

# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



## South Dakota Snowmobiling

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Snow

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High School Students  
Gaining Dual Credits

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# Rate Increase Planned for April 2024



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

Tim.McCarthy@  
siouxvalleyenergy.  
com

The Sioux Valley Energy Board of Directors recently met to review the proposed 2024 workplan and budget. The projected 2024 budget shows a revenue shortfall of \$6.7 million, due primarily to increased material, equipment, borrowing, and power supply costs for the past several years. Because of the projected shortfall, the Board of Directors approved an overall average rate increase of 6.38 percent as of April 1, 2024. Rate adjustments to each rate class will vary based on the cost of service. Our long-range financial forecast also indicates the need for modest rate increases in future years as well. Sioux Valley Energy is not alone in needing to increase rates, as many utilities in the region and across the country face the same rate pressures from increased costs.

The last rate adjustment we had was in September of 2020. Through the good fortune of system growth, the use of deferred revenue, careful budgeting, management of spending, and scaling back line construction, we were able to hold rates steady for nearly four years. We were able to do this while combating skyrocketing inflationary pressures which have impacted our entire economy. However, as we have continually said at our district meetings over the years, there will come a time when we face an increase. We have gotten to the point where a rate adjustment will be necessary.

## Why is a rate increase needed?

### 1. INCREASED CAPITAL COSTS.

Equipment and material costs have climbed sharply since 2020. As an example, the cost of transformers, poles, and enclosures have all increased more than 100 percent in less than four years. *(See the graph below)* We scaled back our line replacement plan from 125 miles

to 100 miles temporarily, but to maintain reliability, we need to get that back up to 125 miles per year and plan to do so in 2024.

### 2. INCREASE IN OPERATING COSTS.

It's not just our capital budget that has increased. Everything we do to support our members has come with higher expenses – from postage to printing and software to billing – it has all gone up.

### 3. INCREASED COST OF BORROWING.

Since the year 2020, interest rates have gone up by 150 percent. This makes for a substantial increase given our capital budget will be \$20.4 million in 2024.

### 4. POWER SUPPLY RATE INCREASES.

Approximately 60 percent of Sioux Valley Energy's costs go towards purchasing power. As a result, when our power suppliers institute a rate increase, it is impactful. Both of our power suppliers have announced a rate increase for 2024. East River Electric will be implementing a 2.5 percent increase and L&O Power Cooperative will increase their rates by 1.3 percent.

It's never fun delivering a rate increase message to our members, but we want to provide the information to you as early as possible. We will have more detailed information regarding the rate increase and how it will impact your electric bill in this edition of the magazine and plan to dedicate future articles to that topic as well. In addition, we will be talking about rates at our upcoming district meetings. We encourage you to attend.

Please feel free to give one of our member services representatives a call at 877-511-8062 to learn more about how your individual rate will be impacted.

Material/Equipment	Cost Increase since 2020	Cost Increase since 2022	Current Lead Times
Single-phase Transformers	173%	26%	80-90 weeks
Three-phase Transformers	92% to 120%	30% to 45%	24-32 weeks
Meters	13%	10%	54 weeks
Poles	104% to 138%	54% to 96%	24 weeks
Enclosures	108% to 111%	50% to 63%	43-50 weeks

**COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS**  
**SIoux VALLEY ENERGY**

(USPS No. 497-440)

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

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- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov

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

# 2024 DISTRICT MEETINGS SET

The Cooperative's District Meetings have been scheduled throughout the months of February and March. Three elections will take place in Districts 1, 3, and 8. All incumbent directors have indicated they plan to run again. The petition deadline for District 1 is open until Thursday, January 25 and District 8 is open until Friday, January 26. For more information on how to run for the Board, log on to Sioux Valley Energy's website at: <https://www.siouxvalleyenergy.com/elections-and-voting-process>.

Members will receive a mailed postcard inviting them to their District Meeting but are welcome to attend any of the locations listed below. However, members are only allowed to vote in Director elections within their respective district.

Each meeting will include a short program presented by the district's board member and a management update.

A meal consisting of country-style BBQ ribs, cheesy hashbrowns, green beans, bun, and a cookie will be served from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. The meeting and program will begin at 7 p.m.

Meeting dates and locations are listed below. Election meetings are indicated with an asterisk (\*).

Sioux Valley Energy District Meetings

SERVING OUR MEMBERS.  
*Always.*

Date	District	Director	Location
Thursday, February 22	4	Daniel	Dakota Prairie Playhouse, Madison, SD
Monday, February 26*	3	Heinemann*	William J. Janklow Community Center Flandreau, SD
Tuesday, February 27	5	Weinacht	Taopi Hall, Colton, SD
Thursday, February 29	10	Roskamp	Edgerton Public School, Edgerton, MN
Monday, March 11	6	Fish & Rogen	Brandon Valley High School, Brandon, SD
Tuesday, March 12	7	DeMent	West Central School, Hartford, SD
Thursday, March 14	9	Johnson	Pipestone Area High School, Pipestone, MN
Thursday, March 21	2	Vostad	Sioux Valley School, Volga, SD
Monday, March 25*	1	DeGreef*	Elkton Community Center, Elkton, SD
Tuesday, March 26*	8	Leuthold*	Generations (Grand Prairie Event Center) Luverne, MN

\* Denotes Election Meeting

## Cooking Safety

### Watch What You Heat: Cooking is the Number One Cause of Home Fires

#### Plan A: Primary Prevention

- The best time to cook is when you are wide awake, and not drowsy from medications or alcohol.
- Always wipe clean the stove, oven, exhaust fan to prevent grease buildup.
- Wear short or close-fitting sleeves when cooking.
- Keep a pan lid and dry potholders or oven mitts near you EVERY time you cook.
- Turn pot or pan handles toward the back of the stove.
- When heating food in the microwave, use microwave- safe cookware that allows steam to escape.
- Allow food to rest before removing from the microwave.
- When frying, use a pan lid or splash guard to prevent grease splatter.
- Stay in the kitchen while you are frying, grilling, or broiling food. If you leave, turn off the stove.
- If you are simmering, baking, roasting, or boiling food, check it regularly. Remain in the home while food is cooking, and use a timer to remind you to check on your cooking.
- After cooking, check the kitchen to make sure all burners and other appliances are turned off.

#### Plan B: Secondary Prevention

If your food does catch on fire...

1. Cover the pan with its lid. A cookie sheet works too. Leave covered until the pan is cool. NEVER move the pot or carry it outside - the pot is too hot to handle and the contents may splash, causing a severe burn.
2. Turn the heat off. With the lid on and the heat off, the fire should quickly put itself out. NEVER use water to put out a kitchen fire. Water will cause the

oil to splatter and spread the fire, or scald you as it vaporizes.

3. If the fire is inside the oven or microwave, keep the door shut and turn it off. Keep closed until the oven is cool.
4. If the fire gets out of control- get out, stay out and call 9-1-1. Don't return inside for any reason.

#### STATS

- 47% of all home fires are caused by cooking
- Preventing a burn injury is always better than the pain and trauma of medical treatment afterward.

**National Burn Awareness Week (Feb. 4-10, 2024)** is a window of opportunity for organizations to mobilize burn, fire, and life safety educators to unite in sharing a common burn awareness and prevention message in our communities.

*Source: American Burn Association*



#### Call 811 Before You Dig

##### Lillee Pannell, Age 10

Lillee Pannell instructs readers to call 811 before digging. Lillee is the daughter of Scott and Kim Pannell from Sioux Falls, S.D., members of Southeastern Electric Cooperative.

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.

# BRUNCH SPECIALS

## FRENCH TOAST SUPREME

### Ingredients:

1/2 cup butter  
 2 tbsps. white corn syrup  
 1 cup brown sugar  
 5 eggs  
 1 cup Carnation milk  
 1 tsp. vanilla  
 1/4 tsp. salt

### Method

Boil together butter, corn syrup, and brown sugar for one minute. Grease a 9x13 pan and put the caramel mix in bottom. Slice French bread about one inch thick or use Texas toast. Put slices close together on top of the caramel sauce. Beat together eggs, milk, vanilla, and salt. Pour on top of bread. Cover and refrigerate overnight. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes. When ready to serve, turn the pieces over and caramel will be on top. Best served warm.

Brigitta Hofer  
 Bridgewater, S.D.

## MINI FRITTATAS

### Ingredients:

8 eggs  
 1/4 cup milk  
 1 1/2 tps. Italian seasoning  
 1/4 tsp. salt  
 1/8 tsp. ground black pepper  
 1 cup crumbled cooked bacon  
 1 med. onion, finely chopped  
 1 med. zucchini, finely chopped  
 1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese, divided

### Method

Preheat oven to 350°F. Beat eggs, milk, Italian seasoning, salt and pepper in medium bowl until well blended. Add bacon, onion, zucchini and 1/2 cup of the cheese; mix well. Spray one (12-cup) muffin tin generously with no stick cooking spray. Spoon about 1/4 cup egg mixture into each cup. Sprinkle with remaining 1/2 cup cheese. Bake 20 to 22 minutes or just until eggs are set. Run small knife or spatula around each cup to loosen mini frittatas. Let stand five minutes before serving.

McCormick.com

## CINNAMON PANCAKES

### Ingredients:

2 cups pancake mix  
 1 tsp. cinnamon  
 2 eggs, beaten  
 1 cup milk  
 2 tbsps. vegetable oil  
 1 tsp. pure vanilla extract

### Method

Stir pancake mix and cinnamon in large bowl until well blended. Stir in eggs, milk, oil, and vanilla just until blended.

Pour 1/4 cup of batter per pancake onto preheated lightly greased griddle or skillet. Cook one to two minutes per side or until golden brown, turning when pancakes begin to bubble. Serve pancakes with Spiced Syrup, if desired.

Kitchen Tip: To make flavorful Spiced syrup, mix one cup pancake syrup, one teaspoon pure vanilla extract and 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon in a small microwave-safe bowl and microwave on HIGH for one minute or until warm, stirring once.

McCormick.com

Please send your favorite recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2023. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

# Energy Solutions for You and Your Family



**Sheila Gross**  
Energy Services  
Specialist

**Contact Sheila Gross** at [sheila.gross@siouxvalleyenergy.com](mailto:sheila.gross@siouxvalleyenergy.com) to learn more. Check out our rebates and incentives here:



Sioux Valley Energy gives its members more reasons to “GoElectric!” in 2024. Keeping rates affordable remains a priority and although we are facing a rate adjustment, think about the great value electricity continues to be. Do you know what \$1 of electricity will buy you? 910 hours of LED bulb usage; 8 hours of washing dishes; 205 hours of brewing coffee; 11.5 hours of toasting bread; 1,823 hours of phone charging; and 62 hours of using a 42-inch LED TV.

The Cooperative’s Beneficial Electrification Department is dedicated to helping you find solutions to save money, take more control of your electric bill, and utilize technologies and equipment to improve energy efficiency. Providing programs, incentives, optional rates, and educational resources are ways we achieve the mission of “serving our members always.”

You’ll find a copy of the Solutions Catalog inserted in this month’s edition of the newsletter. Here are key program highlights:

**Water Heaters** – Purchase a large capacity, high-efficient Marathon or HTP water heater for your home for \$500. The unit must be connected to the load management program and carries a lifetime-tank/6-year parts warranty. Contact 800-234-1960 for details or to place an order (some restrictions apply).

**Heat Pump Incentives** – It’s tough to beat the efficiency of an electric heat pump that not only cools your home in the summer, but also heats it in the winter. Rebates are available on equipment 2-ton and larger and we offer a reduced electric heat rate. **Air-to-Air Heat Pump:** \$600 with non-electric backup or \$1200 with electric backup. **Geothermal Heat Pump:** \$1,200. **Ductless Mini-split Heat Pump:** \$300 per structure. (Federal tax incentives are available for geothermal heat pump applications and also for EnergyStar® rated air-source heat pumps installed in an existing home.)

**Electric Vehicle Program** – If you are in the market for an electric vehicle, we offer a rebate of \$500 for the purchase/lease of a battery electric vehicle (BEV) or \$250 for a plug-in

hybrid vehicle (PHEV) with participation in one of the off-peak charging rate options – Time of Use Rate or Vehicle Plug-in Rate. We also offer an EV-Ready New Home Construction Rebate of \$300.

**Time of Use Rate** – Put the power in your hands to save money on your electric bill by signing up for the Time of Use Rate. You can save money simply by shifting your energy use to off-peak times for daily chores such as laundry and dishwashing.

## PROGRAMMING CHANGES

**Air Conditioning Control** – We have not promoted new controlled air conditioning for several years. As of Jan. 1, 2024, the controlled air conditioning program was discontinued. We will be communicating with affected members about how this change will take place.

**Kohler Stand-by Generators** – Sioux Valley Energy is no longer selling Kohler stand-by generators, but we are available to help you determine the capacity of equipment you may need during an outage. We have a list of local contractors who currently install standby generators available upon request. Our electricians can still provide installations of interlock kits and generator inlet boxes.

Contact Energy Services for more information on programs and incentives at 800-234-1960 or visit our website at [www.siouxvalleyenergy.com/rebates-and-loans](http://www.siouxvalleyenergy.com/rebates-and-loans).

**ELECTRICITY IS A BARGAIN**  
WHAT ELSE COSTS ONLY PENNIES PER HOUR?

HERE'S WHAT \$1 OF ELECTRICITY WILL BUY YOU:

- 8 HOURS OF WASHING DISHES
- 62 HOURS OF USING A 42" LED TV
- 910 HOURS OF LED BULB USAGE

\* Based on 11¢ per kWh. Your rate may be slightly higher or lower.

# Outage Checklist: Be Prepared

Sioux Valley Energy strives for reliability that ranks amongst the country's top-quartile performance within the electric cooperative industry. Unfortunately, occasionally outages do occur and are caused by a variety of things such as public contacts, storms, and sometimes even animals.

Are you prepared for an outage? The Cooperative provides a variety of tools for members to report and monitor outages:

- 1. Sign up for SmartHub.** SmartHub is an online tool/application that allows members to report outages almost instantaneously without making a call. You can also sign up for outage and restoration email/text updates within the SmartHub app. The first step is to create an account online at: <https://siouxvalleyenergy.smarthub.coop/>.
- 2. Add Sioux Valley Energy's toll-free number to your contacts** so it's easy to give us a call when you experience an outage. That number is 800-234-1960. We have an in-house dispatch center that is staffed 24/7.
- 3. Monitor Sioux Valley Energy's Facebook page** for outage updates, but please report outages by calling the toll-free number or using SmartHub. We discourage the use of reporting via social media as those accounts are not monitored 24/7.
- 4. Curious about the extent of the outage? Check out our outage map** on the Cooperative's website. You can find the map on our website's homepage at [siouxvalleyenergy.com](http://siouxvalleyenergy.com). From there you click on the button that says, 'outage center'.
- 5. Rest assured we are here to respond to your outage day or night and during inclement weather (as long as it's safe to do so).** Even if Sioux Valley Energy has closed its offices due to poor weather conditions, our employees are still working from home or are out in the field!



## OUTAGE CHECK LIST

1. Sign up for smart hub 
2. Add **800-234-1960** to your contacts so it's easy to give us a call if you experience an outage.
3. Monitor  @SVECOOP for outage updates.
4. Check out our outage map at [www.siouxvalleyenergy.com](http://www.siouxvalleyenergy.com)

 **SIoux VALLEY ENERGY**  
A member of the cooperative family

## CONTEST WINNERS NAMED

These members won prizes in the recent Energy Makeover Contest:

- EGO snowblower **Layne Drenth**, Sioux Falls
- Roomba vacuum **Monte Fryer**, Hartford
- Instapot Vortex Air Fryer **Larry Hobbie**, Flandreau
- Blackstone griddle **Sharon Olsen**, Humboldt
- Razor Motocross Bike **Paul Hanusa**, Volga

## DONATIONS RECEIVED

Thanks to Sioux Valley Energy members and employees who donated hundreds of items during the Tree of Giving Hope drive for Sleep in Heavenly Peace.

Items donated included:

- 74 pillows
- 68 twin sheet sets
- 27 comforter sets
- 16 comforters
- 1 teddy bear
- 3 blankets
- 8 pillowcases
- 2 mattress pads
- 5 quilts
- 1 afghan

The items were delivered to SHP Brookings Chapter on Dec. 22. Thanks again to all who donated!





# SOUTH DAKOTA'S SNOWMOBILE CLUBS

A group of Black Hills Snowmobile Club members enjoy a ride through the snow covered pines.

## Snow Lovers Create Trails and Lifelong Friendships Through Club Membership

**Shannon Marvel**

shannon.marvel@sdrea.coop

Being a member of one of South Dakota's many snowmobiling clubs is more like being a member of a big, adrenaline-loving family.

Being a part of a snowmobile club provides the opportunity to meet likeminded individuals that can easily turn into some of your best friends. That's the case for Mike Boock, of Rapid City, who is a longtime member of the Black Hills Snowmobile Club (BHSC).

"Most of the friendships that I have today are because of the snowmobile club. Many of us even camp together during the summer at the lake," Boock said.

Boock said the club boasts up to 70 members in all. While he primarily rides the mountains of Colorado and Wyoming, Boock loves riding in Black Hills when the area receives enough snow.

There are a total of 416 miles of groomed snowmobile trails

in the Black Hills National Forest, making it a pristine spot for snowmobiling.

The snowmobile clubs in the Black Hills have it a little easier than those out east as they don't have to mark, install, groom or repair trails.

"The state takes care of that," Boock said. "This allows clubs like the BHSC to become more of an educational and community support organization."

This allows club members more free time to volunteer or participate in community events, such as the Festival of Lights Parade and Storybook Island Christmas Nights of Light.

Kelly Weaver is the President of the South Dakota Snowmobile Association and a member of the Aberdeen Drift Busters Snowmobile Club.

The Aberdeen Drift Busters maintain what's called the Dakota Midland trail system, which connects Aberdeen, Mina Lake, Richmond Lake, Westport, Frederick and Columbia.

"This provides about 75 miles of riding in a safe, marked, and groomed corridor," Weaver said.

There are rules governing the trail system. While there are no posted speed limits on the trail, when the trail is located in a road right-of-way, the speed limit of the road applies.

There are also laws governing the type of vehicle that can be ridden on a snowmobile trail. Machines must meet the state definition of a snowmobile. ATV's and other motorized vehicles do not typically meet that definition.

Aberdeen Drift Busters has held the title of being the largest snowmobile club in the state for several years. It was established in 1969, the same year the South Dakota Snowmobile



Association was established.

“Currently, our membership is right around 100 families,” Weaver said. “The club has been as large as 225 members but membership has slowed over the past decade due to the lack of snow and the growing number of activities that families have an opportunity to participate in.”

Anyone can join a snowmobile club and snowmobile ownership is not a requirement.

“You are connected with very experienced snowmobilers who can provide information about machines, riding ventures and how organized snowmobiling operates,” Weaver said. “It is a way to connect with people who have a shared passion for the sport.”

Weaver had her first taste of snowmobiling as a young child with her father and neighbors.

“When I was young, I only rode as a passenger, which I found was not to my liking. When I met my future husband, he also had a snowmobile and I had to ride as a passenger once again,” Weaver said.

Weaver and her husband decided to join the Aberdeen Drift Busters while taking a break from riding for a bite to eat years ago.

“In 1986, my fiancé – now husband – and I were on a snowmobile ride and stopped to eat at a trailside business. Another snowmobiler, who we did not know, approached us and told us we needed to join the club. We did and have been actively involved ever since. That snowmobiling ‘stranger’ became a lifelong friend who we’ve shared many snowmobile memories with,” Weaver said. “Like most things we are drawn to, it is the ability to connect with others who share a common interest that keeps us involved. We have met so many people across the state and the nation through our involvement and have experienced some awesome and fun-filled trips over the years. There are so many ways to be involved that even members who are not avid riders can benefit from and enjoy

being part of the club.”

Once married, Weaver decided she’d need her own sled if she were to continue with snowmobiling. When her husband acquired a new Polaris, she was granted a used Arctic Cat Jag that she described as a “trusty starter sled.”

“Early on in our riding, we were able to make trips to the Black Hills, Big Horn Mountains and West Yellowstone. These venues are even more breathtaking in the winter,” Weaver said.

A long day on the trail in a large riding area might last six to eight hours. There needs to be a minimum of six inches of snow on the ground, depending on the terrain.

It may take several layers of snow to create a base for the trail, which can then be groomed and maintained throughout the season.

With adequate snow and a trail in place, an ideal riding day for Weaver would be sunny skies with a little wind, and temperatures between 0 and 30 degrees.

Over in the southeastern corner of

the state, Duane Duerr, President of the Siouxland Sno Trackers, finds great enjoyment in riding his Ski Doo 900 Ave Four Cycle snowmobile.

The Siouxland Sno Trackers is one of the original snowmobile clubs in South Dakota and has around 78 miles of groomed trails for its 80 members.

Duerr grew up in Minnesota and joined the club in 2006 when he moved to South Dakota. Joining the club helped him to learn the trails and rules, and provided him with many friendships.

“I think snowmobiling has become more popular, but involvement in all organizations is down,” Duerr said. “Many do not realize that snowmobile clubs are why we have a trail system and that they put it in and take it out. Without the clubs, we will no longer have trails in South Dakota. Member support is what makes a difference and too many take that involvement for granted.”

More information on the state’s snowmobile clubs can be found at the SDSA’s website at [snowmobilesd.com](http://snowmobilesd.com).



Watertown’s South Dakota Snowmobile Club members take a break during an outing.



# LEARN MORE

## Why are my electric rates going up?

Electric rates are influenced by several factors, some within Sioux Valley Energy's control and some not.

Over the next several months, we will provide you with a deeper dive into the upcoming rate adjustment which will take effect April 1, 2024. This first article will cover why the rate increase is needed, including the internal and external factors influencing it.

Sioux Valley Energy is not alone in its experience of upward pressure on electric rates. Many utilities throughout the region and in other parts of the country are implementing rate increases this year as well.

The inflation rate hit a **44-year high** in 2022, increasing the price of items purchased.

The most significant factor influencing the cost of electricity is inflation and its impact on every part of doing business. While inflationary pressures have decreased in recent months, the inflation rate hit a 44-year high in 2022. This means for the past several years, the cost of nearly ev-

erything Sioux Valley Energy purchased climbed sharply. For example, since the year 2020 necessary equipment such as transformers, poles, and enclosures have increased by more than 100 percent (as seen on Page 2). The price of a bucket truck was approximately \$325,000 two years ago. Today that number is \$500,000. The cost of financing all of this material and equipment has also more than doubled since the year 2020.

If that example is extrapolated to all other organizations that Sioux Valley Energy does business with, the result is higher costs across the board – including what the Co-operative pays for wholesale power. Both of Sioux Valley Energy's power suppliers will be implementing a 2.5 and a 1.3 percent rate increase respectfully in 2024. This is impactful because approximately 60 percent of your electric bill goes directly to paying for power supply.

The last rate adjustment for Sioux Valley Energy's members was in 2020 prior to the rise in inflation. Sioux Valley Energy put in place several stopgaps to hold rates steady over the last four years including the use of deferred revenue, careful budgeting, management of spending, and the reduction of line construction.

The good fortune of system growth also helped lower the need for an immediate rate increase last year.

To minimize the rate increase needed in 2024, Sioux Valley Energy again plans to utilize deferred revenue and continue its historical practice of careful budgeting and management of spending.

The major change between the 2023 and 2024 capital budget is planned line construction. The Cooperative scaled-back line construction from 125 miles to 100 miles last year. However, to maintain reliability, that number must return to normal (125 miles per year). Since 2015 just under 1,600 miles of old copper conductor (the original equipment that was built in the 1940s and '50s) has

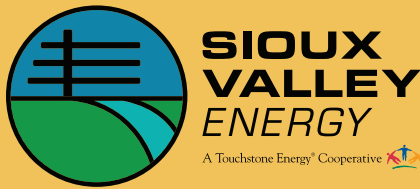
been replaced. There are approximately 1,200 miles of the older conductor left to replace going forward. Once that is completed in 10 years, the 125+ mile per year replacement schedule will continue in an effort to maintain top quartile reliability standards.

Next month we will break down the rate increase into specific components, looking at the energy charge, basic service charge, and for commercial accounts – the demand charge.

If you have questions on how the rate increase will specifically affect your electric bill starting in April, please call one of our Member Services Representatives at 877-511-8062.

Since 2020, necessary equipment has increased over **100 percent.**

Approximately **60 percent** of your electric bill goes directly to paying for power supply.



## Planned Rate Adjustments April 2024

For other rate class adjustments or to learn how the new rates will impact your electric bill, call our Member Services Department at 877-511-8062.

Farm and Rural Residential		
Rate Component	Old Rate	New Rate
Single-Phase Basic Service Charge	\$55	\$65
3-Phase Basic Service Charge	\$100	\$120
Energy Charge	\$.1026	\$.1055
Residential		
Rate Component	Old Rate	New Rate
Basic Service Charge	\$20	\$30
Energy Charge	\$.1026	\$.1055
General Service		
Rate Component	Old Rate	New Rate
Single-Phase Basic Service Charge	\$55	\$75
3-Phase Basic Service Charge	\$100	\$120
Energy Charge	\$.1026	\$.1055
Large Power		
Rate Component	Old Rate	New Rate
Basic Service Charge	\$1.20/kVa	\$1.50 /kVA
Demand Charge	\$16.50/kW	\$17.00 /kW
Energy Charge	\$0.03650/kwh	\$0.03760 /kWh



Jocelyn Cihak takes a dual-credit calculus class offered by Northern State University. *Photo courtesy of Northern State University*

# DUAL-CREDIT

## High Schoolers are Gaining College Credits

**Scott Waltman**

Some graduates of South Dakota high schools are showing up on college campuses with a semester's worth of credits.

Sometimes even more.

The dual-credit program has proven to be both beneficial and popular since it was introduced by Gov. Dennis Daugaard in 2014.

It's easy to understand why. Here's how the program works. High school juniors and seniors at any South Dakota high school can take classes for which they get both high school and college credits. There are scores of

classes to choose from, and the cost to take them is steeply discounted.

For instance, once a student enrolls at any of the state's six public schools or universities, they pay between \$253.85 and \$260.55 per credit hour. That cost for a high school student taking a college-level class through the dual-credit program? It's a mere \$48.33 per credit hour.

That's why education officials in South Dakota love the program.

Nathan Lukkes, executive director and chief executive officer for the South Dakota Board of Regents, said providing an affordable education has been a priority for the regents in

recent years. Tuition freezes and an increased number of scholarships are part of that work. But so are dual-credit classes, he said.

Most of the dual-credit courses are general education classes – or generals, as college students often call them – he said. Through the program, students can have some of those courses out of the way before they even get their high school degrees.

The work done by the regents and the universities resulted in Forbes naming South Dakota the most affordable state in which to get a high school education, Lukkes said.

All six South Dakota public universities offer dual-credit classes, and the number of high school students taking advantage has been going up in recent years.

The number of students taking dual-credit classes changes throughout

the year, but there were 1,223 taking classes at Northern State University in Aberdeen in fall 2023 compared to 1,141 the year before. And at South Dakota State University in Brookings, the number jumped from 903 to 1,031 in fall 2023, according to statistics from the board of regents.

Here's how the systemwide numbers are trending based on the number of students taking dual-credit classes, according to the 2023 South Dakota Board of Regents Fact Book, which was issued during summer at the end of the most recent fiscal year.

**2021-2022:** 4,300

**2020-2021:** 3,919

**2019-2020:** 3,781

**2018-2019:** 3,168

## The 10 most popular classes all had more than 150 students.

**College algebra:** 990

**Fundamentals of speech:** 905

**Composition I (English 101):** 830

**General psychology:** 513

**U.S. history I:** 379

**American government:** 317

**Music appreciation (Music 101):** 280

**Introduction to sociology:** 241

**Biology survey I (Biology 101):** 157

**Biology survey lab:** 156

In 2021, there were 9,523 dual-credit courses taken by South Dakota high school students, according to information from the regents. That number includes summer courses and students who took more than one course.

At Northwestern High School in Mellette, Superintendent Rob Lewis said about 25% of the juniors and seniors are taking advantage of dual-credit courses. One student has taken a full semester's worth, he said.

Do the math over the course of a semester, and that's a savings of north of \$2,300. And that doesn't take on-campus housing and food into account.

That's just a great deal for high school kids, Lewis said.

Chris Ulrich, the middle school and high school principal at Northwestern, agrees.

"It's a nice opportunity for kids

to get not only college credits, but also experience what college is like," he said.

And they get to do it within the comfort of their high school, Ulrich said. The program is a great transitional step leading from high school to college, he said.

AP, or Advanced Placement classes, were great, but dual-credit classes are even better, Lewis said.

AP classes are college-level courses taught by high school teachers. But they don't always equate to college credit. Dual-credit courses are taught by college instructors and professors and always result in college credit, if a student passes.

In South Dakota, dual-credit courses can be taken on any of the six public university campuses, in Sioux Falls, Rapid City, Huron, Pierre, Watertown and online.

And there's another benefit, Lukkes said. Dual-credit classes create a tie between South Dakota high school students and the regental schools. Any chance a high school student has a chance to engage with a state school creates a bond that could help keep that kid in South Dakota, he said.

Perhaps a Spearfish High School student takes a dual-credit class at Black Hills State University and it's a good experience. Maybe that high school graduate stays in town and enrolls at BHSU.

Lewis, too, said the program is a great way to keep students in South Dakota for college and perhaps beyond.

That's also a focus for the Aberdeen Development Corp., which is starting a program aimed at keeping more Northern graduates in town to start their professional careers.



Rhianna Troske, a student at Northwestern High School in Mellette, takes a dual-credit class while at school. *Photo by Scott Waltman*

# Sioux Valley Energy Employees Recognized for Years of Service in 2023



**Kimberlee Hansen**  
30 Years



**Jim Kuyper**  
30 Years



**Leann Nelson**  
25 Years



**Chad Williams**  
25 Years



**Dan Doyle**  
20 Years



**Jim George**  
20 Years



**Jody Lebahn**  
20 Years



**Ryan Gruber**  
15 Years



**Toni Kruger**  
15 Years



**Steve Neises**  
15 Years



**Michele Nielson**  
15 Years



**Elliot Ostercamp**  
15 Years



**Tim Schoolmeester**  
15 Years



**Michael Uhing**  
15 Years



**Tanner Donelan**  
10 Years



**Tim McCarthy**  
10 Years



**Garth Park**  
10 Years



**Cole Anderson**  
5 Years



**Daren Hoffer**  
5 Years



**Trevor Reif**  
5 Years



**Brian Bjorum**  
1 Year



**Ross Dixon**  
1 Year



**Amanda Hoffman**  
1 Year



**Brandon Lane**  
1 Year



**Kendra Wire**  
1 Year

## NELSON RETIRES

Leann Nelson, Sioux Valley Energy's Manager of Accounting, retired in January after 25 years at SVE.

## PROMOTIONS

Chris Graff has been named the Co-op's Director of Operations; Jody Lebahn is the Manager of Accounting, Jay Buchholz is the Manager of Public Relations; and Chinelle Christensen is the Culture and Training Development Strategist.



## Statement of Nondiscrimination

Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, age or disability. Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

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

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

## Co-Generation Notification

In compliance with Sioux Valley Energy's adopted rules relating to Co-Generation and Small Power Production, Sioux Valley Energy is obligated to interconnect with and purchase electricity from co-generators and small power producers whom satisfy the conditions of a qualifying facility. Sioux Valley Energy is obligated to provide information free of charge to all interested members upon request regarding rates and interconnection requirements. All interconnections require an application and approval to become a qualifying facility. Any dispute over interconnections, sales and purchases are subject to resolution by the Cooperative. Interested members should contact Sioux Valley Energy, PO Box 216, Colman, SD 57017 or call 800-234-1960.



RECIPES NEEDED FOR THE

# Country Cookin'

cookbook

Help us create another great cookbook by submitting your favorite recipes.

Submit recipes via email to [ajhannsen@eastriver.coop](mailto:ajhannsen@eastriver.coop),  
or contact your local cooperative for more information.



**FEB. 24, 2024**  
**Nemo 500 Outhouse Races & Chili Cookoff**  
 10 a.m.  
 Nemo Guest Ranch  
 Nemo, SD

To have your event listed on this page, send complete information, including date, event, place and contact to your local electric cooperative. Include your name, address and daytime telephone number. Information must be submitted at least eight weeks prior to your event. Please call ahead to confirm date, time and location of event.

**FEB. 3**  
**Lake Hendricks Fishing Derby**  
 11 a.m.  
 City Boat Landing  
 Hendricks, MN

**FEB. 9-10**  
**Mardi Gras Weekend**  
 Historic Downtown Deadwood  
 Deadwood, SD

**FEB. 10**  
**Polar Bear Chili Cook-Off**  
 11 a.m.  
 Main Street  
 Hill City, SD

**FEB. 11**  
**Beadle County Humane Society Bingo, Silent Auction & Bake Sale Benefit**  
 2 p.m.  
 Huron Community Center  
 Huron, SD

**FEB. 18-20**  
**MASC presents Disaster! the Musical**  
 Vesta Community Center  
 Vesta, MN

**FEB. 22**  
**The Starlets: Pop Female Trio**  
**Aberdeen Community Concert Association**  
 7 p.m.  
 Johnson Fine Arts Center NSU  
 Aberdeen, SD

**FEB. 23-24**  
**Women in Blue Jeans Conference**  
 Highland Conference Center  
 Mitchell, SD

**MARCH 1-3**  
**National Pheasant Fest & Quail Classic**  
 Denny Sanford Premier Center  
 Sioux Falls, SD

**MARCH 2**  
**Live on Stage**  
 High Country Guest Ranch  
 Hill City, SD

**MARCH 7**  
**Elevate Rapid City Economic Summit**  
 8 a.m.  
 The Monument  
 Rapid City, SD

**MARCH 9**  
**French Toast/Pancake Feed & Health Fair**  
 8:30 a.m.  
 Tea Community Building  
 Tea, SD

**MARCH 9**  
**SunCatcher Therapeutic Riding Academy & 3rd Annual Shamrock Gala and Benefit Auction**  
 5 p.m.  
 Alex Johnson Ballroom  
 Rapid City, SD

**MARCH 11-15**  
**Black Hills Institute's 50th Anniversary Celebration**  
 Hill City, SD

**MARCH 15**  
**East Dakota Chapter NWFT 31st Annual Banquet**  
 Ramkota Exhibit Hall  
 Sioux Falls, SD

**MARCH 16**  
**Live On Stage**  
 High Country Guest Ranch  
 Hill City, SD

**MARCH 16-17**  
**Hill City Antiques, Railroad & Collectibles Show & Sale**  
 Hill City Center  
 Hill City, SD

**MARCH 17**  
**St. Patrick's Day Green Pancakes and Sausage**  
 8:30 a.m.  
 RVUMC  
 Rapid City, SD

**MARCH 20-23**  
**Hill City Restaurant Week**  
 Hill City, SD

**MARCH 23**  
**Tyndall VFW Vegas Night**  
 7:30 p.m.  
 Tyndall Community Center  
 Tyndall, SD

**MARCH 23**  
**Hill City Children's Easter Egg Hunt**  
 Visitor Info Center  
 Hill City, SD

**MARCH 24**  
**Ham Dinner & Silent Auction**  
 11:45 a.m.  
 RVUMC  
 Rapid City, SD

**MARCH 24**  
**Run for the Rangers**  
 Hill City, SD

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



2024



# WHEN THE ENERGY IS ELECTRIC

You'll rave about all the benefits you get by switching to electric appliances, power tools, and even vehicles.



## SAFETY FIRST

Electric appliances are generally safer than their gas counterparts as they eliminate both open flames and the potential for a gas leak.



## COST SAVINGS

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## IT'S UNIVERSAL

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# Electric Vehicle Program

With today's technologies, the average all-electric vehicle can go nearly 300 miles on a single charge which covers the daily commute for most drivers, even in rural areas. Plug-in hybrid vehicles have an average range of 20 to 50 miles on the electric battery, along with having a gasoline engine. EVs have lower operating costs, are virtually maintenance free, and have no tailpipe emissions. Electric motors provide quiet, smooth operation and their power and quick acceleration make them fun to drive. Enjoy the convenience of charging up at home. In addition to SVE's EV rebate and special rate programs, instant dealership rebates are available for eligible models at the time of purchase. To learn more about EVs, visit [www.siouxvalleyenergy.com](http://www.siouxvalleyenergy.com) to check out the EV resource tool.



## Rate Options to Take Advantage of Off-Peak Reduced Rates (Approximately half of the standard rate)

- Time of Use Rate (TOU): Whole home usage including EV charging
- Vehicle Plug-In Rate: EV charging usage only (sub-meter installation required)

## Rebates and Incentives

- **Rebate for new EV purchase or lease**  
(Requires participation in Time of Use Rate or Vehicle Plug-In Rate)
  - \$500 for battery electric vehicle (BEV)
  - \$250 for plug-in hybrid electric vehicle (PHEV)
- **EV Ready New Home Construction Rebate** – \$300 for a new home that at a minimum has 1-inch conduit installed from the electrical panel to the garage to provide a means for future EV charger installation. If preferred location for a receptacle is known, installation of a 40-amp (minimum) branch circuit and NEMA 14-50 receptacle is also acceptable.

# Energy Audits

An energy audit is a great tool to help you determine the location of energy leaks in your home and prioritize efficiency upgrades. Sealing and insulating the home's envelope is a cost-effective way to improve efficiency and comfort.

## ENERGY AUDIT – Contact SVE to schedule a third-party certified energy audit

- \$100 fee includes use of infrared camera imaging and blower door testing
- Receive an audit report

# Loan Program

Loans up to \$15,000, 5% interest with a seven-year term are available to assist qualifying members in purchasing heat pumps and weatherization products.

# Generator Services

Generators can give you peace of mind for Mother Nature's temperament. An interlock kit with a generator inlet box can generally be installed by SVE electricians for around \$600. This is the most practical way to ready your home for the connection of a portable generator. No more cords running from the generator throughout the house. A permanently installed stand-by generator paired with an automatic transfer switch comes on automatically—whether you are home or away—all within seconds of a power outage. There's a higher investment to install this system, but it takes all the work and worry out of dealing with a power interruption.

SVE no longer sells Kohler stand-by generators, but we are available to help you determine the capacity of the stand-by equipment you may need during an outage. Contact us for a list of local contractors that currently install standby generators for your home or business.



# Renewable Energy Credit (REC) Program

Do you want to support renewable energy without the costs or hassles of installing solar? Consider SVE's Renewable Energy Credit (REC) Program that allows you to off-set your energy usage up to 100% with renewable energy. Sioux Valley Energy has RECs available for purchase. Contact SVE for more information.

## Water Heaters – \$500

Purchase the last water heater you will ever need to buy for your home! Lifetime tank/six-year parts warranty for original purchaser of Marathon® or HTP water heaters (some restrictions apply). \$500 plus applicable tax with participation in the load management program. In stock at SVE service centers in Colman, Brandon, Hartford, and Pipestone – call to place your order. SVE provides warranty and repair services. Homes requiring more than one water heater may purchase the first unit at \$500 and the second at \$1,000.

**Marathon SIZES:** 85 gallon – 28¼" x 70¼" and 100 gallon – 30¼" x 70¾"

**HTP SIZE:** 80 gallon – 23¼" x 71½"



*Rebate eligibility is once every 10 years per account.*

## Electric Heat

Heating and cooling use the largest chunk of your home energy dollars. When you choose electric, you know it's clean, reliable, safe – and it can also be very energy efficient. It's tough to beat the efficiency of an electric heat pump that not only cools your home in the summer, but also heats it in the winter.

Heat pumps – geothermal or air-to-air systems including ductless solutions – are designed to be used in any home whether it's new construction, a renovation project, or replacing existing equipment. Sioux Valley Energy offers rebates and special electric heat rates to make choosing electric a great value.

### **Air-to-Air Heat Pump Rebates** (2 ton and larger)

- With electric back-up: \$1,200
- With non-electric back-up: \$600

### **Geothermal Heat Pump Rebates** (2 ton and larger)

- \$1,200

### **Ductless Air-Source Heat Pump Rebates** (2 ton and larger)

- Rebate of \$300 per structure

### **Electric Heat Rate**

- Reduced rate (approximately 40 percent less than the standard rate)
- Available October – April billing cycles

**Some Restrictions Apply.**

## Time of Use Rate

Put the power in your hands to save money on your electric bill by signing up for the time of use (TOU) rate. You can save big by just shifting your energy use to off-peak times. It's also a great way to take advantage of smart home automation and electric vehicle technology. Rearranging tasks such as laundry and dish washing, and conserving energy to take advantage of reduced off-peak rates is good for both the member and the utility – we both save money! Contact SVE's Member Services Department to sign up for a three-month risk-free trial period.

Use **SmartHub** to manage and review your usage.

### **Time of Use Rate**

- Off-peak Hours (16 hours/day):  
10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and 9 p.m. to 7 a.m.
- On-peak Hours (8 hours/day):  
7 a.m. to 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.

TOU Rate is approximately half of the standard rate during off-peak hours and 1.5 times higher during on-peak hours. Members with sub-metered electric heat still receive the reduced electric heat rate.

# \$HIFT

TO TIME OF USE RATE &

# \$SAVE





# Commercial Energy Efficiency Programs

**Electric Heat Rebate:** Available for heat pump and electric resistance heating equipment in agricultural, commercial, and multi-family facilities.

**Rebates:**

- Heat Pumps: \$100/ton up to 150 ton (*Minimum of 2 ton*)
- Electric Resistance: \$10 per kW up to 600 kW (*Minimum of 8 kW*)

**Electric Heat Rate**

- Reduced rate is approximately 40 percent less than the standard rate
- Available October – April billing cycles

**Some Restrictions Apply**

**Energy Audits:** Commercial members can be reimbursed up to \$1,000 for a third-party commercial energy audit for a facility inspection, to analyze the efficiency/paybacks of upgrading equipment technology, or for the cost associated with the technical report required for a grant application.

**Irrigation Rebate:** \$750 per device is available for a third-party remote managed irrigation system that allows SVE to control usage during peak times. Members participating in the load management program receive a reduced rate per metered kW for the billing cycles of June through September.

**Commercial Electric Vehicle (EV) Charger Rebate/Rate Program:**

Rebates are offered for businesses on SVE lines that promote the charging infrastructure for electric vehicles by installing equipment for public, workplace, multi-family, and fleet applications. Level 2 charging equipment rebates are \$500 for a single-plug or \$1,000 for a dual-plug. Minimum of 7.7 kW charging capacity, including wall mountable and pedestal chargers (NEMA 14-50R outlets do not qualify.) Level 3 charging equipment rebate for 50 kW or larger is \$2,500. Enrollment in an EV rate program is required.

**Programs and rates are subject to change. Some restrictions apply.**

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