



# Cooperative Connections

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# Sioux Valley Energy Earns Four Star Co-op Status



**Tim McCarthy, GM/CEO**

tim.mccarthy@siouxvalleyenergy.com

Serving Our Members. Always. The Sioux Valley Energy mission statement is not just a slogan or a motto that we slap on a website. We believe it; We live it; We act on it. Every. Single. Day. Is it perfect every time? No, but our goal is to strive towards excellence for our membership in everything we do—reliability, member care, programs and services, communication and the list goes on. The commitment of service excellence is born from the unique business model of cooperatives, with the member being the foundation of everything we do.

October is National Co-op Month. It is a time when we reflect on the seven cooperative principles of:

- 1) Open and Voluntary Membership
- 2) Democratic Member Control
- 3) Members' Economic Participation
- 4) Autonomy and Independence
- 5) Education, Training, and Information
- 6) Cooperation Among Cooperatives
- 7) Concern for Community

Sioux Valley Energy employees live out those principles and the Cooperative mission of 'Serving Our Members. Always' through service excellence and they do it because our members deserve it.

This past year, Sioux Valley Energy received national recognition from Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives for earning Service Excellence Four-Star Cooperative status. Sioux Valley Energy is one of less than 50 electric co-ops from across the nation (out of 900) that has earned this prestigious recognition.

The Four-Star Cooperative status was earned by Sioux Valley Energy because all employees took part in four, full-day educational sessions. Those sessions included training on advanced communication skills, adopting a 'can-do' attitude and learning to better assist members by proactively anticipating their needs. The Four-Star status verifies that Sioux Valley Energy is on track to become one of the best in the industry by preparing its employees to provide superior service to its members and serve as ambassadors for the Cooperative.

Touchstone Energy Interim COO, Jeffrey Connor, offered these comments about the Four Star Status earned by SVE, "This is a rare achievement, one that reflects an electric co-op's unique commitment to use membership input to drive the advancement of the co-op in service to the entire community. Electric cooperatives that excel in Service Excellence put members first. That kind of leadership becomes the most powerful driver of trust with the people we serve, and it's a spirit that truly drives Sioux Valley Energy."

Our work towards becoming a Four-Star Cooperative is a testament of our commitment to service and ongoing employee education, and our members will reap the rewards of this effort. Our participation in this program which is focused on service excellence is just one example of how we are continuously working to serve our members in the best way possible and live out the seven cooperative principles.

As I said before, we don't do it perfectly every time, but we will continue to strive towards service excellence for our members. If you have some time and want to learn more about electric cooperatives, check this out: [https://www.electric.coop/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Coop\\_FactsAndFigures\\_June2020.pdf](https://www.electric.coop/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Coop_FactsAndFigures_June2020.pdf)



# Sioux Valley Energy

## Cooperative Connections

(USPS No. 497-440)

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#### How to contact us:

Phone: 1-800-234-1960

e-mail: [sve@siouxvalleyenergy.com](mailto:sve@siouxvalleyenergy.com)

Website: [www.siouxvalleyenergy.com](http://www.siouxvalleyenergy.com)

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Sioux Valley Energy is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

## UNDERSTANDING THE 7 COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES

Cooperatives around the world operate according to the same set of core principles and values, adopted by the International Co-operative Alliance.

These principles are a key reason why America's electric cooperatives operate differently from other electric utilities, putting the needs of our members first.



**1 VOLUNTARY AND OPEN MEMBERSHIP** - Membership in a cooperative is open to all persons who can reasonably use its services and stand willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, regardless of race, religion, gender or economic circumstances.



**2 DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL** - Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. Elected representatives (directors/trustees) are elected from among the membership and are accountable to the membership. In primary cooperatives, members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote); cooperatives at other levels are organized in a democratic manner.



**3 MEMBERS' ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION** - Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. At least part of that capital remains the common property of the cooperative. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing the cooperative; setting up reserves; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the cooperative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.



**4 AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE** - Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control as well as their unique identity.



**5 EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EDUCATION** - Education and training for members, elected representatives (directors/trustees), CEOs and employees help them effectively contribute to the development of their cooperatives. Communications about the nature and benefits of cooperatives, particularly with the general public and opinion leaders, helps boost cooperative understanding.



**6 COOPERATION AMONG COOPERATIVES** - By working together through local, national, regional, and international structures, cooperatives improve services, bolster local economies and deal more effectively with social and community needs.



**7 CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY** - Cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies supported by the membership.

## THESE ARE THE WORDS WE LIVE BY.

# Sign Up To

# WIN

In celebration of National Cooperative Month in October, Sioux Valley Energy is holding a contest. Answer the question below and mail it into us by Oct. 2 and you could win a tote full of prizes. We'll also have chances to win on our Facebook account, [www.facebook.com/svecoop](http://www.facebook.com/svecoop)

How many cooperative principles are there? \_\_\_\_

Member Name:

Address:

City, State, ZIP:

Home Phone:

Cell Phone:

Account Number (From your electric bill):

Mail this form to Sioux Valley Energy, PO Box 216, Colman, SD 57017 by Oct. 2 to register to win. Winner will be drawn from all eligible entries.

\* Sioux Valley Energy employees, directors and their immediate families are not eligible to win.

# Use Safety as Your Guide When Planting Trees

If the trees in your yard have grown so tall that they touch overhead power lines, they can cause all kinds of trouble. Branches that sway in the wind and rain can snap an electric line, sending a live wire to the ground, where it can electrocute anyone who touches it.

Plus, power lines that are broken by fallen trees will cause you and your neighbors to lose electricity and require a costly trip from your electric cooperative.

That's why any tree that poses a danger—even an old or favorite tree—could be slated for removal by your electric cooperative.

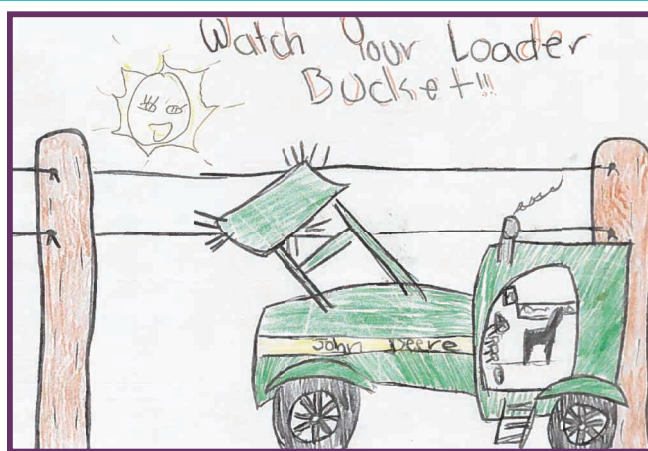
You can prevent problems on the front end by planting smart.

Here are a few tips:

- Do some research and learn all you can about the particular type of tree you want to plant. Learn how tall it will grow when it matures and how wide the full span of its mature branches will become. Use those dimensions to determine how far away from an existing power line you should plant it. Some trees are safe only when they grow 30 feet or more away from a line.
- If the landscape design you like requires you to plant trees in close proximity to electric lines, choose a low-growing variety that will never be tall enough to pose a hazard.
- Before digging any holes to plant trees, call 811, the state's "call before you dig" service. If you don't call and hit underground utility lines, you could be liable for damages.
- Avoid planting in the right-of-way on the edge of your yard or personal property. Your local electric cooperative and other utility companies must maintain that space and could wind up trimming trees out of the way of power lines, possibly leaving the tree looking lopsided.
- Don't plant shrubs too close to your home's outdoor air conditioning unit. AC units require breathing room and should never be crowded by shrubbery or debris.
- If your yard is already home to trees that are close to power lines, keep the trees trimmed so they don't touch any overhead wires. Hire a professional tree trimmer with the proper tools and training to provide this service for you. Don't risk doing it yourself.



## KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



### "Watch Your Loader Bucket!"

**Adalin Homola**, 11 years old

Adalin Homola is the daughter of Joe and Sonja Homola from Lake Nordin. They are members of H-D Electric Cooperative based in Clear Lake.

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.

# People-Pleasing Pasta

## Pasta Florentine

16 oz. penne pasta	1 zucchini, cut in thin strips
1 red pepper, thin cut	2 cans mushrooms, drained
1 onion, chopped	1/8 cup butter
1 cup tomatoes, chopped	1/4 cup flour
1 cup skim milk	1 cup chicken broth
1/2 tsp. nutmeg	1/2 tsp. pepper
1 pkg. frozen spinach, thawed, drained	1/4 cup Parmesan

Prepare pasta, cooking 7 minutes. Drain. Spoon into greased 9x13 baking dish. Cook and stir zucchini, peppers, mushrooms, and onions for 3-4 minutes. Remove from heat, stir in tomatoes. Spoon mixture over pasta and gently mix. Whisk flour with drippings in skillet. Whisk in milk. Add broth, nutmeg and pepper. Cook over medium heat and stir until mixture comes to boil and thickens. Add spinach and cheese. Pour sauce over casserole. Cover with foil. Bake at 350 degrees for 40-45 minutes.

Glen and Linda Erickson, Chester, SD

## One Pan Chicken Alfredo

3 tablespoons olive oil	1/2 lb. penne pasta, or any bite-sized shape pasta, uncooked
1/4 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breasts	2 c. freshly shredded real parmesan cheese
2 cloves garlic, minced	Salt and pepper
2 c. low sodium chicken broth	Flat leaf parsley for garnish
1 c. heavy cream or half and half	

Cut chicken breasts into half-inch and 1-inch pieces. Season with salt/pepper. Brown chicken in olive oil over medium heat. It will finish cooking as it simmers. Add minced garlic and saute for 1 minute. Add broth, cream or half and half and uncooked pasta and stir. Bring to a boil, cover, reduce to a simmer. Keep pan covered while simmering. Simmer for 15-20 minutes or until pasta is tender. Remove from heat, stir in shredded parmesan cheese. Season with salt and pepper.

Judy Mendel, Doland, SD

## Pizza Hot Dish

2 lb. hamburger - brown, sprinkle with onion and garlic salt	1/2 cup water
1 10-oz. can pizza sauce	1/2 tsp. salt
1 8-oz. can tomato sauce	1/4 tsp. pepper
	1 tsp. oregano

Simmer above ingredients 20 minutes. Add 1-1/2 cup grated American cheese (Velveeta) and 8-oz. package of wide noodles, cooked. Put 1/2 of sauce in 9x13 cake pan. Top with noodles. Add rest of sauce. Top with mozzarella cheese and sprinkle generously with parmesan cheese. Bake 30-40 minutes at 350 degrees.

Shirley Miller, Winfred, SD

## Shrimp Scampi

8 ounces pasta linguine	1/4 teaspoon black pepper
2 tablespoons butter	1 dash crushed red pepper flakes
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil	1-1/2 pounds large or extra-large Aqua Star shrimp, shelled
4 garlic cloves, minced	1/3 cup parsley, chopped
1/2 cup dry white wine or seafood broth	1/2 lemon, juice only
3/4 teaspoon kosher salt	

Cook pasta according to package directions. In large skillet, melt butter and oil. Add garlic and saute until fragrant. Add wine or broth, salt, red pepper flakes and black pepper. Bring to simmer and reduce by half. Add shrimp and saute until shrimp turn pink and opaque, approximately 2-4 minutes depending on size. Stir in parsley, lemon juice and cooked pasta. Provided by [www.aquastar.com](http://www.aquastar.com).

Please send your favorite vegetarian, garden produce and pasta recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2020. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

# Shedding a Light on LEDs



**Sheila Gross**

Energy Services Specialist

Have you made the switch to high-efficiency LED bulbs? You may know that LEDs use a lot less energy than standard bulbs, but are you aware of all the other benefits they bring to the table? When you install LEDs in your home, you'll:

- 1) **Forget how to change a light bulb** - High-quality LED bulbs last 25,000 hours or more. At an average of five hours a day, 365 days a year, they can last for at least 14 years. You may find yourself having to look at the instructions on the package the next time you need to change one out.
- 2) **See your home in a whole new light** - Color rendering index (CRI) measures how well a light bulb displays colors compared to sunlight. Incandescent bulbs set the standard with a score of 100. The latest LED products have a CRI of up to 90, making the light in your home look vivid and natural.
- 3) **Enjoy a cozy atmosphere** - LEDs are inherently dimmable. That means you can turn down the lights for dinner or for an evening movie with the family. You'll save energy, as well.
- 4) **Improve your options** - Bulbs emit light in different tones, ranging from cool to warm. Warm (yellowish) light is great for your family room, while cool (bluish) light is better for performing tasks, such as in a workroom. LEDs cover the entire color range, so they can be used anywhere in your home or outdoors.
- 5) **Live more sustainably** - If you're looking to downsize your environmental footprint, switching to LEDs puts you on the right path. The lower energy use will reduce your household emissions. Also, LEDs contain no mercury, a hazardous substance found in other types of bulbs. This makes disposal simpler and easier on the planet.

Choose LED products that are ENERGY STAR-certified for quality and efficiency. Energy savings, good color quality and long life - with LEDs there's no reason to settle for less!

Rebates are available for retrofit LED lighting projects in existing agricultural and commercial facilities. A rebate of \$.10 cents per watt saved up to 50 percent of the project costs or a maximum rebate of \$1,000 per account is available (lifetime member maximum of \$5,000).

Call our Energy Services Department at 800-234-1960 for more information.

## Tell Me More!

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

Please contact me about the topics above.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Account #: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Lighting 101: Brightness

**FOR MANY YEARS...**  
light bulbs were referred to by their wattage to express brightness.

**BEFORE**

40W      60W

**WATTS ARE THE MEASURE OF POWER...**  
it takes to keep the light bulb on.

**OLDER BULBS USE MORE WATTS.**

WATTS	LUMENS
25W	250+
40W	450+
60W	800+
75W	1100+
100W	1600+

**NOW**

7W      8.5W

**NOT ALL BULBS ARE CREATED EQUAL.**  
Newer (LED) bulbs require less power (wattage) to produce the same level of brightness as older (incandescent) bulbs.

**THE WORLD OF LIGHTING IS CHANGING.**  
LED bulbs are paving the way with higher efficiency, more styles, more colors and a new way to evaluate brightness.

**SO WHAT IS A WATT?**

**THEN HOW DO WE MEASURE BRIGHTNESS?**  
Lumens are used to measure brightness and are, therefore, a better indicator of how much light will be given off.

**DON'T BLAME THE LED. CHECK THE LUMENS.**  
Find the right amount for your need and you'll be much happier.

# Help Spread Good Cheer!

Tick, tock! The next deadline for Sioux Valley Energy's Operation Round Up® funds is Nov. 20. Since 2000, area community groups have benefited from more than \$1.8 million awarded by the program. Is your group next?



Each month, co-op members round up their electric bill to the next highest dollar. That money is collected for Operation Round Up®.

Many Sioux Valley Energy employees also help by deducting from their paychecks. More than 75 percent of SVE's members and employees participate in the program.

## Who can apply for funds?

Individuals and organizations within the Sioux Valley Energy service area may apply. Non-profit organizations that are providing COVID-19 relief are especially encouraged to apply before Nov. 20 for the next round of awards which will be announced in December.

## How much can a non-profit receive from the Operation Round Up Program?

Non-profit organizations, or charities are eligible to receive up to \$10,000 annually. The average award is \$1,000.

## When are projects eligible for funding?

Whenever possible, requests for funding should be for projects that will be completed within 12 months following the grant application.

## When does the Sioux Valley Energy Customers' Trust Board of Directors meet and approve applications?

The board meets quarterly during the months of March, June, September and December.

## When are applications due at the Sioux Valley Energy office?

All applications received by the 20th of the month preceding a board meeting will be considered at the next board meeting. For example, an application received at the Sioux Valley Energy office by Nov. 20 will be reviewed for funding at the December board meeting.

## How do I submit an application?

Applications can be found on the Sioux Valley Energy website at:

<https://www.siouxvalleyenergy.com/my-community/operation-roundup>.

You can email the completed application to [Debra.Biever@siouxvalleyenergy.com](mailto:Debra.Biever@siouxvalleyenergy.com) or FAX it to 605-256-1693. To mail the application, please send it to: Sioux Valley Energy Customer's Trust, PO Box 216, Colman, SD 57017.



The Children's Dental Services resumed dental clinics in Rock County in August. The next clinic is set for Sept. 24 in Luverne.

## Operation Round Up® Spotlight: Bringing Smiles to Rock County, Minnesota

Young people and expectant mothers in Rock County, Minnesota, are getting much needed dental care through monthly clinics performed by Children's Dental Services.

The #Luv1LuvAll – Rock County Oral Health Task Force was one of several community organizations to receive funding this year from the Sioux Valley Energy Operation Round Up® program. In their application, the task force wrote that dental needs in the county have gone unmet for the past decade.

“Families and individuals have had no other choice but to travel three to four hours to locate dentists that accept state insurance,” wrote Wanda Jarchow, the task force's chairwoman.

The task force sought to fill the gap in services by bringing in the Children's Dental Services out of Minneapolis, Minn. The mobile clinic visits monthly at a cost of \$700 a month to cover mileage and staff time.

Services given by the mobile clinic were on hiatus during COVID-related protocols and resumed in August. Organizers work to fill 20 appointment slots each month. The visits provide hygiene, check-ups and follow-up treatment for those in need.

The program provided dental care to more than 800 children in 2019.

The next dental clinic by Children's Dental Services will be on Thursday, Sept. 24, 2020, at Rock County Health and Human Services in Luverne. Dental care is provided for those ages 0-26 and pregnant women. To schedule an appointment, call 612-746-1530.

To learn more about #Luv1LuvAll, visit their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/Luv1LuvAll>



OPEN FOR BUSINESS



While the ag markets have experienced shifts and changes, rural South Dakota continues to offer a favorable business climate for many industry sectors.

# S.D. IS OPEN FOR BUSINESS

## REED Fund supports business growth in rural areas

**Billy Gibson**

editor@sdrea.coop

The old adage about making hay while the sun is shining is not lost on the Governor's Office of Economic Development.

During the summer months, the department launched an aggressive regional advertising campaign called "South Dakota Means Business," aimed at encouraging companies from surrounding states to relocate to a more business-friendly environment.

The timing of this marketing strategy was intended to take advantage of the favorable national publicity the state has received for its response to COVID-19 and also to lure disaffected businesses weary of increasingly onerous and burdensome regulatory policies in other states.

The promotional initiative was based on a long list of advantages that make it easier in South Dakota for companies to maximize positive margins and plan for future growth.

The campaign featured Gov. Kristi Noem emphasizing the fact that South Dakota has been ranked best in the nation in several categories: lowest business costs; most accessible financing; two-year college graduation rates; lowest regulatory restrictions; lowest state tax revenue volatility; and more.

"We hear over and over from business owners in other states that increased government regulations are making it difficult to earn a profit and plan for growth," said Commissioner Steve Westra. "We want to get the word out that it doesn't have to be this way."

"As out-of-state businesses become more frustrated with

Dakota Style is a thriving business that has received REED funding through Codington-Clark Electric.



overreach by their state governments, they're turning to South Dakota," said Gov. Noem. "The number of new businesses interested in moving to South Dakota has increased dramatically. We're ready to show these businesses what South Dakota can do for them."

While Gov. Noem pushes to attract more businesses to South Dakota, the state's rural electric cooperatives continue to be engaged in efforts to spark community development. Twenty of the state's electric cooperatives collaborate with five western-Minnesota co-ops to support local business growth through the Rural Electric Economic Development, Inc. (REED) Fund. The non-profit corporation provides financing in all or parts of roughly 70 counties in the two states.

The REED Fund was created in 1997 to boost business growth in small communities and has issued nearly 400 loans totaling more



than \$102 million. That financial support has resulted in more than 9,000 jobs.

While the fund is used by rural electric cooperatives to boost economic activity in their service areas, it is not restricted to co-ops. Many loans have gone to retail entities, manufacturing facilities, agriculture processing and marketing and support services. The fund has also been used to support rural health care, education, recreation, arts, public safety, community infrastructure, housing and office space.

The fund is supported by state and federal government entities, including the Governor's Office of Economic Development and the USDA Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program, and also private groups such as Dakota Resources, Basin Electric Cooperative and banking institutions.

The REED Fund had a record year in 2019, with \$12.8 million in new loans. REED and Avera Health also signed a new workforce housing development financing partnership as Avera committed to a \$2 million investment in the fund. This investment, along with an additional \$1 million pledge from SDN Communications and another \$1 million from First Bank & Trust, will expand efforts to finance workforce housing.

Two loans issued in August went to Lesterville Fire and Rescue from Bon Homme Yankton Electric, and to 605 Sires, LLC, from Southeastern Electric.

Bon Homme Electric Manager Stephanie Horst said the money would go toward the purchase of new air packs and a new building addition for the local volunteer fire department.

"A big part of our guiding principles as locally-owned, locally-controlled electric cooperatives is to do whatever we can to improve the quality of life in our service areas and to expand the range of economic opportunities available to our members and our communities," Horst said. "It's very gratifying for us to know we're making a positive impact."

She noted that more than 80 percent of the REED Fund's lending is established in communities of fewer than 4,000 people and 98 percent of REED-financed projects have local ownership.

At Southeastern Electric, General Manager Brad Schardin said 605 Sires, LLC, used its financing to expand its family-owned, full-service bull collection and donor facility. The company opened in 2017 and delivers its products to customers both domestically and internationally.

According to Schardin, "Delivering electrical power that is safe, affordable, reliable and accessible is a tall order in itself. But our commitment goes beyond providing electricity. We also have an obligation to enhance and improve the communities we serve. The REED Fund is an excellent resource to help us fulfill that commitment."

For more information on the REED Fund, visit [www.reedfund.coop](http://www.reedfund.coop) or call 605-256-8015.

## Future of Energy Storage

Energy storage technology is extremely versatile - it's small enough to fit in your phone, or large enough to power your entire home.

Many people are familiar with small-scale batteries for handheld devices, but utility-scale batteries take energy storage to a whole new level. The ability to store energy helps to ensure that energy demand meets supply at any given time, making electricity available when you need it.

The most widespread form of energy storage in the U.S. is through pumped hydropower, a form of mechanical energy storage. Pumped hydropower has been used for several decades now, and currently makes up about 97 percent of the country's utility storage capacity.

Energy is stored by pumping water uphill from a lower elevation reservoir to store in an upper water basin. When energy is needed, the water is allowed

to flow through an electric turbine to generate energy, the same way it flows through a hydroelectric dam. This method is largely dependent on surrounding geography and any potential resulting ecosystem issues.

Battery technology is also gaining a lot of ground. In 2018, the power capacity from battery storage systems more than doubled from 2010. The most common type of battery chemistry is lithium-ion because of a high-cycle efficiency and fast response time. Some less-common battery types for utility storage include lead acid batteries, nickel-based batteries and sodium-based batteries. However, each chemistry has varying limitations. Beyond pumped hydropower and batteries, there are a few other forms of energy storage used at the utility scale: thermal, hydrogen and compressed air.

Energy storage currently plays a crucial role in incorporating renewable energy into our electric grid. Solar and wind energy are weather-dependent, so when energy demand is low but energy supply is high from the sun or wind, storing the excess energy makes it possible to use it later when demand is higher. As renewable energy becomes more prevalent, energy storage will help to create a more resilient grid.

Although battery prices have been decreasing steadily over the last several years, energy storage can be expensive to attain. Currently, there are 25 gigawatts of electrical energy storage capacity in the U.S., and many experts expect capacity to grow.



Energy storage plays a crucial role in incorporating renewable energy into our electric grid. Photo by Dennis Gainer



Electric Vehicles (EVs) are a great way to take part in beneficial electrification.

### Today's Technology:

# Beneficial Electrification of Your Home and Your Life

If you look around your home, you will likely see all the typical electrical devices and appliances plugged in, turned on and humming right along. Not much thought is usually given to electricity because it tends to always be there when you need

it. But what if those things could be used in a way that is even more efficient, all while improving your life and allowing for the electric grid to be operated more effectively? Sounds like a heavy lift, but with the concept of beneficial electrification, it is possible.

## Electric Vehicles

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

The individual benefits include lower costs to operate; more power when accelerating; reduced maintenance requirements; quieter operation and zero emissions. The individual benefits sound pretty good, but it goes beyond that. With an EV, your neighbor does not have to listen to the motor running and won't

smell any fumes. Now take that concept even further. The EV that is plugged in to an electrical outlet to charge becomes part of the electric grid. As more EV's are plugged in for charging, electric utilities, like Sioux Valley Energy, can coordinate the timing for when there is less demand on the system—such as the middle of the night. This shifts electric use to a time when there is very low demand, allowing the grid to operate more efficiently and maximizing the use of power generated from renewable sources. As EVs expand globally, the impact multiplies. This is the concept of beneficial electrification.

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National Drive Electric Week is Sept. 26-Oct. 3. While COVID-19 restrictions don't currently allow for test drives of 'EVie', Sioux Valley Energy's all-electric Nissan Leaf vehicle, we hope to resume the drives when it is safe to do so. In the meantime, SVE has an entire section of their website dedicated to information about electric vehicles.



## The Smart Home

Beneficial electrification encompasses more than just EVs. Experts predict that smart home technologies being developed today will have similar advantages in the future. Forbes.com defined the smart home as “a house featuring ‘intelligent’ technology that simplifies and automates everyday activities, such as turning on lights, locking the door, lowering shades—and yes, changing the settings on your thermostat. You can call any device ‘smart’ that is capable of doing something autonomously.” A few technologies that fall into the Smart Home category include:

- **Smart Thermostats** – Thermostats like Nest, Ecobee or Emerson’s Sensi Touch help consumers take control of the home’s climate from anywhere. Smart thermostats are Wi-Fi enabled and may be controlled remotely through a tablet, smartphone or voice control. Some models use multiple sensors to monitor temperatures in various parts of the home for more balanced heating or cooling, track user temperature preferences and use the data to optimize your heating and cooling schedule, and some are designed for complex multi-stage systems that will control heating, cooling, dehumidifier and ventilation systems.
- **Home Energy Monitors** – Energy monitors, like smappee, sense or neuroio help consumers better understand their energy use. They come with a variety of features, including recognizing the usage of individual appliances, generating energy saving tips and real-time tracking of energy consumption. Most systems attach to a circuit breaker. While many

brands market themselves as do-it-yourself projects, it’s always recommended that a licensed electrician work on anything involving a circuit breaker due to shock hazards. Many electric utilities, such as Sioux Valley Energy, also have online account management that gives consumers the ability to dig deeper into their energy use as well. Sioux Valley Energy’s online energy management system is called “SmartHub” and is available for members to download.

- **Smart Home Sensors** – Smart sensors were created to help monitor the total environment of the home. There are a variety of devices and systems including Nest Protect, wi-fi Water Sensor by D-Link, or Foobot’s air monitor. Among these devices there are features including flood sensing, propane level sensing, air quality monitoring and smoke/CO sensing. Many devices have mobile apps and can integrate with a smart thermostat, home energy monitoring systems and even ventilation systems.
- **Smart Lighting** – “Connected” LEDs offer features like controlling lights remotely from a smartphone app or via voice control through an in-home speaker. They can also be connected to a home security system or dimmed to enhance entertaining. Connected LEDs require a central controller or hub, like Amazon’s Alexa or Apple HomeKit. The hub can control other smart devices and become the center of a smart home system.

## Available Programs and Incentives

Sioux Valley Energy offers its members a variety of incentives and rebates to get them started in beneficial electrification. For example, the ‘Time of Use’ (TOU) rate allows members to shift their energy use to off-peak times resulting in a lower electric bill. In addition, members who sign up for the TOU rate can receive a \$50 rebate for a Smart Thermostat. The Co-op also has

an entire suite of electric vehicle programs including rebates for level 2 chargers, Renewable Energy Credits, new EV-ready home construction and commercial public EV chargers. Check out Sioux Valley Energy’s website for a full listing of beneficial electrification programs and services available for members: [www.siouxvalleyenergy.com](http://www.siouxvalleyenergy.com)

## Let Sioux Valley Energy Help You *Drive Electric*



### Time of Use Rate

Charge your electric vehicle at a reduced rate for lower operating costs!

• **5.84¢/kWh** during off-peak hours



### Charger Rebates

- Level II Charger: up to **\$500**
- Public EV Charger: **\$500**
- Renewable Energy Credit Rebates



### New Construction Rebate

A rebate of **\$100** is available for a new home that has been wired to be EV ready for a future Level II charger.

Must be a member of SVE to qualify for EV programs. Some restrictions apply, contact Sioux Valley Energy for more information.



**SIoux VALLEY ENERGY**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

800.234.1960

[www.siouxvalleyenergy.com](http://www.siouxvalleyenergy.com)





Life on farms and in small towns changed for the better when electric co-ops brought power to the countryside.

# CO-OP HISTORY

## Co-op legacy provides a road map to success

**Billy Gibson**

[editor@sdrea.coop](mailto:editor@sdrea.coop)

On Nov. 29, 1935, a handful of local farmers huddled together in a nondescript general store near Vermillion.

They knew that six months earlier President Franklin Roosevelt had signed an executive order creating the Rural Electrification Administration (REA). They knew the purpose of this new federal entity was to provide low-interest loans so that small communities all across the nation could build the power delivery infrastructures required to bring power to the countryside. And they knew this would be their best opportunity to accomplish something for themselves that the for-profit corporate utilities were unwilling to do: energize rural America. They were all in.

While there were a few fits-and-starts along the way, what emerged out of that meeting was South Dakota's first rural electric cooperative, Clay-Union Electric Corp.

Meanwhile, this exact scenario was being replicated in other small towns and villages from coast-to-coast as the rural electrification movement gained momentum and transformed the lives of millions. From those humble beginnings, the movement has swelled to more than 900 locally-owned and locally-controlled cooperatives serving 42 million Americans in 47 states.

The improbable feat of individuals coming together, organizing, planning and building such a vast power delivery system through the most sparsely populated and inhospitable landscapes has been recognized as one of the country's crowning achievements.

America's electric cooperatives take a great deal of pride in their legacy of service, their spirit of independence, their ability to work together for a common purpose and their democratic system of control and decision-making. It's a system rooted in the



Local citizens got together in the 1930s to organize electric co-ops.

very ideals that made the country great.

So why should today's generation care about this legacy?

Dan Lindblom thinks he knows. Lindblom, along with his fellow co-op leader Verdon Lamb, recently received the South Dakota Rural Electric Association's (SDREA) Legacy of Leadership Award for 2020. He said the rich history of the cooperative movement is important because it provides a model for success that both current and future generations can use to overcome obstacles and challenges, to help navigate through difficult and seemingly intractable situations.

Having served 27 years on the board at Black Hills Electric Cooperative in Custer and 23 years on the SDREA board, Lindblom certainly knows about how to approach difficult dilemmas. As a statewide board officer, Lindblom found himself in the middle of many imbroglios and political squabbles over the decades.

Whether the battleground was in Pierre or Washington, Lindblom fought to protect the interests of electric cooperative



Co-ops led the way in energizing rural America and today lead the way in developing new technologies such as electric vehicles.

members through a wide range of issues such as service territory disputes, state and federal environmental regulations, taxation, transportation and more.

In the process, he learned the art of compromise and the virtue of demonstrating mutual respect. He recalls the not-too-distant past when political



Co-ops improved the lives of all citizens in their communities.

opponents maintained personal, respectful relationships despite any ideological or policy differences they may have had. He also learned the meaning of the old axiom, “United we stand, divided we fall.”

“Speaking with one voice pays off, especially in the political arena,” Lindblom said. “We had situations where an issue may impact one or two co-ops, but we all had to stand together to provide the strength we needed to win. It’s a difficult decision to engage in a fight when you think you don’t have a dog in the hunt, but it’s necessary if you’re going to do what’s good for co-op members across the state. The next time, it may be your issue that comes up and you’ll need the support.”

Lindblom said the secret sauce of success is adopting a posture of give-and-take while standing in solidarity behind a set of shared values.

Verdon Lamb, the other 2020 Legacy of Leadership recipient, served 40 years on the board at Codington-Clark Electric Cooperative in Watertown and also served on the SDREA board. He said the history of the electric co-op movement is a prime example of what can be accomplished when people work together.

“It’s about leadership, sacrifice and working in harmony to do something that’s worth doing for other people,” Lamb said. “I always felt it was worth the sacrifice of giving up my personal time and my farming time to represent the members who put their faith in me and elected me to serve on the board.”

While some say the sense of community, sacrifice and selflessness are lost on the current generation, Lamb said he has hope that young adults will come to understand those ideals exemplified by electric co-ops.

“You know, people said the same things about us when we were kids,” said Lamb, who graduated from high school in 1953. “They said we weren’t going to amount to much, but we turned out okay.”

Chris Larson is manager at Clay-Union Electric Corp., where South Dakota’s electric cooperative system began. He pointed out that the legacy of electric cooperatives is rooted in friends, family and the community. Because cooperatives have always been owned, operated and controlled independently, and have always been geared for local service, they demonstrate the power of human connections and the strength that comes with

teamwork. He said this is especially clear to see as cooperatives and their members deal with the coronavirus pandemic.

“When times get tough, you look to your family and friends, and those are the people who make up our cooperative,” Larson said. “Cooperative communities work together to accomplish things that would be impossible to do alone. That’s what the cooperative legacy is all about, and we see how it lifts us up and sustains us through troubling times.”

Larson said electric co-op history points back to a time in the 1930s when the country was racked by a slumping economy. Co-op organizers went door-to-door to rally support and ask for a membership fee. It was money that many households simply didn’t have. He noted that the first attempt at forming the co-op failed because the start-up funds weren’t there. But by working together and staying focused on the goal, the community accomplished the mission of energizing homes, farms, schools and businesses.

“Friends and families in the Clay County area pulled together and found a way to improve the quality of life for all,” Larson said. “The result is that today we provide power to water districts, banks, grocery stores, elevators, hotels, ag supply stores and more. Electricity is the life blood that makes our local economy run. That’s why our history is so important – it shows the possibilities of what can be done. It’s a road map for achieving what some think is impossible. That’s a message we can all learn from and has no expiration date.”

Larson said that by being attentive to the legacy of electric cooperatives, members of the younger generation can make a real difference in the future of the country.



# CO-OPS VOTE

Cooperative members encouraged to make their voices heard

**Billy Gibson**

[editor@sdrea.coop](mailto:editor@sdrea.coop)

The act of voting is not only a basic right of every American citizen, it's also a hallmark of the country's rural electric cooperative system.

The monumental rural electrification movement that began in the 1930s was founded on the principle of one member, one vote. As communities all across the nation began building infrastructures to deliver electricity to farms and schools and homes in outlying areas, the idea that every member had only one vote – regardless of that member's status, wealth or influence – quickly gained widespread appeal.

The same set of democratic principles that have served as the system's bedrock from the beginning continue to sustain the cooperative network today.

All of the more than 42 million electric cooperative members across the country are encouraged to cast their vote for their local board representative with the aim of installing competent, effective leadership. Exercising the right to cast a ballot in board elections ensures that the members maintain a measure of democratic control over the organization that they collectively own.

While voting power rests in the hands of cooperative members, as it does with the general electorate, that power is lost if those responsible for being engaged in the political process don't do their part. If electric cooperative members don't elect qualified, committed representatives to look out for their interests at the board table, this puts the future of the cooperative in doubt. The same applies to the national political system as well.

Participating in the political process is so paramount to maintaining and upholding democratic institutions that the more

than 900 member-owned electric cooperatives across the country have launched a promotional initiative called Co-ops Vote. The campaign is designed to raise awareness not only of the upcoming national elections but also the voting process that takes place each year at every cooperative.

Long before the launching of the Co-op Votes campaign came the formation of a federal political action committee called the Action Committee for Rural Electrification (ACRE). Founded in 1966, ACRE is a non-partisan organization that provides support for candidates who serve as advocates for the best interests of electric co-ops, their member-owners and their communities.

The grassroots organization is backed by a diverse group of more than 35,000 individuals in 47 states who make an average annual contribution of just \$65. Through the ACRE Co-op Owners for Political Action, an off-shoot of the original ACRE program, local cooperatives are able to reach out to their residential member-owners and invite them to be politically engaged in marshaling financial support for candidates and involved in other significant grassroots advocacy initiatives.

South Dakota's rural electric cooperatives are strong participants in the effort to make sure the voices of co-op members reach the halls of the statehouse in Pierre and also resonate on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. According to Ed Anderson, general manager of the South Dakota Rural Electric Association in Pierre, those voices include calls for electrical power that is safe, reliable, affordable and accessible for all South Dakota citizens.

"Electrical power is essential to sustaining our way of life," Anderson said. "We need power to run our homes and farms

and businesses. With our relatively low population density, it's a challenge to keep power rates at a point where our members can afford their monthly electric bill. That's why it's critical that we make sure the decision makers in Pierre and in Washington are listening to our voices and listening to our concerns."

South Dakota's electric cooperative leaders, employees and members are stepping up to the plate by increasing their participation in ACRE and ACRE Co-op Owners for Political Action. Roughly half of the 30 cooperative boards in the state boast 100 percent participation in ACRE at the \$100 per year (Century Club) level.

One of those cooperatives, Black Hills Electric based in Custer, also has an employee participation level of 100 percent, in addition to its management, key staff and seven-member board.

CEO and General Manager Walker Witt said supporting political leaders who can relate to the unique challenges faced by rural South Dakotans is important.

"The management, staff and employees have supported ACRE since its inception. We believe in the importance of electing representatives who believe in the importance of the rural electric program and

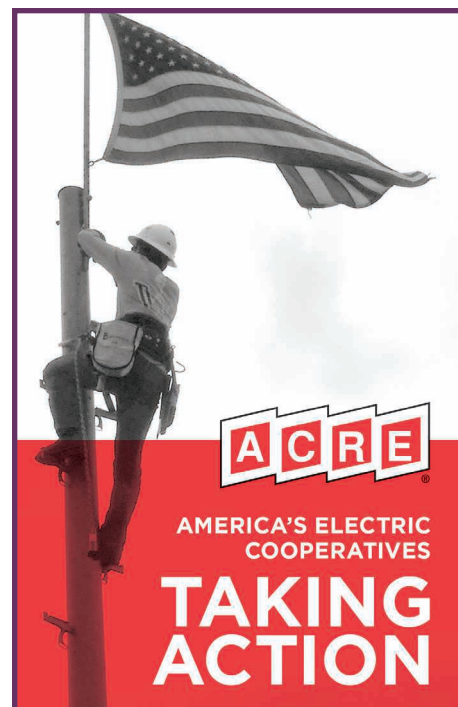
those co-ops on the front lines of rural electrification. ACRE dollars help keep the struggles of rural America in the forefront of the legislative arena. ACRE has helped us build political capital in South Dakota and Washington."

Tim McCarthy, General Manager and CEO at Sioux Valley Energy in Colman, echoed Witt's observations.

"Our Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) and Board of Directors believe it is important to be politically engaged. We view our role as advocates for our member-owners and it's part of our commitment to them. We are engaged at all levels of the political process and, in fact, employ a government relations professional to ensure continued involvement. ACRE supports candidates who will speak for and protect the interests of electric cooperatives and their consumer-owners."

Sioux Valley Energy has also made an effort to appeal directly to members by conducting community-based forums, a process that has been temporarily disrupted by the coronavirus pandemic.

According to McCarthy, "We have worked hard to engage our members in the political process, hosting what we call 'Take Action' forums. We invite



elected officials to speak at these events and it allows our members to hear about energy-specific legislation and regulation that may impact their rates and or service. They also have the chance to ask questions and hear directly from their elected officials. Unfortunately, because of COVID-19, we will not be hosting any this year."

## Rural communities depend on Co-op Voters.

- ✓ Learn about the issues.
- ✓ Talk to your family and friends.
- ✓ Cast your vote.

**Election Day is  
November 3, 2020**



**Be an active participant in our democracy. Be a Co-op Voter.**

[www.vote.coop](http://www.vote.coop)

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

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**September 24-26**

Custer State Park Buffalo Roundup and Arts Festival, Custer, SD, 605-255-4515

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**September 25-27**

Coal Springs Threshing Bee Featuring Massey Harris Tractors, Meadow, SD 605-788-2229

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**September 26**

Great Downtown Pumpkin Festival, 526 Main Street, Rapid City, SD, 605-716-7979

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**September 26**

Chamberlain/Oacoma Harvest Festival, Chamberlain, SD, 605-234-4416

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**September 26-27**

Menno Pioneer Power Show, 616 N Fifth Street, Menno, SD

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**September 26**

Wheelin' to Wall, Wall Community Center, Wall, SD

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**October 2-3**

First United Methodist Church Rummage Sale, 629 Kansas City St, Rapid City, SD, 605-348-4294

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**October 2-3**

Oktoberfest, Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

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**October 3**

Cruiser Car Show & Street Fair, Main Street, Rapid City, SD, 605-716-7979

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**October 3**

Cowboys, Cowgirls and Cowcatchers Soiree, 6 p.m., South Dakota State Railroad Museum, Hill City, SD, 605-574-9000



**Sept. 26**  
Wheelin' to Wall, Wall, SD,

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**October 3-4**

Marshall Area Gun Show, Red Baron Arena, 1651 Victory Dr., Marshall, MN, 507-401-6227

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**October 3-4**

Harvest Festival, Harrisburg, SD, 605-743-2424

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**October 3-18**

Pumpkin Festival, Canton, SD, 605-987-5171

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**October 10**

Annual Fall Festival, 4-6 p.m., Fairburn United Methodist Church, Fairburn, SD 605-255-4329

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**October 10**

Groton's 5th Annual Pumpkin Fest, Groton City Park, Groton, SD, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Lunch Served 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

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**October 10-11**

Pumpkin Festival, 27249 SD Hwy 115, Harrisburg, SD, 605-743-2424

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**October 24**

Ladies Day Shopping Extravaganza, The Crossing Bar, Mina, SD, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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**October 29-30**

Helping with Horsepower's Phobia - A Haunted Trail, Reclamation Ranch, 40789 259th St., Mitchell, SD, 7-11 p.m. 605-770-2867

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**October 31-November 1**

Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Assn. Sioux Falls Classic Gun Show, 3200 W Maple St. Sioux Falls, SD, 605-630-2199

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**November 7**

Silver Star Bazaar, Lake Norden Community Center, Lake Norden, SD, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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**November 7**

Helping with Horsepower's RibFest, 4 p.m., Reclamation Ranch, Mitchell, SD, Contact mattcarter1421@gmail.com to Register Your Team

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**November 14**

Annual Holiday Extravaganza, Sisseton Area Merchants and Crafters, Sisseton, SD, 605-698-7425

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**November 21-22**

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

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.