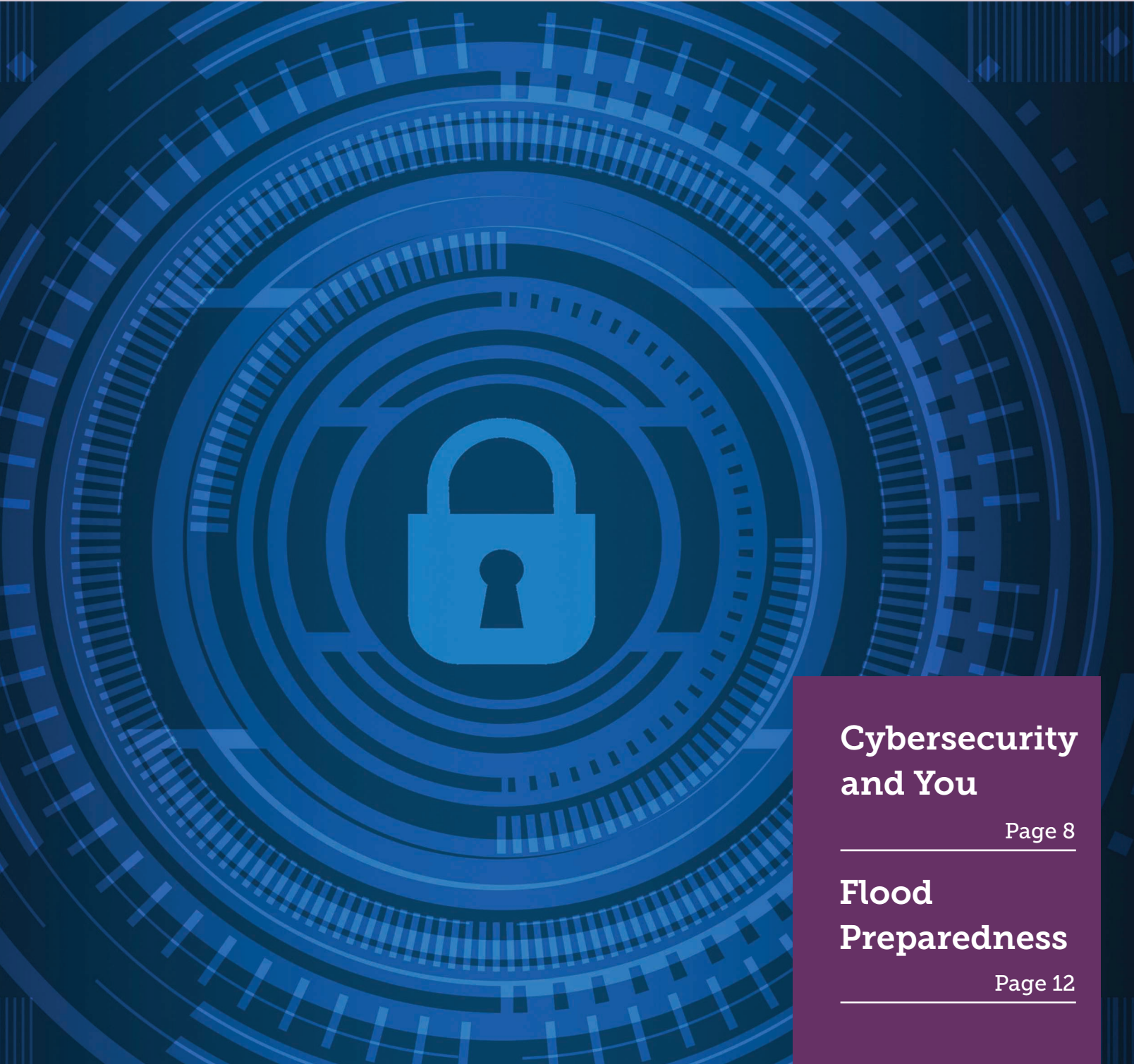




Cooperative Connections



**Cybersecurity
and You**

Page 8

**Flood
Preparedness**

Page 12

Rates to Increase in May



Tim McCarthy, GM/CEO

tim.mccarthy@siouxvalleyenergy.com

We have made the decision to cancel the remainder of district meetings which were scheduled in March and April due to the continued spread and confirmed case of Coronavirus within the Cooperative's service territory. As an essential service provider, we believe it is prudent to mitigate as much risk as possible for our members and our employees. More detailed info is available on page 3.

One of the major messages we had planned to provide at these meetings is in regard to the upcoming rate adjustment members will see on their electric bills in May. I have mentioned it a few times in my column—but wanted to provide a few more details.

Sioux Valley Energy has over 6,100 miles of electric line—that's enough to stretch from Sioux Falls to Tokyo, Japan. Those lines cover over 3,800 square miles or 2.5 Million acres which is three times the size of the state of Rhode Island or one and a half times the size of Delaware. Our system also has over 16,000 transformers on it and almost 52,000 poles. If you convert our system peak, which is 150 megawatts to horsepower units, it would take over 1,000 - 200 horsepower tractors to supply the required energy and our demand is growing by over 30 tractors each year.

Now that you have a mental image of the size and scope of Sioux Valley's system, multiply that for our power supplier's transmission—it's simply massive.

All of these poles, wires and equipment need to work together to meet an ever-increasing demand. One of the issues facing not only Sioux Valley Energy, but utilities nationwide is aging infrastructure. Right now, approximately one-third of Sioux Valley Energy's electric system needs to be replaced. Some of that was built back in the 1940s and 50s. Four years ago, we increased our replacement plan and each year our goal is to build 125 miles of new electric line and associated equipment. We plan to invest more than \$18-million dollars on electric infrastructure in 2020. At this pace, it will take up to twenty years to update and modernize the system. Our transmission suppliers are facing the same issue of aging infrastructure and so they too are investing significant capital in the transmission system.

This investment on the distribution and transmission level has led to increased costs resulting in upward pressure on rates. If you combine the increased investment with the fact that we had a wholesale power increase of 13 percent three years ago (we absorbed all but four percent), you end up with a revenue shortfall. As a result, there will be a rate increase this year. We plan to implement the increase in May instead of January. The overall average increase for all rate classes will equate to about 7.5 percent. Each rate class will be a little different depending on actual costs. Even with this increase, we remain below the 13 percent increase mentioned above.

Some of the methods we have used over the last several years to hold rate increases to a minimum have been to utilize revenue deferral, improve internal efficiencies and avoid adding labor. We will again use some deferred revenue this year, but unfortunately, that will not be enough. We continue to seek internal efficiencies to help offset potential increases. In the meanwhile, Sioux Valley Energy has continued to grow and has reached a point of needing to hire additional labor to keep up with increasing growth and demand. Looking forward, my hope is to be able to hold these rates solid for the next three years. This is my goal. And while circumstances can change, my promise to you is that we will work hard to achieve this goal.

Our SMEC members will see a different increase than our legacy members. The overall average increase for our SMEC members will be five percent. The change in the SMEC rate will be applied mostly to the basic service charge. The basic service charge covers things like your meter, poles, lines and billing costs--all the things that have fixed costs and aren't tied to how many kilowatt hours you use.

Continued on Page 3

CORRECTION

In the March edition of the newsletter we found a mistake. Within the manager's column, we highlighted various programs and in error we listed our 'Time of Use' program OFF-PEAK time periods incorrectly. Please note the program has NOT changed.

Our ON-PEAK hours are still 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. and our OFF-PEAK hours are any other time of the day. We apologize for any confusion this may have caused.

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.

District Meetings Canceled

Sioux Valley Energy provides an essential service to its membership. Electricity is a necessity for our daily lives at work and at home. This is why the Cooperative has initiated plans to reduce the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19) to its employees and members. The following steps are being taken to help mitigate as much unnecessary risk as possible:

- **Cancellation/Postponement of all remaining District Meetings:** We believe that it is best to avoid bringing together large groups of people in tight quarters (some of whom may be at higher risk for complications). District meetings, where elections were to be held, will be moved to coincide with the Annual Meeting which will take place on Tuesday, June 2nd at the Tri-Valley School. Election meetings must be held per the bylaws. Non-election meetings will be cancelled. Members will still be eligible for a \$25 bill credit if they attend the Annual Meeting in June (unless they already received one at the two District Meetings that were held in Luverne, MN and White, SD).
- **Implementation of more frequent cleaning and sanitizing schedule throughout all Sioux Valley Energy facilities.**
- **Coordination of interdependent utilities, contractors and suppliers to evaluate how operations could be impacted by potential disruptions and make plans to reduce the chance of those disruptions.**
- **Limitation of non-essential travel and minimization of unnecessary large group interaction.**
- **Preparing office employees to work remotely from home when possible and if it becomes necessary. Lineworkers will be available for any potential outages.**
- **If necessary, SVE will be prepared to close each of its Service Centers to public access but will continue to provide 24/7 phone assistance to members.**
- **Members who are financially impacted by extenuating circumstances related to Coronavirus will be encouraged to contact SVE to set up a special payment plan.**

As an essential service provider, it is our responsibility to be prepared and these steps are simply precautionary. We encourage you to do your part to reduce the spread of any infectious diseases by thoroughly washing your hands, covering coughs, sneezes and sniffles with a tissue and avoid touching your face. More recommendations are available on the Centers for Disease Control website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/prevention.html>.

If you have any questions, please call us at 800-234-1960 or email us at info@siouxvalleyenergy.com.

Manager's Column, Continued from Page 2

The reason this increase is less than our legacy members is because it was part of an agreement we made with the Minnesota PUC when Sioux Valley, along with several other co-ops, purchased the Alliant Energy assets in Minnesota.

The agreement we made with the PUC restricted any rate increases until 2019 and would allow up to a five percent rate increase in 2019 and 2020. So, when our legacy members received rate increases in 2017, SMEC rates remained unchanged.

We will begin to transition our SMEC rates to the legacy Sioux Valley Energy rates over the next few years. As we start to blend those rates, SMEC members will see gradual adjustments over a period of time to adjust the rate format to what all other members pay.

Of course, it's never fun to announce a rate increase, but we have attempted to develop creative rates and programs which will give the member more control over their electric bill. I encourage you to give us a call if you would like to learn more about these programs.

Please stay safe this upcoming spring and we will continue to keep you updated on any Coronavirus-related information that may impact Sioux Valley Energy.

Springtime Electrical Safety Tips

Now that the weather is warmer and people are spending more time outside, it's important to make sure certain electrical components are functioning properly and you are practicing good habits around electrical items both inside and outside of the home.

Focusing on electrical safety awareness can help ensure you are not injured due to an electrical malfunction.

According to the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI), thousands of people in the United States are critically injured or electrocuted as a result of electrical fires and accidents in their own homes.

Here are some simple safety rules to remember:

- Ladders of every material should not come in contact with a power line, as it may result in a serious injury or death. Keeping a 10 feet distance from an overhead power line is a good rule of measure.
- If your power tools are not being used, make sure to unplug everything. If not, it's possible for the tools to overheat and cause a fire.
- Check for damaged cords on power tools. It is important to check if the cord is frayed or the plug is broken. This makes the tool dangerous to operate.
- Avoid wet areas while using any electrical item. Be aware of your surroundings, being sure to check for a running hose or sprinkler. Wet grass is particularly an issue.
- Teach kids to never fly a kite or climb a tree near a power line. If a kite gets tangled in overhead power lines, don't try to remove it yourself. Kite string can conduct an electrical current, which can cause serious injuries or death.
- Call 811 before you dig so underground utility lines can be properly marked. This free service is required by state law and should be done at least two business days before the digging begins.

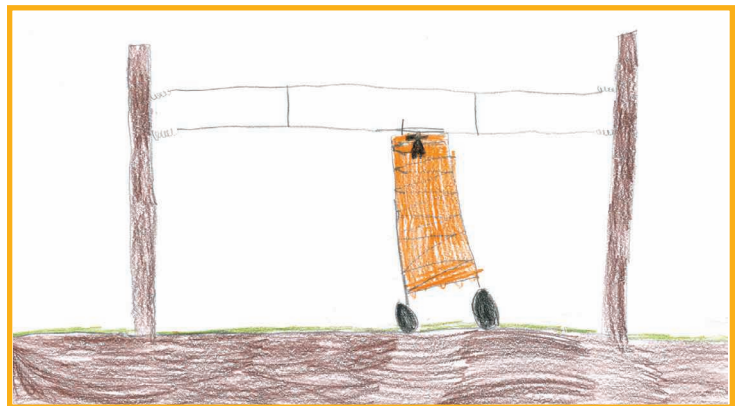
All electrical lines and equipment should be treated seriously and with caution.

Use these simple and easy to follow tips to stay safe this summer.

Source: www.mrelectric.com



KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



"Do not cut power lines in half."

Annette Tschetter, 6 years old

Annette is the daughter of Ryan and Elaine Tschetter, Revillo, S.D. They are members of Whetstone Valley Electric Cooperative, Milbank, 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.

Appetizers and Beverages

Pink Rhubarb Punch

8 cups chopped rhubarb	2 cups boiling water
8 cups water	2 cups pineapple juice
2 cups sugar	1/4 cup lemon juice
3 T. strawberry gelatin	Lemon-lime soda

In large saucepan, bring rhubarb and water to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer for 10 minutes. Drain, reserving liquid. In a large bowl, combine sugar, gelatin and boiling water until dissolved. Add pineapple and lemon juices. Stir in rhubarb liquid; chill. Just before serving, add soda or ginger ale as desired.

Joyce Romkema, Springfield, S.D.

Jalapeño/Bacon Poppers

10 jalapeños	1-1/2 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
1/2 tsp. garlic powder	1/2 lb. bacon, cooked and crumbled
1/2 tsp. salt	1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, softened
1/4 tsp. pepper	
1/4 cup sliced green onions	

Slice each jalapeño in half lengthwise and use spoon to remove seeds and veins. Combine garlic powder, salt, pepper, green onions, Cheddar cheese, bacon and cream cheese. Spoon the mixture evenly in jalapeños and place on baking sheet. Bake at 400°F. for 20 minutes or until jalapeños are tender. Very flavorful but not hot to taste.

Tina Haug, Pierre, S.D.

Spring Radish-Onion Spread

1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, softened	1/4 tsp. paprika
1/4 cup butter, softened	1 cup shredded radishes
1/2 tsp. celery salt	1/4 cup finely chopped green onions
1/2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce	Assorted crackers, chips or fresh veggies

Combine first 5 ingredients. Fold in radishes and onions. Cover and chill before serving.

Elaine Rowett, Sturgis, S.D.

Jalapeño Cheddar Biscuits

2 cups flour	1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
1 T. baking powder	2 green onions, thinly sliced
1 tsp. baking soda	Honey Butter:
2 tsp. McCormick Gourmet™ Jalapeño Pepper, Ground	1/2 cup (1 stick) butter, softened
1 cup buttermilk	3 T. honey
1/2 cup (1 stick) cold butter, cut into chunks	

For the biscuits, mix flour, baking powder, baking soda and jalapeño pepper in large bowl. Cut in butter with pastry blender or 2 knives until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Add buttermilk; stir to form a soft dough. Stir in cheese and green onions. Drop dough by rounded 1/4 cupfuls about 2 inches apart onto parchment paper-lined baking sheet, forming 12 biscuits. Bake at 375°F. for 18 to 20 minutes or until golden brown. Cool on wire rack. Meanwhile, for the honey butter, mix butter and honey in small bowl until smooth. Serve with biscuits. Makes 12 servings.

Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 270, Total Fat 18g, Fiber 1g, Cholesterol 51mg, Sodium 414mg, Carbohydrates 22g, Protein 5g

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Mocha Freeze

2 cups vanilla ice cream, softened	1 T. chocolate syrup
1/4 cup cold strong coffee	1/2 cup crushed ice

In blender, combine all ingredients. Cover; blend until of desired consistency. Pour into glasses and serve immediately. Makes 4 servings.

Becki Hauser, Tripp, S.D.

Please send your favorite casserole, dairy or dessert recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3).

Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in June 2020. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and co-op name.

Rate Increase Effective in May

The Sioux Valley Energy Board of Directors approved an increase in rates and charges affecting prices for the electric service that you receive. The increase will apply to your electric bill beginning in May 2020.

The average increase in annual revenues for the cooperative overall will be approximately 7.5 percent system wide. SMEC members will see an overall average increase of five percent which will mostly impact their basic service charge. Please see the ‘Manager’s Column’ on pages 2 and 3 for more detail on the rate adjustments. The effect of the increase on your bill will vary depending upon the type and extent of usage. The average annual revenue increase by rate classes are listed below along with SMEC rate adjustments.

SVE Customer Class	Increase	SMEC Customer Class	2019 Basic Service	2020 Basic Service
Farm and Rural Residential	8.1%	Single Phase Residential	\$8.50/mo.	\$14.25/mo.
Residential	7.5%	Single Phase Farm	\$21.33/mo.	\$23.00/mo.
General Service	8.2%	General Service	\$21.33/mo.	\$23.00/mo.
Large Power	6.9%	Large Power	\$15.14/kw (summer)	\$16.00/kw (summer)
Irrigation	4.6%		\$9.28/kw (winter)	\$11.40/kw (winter)
Electric Heat	5.0%			

The percentage increase is different among the rate classes due to varying costs of providing service to each customer class. The different percentages help realign the classes closer to their actual cost of providing service. The detailed rate schedule will be posted on the SVE website.

Questions? To obtain an individual rate analysis, contact Sioux Valley Energy at **1-800-234-1960**.

5 STEPS FOR SAFE DIGGING

Working on an outdoor project? Always call 8-1-1 first, because you never know what’s below. Here are five easy steps for safe digging:

Source: call811.com

1. NOTIFY

Call 8-1-1 or make a request online two to three days before you start.



2. WAIT

Wait two to three days for a response to your request. Affected utilities will send a locator to mark any underground utility lines.



3. CONFIRM

Confirm that all affected utilities have responded by comparing the markers to the list of utilities the 8-1-1 call center notified.



4. RESPECT

Respect the markers provided by the affected utilities. They are your guide for the duration of your project.



5. DIG CAREFULLY

If you can't avoid digging near the markers (within 18-24 inches on all sides, depending on state laws), consider moving your project.



Free Trees Available to SVE Members

Earth Day Celebration



Earth Day is celebrated on Wednesday, April 22nd and in recognition of Sioux Valley Energy's commitment to community and caring for the environment initiatives, the Cooperative will purchase a limited number of **bare-root seeding trees** for members to plant.

The give-away event* will take place at each of the Co-op's service centers in Colman, Brandon and Pipestone. Members can stop by one of the offices on **Wednesday, April 22 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.** Any extra trees will be available Thursday, April 23 and Friday, April 24 during the hours of 8 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Please call ahead to check to see if there are any extra trees. There will be 1,500 trees in total available to the membership and they will be given out on a "first-come, first-served" basis. Each member is eligible for four trees in total--two Hackberry and two Black Hills Spruce. Once the trees are gone; they are gone!

The give-away event is dependent upon weather, shipment dates and availability. Check Facebook and www.siouxvalleyenergy.com for updates during the day on April 22! Trees are provided by the Conservation Districts of South Dakota and grown in Watertown, SD at the Big Sioux Nursery.

*In Spring of 1970, Senator Gaylord Nelson created Earth Day to bring the issue of pollution to national attention. Twenty-two million Americans demonstrated in different cities and Congress authorized the creation of a new federal agency, EPA, to promote ecology and awareness for the growing issues related to air, water and soil pollution. *Give-away event is dependent upon weather, shipment dates and availability.*

Mark Your Calendar!

Annual Meeting

This year's annual meeting date and location has been set!

The meeting will be held at the Tri-Valley School (between Colton and Hartford) on Tuesday, June 2.

The meeting will include a short business session as required by the bylaws and the musical group 'Surfin' Safari' will perform. This band exclusively performs the music from the 50's and 60's, DooWop, Surfin' Music, Rockabilly, and more.



Rebates & Incentives Available

Members Can Save Energy & Money

Sioux Valley Energy offers an entire suite of programs available to members to help them save energy and money. From water heaters and smart thermostats to heat pumps and electric vehicles, the Co-op can help make your home or business more efficient. Take a look at the suite of programs available:

Sioux Valley Energy Rebates & Incentives

- Irrigation Rebate
- Commercial Electric Heat Rebate
- Commercial Lighting Rebate
- Commercial Energy Audit
- Loans
- Generator Services
- Commercial Public Electric Vehicle (EV) Charger
- Water Heater Program
- Electric Vehicle Incentives
- Time of Use Rate
- Smart Thermostat Rebate
- Residential Heat Pump Rebate
- Electric Heat Rate

To learn more about Sioux Valley Energy Programs, log on to: www.siouxvalleyenergy.com/my-programs/rebates



COOPERATIVE CYBERSECURITY

Kaley Lockwood

NRECA

Digital technologies and smart devices are facilitating greater information sharing by allowing people (and devices) to more efficiently communicate with each other. Internet-connected devices not only better enable us to stay in touch with loved ones, they simplify and streamline our lives by communicating with each other.

But greater connectivity comes with a cost.

Addressing the persistent and evolving reality of cyber threats is important for individuals and organizations alike. As people become increasingly interconnected and reliant on digital technologies, there are more opportunities for cyber threats that need to be addressed.

To this end, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) launched RC3, the Rural Cooperative Cybersecurity Capabilities program, to help electric cooperatives build stronger cybersecurity programs. With funding from the U.S. Department of Energy, RC3 is developing tools to help cooperatives develop a culture of cybersecurity.

Electric cooperatives, large and small, are investing time and

resources to build stronger cyber defenses and increase their resiliency to cyberattacks. As co-ops ramp up capabilities in the beneficial use of digital technologies, they are integrating best practices to safeguard consumer data and grid operations from cyberattacks.

Electric co-ops are responding to the challenge, but are you? Cybercrime affects everyone – organizations, businesses and even individuals. Taking steps to protect your home network and devices from cyberattacks now will save you time and money in the long run.

Here are a few tips to beef up your personal cybersecurity:

- Make sure you have antivirus software installed on your computer, and remember to keep it updated.
- Don't send e-mails containing personal information, like your date of birth or Social Security Number, because that increases opportunities for mal-actors to steal your identify. Be careful when entering a credit card number into a website – if you do, make sure that it's a secure website. You can tell if it's secure by looking for the "s" at the beginning of the website address. Most begin with "http://." A secure site will begin with "https://."

- Attachments or links in an email can contain malware that can infect your computer. Never open an e-mail attachment or click a link unless you know the person sending it, and you were expecting them to send it to you (hackers can take over an account and make it look like it's from a friend.)
- Monitor children's online activity, and make sure they know how to practice good cyber security. Visit the U.S. Computer Emergency Readiness Team's (UC-CERT) website for security tips on how to keep children safe online (<https://www.us-cert.gov/ncas/tips/ST05-002>).

- Always use a different password for each account. Stick to longer passwords that include a combination of numbers, special characters, with both lowercase and capital letters.

Kaley Lockwood writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56 percent of the nation's landscape.

Everyone plays a role in their organization's online safety and security, whether that be at home, school or work. You are the first line of defense.

Think Before You Click

- Always hover over a link first to be sure it is safe.
- Report suspicious emails or emails from an unknown sender to your spam filter and delete them from your inbox.



Defend Your Computer

- The best defense against viruses, malware and other online threats is keeping your equipment up to date.
- Work with our IT staff (or provider) to keep your software, including your web browser, and operating systems current.



Lockdown Your Log-in

- Create long and unique passwords. Use familiar phrases or song lyrics you'll remember.
- When possible, use 2-factor authentication as a second layer of defense.
- Change passwords regularly, and do not share them.



Protect Sensitive Information

- Use encryption to protect sensitive data.
- Limit the spread of any attack by only accessing files and folders you need.
- Do not put confidential information in emails, or instant and text messages.



Watch for Red Flags to Identify Potential Phish Attacks

- Phishing attempts seek to steal or compromise data and will often mimic a known sender.

Look for red flags:

1. the email is unexpected;
2. there is a sense of urgency conveyed;
3. there is an offer that seems too good to be true; and/or
4. there are typos and misspellings.



Practice Good Cyber Hygiene On the Go

- Treat all public Wi-Fi networks as a security risk, and don't make financial or other sensitive transactions over public networks.



Want more tips to improve your cyber hygiene?
Visit www.staysafeonline.org.



EMPOWER

Youth Leadership *Making Your Mark on the World!*

Deadline to apply:
**Friday,
May 1st**

EmPOWER Youth Leadership



THIS IS YOUR TIME TO SHINE!
Want an amazing opportunity to develop leadership skills, learn more about cooperatives, meet new friends & be challenged in an interactive way?

EmPOWER will help you explore career options, network with students & professionals, build & improve leadership skills, learn from community leaders, industry experts & motivational speakers & work on personal growth.

OPPORTUNITIES TO GROW!

Trip to Basin Electric power generation facilities

Four fun-filled program days focusing on:



- Cooperative Model
- Leadership Skills
- Electrical Safety/CPR
- Health and Wellness
- Public Speaking

- Career Options
- Personal Strengths
- Communication Skills
- Networking
- Teamwork Activities

Chance for College/ Technical School Scholarships

Chance to travel to Washington D.C.

TO APPLY:

- Must be a junior during the 2020-2021 school year.
- Fill out an application and return to Sioux Valley Energy by Friday, May 1st. **Applications are available from your school counselor or on the Sioux Valley Energy website. Submit via email to Chinelle.Christensen@siouxvalleyenergy.com.**

Brought to you by:



SIoux VALLEY ENERGY

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

800-234-1960

www.siouxvalleyenergy.com/my-community/empower-youth-leadership-program

Renewable Energy Credit (REC) Program

Available to SVE Members

Sioux Valley Energy has Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) available for purchase to offset your current usage with 25%, 50%, 75% or 100% renewable energy options. Through the REC program, the electricity you receive will still be the same reliable, affordable energy you have always received from Sioux Valley Energy but, by participating in this program, you will be supporting current and future renewable projects.

What is a Renewable Energy Credit (REC)?

- 1 MWh (megawatt hour) produced by a renewable energy source equals 1 REC
- RECs are also called Green Tags
- RECs represent the valuable renewable attributes of wind energy

How much does it cost?

\$1 per MWh. Example: If you use 1,200 kWh per month, participating in the REC program would add \$1.20 + tax to your monthly bill.

Do I need to purchase any special equipment?

No. Sioux Valley Energy will continue to fulfill all your electric needs and you can enjoy the benefits of renewable energy.

What are my payment options?

You will be billed monthly based on the kWhs used. The additional charge will appear on your normal monthly electric statement.

Where do the RECs come from?

The RECs come from several wind farms in the region that supply renewable energy to Sioux Valley Energy. These include, but are not limited to:

- North Dakota: PrairieWinds 1, Wilton 1 & 2, Baldwin Wind Project and Minot Wind Project
- South Dakota: Crow Lake Wind, the Chamberlain turbines, Day County Wind Farm and South Dakota Wind Project

What if I move?

This program is available only to members of Sioux Valley Energy. If you move outside of SVE's service territory, you will no longer be a member or eligible for this service.



SIoux VALLEY ENERGY RENEWABLE ENERGY CREDIT CERTIFICATE PURCHASE

_____ (name of member) hereby requests qualification of the following purchase for the Renewable Energy Credit Rate in effect on the date of qualification and agrees to each of the conditions in the Rate:

Name of Owner and Address of the Renewable Energy Credit Purchaser:

Participation Level Selection:

- 100% Participation = \$0.0010 per kWh used
- 75% Participation = \$0.00075 per kWh used
- 50% Participation = \$0.0005 per kWh used
- 25% Participation = \$0.00025 per kWh used

Beginning Date: _____

The purchase of RECs will be added to your total kWh monthly usage for a period of one year. This agreement will continue after the first year until Sioux Valley Energy is notified of cancellation.

Rate is subject to change on an annual basis based on market conditions.

Signature _____

Printed Name _____ Date _____

Are You Flood Ready?

Brenda Kleinjan

editor@sdrea.coop

Wisdom has it that April showers bring May flowers, but in much of South Dakota, April showers may bring more water woes to areas that exited 2019 with saturated soils.

In late February, the National Weather Service issued its spring flood outlook for rivers and streams in eastern South Dakota, portions of central South Dakota, and portions of west central Minnesota.

“Due to the very wet conditions across the area late last summer and into last fall, the chances for minor, moderate, or major flooding are above normal across the eastern and central parts of the area, with lesser chances across the west,” the NWS office in Aberdeen wrote in its release.

Of the 68 river gauges located in South Dakota, 37 show more than 50 percent chance of minor, moderate or major flooding in April and May. The areas shown at risk are in central and eastern South Dakota along the James, Big Sioux, Vermillion and White rivers. (View the map at https://water.weather.gov/ahps/region_long_range.php?state=sd&percent=50)

The flood threat through this spring, both in location and severity, will be determined by future rain or snowfall, and how fast the melting of snowpack occurs. In late February, the 90-day outlook through the end of May contained no strong indication of any abnormally warm/cold or moist/dry trends.

The chances for river flooding are near to above normal, with well above normal chances for the James River and Big Sioux River basins.

There is a wide range of snow depths across the area. Most areas west of the Missouri River have a trace to 2 inches, while east of the James River Valley is a thicker snow pack generally ranging from 8 to 20 inches.

With wet conditions last fall heading into the freeze-up, the soils were fairly well saturated as they froze, which will make them much more impervious to soaking up much of the snow melt as it occurs.



Flooding in southeastern South Dakota last fall, which followed spring flooding, inundated roads and farmland.

Flooding 411

Flooding is the nation’s most common natural disaster. Flooding can happen in every U.S. state and territory. However, all floods are not alike. Some can develop slowly during an extended period of rain, or in a warming trend following a heavy snow. Others, such as flash floods, can occur quickly, even without any visible signs of rain. Be prepared for flooding no matter where you live, but particularly if you are in a low-lying area, near water or downstream from a dam. Even a very small stream or dry creek bed can overflow and create flooding.

Prepare for Flooding

- Elevate the furnace, water heater, and electric panel in your home if you live in an area that has a high flood risk.
- Consider installing “check valves” to prevent flood water from backing up into the drains of your home.
- If feasible, construct barriers to stop floodwater from entering the building and seal walls in basements with waterproofing compounds.
- Property insurance does not typically cover flood damage. Talk to your insurance provider about your policy and consider if you need additional coverage.
- Get a kit of emergency supplies and prepare a portable kit in case you have to evacuate.
- Familiarize yourself with the terms that are used to identify a thunderstorm hazard, including understanding the difference between a severe thunderstorm watch and a severe thunderstorm warning.
- A flood watch or flash flood warning means there is a possibility of flooding or a flash flood in your area.

Be Prepared to Evacuate

- If time allows, bring in outside furniture and move your

3 SIMPLE STEPS FOR FLASH FLOOD SAFETY

During a flood, water levels and the rate at which the water is flowing can quickly change. Remain aware and monitor local radio and television.



[weather.gov/flood](https://www.weather.gov/flood)

1 GET TO HIGHER GROUND

Get out of the areas subject to flooding

2 DO NOT DRIVE INTO WATER

Do NOT drive or walk into flooded areas. It only takes 6" of water to knock you off your feet.

3 STAY INFORMED

Monitor local radar, television, weather radio, internet or social media for updates.

valuables to higher places in your home. Unplug electrical appliances, moving them to higher levels, if possible. However, do not touch an electric appliance if you are wet or standing in water.

- If you have a car, fill the gas tank in case you have to evacuate.
- A flood warning means a flood is occurring or will likely occur soon. If you are advised to evacuate do so immediately.
- A flash flood warning means a flash flood is occurring. Seek higher ground immediately; do not wait for instructions.
- Visit NOAA Watch for more weather-related information.

Plan to Evacuate

- Plan how you will leave and where you will go if you are advised to evacuate.
- If you do not have a car, plan alternate means of evacuating.
- Plan places where your family will meet, both within and outside of your immediate neighborhood.
- Identify several places you could go in an emergency, a friend's home in another town, a motel or public shelter.
- If you have a car, keep a half tank of gas in it at all times in case you need to evacuate.

- Become familiar with alternate routes and other means of transportation out of your area.
- Take your emergency supply kit.
- Lock the door behind you.
- Listen to NOAA Weather Radio for information.
- Take your pets with you, but understand that only service animals may be permitted in public shelters. Plan how you will care for your pets in an emergency.
- Call or email the "out-of-state" contact in your family communications plan.
- Tell them where you are going.
- Leave a note telling others when you left and where you are going.
- Check with neighbors who may need a ride.
- Do not walk through moving water, if possible. Look for areas where the water is not moving. What might seem like a small amount of moving water can easily knock you down.
- Do not drive into flooded areas. If your vehicle becomes surrounded by rising water, get out quickly and move to higher ground, if possible.

Stay Informed

- Local authorities may not immediately be able to provide information on what is happening and what you should do. However,

you should listen to NOAA Weather Radio, watch TV, listen to the radio or check the Internet often for official news and instructions as they become available.

- If it has been raining hard for several hours or if it has been raining steadily for days there may be the potential for flooding. Use common sense and available information. If water is rising quickly or you see a moving wall of mud or debris, immediately move to higher ground.
- Stay out of flood waters, if possible. The water may be contaminated or electrically charged. However, should you find yourself trapped in your vehicle in rising water get out immediately and seek higher ground.
- Stay away from downed power lines to avoid the risk of electric shock or electrocution.
- Do not return to your home until local authorities say it is safe. Even after flood waters recede, roads may be weakened and could collapse. Buildings may be unstable, and drinking water may be contaminated.
- Use common sense and exercise caution.

For more information on how you can be prepared for a flood, visit <https://www.floodsmart.gov/>.



White loose-fill fiberglass insulation is being blown into an attic. It must be installed properly to attain the desired R-value per inch thickness.

ENERGY TAX CREDITS

Tax Credits May Be Available for Your Projects

Brenda Kleinjan

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According to ENERGY STAR®’s website, the Non-Business Energy Property Tax Credits have been retroactively extended from Dec. 31, 2017, through Dec. 31, 2020.

The tax credit is 10 percent of the cost up to \$500 or a specific amount between \$50 and \$300, depending on the qualifying upgrade.

The credits expire Dec. 31, 2020, and must be made to an existing home and your principal residence.

The tax credits for residential renewable energy products are also still available through Dec. 31, 2021. This tax credit provides:

- 30 percent for systems placed in service by Dec. 31, 2019;
- 26 percent for systems placed in service after Dec. 31, 2019, and before Jan. 1, 2021;
- 22 percent for systems placed in service after Dec. 31, 2020 and before Jan. 1, 2022.

There are tax credits for certain:

- Geothermal Heat Pumps
- Small wind turbines (residential)
- Solar Energy Systems (including solar water heaters)
- Fuel Cells

The tax credit for builders of energy efficient homes and tax deductions for energy efficient commercial buildings have also been retroactively extended, through Dec. 31, 2020.



Residential Energy Property Costs:

Air-Source Heat Pumps

Heat pumps that are ENERGY STAR® certified meet the requirements for this tax credit.

Tax Credit Amount: \$300

Requirements

- Split Systems:
 - HSPF >= 8.5
 - EER >= 12.5
 - SEER >= 15
- Package systems:
 - HSPF >= 8
 - EER >= 12
 - SEER >= 14

Central Air Conditioning

Air conditioners recognized as ENERGY STAR® Most Efficient meet the requirements for this tax credit. To verify tax credit eligibility, ask your HVAC contractor to provide the Manufacturer Certification Statement for the equipment you plan to purchase.

Tax Credit Amount: \$300

Requirements

- Split Systems:
 - SEER >= 16

- EER >= 13

Package systems:

- SEER >= 14
- EER >= 12

Electric Heat Pump Water Heater

Most ENERGY STAR certified water heaters meet the requirements of this tax credit. Water heaters account for 12 percent of the energy consumed in your home.

Tax Credit Amount: \$300

Requirements

- Energy factor >= 2.2

Advanced Main Air Circulating Fan

An Advanced Main Air Circulating Fan is an efficient fan, or blower motor which blows the air that your furnace heats up through the duct system.

Tax Credit Amount: \$50

Requirements

Must use no more than 2 percent of the furnace's total energy.

Qualified Energy Efficiency Improvements:

Please note: Tax credit DOES NOT INCLUDE INSTALLATION for the following products.

Insulation

Adding adequate insulation is one of the most cost-effective home improvements that you can do.

Tax Credit Amount: 10 percent of the cost, up to \$500 (not including installation)

Requirements

- Typical bulk insulation products can qualify, such as batts, rolls, blow-in fibers, rigid boards, expanding spray, and pour-in-place.
- Products that air seal (reduce air

leaks) can also qualify, as long as they come with a Manufacturer's Certification Statement, including:

- Weather stripping
- Spray foam in a can, designed to air seal
- Caulk designed to air seal
- House wrap

NOTE: Tax Credit does NOT include installation costs.

Roofs: Metal and Asphalt

This tax credit is for ENERGY STAR certified metal and asphalt roofs with pigmented coatings or cooling granules designed to reduce heat gain. Certified roof products reflect more of the sun's rays, which can lower roof surface temperature by up to 100°

F, decreasing the amount of heat transferred into your home.

Tax Credit Amount: 10 percent of the cost, up to \$500 (Not including installation.)

Requirements

- "Metal roofs with appropriate pigmented coatings" and "asphalt roofs with appropriate cooling granules" that also meet ENERGY STAR requirements.

NOTE: Tax Credit does NOT include installation costs.

Windows, Doors and Skylights

Windows, doors and skylights that earn the ENERGY STAR save energy, improve comfort and help protect the environment.

Tax Credit Amount: 10 percent of the cost, up to \$500, but windows are capped at \$200. (Not including installation)

Requirements

- Must be ENERGY STAR certified.
- You do not have to replace all the windows/doors/skylights in your home to qualify. And it doesn't need to be a replacement either - installing a new window where there wasn't one previously (like in an addition) qualifies.

NOTE: Tax Credit does NOT include installation costs.



Photo Credit: Certainteed

Photo Credit: Rare Form Properties

March 20-21, 27-28

Annual Schmeckfest,
Freeman, SD, 605-925-4237

March 21

Gift of Hope Charity Event,
Come hear standup Christian
comedian Jennifer Fulwiler
while supporting a good
cause, 7 p.m., O'Gorman
Performing Arts Center, Sioux
Falls, SD, 605-988-3765,
www.ccfesd.org

March 21-22

Dakota Territory Gun
Collectors Gun Show, Gun
Show, Codrington County
Ag Building, Watertown, SD,
701-361-9215

March 22

Meat Shoot, Gun Club,
Practice rounds at 10 a.m.,
Shoot starts at 11 a.m., 2378
310th St., Rock Valley, IA,
712-540-9757, 605-530-1413
or 712-551-7164

March 28

Annual Ag Day at the
Washington Pavilion,
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-6000

April 2

McCrossan Wildest Banquet
Auction in the Midwest
featuring Bonner Bolton
from Dancing with the
Stars, 5:30 p.m., Arena,
Sioux Falls, SD, Tickets:
\$75 each, 605-339-1203,
www.mccrossan.org

April 25

River Rat Marathon, Yankton,
SD, 605-660-9483

May 2

Consignment Auction,
Prairie Village, Madison,
SD, 800-693-3644,
www.prairievillage.org

**March 18,
June 11,
Aug. 13 and
Oct. 8**

Kids Mystery
Dinner Theater,
Brookings, SD,
605-692-6700



Photo courtesy: Children's Museum of S.D.

May 2-3

Brookings Area Quilt Guild
Show, Keeping Warm in South
Dakota XII, Admission: \$6
daily, Saturday 9 a.m. to
5 p.m., Sunday 10 a.m. to
3 p.m., Quilters gather for
fabric and design
competitions, More than 300
quilts on display, vendors,
luncheon and quilt raffle,
Swiftel Center, Brookings,
SD, Contact Theresa Bennett
at 605-690-3246 for lunch
tickets and info or email
tbennett111@hotmail.com

May 3

Opening Day, Prairie Village,
Madison, SD, 800-693-3644,
www.prairievillage.org

May 5-6

Energize! Explore Innovative
Rural Communities
Conference, Milbank, SD,
<https://extension.sdstate.edu>

May 29-30

South Dakota Regional
Senior Games, Sioux Falls,
SD, Contact Nick Brady at
605-978-6924

June 5-7

Regional Qualifying High
School Rodeos:
■ Rodeo Grounds, Wall, SD,
605-529-5868
■ Rodeo Grounds, Highmore,
SD, 605-529-5868
■ Tipperary Arena, Buffalo,
SD, 605-529-5868
■ Heartland Arena, Huron, SD,
605-529-5868

June 12-14

Regional Qualifying High
School Rodeos:
■ Tripp County Fairgrounds,
Winner, SD, 605-529-5868
■ Rodeo Grounds, Sturgis, SD,
605-529-5868
■ Rodeo Grounds, Dupree,
SD, 605-529-5868
■ Derby Downs Arena,
Watertown, SD,
605-529-5868

June 16-21

SD State High School Finals
Rodeo, Stanley County
Fairgrounds, Fort Pierre, SD,
605-529-5868

June 25-27

31st Annual Red Power Round
Up, Fairgrounds, Huron,
SD, Contact Steve Masat
at 605-460-0197 or Dennis
Schilling at 605-354-2867,
redpowerroundup2020.com

July 14

Rock Nobles Cattlemen 2020
Summer Beef Tour, Nobles
County Fairgrounds, Register
Before June 1: \$20, After June 1:
\$40, Worthington, MN,
507-967-2380, www.mnsca.org

**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.**