

# Traverse Electric

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

April 2020 Vol. 20 No. 12

# Cooperative Connections



**Cybersecurity  
and You**

Page 8

**Flood  
Preparedness**

Page 12

# Electric Co-ops to Purchase Power from South Dakota's Largest Solar Project



**Joel Janorschke, General Manager**

[jjanorschke@traverseelectric.com](mailto:jjanorschke@traverseelectric.com)

Traverse Electric Cooperative is adding solar power to its generation mix thanks to a 128 megawatt (MW) solar energy project that will be constructed near New Underwood, S.D., and is projected to be operational by 2022.

On Feb. 18,

Geronimo Energy, a National Grid company, and Basin Electric Power Cooperative announced the execution of a Power Purchase Agreement for the Wild Springs Solar Project. Traverse Electric Cooperative is a member of Basin Electric, a wholesale generation cooperative that provides a large portion of its power supply. Once operational, Wild Springs will be the largest solar project in South Dakota. It will be located about 20 miles east of Rapid City in the service area of West River Electric Association, Inc., which is a distribution electric cooperative member of Basin Electric.

“We’re excited that West River’s service area will be home to the Wild Springs Solar Project,” said West River Electric Association CEO/General Manager Dick Johnson. “This solar energy project will benefit our cooperative family, as well as our local communities. As not-for-profit co-ops that are owned by our members, everything we do goes back to the people we serve.”

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 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. The state’s 28 distribution co-ops power the homes, farms and businesses within their service areas.

“For the first time in its history, Basin Electric will buy solar generation on a large scale to serve our members. The board’s decision to add solar generation to our resource portfolio is to continue with our all-of-the-above strategy, as well as solar generation becoming a more economic energy source. We are excited about adding solar to our already diverse generation mix,” said

Paul Sukut, CEO and general manager of Basin Electric Power Cooperative.

Traverse Electric is a member of East River Electric, the G&T that serves the eastern half of South Dakota and parts of western Minnesota. In 2019, nearly 38 percent of East River’s power supply mix came from wind and hydropower generation. That percent is projected to increase as new renewable sources, including the Wild Springs project, are added to the mix.

Traverse Electric also offers a Renewable Energy Credit (REC) program through which its member-owners can purchase RECs to offset their current energy usage with 100 percent renewable energy and showcase their support for current and future renewable projects.

“Our cooperative network is always looking to ensure we have a mix of power resources to meet the needs of our membership and renewable energy is an important part of that strategy,” said East River Electric General Manager Tom Boyko. “This project with Geronimo Energy is an important strategic step as we look to the future in continuing our strong history of providing safe, affordable and reliable power.”

The Wild Springs project has been supported by local and state community members and will bring significant economic benefits to the local area. Current estimations for the project’s economic benefits total more than \$17 million throughout the first 20 years of operation, including positive impacts in new tax revenue, construction jobs, new full-time jobs and charitable funds through the project’s Education Fund. The Wild Springs Education Fund alone will offer approximately \$500,000 in donations to the local school districts connected to the project above and beyond all tax revenue and local spending benefits.

“Historically, there has been a misconception that solar in the northern regions of the United States wasn’t feasible,” stated David Reamer, president for Geronimo Energy. “Both Geronimo and Basin Electric recognized that the addition of solar to its overall generation fleet not only offers customers a clean, economic option for their electricity, but it also diversifies a utility’s portfolio.”

Geronimo’s South Dakota operating project portfolio includes the recently completed Crocker Wind Farm, a 200 MW wind project located in Clark County, South Dakota.

Geronimo also successfully developed the operational Pierre Solar Project, a joint effort with the City of Pierre and Missouri River Energy Services, located on City property in Hughes County, South Dakota.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joel Janorschke".

# Traverse Electric Cooperative Connections

(USPS No. 018-903)

**Board of Directors**

- President:** Alan Veflin, Sisseton, SD
- Vice President:** Pat Homan, Beardsley, MN
- Secretary:** Mark Pearson, Rosholt, SD
- Treasurer:** Karen Kath, Campbell, MN
- Doug Diekmann, Beardsley, MN
- Russ Armstrong, Wheaton, MN
- Terry Monson, Veblen, SD
- Michael Marks, Norcross, MN
- Tom Frisch, Dumont, MN

**Office Personnel**

- Joel Janorschke - General Manager
- Karen Lupkes - Office Manager
- Dale Schwagel - Operations Manager
- Stephen Powers - Member Service Representative/Electrician
- Melissa Przymus - Accountant
- Susan Wilts - Billing Clerk

**Operations Personnel**

- Richard Davis - Foreman
- Lonnie Tekrony - Journeyman Linemen
- Joe Gahlon - Journeyman Linemen
- Chris Falk - Journeyman Linemen
- Josh Shoutz - Journeyman Linemen
- Austin Reinke - Journeyman Linemen
- Dennis Koch - Facility Technician

**General Managers Contact Information**

- Joel Janorschke
- Cell: 320.304.1392
- Direct: 320.563.1055
- jjanorschke@traverseelectric.com

**In case of a power outage call  
1-800-927-5443**

Traverse Electric Cooperative Connections is published monthly by Traverse Electric Cooperative, PO Box 66, 1618 Broadway, Wheaton, MN, 56296 for its members. Families subscribe to Traverse Electric Cooperative Connections as part of their electric cooperative membership. Traverse Electric Cooperative Connections' purpose is to provide reliable, helpful information to electric co-op members on matters pertaining to rural electrification and better rural living.

Subscription information: Electric cooperative members devote 50 cents from their monthly electric payments for a subscription. Nonmember subscriptions are available for \$12 annually. Periodicals Postage Paid at Wheaton Post Office, Wheaton, MN, 56296 and at additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Traverse Electric Cooperative Connections, PO Box 66, Wheaton, MN 56296; Phone (320) 563-8616; Fax (320) 563-4863;

Web site: www.traverseelectric.com. This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

**Our Mission:** To provide dependable service at the lowest possible rates, consistent with sound business principles. Design assistance by SDREA.



# #ThankALineworker on April 13

Lineworkers serve on the frontlines of our nation's energy needs, and on April 13, 2020, Traverse Electric, along with other electric cooperatives across the country, will honor the brave men and women who work hard to keep the lights on.

Line crews work around the clock, sometimes in difficult and dangerous conditions, to keep power flowing to our local communities. Whether they're restoring power after a major storm or maintaining critical infrastructure to our electric system, lineworkers are at the heart of our co-op.

When a storm hits, they set aside their personal priorities because Mother Nature doesn't work around holidays, vacations and birthdays. A service-oriented mentality is one of the many admirable characteristics of an electric lineworker.

Traverse Electric is proud to honor the six lineworkers that maintain 1,714 miles of power lines in our service territory.

Traverse Electric invites all co-op members to take a moment and thank a lineworker for the important work they do. On April 13, you can use #ThankALineworker on social media to show your support for the brave men and women who power our lives.



## January Financial Information

	January 2019	January 2020	YTD 2020
<b>Total Revenue</b>	\$1,000,688.22	\$1,044,942.75	\$1,044,942.75
<b>Cost of Power</b>	\$614,520.04	\$612,539.65	\$612,539.65
<b>Total Cost of Service</b>	\$934,989.84	\$920,601.31	\$920,601.31
<b>Operating Margins</b>	\$65,698.38	\$124,341.44	\$124,341.44
<b>Total Margins</b>	\$82,964.15	\$123,587.93	\$123,587.93
<b>Kilowatt-Hours (kWh) Purchased</b>	11,662,389	11,672,646	11,672,646
<b>Kilowatt-Hours (kWh) Sales</b>	10,793,276	11,086,094	11,086,094
<b>Line Loss</b>	7%	5%	5%

# 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

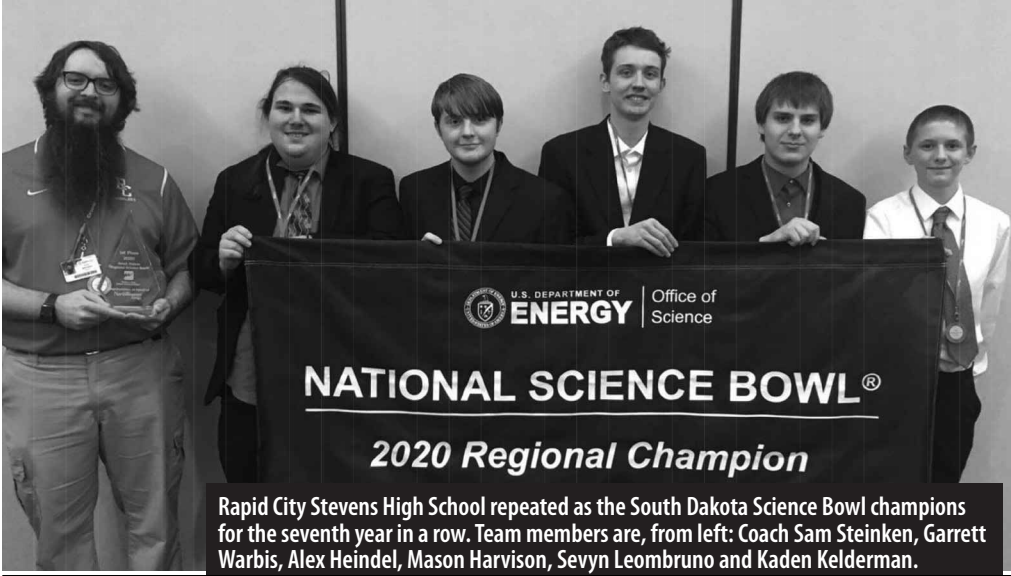
Power Purchase Agreement for 128 MW South Dakota Solar Project Geronimo Energy (Geronimo), a National Grid company, and Basin Electric Power Cooperative (Basin Electric) announced Feb. 18 the execution of a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) for the Wild Springs Solar Project (Wild Springs). Wild Springs 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.



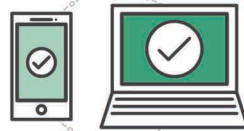
### Defend Your Computer

- 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).**

# How Will You Celebrate Earth Day?

Earth Day is considered one of the world's largest civic events, and on April 22, we can all be part of this global movement to help the environment.

There are many ways we as individuals can help the environment and some are easier than you'd think. Here are a few simple actions you can take now to reduce your energy use.

■ **Audit your light bulbs.** Swapping out any remaining incandescent bulbs with LED bulbs can make a big difference in home efficiency, and it's one of the easiest ways to reduce your energy bill.



■ **Maintain your HVAC system.** Replace your home air filters to allow your HVAC system to run more efficiently. Air filters prevent dust and allergens from clogging your HVAC system. Changing the filters makes your unit run more efficiently – keeping your home cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter.

■ **Examine your smart or programmable thermostat.** Make sure it is programmed for the current season and family schedule. This is one of the best tools at your fingertips, however, you can only achieve these efficiencies and savings if it is programmed properly and adjusted periodically to keep pace with changes in household routines.

■ **Seal window and doors.** Seal leaks with weather stripping and caulk to keep cool air indoors during warm months and prevent cold air from penetrating the indoors during colder months. Sealing gaps around piping, dryer vents, fans and outlets also helps to seal the envelope and increase efficiency.



While these suggestions may not be glamorous actions worthy of a press release or event, they do make a difference. And we're always here to help if you want more information on how you can save energy. Stop by our office or give us a call.

As we celebrate Earth Day this April, let's continue to work together and make a positive impact on our local community – and our beautiful planet.



## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

This spring, consider using a rain barrel to save energy. Rain barrels capture rainwater from a roof that can be used later for watering your lawn, garden or indoor plants.

Source: energy.gov



# January Board Meeting Highlights

The January board meeting was held on Tuesday, Jan. 28, 2020, at 9 a.m. Absent: Monson.

Staff members present were General Manager, Joel Janorschke and Karen Lupkes.

- The minutes of the December board meeting were approved.
- The December check register was approved.
- Basin Electric board video report was viewed.
- Veflin and Pearson reported on the SDREA annual meeting.
- Janorschke presented the Manager's Report, which included:
  - ▶ Provided a Minnesota legislative update.
  - ▶ Provided a South Dakota legislative update.
  - ▶ Reported on the CEO Close-Up.
- Lupkes gave the Office Manager's Report, which included:
  - ▶ December 31, 2019, accounts receivable balances were reviewed.
  - ▶ A list of new members was reviewed.
  - ▶ Red Flags Policy review and procedures to protect member information.
  - ▶ The application deadlines for the Youth Tour and Basin Electric Scholarship are approaching.
  - ▶ Reviewed and approved the December Financial Report.
- Janorschke gave the Operations Report. Items discussed included:
  - ▶ Outages were reviewed.
  - ▶ Crews are working on pole changes.
  - ▶ Currently doing line patrol.
  - ▶ Completed year-end inventory counts.
  - ▶ Provided a meter update.
  - ▶ Our safety program was reviewed.
  - ▶ Reviewed engineering services.
  - ▶ RUS O & M Review completed.
- Selected CFC annual meeting voting delegates.
- Reviewed the January 2020 district meeting dates.
- A list of upcoming meetings and attendees was reviewed.

## Current Addresses Missing for These Former Consumers

We have capital credit checks for these people, but they were returned to us marked unknown. Please call the office at 1-800-927-5443 if you know their new address. Thanks.

Name	Address	Years On
Eric Boersma	Wilmot, SD	2003
Chaska Boucher	Rosholt, SD	2003
Charles Carroll	Sioux Falls, SD	1981-2006
Charrieth Cloud-Castillo	Dawson, MN	2002-2004
Jeffrey Ehlen Estate	Chokio, MN	2002-2003
Cliff & Emily Ellingson	Rosholt, SD	2003-2004
Joann Firecloud	Sisseton, SD	2003
Genetiporc USA LLC	Alexandria, MN	2003-2012
Crystal Helde	Sacaton, AZ	2003-2004
Thomas Inman	Andover, MN	2003-2009
Travis Jarman	Mandan, ND	2003-2005
Gerald Lubarski	Monticello, MN	2000-2001
John Miller	Browns Valley, MN	1994-2002
Madelyne Newborn	Sisseton, SD	2003
Kenneth C Peterson	Granite Falls, MN	1983-2014
Rodney Piechowski	Orlando, FL	2003-2004
Nichole Rein	Veblen, SD	2002
Amy Ronning	Apple Valley, MN	2003-2005
Monica Smotherman	Battle Lake, MN	2003-2004
Renee Topoluk	Corcoran, MN	2003-2006
Wesley Torke	Clear Lake, SD	1999-2004
Jess Traub	Gaylord, MI	2002-2003
US Geological Survey	Columbia, SC	1999-2013
Ralph & Joy Wagner	Sahuarita, AZ	2000-2016

## Update Your Contact Information

In the utility business, we know rough weather will occur and sometimes power outages simply can't be avoided.

But did you know there are steps you can take to ensure your electricity is restored as quickly and safely as possible? By keeping your contact information up-to-date, you can take full advantage of the services Traverse Electric offers.

You may have noticed prompts through our billing statements and webpage requesting your updated contact information. If we don't have the correct phone number linked to your home address, it makes it very difficult to contact you during an outage.

Updating your contact information is helpful because it speeds up the power restoration process. With correct information, we can also contact you in advance of planned outages for repairs and maintenance.

Please call 320-563-8616 and make sure you're up to date.



## Member Comments

Thank you for the past 51 years of dependable service!

Duane & Marcy Porter, Fergus Falls, MN

Thank you so much for your donation for our Annual Turkey Night Lunch. We really appreciate your support!

Claire City Community Women, Claire City, SD

Thank you for the capital credit check. Appreciate all your good work. Happy New Year.

Karen Borgen & Family, Sisseton, SD

Thanks for the quick response to my outage when we received that heavy snow. It was starting to get cold, but the men took care of the problem.

Laurel Ogg, Norcross, MN

Thank you for the \$25 bill credit I won at the district meeting.

Ronald Hervey, Wheaton, MN

To the Traverse Electric Board of Directors, manager and staff: Thank you for the \$25 credit I won at the district meeting in Beardsley.

Mark & Carol Findlay, Beardsley, MN

Thank you to the guys for fixing my security light.

Linda Melkert, Breckenridge, MN

Thank you for the delicious lunch and bill credit we won at the District Meeting. We enjoy coffee in the neat cups.

Jerome & Geraldine Broz, Breckenridge, MN

Thank you for the good lunch and the \$25 credit we received at the district meeting. We also appreciate all the helpful information shared at the meeting.

Albert & Marceil Braun, Rosholt, SD



### Like Us on Facebook!

To check out news and happenings, go to [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) and search Traverse Electric Cooperative



# 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.



# 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  $\geq$  8.5
  - EER  $\geq$  12.5
  - SEER  $\geq$  15
- Package systems:
  - HSPF  $\geq$  8
  - EER  $\geq$  12
  - SEER  $\geq$  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  $\geq$  16

- EER  $\geq$  13

### Package systems:

- SEER  $\geq$  14
- EER  $\geq$  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  $\geq$  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.



---

**December 15-March 31**

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

---

**March 19-21**

SD State A High School Boys and Girls Basketball Tournament, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD, 605-224-9261

---

**March 19-21**

SD State AA High School Boys and Girls Basketball Tournament, Sanford Premier Center, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-224-9261

---

**March 19-21**

SD State B High School Boys Basketball Tournament, Barnett Center, Aberdeen, SD, 605-224-9261

---

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

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

---

**March 21-22**

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

---

**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 3-4**

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

---

**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 4-5**

Annual USD Wacipi, Vermillion, SD

---

**April 11**

Eggstravaganza, Rapid City, SD, 605-716-7979

---

**April 17-19**

First Dakota Classic Archery Tournament, Yankton, SD, 605-260-9282

---

**April 18**

Black Hills Gold & Treasure Show, Rapid City, SD

---

**April 25**

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

---

**May 5-6**

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

---

**May 29-30**

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

---

**June 5-7**

Regional Qualifying High School Rodeos:

- Rodeo Grounds, Wall, SD, 605-529-5868
- Rodeo Grounds, Highmore, SD, 605-529-5868
- Tipperary Arena, Buffalo, SD, 605-529-5868
- Heartland Arena, Huron, SD, 605-529-5868

---

**June 12-14**

Regional Qualifying High School Rodeos:

- Tripp County Fairgrounds, Winner, SD, 605-529-5868
- Rodeo Grounds, Sturgis, SD, 605-529-5868
- Rodeo Grounds, Dupree, SD, 605-529-5868
- Derby Downs Arena, Watertown, SD, 605-529-5868

---

**June 16-21**

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

---

**June 25-27**

31st Annual Red Power Round Up, Fairgrounds, Huron, SD, Contact Steve Masat at 605-460-0197 or Dennis Schilling at 605-354-2867, [redpowerroundup2020.com](http://redpowerroundup2020.com)

---

**July 14**

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

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