes to what a co-op does for a community," Amanda said.

Growing up in rural Moody County on Sioux Valley Energy lines, Amanda was very involved in the co-op. In high school, she helped serve the meals at district meetings, attended annual meetings, and even traveled to North Dakota on Youth Excursion – a co-op event promoting youth education in energy careers and production. On the trip, Amanda toured the Antelope Valley coal-fired power plant and other facilities, getting a behind-the-scenes look at how electricity is generated and transported to co-op members. She also participated in Sioux Valley Energy's EmPOWER Youth Leadership Program, which prepped students with professional skills for future careers.

"The EmPOWER Youth Leadership program went over different leadership skills and how to find strengths and weaknesses," Amanda recalled. "That involvement is really how I got ingrained with the co-op."

Years later, as Amanda worked to finish her marketing degree at Lake Area Technical College, she was on the hunt for internship openings to help kick off her career.

"I gave it to God and put it in his hands," Amanda said.

One Thursday afternoon, during class, Amanda's phone started



Now living at opposite ends of the state, Sharla and Amanda enjoy time together in the Black Hills during visits. When in each other's company, other family members suggest there's perhaps too much talk about electric cooperatives.

Photo submitted by Sharla Haugen.

buzzing over and over again. When she glanced down, she saw multiple missed calls and texts from her mom. West River Electric Association had an opening for a member services representative at their Rapid City office, and applications were due the next day.

"Friday morning, I worked on a revamped resume and cover letter and sent it off," Amanda said. WREA reached out shortly after for an interview, and less than two weeks later, Amanda was offered the job.

"It's like the stars aligned," Amanda said. "When I told my mom, she was ecstatic – I'm pretty sure she started crying."

For Sharla, it was a joyful moment, knowing Amanda was part of the co-op family that had treated her so well over her decades.

"If Amanda got out there and she had car trouble, I knew the co-op people would take care of her," Sharla said. "It was just a sense of relief for me to know if something were to happen, there'd be people there to help her."

Amanda, now five years into the job at West River Electric, works on the co-op's Cooperative Connections magazine, communications and public relations, and youth initiatives similar to the ones at Sioux Valley Energy that lead to her co-op career. Much like her mom, Amanda said her co-op now feels like family.

"Coming to work every day, you kind of have this second family that always has your back," Amanda said. "They are there for you and will help you whenever you need it."

That's exactly what Sharla wanted for her daughter.

"Co-ops are big on employee growth, so I knew Amanda would always be learning and improving. I knew she wouldn't be stagnant in a career at a cooperative because they're always investing in their employees. It was just such a proud moment when she joined the co-op world."



SOUTH DAKOTA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A PAST FIT FOR THE FUTURE

A new lobby welcomes visitors to the Cultural Heritage Center.

Photo by Jacob Boyko

Cultural Center & State Museum Reopens After Extensive Renovation

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

After more than two years spent closed for renovation, South Dakota's state museum and cultural center is back up and running to share the story of South Dakota and its people with visitors from across the state and beyond.

The iconic museum built into the Pierre hillside held its grand reopening July 1 in time for the nation's 250th birthday, showing off new exhibits, a gift shop and an expansion that includes a larger meeting room and more space for its archives.

For Museum Director David Grabitske, the reopening marks a new chapter for the South Dakota State Historical Society, which oversees both the museum and state archives housed there. But it also honors the first laws set forth by the Dakota Territory's first territorial legislature, outlining specific steps and functions for historical preservation for untold future generations of its citizens.

According to Grabitske, many of the

first Dakotan settlers were determined to preserve the history they were making day by day as settlers on the vast American frontier.

"The first three acts [by the territorial legislature] were all about transferring property at the end of life – it's all about inheritance," Grabitske explained. "The fourth act of the territory created the historical society. In my mind, the fourth act goes along with those first three acts; it's about how we give things to the future."

Establishing a historical society demonstrated confidence that there would be a future for the Dakota Territory – complete with a permanent population that would live, grow and prosper there.

"We have a mantra around here," Grabitske said. "We collect today for tomorrow's history."

What that sentiment has amounted to is a sprawling collection of more than 17,000 cubic feet of paper, 50 terabytes of data on its servers, and more than 35,000 individual objects.

"The very first collections that arrived were in 1863, and we still have those in our library," Grabitske said. "They were

library books – 514 of them in 11 boxes."

In the process of collecting and disseminating information, historical societies at the time would collect and make copies of books to trade with other historical societies to expand their collections and diffuse knowledge across a wider area and reduce the risk of losing records to fire.

You'll find those 160 years' worth of books, deeds, contracts and reports



On the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Little Bighorn, Curator of Collections Katy L. Schmidt holds a can found on the battlefield.

Photo by Jacob Boyko

throughout the high-ceilinged, climate-controlled archive wing of the building – but you'll also find objects that aren't necessarily old or inherently valuable.

"The reason we add something into our collection is because it's historic, and what we mean by historic is it has significance and integrity," Grabitske explained. "Something being 'old' just fixes it in time. What makes something historic is that it is significant – it tells the story of people in South Dakota, and it has integrity, which means a certain completeness to tell that story."

To illustrate the point, Grabitske described a recent addition to the museum's collection – a painted tire with the words "no hunting."

"You see these things going down the road [in South Dakota], and we realized we were missing [one for the museum]," he explained. "We found one near Timber Lake which had a story. The lady who gave it to us (family of Dorothy Dopp, courtesy of the Timber Lake & Area Museum) had put it up in 1967 and she had faithfully painted it over the years and knew the dates she had painted it. We don't need 400 of these tires – we need one to represent the whole state."

Visitors to the museum this summer can experience the first three rooms of the updated exhibits. These sections house a welcome area, 'What is History?' exhibit and a gallery. The remaining sections are slated for completion in December 2026 and will feature exhibits on South Dakota's environment, people, politics, conflicts and more.

For more information on the Cultural Heritage Center and the South Dakota State Historical Society, visit history.sd.gov.



An exhibit showcasing the famous people of South Dakota.
Photo by Jacob Boyko



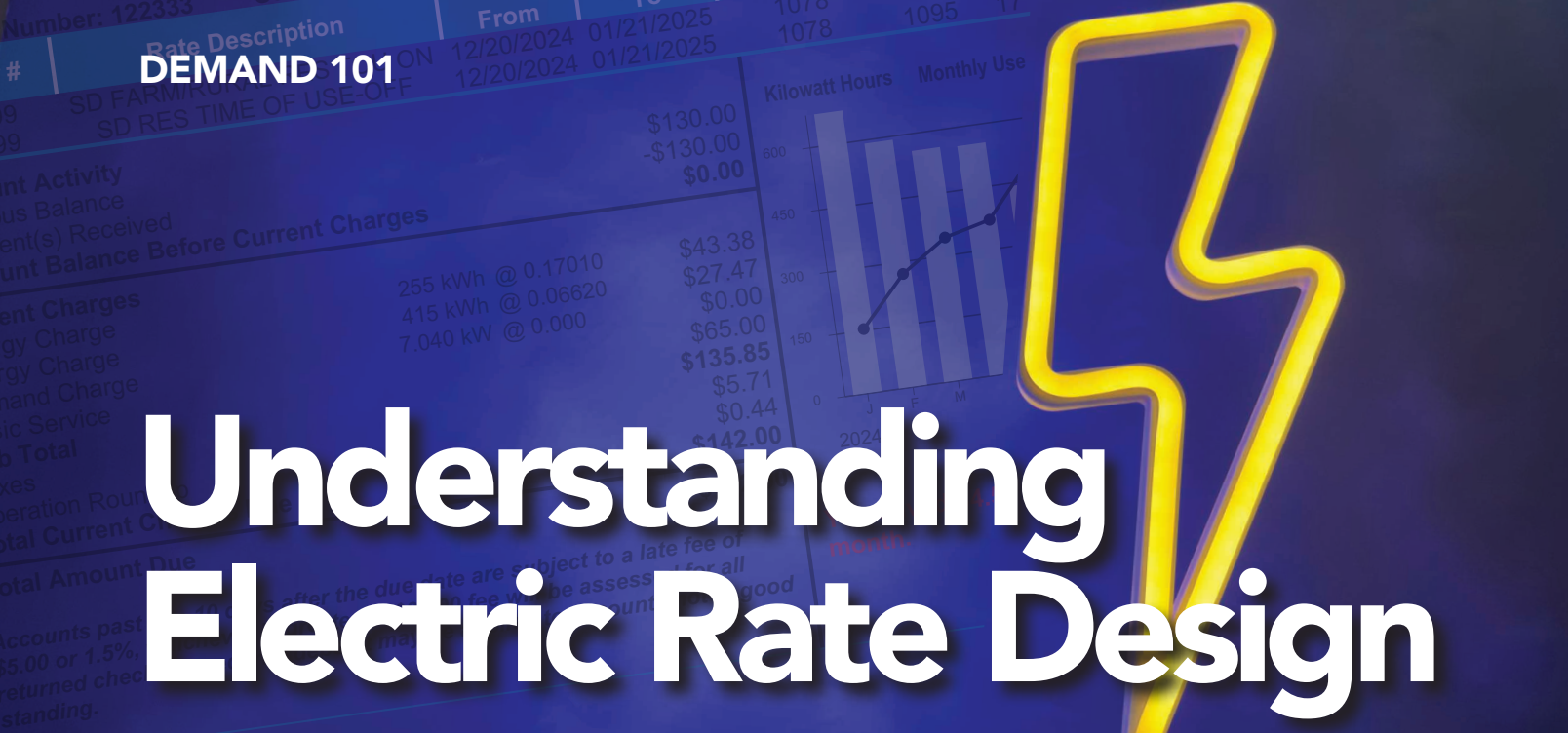
This plaster doll (left) was gifted to South Dakota by Japan in 1927 to commemorate the United States' 150th birthday. Fifty years later, for the nation's 200th birthday, Japan gifted South Dakota another doll (right).
Photo by Jacob Boyko



Museum Director and South Dakota State Historical Society Assistant Director David Grabitske walks through the extensive art archive, revealing a painting of an electrical lineman working through a winter storm.
Photo by Jacob Boyko



Grabitske demonstrates the new movable shelves installed over tracks within the floor. This upgrade will maximize the available archival space.
Photo by Jacob Boyko



Understanding Electric Rate Design

Electric rates change over time as costs increase, member energy use changes, and the electric industry evolves. Beginning in 2027, Sioux Valley Energy will transition its residential and general service rates from a two-part rate structure to a three-part rate structure.

Today, residential and general service members pay for:

- **Basic Service**
- **Energy (kWh)**

Beginning in 2027, electric bills will include:

- **Basic Service**
- **Energy (kWh)**
- **Demand (kW)**

Why Are Rates Designed This Way?

Every electric utility is different, so rates are not designed exactly the same across the industry. However, all utilities must recover the costs of three basic things:

1. The capacity to meet peak demand
2. The energy members use
3. The equipment and infrastructure that deliver electricity

A three-part rate better reflects the actual costs of providing electricity. It also provides more stable revenue to maintain and improve the electric system.

When rates rely mostly on energy use, revenue can fluctuate due to weather, energy efficiency, or members generating their own power. However, many of the Cooperative's costs – including charges from its power suppliers – are based on demand, not just energy consumption.

By including charges for demand, energy, and basic service,

rates more accurately reflect the full cost of providing reliable electric service.

A demand charge also helps ensure costs are shared fairly. The electric system must be built to handle times when electricity use is at its highest. When many large appliances are used at the same time, demand increases and additional infrastructure may be needed. The need to build additional demand or capacity into the electric system is due to the increasing use of electricity by Sioux Valley Energy's legacy members (residential, farm, small business, etc.) not hyperscale data centers.

Members who spread out their electricity use place less strain on the system and help reduce the need for costly upgrades. A demand charge helps assign those costs to the members who create them, helping keep rates fair for everyone.

How Rates Are Developed

Designing electric rates is a thorough and well-planned process. Sioux Valley Energy evaluates the actual cost of providing electric service and develops rates that are:

- Financially sound
- Fair and equitable
- Based on cost causation, meaning costs are paid by the members who create them

The Cooperative sets its rates after receiving updated power supply rates from its wholesale power providers which happens in late summer. Once those costs are known, Sioux Valley Energy conducts rate studies to determine the cost of providing service. Any rate changes must be reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors before they take effect.

Summer Outings

Summer parades and camps provide opportunities for Sioux Valley Energy employees to connect with members in area communities and share its safety message with the public.



Above Left: Journey Lineworker Alex Christensen and Lead Journey Lineworker Tom Sebert were in Hartford's Jamboree Day Parade. **Above Right:** Journey Lineworker Jake Dybedahl entered Dell Rapids' Quarry Days parade June 27. **Left:** Member Services Representatives Melissa Hennings and Holly Kruger and Journey Lineworker Matt Determan, along with family members, tossed candy at Pipestone's Water Tower Festival parade on June 27.



Above: Lead Journey Lineworker Mike Oines and family tossed candy at Volga's Old Timers Parade June 13. **Left:** Safety Manager Travis Denison, Lead Journey Lineworker Bob Johnson, and Journey Lineworker Casey Lowe conducted a high-voltage safety demonstration for middle school students attending Augustana University's 'For Your STEM' summer day camp.

Brats & Kilowatts

Learn more about demand at our Brats and Kilowatts events (listed at right):

4:30 6 p.m. 'Come and Go' Learning
Don't have much time? Join us for our 'Come and Go' learning opportunity. Enjoy a brat and chips and chat with an expert about your peak demand and how it will impact your bill.

6 6:30 p.m. Demand 101 Session
Grab some food and join Sioux Valley Energy as they present 'Demand 101'.

6:30 7 p.m. Q&A Session
Have more questions? We will have experts on hand to answer all your questions!

Monday, August 24

District 8:
Generations
105 S Estey St
Luverne

Thursday, August 27

District 1:
McKnight Community Center
300 W Main St., White

Tuesday, September 8

District 9:
Sioux Valley Energy
Pipestone Service Center
1102 7th St SE
Pipestone

Thursday, September 10

District 2:
Sioux Valley School
200 Hansina Ave, Volga

Thursday, September 17

District 5: Taopi Hall
102 E 3rd St, Colton

Thursday, October 1

District 4:
Dakota Prairie Playhouse
1205 Washington Ave N
Madison

Tuesday, October 6

District 7:
Humboldt
Community Center
201 S Main St, Humboldt

Thursday, October 8

District 3:
Sioux Valley Energy Office
23491 471st Ave., Colman

Tuesday, October 13

District 6:
Sioux Valley Energy
Brandon Service Center
108 N Heritage Road
Brandon

Monday, October 19

District 10:
Edgerton Public School 423
1st Ave W, Edgerton

Please register to attend at siouxvalleyenergy.com or by calling 800-234-1960.

CO-OP SUMMER OUTREACH

Join Us at S.D. State Fair, Dakotafest, Minn. Farmfest

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

Attention all co-op members! If you're heading to the South Dakota State Fair, Dakotafest or Farmfest this summer, stop by the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives booths for some great family fun and a chance to win a prize!

Make sure you fill out your coupon on the back of this magazine and bring it with you to the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives booth at the South Dakota State Fair or Dakotafest for your chance to win one of two electric grills sponsored by Karl's TV & Appliance.

South Dakota State Fair – Sept. 3, 2026

South Dakota's electric cooperatives will host the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives booth at the South Dakota State Fair in Huron, Thursday, Sept. 3, 2026.

This one-day event will feature a slew of energy-themed activities, from bucket truck rides lifting you more than 50 feet above the state fairgrounds to an interactive pole climbing demonstration complete with real spiked boots and climbing gear that linemen use every day on the job. We've also partnered up with South Dakota One Call to remind you to always call 811 before you start digging – but your kids are welcome to use our mini excavator in our sandbox to uncover buried treasure!

While you're here, check out our on-site displays for select highly efficient, all-electric heat pumps and mini-splits, water heaters, yard tools and more!

Find our booth near the Horticulture Building.

Dakotafest – Aug. 18-20, 2026

You'll want to stop by the South Dakota Touchstone Energy Cooperatives building at Dakotafest in Mitchell, Aug. 18-20!

Join us for fresh-off-the-grill brats, oven-baked cookies and freezie pops as you learn about the latest in home energy savings and efficiency. We'll have other cool stuff for you to check out, including an automatic lawn mower, a solar panel display and an EGO Power+ Portable Power Station.

Minnesota Farmfest – Aug. 4-6, 2026

Minnesota members, come visit your electric cooperative at Minnesota Farmfest near Redwood Falls, Aug. 4-6, 2026. Members may enter a raffle drawing for one of five battery-operated yard tools. We'll even have the high-voltage trailer on site for a live demonstration to remind visitors to be safe around overhead and buried power lines.



Kids perfected their utility pole climbing skills at the South Dakota State Fair.

Photo by Jacob Boyko



Touchstone Energy Cooperatives host a booth at Dakotafest in 2025.

Submitted Photo



Charles Mix Electric Lineman Joe Michael shows off the bucket truck at the State Fair.
Photo by Jacob Boyko



Fairgoers get a lineman's view of the State Fair! *Photo by Jacob Boyko*



A future lineman readies for his climb.
Photo by Jacob Boyko



Show off your co-op spirit with temporary tattoos! *Photo by Jacob Boyko*



A line forms for bucket truck rides.
Photo by Jacob Boyko



Booth visitors can win prizes by playing Plinko.
Submitted Photo

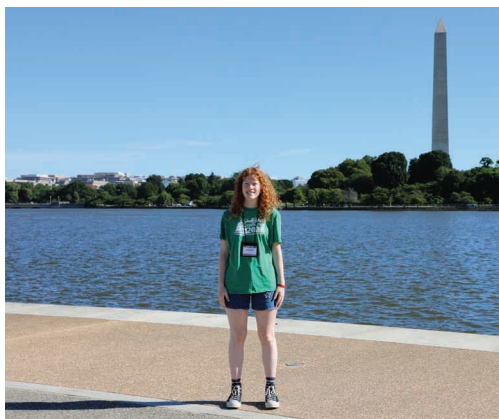


SVE Students Travel With Minnesota, South Dakota Groups

Sioux Valley Energy students Lydian Gilkerson and Iva Witte participated in the Rural Electric Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., in June. Gilkerson was part of a group of 33 students representing South Dakota electric cooperatives while Witte was among 35 students representing Minnesota electric cooperatives. A total of 44 states were represented on the tour.

The 2026 groups visited many of Washington, D.C.'s most historic and impactful sites, including Arlington National Cemetery, war memorials and explored themes of patriotism and national history throughout the week, viewing the Declaration of Independence at the National Archives.

Students also met with their respective state's congressional leaders at the U.S. Capitol. At the Gaylord National Resort & Convention Center, students concluded their trip with National Rural Electric Cooperative Association-led events, where they heard from Youth Day keynote speaker Mike Schlappi, a four-time Paralympic medalist.



Lydian Gilkerson (**left**) of Oldham-Ramona-Rutland High School represented Sioux Valley Energy on the South Dakota Youth Tour delegation (above) while Iva Witte (**far left**) of Pipestone Area Schools represented SVE on the Minnesota delegation (top).

Operation Round Up Helps Meet Needs in Brookings Area

Brookings Behavioral Health and Wellness' Systems of Care (SOC) program utilized \$1,000 in Operation Round Up® funding to address the immediate basic needs impacting the health and well-being of its clients and families within the community. Funds were used to purchase hygiene products for individuals experiencing financial hardship, as well as shelf-stable food items to stock the program pantry for clients facing food insecurity following Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefit reductions in November 2025.

"Securing access to essential hygiene products and reliable food sources plays a critical role in supporting both physical and mental health outcomes," wrote Liz Roden. "Many of our clients served through the Systems of Care program experience barriers related to poverty, housing instability, food insecurity, and limited access to community resources. By providing items such as soap, shampoo, toothpaste, feminine hygiene products, and shelf-stable, nonperishable foods, the SOC program helped

reduce these immediate stressors that can negatively impact their overall health and engagement in our services."

The pantry and hygiene supplies also strengthened the SOC program's ability to respond quickly to emergent client needs with dignity and compassion. These resources supported stabilization efforts for vulnerable individuals and families, helped reduce gaps created by decreased public assistance, and reinforced the Systems of Care model by addressing social determinants of health that directly influence behavioral health and long-term wellness outcomes.



Members of the Systems of Care program team gather supplies for a client.

Operation Round Up® Grants Awarded to Area Organizations

Sioux Valley Energy and its members are investing in local communities by giving a boost to 18 non-profits, schools, and communities. During the most recent quarterly meeting of the Sioux Valley Energy Customers' Trust Board of Directors, \$25,500 in grants were awarded by the Cooperative's Operation Round Up® program.



An additional \$6,000 was reserved for scholarships.

A list of recent grant recipients, as well as information on how local organizations can apply for funding, can be found at www.siouxvalleyenergy.com/operation-round-up. The next deadline to apply for funding is August 20 with grants being awarded in September.

Recipients included:

Brandon, South Dakota

- Blessed Redeemer Lutheran Preschool – \$1,500 to update the playground
- Brandon Valley Community Foundation – \$1,500 to design, produce, and install a permanent recognition and founders wall in the Gene Johnson Community Room at Burkman Elementary School

Crooks, South Dakota

- Crooks Veterans Park – \$2,000 to put toward enhancement projects
- Tri-Valley School District/Crooks Elementary – \$1,000 to purchase items for the sensory room in the school

Flandreau, South Dakota

- Flandreau Sports Association – \$2,000 to purchase sports equipment

Garretson, South Dakota

- City of Garretson – \$1,500 to help install

community pickle ball courts and a basketball court adjacent to the ball fields and pool

Hartford, South Dakota

- West Central Education Foundation – \$2,000 to fund grant requests made by teachers

Luverne, Minnesota

- SHARE – \$2,000 for a shoe drive, allotting \$50 per pair of shoes for children in need

Madison, South Dakota

- Lake County 4-H – \$1,000 to purchase new rabbit cages

Pipestone, Minnesota

- Ewert Recreation Center (City of Pipestone) – \$1,000 to update the disc golf course
- Pipestone County Medical Center – \$1,000 to purchase fleece to make tie

blankets to give to children who have surgery

- Pipestone EDA – \$1,000 to continue childcare providers appreciation events

Sioux Falls, South Dakota

- Falls Area Bicyclists (FAB) – \$500 to be used for general operation
- Feeding South Dakota – \$2,000 to purchase food for the Back Pack program
- Habitat for Humanity of Greater Sioux Falls – \$2,500 to purchase material to help build one Habitat home in partnership with the CTE Academy of Sioux Falls

Volga, South Dakota

- Volga Christian School – \$1,500 to replace and update the playground play system

White, South Dakota

- City of White – \$1,500 to help with the remodel of McKnight Community Center

REGISTER TO WIN!

Bring this coupon and mailing label to the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives booth at Dakotafest or the South Dakota State Fair to win a prize!

Your Phone Number: _____ Dakotafest – Find us in the Touchstone Energy Building!
Your Email Address: _____ S.D. State Fair – Find us in the Horticulture Park!

WIDER OWNED BY THOSE WE SERVE
WAYS AND COOL OFF IN OUR
LEARNING ABOUT ELECTRICITY



AUG. 18-20
Dakotafest
2300 E. Spruce St.
Mitchell, SD

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.

JULY 24-26
Bruce Honey Days
Bruce, SD
605-627-5671

JULY 31-AUG. 2
Sioux River Folk Festival
Newton Hills State Park
Sioux Falls, SD
SiouxRiverFolkFest.com

AUG. 1-2
51st Annual Pioneer Power Threshing Show
MN Machinery Museum
Hanley Falls, MN
507-828-5437

AUG. 1-2
Family Camping Weekend
Prairie Village
Madison, SD

AUG. 4-6
Farmfest 2026
8 a.m.-4 p.m.
Morgan, MN
Ideagroup.com/Farmfest

AUG. 5
Ag Appreciation Day
11 a.m.-1 p.m.
Sioux Empire Fair
Sioux Falls, SD

AUG. 8-9
South Dakota Senior Games
Events for People Ages 50+
Huron, SD
Register by July 26
SouthDakotaSeniorGames.org
605-295-2039
sdsrgames@gmail.com

AUG. 9
Czech Heritage Festival
8 a.m.-4 p.m.
Bechyn, MN
320-522-1218

AUG. 12
BFest Concert Series & Farmers Market
Jim McKinney & Friends
Performing
Museum Park
Bruce, SD
605-627-5671

AUG. 15
Melon Festival
Car Show, Live Music,
Bean Bag Tournament
Forestburg, SD
605-770-2132

AUG. 22
Hartford Area Fire & Rescue's 8th Annual Public Safety Day
10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
305 W. South St.
Hartford, SD

AUG. 22
McCrossan Boys Ranch Xtreme Event Challenge
3:30 p.m.
McCrossan Boys Ranch
Sioux Falls, SD
605-339-1203

AUG. 27-30
Steam Threshing Jamboree
Prairie Village
Madison, SD

SEPT. 1-6
20th Annual Sturgis Mustang Rally
Sturgis, SD
SturgisMustangRally.com

SEPT. 3
Touchstone Energy Cooperatives at the South Dakota State Fair
9 a.m.-5 p.m.
State Fairgrounds –
Horticulture Park
Huron, SD
605-224-8823

SEPT. 9
BFest Concert Series & Farmers Market
Matt Gauger Performing
Museum Park
Bruce, SD
605-627-5671

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.