

# South Dakota Electric

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

## Cooperative Connections

NOVEMBER 2017 VOL. 69 NO. 11



# Art Emerging

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Lemmon Artist Reshapes Metal into Art





## Be the light.

The world we share provides abundant vitality — time with those we love and beautiful landscapes to explore. It's why we use our natural resources to create electricity in the cleanest, safest manner possible. To us, it's more than delivering light, it's being a light for our members and our communities by ensuring our environment remains vibrant for all future generations.



**BASIN ELECTRIC  
POWER COOPERATIVE**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Your energy starts here.

[basinelectric.com/bethelight](http://basinelectric.com/bethelight)



Produced by the following electric cooperatives in South Dakota and western Minnesota:

Black Hills Electric, Custer, S.D.  
Bon Homme Yankton Electric, Tabor, S.D.  
Butte Electric, Newell, S.D.  
Cam Wal Electric, Selby, S.D.  
Central Electric, Mitchell, S.D.  
Charles Mix Electric, Lake Andes, S.D.  
Cherry-Todd Electric, Mission, S.D.  
Clay-Union Electric, Vermillion, S.D.  
Codington-Clark Electric, Watertown, S.D.  
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Traverse Electric, Wheaton, Minn.  
Union County Electric, Elk Point, S.D.  
West Central Electric, Murdo, S.D.  
West River Electric, Wall, S.D.  
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# Companies That Care

## Ownership of the Company Matters



**Ed Anderson**  
General Manager, South Dakota  
Rural Electric Association

**Studies have shown** that communities where owners occupy the majority of homes are more successful academically, are more physically fit and have a stronger sense of community. While owning a home may not be possible or desirable for everyone, ownership does matter. It just seems to make sense that we treat things we own with greater care.

Chances are you probably don't think too often about your ownership role with your electric cooperative. Every member of our electric cooperatives can take pride in the fact that they are an owner of their electric co-op. While at times it may seem easy to take the provision of electricity for granted, we are working 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to make sure you, the member-owners of the co-op, are well taken care when it comes to your electricity needs.

Locally based cooperatives believe this special bond and obligation to be an integral part of the community. Electric cooperatives understand that you can't sell electricity to a business that has closed its doors or to people that have left the community because there are not enough local opportunities. Electricity is a critical need, but it takes more than poles, wires and kilowatt-hours to make a community.

We are owners of our co-op, and in a real sense, we are owners of our community. Our community is strong. Think about how much greater it can be when we work cooperatively to tackle our future challenges. If we act like owners on a consistent basis, we will put even more care and attention into our community and we will look locally

for solutions. Finding local solutions can help keep money – and people – right here in our local communities.

We all have a role to play. As your local electric cooperative, we promise to do our part for the community.

If you have thoughts about how we can do a better job, please contact your local electric cooperative. You are the owners of the co-op and we welcome your active participation.



More than **215** individuals have served as a director for the South Dakota Rural Electric Association since 1942. Combined, SDREA's 30 directors comprise a total of **522 years** service on their local boards and **188 years** of service on the SDREA board.

# Halloween Electrical Safety

**Halloween haunts** usually mean strings of decorative lights, fog machines, strobe and black lights, animatronics, electrically powered decorations and the list goes on. These things all add to the ambience of your haunt, but they also create the added dangers of fire, electrocution and other nasty and potentially disastrous accidents. It is very important that you look for and eliminate potential dangers from your Halloween lights and decorations that could lead to fires and injuries.

- Carefully inspect each electrical decoration. Cracked or frayed sockets, loose or bare wires and loose connections may cause a serious shock or start a fire. Discard damaged sets of lights or damaged props that can no longer be used safely.
- Fasten outdoor lights securely to trees, house walls or other firm supports to protect the lights from wind damage. Use only insulated staples to hold strings in place, not nails or tacks. Or, run strings of lights through hooks (available at hardware stores). Don't staple or nail through light strings or electrical/extension cords – you could damage the wire or insulation, which could lead to an electrical shock or fire.
- Don't overload extension cords or allow them to run through water or snow on the ground. Before using any light strings, animated displays or other electrical products outdoors, make sure the product is approved by a nationally recognized certification organization and marked for outdoor use.
- Use no more than three standard-size sets of lights per single extension cord. Don't use electrical decorations or light strings on materials that could catch fire. It is important to turn off all electrical light strings and decorations before leaving home or going to bed. Follow the use and care instructions that accompany your electrical decorations.
- Rule of thumb, most household circuit breakers are rated up to either 10 or 15 amps (you can tell by looking at the breakers themselves) and household current is generally 110 volts. Amps times volts equal the amount of watts that a breaker can handle without tripping. With caution, learn what breakers protect each section of your home and label them. Don't overload your circuit breakers/fuses.
- For added electric shock protection, plug outdoor electric lights and decorations into circuits protected by ground fault circuit interrupters. Portable outdoor GFCIs can be purchased where electrical supplies are sold. GFCIs can be installed permanently to household circuits by a qualified electrician.
- Turn off all lights when you go to bed or leave the house. The lights could short out and start a fire. Always have at least one fire extinguisher available and know how to use it. In homes with small children or animals, take special care to avoid decorations that are sharp or breakable.

Practice safety, use common sense and you'll have a happy, memorable Halloween!

Source: [www.halloween-online.com](http://www.halloween-online.com)

## Kids' Corner Safety Poster

**"Don't touch active wires."**



**Max Baker, 9 years old**

*Max is the son of Travis and Becki Baker, Fulton, S.D. They are members of Central Electric Cooperative, Mitchell, 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.


Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives




## PoweringYourSafety.com

KNOW WHAT TO DO IF YOU HIT A POWER LINE




### STAY PUT

If your equipment contacts a power line, stay inside. **DO NOT EXIT. Call 911.**



### JUMP CLEAR

If you must exit due to a fire, jump from the equipment so that no part of your body touches the equipment and ground at the same time. Hop or shuffle with your feet together at least 40 feet away.



### STAY AWAY

When you are clear of the area, call for help and keep others away. **DO NOT** approach your vehicle again until utility crews and emergency responders tell you it is safe.



# Crockpot Creations



## Slow Cooker Potato Casserole

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 2 lb. pkg. frozen hash brown potatoes, partially thawed | 1 (13 oz.) can evaporated milk, undiluted |
| 2 (10 oz.) cans Cheddar cheese soup                     | 1 can French-fried onions                 |
|   | Salt and pepper to taste                  |

Combine potatoes, soup, milk and half the onions. Pour into a greased slow cooker. Add salt and pepper to taste. Cover and cook on LOW 8 or 9 hours or on HIGH for 4 hours. Sprinkle remaining onions over top before serving.

**Carolyn Saugstad, Alcester**

## Slow Cooker Corn

- |                             |            |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| 2 (16 oz.) bags frozen corn | 2 T. sugar |
| 1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese | 2 T. water |
| 1 stick butter              |            |

Place frozen corn in slow cooker. Cut cheese and butter into small cubes. Add to corn with sugar and water. Cook on HIGH for 45 minutes. Stir with a wooden spoon. Turn to LOW for 3-1/2 hours, stirring occasionally.

**Shirley Miller, Winfred**

## Slow Cooker Whole Chicken

- |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| 4 tsp. salt  | 1/2 tsp. garlic powder   |
| 2 tsp. paprika   | 1/2 tsp. black pepper    |
| 1 tsp. each cayenne pepper, thyme, onion powder and white pepper | 1 large roasting chicken |

In a small bowl, combine spices. Place frozen chicken in slow cooker. Pour seasonings over chicken. Do not add any liquid. Cook on LOW 4 to 8 hours.

**Teresa Affeldt, Box Elder**

## Sweet and Sour Pork

- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1-1/2 to 2 lbs. pork steak, cut into strips | 1 (8 oz.) can tomato sauce           |
| 2 T. canola oil                             | 1 cup brown sugar                    |
| 1 large onion, sliced                       | 2 T. vinegar or Worcestershire sauce |
| 1 large green pepper, cut into strips       | 1-1/2 tsp. salt                      |
| 1 (4 oz.) can mushroom pieces               | 1 (10 oz.) jar sweet & sour sauce    |

Brown pork in oil; drain. Place all ingredients into slow cooker. Cover and cook on LOW 6 to 8 hours. May serve over rice or noodles.

**Patricia Hopkins, Central City, Neb.**

## Slow Cooker Chocolate Pecan Pie Cake

- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1 pkg. (2-layer size) chocolate cake mix                  | 2 cups chopped pecans                |
| 2 tsp. McCormick® Cinnamon, Ground                        | 1-1/2 cups light corn syrup          |
| 1 T. plus 2 tsp. McCormick® Pure Vanilla Extract, divided | 1-1/2 cups firmly packed brown sugar |
|   | 1/2 cup (1 stick) butter, melted     |

Spray inside of 6-quart slow cooker with no stick cooking spray. For the Chocolate Cake, prepare cake batter as directed on package, stirring in cinnamon and 2 tsp. vanilla. Pour into greased slow cooker. Place towel over slow cooker and cover with lid. Cook 2 hours on LOW or until cake is almost set. For the Pecan Pie Topping, sprinkle pecans over cake. Beat remaining ingredients with wire whisk until smooth. Slowly pour over pecans. Cover. Cook 10 minutes longer on LOW. Turn off slow cooker. Carefully remove slow cooker insert and place on wire rack. Cool 20 minutes before serving. Serve with vanilla ice cream, if desired.

*Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 580, Total Fat 28g, Saturated Fat 7g, Sodium 377mg, Cholesterol 57mg, Carbohydrates 78g, Dietary Fiber 2g, Protein 4g*

**Pictured, Cooperative Connections**

## Thyen Family Slow Cooker Dressing

- |                               |                          |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1/2 cup parsley               | 1-1/2 tsp. sage          |
| 1 cup diced onions            | 1 tsp. poultry seasoning |
| 2 (8 oz.) cans mushrooms      | 1 tsp. thyme             |
| 2 cups diced celery           | 4-1/2 cups chicken broth |
| 1 cup butter                  | 2 eggs, well beaten      |
| 12 to 13 cups of bread crumbs |                          |

Saute first 4 ingredients in butter. Combine bread crumbs, sage, poultry seasoning and thyme. Mix together all ingredients. Put in slow cooker on HIGH for 45 minutes. Reduce heat to LOW for 4 to 8 hours.

**Emily Luikens, Tea**

## Morning Slow Cooker Casserole

- |  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| 1 (2 lb.) bag frozen hash brown potatoes     | 1 cup shredded cheese |
| 1 lb. diced, cooked and drained bacon or ham | 12 eggs               |
| 3/4 cup diced onions                         | 1 cup milk            |
| 1 green pepper, chopped                      | 1 tsp. salt           |
|  | Pepper to taste       |

Place layer of frozen hash browns on bottom of slow cooker. Layer 2 or 3 times the bacon, onions, green peppers, cheese and hash browns; ending with cheese on top. Beat eggs, milk, salt and pepper. Pour over all; cover. Cook on LOW for 10 to 12 hours.

**Elaine Rowett, Sturgis**

*Please send your favorite holiday treat, soup and brunch recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2017. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.*

# How to Efficiently Bring Fresh Air Into Your House Year-Round



**James Dulley**  
[www.dulley.com](http://www.dulley.com)

**Dear Jim:** We made efficiency improvements over the years, but the indoor air often gets stale now. Without negating all our efficiency investments, what ways can we get more fresh air indoors?  
— Laura T.

**Dear Laura:** Stale air and a buildup of pollutants are common problems as people tighten up their houses to save energy. According to the U.S. EPA, people typically

spend 90 percent of their time indoors. Common symptoms of poor indoor air quality include irritation of the eyes, nose, and throat, headaches, dizziness and fatigue. Radon gas can be a cancer risk as great as smoking.

The purpose of bringing in fresh air is two-fold. First, when fresh air comes in, polluted stale air must go out or your house would explode. Secondly, fresh air dilutes the pollutant concentrations of the stale air remaining indoors. In addition to providing fresh air ventilation, attempt to minimize the gaseous and particulate pollution you generate indoors.

There are four basic mechanical methods to introduce fresh air into your house and each has advantages and disadvantages. The simplest is an exhaust-only system. This often uses a central ducted vent fan to depressurize the house. This draws fresh air in through gaps and leaks in the house exterior. Passive inlet vents can be installed in an airtight house like yours.

This is the least expensive system to install. This works best in cooler, low-humidity climates, especially during summer. Its drawback is the fresh air may not be distributed evenly throughout the house. It will increase utility bills slightly and may cause chilly drafts during winter. If you have gas appliances, backdrafting may be a problem.

Supply-only systems use ducted fresh air fans to create a positive pressure indoors. This forces the stale indoor air out through cracks in the exterior. It

is simple and inexpensive to install like an exhaust-only system. Its primary advantage is the incoming air can be filtered and it provides better control over the fresh air flow. Also, it will not cause backdrafting of gas appliances.

A balanced system uses a combination of ducted supply- and exhaust-only systems. This provides better control of the ventilation because it does not rely on just cracks or leaks in the house exterior. It costs more to install because it requires two ducted systems. It uses more electricity because it runs two sets of fans and it does not control incoming summertime humidity.

A HRV (heat recovery ventilation) system is the most efficient and expensive (typically \$1,000 to \$2,000) balanced system. During winter, heat from the stale outgoing warm air is transferred to the incoming cold fresh air. During summer, the stale outgoing cold air pre-cools the incoming hot outdoor fresh air. Up to 75 percent of the energy in the air can be saved.

A HRV is a simple system with a heat exchanger inside a cabinet and two separate blowers, one incoming air and one outgoing air. It has its own duct system drawing the stale indoor air usually from bathrooms and the kitchen. The incoming fresh air ducts often lead to the living room and hallway.

In many climates, indoor humidity levels are also a concern. During summer, bringing in pre-cooled humid air may not greatly improve comfort and may exacerbate allergies. Excessively dry air during winter can be uncomfortable for the skin and can cause other health problems.

An ERV (energy recovery ventilation) system has a special heat exchanger to also transfer moisture. During the summer, the incoming fresh air is partially dehumidified by the outgoing cool dry stale air. During winter, the indoor humidity is recaptured. These systems speed and run-time are controlled by a humidistat or programmable timer.

The following companies offer HRV's and ERV's: Aprilaire, 800-334-6011, [www.aprilaire.com](http://www.aprilaire.com); Broan, 800-558-1711, [www.broan.com](http://www.broan.com); Fantech, 800-747-1762, [www.fantech.net](http://www.fantech.net); Honeywell, 800-328-5111, [www.yourhome.honeywell.com](http://www.yourhome.honeywell.com); and Renewaire, 800-627-4499, [www.renewaire.com](http://www.renewaire.com).

Send inquiries to James Dulley, Cooperative Connections, 6906 Royalgreen Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45244 or visit [www.dulley.com](http://www.dulley.com).

# Cooperative Representatives Talk Current Issues on Capitol Hill



**Representatives from Basin Electric** Power Cooperative and member cooperatives visited Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., during the cooperative's annual Legislative Fall Fly-In the week of Sept. 25.

In total, more than 70 attendees represented eight states – North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Montana, Wyoming and Colorado.

The fly-in included visits with legislators and their staffs from states representing participating cooperatives, as well as a reception Sept. 27 for fly-in attendees, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association representatives and congressional staff.

Topics of conversation included legislation to encourage carbon sequestration; carbon management strategies; advanced energy technology solutions such as the Allam Cycle; Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act (PURPA) reform; high pension premium rates paid in “multiple-employer” plans; and the effort to repeal and replace the Clean Power Plan with a workable carbon dioxide mitigation standard.

“The fly-in is a great opportunity to get some facetime with legislators and their staffs, build those relationships and keep them informed on issues that are important to Basin Electric and its members,” said Dale Niezwaag, Basin Electric vice president of government relations.

**Sen. Mike Rounds, South Dakota Rural Electric Association general manager Ed Anderson, Sen. John Thune, SDREA board president Don Heeren and Rep. Kristi Noem pose for a photo during the fly-in.**

# Michels Announces Veterans Arts Initiative

**In partnership with** the Michael J Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home, the South Dakota Arts Council and Arts South Dakota, the South Dakota Lieutenant Governor's Office is working to design comprehensive arts residency programming for the State Veterans Home and community of Hot Springs. The veterans arts program will be designed around a central storytelling component and include professional artists-in-residence from all arts disciplines.

“I'm excited to begin working on this program, as are all of our partners,” said Lt. Gov. Matt Michels, who was selected to serve as chair of the National Lieutenant Governors Association during the organization's annual meeting in Nashville, Tenn. As chair, Michels announced the group's initiative for the year would be to focus on connecting veterans with opportunities in the arts.

“We've already developed a concept

for the program and it will take some time to get it designed and implemented. But this will be a wonderful investment to help our state's honorable veterans share and celebrate their stories.”

Arts South Dakota, funded entirely by donor contributions and grants, is a nonprofit, non-partisan corporation whose primary purpose is to advance the arts in South Dakota through service, education and advocacy.

An office of the South Dakota Department of Tourism, the South Dakota Arts Council's mission is to provide grants and services to artists, arts organizations and schools across the state with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts and the state of South Dakota.

The South Dakota Department of Tourism is comprised of Tourism and the South Dakota Arts Council. The Department is led by Secretary James D. Hagen.



**Back row: Rhode Island Lt. Gov. Dan McKee (former chair), S.D. Lt. Gov. Matt Michels**  
**Front Row: Montana Lt. Gov. Mike Cooney (vice chair) and Jay Dick with Americans for the Arts.**



# Taking Shape

## *Lemmon Artist Transforms Old Iron into Masterpieces*

Brenda Kleinjan

**Below:** Artist John Lopez stands in front of the his Cow Bossman statue which honors Ed Lemmon. The mural on the wall of the Kokomo Inn was created by Nigerian artists as a background for the sculpture.

(Photos Courtesy Artist John Lopez)

**S**TUDY ONE OF JOHN LOPEZ'S HYBRID METAL ART sculptures long enough, you might just be able to decipher what an individual element's purpose was.

The filigreed piece that forms what looks like a shield on some pieces may have started out as a grate on a stove or in a building. Chains and gear links are formed into various parts of the sculpture. Disc blades give definition to large muscles on a finished horse or buffalo. The finely textured feathers of the peacock? Closer examination shows that they once graced many a dining room table as various patterns of silverware.

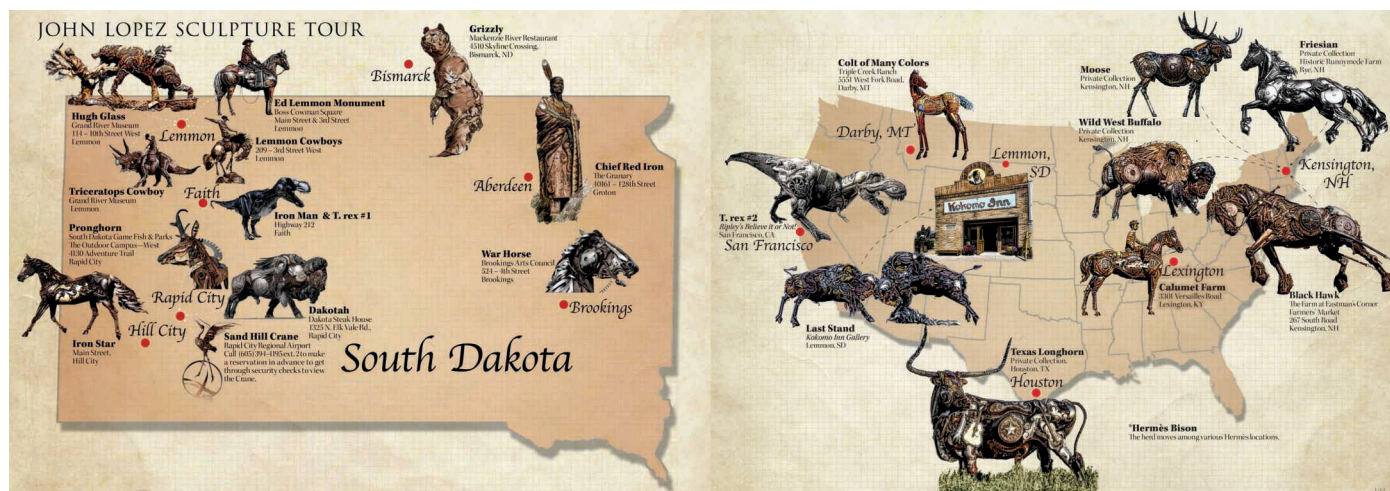
Whether farm implement or table ware or individual pieces of unidentifiable metal, Lopez's talented touch transforms that which may have been headed to the scrap yard into stunning pieces of art.

One of the artist's newest sculptures is that of Ed Lemmon, namesake of the northwestern South Dakota community. Lemmon, atop a horse, stands in the Cow Bossman Square next to Lopez's Kokomo Gallery in the Kokomo Inn on Main Street in Lemmon, S.D.

According to Lopez's description of the monument, he created the statue primarily using scrap iron donated by local friends and neighbors. The portrait of Ed Lemmon is cast in bronze making this monument a Hybrid Metal Sculpture. It took Lopez about six months to create the work. You can watch out for the revolver and jack knife donated in honor of Alvin Jacobs (a cowboy that inspired John). There are other personal items hidden within the sculpture which are the fingerprints of the community members.







At the Grand River Museum, also in Lemmon, Lopez has depicted the grizzly bear attack of Hugh Glass. The grizzly bear comes to life with chains and other metal pieces creating the bear's fur. Lopez's portrait of Glass depicts the terror of the attack as the ferocious grizzly advances.

"The Last Stand" depicts two bison – one with a likeness of Gen. George Custer and the other with a likeness of Sitting Bull – engaging one another. It is on display at the Kokomo Gallery, which is open Monday through Saturdays from May 1 to Oct. 30.

Also in the gallery, the aptly named "Silverware Peacock" captures the imagination. Utilizing steel cable and silverware to create the bird's tail, the 142 forks, 70 spoons, and 71 butter knives meld into a regal bird proudly standing on a pillar. The sculpture is one of



**Silverware Peacock can be viewed at Lopez's Kokomo Gallery in Lemmon, S.D.**

many of Lopez's to win awards. "Silverware Peacock" was the People's Choice Award at the annual Sculpture in the Hills Show in Hill City, S.D.

You can find Lopez's more traditional bronze sculptures as part of the The City of Presidents series in Rapid City (John Adams, John F. Kennedy and John, Jr., Calvin Coolidge, Teddy Roosevelt and Ulysses S. Grant) or in the Governor's Trail in Pierre (Arthur Mellette and Harvey Wollman).

His Hybrid Metal Art can be found across the breadth of the state and from coast to coast as pieces are on display in San Francisco, New Hampshire, Texas and points in between.

For more on Lopez's work, go to <http://www.johnlopezstudio.com/>. There is also a coffee table book of Lopez's work, "John Lopez: Sculpture" available as well.



**Above:** "The Last Stand" depicts two bison butting heads. The left bison includes a likeness of Gen. George Custer while the right buffalo pays tribute to Sitting Bull. **Right:** A close up of a portion of "The Last Stand" reveals the multi-leveled story telling that takes place in Lopez's statues. **On the Cover:** "War Horse" stands in front of the Brookings Arts Council building on Fourth Street in Brookings, S.D.



# High-Energy Jobs

## Cutting-Edge Careers at Electric Co-ops Power the Economy

**I**F YOU WANT TO WORK WHERE THE ACTION IS, how about a job in the fastest-growing occupation in America?

As a wind-turbine technician you could make about \$50,000 a year and know that your career is expected to grow 108 percent in the next seven years, says the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

And you'd be part of the cutting-edge essence of the American economy, according to a report on electric utility jobs.

"Electricity is the backbone of our economy and is crucial to our national security," concludes a recent report by M.J. Bradley and Associates, LLC, titled *Powering America: The Economic Workforce Contributions of the U.S. Electric Power Industry*. The report says, "Our high-tech society demands electricity to power or charge nearly every new product or technology that comes to market."

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) sponsored that study, along

with two other national utility groups, to show how electric utilities power the economy as a result of lighting our homes and businesses.

### **\$100 million a year on infrastructure**

Powering America cites the utility industry as the most capital-intensive economic sector, investing more than \$100 million a year on the nation's electricity infrastructure with advances in technology, environmental protections and other improvements. And that's in addition to money spent on regular operations and maintenance.

All that adds up to supporting more than 7 million jobs. More than 2.6 million of those jobs result from direct employment, like utility employees and contractors. As all those people go to work and live their lives, they create another 4.4 million "induced jobs" – teachers, doctors, real estate agents and service workers.

The report calculates the economic impact of the

**By Paul  
Wesslund**

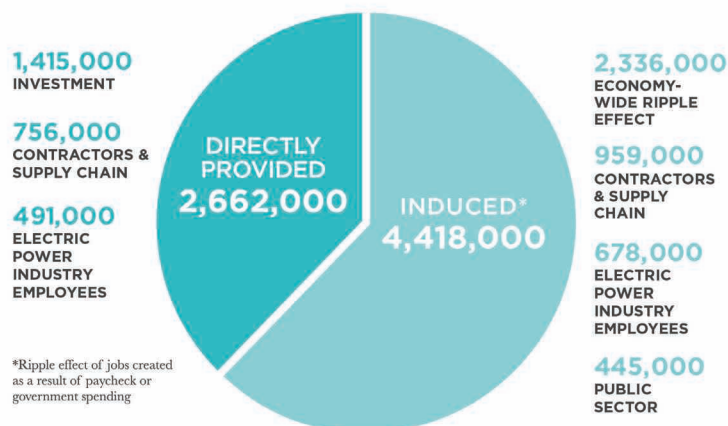




# POWERING AMERICA

The U.S. electric power industry creates American jobs and supports a healthy economy.

The electric power industry supports  
**OVER 7 MILLION JOBS**



Source: *Powering America: The Economic and Workforce Contributions of the U.S. Electric Power Industry*, August 2017, M.J. Bradley & Associates LLC

## Co-op Careers:

Electric cooperatives expect to hire as many as  
**25,000**  
new employees in the next five years.

## Military Veteran Hiring:

Comprised  
**10%+**  
of new hires as of year-end 2014.

## Good Wages:

**2X**  
the national median.  
2015 median annual wages in the electric power industry were  
**\$73,000**

ity generation workforce. Wind employs about 100,000 people.

## Co-ops hire veterans

Those renewable energy jobs are in addition to a raft of other careers in energy, from mining, to energy efficiency, power plant operators, and social media and cyber security specialists. Jobs at electric co-ops especially offer openings in cutting-edge careers, says Michelle Rostom, director of workforce development for NRECA.

"There are a lot of great opportunities at co-ops," says Rostom, noting that electric co-ops expect to hire as many as 25,000 new employees in the next five years. "Electric co-ops are doing a lot of research on integrating solar power and wind with coal and other cutting-edge solutions. There are opportunities to be part of the next generation of the energy industry."

Part of the reason those jobs will be available is that the large Baby Boom Generation is retiring – Rostom says 6,000 co-op employees retired last year. Other parts of the energy industry went through that wave of retirements several years ago, but Rostom says it's just catching up with electric co-ops. "People stay at the co-op for so long because they're great jobs, with interesting work, a chance to grow professionally in a lot of different areas and they have a strong connection with their local communities," says Rostom.

Electric co-ops formally addressed that need to hire more talent when NRECA set its six strategic objectives, one of which is to develop the "Next Generation Workforce." In 2006, NRECA joined with other national groups to form the Center for Energy Workforce Development as a way of making sure jobs get filled with high-quality workers.

NRECA sees military veterans as part of the solution: Another part of Rostom's job is coordinator of NRECA's Serve Our Co-ops; Serve Our Country veterans hiring initiative.

"Veterans have always been a core part of our co-op workforce, and this program creates additional intent to hire more veterans," she says. "Veterans are mission oriented, disciplined and safety-focused... They show strong leadership capabilities and they work well under pressure."

Rostom adds that the experience veterans bring to their jobs matches the culture of the local, member-owned electric co-ops: "There are a lot of parallels between the military and cooperative principles, like teamwork, autonomy, independence and community."

*Paul Wesslund writes on cooperative issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.*

electric power industry at \$880 billion – about 5 percent of the nation's \$18 trillion Gross Domestic Product.

The U.S. Department of Energy slices and dices those numbers a different way, shedding a little more light on wind-turbine technicians and other renewable energy jobs.

DOE's second annual United States Energy and Employment Report released in January views energy jobs more broadly than just electric utilities. It includes careers in energy efficiency, mining and transportation, and concludes: "Rebuilding our energy infrastructure and modernizing the grid, diversifying our energy mix, and reducing our energy consumption in both our built environment and motor vehicles, America's labor markets are being revitalized by our new energy and transportation technologies."

Wind power jobs may be growing rapidly, but the DOE report lists solar energy jobs as the largest share of people working on all types of electricity generation. Almost 374,000 people are working in solar power – 43 percent of the electric-



# Lending a Helping Hand

*Organization Helps Those in Need Bring In the Harvest*

Jocelyn Romey

**D**URING TRAGIC CIRCUMSTANCES, FARMERS AND ranchers usually don't have many options. What happens when a natural disaster, injury, health issue or fatality is experienced by an agricultural family?

Getting the harvest in on time and cutting enough hay for the coming year can become major issues these families face when tragic circumstances occur. So, in the Midwest, farmers are helping farmers.

Farm Rescue – a nonprofit organization created in North Dakota and headquartered in Horace, N.D., just outside of Fargo, is providing help to farmers and ranchers through the organized efforts of volunteers. People from across the nation have volunteered their time and effort to assist agricultural families who need help getting their crops in during a family crisis. This organization's volunteers

not only help harvest and plant crops, but also haul grain and provide donated hay to farmers and ranchers affected by the drought.

Bill Gross, founder and president of Farm Rescue, started the organization in 2005 when it received its nonprofit status. In 2006, volunteers began their harvest heroism helping families in North Dakota. Since then, Farm Rescue has grown. It now offers help to agriculture communities in a five-state region with plans to expand. Currently, this region encompasses North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, Montana and Minnesota.

Farm Rescue's Carol Wielenga, program coordinator, said roughly 100 volunteers are called upon every year. They are included in a database of nearly 1,000 nationwide. Most volunteers have an agriculture background and want to get back to the farm.







Yet, a few come from different demographics. Wielenga said one volunteer was a scientist from NASA.

Ted Smith, director of engineering and operations from Sioux Valley Energy in Colman, S.D., is one of those volunteers who dedicates his time off to helping others. He began his work with Farm Rescue in 2012.

While describing his volunteer services, Smith said, "Some people think I'm crazy to take my vacation time to go work, but I enjoy it...I've worked for really nice folks over the years."

Good deeds are not always easy to act out, however. Smith told one story in which he and his partner set a record for how many times they could become stuck in one day while volunteering.

Smith said, "I don't think anyone has broken our record yet, at least I hope not."

Farm Rescue not only relies on volunteers like Smith, but also sponsors and donors to aid farmers and ranchers.

One donor heavily involved in aiding agricultural families through Farm Rescue is RDO

Equipment Co. From the beginning, this company has been the sole donator of all the equipment needed by volunteers to plant, harvest and haul.

Currently, Farm Rescue employs four full-time employees and is managed by a board of directors. These directors make the qualification decisions of every applicant requesting help from Farm Rescue. Wielenga described the application process as easy and quick. She also noted that many requests for assistance are made anonymously by a friend of the family. Since Farm Rescue assists families who are usually stressed, the application process is simple and has no cut-off date. This ensures that help is available for any family in need.

Information regarding qualification for assistance can be found on Farm Rescue's website [www.farmrescue.org](http://www.farmrescue.org).



**Above:** Volunteers pause from their duties to pose for a photo.

**Top:** A Farm Rescue combine and semi trailer continue the harvest at dusk.

**Opposite Page:** Farm Rescue volunteers harvest soybeans.

**Left:** Farm Rescue volunteers operate an air seeder to help a farm family in crisis during





# Two Years In:

## Regional Power Entities are Part of SPP

**I**T'S BEEN TWO YEARS SINCE COOPERATIVES AND other entities joined the Southwest Power Pool, a regional transmission organization.

"It's definitely been a benefit to Basin Electric and our members," said Valerie Weigel, director of Marketing Financial Analytics for the Bismarck, N.D.,-based cooperative.

"In an RTO, everyone pools their assets together and the RTO dispatches them economically, which allows access to lower-cost production," Weigel said.

At midnight on Oct. 1, 2015, Western Area Power Administration's Upper Great Plains Region, Basin Electric Power Cooperative and Heartland Consumers Power District successfully transferred functional control of the integrated transmission system to Southwest Power Pool and began operating in the regional transmission organization. This was the final step in achieving full membership in the RTO.

"This major achievement demonstrates Western's commitment to evolve our services in a changing energy frontier so we can continue to reliably, economically and securely serve our customers," said Western Administrator and CEO Mark Gabriel at the time of the transfer.

With the inclusion of the Integrated System, SPP's footprint spans almost 575,000 square miles in all or parts of 14 states in the central U.S. and includes more than 800 generating plants, nearly 5,000 substations and about 56,000 miles of high-voltage transmission lines. The IS added about 5,000 megawatts of peak demand and 7,600 megawatts of generating capacity, including a threefold increase in SPP's hydroelectric capacity. Western also represented the first federal power marketing administration to become a full RTO member.

"The successful integration of the Integrated System is a significant milestone for SPP," said SPP President and CEO Nick Brown. SPP was organized in 1941 and celebrated 75 years of existence in 2016. "The IS further diversifies our membership with the addition of a federal agency and creates a more robust transmission network to meet the electrical demand across the region and efficiently operate a wholesale energy market."

The decision to integrate into SPP meant the IS would need to develop systems and tools to successfully operate in an RTO environment. "I have to give a lot of credit to our employees who have been dedicated and tenacious in preparing the cooperative for this transition," said Paul Sukut, Basin Electric CEO





and general manager. “It’s a significant shift in how we have historically operated, and though our decades-old partnership with Western is changing, we have plans to continue working with them in a number of ways. Today, we have taken a step to evolve our operations and partnerships, but one thing will never change. Our primary focus has and always will be serving our members.”

Heartland CEO Russell Olson said, “This move represents a major shift in the way we have traditionally operated, but is a necessary step in ensuring we are providing the best possible service to our customers. We will have greater flexibility and increased options for buying and selling power and look forward to the opportunities operating within SPP will provide.”

The integration was the culmination of years of discussions and public involvement between the IS members, SPP, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and customers. The IS owners studied several forms of potential regional transmission organization participation since the 1990s. Beginning in 2001, the IS participants began to evaluate potential options of joining SPP, joining the Midcontinent Independent System Operator or continuing operations on a stand-alone basis. These studies identified the option to join SPP as having the most benefit and the least risk. A public process began in November 2013 to hear comments from concerned parties, which resulted in approval to pursue membership in January 2014.

Western’s Upper Great Plains Region markets Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program – Eastern Division power and energy to preference customers in Montana east of the Continental Divide, North Dakota, South Dakota, western Minnesota and Iowa and eastern Nebraska. It also operates the Integrated Transmission System, which is owned by Western, Basin Electric Power Cooperative and Heartland Consumers Power District.

## SPP Primary Services Provided to Members and Customers

**SPP provides many services** to its members and customers. These services include:

**Reliability Coordination:** SPP monitors power flow throughout its footprint and coordinates regional response in emergency situations or blackouts.

**Tariff Administration:** SPP provides “one-stop shopping” for use of the region’s transmission lines and independently administers an Open Access Transmission Tariff with consistent rates and terms. SPP processes an average of 4,729 member transmission service requests per month. In 2016 transmission service transactions totaled \$3.9 billion.

**Regional Scheduling:** SPP ensures the amount of power sent is matched with power received.

**Transmission Expansion:** SPP’s planning processes seek to identify system limitations, develop transmission upgrade plans, and track project progress to ensure timely completion of system reinforcements.

**Market Operations:** The Integrated Marketplace launched in 2014, replacing the Energy Imbalance Service (EIS) market. It includes a day-ahead market with transmission congestion rights, a reliability unit commitment process, a real-time balancing market replacing the EIS market, and the incorporation of price-based operating reserve procurement. SPP’s own analysis showed its markets provide participants with net savings of 422 million annually.

**Compliance:** The SPP Regional Entity enforces compliance with federal and regional reliability standards for users, owners and operators of the region’s bulk power grid

**Training:** SPP offers continuing education for operations personnel at SPP and throughout the region. SPP’s 2016 training program delivered over 28,046 training hours to 46 member companies

### About Western Area Power Administration

Western Area Power Administration annually markets and transmits more than 25,000 gigawatt-hours of clean, renewable power from 56 hydroelectric powerplants owned and operated by the Bureau of Reclamation and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 15 central and western states. Western also owns, operates and maintains a more than 17,000 circuit-mile, high-voltage transmission system in its service territory. It is part of the Department of Energy. Learn more at [www.wapa.gov](http://www.wapa.gov).

### About Basin Electric Power Cooperative

Basin Electric is a consumer-owned, regional cooperative headquartered in Bismarck, N.D. It generates and transmits electricity to 138 member rural electric systems in nine states: Colorado, Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming. These member systems distribute electricity to about 2.9 million consumers. [www.basinelectric.com](http://www.basinelectric.com)

### About Heartland Consumers Power District

Heartland Consumers Power District is a non-profit, public power utility located in Madison, S.D. Heartland provides reliable wholesale power as well as energy services and community development programs to communities, state agencies and organizations in South Dakota, Minnesota and Iowa. Heartland is governed by a ten-member, publicly elected board of directors and owns participation shares in two base-load generating units including Whelan Energy Center Unit 2 near Hastings, Neb., and Laramie River Station near Wheatland, Wyo. Heartland also procures the output of the 51 MW Wessington Springs Wind Energy Center located in South Dakota.

### About Southwest Power Pool, Inc.

Southwest Power Pool, Inc. manages the electric grid and wholesale energy market for the central United States. As a regional transmission organization, the nonprofit corporation is mandated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to ensure reliable supplies of power, adequate transmission infrastructure and competitive wholesale electricity prices. Southwest Power Pool and its diverse group of member companies coordinate the flow of electricity across 56,000 miles of high-voltage transmission lines spanning 14 states. The company is headquartered in Little Rock, Ark. Learn more at [www.spp.org](http://www.spp.org).



## Regional Dateline

### October 21

Black Hills Opry with  
Aces and Eights featuring  
Jalan Crossland, Lead, SD  
605-584-2067

### October 21

Nelly's Revenge Murder  
Mystery Dinner Theater  
Deadwood, SD, 605-580-5799

### October 22

Kidz Bop Kids Best Time Ever  
Tour, Sioux Falls, SD  
605-367-7288

### October 27-28

Harvest Halloween, Yankton, SD  
info@harvesthalloween.com

### October 27-28

Deadweird, Main Street  
Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

### October 27-29

Autumn Festival  
Sioux Falls, SD, 402-331-2889

### October 27-29

ZooBoo, Sioux Falls, SD  
605-367-7003

### October 28

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

### October 28

ZOO BOO, Watertown, SD  
605-882-6269

### October 29

Trick or Treat Trails, Pierre, SD  
605-773-2885

### November 4

78th Annual Lutefisk Feed  
Summit, SD, 605-881-4377



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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

### October 21-January 7

Pheasant Hunting Season  
Statewide, Pierre, SD  
605-223-7660

### November 9-11

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

### November 11

Holiday Extravaganza  
Sisseton, SD, 605-698-7425

### November 11

Foo Fighters, Sioux Falls, SD  
605-367-7288

### November 17-January 7

Winter Wonderland  
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-275-6060

### November 18-19

Winterfest 2017, A Winter Arts  
Festival, Aberdeen, SD  
605-626-7025

### November 21-December 25

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

### November 24

Annual Parade of Lights  
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-338-4009

### November 24-December 23

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

### November 25

Holiday Celebration and  
Winter Market, Rapid City, SD  
605-716-7979

### December 1-2

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

### December 1-2, 7-9, 14-16

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

### December 2

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

### December 2

Christmas Parade, Custer, SD  
605-673-2244

### December 2-3

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

### December 9

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

### December 9

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

### December 15

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

### December 15-17

Sioux Empire Wacipi  
Sioux Falls, SD  
310-922-1886

### December 15-March 31

South Dakota Snowmobile  
Trails Season, Lead, SD  
605-584-3896

### December 31

Make-A-Wish New Year's Eve  
Dance, Ramkota Hotel and  
Convention Center  
Aberdeen, SD, 605-370-4588

### January 19-20

ISOC Deadwood SnoCross  
Showdown, Deadwood, SD  
605-578-1876