

# Black Hills Electric

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

April 2020 Vol. 20 No. 12

# Cooperative Connections



**Cybersecurity  
and You**

Page 8

---

**Flood  
Preparedness**

Page 12

---

## Lineman Appreciation Day

# Your linemen are energizing you



**Walker Witt**

CEO and General Manager  
wwitt@bhec.coop

***...when you see a  
lineman, thank them for  
all that they do for us.***

February was the month of soups, breads, and lots and lots of desserts for the BHEC management team and directors. For 33 years, BHEC directors and employees have partnered with local civic organizations to host the Member Appreciation Area Meetings. So far this year, six meetings have been held, and 436 people came to enjoy the great food and good fellowship. The Rochford meeting is March 27. So far this year, more than \$3,700 has been raised for the various partnering civic organizations. These meetings are an opportunity to talk to our members in an informal setting, answer questions, and tell you all that we appreciate you – our members.

April 13 is National Lineman Appreciation Day. At Black Hills Electric, every day is lineman appreciation day. Our linemen are the face of our co-op. Our journey linemen and staking technicians are most often the first contact for a new member when they decide to build a new home. Throughout the year, our members see and talk to our linemen as they patrol and inspect rights-of-way and trim and cut trees. Whenever we have severe weather that results in an outage, it is our linemen that our members see.

Our linemen's commitment to your co-op is not finished at the end of the workday. Black Hills Electric Cooperative's linemen are responsible for keeping the power on day and night, whether it's Thanksgiving, Christmas, or their 25th Wedding Anniversary! Crews are scheduled and on-call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

BHEC linemen work in some of the most remote and rugged terrain in the Black Hills. While many electric utilities topography allows access for bucket trucks and equipment to infrastructure, which makes climbing a seldom used skill, for your linemen, climbing poles is still a daily duty, and often times after hiking to the pole that needs climbed in extreme weather. Our linemen work safely, smart, and efficiently, all while 40 feet in the air, wearing thick rubber gloves and often in the dark with the wind blowing and the snow falling.

Linemen are often first responders during storms, fires, and other catastrophic events, making sure the scene is safe for public safety workers.



Black Hills Electric has over 2,400 miles of line throughout its service territory. Fourteen linemen are responsible for the 24 hours a day, 365 days a year operation and maintenance of those lines. In addition to the operation and maintenance of all those existing miles of line, our linemen construct lines to new services and build upgraded lines to enhance reliability and meet the ever-increasing electric needs of all our members.

So, when you see a lineman, thank them for all that they do for us. When April 13 rolls around, think of them and their families, and say a prayer for their safety.

Thank you, Bill, Dean, Danny, Beau, Corey, Travis, Mark, Kenny, Carlos, Lonnie, Rory, Scott and Soren (part time). Bob and Casey not pictured. You are appreciated!

# Black Hills Electric Cooperative Connections

(ISSN No. 1531-104X)

**Board President:** Alan Bishop

## Board of Directors

Dennis Quivey – Vice President  
Gary Kluthe – Secretary  
Don Andersen – Asst. Secretary  
Jim Preston – Treasurer  
Al Perry  
Dave Lindblom

**CEO and General Manager:** Walker Witt – [wwitt@bhec.coop](mailto:wwitt@bhec.coop)

**Manager of Operations –** Bill Brisk – [billb@bhec.coop](mailto:billb@bhec.coop)

**System Coordinator –** Jesse Sorenson – [jsorenson@bhec.coop](mailto:jsorenson@bhec.coop)

**Chief Financial Officer:** Sammi Langendorf – [slang@bhec.coop](mailto:slang@bhec.coop)

**Manager of Marketing and Member Services and Cooperative Connections Editor:** Mike Chase – [mchase@bhec.coop](mailto:mchase@bhec.coop)

BLACK HILLS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is the monthly publication for the members of Black Hills Electric Cooperative, 25191 Cooperative Way, P.O. Box 792, Custer, S.D. 57730-0792. Families subscribe to Cooperative Connections as part of their electric cooperative membership. Black Hills Electric Cooperative Connections' purpose is to provide reliable, helpful information to electric cooperative members on matters pertaining to their cooperative and living better with electricity. Also available at [www.bhec.coop](http://www.bhec.coop).

This cooperative is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found on-line at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter by mail to U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202 690-7442) or e-mail at [program\\_intake@usda.gov](mailto:program_intake@usda.gov).

Subscription information: Black Hills Electric Cooperative members devote 50 cents from their monthly electric payments for a subscription. Non-member subscriptions are available for \$12 annually. Periodicals Postage Paid at Black Hills Electric Cooperative, 25191 Cooperative Way, Custer, S.D. 57730-0792, and at additional mailing offices.

Postmaster: Please send address changes to Black Hills Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 792, Custer, S.D. 57730-0792. Address all other correspondence to: Cooperative Connections, P.O. Box 792, Custer, S.D. 57730-0792 Telephone: (605)673-4461; Fax: (605) 673-3147; e-mail: [bhec@bhec.coop](mailto:bhec@bhec.coop); website: [www.bhec.coop](http://www.bhec.coop)

## New director to be elected

Black Hills Electric Cooperative's Nominating Committee met in late February and placed two candidates on the ballot for a soon to be vacated seat on the co-op's board of directors.

On the ballot to replace Al Perry, who is retiring, are Michael Buckingham and Thad Wasson. Perry will serve as a director from the Lawrence, Meade and Pennington Counties geographical area until after the June 4 annual meeting.



Michael Buckingham

of the South Dakota House of Representatives from 2002 to 2007 and currently serves as board president of the Children's Home Society and is on the South Dakota

Buckingham is a co-owner of Buckingham's ATA Black Belt Academy and Karate for Kids in Rapid City.

He has served on the Rapid City School Board, was a member

## Furse wins scholarship

Joshua Furse, a son of Matt and Wilma Furse of rural Custer, has been selected to receive Black Hills Electric's \$1,000 scholarship.



Joshua Furse

Furse is a senior at Custer High School where he excelled in the classroom and on the football team.

He has not selected a college, yet.

Board of Elections.

Thad Wasson is a network technician for CenturyLink Communications in Rapid City.



Thad Wasson

Wasson has served on the education board at St. Paul's Lutheran

School, was board president at Abiding Word Lutheran Church and treasurer at Bethany Christian Services.

He is honorably discharged from the U.S. Marine Corp.

A complete biography of both candidates will be included in the annual report to be mailed to each member in early May.

Members may vote at this year's annual meeting on Thursday, June 4, at the Ramkota Convention Center in Rapid City. Registration begins at 5 p.m.

## Home show March 27-29

If you are thinking of building or remodeling this spring, visit our booth at the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center during the Black Hills Home Builders' Home Show.

Show hours are Friday, Mar. 27: 12-7 p.m.  
Saturday, March 28: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
Sunday, March 29: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

## Rochford area meeting

Rochford

Friday, March 27, 6-7 p.m.

Rochford Community Hall

Co-sponsor: Rochford Community Club

# Springtime Electrical Safety Tips

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

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

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

Here are some simple safety rules to remember:

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

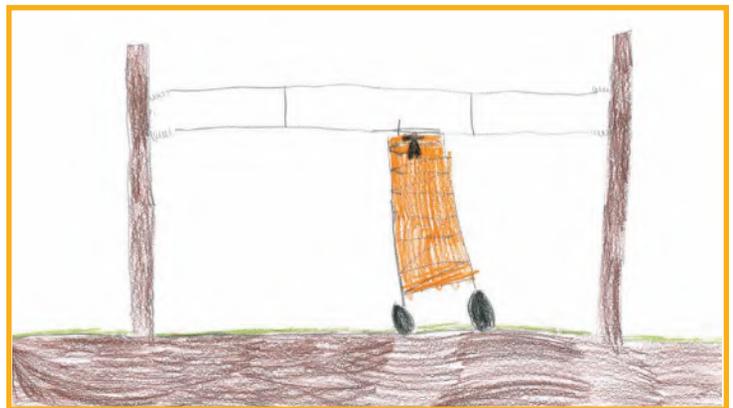
All electrical lines and equipment should be treated seriously and with caution.

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

Source: [www.mrelectric.com](http://www.mrelectric.com)



## KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



**"Do not cut power lines in half."**

**Annette Tschetter, 6 years old**

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

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

# Appetizers and Beverages

## Pink Rhubarb Punch

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

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

**Joyce Romkema, Springfield, S.D.**

## Jalapeño/Bacon Poppers

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

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

**Tina Haug, Pierre, S.D.**

## Spring Radish-Onion Spread

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

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

**Elaine Rowett, Sturgis, S.D.**

## Jalapeño Cheddar Biscuits

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

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

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

**Pictured, Cooperative Connections**

## Mocha Freeze

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

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

**Becki Hauser, Tripp, S.D.**

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

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

# Four Considerations Before Replacing Windows



Pat Keegan

Collaborative Efficiency

**Replacing old windows can provide a number of benefits, but it's a costly endeavor.**

This column was co-written by Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen of Collaborative Efficiency.

For more information, please visit: [www.collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips](http://www.collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips).

**Dear Pat and Brad:** Our home's windows are very old, and when the weather is cold, we can feel a chill when we stand near them. Do you think it's worth replacing them? – Grace

**Dear Grace:** First, prepare yourself for a bit of sticker shock when you get your first bid for replacing windows. To help you decide if replacement is the right move, you'll want to consider a few factors.

## Increased Comfort

The chill you feel near your windows when it's cold out is likely due to radiant heat loss. When you're near a cold surface, such as a window, you can feel chilled even if the temperature inside your home is over 70 degrees. Your body is much warmer than the surface of the window, and heat radiates from warm to cold. The inside surface of an inefficient, single-pane window will be much colder on a winter night than that of a double- or triple-pane window.

Window coverings are one unique approach to increasing the comfort level of your home. Curtains and blinds are very effective at reducing radiant heat loss in the winter and can even block some unwanted heat gain in the summer.

Another aspect to comfort is the sun. If you have cold winters but lots of winter sunshine, you might enjoy the comfort and warmth of the sun streaming through your windows on a cold clear day. If that's the case, you should take this into consideration as you ponder window replacement. Some windows are better at letting the sun's heat into the home than others.

## Appearance and Function

Since your windows are older, new wood- or vinyl-framed windows can act as an exterior facelift. But keep in mind, if you own an older home with classic wooden windows, vinyl replacements might look out of place. It's possible to buy new windows that match the style of some older wooden windows, or you could decide to apply a little elbow grease to get them back into shape. Wooden windows, even if they were built before 1960, can last the life of the home.

Windows can provide ventilation, which sometimes improves comfort more cost-effectively than air conditioning. Windows also need to be cleaned occasionally. If your existing windows don't provide ventilation or they are hard to clean, replacing them could solve these problems.

## Resale Value

Windows are a major point of interest for most prospective homebuyers, which is why we often hear that window replacement is good for resale value. But a 2019 study by the National Association of Realtors found that on average across the U.S. installing new vinyl windows costs about \$22,000 per home but only increased resale value by \$16,500. Only 4 percent of realtors said the new windows helped close the sale, so if resale value is your main objective, the costs could likely outweigh the return on investment.

## Energy Savings

Homeowners often believe that the best way to reduce energy use is to replace their windows, but this is rarely true. Companies that sell new windows sometimes advertise greater energy savings than the new windows can actually deliver. The amount of energy you save really depends on the efficiency of your existing windows compared to the efficiency of the replacement windows. An energy auditor can estimate potential savings, but most audits show that there are much more cost-effective efficiency investments than replacing windows.

On average, according to ENERGY STAR®, replacing single-pane windows in a 2,000 square-foot home with ENERGY STAR-certified windows will produce an average savings of \$125 to \$340 a year, depending on where you live. At this rate, it would take a decade or more to pay off your initial investment.

Replacing old windows can provide a number of benefits, but it's a costly endeavor. By considering these factors and how long you plan to live in the home, you'll be able to make the right decision. Next month we'll provide information that will help you decide what to look for in a replacement window.

## Solar Project Announced

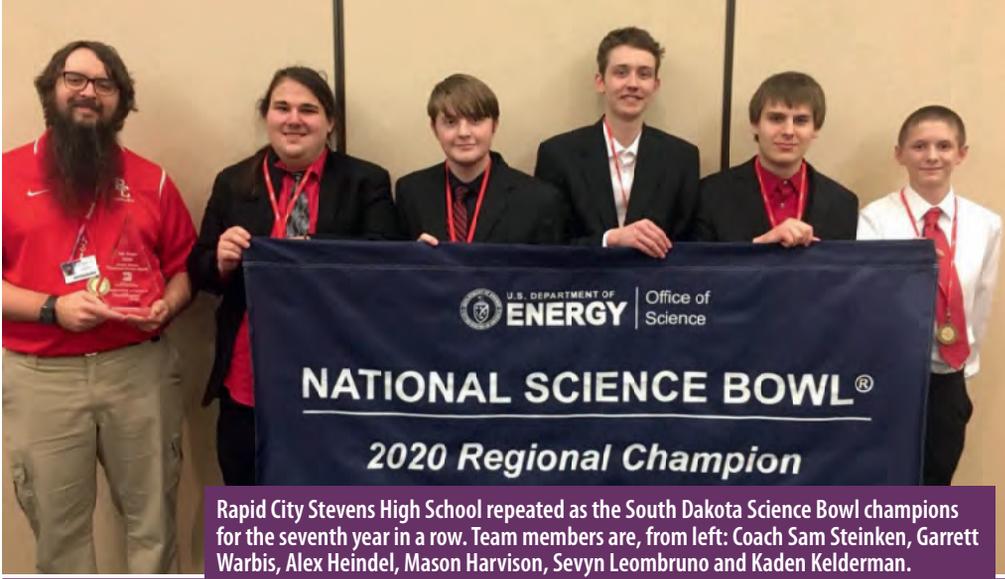
Power Purchase Agreement for 128 MW South Dakota Solar Project Geronimo Energy (Geronimo), a National Grid company, and Basin Electric Power Cooperative (Basin Electric) announced Feb. 18 the execution of a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) for the Wild Springs Solar Project (Wild Springs). Wild Springs is a 128 megawatt (MW) clean solar energy project located in Pennington County, South Dakota, approximately 20 miles east of Rapid City. Wild Springs is anticipated to begin operations in 2022. Using the EPA's greenhouse gas equivalencies calculator, the project is estimated to offset carbon dioxide emissions by 190,000 metric tons annually.



Officials from Geronimo Energy, Basin Electric, Rushmore Electric and West River Electric announced the project Feb. 18 in Pierre, S.D.

Once operational, Wild Springs will be the largest solar project in South Dakota. It will be located in the service area of West River Electric Association, Inc. (West River Electric), which is a distribu-

tion electric cooperative member of Basin Electric. In total, Basin Electric is a not-for-profit wholesale power provider to 141 member cooperative systems in nine states. In South Dakota, Basin Electric transmits its power supply to two generation and transmission (G&T) cooperatives, Rushmore Electric Power Cooperative (Rushmore Electric) and East River Electric Power Cooperative. Those two G&T cooperatives then transmit the power supply to their respective distribution cooperatives, with Rushmore Electric being the G&T provider to West River Electric. West River Electric and the state's 27 other distribution co-ops power the homes, farms and businesses within their service areas.



Rapid City Stevens High School repeated as the South Dakota Science Bowl champions for the seventh year in a row. Team members are, from left: Coach Sam Steinken, Garrett Warbis, Alex Heindel, Mason Harvison, Sevyn Leombruno and Kaden Kelderman.

## R.C. Stevens Takes Seventh Science Bowl Title

For the seventh year in a row, the Rapid City Stevens High School science bowl team captured first-place honors in the South Dakota Science Bowl held in February in Huron.

The fast-paced quiz format of the competition challenges the students' knowledge of biology, chemistry, Earth science, physics, energy and math.

Students representing 10 schools from throughout South Dakota competed, vying for a free trip to the National Science Bowl in Washington, D.C., April 30-May 4. The regional and national events encourage student involvement in math and science, inspire the next generation to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and math fields and reward superior academic achievement.

In addition to Rapid City Stevens, teams from Aberdeen Central, Brookings, Deuel, Hitchcock-Tulare, Huron, Little Wound, Rapid City Central, Redfield, and West Central competed in the event.

### Past S.D. Science Bowl Champs

<b>2019:</b> Rapid City Stevens High School	<b>2006:</b> Rapid City Central High School
<b>2018:</b> Rapid City Stevens High School	<b>2005:</b> Rapid City Central High School
<b>2017:</b> Rapid City Stevens High School	<b>2004:</b> Rapid City Stevens High School
<b>2016:</b> Rapid City Stevens High School	<b>2003:</b> Rapid City Stevens High School
<b>2015:</b> Rapid City Stevens High School	<b>2002:</b> Vermillion High School
<b>2014:</b> Rapid City Central High School	<b>2001:</b> Huron High School
<b>2013:</b> Rapid City Central High School	<b>2000:</b> Huron High School
<b>2012:</b> Aberdeen Central High School	<b>1999:</b> Huron High School
<b>2011:</b> Vermillion High School	<b>1998:</b> Vermillion High School
<b>2010:</b> Greater Sioux Falls Home School Association	<b>1997:</b> Alcester-Hudson High School
<b>2009:</b> Aberdeen Central High School	<b>1996:</b> Philip High School
<b>2008:</b> Aberdeen Central High School	<b>1995:</b> Aberdeen Central High School
<b>2007:</b> Greater Sioux Falls Home School Association	<b>1994:</b> Brookings High School

**Source:** <https://www.wapa.gov/regions/UGP/ScienceBowl/Pages/south-dakota-winners.aspx> and <https://science.energy.gov/wdts/nsb/about/historical-information/past-national-science-bowl-winners/past-hs-winners/other-participants-1994/>



# COOPERATIVE CYBERSECURITY

**Kaley Lockwood**

NRECA

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

But greater connectivity comes with a cost.

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

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

Electric cooperatives, large and small, are investing time and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Think Before You Click

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



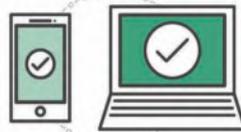
### Defend Your Computer

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



### Lockdown Your Log-in

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



### Protect Sensitive Information

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



### Watch for Red Flags to Identify Potential Phish Attacks

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

#### Look for red flags:

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



### Practice Good Cyber Hygiene On the Go

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



Want more tips to improve your cyber hygiene?  
**Visit [www.staysafeonline.org](http://www.staysafeonline.org).**

# Custer in the late 1930s



Custer's downtown was busy in the late 1930s. The photo above is the north side of Mt. Rushmore Road between 5th and 6th streets. The two-story building in the background is the Custer County Courthouse built in 1881 and is now a museum. Black Hills Electric Association's first office was on North 6th Street in 1941. The Red Owl grocery store is now a pizza restaurant.

## Defining BHEA's territory

At its July 1, 1946 meeting, the Black Hills Electric Association's board passed a resolution defining its service territory and agreeing to borrow \$260,000 from the U.S. government for the expansion.

With respect to the service territory, the board voted to provide service in rural areas in the counties of Custer and Pennington and in counties contiguous to those counties in both South Dakota and Wyoming.

At that time, the association had identified 293 consumers who were not receiving central station electric service.

At its July 13, 1946 meeting, the board voted to extend its power lines into Fall River County.

The resolution read, "...electric trans-

mission and distribution lines shall be constructed in the County of Fall River, State of South Dakota, to be approximately 150 miles in length in Fall River County, entering Fall River County from Custer



County at a point approximately one-half mile southeast of Buffalo Gap, South Dakota, and running southerly and southeasterly and southwesterly in a number of unorganized townships in Fall River County to farms in a number of unorganized townships and including users in small incorporated and unincorporated towns and villages having no other electric service available,

said lines to cover generally the eastern half of Fall River County and including users in the area to be covered by the Angostura Irrigation Project."

## Meetings, meetings and more meetings

Meetings took a lot of time for the early volunteers on Black Hills Electric Association's board.

In 1941, as the board hammered out bylaws and loans, they met 27 times. The meetings were often at night after chores and work had been finished. It was not uncommon for meetings to last several hours and several were adjourned to continue on another night.

The board met seven times in 1942 before discontinuing the association due to World War II.

After the war, meetings continued with 10 board meetings during the last six months of 1945 and 27 meetings in 1946.

The secretary's job was the hardest as the thousands of pages of minutes were all recorded using a manual typewriter.

# Black Hills Electric Co-op's headquarters



The original headquarters building for Black Hills Electric Cooperative is in the left half of this photo. In 1962, a large addition gave the growing cooperative more office space. Since the buildings did not touch, a covered open garage was built between the two buildings. That area was later enclosed and became the manager's office and board room. With the exception of a few minor remodeling changes, the building remains close to its original floor plan today.



Black Hills Electric Cooperative moved to its current location two miles west of Custer in 1952. The above building is still used. The garage doors have been covered and that area is now the warehouse. The original office area on the left serves as an employee wellness room and storage.

## Rep. Case to the rescue

During the formation of Black Hills Electric Association, the board often called on U.S. Congressman Francis Case for help.

Case had been the editor and publisher of the *Custer County Chronicle* until his election to Congress in 1931. He was a strong proponent of improving rural America's infrastructure, be it roads, waterways or power.

The board invited Case to its November

21, 1946, meeting to ask for help bringing a speedy settlement of the Stop Order on construction work issued because of the inability of securing a satisfactory permit with the U.S. Forest Service because of paragraphs in the permit pertaining to possible inductive interference on forest service-owned grounded telephone lines.



Rep. Francis Case

## Henry Barnes named manager

In the spring of 1947 as several hundred miles of power lines had been completed in Custer and Fall River Counties, Black Hills Electric Association's board approved a special use permit issued by the U.S. Forest Service covering the Hill City to Mystic distribution line in Pennington County and authorized the board president to sign all requests for special use permits on the national forest.

The board also signed an agreement with Black Hills Power and Light to provide power to the Pringle substation and to a point serving the Hill City to Keystone line.

After serving on the original board before World War II and as project coordinator overseeing the entire project from 1945 to 1947, Henry Barnes was named manager of the association.

As coordinator, Barnes earned \$200 a month plus five cents per mile for all project-related mileage. His salary as manager was set at \$3,000 a year. Barnes would serve the membership as manager from 1947 until March of 1964.

Due to rapid growth in its membership, the board also voted to apply for a \$152,000 loan from the REA.

# Are You Flood Ready?

**Brenda Kleinjan**

editor@sdrea.coop

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

## Flooding 411

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

### Prepare for Flooding

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

### Be Prepared to Evacuate

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

# 3 SIMPLE STEPS FOR FLASH FLOOD SAFETY

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



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

## 1 GET TO HIGHER GROUND

Get out of the areas subject to flooding

## 2 DO NOT DRIVE INTO WATER

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

## 3 STAY INFORMED

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

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

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

### Plan to Evacuate

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

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

### Stay Informed

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

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

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

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



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

# ENERGY TAX CREDITS

## Tax Credits May Be Available for Your Projects

**Brenda Kleinjan**

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

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

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

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

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

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

There are tax credits for certain:

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

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



ENERGY STAR® windows qualify for tax credits.

# Residential Energy Property Costs:

## Air-Source Heat Pumps

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

Tax Credit Amount: \$300

### Requirements

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

## Central Air Conditioning

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

Tax Credit Amount: \$300

### Requirements

- Split Systems:
  - SEER >= 16

- EER >= 13

### Package systems:

- SEER >= 14
- EER >= 12

## Electric Heat Pump Water Heater

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

Tax Credit Amount: \$300

### Requirements

- Energy factor >= 2.2

## Advanced Main Air Circulating Fan

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

Tax Credit Amount: \$50

### Requirements

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

# Qualified Energy Efficiency Improvements:

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

## Insulation

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

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

### Requirements

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

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

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

**NOTE:** Tax Credit does NOT include installation costs.

## Roofs: Metal and Asphalt

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

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

### Requirements

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

**NOTE:** Tax Credit does NOT include installation costs.

## Windows, Doors and Skylights

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

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

### Requirements

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

**NOTE:** Tax Credit does NOT include installation costs.



Photo Credit: Certainteed

Photo Credit: Rare Form Properties

---

**December 15-March 31**

South Dakota snowmobile trails season, Lead, SD, 605-584-3896

---

**March 20-21, 27-28**

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

---

**March 27**

Rockford Area Meeting, 6-7 p.m., Community Center, Rochford, SD, 605-673-4461

---

**March 28**

Escape to the Park, 1-3 p.m., Custer State Park Visitor Center, Custer, SD, 605-673-2244

---

**March 28**

Rummage Sale/Breakfast Burritos/Bake Sale, 8 a.m. to noon, Rapid Valley United Methodist Church, 5103 Longview Road, Rapid City, SD, 605-393-1526

---

**March 28**

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

---

**March 28**

SD High School All-State Band Concert, Mitchell Fine Arts Center, Mitchell, SD, 605-224-9261

---

**April 4**

Hill City Community Easter Egg Hunt, 10 a.m., Visitor Information Center, Hill City, SD, 605-574-2368

---

**April 3-4**

Forks, Corks and Kegs Food, Wine and Beer Festival, Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876 or 800-999-1876

---

**April 4-5**

Annual USD Wacipi, Vermillion, SD

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

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



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

---

**April 5**

Annual Ham Dinner/Silent Auction, 11:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Rapid Valley United Methodist Church, 5103 Longview Road, Rapid City, SD, 605-393-1526

---

**April 11**

Easter Egg Hunt at the State Home, 10-10:30 a.m., S.D. State Veterans' Home, Hot Springs, SD, 605-745-4140

---

**April 17**

Hermosa American Legion Auxiliary Bingo Dinner, Meal 4:30 to 6:45 p.m., Bingo at 7 p.m., American Legion Hall, Hermosa, SD, 605-255-5977

---

**April 17-18**

Creative Quilt, Art & Craft Market, Friday 5-8 p.m.; Saturday 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Best Western Ramkota Hotel, Rapid City, SD, 605-355-0937

---

**April 18**

Black Hills Gold & Treasure Show, Rapid City, SD

---

**April 25**

Hermosa Arts & History Association's Annual Hermosa Saturday Night Fundraiser, 5 p.m., Elementary School, Hermosa, SD, [www.HermosaHistory.org](http://www.HermosaHistory.org)

---

**May 5-6**

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

---

**May 29-30**

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

---

**June 5-7**

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

---

**June 12-14**

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

---

**June 16-21**

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

**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.**