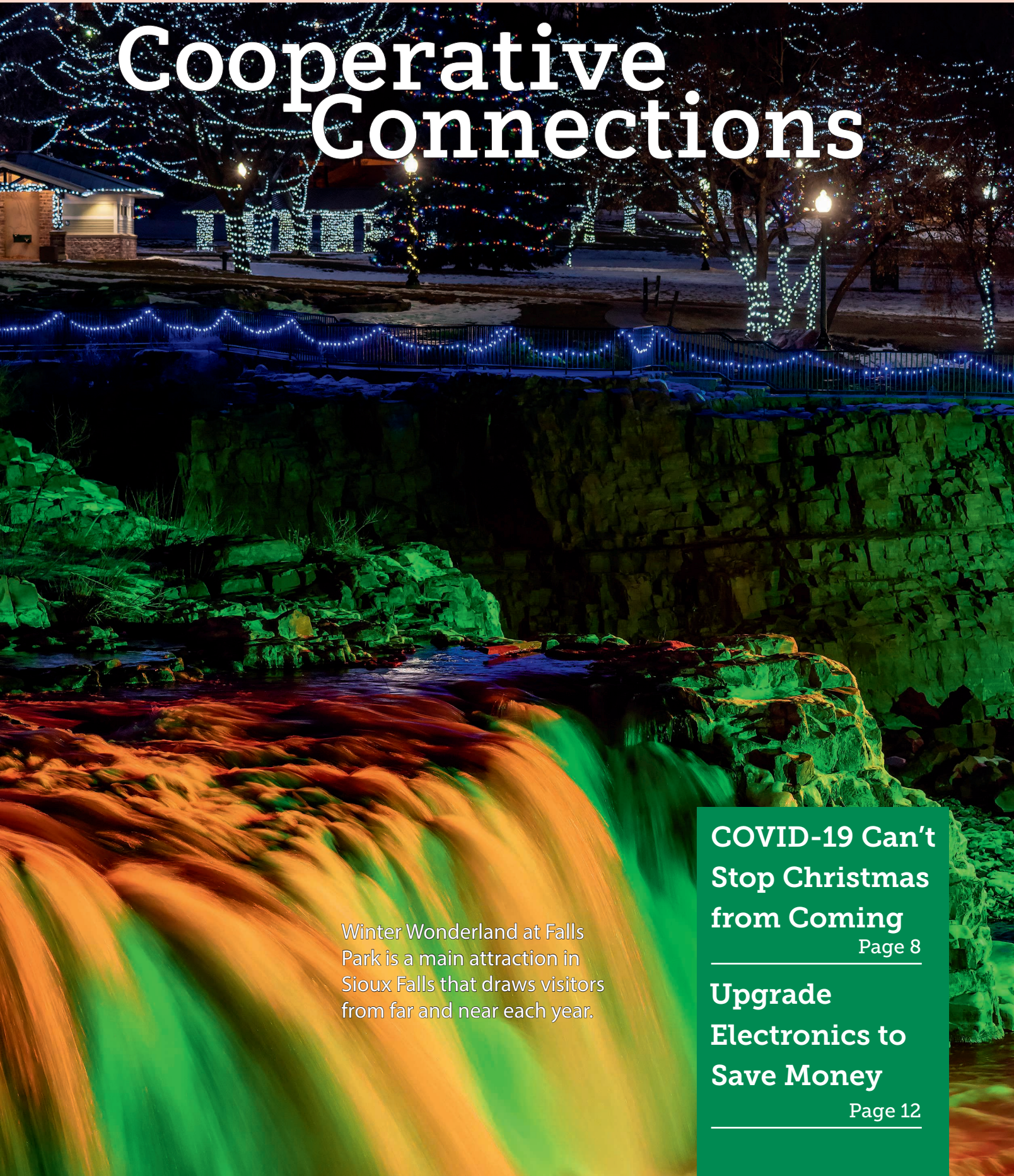




Cooperative Connections



Winter Wonderland at Falls Park is a main attraction in Sioux Falls that draws visitors from far and near each year.

COVID-19 Can't Stop Christmas from Coming

Page 8

Upgrade Electronics to Save Money

Page 12

Sioux Valley Energy Adds Beneficial Electrification Department



Tim McCarthy, GM/CEO

tim.mccarthy@siouxvalleyenergy.com

Sioux Valley Energy is entering the era of Beneficial Electrification (BE). You are probably wondering what that is and why you should care. Beneficial Electrification can be described as the use of electricity that accomplishes one of the following without adversely affecting the others:

1. Saves consumers money over time
2. Benefits the environment
3. Reduces greenhouse gas emissions
4. Improves product quality or consumer quality of life
5. Fosters a more robust and resilient electrical grid

One of the oldest and most important forms of BE for electric cooperatives is water heater load management. This is a program that Sioux Valley Energy has had in place for decades and has provided millions of dollars in savings for members and the co-op in general. When an electric water heater is placed under load management, it is controlled during high demand periods, when electricity costs are greater. The hot water is stored in the insulated tank (energy storage) and can be used when it's being controlled. Once the electrical demand is reduced, the water heater is no longer controlled. It's a win-win for the member and the co-op.

Another real-life example is your vehicle. Most people still operate a gas-powered car or truck for their daily commute to work. It becomes routine to fill it with gas, change oil, conduct maintenance, etc. However, electric vehicles provide another option that offers significant benefits to the owner, their neighbors, and the global community as a whole.

The individual benefits include lower costs to operate;

more power when accelerating; reduced maintenance requirements; quieter operation and zero emissions. The individual benefits sound pretty good, but it goes beyond that. With an EV, your neighbor does not have to listen to the motor running and won't smell or inhale any fumes. Now take that idea even further — the EV that is plugged into an electrical outlet to charge becomes part of the electric grid. As more EV's are plugged in for charging, electric utilities, like Sioux Valley Energy, can coordinate the timing for when there is less demand on the system — such as the middle of the night. This shifts electric use to a time when there is very low demand, allowing the grid to operate more efficiently and maximizing the use of power generated from renewable sources. As EVs expand globally, the impact multiplies. This is a real-life example of BE.

Beneficial Electrification will become an important part of the future for electric utilities and that includes Sioux Valley Energy. Over the last several years, we have expanded our programs and services meant to encourage BE. As demand for these and other programs increase, we have recognized a need for a dedicated BE department. That department will be the go-to for all things related to BE, such as renewable energy, new technology, load management, rebates, consumer advice, energy storage, and much more.

We hope our BE department will be up and running in the first quarter of 2021. Sioux Valley Energy currently offers its members a variety of incentives and rebates to get them started in BE. For example, the 'Time of Use' (TOU) rate incentivizes members to shift their energy use to off-peak times when the cost for power is much lower, allowing the co-op to offer a reduced electric rate during those times. In addition, members who sign up for the TOU rate can receive a \$50 rebate for a Smart Thermostat. The co-op also has an entire suite of electric vehicle programs including rebates for level 2 chargers, Renewable Energy Credits, new EV-ready home construction and commercial public EV chargers. Check out Sioux Valley Energy's website for a full listing of beneficial electrification programs and services available for members at www.siouxvalleyenergy.com.

Sioux Valley Energy

Cooperative Connections

(USPS No. 497-440)

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(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.



The deadline to apply for \$17,500 in scholarships is 4:30 p.m. Jan. 15, 2021.

\$17,500 in Scholarships to be Awarded in 2021

Sioux Valley Energy is offering \$17,500 worth of scholarships to eligible graduating high school seniors or first time attendees at an institution of higher education. Those scholarship funds also include a designated scholarship to an individual attending power line school. Applications that are hand delivered must be in one of the SVE offices no later than 4:30 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 15, 2021. Mailed applications must be postmarked by Jan. 15, 2021. ACT or SAT test scores will not be required this year due to COVID-19.

Applications will be judged on the basis of grades, work experience, school activities, volunteer community service and an essay question.

The majority of the scholarship funding comes from Operation Round Up® funds, with additional monies from Basin Electric Power Cooperative and L&O Power Cooperative.

To be eligible you must:

- Be a graduating high school senior or first-time attendee at an institution of higher education.
- Plan to be a full-time student in an accredited college or vocational-technical school this fall.
- Be a child of a Sioux Valley Energy customer.
- Have a 3.0 or higher cumulative GPA.
- Provide a written recommendation from a teacher, administrator or counselor.
- One winner per family/per year.

Applications are available from your school counselor, from any Sioux Valley Energy service center (in Colman, Pipestone and Brandon), on the web at:

<https://www.siouxvalleyenergy.com/my-community/scholarship-program>.

Decorate Your Home Safely

It's time to deck those halls - safely. More than 800 home fires are caused by Christmas and holiday decorations each year, according to the National Fire Protection Association.

An additional 170 home fires are caused by Christmas trees each year. Keep these tips in mind for a safe holiday season:

- Carefully inspect all electrical decorations before you use them. Cracked or damaged sockets and loose or exposed wires can cause serious shock or start a fire.
- Make sure all extension cords and electrical decorations are being used properly - indoor-rated cords indoors, outdoor-rated cords for outside decorations.
- Inspect extension cords for damage and discard (not repair) any that are not completely intact.
- Never mount or support light strings in a way that might damage the cord's insulation.
- Outdoor electrical lights and decorations should be plugged into circuits protected by ground-fault circuit interrupters.
- Exercise caution when decorating near power lines. Keep yourself and your ladder at least 10 feet from power lines.
- Turn off all indoor and outdoor electrical decorations before leaving home or going to sleep.
- Avoid overloading electrical outlets with too many decorations or electrical devices. They can overheat and cause a fire.
- Never connect more than three strings of incandescent lights together.
- Water your Christmas tree daily.
- Keep all decorations at least three feet away from heating equipment.
- Avoid using candles. The flames are just too dangerous with all the flammable decorations around.
- Purchase electrical decorations from reputable retailers and that are approved by a nationally recognized testing lab such as UL, Intertek or CSA.



Correction: Pheasant bag limit unchanged

A story on pheasant hunting in last month's issue incorrectly stated that the daily bag limit was increased from three to four birds. This proposed change was considered by South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks; however, the proposal was not approved.

KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



"Do Not Shoot the Power Line!"

Luke Welsh, 10 years old

Luke is a resident of Oral, S.D., and is the son of Ryan and Rachel Welsh. He warns, "Do not shoot the power line. It might start a fire! Be safe."

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.

Delicious Holiday Desserts

Dorothy's Baked Carmel Corn

1 c. butter	1/2 tsp. soda
2 c. brown sugar	1 tsp. vanilla
1/2 c. dark Karo syrup	6 qts. (24 c.) popped corn
1 tsp. salt	

Add butter, brown sugar, syrup and salt to a large pan. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Boil 4 1/2 minutes without stirring. Remove from heat. Add soda and vanilla. Stir 1-2 minutes. Pour over popcorn and stir well. Divide into 2 cake pans. Bake 250 degrees 1 hour, mix every 15 minutes. Break up and store in tight container.

Gloria Puetz, Salem, SD

Chocolate Kissed Macaroons

1 14 oz. pkg. sweetened angel flaked coconut	1 14-oz. can sweetened condensed milk
3/4 c. flour	2 tsp. vanilla extract
1/4 c. salt	24 chocolate kisses, unwrapped
1 egg white, beaten til frothy	

Line two baking sheets with a silicone baking mat or parchment paper. In a medium bowl, mix together coconut, flour and salt. Add sweetened milk, beaten egg white and vanilla. Mix well. Mixture will be stiff. Use a cookie scoop, ice cream scoop or tbsp. to divide the dough dropping two inches apart on the baking sheet. Bake for 16-18 minutes or until golden. Remove from oven and gently press a candy kiss into the center. Remove to wire rack to cool.

Colleen Wolfe, Hot Springs, SD.

Scoops Ah Caramel

1/2 c. butter	1 can condensed milk
1-1/2 c. brown sugar	1 tsp. vanilla
3/4 c. white syrup	3 9-oz. bags Scoops

Bring the butter, brown and white sugar and condensed milk to a boil. Boil for 1 minute. Add vanilla. Stir. Put chips on a platter. Pour caramel over Scoops. May drizzle with hot fudge. Keep well refrigerated.

Ginny Jensen, Volga, SD

Reindeer Pecan Brownies

Nonstick cooking spray	1/2 cup cocoa powder
1 stick (1/2 c.) unsalted butter, melted	1 teaspoon espresso powder (optional)
1 tablespoon pecan or canola oil	1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
1 cup, plus 2 tablespoons, granulated sugar	20 raw pecan halves, cut in half
2 large eggs	40 candy eyeballs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract	20 red chocolate candies
1/2 cup all-purpose flour	1/4 cup chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350 F. Spray mini muffin tin with nonstick cooking spray. In large bowl, whisk melted butter, oil and sugar until well combined. Add eggs and vanilla extract; beat until mixture is thick and pale in color, about 1 minute. Sift in flour and cocoa powder. Add espresso powder, if desired, and salt. Using rubber spatula, fold dry ingredients into butter mixture until just combined. Batter should be thick. Using 1-tablespoon cookie scoop, transfer batter to prepared mini muffin tin. Bake 13-15 minutes until toothpick inserted in center comes out mostly clean, with some lingering crumbs. Add chocolate chips to heat-proof bowl; microwave until smooth and melted. Pour melted chocolate into sandwich bag and cut off small portion of one corner to use as tip. Use melted chocolate to "glue" on pecan antlers, candy eyeballs and red candy noses to brownies. Allow chocolate to set before transferring brownies to airtight container. Note: Brownies will stay fresh for up to three days.

AmericanPecan.com

Please send your favorite holiday 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 2020. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.



Operation Round Up® monies helped fill donation bags with the Luverne, Minnesota-based SHARE group in 2019. Since Operation Round Up's start 20 years ago, more than \$1.8 million has been awarded to local organizations.

#GIVING TUESDAY is Dec. 1

December starts off with a relatively new tradition, #GIVINGTUESDAY, the National Day of Giving.

This day, held the Tuesday after Thanksgiving, encourages people to give back.

Since 2012, when the 92nd Street Y in New York City created Day of Giving to bring focus to charitable giving season, hundreds of organizations have benefited.

The South Dakota Day of Giving will be in its third year in 2020, kicking off at midnight on Dec. 1 and concluding 24 hours later at 11:59 p.m.

According to the website www.southdakotagives.org/ more than 400 nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations across the state unite on the day to "raise as much money as humanly possible."

Additional ways to give:

- Set up a collection for non-perishable food at work. Deliver the collection to a local food pantry.
- Donate gift cards to a shelter.
- Collect new toys and donate them to children spending the holidays in the hospital.
- Make blankets for those receiving cancer treatment.
- Share your giving ideas and use #GivingTuesday to post on social media.
- Make sure you're rounding up your Sioux Valley Energy bill by participating in Operation Round Up®. Each quarter, the Operation Round Up Board of Trustees meet to award funds to local organizations.

Christmas is Coming and SVE Members are **PUTTING A PENNY IN**

The nursery rhyme and Christmas song "Christmas is Coming" asks the listener to "put a penny in the old man's hat." Each month, Sioux Valley Energy members do just that: gathering up those pennies and more to do good for organizations in the seven counties served by Sioux Valley Energy.

Since the Operation Round Up® program began at Sioux Valley Energy 20 years ago, members and employees have awarded more than \$1.8 million to worthwhile causes throughout the cooperative's service territory. The concept is easy, participating members agree to have their electric bill rounded up to the next highest dollar and that money is collected for Operation Round Up. Many Sioux Valley Energy employees also help by deducting a small amount from their paychecks. Nearly 75 percent of our members and employees participate in the program.

One of the organizations that has historically received funding at the holidays is Luverne, Minnesota-based Sharing Hearts Are Reaching Everyone (SHARE). SHARE serves approximately 500 people in Rock County and at Christmas uses the Operation Round Up money to purchase and distribute gifts to persons in need in the county. Children under age 12 receive a new toy while families can choose what's most beneficial to them, whether it is clothing, diapers, bus tokens, groceries

or senior dining tokens.

The Operation Round Up Board of Trustees meets quarterly — with the last meeting of 2020 occurring in December. While gathered, this group of members will consider dozens of applications from area organizations.

"Our Operation Round Up program fills a critical need for a lot of different non-profit organizations from some who are very large to the majority who are very small or just starting out. Without ORU, these smaller charities would have a very difficult time getting the funding they need to provide some wonderful programs and services throughout our communities," said SVE Vice President of Human Resources and Member Services Debra Bieber.

Download an application for the program at <https://www.siouxvalleyenergy.com/my-community/operation-roundup>.

If you are a member who currently is not participating in the program but would like to join, just indicate on your next billing that you would like to participate in Operation Round Up, sign up online or call 1-800-234-1960. You too can help make a difference.



Bills More Than You Can Handle?

Area Agencies May Offer Help

Some members find it difficult to pay their utility bills in the winter. Organizations in both South Dakota and southwestern Minnesota may be able to provide assistance. Below is the contact information for some of these groups.

South Dakota	
Statewide in South Dakota	
LIEAP, Low Income Energy Assistance Program	1-800-233-8503
First Call for Help	211
Brookings County	
Brookings County Welfare Office	605-696-8260
Brookings County Community Action	605-692-6391
Salvation Army of Brookings County	605-692-8863
My Neighbor	605-691-3225
Kingsbury County	
Interlakes Community Action	605-854-3701
Lake County	
Interlakes Community Action	605-256-6518
Lake County Welfare	605-256-7619
Minnehaha County	
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
Moody County	
Interlakes Community Action	605-997-2824
Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribal Office	605-997-3891
Southwestern 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
MN Department of Energy Services	800-657-3710
First Call for Help	211
Pipestone County	
Pipestone County Veterans Administration	507-825-1171
United Community Action Partnership (UCAP)	507-537-1416
Rock County	
Rock County Veterans Administration	507-283-5061
United Community Action Partnership (UCAP)	507-727-1401

ENERGY ASSISTANCE AGENCIES

Help for Those Impacted by COVID-19

SD CARES Housing Assistance Program

The State of South Dakota, in collaboration with SD Housing Development Authority, Helpline Center, and partner agencies, is making available CARES Act funding to assist South Dakota residents with housing expenses. Individuals and families financially impacted due to COVID-19, the SD CARES Housing Assistance Program (SDCHAP) may provide temporary rental, mortgage, or utility assistance for South Dakota residents who:

- Owe past-due rent, mortgage, or utilities because they have experienced a particular loss due to COVID-19;
- Have incomes at or below 115% of AMI;
 - 1 person - \$62,675
 - 2 person - \$71,530
 - 3 person - \$80,500
 - 4 person - \$89,470
 - 5 person - \$96,600
 - 6 person - \$103,730
 - 7 person - \$110,975
 - 8 person - \$118,105
- Meet all program criteria; and
- Ensure a complete application

The funding amount is based on need with a maximum of \$1,500 per month. While the funding may not fully cover monthly rent, mortgage, or utility bill, it is intended to reduce amounts owed. Paper checks will be mailed directly to the person whom the bill is owed. SDCHAP program funding is not guaranteed.

Review the program details at <https://www.sdhda.org/social-programs/cares-act-housing-assistance-program>

Applications close Dec. 18, 2020. If you have additional questions, please call 211.

Minnesota COVID-19 Housing Assistance Program (CHAP)

The COVID-19 Housing Assistance Program provides housing assistance payments to help prevent eviction, prevent homelessness, and maintain housing stability for eligible renters and homeowners. Local administrators review applications from individuals and families requesting assistance, verify eligibility, and process payments for eligible expenses (including some utility payments) on behalf of households.

To qualify, Minnesota households must:

- Have income at or below 300% of federal poverty guidelines
- Have an eligible expense incurred after March 1, 2020, that is past due.
- Be unable to make one or more payments owed due to unemployment, illness or another COVID-19 related issue.

To apply for CHAP funds:

- Apply for CHAP assistance at www.housinghelpmn.org/
- Call 2-1-1 or 1-800-543-7709 and press 2
- Text "MNRENT" to 898-211
- Multilingual applications available for Hmong, Spanish and Somali
- <https://www.211unitedway.org/>



Storybook Island captures the imagination of the young and old alike both during the summer and the holiday season.

CHRISTMAS IN SD

COVID-19 Hasn't Stopped Christmas from Coming

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

The coronavirus pandemic has certainly had a substantial “bah humbug” effect since it began sweeping across the globe last spring. And as the virus continues to pose a health risk going into the new year ahead, many familiar holiday festivals and events across the state have been canceled, curtailed or postponed until 2021.

But there are still a number of events across the state that are planning to proceed as scheduled, many of which have become annual holiday traditions for individuals and families looking to get into the Christmas spirit.

That’s the case for those who look forward every year to taking in the sights and sounds of the Winter Wonderland event held at Falls Park in Sioux Falls. For residents of the Sioux Falls area and thousands of out-of-town visitors each holiday season, the brilliant light display is a spectacle that not only sparks the Christmas spirit but also brings back memories of childhood wonder from previous seasons.

The Winter Wonderland exhibit includes 270 decorated trees and light poles and more than 25 miles of string lights throughout the complex that runs along the Big Sioux River. A five-story observation tower also gives park visitors a 360-degree bird’s eye view of the many eye-popping displays.



Storybook Island comes alive each Christmas with thousands of holiday lights.

The 29th Annual Parade of Lights will officially kick off the downtown Sioux Falls holiday season with festive music and a dazzling float parade along historic Phillips Avenue from 13th Street to 5th Street. But due to the pandemic this year, officials have announced there will be a twist: instead of the floats moving past the spectators, the spectators will walk along in front of the floats. The floats will remain stationary for the duration of the event and the public is invited to casually walk along the route and view the parked floats up close.

The “stationary parade” begins at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 27.



Black Hills Electric Cooperative in Custer shares the holiday spirit by decorating a bucket truck each year.

Everyone is encouraged to stay for an after-party and awards ceremony where there will be live musical entertainment and other activities. Admission is free.

Storybook Island, a popular attraction in the Rapid City area during the summer months, will hold its annual Christmas Nights of Lights display this season. The park boasts 16 miles of colorful lights, including dioramas, popular children’s fictional characters and a variety of additional holiday-related themes. The event takes place Dec. 4-6, 11-23 and 26-31, from 5:30 to 8:30 each night at 1301 Sheridan Lake Rd. Admission is \$3 per person.

In Custer, the Annual Parade of Lights will take place downtown on Saturday, Dec. 5, beginning at 5:30 p.m. The annual event signals the kick-off of the holiday season in the Southern Hills area. After the parade, Santa and Mrs. Claus will make an appearance at Way Park for the Memorial Tree Lighting Ceremony. The parade begins at 8th and Mt. Rushmore Road and will end at Way Park on 4th and Mt. Rushmore Road.

The residents of Spearfish will celebrate the start of the season with the annual Holidazzle Light Parade and Christmas Stroll sponsored by the Downtown Business Association. The event will take place along Main Street on Saturday, Dec. 5, beginning in the morning and lasting all day.

The Christmas Stroll will take place immediately after the parade and will feature special sales and discounts at downtown merchants and business establishments. To add to the holiday mood, carolers will perform from 2 to 4 p.m., and there will be a



The Pumpkin Carriage is a popular attraction at Storybook Island.



Winter Wonderland at Falls Park offers a unique light display along the Big Sioux River.

Community Chili Feed at Common Grounds at 5 p.m.

In Pierre, revelers will ring in the holiday season with the 20th Annual Parade of Lights on Monday, Nov. 23, from 5 to 7 p.m. Prizes will be awarded for first, second and third place entries and there will also be a Mayor’s Choice Award as well as a Griswold Award for gaudiest float.

Also in Pierre, the highly anticipated “Christmas at the Capitol” event will take place once again this year from Nov. 25 through Dec. 26. The rotunda and the hallways of the Capitol Building will be filled with the sounds of carolers and musicians as well as the scent of mountain pine and the soft glow emanating from nearly 100 lighted Christmas trees. The trees are decorated by cities, businesses, non-profit groups and other civic organizations.

Popular displays inside the Capitol include a set of hand-painted porcelain ornaments and a wooden nativity scene believed to be nearly 125 years old located on the second floor.

Before scheduling a visit, check for the most recent updates at www.facebook.com/ChristmasattheCapitol.

Energy Savings to Give Your Family this Season



Sheila Gross

Energy Services Specialist

'Tis the season for making lists: holiday baking lists, shopping lists, gift-giving lists, and the list goes on.

This month, I'm making a list of 12 "ways" of energy savings our members can give to themselves. I'm borrowing from the theme of a popular Christmas song, so feel free to sing along!

But, before I dive in, the gift of membership is one you gave yourself when you became a

member of Sioux Valley Energy. Throughout the year, your cooperative gives back to you, our members. After all, you're the ones who own the cooperative. We're guided by the Seven Cooperative Principles. Among those principles is commitment to community, education, training and information and members' economic participation.

Educating our members about using electricity wisely is one of the biggest gifts co-ops give. So, for the upcoming holidays, check out these energy savings tips:

- 1. Thinking about upgrading your home's heating and cooling system or considering a system for your new home?** Be sure to check out an electric heat pump. We offer rebates for qualifying heat pumps and also offer an electric heat rate for even more savings. Learn more about our program at <https://www.siouxvalleyenergy.com/my-programs/hvac-programs>.
- 2. An ENERGY STAR® washing machine and dryer** can help reduce your energy bill. Laundry can amount to 5% to 9% of your monthly energy use, so purchasing an energy-efficient set can make a difference.
- 3. We have three ways (and honestly more) to reach trusted**

energy advice. You can call us at 800-234-1960, you can visit our homepage at www.siouxvalleyenergy.com or visit <https://www.yourcoopower.com/energy-resources/home/energy-house>. And you can monitor your energy use through your SmartHub app on your mobile device (available for download in your app store) and available for your computer at <https://siouxvalleyenergy.smarthub.coop/Login.html>. Sign up today!

- 4. Throughout the year, there are several things you can do to maximize your seasonal savings.** In the winter, set your thermostat to 68 degrees F. and turn it up to 78 degrees in the summer. Save even more by installing a programmable thermostat. (Check out our \$50 rebate for the purchase of a new smart thermostat when paired with signing up for the Time of Use Rate.) During the winter, close your shades and drapes at night to keep heat in and open them during the day to let solar heat in. In the summer, close the drapes and blinds during the sunniest parts of the day to cut down on heat gain. Monitor your home's relative humidity in the summer and talk to your HVAC technician about lowering your AC indoor fan speed if the humidity is consistently in the 60% range or above.
- 5. Five tubes of caulk will go a long way to sealing up your home and sealing in savings.** Caulk around baseboards with a clear sealant. Caulk around plumbing penetrations that come through walls beneath bathroom and kitchen sinks. Caulk around electrical wire penetrations at the top of the interior walls in the attic. Caulk around windows. (While you're at it, ensure windows and doors are properly weather-stripped and use door sweeps.) Learn more at <https://www.touchstoneenergy.com/caulking-your-windows>
- 6. Plug electronic devices such as computers, gaming consoles printers and the like into power strips to turn off during periods without use.** Smart power strips make it an easy task to save money. Electronics account for about 21% of a home's

Tell Me More!

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heat Pump Rebate | <input type="checkbox"/> SmartHub Account Tool | <input type="checkbox"/> Renewable Energy Credit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electric Heat Rate | <input type="checkbox"/> Smart Thermostat Rebate | <input type="checkbox"/> Energy Saving Tips |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy Audit | <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial/Ag LED Program | <input type="checkbox"/> Interlock Kit/Generator |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loan Program | <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Heat Rebates | <input type="checkbox"/> Marathon/Westinghouse Water Heaters |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electric Vehicle program | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Time of Use Rate Irrigation Rebate | | |

Send me a copy of the 101 Easy Ways to Save Energy and Money booklet

Please contact me about the topics at left.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

Account #: _____

Phone #: _____

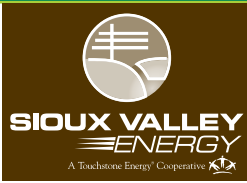
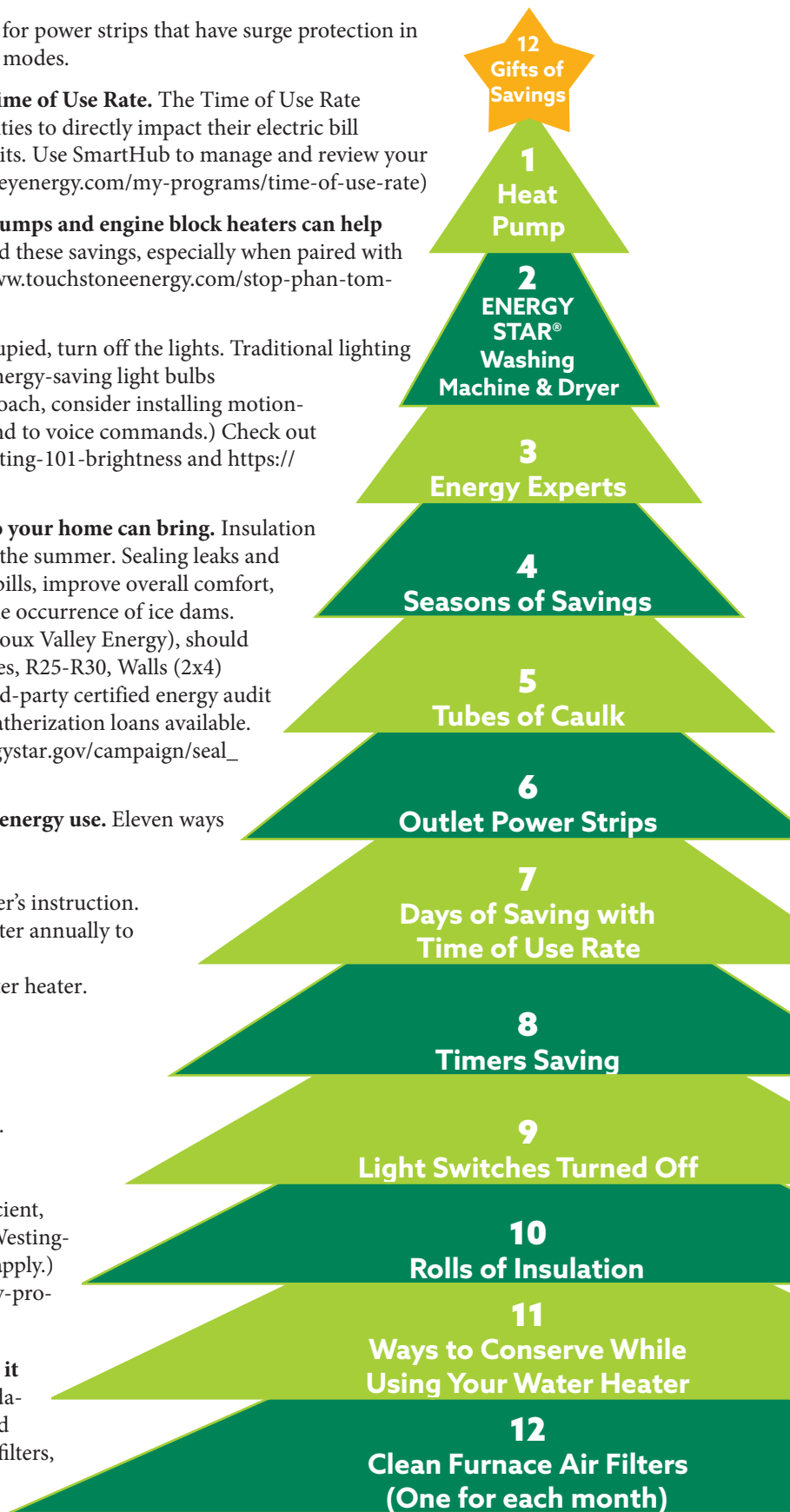
Email: _____

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


energy use – second only to heating and cooling. Look for power strips that have surge protection in them and utilize your devices’ power savings and sleep modes.

7. **Every day of the week is a day for saving with our Time of Use Rate.** The Time of Use Rate (TOU) was developed for members seeking opportunities to directly impact their electric bill through their conservation efforts and daily usage habits. Use SmartHub to manage and review your usage. (Learn more about this at <https://www.siouxvalleyenergy.com/my-programs/time-of-use-rate>)
8. **Using timers on your holiday lights, recirculating pumps and engine block heaters can help with the savings.** Smart home technologies can expand these savings, especially when paired with the Time of Use Rate previously discussed. (<https://www.touchstoneenergy.com/stop-phan-tom-power-and-save-10>)
9. **Turn off light switches.** When leaving a room unoccupied, turn off the lights. Traditional lighting can amount up to 12% of your monthly energy use. Energy-saving light bulbs can slice lighting costs by 75%. (For a hands-free approach, consider installing motion-sensing switches or using smart light bulbs that respond to voice commands.) Check out these articles: <https://www.touchstoneenergy.com/lighting-101-brightness> and <https://www.touchstoneenergy.com/5-cool-things-about-leds>
10. **You’ll be leaping at the savings adding insulation to your home can bring.** Insulation helps keep your home warm in the winter and cool in the summer. Sealing leaks and adding insulation can help you save money on utility bills, improve overall comfort, along with reducing noise, pollen, dust, insects, and the occurrence of ice dams. Zone 6 (which includes all of the counties served by Sioux Valley Energy), should follow these values: Attic R49-R60, Floors/Crawl Spaces, R25-R30, Walls (2x4) R13-R15, Walls (2x6) R19-R21. Contact SVE for a third-party certified energy audit (including infrared imaging/blower door testing). Weatherization loans available. For insulating and sealing tips, visit https://www.energystar.gov/campaign/seal_insulate/ .
11. **Water heating can amount to 12% of your monthly energy use.** Eleven ways to reduce water heating expenses include:
 - Set heating elements to 120 degrees F.
 - Install water heater wrap (blanket) per manufacturer’s instruction.
 - Drain one to two gallons from bottom of water heater annually to reduce sediment accumulation.
 - Install heat traps on water lines when replacing water heater.
 - Insulate exposed hot water lines
 - Limit showers to five to seven minutes.
 - Install water-saving shower heads.
 - Fix dripping faucets.
 - Don’t let water run while shaving or brushing teeth.
 - Wash clothes in cold water.
 - Run dish washer only when full.

Time for a new water heater? Purchase an energy-efficient, lifetime tank-warrantied water heater (Marathon or Westinghouse) from Sioux Valley Energy. (Some restrictions apply.) Learn more at <https://www.siouxvalleyenergy.com/my-programs/water-heater-programs> .
12. **Check your HVAC air filter each month and change it when dirty** (following the manufacturer’s recommendations.) Dirty filters can impact your home comfort and increase your electricity bill. When installing new air filters, make sure they are facing in the correct direction (look for the arrow on the side of the filter.) Have your HVAC system serviced once per year by a NATE-certified technician. Have them verify your ducts are tightly connected to your HVAC equipment. Well-sealed and insulated ducts can save up to 10%.



Contact Sioux Valley Energy for more information on rebates and rates that help you put the power of saving in your hands!



There are several popular electronics on the market that can help you use energy more efficiently.

Cut Energy Consumption

Upgrade Electronics for Energy Savings

Are you looking for easy ways to save more money on your monthly energy bills as the year comes to a close?

Beyond some of the more traditional energy efficiency measures, such as sealing air leaks or adding additional insulation, there are several popular electronics that can help you use energy more efficiently.

These devices are relatively easy to incorporate into your home, making them a simple way to help manage your energy use.

Smart thermostats are becoming an increasingly popular option to help save energy at home. With smart thermostats, there's no longer a need to constantly adjust the temperature. They can be programmed to follow a pattern of heating and cooling throughout the day and year to maximize your comfort and energy use at the same time.

Some advanced smart thermostats out on the market today can even learn your habits and adjust the temperature in your home accordingly. Another great benefit is the ability to control a smart thermostat remotely from an app on your phone, allowing you to set the temperature to your liking before you even arrive home.

Lastly, some smart thermostats can be integrated with a more complete smart home hub, like Amazon Alexa or Google Home,

which are both hot sellers in the market. Smart thermostats can be pretty pricey upfront, but if it's time to upgrade your home's thermostat, you'll soon discover that smart options offer more convenience and savings that make them worth the initial investment.

If you're looking for ways to save energy while you and your family are on a budget, consider smart plugs. Smart plugs can be inserted into any standard electrical outlet and can help you manage the energy of the devices that are plugged in. With con-



Smart thermostats are becoming an increasingly popular option to help save energy. Photo provided by Ecobee.

If your goal is to reduce your energy use at home, energy monitors can give you the information you need to achieve this goal.

trol of the smart plug, you can stop power-hungry devices from being on longer than necessary.

Some smart plug models have a scheduling option, allowing you to turn on lights or turn off the TV at certain times of the day, such as when you leave in the morning and when you anticipate returning home. Others offer a dimming function, allowing you to change the brightness of lights that are plugged into the smart plug. These features can be controlled through an app on your phone, and some models also have voice-controlled options when connected to a smart home hub.

Another useful gadget is the home energy monitor, which helps you monitor home energy use and set energy budgets. If your goal is to reduce your energy use at home, energy monitors can give you the information you need to achieve this goal. They are connected to your electric meter and provide a big picture on your home's energy use.

Additionally, some home energy monitors can show which appliances are using the most energy, giving you the knowledge on which devices to cut down on. There are also a few additional features among home energy monitors that provide several different benefits. Some models can show you real-time electricity use and costs, while some can help create a personalized plan for energy efficiency. Most home energy monitors can be connected through a smart phone app, which can send notifications, warn about abnormal energy use and provide tips for further energy savings.

These simple devices can help you save a little more energy each month. Considering what your needs are will help you choose a device with the appropriate features. As with any new product, do some homework first to determine which device suits your home best.

Plug into Presents that Pay Off with Safety

During the holidays, many of us turn our attention to gift giving, and while the shiny, trendy and pricey may make a big splash when the unwrapping's done, practical gifts can leave lasting impressions. What's more, they can really make a difference by enhancing safety and improving security.

Here are a few practical gift ideas that can make a real difference in helping to reduce safety risks year-round.

Smoke Detectors: Most of us have at least one in our homes, but experts say that's not enough. The National Fire Protection Association recommends that a working smoke detector be installed in every bedroom, on every level of a home, and in hallways outside of sleeping areas. And, if smoke detectors are more than 10 years old, they should be replaced.

Carbon Monoxide Alarms: Carbon monoxide, or CO, is a colorless, odorless gas

created by incomplete consumption of fuels like gasoline, wood, natural gas, propane, oil, coal or methane. The gas is highly toxic, so having CO detectors outside of sleeping areas and on every level of a home improves safety. Local fire departments respond to about 80,000 non-fire CO incidents each year. Fuel-burning heating equipment and cooking appliances should be professionally inspected once a year to reduce the risks of malfunction and detect structural problems early.

Extension Cords: They are not all created equal; subject to wear; have specific use guidelines; and are never recommended for permanent use. Brittle and cracked plastic can indicate heat damage, and exposed wires or frayed connections increase risk of shock, shorts or fires. An extension cord that's warm or hot to the touch is a good indication it's not designed to safely do the job. Consider giving an assortment of extension cords designed for indoor or outdoor use. Before you buy, look for the label of a nationally recognized testing lab like Underwriters Laboratories (UL), CSA-International (CSA) or Intertek (ETL).

Arc Fault Circuit Interrupters: Arcing and sparking are indications that a home's electrical wiring needs service. Arc Fault Circuit Interrupters (AFCIs) can help address fire hazards before they occur. Properly installed by a licensed electrician, AFCIs can often replace circuit breakers in the electrical panel box. This should be completed by a qualified electrician because the installation involves working inside the panel box, which carries current even when main circuit breakers are turned off.



CO-OP SPIRIT OF GIVING



Black Hills Electric employees assist in clean-up efforts after the flood of 2019 in Custer. From left to right are Carlos Rodriguez, Danny Dooley, Scott Schramm, Beau Bradeen, Mark Svoboda and Rory Halverson.

CO-OP SPIRIT OF GIVING

The Cooperative Spirit of Giving is Alive Year-Around

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

For member-owned electric cooperatives, the spirit of giving associated with the Christmas holiday season is something that continues long after the presents have been opened and the egg nog container has been emptied.

Electric cooperatives are committed to serving their communities, a commitment - Concern for Community - that is part of the 7 Cooperative Principles that guide all member-owned cooperative organizations.

Across the state and across the country, for example, electric cooperatives participate in a program called Operation Round Up where members are encouraged to “round up” their bills to the next whole dollar amount. The funds are then used to support civic organizations, local charities and in some cases individuals or individual families who are in need.

There are many other examples. Cooperatives support education through scholarship programs and safety demonstrations, and also engage in youth development programs such as the annual Washington Youth Tour and the Youth Excursion. Employees regularly volunteer their time to participate in local fun runs, community clean-up days, and other projects organized to enhance the quality of life for all.

This commitment to serve is something that has been a hallmark

since the beginning of the rural electrification movement more than 80 years ago and continues unabated today.

Ed Anderson, general manager of the South Dakota Rural Electric Association based in Pierre, said the spirit of giving is an integral part of the fabric that unites all electric cooperatives, and it extends beyond the delivery of electric power.

“Electric cooperatives were created for one purpose only, and that’s to do everything we can to improve the quality of life for the people we serve, as well as everyone else in the community,” Anderson said. “It begins with the thing that everybody needs - electricity - but it also includes a solid commitment to be active, to be engaged and to be involved in those things that make our homes better places to live, work and raise our families.”

Anderson also noted that the commitment to serve also includes not just staff but also cooperative leaders such as upper and middle management and board members.

“Board directors are elected by the members to establish policies that set the future course of the cooperative,” Anderson said. “By definition, they are also members of the cooperative themselves and have a keen interest in supporting the community while also making the decisions that will lead to more reliable power and affordable rates.”

Four Ways Santa Saves Energy in His Workshop

The holiday season is finally upon us, and Santa and his elves have been especially busy as they gear up for their biggest night of the year.

It's no secret that Santa is known for running an efficient workshop - how else could he make all those toys in time for Christmas Eve? Rumor has it that one way Santa ensures an efficient workspace is through energy-saving measures.

Here are four ways Santa saves energy in his workshop.

1. Santa leaves his decorations up year-round, so by using LED holiday light strands, he's able to save on his monthly energy bills. LED holiday strands can last up to 40 seasons, which make them a great option for any festive home.

2. Santa requires several power tools to make a year's worth of new toys. That's why he insists on using cordless power tools with the ENERGY STAR® rating.

According to energystar.gov, if all power tools in the U.S. used ENERGY STAR®-rated battery chargers, 2 billion kWh hours of electricity could be saved - that's equivalent to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 1.7 million tons!

3. Mrs. Claus loves the comfort of a fire, and Santa knows one of the best tricks to ensure fireplace efficiency. While a fireplace can keep a small area of your home cozy and warm, it can also pull heated air from the room through the chimney. That's why Santa always closes the flue when a fire isn't burning.

4. Santa also saves energy by using power strips. Power strips are ideal for workshops, craft nooks, game rooms and other spaces in your home. With one simple switch, you can conveniently control several devices and electronics that are plugged into the power strip.



Last year, Sioux Valley Energy employees volunteered to wrap Christmas presents at the Sioux Empire Mall to raise money for the Children's Home Society. Pictured from left to right: Sarina Hanson, Kim Hansen, Kara LeBrun, Lori George and Chinelle Christensen.



Santa paid a visit to Pipestone, MN, last year. The event was made possible through Sioux Valley Energy's Operation Round Up program, which provided a new suit and related items for Mr. Claus.

Visit Co-op Connections Plus

Take a moment to visit our new online companion to *Cooperative Connections*. Co-op Connections Plus is a YouTube channel that features a more in-depth treatment of stories appearing in this publication as well as other subjects of interest to rural South Dakotans.

Search for "Co-op Connections Plus" and you'll find videos on human trafficking, support programs for veterans, grain bin safety, the Co-ops Vote campaign and more. Be sure to "like" and "subscribe."



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

November 20-21

Holiday Arts Christmas Show, 112 E. 5th St. Masonic Hall, Mitchell, SD, 605-359-2049

November 21-22

Winterfest: A Winter Arts Festival, 203 S. Washington St., Aberdeen, SD, 605-226-1557

November 24-December 26

Christmas at the Capitol, Free Admission, Pierre, SD

November 27

Hill City Olde Tyme Christmas Parade and Celebration Kick-Off, 5 p.m., Downtown Hill City, SD, 605-574-2368

November 27

Black Friday Trap Shoot, Sioux Falls Izaak Walton League, 10:30 a.m., Lunch Available, 5000 North Oakview Place, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-332-9527

November 27

Annual Sioux Falls Parade of Lights, 7:30 to 9 p.m., Phillips Ave., Sioux Falls, SD 605-338-4009

November 28

Holiday Celebration and Winter Market, 2 to 6 p.m., Free Admission, Main Street Square in Downtown Rapid City, SD

November 27-December 27

Trees and Trains at the South Dakota Railroad Museum, Weekends, Contact the Museum for Days and Times. Hill City, SD, 605-574-9000



December 4

Christmas in the Hills Parade of Lights, 6 p.m., Downtown Hot Springs, SD, 605-745-4140

December 4-5

Creekside Crafters 13th Annual Bazaar, Snappers Club Building in City Camp-ground, Friday 1 to 8 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Spearfish, SD

December 4-6 and 10-12

Same Time, Next Year, Dramatic Comedy by Bernard Slade, Grand Opera House, Pierre, SD, www.pierreplayers.com

December 5

Manager Medlodies Concert Christmas in the Hills, 7 to 9 p.m., Mueller Center, Hot Springs, SD, 605-745-4140

December 5

Rapid City Garden Club's 59th Annual Wreath and Centerpiece Sale, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., Lions' and Bridger Buildings, Central States Fairgrounds, Rapid City, SD, 605-343-0710

December 5

Custer Christmas Parade, 5:30 p.m., Downtown Custer, SD, 605-673-2244

December 5

Festival of Trees, Newell City Hall, Newell, SD, Admission: Two Cans of Non-Perishable Food Items Per Person, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

December 6, 20

VFW Bingo, Wall Community Center, Wall, SD, 605-279-2663

December 12

Christmas for Kids, Ages 0-10 visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus, Custer High School, Preregistration is Required, Register via email custerchristmas4kids@gmail.com, Custer, SD

December 12

Frontier Christmas, 11907 434th Ave., Lake City, SD, 605-448-5474

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.