

# Traverse Electric

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

November 2018 Vol. 19 No. 7

# Cooperative Connections



**Veterans  
Sought:  
America's  
Co-ops' Hiring  
Program**

# We're Thankful For Your Membership



**Joel Janorschke, General Manager**

jjanorschke@traverseelectric.com

"Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it." In the spirit of this quote by author William Arthur Ward, I'd like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for your membership in our electric cooperative. Because of your connection to Traverse Electric Cooperative, we are able to make our community a better place.

I generally use this space to provide updates on new projects and developments and report out on the progress of ongoing initiatives. We share these updates so that all of our consumer-members have a window into our priorities, progress and challenges. However, during this season of giving thanks, I think it's equally important to let you and other consumer-members of Traverse Electric Cooperative know just what an impact you have on our co-op and the greater community, likely in ways you may not even realize.

As part of the cooperative business model, one of our core principles is "Concern for Community." While our priority is always to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy, we view our role in the community as a catalyst for good.

We work closely with our local schools to provide safety demonstrations, award college scholarships and contribute to school functions. Traverse Electric also participates in an annual Youth Tour where we take our community's brightest young people to Washington, D.C., for a week-long immersion to experience democracy in action. The trip is inspirational for many students and we are both humbled and honored to be a part of this leadership development journey. Ultimately, the larger community benefits from these programs because of you! You empower the co-op through your membership and through your participation in and support of these programs.

When you attend co-op events, alert us to problems or provide suggestions online or to our employees, you help us improve operations and thereby better serve the larger co-op membership.

Because we are locally governed by members of our community, we are able to get a firsthand perspective on community priorities, thereby enabling us to make more informed decisions on long-term investments, such as rebuilding infrastructure and technology upgrades and electric vehicle programs.

We are thankful that our co-op board members carve out time to attend important training sessions, participate in planning meetings and keep abreast of industry trends. This investment in time results in better informed advisors that serve the co-op's interests in a way that our consumer-members expect and deserve.

On a more personal note, we appreciate the countless acts of kindness our lineworkers and other employees receive when they are working in severe weather and dangerous conditions. Our employees are thankful for your patience and consideration when we are trying to restore power during challenging situations and prolonged periods.

Traverse Electric Cooperative was originally established 78 years ago to bring electricity to our area when no one else would. The cooperative is a reflection of our local community and its evolving needs. Together, let's continue making our corner of the world a better place. We can't do it without you, and for that, we're thankful for your membership.

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

# Traverse Electric Cooperative Connections

(USPS No. 018-903)

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

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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

## 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.



### Energy Efficiency

### *Tip of the Month*

Got holiday leftovers? When possible, use the microwave to reheat food. Microwaves use as much as 80 percent less energy than a standard oven.

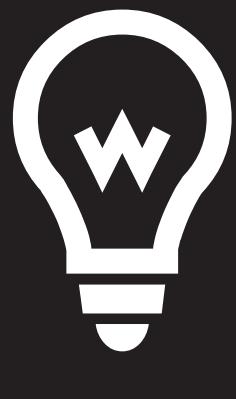
Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)

## Murphy



## IN CASE OF OUTAGE

- |                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| 1 <sup>ST</sup> | Check the fuses or breakers in your home or building in which you do not have power.                  |
| 2 <sup>ND</sup> | Check your breaker below your meter on the yard pole. Some residential members may not have breakers. |
| 3 <sup>RD</sup> | If you still do not have power, call your neighbor to check if their electricity is also off.         |
| 4 <sup>TH</sup> | Call immediately; do not wait for your neighbor to call in the outage.                                |
| 5 <sup>TH</sup> | Call Traverse Electric Cooperative at 1-800-927-5443.   |



# Halloween Safety Tips

Are your Halloween traditions a trick or a treat? The following helpful tips will let you know if real danger is lurking in your Halloween décor.

## Trick:

- Costumes can catch fire! Avoid costumes with billowing or long trailing fabric. If you are making your own costumes, choose fire-resistant materials.
- Never use electrical products outdoors that are marked "for indoor use." You could get shocked – or worse!
- Avoid using dried flowers, corn stalks, hay or crepe paper in your festive decorations. These items are highly flammable and could even be ignited by heat from a nearby light bulb or heater.
- Never block exits or escape routes.

## Treat:

- Inspect all electrical decorations and extension cords before use. Discard any that are have cracked, frayed or exposed wiring.
- Outdoor electrical decorations are increasingly popular. To reduce your risk of shocks, ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) should be used wherever water may come into contact with electrical products. Replace traditional receptacles with GFCIs or use a portable one.
- Use only electrical lights and decorations that are approved for safe use by a nationally tested laboratory such as UL, Intertek (ETL) or CSA.
- Always turn off electrical decorations and extinguish any open flames before leaving home or going to bed.
- Use a flashlight or battery-operated candles in a jack-o-lantern. If you must use a real candle, use extreme caution as it can start a fire or burn someone.
- Curiosity leads to many things, not all of them safe. Protect children by installing tamper resistant receptacles in your home. This permanent, cost-effective solution prevents injuries and deaths caused by the insertion of foreign objects into outlets.

Source: esfi.org

**VISIT VOTE.COOP TO LEARN HOW TO BECOME A CO-OP VOTER.**

## KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER

**"Don't mess with power lines."**

**Jackson Baumgarn, 8 years old**

Jackson is the son of Casey and Anne Baumgarn, Webster, S.D. They are members of Lake Region Electric Association, Webster.

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.



# Crock Pot Creations

## 3-Bean Crockpot Casserole

1/2 lb. bacon	1/2 cup brown sugar
1/2 lb. hamburger	1/2 cup ketchup
1 cup chopped onions	1 can pork and beans
1/2 tsp. salt	1 can lima beans
2 T. vinegar	1 can kidney beans
1 T. prepared mustard	

Brown bacon until crispy. Brown hamburger with the onions. Combine all ingredients in a crock pot. Cook on LOW for 3 to 4 hours.

Mary Ellen Luikens, Tea, SD

## Triple Chocolate Surprise

1 (18 oz.) chocolate cake mix	3/4 cup oil
8 oz. sour cream	4 eggs
1 pkg. instant chocolate pudding	1 cup water
	1 cup chocolate chips

Combine all ingredients. Spray crock pot with no stick cooking spray. Pour mixture into pot. Cook on LOW 6 to 8 hours.

Betty Klingbile, Wall, SD

## Juanita's Crockpot Peanut Clusters

1 (16 oz.) jar salted peanuts	4 oz. German chocolate bar, broken into pieces
1 (16 oz.) jar unsalted peanuts	3 lbs. almond bark, broken into pieces
1 (12 oz.) bag semi-sweet chocolate chips	

Layer ingredients in crock pot in order given. Cook on LOW for 3 hours. DO NOT OPEN. After 3 hours, stir and cook an additional 5 minutes. Turn off crock pot and let cool at least 15 minutes. Stir and spoon heaping spoonfuls onto waxed or parchment paper. Let sit until set.

Marcia Broone, Rapid City, SD

## Slow Cooker Chicken Rice Curry

4 bone-in chicken breasts, halves (about 2 lbs.), skin removed	1 medium Golden Delicious apple, unpeeled, cored and coarsely chopped
1 T. McCormick® Curry Powder	1/4 cup raisins
1 pkg. McCormick® Chicken Gravy Mix	1/4 cup McCormick® Onions, Chopped
1 (14.5 oz.) can chicken broth	2 McCormick® Bay Leaves, broken in half
1 medium red bell pepper, cut into 1/2-inch pieces	1/2 tsp. McCormick® Garlic Powder
	1 cup instant rice

Rinse chicken and pat dry. Cut each breast half into 2 pieces. Sprinkle chicken with curry powder. Gradually stir gravy mix into broth in slow cooker until well blended. Add seasoned chicken and remaining ingredients except rice; stir well. Cover. Cook 8 hours on LOW or 4 hours on HIGH. Gently stir in rice. Cover. Cook 15 to 20 minutes longer on HIGH or until rice is tender. Remove bay leaves before serving. Makes 6 servings

*Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 296, Total Fat 4g, Cholesterol 78mg, Sodium 600mg, Protein 35g, Carbohydrates 30g, Dietary Fiber 2g*

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

## Crockpot French Dip Sandwiches

3 lb. roast, beef or pork	1 (10 oz.) can beef broth
1 (10 oz.) can French onion soup	1 (12 oz.) can beer
	Swiss cheese

Cook above ingredients in crock pot on LOW for 7 hours. Shred meat with fork. Let set 30 minutes. Fill buns (I use steak buns). Top with Swiss cheese. Use the juice in crock pot for dipping, if desired.

Jane Ham, Rapid City, SD

Please send your favorite holiday, soup or brunch recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2018. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

# Efficient Holiday Lighting



Pat Keegan

Collaborative Efficiency

**Innovative decorating ideas can make your display more dynamic and interesting, which might help you get by with fewer lights.**

This column was co-written by Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen of Collaborative Efficiency. For more information, please visit: [www.collaborativeefficiency.com/energystips](http://www.collaborativeefficiency.com/energystips).

**Dear Pat:** My husband and I love decorating our home with holiday lights every year, but I feel guilty about the higher energy bill we get in January. How can we light up the holidays without wasting electricity? – Jessica

**Dear Jessica:** It's a shame that holiday lighting can lead to higher energy bills, but the good news is, there are strategies that can save you money without dampening your holiday spirit!

One of the best ways to save energy is LED lights, which use about 80 percent less energy than incandescent bulbs. The amount of money you can save depends on a lot of factors, including your electric rate and how many hours your holiday lights are turned on.

We've seen a number of savings estimates in energy costs. One report said that replacing five strings of traditional incandescent outdoor lights with LED bulbs could lower your bill from about \$14 to 22 cents. Another report said that replacing incandescent lights on a typical indoor tree with LED bulbs could lower your monthly cost from \$15 to \$2.

The reason incandescent bulbs are so inefficient is that at least 90 percent of their energy is converted into heat, not light. LEDs, by contrast, convert virtually all their energy to light. This means up to 20 strings of LED lights can be linked together, whereas incandescent sets are typically limited to between three and five strings in a chain. The efficiency of LED lights also makes them safer because they generate so much less heat.

Aside from their energy efficiency, LED lights can last longer – around 200,000 hours or more, which is about 25 times longer than incandescent lights. The bulb is more durable because it is made of an epoxy instead of glass.

But not all LEDs are created equal. An LED that is not designed properly can flicker, change color or draw power even when it's turned off. To avoid these problems, purchase ENERGY STAR®-rated LEDs. To qualify for the ENERGY STAR rating, LED products must use 75 percent less energy than incandescent lighting and pass a number of additional tests.

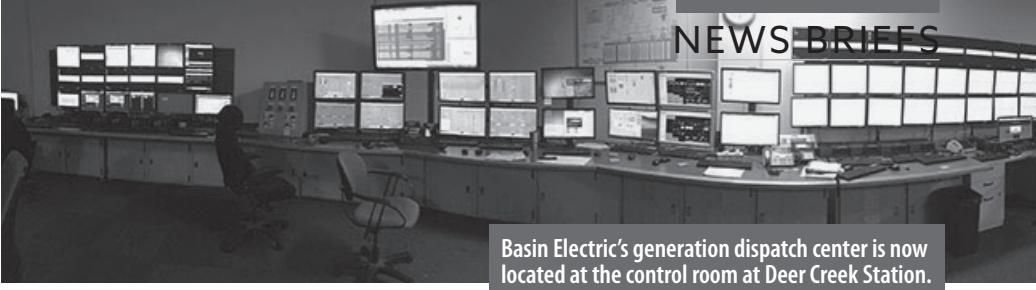
The drawback of switching over to LED lights is the upfront cost. Incandescent bulbs can be purchased for 19 to 50 cents each, while a replacement LED will likely cost \$1 or more. But one estimate we ran across showed the estimated cost of buying and operating standard C-9 lights for 10 seasons is \$122 for incandescent bulbs and \$18 for LEDs. Plus, the LED lighting is more likely to last the full 10 seasons, meaning less trips to the store!

There are other ways to cut energy expenses. You can use decorative solar light sets, which store energy during the day and release light during the night. Timers are also a good idea because they can reduce energy use, especially if you don't always remember to turn the lights off before bedtime.

Innovative decorating ideas can make your display more dynamic and interesting, which might help you get by with fewer lights. This could reduce energy costs and still keep your holidays bright:

- Color-changing LED lights can cycle through the colors in sequence and can even be set to change colors in response to music.
- A laser light projector sits on the ground or other flat surface and projects multi-colored patterns onto the wall of your house. Most include a timer function and may come with a remote control and additional features. They come in a range of prices from \$20 up to \$150 or more.
- You can recreate the excitement of a laser light show (using LED lights) by installing a smart lighting system that creates pre-set or programmable light shows through your smart phone or other smart devices.
- For maximum effect with the smallest amount of energy use, try distributing the lighting across a broader space. In the spaces between light, add reflective ornaments and decorations to increase the effect of the lights and add interest.

I hope these tips help raise your holiday spirits without giving you the budget blues in January!



Basin Electric's generation dispatch center is now located at the control room at Deer Creek Station.

## Basin Electric Employee Testifies at EPA hearing

Tyler Hamman, Basin Electric senior legislative representative, presented comments at the Environmental Protection Agency's public hearing on the proposed Affordable Clean Energy Rule (ACE) Oct. 1 in Chicago, Ill.

"Basin Electric supports the proposed ACE rule," Hamman said during the hearing. "It is consistent with the plain reading of the Clean Air Act that demonstrates that Congress envisioned a 'standard of performance' that applies to specific sources based on adequately demonstrated technology. In addition, the proposed rule recognizes the Clean Air Act's cooperative federalism and gives states the authority to develop a standard of performance consistent with EPA's guidance, yet recognizing the unique characteristics of electric generating units within a state."

Hamman was one of approximately 200 people that testified during the hearing. A representative of Basin Electric member Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association also testified.

While this was the only hearing that will be held concerning the proposed ACE rule, the deadline to submit written comments is Oct. 31.

Basin Electric will submit in-depth written comments in addition to Hamman's oral testimony.



**Tyler Hamman**  
Basin Electric  
Power Cooperative  
Senior Legislative  
Representative

## S.D. Power Plant Adds Dispatch Role

A move to base the gas-peaking generation dispatch center at the Deer Creek Station, located in Brookings County near Elkton, S.D., was a result of the recent realigning of business needs at Basin Electric.

With 24-hour coverage available, Distributed Generation Manager Kevin Tschosik said the move made sense and he had the staff available who were happy to cover the need.

Tschosik said within a week's time, Basin Electric Information Services and Telecommunications and Deer Creek employees worked to set up the dispatch center, which is now located within the Deer Creek control room.

Joe Fiedler, North Dakota/Wyoming/Montana operations superintendent, spent a week at Deer Creek training the operation technicians tasked with dispatching responsibilities. "The technicians worked hard to prepare for their new roles," Tschosik said. "It was a lot of training in a short period of time, including working with Basin Electric's real-time traders, who call the station for self-commitments, based on market prices."

On Sept. 3, operation technicians at Deer Creek took on responsibility of recognizing the daily generation awards and ensuring the engines are online without missing the window of opportunity for selling power.

Generation is now dispatched from Deer Creek for power generated at Culbertson Station, Deer Creek Station, Groton Generation Station, Lonesome Creek Station, Pioneer Generation Station, Spirit Mound Station, Wyoming Distributed Generation, PrairieWinds 1 and Crow Lake Wind. These facilities produce a combined 1,512 megawatts of electricity that can be readily dispatched.

During normal business hours, each facility's technician run the engines, observing real-time operating conditions. "The technicians can react to equipment problems and quickly make corrections or adjustments for better efficiency and availability to meet market requirements," Tschosik said.

The change requires that there is always one person in the control room monitoring dispatch needs. After normal business hours, equipment startup and shutdown is solely controlled from the Deer Creek Station.

"Communication is key," Tschosik said. "It is important to properly communicate at the beginning and end of each day as the controls get passed from one site to another. We can now track closure and online times closely and with optimum control, as well as better protect our assets as we continue to run the stations to meet environmental compliance."

Tschosik said he believes the move allows the distributed generation employees a chance to better understand what is happening within the fleet on a day-to-day basis, spreading the knowledge base within the department. "There will be some challenges going forward, but we have great employees who have taken ownership in this business change," he said.



Military veterans meet with electric co-op leaders at a Veterans in Energy event. Veterans in Energy is a professional development group that was formed through NRECA's Serve Our Co-ops; Serve Our Country initiative to help veterans transition into the energy workforce after they've been hired at electric cooperatives.

## An Electric Co-op Mission to **HIRE VETERANS**

**Paul Wesslund**

NRECA

Electric cooperatives are working to make even better use of a powerful source of energy – military veterans.

“Veterans, active military and their spouses are some of our greatest assets as employees,” says Michelle Rostom, director of workforce development for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). “They are mission-driven. When we think about providing safe, reliable and affordable power, we know our veterans – whatever their job – are focused on making sure we are operating safely and that we are creating a reliable electric network for co-op members.”

Rostom spends a lot of her time getting more veterans hired by electric co-ops in her role as program manager for NRECA’s initiative called “Serve Our Co-ops; Serve Our Country.”

The program launched in January 2016 “to honor and employ veterans,” said Rostom.

Since then, the program has been forming a coalition of co-ops and other groups to focus attention on the benefits of hiring veterans and to actually hire more veterans.

In announcing the program, Jim Matheson, CEO of NRECA,



An NRECA Commemorative Coin Recognizes veterans hired through the Serve Our Co-ops; Serve Our Country program.  
On the Cover: A statue of South Dakota Gov. Leslie Jensen, who was governor in 1937-1939, stands in front of the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building in Pierre. Jensen served in both WWI and WWII.

said, "Our military veterans deserve our unending gratitude for their service to our country, on Veterans Day and every day. Veterans possess many of the qualities sought by electric co-ops, including a deep commitment to service and an uncompromising work ethic. More than 200,000 service members transition out of the military to civilian life each year and we'd like to tap into that talent to help fill the thousands of co-op jobs opening up."

Hiring veterans is certainly a decent thing to do, but Rostom lists why it makes business sense as well.

"They understand their role and they go out and execute it," she says. "They bring leadership skills, they work in teams and look out for each other in that kind of 'brotherhood.' They work in all types of weather. They are disciplined. They show up on time. Those are professional competencies that not every job applicant brings with them, but you find them in the military."

The initiative grew out of broader strategic planning by NRECA. That plan envisioned that 25,000 jobs at electric co-ops would need to be filled in the next few years.

"We are racing to make sure we have the right talent applying for our jobs," says Rostom.

Part of that work has been developing and distributing information to bring attention and advice aimed at connecting veterans with co-op jobs. A series of three checklists published by the program helps guide electric co-ops in setting up a veteran hiring effort. The checklists show co-ops how to recognize veterans, contact groups in their communities for broad-based effectiveness and bring attention to the skills and abilities veterans offer.

Some of those skills and abilities might not be immediately obvious, says Rostom, like what they learn by having to change their job and their residence every few years.

"They are trained to learn," she says. "They change jobs every couple of years, so they learn to adapt."

Serve Our Co-ops; Serve Our Country also started a group called "Veterans in Energy," a professional organization to go

beyond hiring, by helping veterans transition into the energy workforce.

Military spouses make up another often-overlooked resource, says Rostom.

"You'll get resumes for a spouse and they will have big gaps in their experience," she says. "They've put their career path

## **Our military veterans deserve our unending gratitude for their service to our country, on Veterans Day and every day.**

on hold to follow their spouse around the world with the military, so don't just discount that resume."

Rostom says, "They've had to move their family probably 10 times over the past 15 years, so they have to plan, they have to find housing, find schools, medical care – and they're doing that without their spouse there, who is deployed somewhere. Often, they are volunteering, so they are community-focused, which is what we look for in the co-ops. In working with

groups of volunteers, they are managing people, they are probably managing a budget, they are securing vendors for events. There are a lot of skill sets that they bring."

Rostom continues, "Many are working on a degree while they are moving around the world. They are a phenomenal group of untapped talent we should consider. When you see that resume, it doesn't say military spouse, but I think it should. It totally changes the game – it shows the potential employer why their career has been put on hold. They are smart, educated, they are project managers, they work with diverse groups of people. They're an untapped group of talent that we don't always think about."

Through Serve Our Co-ops; Serve Our Country, electric co-ops are better positioned to increase their veteran workforce and support local veteran communities. To learn more about the program, visit [www.servevets.coop](http://www.servevets.coop).

Paul Wesslund 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.



Photo by NRECA

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# August Board Meeting Highlights

The August board meeting was held on Tuesday, Aug. 28, 2018, at 8 a.m. All board members were present.

Staff members present were General Manager Joel Janorschke, Dale Schwagel, Jerrel Olson and Karen Lupkes.

- The minutes of the July board meeting were approved.
- The July check register was approved.
- The East River and Basin Electric video reports were viewed.
- Homan reported on East River board and Basin Electric business.
- Marks reported on the new director orientation training.
- Marks and Armstrong reported on the Energy Issues Summit they attended.
- Kristi Robinson from STAR Energy reviewed current rates and rate recommendations from the Cost of Service Study.
- Schwagel gave the Operations Report. Items discussed included:
  - July outages were reviewed.
  - Crews are working on pole changes, service upgrades, new services and idle services retirements.
  - Review of recent safety meetings.
  - STAR Energy is assisting with the safety manual updates.
  - The safety trailer was demonstrated at the Stevens County Fair and the MN Bump event in Beardsley.
  - List of projects and contractors were reviewed.
  - Discussion on the new dairy site in North Ottawa Township.
- Janorschke presented the Manager's Report, which included:
  - Discussion on topics discussed at the East River manager's meeting.
  - Closed session to discuss general manager performance review.
  - Reviewed and approved the August Financial Report.
  - Discussed offering a generator program to members.
  - Approved the purchase of a new office phone system.
  - 2019-2022 Construction Work Plan is almost done.
  - CFC and Co-Bank director election ballots completed.
  - List of upcoming meetings and attendees was reviewed.

## Member Comments

Thanks so very much for fixing my yard light.

Sandy Gronfeld, Johnson, MN

Thank you so much for being a sponsor at the Veblen Rodeo. We really do appreciate your support. Without it, we wouldn't be able to host this event.

Veblen Club Committee, Veblen, SD



# Minnesota Cold Weather Rule Explained

During the cold weather months, from Oct. 15 to April 15, both the cooperative and the electric consumer have rights and responsibilities as set by law. South Dakota does not have a cold weather rule. This applies to Minnesota accounts only.

One of the most basic responsibilities of the consumer (cooperative member) is to give us a call to arrange a payment schedule if he/she is unable to pay their monthly electric bill. Do not be under the misconception that the cooperative cannot disconnect for nonpayment during the winter! The fact is that if a consumer does not fulfill his/her responsibilities as outlined in the Cold Weather Law, the electricity can be disconnected if the cooperative follows the proper notification procedure.

The consumer has the right to enter into a payment schedule. However, it is up to the consumer to call the cooperative to arrange the schedule. Once the payment schedule has been determined, it must be kept!

The consumer has the right to fill out the Inability to Pay Form with the co-op. Along with the completed Inability to Pay Form, income documentation must be provided to the cooperative. If the total household income is less than 50 percent of the state median income, the member is eligible for protection from winter shutoff. However, the consumer must provide the household income documentation to the cooperative in order to determine if the account is eligible for cold weather protection.

If the consumer is eligible for wintertime protection because the household income meets the criteria set forth in the Cold Weather Law, he/she would also be eligible to receive energy assistance.

Traverse Electric Cooperative would like to remind customers about Minnesota's Cold Weather Rule. Traverse Electric will not disconnect the utility service of a residential customer who meets certain criteria between Oct. 15 and April 15 if the disconnection affects their primary heat source. The criteria is as follows:

1. The customer declares an inability to pay on forms provided by Traverse Electric.
2. The household income of the customer is less than 50 percent of the state median income.

3. Verification of income may be conducted by the local energy assistance provider or Traverse Electric, unless the customer is automatically eligible for protection against disconnection as a recipient of any form of public assistance, including energy assistance that uses income eligibility in an amount at or below the income eligibility.

4. A customer whose account is current for the billing period immediately prior to Oct. 15 or who, at any time, enters into a payment schedule that considers the financial resources of the household and is reasonably current with payments under the schedule.

Before disconnecting service to residential customers between Oct. 15 and April 15, a utility must provide the following information:

- A notice of proposed disconnection.
- A statement explaining the customer's rights and responsibilities.
- A list of local energy assistance providers.
- Forms on which to declare an inability to pay.

If you are having financial difficulties and cannot pay your electric bill and if you do not meet state guidelines for cold weather protection, contact our office immediately to set up a mutually acceptable payment plan. Remember your bill is your responsibility. Arrangements for payments need to be made before the crew is sent out to disconnect.

A residential customer may be involuntarily disconnected for failure to comply with or for inability to meet any one of the four conditions mentioned directly above.



## ENERGY ASSISTANCE AND WEATHERIZATION CONTACTS

### West Central MN Communities Action

Elbow Lake, MN • [www.wcmca.org](http://www.wcmca.org)  
218-685-4486 or 800-492-4805

### Prairie Five, CAC, Inc.

Montevideo, MN • [www.prairiefive.com](http://www.prairiefive.com)  
320-839-2111, 320-269-6578 or 800-292-5437

### South Dakota LIEAP

Pierre, SD • <http://dss.sd.gov>  
605-773-6480 or 800-233-8503



Campaign buttons advocating a no vote on Amendment W are pictured.

# ELECTRIC CO-OPS JOIN FIGHT AGAINST W

Brenda Kleinjan

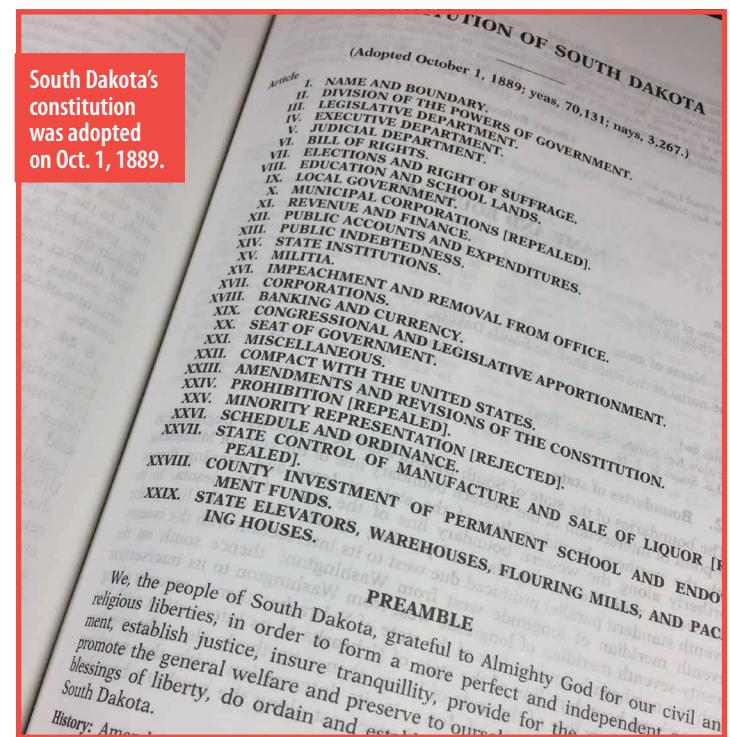
brenda.kleinjan@sdrea.coop

South Dakota's electric cooperatives, through their statewide association, the South Dakota Rural Electric Association in Pierre, have joined with more than 30 other South Dakota-based groups and individuals opposing an amendment to the South Dakota constitution.

Voters in November will decide the fate of Amendment W, which is titled "An initiated amendment to the South Dakota Constitution changing campaign finance and lobbying laws, creating a government accountability board, and changing certain initiative and referendum provisions." A "yes" vote would change South Dakota's constitution. A "no" vote leaves the constitution as is.

"Amendment W creates an entirely new article of the South Dakota Constitution and declares that the new article is superior to all other sections of the constitution. It creates a non-elected tribunal called "The State Government Accountability Board," forces the

South Dakota's constitution was adopted on Oct. 1, 1889.



legislature and Governor to fund it and allows that board to go to court for more money," said David Owen, president of the South Dakota Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Owen is the head of a coalition of South Dakota groups that have formed the "W is Wrong" statewide Ballot Question Committee opposing the amendment.

"No other state has anything like Amendment W," Owen said. "Only two other states even mention an ethics board in their constitution and neither of them overrides the legislative process for funding and oversight."

The SDREA board – comprised of local South Dakotans elected by their neighbors to serve on their local electric cooperative board and then elected to serve on the statewide board – has historically been engaged on advocating on behalf of their member-owners. SDREA was formed in 1942 to help cooperatives bring electricity to the state and continues to work to give voice to the 120,000 co-op members in the state. In Minnesota, the Minnesota Rural Electric Association does similar work on behalf of Minnesota electric cooperatives. The SDREA board consists of members of multiple political ideologies and parties.

"In reaching their conclusion to oppose Amendment W, the SDREA board walked through the proposed language thoughtfully and considered its potential ramifications carefully," said Ed Anderson, general manager of the South Dakota Rural Electric Association. "With any proposed initiated measure or constitutional amendment this complex, a thoughtful, reasoned consideration of all possible effects is the only responsible approach to take and I applaud them for their effort."

To see the amendment in its entirety, along with other measures voters will be deciding on in November, go to <https://sdosos.gov/elections-voting/upcoming-elections/general-information/2018-ballot-questions.aspx>

## Who Backs W?

Promoters of Amendment W claim to be a South Dakota group calling themselves "Represent South Dakota." Financial reports from 2017 and from this year's pre-primary report show that the effort has been funded from a Massachusetts organization known as "Represent US."

For calendar year 2017, the Amendment W campaign reported to have raised \$369,588; and spent \$362,348 – leaving a balance of \$7,240

### 2017 notable contributions were:

- Represent US – Florence, MA – \$121,000
- End Citizens United Non-Federal – \$15,000 (in-kind)
- Donated by Represent US – \$47,238

Plus a supplemental report that is 191 pages of individual contributions – many multiple \$1, \$3, \$5 listings – totaling \$233,588 and not one from South Dakota. The last eight donations were responsible for 50 percent of the total. This report sets the stage of a deceptive claim that there are thousands of supporters of Amendment W who gave small contributions.

Right before the primary election the Amendment W campaign reported they had raised an additional \$26,681 and spent \$33,084 – with a new balance of \$837.40.

## Why is W Wrong?

- Amendment W creates an entirely new Article of the South Dakota Constitution and declares that the new article is superior to all others sections of the constitution and all other provisions of law.
- The Amendment bluntly states that "**if there are any conflicts with any other provisions of the constitution and the new article, this article shall control.**" Amendment W gives the new article control over the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of the constitution. To further secure this power the amendment uses the phrase "**notwithstanding any other provision of the constitution**" four times including a specific reference to Article II – which states "**The powers of the government of the state are divided into three distinct departments, the legislative, executive and judicial; and the powers and duties of each are prescribed by this Constitution.**"
- Amendment W creates an inquisition style board called "The State Government Accountability Board" and gives it unprecedented powers including taking anonymous complaints about campaign violations and a long list of other powers including (but not limited to): **(I) Investigate any allegation of bribery, theft, or embezzlement of public funds, or any violation of this Article, ethics rule, or state law related to government ethics, campaign finance, lobbying, government contracts, or corruption by any elected or appointed official, judge, or employee of any state or local government and to issue subpoenas related to the investigation;**
- This inquisitional board will have authority over all "non-federal elected officials" starting with the Governor and ending with members of road districts and irrigation districts and political precinct chairmen and chairwomen. The reach of the new board includes every public employee working for state, county and local governments including townships.
- The members of the board are required to disclose the conflicts of interest and are expected to recuse themselves from participating in any investigation that deals with those conflicts unless "**the board member's vote is necessary to resolve the matter**"...meaning that a member of the board with a conflict of interest will only vote when it matters most.
- The Amendment uses the constitution to appropriate and annual budget for the new board of \$389,000 (increasing with inflation) which is in direct conflict with the other provisions of the Constitution that require that appropriations be in the annual budget or a separate spending bill and passed with a 2/3rds majority of both the Senate and House of Representatives. The new board is also empowered to intervene in any civil lawsuit. "**The board may intervene as a matter of right in any civil action involving any government entity, agency, or instrumentality alleged to be in violation of any mandate or prohibition under this Article and to and in any civil action relating to the board's powers or the sufficiency of resources provided for the board's implementation and operation.**"

Source: <http://www.wiswrong.com/amendment-w.html>

# Lend Your Voice to Rural America

In 2016, rural America played a big part in our national elections – 500,000 MORE rural voters went to the polls than in 2012. This is an incredible story, as many in small towns and communities across our country went to the polls to ensure their voices were heard and elected officials took notice. But, elections matter EVERY year.

2018 will be no different and electric cooperatives have the opportunity to play a vital role in encouraging rural voter turnout and engaging on issues that matter most to us. This year, we must build on the momentum we started in 2016, to join with 42 million members of electric cooperatives around the country and remind our elected officials that rural issues matter.

Electric co-ops are not-for-profit energy providers that are owned by the members they serve. They provide coverage for 88 percent of our nation's counties. They are a foundation in their communities and their members can make a difference in lending their voices to issues like rural infrastructure and broadband and maintaining access to affordable, reliable electricity.

To ensure that all electric co-op members do continue the

drumbeat that started in 2016, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) will continue the successful Co-ops Vote program. This is a non-partisan initiative that remains quite simple at its core: to ensure that members are registered to vote and they go to the polls for every election and to ensure rural issues remain part of the national discussion.

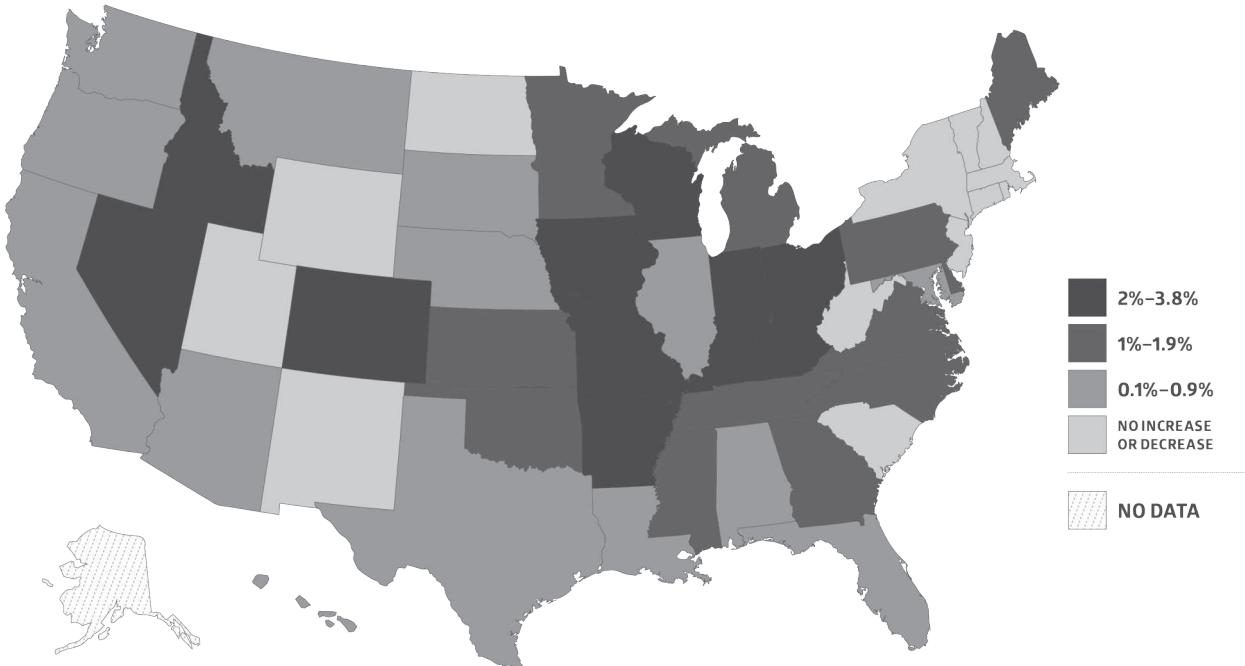
By participating in the Co-ops Vote program in 2018, co-op members continue to send a resounding message that all candidates – at all levels – will need to put rural America's concerns front and center in order to earn our vote. We proved in 2016 that with millions of electric co-op members speaking out with one voice, we can have a major impact in making our top issues part of the national conversation.

Everyone, regardless of their political beliefs, are encouraged to join America's electric cooperatives in this national effort. Let's continue to stand up for the priorities of the rural electric co-op community – it's more important now than ever. Learn more at [www.vote.coop](http://www.vote.coop).

## CO-OPS VOTE 2016 RURAL TURNOUT

RURAL VOTE vs. URBAN VOTE

This data demonstrates where rural counties had a higher voter percentage turnout in 2016 than their urban and suburban counterparts.



# CO-OPS VOTE

A PROGRAM OF AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES  
VOTE.COOP



America's Electric Cooperatives understand what's important to our homes and our communities, and we understand that registering to vote and voting in every

election is vital to protecting our way of life. So is building relationships with elected officials, so they understand the unique issues we face.

**Co-ops Vote** is designed to boost voter turnout, develop relationships with candidates and elected officials, and ensure that issues that matter in rural America are heard everywhere, from local councils all the way up to the U.S. Capitol.

**Co-ops Vote** provides the tools to help build those relationships and educate co-op employees, directors and consumer members prior to hitting the polls for every election.

Please join us, and make sure our elected leaders know that we expect them to represent all the people electric cooperatives serve. Learn more at [vote.coop](http://vote.coop).

Follow **CO-OPS VOTE** on social media and stay updated



@ CoopsVote



## WHY IS THE CO-OPS VOTE PROGRAM IMPORTANT?

- We must elect public officials who identify with America's Electric Cooperatives and will vote to support the issues important to 42 million electric cooperative members across the nation.
- Electric cooperatives are a trusted resource in the communities we serve. Voters want to hear from community leaders (like electric co-ops) about important issues.

For more information on **Co-ops Vote** please visit [vote.coop](http://vote.coop) or [cooperative.com/coopsvote](http://cooperative.com/coopsvote).

## WHAT IS CO-OPS VOTE?

**Co-ops Vote** is a non-partisan campaign focused on enhancing the political strength of electric cooperatives through relationship building and voter engagement. The main goal of the campaign is to boost voter turnout in cooperative areas, making sure that our members exercise one of their most basic rights - the right to vote. Working in collaboration with states and local co-ops, this effort will educate and engage candidates and voters on important issues like:

- Expanding broadband coverage throughout rural America.
- Ensuring continued access to reliable electricity.
- Promoting the work of co-ops within the communities they serve.

## AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

- ✓ **833** distribution and **62** G&T cooperatives, a total of **905** co-op members.
- ✓ Serve a total of **42 million** people in **47 states**.
- ✓ Generate 5% of the total electricity in the United States.
- ✓ Own and maintain **2.6 million miles** or **42%** of the nation's electric distribution lines, covering **56%** of the U.S. landmass.
- ✓ Serve **19 million**, businesses, homes, schools, churches, farms, irrigation systems, and other establishments in **88% of US counties**.

## October 20

SD State High School Boys and Girls Cross Country Meet, Yankton Trail Park, Sioux Falls, SD

## October 20-21

South Dakota State and National Corn Husking Contest, State is on the 20th and National on the 21st, 9 a.m., Flandreau, SD

## October 26-27

Harvest Halloween, Yankton, SD, info@harvesthalloween.com

## October 26-27

Deadweird, Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

## October 26-28

ZooBoo, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7003

## October 26-28

Autumn Festival, An Arts and Crafts Affair, Sioux Falls, SD, 402-331-2889

## October 27

Scare in the Square, Rapid City, SD, 605-716-7979

## October 27

ZOO BOO, Watertown, SD, 605-882-6269

## October 27-28

Dakota Territory Gun Show, Davison County 4-H Grounds, Mitchell, SD, 605-630-2199

## November 1-3

South Dakota Local Foods Conference, Brookings, SD, Contact 605-681-6793 or SDSPAinfo@gmail.com

## November 8-10

Ringneck Festival and Bird Dog Challenge, Huron, SD, 605-352-0000

**October 20-January 6:**  
Pheasant Hunting Season,  
Statewide, Pierre, SD,  
605-223-7660



Photo courtesy: travelsouthdakota.com

## November 9

Hairball, Deadwood Mountain Grand, Deadwood, SD, 605-559-1188

## November 10

Sisseton Area Merchants and Crafters 21st Annual Holiday Extravaganza, Sisseton, SD, 605-698-7425

## November 10

Mountain West Beer Fest, Rapid City, SD, 605-343-6161

## November 15-December 18

Black Hills Christmas Tree Permit Season, Custer, SD, 605-673-9200

## November 16-17

Holiday Arts Christmas Craft Show, Masonic Temple, Mitchell, SD, 605-359-2049

## November 17-18

Winterfest: A Winter Arts Festival, Aberdeen, SD, arts council@nvc.net

## November 20-December 26

Christmas at the Capitol, Pierre, SD, 605-773-3178

## November 23-24, Dec. 1-2, 8-9, 15-16, 22-23

1880 Train Holiday Express, Hill City, SD, 605-574-2222

## November 29-30

Festival of Trees, Lead, SD, 605-584-2067

## December 1

Christmas Stroll and Holidazzle Parade, Spearfish, SD, 605-717-9294

## December 1-2

Living Christmas Tree, Aberdeen, SD, 605-229-6349

## Dec. 1, 7-8, 13-15, 20-21

Strawbale Winery Twilight Flights, Renner, SD, 605-543-5071

## December 8

Community Christmas Musicale, Eureka, SD, 605-284-2161

## December 8

Frontier Christmas, Lake City, SD, 605-448-5474

## December 8-9

Black Hills Cowboy Christmas, Lead, SD, 605-584-2067

## December 9

REO Speedwagon, Deadwood, SD, 605-559-0386

## December 14

A Green Dolphin Jazzy Christmas Concert, Spearfish, SD, 605-642-7973

## December 15-March 31

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

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.