


South Dakota Electric

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

Cooperative Connections

MAY 2015 VOL. 67 NO. 5



CELEBRATING EMTs

Pg 8

Discover there's more to electricity than flipping a switch.



Electricity doesn't just happen. Take a behind-the-scenes tour to learn what it takes to bring power to your home.

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South Dakota Electric Cooperative Connections

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Editorial

May Is National Electrical Safety Month



Ed Anderson
General Manager, South Dakota
Rural Electric Association

It's May – and electric cooperatives throughout the country are celebrating National Electrical Safety Month. While safety for our members is top priority year-round, National Electrical Safety Month is a time to acknowledge the importance of safety excellence.

This year, we're focusing on electrical safety in the home. Electricity is the cause of more than 140,000 fires each year, resulting in more than 500 deaths, 4,000 injuries and 1.6 billion in property damage, according to Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI).

There are many measures you can take to ensure the safety of your loved ones. Use these helpful tips from ESFI to safeguard your home.

In the kitchen

- Vacuum refrigerator coils every three months to eliminate dirt buildup that can reduce efficiency and create fire hazards.
- Ensure all countertop appliances are located away from the sink.
- All appliance cords should be placed away from hot surfaces. Pay particular attention to cords around toasters, ovens and ranges. Cords can be damaged by excess heat.
- The top and the area above the cooking range should be free of combustibles, such as potholders and plastic utensils. Storing these items on or near the range may result in fires or burns.

Light the way to safety

- The wattage of the bulbs you use in your home should match the wattage indicated on the light fixture. Overheated fixtures can lead to a fire.
- Check lamp cords to make sure they are in good condition – not damaged or cracked. Do not attempt to repair damaged cords yourself. Take any item with a damaged power cord to an authorized repair center.
- Extension cords should not be used to provide power on a long-term or permanent basis. Have additional receptacles installed by a professional to provide power where needed.

Be prepared

- Nearly two-thirds of fire deaths result from fires in homes without working smoke alarms. Smoke alarms should be located on every level of your home, inside each bedroom and outside each sleeping area.
- Test smoke alarms every month. Batteries should be replaced at least once a year – or sooner if indicated in the manufacturers' instructions. All smoke alarms should be replaced at least every 10 years.
- Talk to your family about an emergency plan in the event of a fire in your home. If you have small children, include them in planning an emergency escape route – they are more likely to remember the plan if they're involved in creating it.

Electrical safety awareness and education can save lives. For more tips and information about electrical safety, visit www.esfi.org.

Gardening Health and Safety Tips

Gardening can be a great way to enjoy the outdoors, get physical activity, beautify the community and grow nutritious fruits and vegetables. If you are a beginner or expert gardener, health and safety should always be a priority.

Below are some tips to help keep you safe and healthy so that you can enjoy the beauty and bounty gardening can bring.

Dress to protect.

Gear up to protect yourself from lawn and garden pests, harmful chemicals, sharp or motorized equipment, insects and harmful rays of too much sun.

- Wear safety goggles, sturdy shoes and long pants to prevent injury when using power tools and equipment.
- Protect your hearing when using machinery. If you have to raise your voice to talk to someone who is an arm's length away, the noise can be potentially harmful to your hearing.
- Wear gloves to lower the risk for skin irritations, cuts and certain contaminants.
- Use insect repellent containing DEET. Wear long-sleeved shirts and pants tucked in your socks. You may also want to wear high rubber boots since ticks are usually located close to the ground.
- Lower your risk for sunburn and skin cancer. Wear long sleeves, wide-brimmed hats, sun shades and sunscreen with sun protective factor (SPF) 15 or higher.

Put safety first.

Powered and unpowered tools and equipment can cause serious injury. Limit distractions, use chemicals and equipment properly and be aware of hazards to lower your risk for injury.

- Follow instructions and warning labels on chemicals and lawn and garden equipment.
- Make sure equipment is working properly.
- Sharpen tools carefully.

- Keep harmful chemicals, tools and equipment out of children's reach.

Know your limits in the heat.

Even being out for short periods of time in high temperatures can cause serious health problems. Monitor your activities and time in the sun to lower your risk for heat-related illness.

- If you're outside in hot weather for most of the day, you'll need to make an effort to drink more fluids.
- Avoid drinking liquids that contain alcohol or large amounts of sugar, especially in the heat.
- Take breaks often. Try to rest in shaded areas so that your body's thermostat will have a chance to recover. Stop working if you experience breathlessness or muscle soreness.
- Pay attention to signs of heat-related illness, including extremely high body temperature, headache, rapid pulse, dizziness, nausea, confusion or unconsciousness.

Enjoy the benefits of physical activity.

Gardening is an excellent way to get physical activity. Active people are less likely than inactive people to be obese or have high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis, heart disease, stroke, depression, colon cancer and premature death.

- Be active for at least 2½ hours a week. Include activities that raise your breathing and heart rates and that strengthen your muscles. Help kids and teens be active for at least 1 hour a day.
- If you have been inactive, start out with just a few minutes of physical activity each day. Gradually build up time and intensity.
- Vary your gardening activities to keep your interest and to broaden the range of benefits.

Source: arifleet.com

ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIP



Power strips are great – but relying on them too much can be a problem! You may need to install more outlets in your home. Call a qualified electrician for help.

Source: Electrical Safety Foundation International

Kids' Corner Safety Poster



"Don't stick your finger in a plug-in."

**Kate Kramme,
9 years old**

Kate is the daughter of Shane and Dawn Kramme, Fort Pierre, S.D. They are members of West Central Electric Cooperative, Murdo, 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.

Comforting Casseroles



Chicken Biscuit Bake

1/4 cup melted butter 1-1/2 cups milk
3 cups cooked, shredded chicken 2 cups Bisquick
1-1/2 cups mixed vegetables 1 can cream of chicken soup
Salt and pepper to taste 1-1/2 cups chicken broth

In a 9x13-inch pan, layer butter, chicken and vegetables. Combine milk and Bisquick (a few lumps are OK). Pour over chicken/vegetables. Do not mix. Combine cream of chicken soup with chicken broth. Pour over Bisquick layer. Do not mix. Bake at 350°F. for 40 to 45 minutes until brown and bubbly. Let rest 5 minutes before serving.

Mary Truman, Kimball

Potato Beef Casserole

3 lbs. potatoes, peeled and sliced 1/4-inch thick 1 tsp. salt
1 lb. lean ground beef 1/4 tsp. black pepper
1/2 cup chopped onion 2 cups milk
4 T. butter 2 cups grated Cheddar cheese
1/4 cup flour 1/2 cup dry bread crumbs

Cook potatoes with a pinch of salt in water until tender; drain. Arrange in a 6x9x2-inch casserole dish. Brown beef and onion; drain. Melt butter in a medium pan; whisk in flour to make a roux. Cook until mixture bubbles, whisking constantly until light brown in color. Gradually add milk while continuing to whisk. When mixture thickens, add salt and pepper. Stir in cheese and beef. Pour beef mixture over potatoes. Bake at 350°F. for 20 minutes until heated and bubbly. Sprinkle bread crumbs on top and bake an additional 5 minutes.

Lois Hanson, Howard

Cowboy Baked Beans

2 (15. oz.) cans pork and beans 2 T. Worcestershire sauce
1/2 cup chopped onion 2 T. brown sugar
1/2 cup shredded sharp cheese 1 tsp. chili powder
2 T. molasses 4 slices bacon, fried and crumbled

Mix together all ingredients except bacon. Place in a 2-quart baking dish and top with bacon. Microwave about 10 to 12 minutes on High or bake at 325°F. for about 60 to 75 minutes.

Grace Loerzel, Hermosa

Double Cheese Spinach-Potato Pie

1 (4.2 oz) carton Hungry Jack Cheesy Hashbrown Potatoes 1/2 tsp. ground black pepper
3/4 cup Hungry Jack Mashed Potato Flakes 1/4 tsp. salt
3/4 cup milk 16 oz. frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed dry
2 eggs 2 T. vegetable or olive oil
1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Refresh hashbrown potatoes according to package directions. After 12 minutes, drain and squeeze out any excess liquid from carton. Heat oven to 425°F. Coat 9-inch pie dish with cooking spray. While hashbrowns are standing, combine potato flakes, milk, eggs, Parmesan, pepper and salt in large bowl. Mix in spinach. Add oil to refreshed hashbrowns in carton and mix well. Spread 3/4 of hashbrowns firmly onto bottom and sides of prepared pie dish. Spoon spinach mixture lightly into dish. Top evenly with remaining hashbrowns, fluffing hashbrowns with fork. Bake until hashbrowns are well-browned and center is set, 30 to 35 minutes. Let stand 10 minutes before slicing into wedges. Note: To thaw spinach, microwave in large bowl on High for 4 to 5 minutes. Place in colander and press firmly with spoon or spatula to drain liquid. Makes 6 servings.

To make a casserole pie, double ingredients and prepare in a 9x13-inch baking dish. Allow additional time to thaw spinach. Reserve 1/2 carton of hashbrowns for topping; press remaining 1-1/2 cartons of hashbrowns on bottom and halfway up sides of baking dish. Prepare spinach filling as directed in recipe. Bake at 400°F for 40 to 45 minutes. Makes 12 servings.

Nutritional information per serving: 260 calories; 11 g fat (3 g saturated fat); 11 g protein; 28 g carbohydrate; 3 g fiber; 70 mg cholesterol; 710 mg sodium.

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Blend of the Bayou Seafood Casserole

4 oz. cream cheese 1 can water
1/4 cup plus 1 T. butter, divided 1-1/2 cups minute rice, uncooked
1/2 onion, chopped 1 (6.5 oz.) can crab meat, drained and rinsed
2 ribs celery, diced 1 (6.5 oz.) can shrimp, drained and rinsed
1/2 red or yellow pepper, diced 2 tsp. lemon juice
1 large clove garlic 1/4 tsp. Tabasco sauce
1 small can mushrooms, drained
1 can cream of mushroom soup

Heat cream cheese and 1/4 cup butter until melted. Saute onions, celery, pepper and garlic in 1 T. butter. Combine all ingredients. Pour into a 9x13-inch pan or 2-quart casserole. Bake at 350°F. for 45 minutes. Fresh shrimp or crabmeat can be added to enhance the seafood flavor. Also, you may opt to add cheese on top.

Sharon Steckley, Geddes

Please send your favorite dairy, dessert and salad 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 2015. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

Efficient, Strong Home Construction Methods



Jim Dulley

www.dulley.com

Dear Jim: We are empty nesters and have decided to build our dream home. What are some of the most efficient home construction methods? Severe weather is a concern in our town, so options that offer strength and ruggedness would be best. — Ian P.

Dear Ian: There are several relatively new home construction methods that are much stronger and efficient than typical insulated, wood framing built to code. Some of these methods use more than double the insulation value of typical framed walls and can even withstand hurricane- and tornado-force winds.

If you decide on a wood-framed house, use staggered, double-stud walls on 24-inch centers. This construction method not only provides double the insulation value, but by staggering the wall studs, it minimizes thermal bridges (direct non-insulated heat flow paths from indoors to outdoors through the wood studs).

For a wood-framed home, install rigid foam wall sheathing on the exterior so that all of the lumber's thermal mass is inside of the insulation envelope. This can be covered with any type of exterior finish, such as siding, brick or stucco. Use a relatively square or circular shape to minimize the exterior wall and roof area. With similar insulation levels, a wall that is twice as big as another will lose about twice as much heat. Generally, square- and circular-shaped homes resist the forces of storm winds best. This is why animals typically build round nests and dens, which can withstand major storms.

The "stay-in-place" home construction method uses concrete and rigid foam insulation; this method is efficient and strengthens the home. The insulation forms, which hold the wet concrete, are not removed and they provide the insulation and substrate surface for installing the interior and exterior wall coverings. Wall insulation values are as high as R-40 when this method is used.

A similar method uses hollow foam blocks made to fit your home's plans. The blocks are designed so there is an open cavity throughout the inside. Concrete is pumped into the openings at the top of the walls and flows throughout the blocks, which

creates a strong, efficient structure.

SIP (structural insulated panel) systems are a subset of standard foam insulated panels, which have a thick foam core sandwiched between two rigid sheets of various materials. The standard panels are often used for the exterior walls to enclose post and beam-framed and steel-framed homes for some of the highest insulation levels possible.

The rigid sheets in SIP panels are unique because they are made of OSB (oriented strand board), which creates a strong, highly insulated panel. The panel is self-supporting and does not require additional basic wall framing. Once the panels are attached to the foundation and are connected, the SIP panels support themselves, the floors, ceiling and roof.

Steel-framed construction is an excellent construction method if strength is the goal. Steel is strong. It does not burn or change shape over time as lumber does and each steel piece is nearly identical. Also, much of the steel used today in home construction is recycled from scrap materials.

From an efficiency standpoint, steel is superior to most other framing materials. Although steel is not a good insulator, its strength allows for thinner studs and wider spacing. This leaves much more room for additional insulation inside the walls and fewer thermal bridges.

Efficient straw bale homes date back more than a century in the United States. When placed on its side, each three-string bale is about 23 inches wide. When packed to a normal density, it produces an insulation value greater than R-50. The bales are stacked and bolted to a concrete foundation with vertical threaded rods. Properly compressed straw bales are fire resistant when the exterior is covered with materials such as concrete or stucco. Soft plaster and gypsum interior finishes are attractive and durable. The plaster has a comfortable feel and is easy to work with. When completed, other than thick openings at windows and doors, they look like any conventional framed house.

Although they may look unusual, a geodesic dome design makes for an efficient and strong home. The most efficient models are constructed with thick foam panels. Concrete is sprayed over the exterior, completely covering the panels and filling the gaps between panels for strength. Another plus — the spherical exterior allows high storm winds to flow smoothly over it without damage.

Have a question for Jim? Send inquiries to: James Dulley, *Cooperative Connections*, 6906 Royalgreen Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45244 or visit www.dulley.com.

Grandparent Scam Reappears

South Dakota Attorney General Marty Jackley is telling seniors to be leery of telephone calls from someone claiming to be their grandchild or other family member and requests money for a critical situation. The Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division is again seeing an increase number of complaints from seniors who have been receiving these types of calls from a purported grandchild in need of money.

In this scam, the caller poses as a grandchild and uses a plea for help and a sense of urgency when asking for a wire transfer. If the scam works, the victim will wire money and by the time the senior realizes what happened, the money is long gone and most likely not recoverable. In addition, these scam artists are avoiding national chain stores for wire transfers. These chains are asking the right questions to help avoid these scams from occurring. The scammers are directing seniors to other loan operations that may not be familiar to these types of scams.

Tips to avoid becoming a victim:

- Ask several personal questions including something that only a grandchild would be able to answer like a nickname, name of a family pet or special family tradition. This will help determine if this is a fraud or not.
- Call another family member or the grandchild directly with a number that is familiar to you.
- Do not fill in the blanks for the caller. If the caller says, "This is your granddaughter," ask "which one?" or "where are you calling from?" The caller is looking for answers that will assist them in the scam.
- Be cautious if the caller asks you to not tell anyone else, like the parents, because he or she will get in trouble. It is all part of the scam.

If you believe the call is fraudulent, then contact your local law enforcement agency. Those who have already sent money should contact the Consumer Protection Division at 1-800-300-1986 or by email at consum-erhelp@state.sd.us.

More Than \$486,000 Raised to Fight Childhood Cancer

The eighth annual **Brave the Shave**, an event started by Basin Electric Power Cooperative, unites Bismarck-Mandan, N.D., – and the communities where Basin Electric has facilities – in quest to help conquer kids' cancer by raising money for the St. Baldrick's Foundation.

The St. Baldrick's Foundation is a volunteer-driven charity dedicated to raising money for life-saving childhood cancer research and funds more in childhood cancer grants than any organization except for the U.S. government. Since the Foundation's first grants as an independent charity in 2005, St. Baldrick's has funded more than \$131 million to support the most brilliant childhood cancer research experts in the world.

"It's very moving to see the whole community rally around a common goal of combating children's cancer," says Mike Eggl, Basin Electric senior vice president of communications and administration. "The support from area organizations and individuals has been remarkable."

The 2015 events, held in March in Bismarck-Mandan and Beulah, N.D.; Gillette and Wheatland, Wyo.; and Brookings, S.D., brought nearly \$485,000. The 2014 campaign brought in more than \$400,000.

Since Basin Electric brought the "Brave the Shave campaign" to the region in 2008, more than 1,500 volunteers have shaved their heads and raised more than \$1.6 million to help fund childhood cancer research and fellowships.

"Every year we set the bar higher and we've been fortunate to beat the previous year's total," Eggl says. "We're hoping to do it again this year. Regardless of the final total, we feel great about this year's campaign and all the good that came out of it."

For more information, go to www.bravetheshave.coop and www.stbaldricks.org/campaigns/bravetheshave



Aeryn DeKrey, right, a 2015 Brave the Shave honoree, helps her grandfather, Tom DeKrey, get his head shaved during the Brave the Shave event March 13 in Bismarck.

SAFETY FIRST!

May is National Electrical Safety Month

EMS Strong

Emergency Responders are the Front Lines

IN A REGION WHERE THE POPULATION IS SPREAD OUT among small towns and some of the more remote areas of the state, chances are the emergency responders who answer your call for help are part of a volunteer crew.

In fact, a July 2014 survey prepared by the Government Research Bureau of the W.O. Farber Center for Civic Leadership at the University of South Dakota in Vermillion, found that many of the agencies surveyed for an Ambulance Provider Survey reported having higher numbers of volunteer personnel than either full-time or part-time staff. (Typically, full-time personnel are found at agencies in or around the state's largest communities such as Sioux Falls, Rapid City and Aberdeen.)

Nationally, the National Emergency Medical Services Week observation is observed in May each year. In 2015, it is May 17-23 with the theme

“EMS Strong.”

National Emergency Medical Services Week brings together local communities and medical personnel to publicize safety and honor the dedication of those who provide the day-to-day lifesaving services of medicine's “front line.” For additional information, contact emsweek@acep.org.

The first EMS Week was declared by President Gerald Ford in November 1974. It continued for four more years and was reinstituted by the American College of Emergency Physicians in 1982. It has been an annual event since 1982 and is currently observed in May.

“Not everyone needs EMT services, but when they do, it's nice to have it,” said Stephanie Horst, Director of Communications and Marketing at FEM Electric Association in Ipswich, S.D. Horst has been a volunteer Emergency Medical Technician

**By Brenda
Kleinjan**



(EMT) with the Ipswich Ambulance Service just west of Aberdeen since 2010.

“There was a need in the community,” Horst said of why she decided to undergo the training and testing to become an EMT. “It’s hard to pass the test, but that service is so needed in our rural communities. There are communities in South Dakota that are in dire need for people to step up and become EMTs.”

Horst’s observation about the need for responders was noted in a state 2010 EMS Workforce Summit held in South Dakota. Observations made at the summit included that rural areas were being under served and there was a growing need for more people to start volunteering for rural and smaller town ambulance services.

“At first I was worried if I could handle it, but with the training, the emotions get set aside. You’re there to help the person you’re responding to,” said Horst.

While the Ipswich Ambulance Service has additional people working to become EMTs, it currently has five EMTs to cover calls in the community and area. EMTs are scheduled to cover 12-hour on-call shifts.

The Ipswich service is not alone in needing more EMTs. According to the USD survey, 15 agencies reported having 10 or fewer active personnel on their rosters. Thirty-two reported having 11-20 personnel while 25 had more than 21 people.

Horst estimated she will be on call 10 shifts a month, a number that has decreased as she balances demands of her full-time day job with the co-op.

“In the last few months, I haven’t been able to be on call as much as I’d like,” said Horst.

Horst said 24 hours of continuing education are needed annually to cover the state minimum requirements; however to maintain the national certification



There are communities in South Dakota that are in dire need for people to step up and become EMTs.

patient and then transport the patient to a local hospital.

As Horst and Holien (whose husband, Ryan, also works at FEM Electric and is a volunteer firefighter) competed, the co-op background helped play a role.

“It happened to be that the scenario was an electrical contact,” Horst said. Countless hours of safety training at work came in handy.

“It brings in the whole safety thing with our job. When you’re responding to a call, being safe is a priority. At the co-op, it’s something that’s drilled into us, too,” said Horst.

Horst’s husband is also a

firefighter in Ipswich.

For firefighters, based on 2014 certification, there are 8,065 volunteer firefighters statewide and 430 paid firefighters. In 2013, volunteer fire departments account for the majority of the fire departments in the state – 326 – while career paid departments account for five and six departments are comprised of a combination of paid employees and volunteers.

Statewide, the South Dakota Office of Emergency Medical Services certifies 123 in-state ground ambulance services and five in-state air ambulance services.

To find out more about getting involved, contact your local fire department or ambulance service.

that she and others on the Ipswich crew have requires 72 hours of training annually. That training, on top of the on-call shifts, can mean a significant investment in time to serving one’s community.

But, the work can be rewarding.

“It’s a way to give back. There’s a need,” said Horst.

In 2011, Horst and fellow ambulance crew member Kelsey Holien teamed up to compete in the Trauma Wars competition at the South Dakota EMT conference.

The duo went into a room not knowing the scenario they would face and were to respond to the scene, treat the



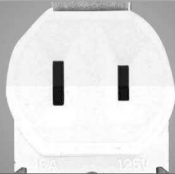
Outlets: The Ins and Outs

Type

Look

Function

Two-Pronged Receptacle



Provides electricity to plugged in appliance.

Grounded Receptacle



Third prong (ground) reduces the risk of electric shock and protects equipment from electrical damage.

Tamper-Resistant Receptacle (TRR)



A built-in shutter system prevents objects from being inserted, except when simultaneous, equal pressure to both slots is provided by a plug.

Arc Fault Circuit Interrupter (AFCI) Receptacle



Reduces the risk of fire, by interrupting power when an arc fault occurs anywhere in the circuit, including within items plugged into it.

Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) Receptacle



Prevents shock by quickly shutting off power to the circuit if the electricity flowing into the circuit differs from that returning, indicating a leakage current.

Surge Suppression Receptacle



Protects sensitive electronic equipment from transient surges.

USB Receptacle



Provides a permanent Universal Serial Bus (USB) connection source.



Often used interchangeably, a “receptacle” is the “female” counterpart to a plug that provides access to electricity while an “outlet” can be any access point to wiring, such as light fixtures or receptacles.

Interesting Fact	Recommended Installation Locations	Average Cost Per Unit
Installed prior to 1962.	None.	Upgrade recommended.
Grounding-type receptacles were first required for all 15- and 20-ampere receptacle outlets in the 1971 edition of the National Electrical Code® (NEC).	Mandated by NEC in all areas unless otherwise specified.	\$0.70
Outlet covers do not provide adequate protection. 100% of children ages 2 to 4 were able to remove one brand of plastic outlet covers from the sockets in less than ten seconds.	Required by the 2008 NEC. Upgrading rooms and areas where children could have access to the outlets is recommended.	\$1.20
The CPSC estimates more than 50% of electrical fires that occur every year could be prevented by AFCIs.	Provides protection from arc faults beyond branch circuit wiring extending to appliances and cords using the receptacle.	\$25
GFCIs shut off electric power in the event of a ground fault within as little as 1/40 of a second.	Installed in areas where water and electricity are in close proximity, such as bathrooms, garages, kitchens, laundry areas, and any receptacles located outdoors.	\$12
National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA) estimates that 60-80% of surges are created within the building, such as when large appliances, like air conditioners, turn on and off.	Not required by the NEC, though often installed in rooms containing costly devices such as computers, TVs or refrigerators.	\$20
Over 10 billion electrical devices in use today charge via a USB cable.	Offers a permanent adaption for devices requiring a USB terminal for power or charging as needed for convenience. Not required by the NEC.	\$20



Out with the old: All outlet installation should be performed by a qualified electrician.



Some receptacles may combine more than one technology such as AFCI+TRR, GFCI+TRR, or USB+GFCI.

Learning, Growing in 1,000 Hours

By
Brenda Kleinjan

EXPERIENCE IS OFTEN REFERRED TO AS THE BEST teacher and for line workers embarking on their careers, getting that valuable experience will often involve a stint as a temporary 1,000-hour employee.

The 1,000-hour employee helps cooperatives bridge the construction season gap. And, at the same time, newly-minted line workers gain valuable on-the-job experience, building upon their line school training with real-world experience.

“We hire them to assist us. We like to hire them because they help us bridge that construction season gap so we can continue with our normal day-to-day activities that goes on 365-days a year,” said Brian Bultje, Operations Manager at Central Electric Cooperative in Mitchell, S.D.

“Typically our busy time is the first week of April to the first of December. Those are our busiest and

most demanding times,” said Bultje, noting that having additional help is beneficial.

At Central, the 1,000-hour workers are considered utility workers. They assist with the ground work and working in non-energized situations

“They’re here to learn – and help,” said Bultje. During their time at the co-op, they learn to run equipment.

“Later on in their training they may go up in the bucket to work on de-energized lines,” said Bultje. “They are honing their craft and learning the basics on the job.”

Bultje said during the course of their 1,000 hours, the temporary utility workers will help with a bit of everything at the co-op; they’ll go on out-ages with the crews, do elbowing for underground installations, install transformers and perform line





Left: 1,000 hour employee Nick Kramer, right assists a Codington-Clark Electric Cooperative crew with framing a pole for a pole change out south of Watertown in May 2013. **Opposite Page:** Kramer works on attaching a crossarm as part of the ground work he did during his 1,000 hour experience at Codington-Clark.

maintenance.

“They do everything from setting a pole to burying underground and pulling underground,” said Bultje. “We ask them to do just about anything and everything our guys are doing once we get comfortable with them – except energized work.”

And the temporary workers observe how crews operate and how energized work is done.

“These hours go towards their apprenticeship hours worked,” said Bultje. A line worker needs 8,000 hours of work as an apprentice along with taking and passing a series of tests over a four-year period to become a journey line worker.

An added benefit to the temporary 1,000-hour gig is that it provides a trial-run for both the worker and the co-op.

“If we have openings, they are one of the first ones we take a look at. If they’re good at their job and fit in with the crew they’ll have the first shot at it,” said Bultje.

“It’s a good way to get in the door. If you’re good at one cooperative and down the road you apply someplace else, the co-ops do talk,” said Bultje.

Central and other cooperatives often hire past 1,000-hour workers when full-time positions become available. And, with a number of retirements among the line crew ranks in the future, more posi-

tions will be becoming available.

“There are going to be a lot of retirees in the next five to seven years,” said Bultje. “The thousand hours gives you valuable experience and exposure to the co-op world.”

This spring several electric cooperatives in South Dakota were looking to fill more than two-dozen 1,000-hour positions.

Lake Region Electric Association in Webster, S.D., was among them.

The thousand hours gives you valuable experience and exposure to the co-op world.

“We’ve been on an extensive retirement mode up here, so that 1,000-hour employee is important in our process,” said LREA Manager Tim McIntyre.

“We’ve had some of our thousand-hour employees turn into full-time employees. You can kind of read what these guys are all about in that summer time frame,” noted McIntyre.

Like Bultje, McIntyre said the 1,000-hour position allows the co-op – and the worker – to size one another up.

“If they turn out to be exceptional employees, when we have an opening we keep that in mind,” McIntyre said.

“It’s a good training process for them; it’s how they learn,” said McIntyre. “And we can tell if they’re worth their salt.”

Trio of Co-op Bills Pass Legislature

THE 2015 SOUTH DAKOTA LEGISLATIVE SESSION found South Dakota's electric cooperatives actively engaged in three main bills and monitored the progress of dozens of others.

And, when the South Dakota Legislature gavelled out of its 39th and final day of the 90th Legislation Session on March 30, bills supported by the electric cooperatives on stray voltage, an issue with how a tax is calculated and a third bill dealing with production credits for wind energy, had all successfully concluded their legislative journey. But, it was a journey with a few bumps along the path – including a gubernatorial veto that was eventually overridden by the Legislature.

The two key pieces of SDREA-supported legislation made it through the legislative process with only six dissenting votes. The Stray Voltage Bill, Senate Bill 131, had only “aye” votes throughout its journey through both chambers. Senate Bill 136,

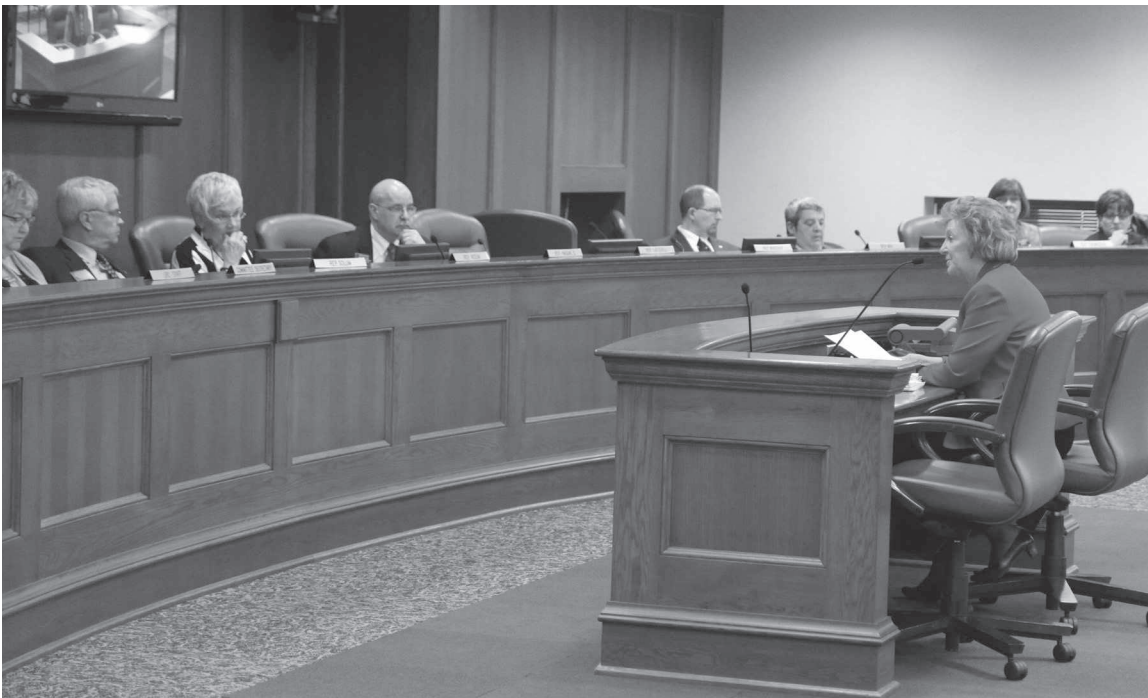


Above: Sen. Scott Parsley, D-District 8, Madison, confers with his seatmate Sen. Bernie Hunhoff, D-District 18, Yankton, at the start of a Senate session in Pierre. Parsley is the long-time Assistant General Manager of Member Services For East River Electric Power Cooperative in Madison, S.D.

what electric cooperatives referred to as the “Tax on Tax Bill” had only two nay votes throughout.

**By Brenda
Kleinjan**





Left: SDREA Lead Lobbyist and Pierre attorney Darla Rogers testifies in front of the House of Representatives Taxation Committee about SB 136.

Inset: Sen. Larry Tidemann, R-District 7, Brookings, testifies in favor of SB131 in front of the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee. Tidemann was one of 37 legislators who signed on as a sponsor of the bill.

Another key piece of legislation watched by co-ops was SB180, which dealt with production tax for wind energy facilities. It, too, had overwhelming support, making its journey through the legislative process with only seven nay votes (and 149 yeas votes.)

“It is hard to imagine how SDREA’s 2015 legislative session could have been more successful. Our stray voltage bill (SB 131) passed the session without a dissenting vote, despite opposition from the dairy producers,” said Darla Rogers, the lead lobbyist for South Dakota’s electric cooperatives and the attorney for the South Dakota Rural Electric Association.

“We were also successful in passing our “tax on a tax” bill (SB 136), over the objections of the

Department of Revenue,” said Rogers.

SB136 had made it through the full House and Senate with only one dissenting vote on the floor (it garnered only one dissenting vote in committee)

when it was delivered to the Governor for signature. The governor vetoed the bill which sent it back to both chambers to consider on March 30.

The Senate voted to override the veto 31-1 and the House also voted to override with a 63-1 vote.

To learn more about these bills and the fate of more than 400 other bills considered by the South Dakota Legislature this

year, go to http://legis.sd.gov/Legislative_Session/Bills/default.aspx?Session=2015.



Left: Rep. Tom Brunner, R-District 29, Nisland, pictured at the center of the photo, reviews material prior to the start of business in the South Dakota House of Representatives. Brunner farms near Nisland and has been a director for Butte Electric Cooperative in Newell since 1991. He has represented Butte Electric on the South Dakota Rural Electric Association board of directors since 1994.

Opposite Page: Ed Anderson, General Manager for the South Dakota Rural Electric Association in Pierre, testifies in front of the House of Representatives Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee about SB131.

Regional Dateline

April 23-25

Black Hills Fiber Arts Fair
Rapid City, SD, 605-791-0711
www.blackhillsfiberartsfair.org

April 23-26

Shrine Circus, Sioux Falls, SD
605-336-1117

April 25

RiverRat Marathon and
Bike Ride, Yankton, SD
www.riverratmarathon.com

April 27-29

Shrine Circus, Mitchell, SD
605-336-1117

May 1

Special Olympics Spring
Games Watertown, SD
605-237-3933

May 2

S.D. Coin & Stamp Club Show
Watertown, SD, 605-886-4609

May 2

Spring Market and Boats
Jets and Pets, Rapid City, SD
605-716-7979

May 1-3

Shrine Circus, Rapid City, SD
605-342-3402

May 6-10

Black Hills Film Festival
Hill City, SD, 605-574-9454
www.blackhillsfilmfestival.org

May 9-10, 16-17, 24-25

NE Area Pari Mutual
Horse Racing
Aberdeen, SD, 605-715-9580



PHOTO COURTESY OF KAY BAER

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.

Events of Special Note

May 25

Annual Quilt Show
Buffalo, SD, 605-373-3314

June 5-7

Black Hills Quilt Show & Sale
Rapid City, SD, bhquilters.org

June 6-7

SDQG Quilt Show
Aberdeen, SD, 605-228-3545

May 20-23

Shakespeare Garden
Planting Festival
Wessington Springs, SD
605-539-1529

May 22

Williams & Ree Comedy
Show, Watertown, SD
1-800-658-4717

May 23-24

Black Hills Music Festival
Spearfish, SD, 605-645-1880
www.bhmusicfest.com

May 23-24

SDRA Foothills Rodeo
Wessington Springs, SD
605-770-4370

May 31

Buffalo Ridge Chorale Spring
Concert with guest musicians
"Friends of Jazz"
Christ Lutheran Church
Hendricks, MN, 605-479-3438

May 31

Shrine Circus, Milbank, SD
605-225-4841

June 1

Shrine Circus, Watertown, SD
605-225-4841

June 3-4

Shrine Circus, Pierre, SD
605-225-4841

June 5

Shrine Circus, Mobridge, SD
605-225-4841

June 5-6

The Original SD BBQ
Championships
Huron, SD, 605-353-7340
www.sdbbqchampionships.com

June 5-7

Wheel Jam, Huron, SD
605-353-7340
www.wheeljam.com

June 6

Sisseton Car & Motorcycle
Show & Swap Meet
Sisseton, SD, 605-698-3401

June 6-7

Spring Volksmarch
Crazy Horse, SD
605-673-4681

June 7

Miss Prairie Village & Prairie
Princess Pageant
Madison, SD, 605-256-3644

June 7

Mickelson Trail Marathon
Deadwood, SD, 605-584-3896
www.gfp.sd.gov

June 7-13

RASDAK - Ride Across
South Dakota Bike Tour
Spearfish, SD, rasdak.com

June 12

Northern Bull Riding Tour
Madison, SD, 605-256-3844