

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

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Avoiding Scams



Jeff Birkeland
CEO

Consumers with water, gas and electricity connections have long been targets for utility scams. But in today's digital world, every swipe and click increases the risk of potential scams.

Scammers are more sophisticated than ever before, and they understand our increasing reliance on technology. With their sharpened digital knives, scammers have adapted their tactics to trick unsuspecting consumers through a variety of methods.

West Central Electric wants to help you avoid energy scams, whether a financial loss or a leak of your personal information. This month, I'd like to share updates on some of the latest utility scams, as well as tips to help you stay safe from even the craftiest scammers.

Recent Utility Scams

Scammers typically disguise themselves – either physically or digitally – as utility employees or representatives to steal consumers' money or personal information. A common trick is to claim a consumer's bill is past due and threaten to disconnect service if payment isn't received immediately. Scammers approach consumers through a variety of means, including phone calls, text messages, emails, and even in-person visits. However, the digital line of attack is increasingly more common.

For example, new capabilities disguising caller ID or "spoofing" can make the phone number you see on caller ID appear to be from a trusted source. Spoofing makes it easier for scammers to deceive you because it's more difficult to verify the call immediately. Another recent scam uses fraudulent websites that are identical to a utility payment webpage – and what's worse, these pages are often promoted on search engines to trick consumers into clicking and making a payment.

Another recent scam involves phone calls, text messages, or emails claiming you overpaid your electric bill and will receive a cash or banking refund. This offer may seem too good to be true, and it is – it's likely a scam aimed at stealing your personal information.

Spotting a Scam

There are several red flags you can look for when identifying an energy scam. Scammers often use high-pressure tactics to create a sense of urgency, like claiming your electricity or other services will be disconnected if a payment isn't made immediately.

Additionally, scammers may ask for unusual payment methods such as gift cards or cryptocurrency. If someone is pushing for an unusual payment method, it's likely a scam.

You've probably noticed that many digital scams, like emails or text messages, include poor grammar, spelling errors and odd email addresses. These are red flags, so when you see these dodgy forms of communication, consider it a potential scam.

What West Central Electric Will (and Won't) Do

West Central will never demand an instant, immediate payment and threaten to disconnect your service without prior notices or warnings. We strive to resolve challenging situations and work with our members to avoid disconnects.

West Central will never ask for your Social Security number or banking details over the phone or through email. We offer several secure payment options, including in-person, over the phone, smart-hub or scheduled payments.

Avoiding Scams

Whether in-person, over the phone or online, always be suspicious of an unknown individual claiming to be a West Central Electric employee requesting banking or other personal information. We will only send you text messages if you have opted in for important alerts.

If you're ever in doubt about a potential energy scam, give us a quick call at 605-669-8100 so we can assist. West Central wants to help protect you and our communities against utility frauds, and by notifying us about potential scams, you can create the first line of defense. We encourage you to report any potential scams so we can spread the word and prevent others in our community from falling victim.

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

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Our Mission is to Provide Safe, Reliable Service to our Member Owners.

West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc., is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

**Call 605-669-8100
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Design assistance by SDREA

AG APPRECIATION EVENT AT THE CENTRAL STATES FAIR

Please come show your support in honoring these individuals for their dedication to the rural community.

An Ag Appreciation Meal and short program will be August 20th from 5-6:30pm at the Monument Health Community Stage inside the fairgrounds.

Enjoy a free meal, free fair entrance* and a night out at the rodeo*!

2024 RURAL NEIGHBOR NOMINEES



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In memory of Jerry Cope

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Extreme Heat Preparation

Learn How to Stay Hydrated

You need to drink enough water to prevent heat illness. An average person needs to drink about 3/4 of a gallon of water daily. Everyone's needs may vary.

- You can check that you are getting enough water by noting your urine color. Dark yellow may indicate you are not drinking enough.
- Avoid sugary, caffeinated and alcoholic drinks.
- If you are sweating a lot, combine water with snacks or a sports drink to replace the salt and minerals you lose in sweat.
- Talk to your doctor about how to prepare if you have a medical condition or are taking medicines.

Make a Plan to Stay Cool

Do not rely only on electric fans during extreme heat. When temperatures are in the high 90s, fans may not prevent heat-related illness. Taking a cool shower or bath or moving to an air-conditioned place is a much better way to cool off.

- Spending a few hours each day in air conditioning can help prevent heat illness.
 - If you have air conditioning, be sure that it is in working order.
 - If you do not have air conditioning or if there is a power outage, find locations where you can stay cool. For example, a public library, shopping mall or a public cooling center. Plan how you will get there.
 - Additional resources may be available from local government or community groups.
- Make sure you have plenty of lightweight, loose clothing to wear.
- Create a support team of people you may assist and who can assist you. Check in with them often to make sure that everyone is safe.

Learn Emergency Skills

- Learn how to recognize and respond to heat illness.
- Learn First Aid and CPR.
- Be ready to live without power. Utilities may be offline. Be ready to live without power, gas and water. Plan for your electrical needs, including cell phones and medical equipment. Talk to your doctor. Plan for backup power

Gather Emergency Supplies

- Gather food, water and medicine. Stores might be closed. Organize supplies into a Go-Kit and a Stay-at-Home

Kit. In the event of a power outage, you may lose access to clean drinking water. Set aside at least one gallon of drinking water per person per day. Consider adding drinks with electrolytes. Include sunscreen and wide-brimmed hats.

- Go-Kit: at least three days of supplies that you can carry with you. Include backup batteries and chargers for your devices (cell phone, CPAP, wheelchair, etc.)
- Stay-at-Home Kit: at least two weeks of supplies.
- Have a one-month supply of medication in a child-proof container and medical supplies or equipment.
- Keep personal, financial and medical records safe and easy to access (hard copies or securely backed up)
- Consider keeping a list of your medications and dosages on a small card to carry with you.

Source: American Red Cross



Power Line Safety "Call 911 and Don't Get Out"

Hobie Klein, Age 12

Hobie Klein warns farmers to call 911 and don't get out of the tractor if contact is made with a power line. Hobie's parents are Dean and Karey Klein, members of Sioux Valley Energy.

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.

Summer SALADS

MOM'S VEGETABLE SALAD

Ingredients:

Salad

- 2 cans diced carrots
- 1 can green beans
- 1 can yellow beans
- 1 small can peas
- 1 can cut baby corn

Drain all the vegetables

Add

- 1/2 cup diced green pepper
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1 diced medium onion

Dressing

- Combine in a saucepan
- 1/2 cup oil
- 1 1/3 cup sugar
- 1/3 cup white vinegar
- 1/3 cup cider vinegar
- 2 Tbsp water

Combine in a saucepan and boil until clear

Method

Pour dressing over vegetables and refrigerate for several hours before serving. Keeps for a week.

**Debra Clow
Harrisburg, S.D.**

FRESH SUMMER SALAD

Ingredients:

- 3 tbsps. olive oil, divided
- 1 tbsp. lime juice
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1 1/5 cups fresh corn or thawed frozen corn
- 1 1/2 cups cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1/2 cup cucumber, finely chopped
- 2 tbsp. fresh basil, minced
- 1/3 cup crumbled Feta cheese or Parmesan cheese
- 1 tbsp. balsamic vinegar or Italian salad dressing

Method

Mix 2 tablespoons of oil, lime juice and salt in a small bowl. Cook corn in a skillet with remaining 1 tbsp. oil. Pour corn into bowl, cool slightly. Add tomatoes, cucumber and basil. Refrigerate. Before serving, drizzle with dressing, cheese and balsamic vinegar or Italian dressing.

**Barb Selland
Mitchell, S.D.**

CHICKEN SALAD

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup plain lowfat yogurt
- 2 tbsps. mayonnaise
- 1 tsp. parsley flakes
- 1/2 tsp. seasoned salt
- 1/4 tsp. ground black pepper
- 1/2 rotisserie chicken, cut into bite-size chunks (about 2 cups)
- 1/2 cup thinly sliced celery
- 1/4 cup chopped red onion

Method

Mix yogurt, mayonnaise, parsley, seasoned salt and pepper in large bowl. Add chicken, celery and onion; toss to coat well. Cover. Refrigerate at least 30 minutes or until ready to serve. Serve in sandwiches or on salad greens.

McCormick.com

Please send your favorite recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2024. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

Types of Heat Pumps



Miranda Boutelle
Efficiency Services
Group

Q: My heating system is 10-plus years old, and I want to switch to a heat pump. Can you help me choose the best option for my home?

A: Heat pumps have been around for decades, and in that time, the technology has come a long way. In my opinion, they could use a rebrand.

The name heat pump does not highlight the benefit of air conditioning that comes with the technology. Heat pumps are highly efficient because they don't use energy to create heat. Instead, they use energy to move heat – into the home in the winter and out of it in the summer. They typically produce about three times more energy than they use.

The most common types of heat pumps are air source and ground source. Air source heat pumps transfer heat from the outside air, even if it isn't particularly warm outside. Ground source, or geothermal heat pumps, transfer heat between your home and the ground. With a lower upfront price tag, air source heat pumps are more common.

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, air source heat pumps can reduce heating use by about 65% compared to an electric furnace. They come in a variety of styles and configurations to fit different homes. Air source heat pump technology has been popular in warmer climates for decades. There are now cold climate versions available, too.

Here's an explanation of how each type operates:

Ducted air source heat pumps are ideal for homes with existing ductwork or homes where ductwork can be feasibly added. Replacing an aging central air conditioning system with a heat pump can significantly reduce heating costs.

Ductless heat pumps, or mini-split heat pumps, also draw heat from the outside air. They are a great solution for homes that do not have existing ductwork.

There are many configurations to suit

different home layouts. New options on the market allow for coupling with gas or propane backup heat, which might be a good fit for your home. Ductless heat pumps can be a great option for homes with wood stoves. This can help home air quality, heat the home without gathering wood and provide air conditioning in warmer months.

Geothermal heat pumps transfer heat from the ground to your home. They are even more efficient than air source heat pumps, reducing energy use by 70% to 80%, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. They can also heat water for use in the home, which saves on water heating costs.

From a user experience perspective, heat pumps are a little different because the heat from the register doesn't feel quite as warm as oil, electric, natural gas or propane heat. That can take a little getting used to, but the efficiency gains and energy savings make the investment worthwhile.

Before buying a heat pump, compare equipment ratings. The higher the rating, the more efficient the equipment. If it is time to replace your heating system, I recommend making the switch to a heat pump to conserve energy and potentially save on your electric bills.

Understanding the Backup Heat Feature

Most heat pump systems are installed with a backup or auxiliary heat for cold weather. This auxiliary heat can be electric coils, gas, propane or oil, which is usually more expensive to operate. This helps keep your home warm on cold days, but you don't want to use it if you don't need it.

For some heat pumps, turning up the thermostat too quickly or too high can trigger the backup heat. Typically, your thermostat will display emergency or auxiliary heat when using this feature. Speak to your HVAC technician to ensure your thermostat is set to maximize efficiency.

Sparking Innovation On The Farm

Tara Miller

Central Electric Cooperative, Manager of Communications

The year was 1950, and a teenager named Robert Moe was living on a farm in northern Hanson County when Intercounty Electric brought power to the prairie. His parents, Chester and Myrl, had three boys and three girls. Robert was the second youngest of the Moe children.

When farms started receiving power, welding manufacturers held demonstrations to sell their products to area farmers. So, Robert's dad and his brother, Roy, purchased a 220-volt Forney brand welder.

"Intercounty Electric started small group welding classes in each county. Hanson County's classes were held at an implement dealer in Alexandria," Robert said.

After several weeks of classes, Intercounty Electric organized a contest in each county to pick the best welder, and Robert emerged as the winner in Hanson County. His skills were further recognized in a four-county contest held at the Intercounty Electric office building, where he was again named the winner.

Robert presented the first-ever 4-H welding demonstration at the South Dakota State Fair.

"Because my welding demonstration required a special electrical connection, Intercounty Electric installed an electric plug on a pole in the middle of an empty lot on the state fairgrounds."

Robert fabricated livestock gates and other farm necessities. In 1953, he also made a metal grille guard for the family's 1952 International pickup. His welding demonstrations would earn him a trip to Chicago to attend the 4-H Club Congress in the electrical division.

At age 21, Robert joined the United States Army and served for two years before returning home to farm. He eventually met his future wife, Norma Northrup, who grew up on a farm served by Intercounty Electric east of Letcher on Highway 37.

Robert and Norma grew crops and raised cattle on the Moe homestead for more than 25 years. They spent 32 winter seasons in south Texas and traveled around in an RV in the summer for 18 years before eventually moving to Mitchell.

Robert remembers, "Having a yard light was a handy new luxury when we first got electricity, but it got even better later when Intercounty offered a free all-night light if wired through the meter."

Norma said, "It's amazing to look at all that's changed with electric appliances. Refrigerators, deep freezers, water heaters, and washing machines."

However, Norma explained, one of the more profound impacts of electricity was how it would shape their children's lives. Their two sons, Kevin and Keith, both have successful careers related to computer technology, a field that would not exist without electricity.

Intercounty Electric merged with Tri-County Electric in 2000 to form Central Electric Cooperative, which today serves mostly rural portions of Aurora, Brule, Buffalo, Davison, Hanson, Jerauld, Miner and Sanborn Counties.

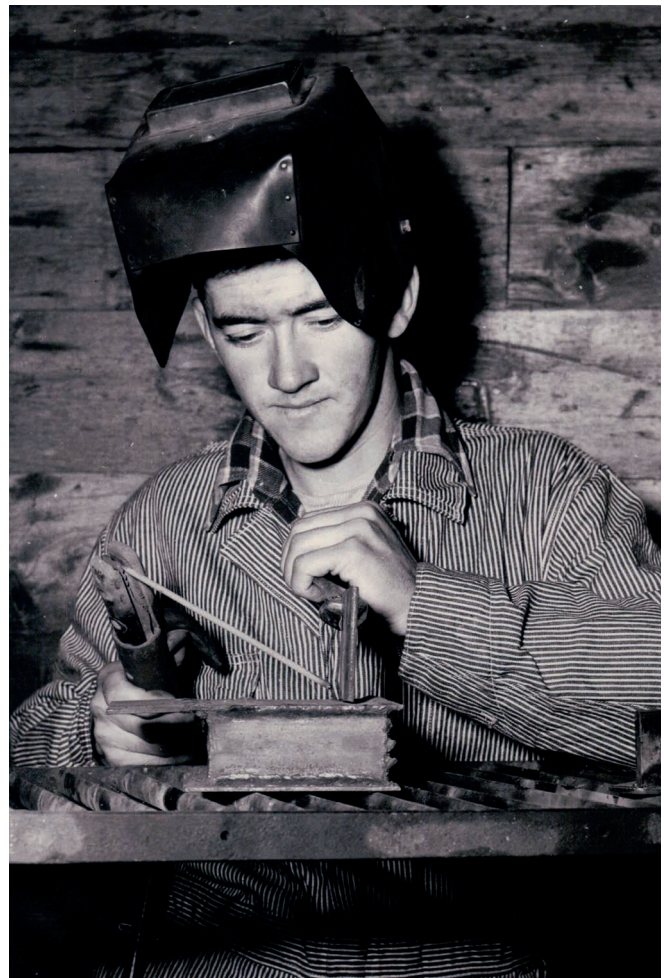




Photo Credit: North Dakota Geological Survey

Mammoth Discovery

Shannon Marvel

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Over Memorial Day of 2023, a coal miner made a historic discovery at the Freedom Mine in North Dakota.

“The shovel operator just happened to take a scoop that had a complete mammoth tusk,” said Jeff Person, a paleontologist with the North Dakota Geological Survey.

“The tusk was about seven-foot-long. That shovel must’ve picked it up just perfectly to not damage or break it. The driver reported the find to his superiors at the Freedom Mine, who then contacted us,” Person said.

The tusk was found in an old streambed. Other fossils



Photo Credit: North Dakota Geological Survey

were found in the streambed, including “more than twenty bones from the skeleton, including ribs, a shoulder blade a tooth and parts of the hips,” according to a news release.

“Most of the mammoth fossils known from North Dakota are isolated bones and teeth,” stated Clint Boyd, Senior Paleontologist for the North Dakota Geological Survey, in the news release. “This specimen is one of the most complete mammoth skeletons discovered in North Dakota, making it an exciting and scientifically important discovery.”

The bones were sent off to the Paleontology Lab at the North Dakota Heritage Center and State Museum in Bismarck to undergo extensive cleaning before being prepped to be dried out, which requires that the bones be

wrapped in plastic.

It could take up to another year for the bones to be dried out enough to be taken out of the plastic wrap, Person said.

At that point, the bones will be the focus of scientific research, he said.

According to the news release, “mammoths lived in North Dakota during the Pleistocene Epoch, commonly called the Ice Age, and went extinct in this area around 10,000 years ago. Several species of mammoth lived in North America, including the Woolly Mammoth and the Columbian Mammoth. They lived alongside other iconic animals like saber-toothed tigers and giant sloths. Once the bones are fully cleaned, paleontologists will be able to identify which species was collected from the mine.”



Photo Credit: North Dakota Geological Survey

What Causes the Lights to Blink Constantly?



Kit Talich
Operations

Here at your Electric Cooperative, we understand that an occasional blink in power is a nuisance that we can probably live with. Still, we can all agree that blinking lights that happen continuously can be very frustrating. While blinks can happen any time of the year, late spring/early summer is usually the time of year the system sees the most blinks. Let's take a closer look at the typical causes to see why:

A blink of the power is caused by a piece of equipment on the system called a recloser. Its job is to see a fault on the line and open up, or "operate". The device then waits a short amount of time (usually no more than a second or so at the longest) and closes back in to see if the fault cleared the line. If there is no fault, it stays closed and life is good. If the fault remains, the device will open again and repeat the process a set number of times. Ultimately, if the fault does not clear, the device will remain open (or "lockout") and the linemen have to go find the problem.

A vast majority of blinks are caused by a specific event, a 'one-off' kind of thing. An excellent example of that would be an accidental contact where equipment brushes the neutral wire up into the phase. Storms are also a good example. Wind may lift the neutral into the phase, or a tree branch or other debris being blown around may impact the line and cause the wires to get together. Outside of those causes, animals occasionally get into the line, and that will cause the recloser to operate. The most common critters in our part of the world are raccoons, birds, and snakes. Newer construction methods minimize these kinds of contacts with coverup material, perch diverters, 10' cross arms, and pole wraps to prevent critters from climbing up.

Sometimes areas of the systems will experience events that

cause many blinks over a few days or weeks. Several things can cause these persistent blinks. Let's dive into these a little deeper:

- Equipment failures can be one cause. One source of an issue can be a piece of equipment called a regulator. A regulator is a type of transformer that will adjust as needed to keep the voltage in a specific band. Inside the regulator is an arm that sweeps between contacts to adjust the output. On rarer occasions, one of these contacts can become pitted and can cause a voltage fluctuation every time the arm sweeps over it. Another piece of equipment that can cause many blinks is an insulator or arrestor. When these fail, they can sometimes hang in there until moisture comes along, and then the rain allows the electricity to short across, operating the recloser. Of course, this arcing evaporates the moisture, and the recloser will close in



Broken overhead line that could result power blinks

Blinking Lights, Continued

and not see the fault anymore. Keeping everything on until it rains again!

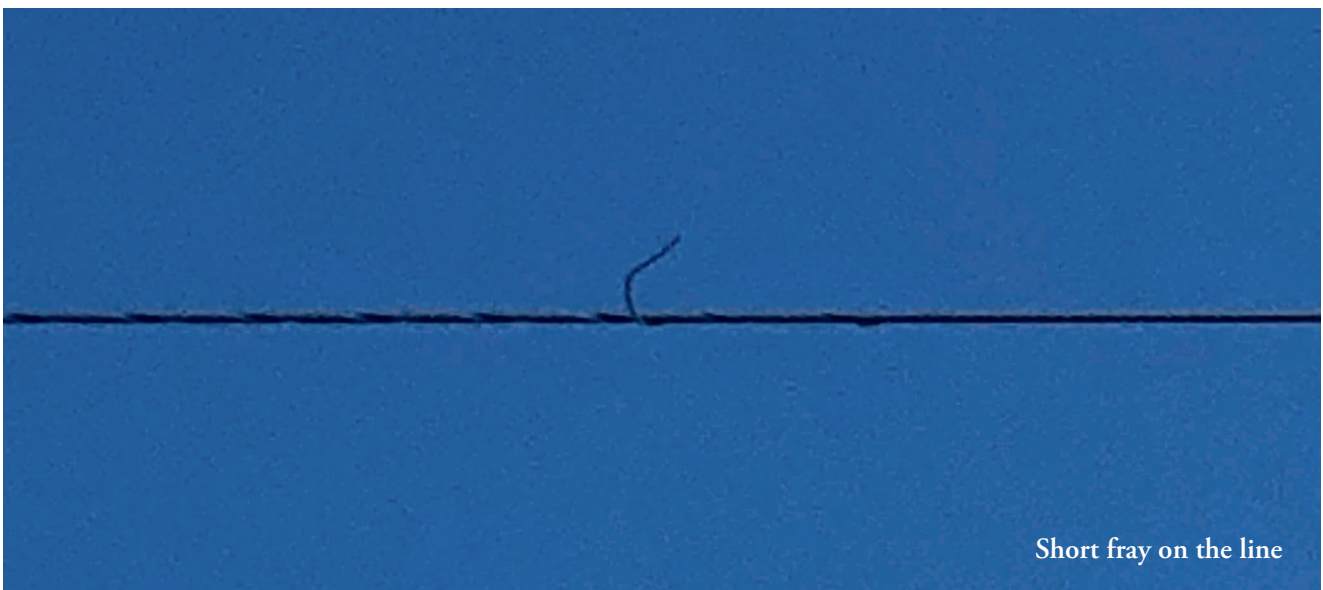
- Frays on the line can be caused by something going through the line during a storm (like we discussed above) or by gunshots. To understand a fray, we have to look at the conductor. The conductor your Co-op uses is stranded and twisted composed of some steel wire in the middle for strength surrounded by aluminum wires on the outside for the current-carrying abilities. When something damages one or some of the outside aluminum wires, they can come unwrapped from the rest of the conductor, especially when the wind gets the wire moving. Eventually, once the wire comes unwrapped enough, it will get into the other conductor and cause the recloser to operate. This will burn off the end of the frayed wire, and the recloser will hold until the wind unwraps more!
- Animals can also cause these persistent blinks. As we all know, cattle love to rub. Occasionally we will come across an old pole that has been rubbed so much that the diameter near the ground is three quarters or less than the rest of the pole! This hard rubbing at the bottom of the pole can cause the top of the pole to start oscillating, and the wires attached will get enough movement that they can get together in the middle of the span and cause the recloser to operate. Birds can be another culprit. When the flocks of blackbirds take off from perching on a line, it can be

enough to get the wires together. The other place a flock of birds can cause problems is if they congregate around an older transformer service with the minimal coverup. One may make contact and operate the breaker to cause a blink and then close in fine until another bird gets into the same place!

- Trees that grow too close to the power line is probably the easiest to of all these to find. If a tree grows into the line, it can burn the end of the branches as some of the energy finds a path to the ground through the tree. As the wind blows the branches around, they can get close enough to cause an operation on the recloser. When patrolling the line, these are easy to see and fix with a quick trim of those branches.

As you can now understand, the storms in the spring and early summer and wildlife returning are more likely to cause blinks during those time frames. These situations where a line keeps blinking can be quite hard to find for the linemen because, by the time they get on-site to patrol line, the temporary fault has cleared. It can also be nearly impossible to see a faulty insulator or a single strand sticking out when it is 30+ feet in the air! Sometimes the crews find the problem the first time they run the line, but sometimes they don't see anything, and not being able to find the problem can be almost as frustrating for us as it is for you!

If you are experiencing continuous blinks, that does not seem reasonable (i.e. no storms in the area), we encourage you to call us to report. We can investigate and get it remedied before something fails and causes an outage or damages equipment or property.



Short fray on the line



A GOLDEN HARVEST

The Buzz Behind Adee Honey Farms

Frank Turner

frank.turner@sdrea.coop

Three generations ago, the Adee family learned that a tumultuous time can lead to significant opportunity. During the 1930s, the Great Depression wreaked havoc on small rural communities and the agricultural industry. The value of crops and livestock plummeted, and the land became arid.

These hard times impacted many in the Midwest, including Vernon Adee, a rural teacher and rancher in Nebraska. Vernon needed a new way to provide for his family, and a letter from his brother held the answer: “I can’t sell chickens or hogs, but I’m doing well with honey. Be advised: Get a beehive.”

Following his brother’s advice, Vernon attended a foreclosure auction and purchased his first beehive. The decision to begin

beekeeping would inspire several more generations of the Adee family to continue in the trade.

Wanting to start their own operation, Vernon’s sons, Richard and Stanley, purchased a retiring beekeeper’s business through a trade magazine advertisement in 1957. Located in Bruce, South Dakota, the business included 1,500 hives and a breeding yard in Woodville, Mississippi. The acquisition marked the beginning of Adee Honey Farms, and what began as a small family farm quickly grew into the largest beekeeping operation in the country. Today, Adee Honey Farms supports more than 80,000 colonies and nearly 70 full-time employees.

“It started with survival and eventually became a family business,” said Bret Adee, Vernon’s grandson and the owner-operator of Adee Honey Farms. “I can remember being four or five years old and being in the field with my dad, holding the smoker and helping where I could. By the time I was in elementary school, I was loading trucks and moving boxes in the warehouse. Like anyone who grew up on a farm, I was involved in the family business by the time I could walk.”

From a young age, Bret has held a deep love and appreciation for the honey bee. The insect’s ability to cooperate and produce golden treasure while benefiting plants, crops, and the ecosystem at large makes them a unique livestock, unlike any other.

“To watch a hive grow and forage, and by the end of the summer make up to 150 pounds of honey – it’s just so exciting,”

said Bret. “It’s the dynamics of the biology that keeps it interesting.”

Right now, Adee Honey Farms is engaged in honey production in the Midwest, with their bees spread across South Dakota and the west edge of Minnesota and the south edge of North Dakota. Around the first week of August, Bret’s business will start the honey harvest, an event that can last until the first frost or even longer. For now, Bret said this year is shaping up to be a good season for honey production.

“It’s early, but I’m optimistic. The years when there is a lot of clover are the years that beekeepers do well,” said Bret. “We had a wet enough fall that enough clover germinated. We can always lose that to a hot dry wind... but we are optimistic right now.”

But bees aren’t just used to make honey; they also have hand in pollinating crops across the country. More than a neat fact, it’s also the second half of the beekeeping industry. The mere presence of honey bees can increase yields for crops such as alfalfa and sunflowers by up to 20 to 30 percent, depending on the variety of crop. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, pollination is responsible for more than \$18 billion in added revenue to crop production in the country.

Once the honey harvest is over, the bees will be loaded onto a truck to tour the country, traveling from the Dakotas to California and later to Texas in search of favorable weather and crops to pollinate. In fact, crop yields from California almond trees and apple trees are almost totally dependent on pollination from bees, enticing farmers from across the country to welcome

bees onto their land. Everyone benefits – even bees.

“It’s a win for the consumer who gets to eat the honey. It’s a win for the landowner who has the bees on his land, and if everything goes right, it’s good for the beekeeper’s family too,” said Bret.



Bret Adee, owner-operator of Adee Honey Farms, is a third-generation beekeeper in the Adee family. Photos courtesy of Adee Honey Farms.



FOOD TRUCKS



Photos Courtesy of Karli Hinds

Food Trucks

How Karli Hinds Jumped Into the Business

Shannon Marvel

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Karli Hinds was working a typical corporate 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. job when she realized she wanted a life where she had the flexibility to travel with her husband.

“So I had actually quit my job and stayed home for six months or so,” Hinds said. “Then I wanted something I could do but still have the flexibility to travel.”

Hinds had a couple ideas, one that had to do with the fact that she’s a “foodie.”

“I started cooking really young. I would say I was making meals by myself when I was in middle school,” she said.

The idea for opening a food truck was at the forefront of her mind, given that she was not interested in having a storefront.

“I didn’t want the hassle and responsibility of it. I wanted a business I could rely on myself and not have to rely on several employees,” Hinds said.



“On my second day in the food truck, I was serving Tex Mex, and I had a crazy line. It was just insane. I wanted to quit right then, but I also was thinking, ‘this is going to work.’ It was a good turnout, and it was only my second day.”

- Karli Hinds

Financially, there are pros and cons to starting up a food truck business.

Hinds said there’s limited finance options for food trucks while at the same time, there’s more cash that you must have on hand to get started.

Finding a food truck or trailer was the next challenge and proved to be fairly difficult for Hinds at first.

“We wanted one that was brand new,” Hinds said. “Most of the manufacturers are out of Mexico, and they don’t always have the best reputations. We really struggled with finding a reputable company to build a trailer with me. Somehow, we found a random post on Facebook from a guy that was selling brand new food trailers somewhere in the middle of nowhere in Iowa.”

Hinds and her husband walked through the trailers and picked out what they liked and didn’t like before finally deciding on the one to get.

Hinds uses the food truck to cook up an array of menu items every week.

“I’m actually a really picky eater, believe it or not,” Hinds said. “I didn’t want to specialize in one thing. People in small towns know we get kind of burnt out from eating the same thing over and over.”

Hinds rotates between eight or so different food themes.

“Once in a while I come

up with something new to add within that theme,” Hinds said. “My best seller is always my smash burgers.”

She’ll find her recipes on the popular social media app, Tik Toc.

On her second day of business, Hinds knew her food truck business would be sustainable.

“On my second day in the food truck, I was serving Tex Mex, and I had a crazy line,” Hinds said. It was just insane. I wanted to quit right then, but I also was thinking, ‘this is going to work.’ It was a good turnout, and it was only my second day.”

Hinds said the job isn’t always fun and is physically demanding.

“The hours are a lot more chaotic,” she said. “The problem-solving aspect is better as I don’t have a chain of command that I need to go through to make things right with the customer.”

During the winter months, Hinds delivers lunches a couple days out of the week.

“It’s just one item and I deliver them in town within Vermillion,” Hinds said. “That’s just something that I do that’s a little bit different than other food trucks.”



REGISTER TO WIN!

Bring this coupon and mailing label to the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives booth at Dakotafest or the South Dakota State Fair to win a prize!

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AUG. 2-11
Sturgis Motorcycle Rally
Sturgis, SD
www.sturgismotorcyclerrally.com

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.

JULY 26-28
Meghan Newsam
Community Celebration
Murdo, SD

July 27
South Dakota Chislic
Festival
10 a.m.-9 p.m.
Freeman Prairie Arboretum
Freeman, SD
605-496-9946

AUG. 2-4
Arlington Days
Arlington, SD
605-690-5717
Follow Arlington Days, South Dakota on Facebook & Instagram

AUG. 7
Ag Appreciation Day
W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds
Sioux Falls, SD

AUG. 10
Perseid Meteor Shower
Palisades State Park
Garretson, SD

AUG. 10
Camaro Fun Days
10 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
Pioneer Park
Brookings, SD

AUG. 6-8
IDEAg's Farmfest
8 a.m.-4 p.m.
Redwood County, MN
651-316-4369

AUG. 10
Pioneer Auto Museum 70th
Anniversary
Murdo, SD

AUG. 17
6th Annual Black Hills Super
6 Mountain Bike Race
3 hour race, 10 a.m.
6 hour race, 8 a.m.
Northern Hills Area CASA
Spearfish, SD

AUG. 18
Arlington Car Show
Arlington, SD
605-203-0728

AUG. 20-22
Dakotafest
Mitchell, SD

AUG. 22
61st Annual Steam
Threshing Jamboree
Prairie Village
Madison, SD

AUG. 28 - SEPT. 2
South Dakota State Fair
7 a.m. - 8 p.m.
State Fairgrounds
Huron, SD
www.SDStateFair.com

SEPT. 8
Homesteader Day
1-4 p.m.
Beaver Creek Nature Area
Valley Springs, SD

SEPT. 14-15
2024 Kuchen & Harvest
Festival
Delmont, SD

SEPT. 17
EV Expo
W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds
Sioux Falls, SD

OCT. 17
Co-op Month Celebration
Cherry Rock Farms
Brandon, SD

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