



Cooperative Connections



**Cybersecurity
and You**

Page 8

**Flood
Preparedness**

Page 12



The 128-megawatt Wild Springs Solar Project will be located near New Underwood, S.D.

Large Solar Coming to Western S.D.

Recently there was exciting news announced about power generation for electric co-ops in western South Dakota. On Feb. 18, Basin Electric Power Cooperative of Bismarck, N.D., and Geronimo Energy of Edina, Minn., announced a Purchase Power Agreement (PPA) for the Wild Springs Solar Project. Located near New Underwood, S.D., Wild Springs is a 128-megawatt clean solar energy project.

Once operational, Wild Springs will be the largest solar project in South Dakota. By using the Environmental Protection Agency's greenhouse gas equivalencies calculator, the project is estimated to offset dioxide emissions by 190,000 metric tons annually. The 1,000-acre project, which is located in West River Electric Association's service territory, also has a large economic benefit to the area. Current estimations for the project's economic benefits total over \$15 million throughout the first 25 years of operations, including positive impacts in new tax revenue, construction jobs, new full-time jobs and charitable funds through the project's Education Fund.

"There has been a lot of discussion about power being sold outside of South Dakota," says Vic Simmons, CEO of Rushmore Electric Power Cooperative in Rapid City, S.D.. "In this case, we are going to use it all. It makes up about half our load if you look at it when it's running. So, it doesn't escape. It doesn't go to other states."

Chuck Kroetch Passes

Chuck Kroetch's story began in 1934, on April 3, when he was born to Lydia "Pearl" Boyce and Frederick Kroetch on the family homestead, 17 miles north of Philip. He joined two brothers, Art and Ralph, and the family would later welcome Lottie and Fritz. He loved life in the country; caring for the animals and learning many skills working on projects that came with running the farm and improving the property. Before he was a teenager, he helped his dad and brothers build the large family house; observed the construction of the large WPA dam nearby, and with Ralph, spent a summer completing a "shovel and bucket" excavation for a very large cistern. Experiences like these, combined with gifted hands and a natural aptitude for "fixing" made Chuck a community resource when anything needed repairs. You knew he was ruminating on a solution when he would say, "I wonder what would happen if a fella did this..."



Chuck enjoyed a wonderful life and, if asked, he would have said that it was in large part because he had been smart enough to marry Catherine "Kay" Noack, his wife of 60-plus years. They grew up on farms only a few miles apart but didn't get together until his sister Lottie needed him to go on a double date and her choice for his date was her friend, Kay.

They married on June 14, 1959, and over the course of the next 11 years, they were blessed with multiple additions to the family: Jeffrey (who died in infancy), Jeanene, Sondra, Tricia, Toby, Susan, and Doug. Together while raising the little ones, Chuck and Kay spent 38 years on the farms. In 1997 they moved to Philip after building a new house.

He took pride in the accomplishments of his children. While he was sparse with direct praise, he was overheard to say he would "put his girls up against any boys in the neighborhood" when it came to farm equipment operating skills. He admired Toby's talent with woodworking, Tricia's engineering accomplishments, Sondra's enthusiasm for the great outdoors, Susan's compassionate nursing skills, Doug's small business success, and while he never clearly understood Jeanene's work, he thought it was great that the company paid her to travel the world. He and Kay visited Jeanene when she lived in Poland and in Mexico, where he paraglided over the beach. They also enjoyed exploring many US cities in the 18 years he was on the board of West Central Electric.

Chuck was a quiet man who enjoyed a good joke. When he thought something was very funny, you could catch him laughing with tears in his eyes. He was a favorite among small kids for his steady attention. They felt important and listened to with Chuck. Many of his adult friends said the same thing.

He had faith in God and tried to demonstrate that faith by the way he lived. A lifelong member of the Knights of Columbus, he was always ready to lend a helping hand. He was kind, fair, and a man of his word.

West Central Electric

Cooperative Connections

(USPS No. 018-988)

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Being a Good Neighbor



Jeff Birkeland, CEO

jeff.birkeland@wce.coop

As I write this article, it's snowing and 25 degrees outside. I hope by the time this magazine is mailed, the temperature has increased and the snow is a thing of the past! In this month's manager's report, I would like to give you a little insight into a project we have been working on with our neighbors to the east, Northwestern Energy.

In September of 2019, West Central was approached by Northwestern Energy about the possibility of using our transmission lines to deliver 40 megawatts of wind energy from our tie switch at Chamberlain to the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) substation at Fort Thompson. (Northwestern Energy provides electrical service to the Chamberlain area and other towns east of the Missouri River). WAPA will be doing maintenance

work on a substation in Northwestern Energy's area this spring, which will require taking the substation offline. This substation is connected to two wind farms and when the substation is shut down, the wind farms cannot produce electricity. This is where West Central comes into the equation. Our transmission line may allow the wind farms the ability to stay connected to the grid and produce electricity.

The request from Northwestern Energy wasn't out of the ordinary as we have an emergency tie between West Central and Northwestern that we use to supply each other electricity in an outage situation. It's been a valuable tool over the years for both entities. What is significant about this request is the amount of capacity they are asking us to deliver to the WAPA substation. 40 megawatts may not sound like a lot of energy, so to help put this in perspective, West Central's entire annual peak is roughly 35 megawatts. It's a significant consideration for us and it requires a detailed engineering study to determine if our system can handle it. Our transmission system in that area is more than 60 years old and although it's reliable and of sound quality construction, it has never carried that much load.

By the time you read this article, a decision will be made on this project that we've been working on since last fall. Once we review the results of the engineering study, we will know more. In being a good neighbor, we hope to be able to accommodate the request, but our main consideration is our reliability of service to our members.

**West Central's
entire annual
peak is roughly
35 megawatts.**



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.

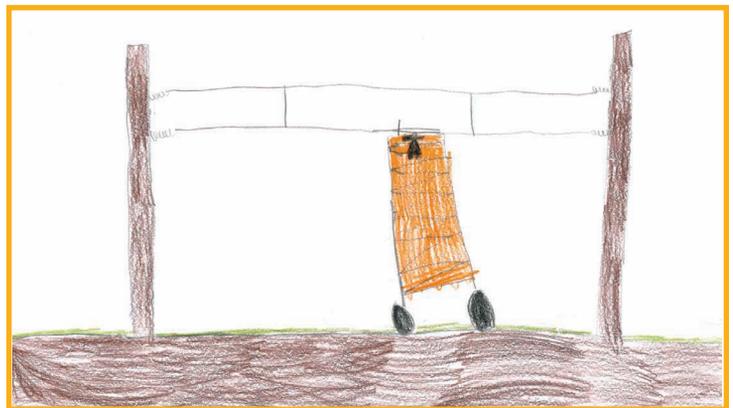
All electrical lines and equipment should be treated seriously and with caution.

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

Source: www.mrelectric.com



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	Honey Butter:
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.

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

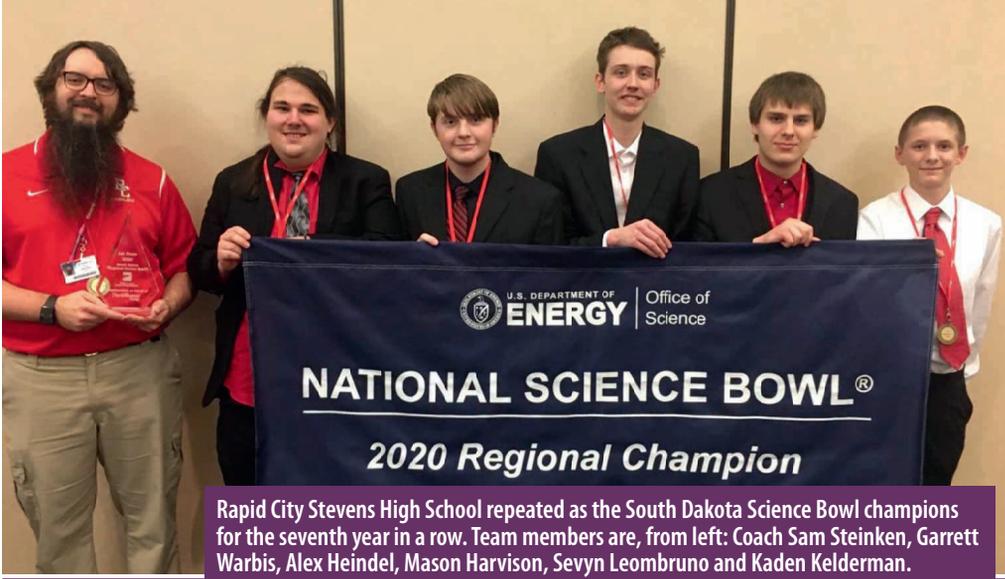
Power Purchase Agreement for 128 MW South Dakota Solar Project Geronimo Energy (Geronimo), a National Grid company, and Basin Electric Power Cooperative (Basin Electric) announced Feb. 18 the execution of a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) for the Wild Springs Solar Project (Wild Springs). Wild Springs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

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



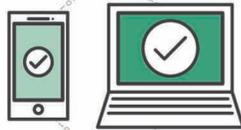
Defend Your Computer

- 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.

FOR SALE

West Central Electric has two service trucks that will be sold through Big Iron Online Auctions on March 25 at <https://www.bigiron.com/>.

Big Iron Auctions are no reserve and have no buyers' fees/premiums!

Regular maintenance performed and well taken care of. Both trucks will be **sold as-is** with service bins. **Diesel engine is out** in the 2008 F550 and it will be sold with the Altec AT37G articulating squirt boom lift.

For more truck information, please contact Seth Geigle at 669-8100.

For information about Big Iron Auctions and the exact listing information, contact Judge Jessop at 280-0127.



Unit 35

Unit 35 is a 2013 Ford F350 with 107,956 miles and is equipped with service bins.



Unit 67



Unit 67 is a 2008 Ford F550 with 118,629 miles, service bins and an Altec AT37G articulating squirt boom. The engine is out.



Wild Game Feed



Saturday March 28 6 p.m.

Reliance Fire Hall 101 S Main St.



West Central would like to correct a date that was published last month for the Reliance Volunteer Fire Department fundraiser.

The wild game feed fundraiser will take place on Saturday, March 28, starting at 6 p.m. It is come-and-go style, and there will be fish, deer, pheasant, etc., as well as salads and desserts. There will be hot dogs for those who like their meat a little less wild.

The fire hall is located at 101 S. Main St.

Digging? Call 8-1-1 First



Scott Kittelson

scott.kittelson@wce.coop

Even simple tasks like installing a new mailbox post can damage utility lines,

**South Dakota One-Call
Required Ticket Information
Dial 811**

Name of person doing the excavation _____
 Phone Number _____ Extension _____
 Caller Name _____
 Homeowner Mailing Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Alternate Contact _____ Phone _____
 Best Time to Contact _____
 Work to Begin Date _____ Time _____
 Duration of work via hours/days _____
 County _____
 City/Town _____
 Excavation Address _____
 Nearest Cross Street _____
 Type of Work _____
 Depth of Excavation _____
 Tunneling or Boring (Y/N) _____
 Excavating in Right of Way (Y/N) _____
 Explosives (Y/N) _____
 Work being done for _____
 Description of the Excavation Site (Marking Instructions) _____
 Examples:
 A. Excavation in rear of lot, mark from house to back lot line
 B. Mark 15' either side of white flagged route
 Remarks (include driving instructions on rural tickets w/o street address) _____
 Rural Tickets might require this information if a specific rural address is not provided by the caller:
 Latitude/Longitude Coordinates _____
 or
 Township _____ Range _____ Section/Quarter _____

www.sd811.com

Our mission is to provide safe, reliable service to our member-owners. There is a reason why spring is an optimal time of year to dream up and achieve your landscaping masterpiece or perhaps you're planning to build a new deck to enjoy those cool summer evenings. If any of your spring projects require digging – such as planting trees or shrubs or setting posts – remember to dial 811 first.

Underground utilities, such as buried gas, water, communications and electric lines can be a shovel thrust away from turning a fall project into a disaster.

Play it safe by dialing 811 to find out where utility lines run on your property. Your call will be routed to a local “one call” center. Tell the operator where you're planning to dig and what type of work you will be doing and affected local utilities will be notified.

In a few days, a locator will arrive to designate the approximate location of any underground lines, pipes and cables. These areas will be marked with flags or paint, so you'll know what's below. Then the safe digging can begin.

Although many homeowners tackling do-it-yourself digging projects are aware of “Call Before You Dig” services, the majority doesn't take advantage of the service. A national survey showed that only 50 percent of homeowners called to have their lines marked before starting digging projects, according to the Common Ground Alliance (CGA), a federally mandated group of underground utility and damage prevention industry professionals. CGA data also shows that an underground utility line is damaged every six minutes in the U.S. because someone decided to dig without first dialing 811.

Even simple tasks like installing a new mailbox post can damage utility lines, which can disrupt service to an entire neighborhood, harm diggers and potentially result in fines and repair costs.

Never assume the location or depth of underground utility lines. There's no need: the 811 service is free and can be called 24/7, this will prevent the inconvenience of having utilities interrupted and can help you avoid serious injury. For more information about local services, visit www.sdonecall.com/ homeowners. There is also a link located there that will take you to the South Dakota Homeowner Portal for processing your locate online.

Please remember that some underground lines on your property may not be owned by the utility and may not be located by them, such as lines that run from the meter to the house or lines between buildings. These types of lines can include water, electrical, communications, gas and etc. These are considered “privately owned” facilities, in which case the utility has no record of the buried lines and consequently, they are not registered with the South Dakota 811 Center. You may have to hire an electrician or other independent locating company to mark those lines.

Remember to call 811, so you won't need to call 911.

Guidelines FOR Homeowners, Ranchers and Farmers

Call 811
or
Go to www.SD811.com, then click on the Homeowner or Landowner Tab

Two Working Days Before You Dig.

It's FREE It's Smart It's The Law

Locates Accepted 24 Hours a Day
7 Days a Week

Uniform Color Code	
	White - Proposed Excavation
	Pink - Temporary Survey Markings
	Red - Electric Power Lines, Cables, Conduit and Lighting Cables
	Yellow - Gas, Oil, Steam, Petroleum or Gaseous Materials
	Orange - Communication, Cable TV, Alarm or Signal Lines, Cable or Conduit
	Blue - Water, Irrigation or Slurry Lines
	Purple - Reclaimed Water, Irrigation or Slurry Lines
	Green - Sewers and Drain Lines

Marking of Underground facilities may not be exact.

To expose the facility
CAREFULLY HAND DIG 18 inches either side of the markings.

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)

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

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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.



Photo Credit: Certainteed

Photo Credit: Rare Form Properties

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

Wild Game Feed Fundraiser, 6 p.m., Come-and-go style, There will be fish, deer, pheasant, etc. as well as salads and desserts, There will be hot dogs for those who like their meat a little less wild, The fire hall is located at 101 S. Main Street, Reliance, SD

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

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



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

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

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

May 17

Norway Independence Celebration, Parade at 6 p.m., Meal at 7 p.m., Program at 8 p.m., Vivian, SD, 605-295-2501

May 29-30

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

June 5-7

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

June 12-14

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

June 16-21

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

June 25-27

31st Annual Red Power Round Up, Fairgrounds, Huron, SD, 605-460-0197

July 14

Rock Nobles Cattlemen 2020 Summer Beef Tour, Nobles County Fairgrounds, Worthington, MN, 507-967-2380

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.