


South Dakota Electric

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

Cooperative Connections

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MAKING YOUR VOICE HEARD

Pg 8



WE ARE ALL WORKING TOWARDS THE SAME GOAL. Using energy wisely is the job of every electric co-op member. And when we work together, our combined strength is more than enough to accomplish anything. Learn more about the power of your co-op membership at TogetherWeSave.com.



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Editorial

The Impact of Regulations on Cooperative Members



Ed Anderson
General Manager, South Dakota
Rural Electric Association

in South Dakota.

While these regulations are technical, the potential increase in electric rates is something we take personally because we know it's difficult to make ends meet month-to-month. We know the tough choices you face – we all face – in trying to live on a budget. That's what sets cooperatives apart from other utilities and that's why we must stick together.

Thousands have answered the call already and sent comments through www.Action.coop. But we need more. Our electric cooperatives look out for their members, but we need your help. And we don't take this request lightly. It only takes 30 seconds to help raise our voices together.

As electric cooperatives, we've encouraged all of electric co-op employees to sign up ... and ask their friends and families. And now we're asking the same from you.

We need you to take a stand and urge our families and friends to join us.

Visit <http://www.Action.coop/>. And talk to your neighbors about what we're doing and why.

We're powering the future, driving economic growth and fostering innovation for you. And we don't want these new regulations to get in our way of progress. Please join the call and help us keep moving forward.

We've written before how the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has proposed to limit carbon dioxide at new power plants. This is concerning because these regulations, along with the ones the EPA has in store for existing plants, have the potential to drive up your electric bills.

Now is the time for electric cooperative members to join their voices together to send a clear message: please remember consumers as you are writing these regulations.

You can help first by visiting www.Action.coop to-day and sending a comment to the EPA. You can also help by sharing the link to your friends and family.

What's at stake? Beyond providing safe, affordable electricity, at America's electric cooperatives, we're worried about jobs across the region, including those

**COOPERATIVE
ACTION NETWORK**

**STAND WITH US
AS WE FIGHT
TO KEEP
ELECTRIC BILLS
AFFORDABLE.**

ACTION.COOP

Shopping Tips

The holiday shopping season is already upon us and the South Dakota Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division is encouraging consumers to shop with care this holiday season. Attorney General Marty Jackley warns that during the busiest season of the year it is especially important to be watchful and avoid those common shopping mistakes.

Tips on Holiday Shopping:

- Check the refund and return policies for restrictions and exceptions.
- When buying gift cards, check for fees and expiration dates that apply.
- Read the fine print.
- Double check delivery dates.
- Review warranties.
- Compare prices.
- Check shipping and handling fees.

Along with those traditional shopping methods consumers also need to proceed with caution when dealing with online retailers.

Online Shopping Tips:

- Consumers using the Internet to find the perfect gift should avoid using email links. These links can appear to be from a known business, when in fact they are coming from a different company altogether.
- Use credit cards for online purchases. If there is a problem with the purchase it is much easier to dispute the charges.
- Be leery of businesses that are offering deep discounts. If it sounds too good to be true, then it likely is, so shop with reputable sellers.

As technology changes, so do the scams. The use of mobile devices for online shopping has increased immensely. Consumers are using the devices to compare prices, research products, locate stores and make purchases. Smartphone users should consider these tips:

Smartphone Shopping Tips:

- Be sure your computer and mobile devices are current with all software updates.
- Be cautious of social media scams including fake Twitter and Facebook pages. Stick to the sites that you are familiar with and do not click on unfamiliar links.
- Do your homework on price comparison apps. There are many malicious mobile apps just ready to be downloaded.
- Do not download apps from unknown sources.

If you have any additional questions, contact the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Office at 1-800-300-1986 or consumerhelp@state.sd.us.

January is Bath Safety Month

According to a Consumer Product Safety Commission report, on average, every day in the United States, 370 people of all ages suffer bathtub or shower-related injuries. Other research has shown that drowning is the leading cause for unintentional death of children 4 years or younger, about 10 percent of all people over the age of 65 have difficulty bathing and drowning deaths for those over age 60 were primarily due to having fallen in the tub.

We do not want you or your loved ones to become part of the aforementioned statistics. With that in mind, we present you with a few bathroom safety tips:

For the Elderly:

- Install safety bars near the toilet and on the walls in and around the bathtub;
- Install a portable hand-held shower head;
- Purchase non slip rugs to counteract a smooth floor, especially a floor that comes in contact with water;
- Use colors to differentiate between various levels (edges) and fixtures;
- Check the water temperature carefully. As some age, they have less sensation in their hands and therefore may misjudge the temperature; and
- Be aware of the side effects of medications you may be taking.

For Children:

- Never leave small children unattended around the tub;
- Safeguard bathtubs by using non-skids mats or decals and faucet covers;
- Check the water temperature before placing the child in the bath water; and
- Before bathing children, place items you may need – i.e. shampoo, toys, soap – within easy reach.

Source: <http://nassausportscare.com>

Kids' Corner Safety Poster



"Don't climb up on power lines!"

Destiny Hofer, 8 years old

Destiny is the daughter of Joseph and Rebecca Hofer, Madison, S.D. They are members of Sioux Valley Energy, Colman, 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.

Satisfying Soups



Chicken Taco Soup

- 1 medium green pepper, chopped
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 (14.5 oz) cans chicken broth
- 1 quart tomatoes, undrained
- 1 pint salsa
- 1 can black beans, drained
- 1 can whole kernel corn, drained
- 1 whole chicken breast
- Garlic salt
- Chili powder
- Cooking oil

In skillet with small amount of oil, sauté pepper and onion with garlic salt until tender. In medium pot, mix broth, tomatoes, salsa, corn and beans; bring to a boil then reduce heat and simmer. Add cooked peppers and onions. Slice chicken breast into four slices; cover both sides generously with garlic salt and chili powder. Cook in small amount of oil until white throughout. Shred chicken; add to soup. Let simmer at least 20 to 30 minutes or longer. Serve with dollop of sour cream, shredded Cheddar cheese and crumbled tortilla chips.

Nancy Stenson, Fort Pierre

Soup Salad

- 1 small clove garlic
- 1 T. sugar
- 1-1/2 tsp. salt
- 24 oz. canned tomato juice
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 2 T. lemon juice
- 1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 3 tomatoes, finely diced
- 1 cucumber, finely diced
- 1 green pepper, finely diced
- 1 cup shredded carrots
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1/2 cup thinly sliced green onions

Put garlic through press or crush it completely. Combine with sugar, salt, tomato juice, olive oil, lemon juice and Worcestershire sauce. Beat with rotary beaters to blend in the oil. Cover and chill while preparing vegetables. Stir in vegetables and chill at least an hour before serving, longer if possible.

Frances Syverson, Rapid City

Grandma's No Peek 5-Hour Stew

- 2 lbs. stew meat, cut in bite-sized pieces
- 6 carrots, sliced
- 4 medium potatoes, cut up
- 2 stalks celery, cut up
- 1 green pepper, chopped
- 1/4 cup tapioca
- 2 T. sugar
- 1 large can tomatoes

Combine all ingredients in a 3-quart roaster; cover tightly. Bake at 250°F. for 5 hours. No peeking!

Jan Bentzen, Tabor

Ham-It-Up White Bean Soup

- 1 T. olive oil
- 1/2 small onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 (12 oz.) can Nestle Carnation Evaporated Milk
- 1 (14.5 oz.) can reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1-1/2 cups cooked ham, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 1 (15.5 oz.) can cannellini (white kidney) beans, undrained
- 1/2 cup frozen peas
- Ground black pepper, optional

Heat oil in medium saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and garlic; cook, stirring occasionally, for 1 to 2 minutes or until onion is tender. Stir in flour. Gradually stir in evaporated milk and broth. Cook, stirring constantly, until mixture comes to a boil. Add ham, beans and peas. Heat through. Season to taste with pepper. Note: One cup coarsely chopped spinach leaves can be substituted for the peas. Makes 6 (1 cup) servings

Nutritional information per serving: 240 calories; 90 calories from fat; 11g total fat; 4g saturated fat; 40mg cholesterol; 520mg sodium; 21g carbohydrate; 3g fiber; 7g sugars; 14g proteing

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Cheeseburger Chowder

- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1/2 cup finely chopped celery
- 1/4 cup chopped onion
- 3 T. flour
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 5 cups milk
- 1 T. instant beef bouillon
- 1 cup cheese (Cheddar or Velveeta)

Brown ground beef in a large kettle. Add the celery and onion. Cook until tender. Blend, then add flour, salt, milk and bouillon. Add cheese and stir until melted.

Alice Holcomb, Buffalo

Pheasant Soup

- Celery
- Onions
- Carrots
- Mushrooms
- 1/2 bag frozen noodles
- 3 cans cream of mushroom soup
- 3 cans cream of chicken soup
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 or 3 pheasants

In a large pot, boil pheasants (cover with water before boiling) with chopped celery, onions, mushrooms and salt and pepper until pheasant is cooked. Remove pheasant from pot and cut into bite-sized pieces; return to pot. Add noodles. Stir together soups and add to mixture in pot. Add salt and pepper to taste. Cook 30 minutes or until noodles are done and soup is thick.

Mary Engebretson, Watertown

Please send your favorite bread, breakfast and seafood 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 2014. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

Efficient Cooking: Replacing Ovens, Ranges and Other Tips



Jim Dulley
www.dulley.com

Dear Jim: I'm updating my kitchen appliances. I am a bit of a chef, so I want efficient tools. What are the best appliances for cooks? Can you share a few energy-efficient cooking tips? – Barb R.

Dear Barb: If you're a frequent cook, you consume a lot of energy. The major energy user is the refrigerator. Odds are if you prepare a lot of food, you have a large refrigerator and open it often.

Place commonly used items (milk, butter, etc.) near the front of your fridge. Keep the fridge fairly full; use water jugs if needed.

In addition to selecting efficient cooking appliances, there are simple tips to cut your energy use. Keep in mind cooking tips change from winter to summer. During winter, the heat and humidity from cooking help warm your house and reduce the heating load on your furnace or heat pump. During summer, this same heat makes your air conditioner run more, increasing electric bills.

When installing kitchen appliances, locate them properly. The cooking range and oven should not be directly next to the refrigerator. Their heat makes the refrigerator compressor run longer. Also, don't put the range or oven under a window; a breeze can carry away heat before it gets into your pots and pans.

The most efficient electric range heating elements are induction units. These elements produce magnetic energy which warms magnetic (usually iron and steel) pots and pans. If there is no utensil on an induction element, the element does not get hot. Induction elements provide heating control almost as precise as gas burners.

Induction elements offer an energy advantage: nearly all of the energy goes into the pot or pan to heat food. With a regular resistance element, the heat transfers from the range top to the base of the pot. A lot of heat is lost to the air, never getting to the food.

Since you do not always want to use magnetic cooking dishes, your range should have only one or two induction elements. The others should be standard resistance or halogen. Halogen elements heat up faster, but are not as efficient. Opt for different sizes, then match the size of the pot to the element size for less heat loss.

When it comes to ovens, electric is preferred by most professionals. It holds more even heat than gas for baking. Another advantage, especially during summer, is that electric does not introduce extra moisture to your house. Extra moisture means more work (and energy use) for your air conditioner. When gas or propane burns, the basic products of combustion are water and carbon dioxide.

A convection oven saves energy as compared to a standard oven. Even though the small air circulation fan uses some electricity in a convection oven, they cook so much faster that there is significant overall savings. Not all foods roast and bake well in the convection mode, so you will not be able to use it for everything. Choose a self-cleaning oven model because they often have heavier wall insulation needed for the super high cleaning temperature.

**Want great energy savings in the kitchen?
Use small countertop appliances when possible.**

Want great energy savings in the kitchen? Use small countertop appliances when possible. For example, a small toaster oven, especially one with a convection option, uses significantly less electricity than large oven elements. This is true even though the large oven has more wall insulation. Countertop electric woks, rice cookers, etc. are other good examples. During summer, use them outdoors to reduce indoor heat.

Microwave ovens are still the most efficient appliance for cooking individual food items. They run on lower wattage and offer short cook times. If you are cooking larger quantities of food, a large oven remains the best choice. Plan your baking to make similar-baking-temperature foods simultaneously or consecutively while the oven is hot.

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

53rd Resource Conservation Speech Contest to be Held

Each year, the South Dakota Department of Agriculture, Resource Conservation and Forestry Division sponsors a resource conservation-oriented speech contest. Any South Dakota student in grades nine through 12 is eligible to enter. This includes public, private and home-school students.

The theme for the 53rd annual Resource Conservation Speech Contest is "Why Conservation Saved Us from Another Dust Bowl."

The contest consists of three levels – local, area and state. Two winners from each of the local contests advance to the area contests. Two winners from each of the seven area contests advance to the state competition.

At the state competition, \$5,300 in scholarship money is awarded:

- First Place – \$1,100 Scholarship
- Second Place – \$750 Scholarship
- Third Place – \$450 Scholarship

East River Electric Power Cooperative, Rushmore Electric Power Cooperatives and the South Dakota Rural Electric Association present the winners with scholarships to be used at any college, university or accredited vocational technical school within South Dakota. Other co-sponsors include the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the South Dakota Association of Conservation Districts.

Local district contests must be completed before March 8 with the regional contest held before March 22. The state contest is held April 5 in Pierre.

Complete rules and an application can be downloaded at <http://sdda.sd.gov/education-outreach/resource-conservation-speech-contest/>

You may also contact the Resource Conservation and Forestry Division by calling 605-773-3623.

EPA and DOE Release 2014 Fuel Economy Guide

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Energy (DOE) are releasing the 2014 Fuel Economy Guide, providing consumers with a valuable resource to identify and choose the most fuel efficient and low greenhouse gas emitting vehicles that meet their needs. The 2014 models include efficient and low-emission vehicles in a variety of classes and sizes, ensuring a wide variety of choices available for consumers.

"For American families, the financial and environmental bottom line are high priorities when shopping for a new vehicle," said Administrator Gina McCarthy. "This year's guide is not just about how the latest models stack up against each other; it's about providing people the best information possible to make smart decisions affecting their pocketbooks and the planet."

"The Energy Department is committed to building a strong 21st century transportation sector that cuts harmful pollution, saves consumers money and leads to a more sustainable energy future," said Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz. "By providing reliable, user-friendly fuel economy information, the Fuel Economy Guide is helping Americans choose the right fuel efficient vehicle for their family and business and save money at the pump."

The guide provides "Top Ten" lists allowing consumers to see the most efficient advanced technology vehicles as well as the most efficient gasoline and diesel powered vehicles. Consumers will also find a broad range of information

in the guide that can be helpful while shopping for a new vehicle – including an estimated annual fuel cost for each vehicle. The estimate is based on the vehicle's miles per gallon (mpg) rating and national estimates for annual mileage and fuel prices. An online version of the guide, available through www.fueleconomy.gov, allows consumers to enter local gasoline prices and typical driving habits to receive a personalized fuel cost estimate. Also, for the second

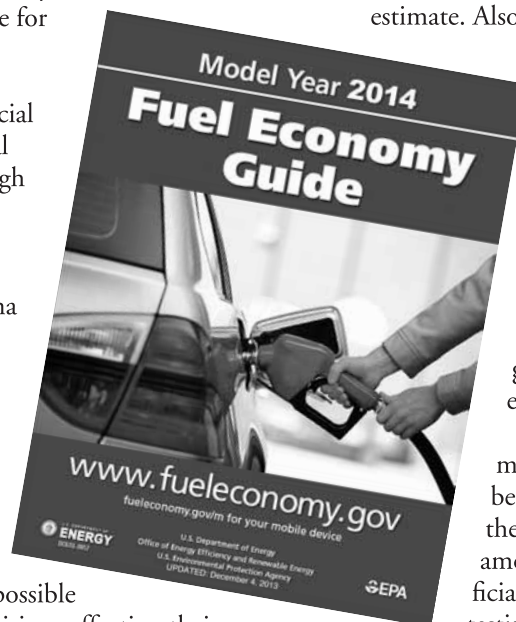
consecutive year, the guide includes a 1-10 greenhouse gas rating for each model, providing a quick and easy way for consumers to identify vehicles with low greenhouse gas emissions.

EPA fuel economy estimates are the best way to compare the fuel economy among vehicles. Official fuel economy testing is controlled,

repeatable, and accounts for a variety of real-world conditions for the average driver, like air conditioning usage and a variety of speed and temperature conditions. Individual mileage will vary depending on factors such as driving style, high air conditioning usage, carrying extra weight and towing, and weather.

For tips on more efficient driving, check out the gas mileage tips at <http://fueleconomy.gov/feg/drive.shtml>.

More information, including a complete version of the guide and details on the fuel economy labels, is available at <http://www.fueleconomy.gov/> and at <http://fueleconomy.gov/m/> for mobile devices. EPA and DOE will update the guide online as more 2014 vehicles become available.



Co-op Voices Vital to Political Process

WHETHER IT'S CONTACTING STATE LEGISLATORS IN Saint Paul or Pierre, writing the congressional delegations in Washington, D.C., or contacting various federal and state agencies to comment on pending rules, getting individual cooperative members to speak up is essential to electric cooperatives.

Grassroots – the unified efforts and voices of the nation's electric co-op supporters – has proven to be the foundation of the industry's more than 70 years of success in serving electric co-ops, their owners and their communities.

It forms the foundation of electric cooperatives' legislative advocacy work – the term used to describe the work co-ops do on co-op members' behalf in the political arena. For co-ops, legislative advocacy is more than just lobbying, it's engaging all co-op members.

Grassroots refers to electric cooperative activists – directors, managers, employees and member-own-

ers – who take an active role in the political process to protect their co-op from harmful legislation and regulation, as well as to promote the value of co-op ownership to their legislators.

The advocacy process starts at individual cooperatives' annual meetings where co-op members elect directors. Those directors engage in state and national resolutions processes that form the foundation of electric cooperatives' position on a variety of topics that impact the cooperative and their members.

While the directors that co-op members elect at co-op annual meetings are actively engaged in the process – as are the employees at cooperatives – the co-op movement's real strength comes from the 42 million people served by co-ops nationwide.

People like you and your family.

Your voice is one that lawmakers listen to.

In Wheaton, Minn., Traverse Electric Coopera-

When you hear from the people at home, it gets you back to where you need to be.

By
Brenda Kleinjan

**COOPERATIVE
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tive manager Clayton Halverson knows from first-hand experience the importance of having individual members speak up.

Before becoming the cooperative's manager in 2008, Halverson had served on the co-op's board of directors representing his neighbors in the Veblen, S.D., portion of the co-op's territory. He also served in the South Dakota House of Representatives from 2005 to 2008, after winning the general election in November 2004.

"I think all legislators respond to their constituents first," said Halverson. "The press, trade organizations and state agencies play a part, but when you hear from somebody at home, you really pay attention. When you hear from the people at home, it gets you back to where you need to be."

Giving added importance to individuals' messages is the knowledge that those individuals are engaged.

"Those that engage are those that vote, and our elected leaders know that," said Halverson.

When individuals speak up and go beyond form letters and simple forwards of message points, Halverson said it really makes a difference, at least on the state level.

"As long as it came from the heart, then you knew you were on a hot topic and you really do pay attention," said Halverson.

Halverson noted that mass campaigns have a role in the process, but their effectiveness increases when individuals engage.

"It has to be followed up with the personal touch," said Halverson.

Another former state legislator also stressed the importance of individuals getting involved.

"It's good for co-op members to get involved, because if legislators don't hear from the constituents, then the only perspective they get is from the lobbyists and such. It's nice to know what the people back home are thinking," said Mark Rogen, president of the Sioux Valley Energy cooperative board in Colman and a former South Dakota Senator representing the Garretson, S.D., area, in the mid-1990s.

"There's always new information daily from all kinds of sources, but legislators need to hear from those who are directly involved with the issue, especially if its going to affect their daily life," said Rogen.

"If they don't hear from you, they'll only hear from the other side," said Rogen.

Electric cooperatives have cultivated a reputation nationally on Capitol Hill and at the state level as a "grassroots" organization. Legislators know that electric co-op member-owners actively get involved by writing, calling and e-mailing their legislators to have their voice heard in the political process. Grassroots advocates speaking with the same voice makes a difference on Capitol Hill.

Communication is a key component of advocacy. Sending your member of Congress an e-mail on an important issue affecting your cooperative is a great way to keep your legislators informed. Cooperatives – through their national arm, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, have set up a Web site where you can do that quickly – the Cooperative Action Network.

Currently at action.coop, co-op members are urged to contact the Environmental Protection Agency, urging the EPA to keep coal as part of our nation's energy mix. (More than half of the electricity used by cooperatives nationwide comes from this important fuel source.)

Legislatively Speaking

How do I contact my legislator? How do I let a Representative or Senator know how I feel about an issue?

One way is to call your legislator while in Pierre or Saint Paul. For South Dakota lawmakers, you can leave a message at 605-773-3251. To contact a member of Minnesota's House of Representatives, call 651-296-2146 and to reach a Minnesota Senator call 651-296-0504. E-mail is a second method. E-mail is most effective if it is not a blanket mailing to all members, but a specific mail message to your representative or senator. When sending an e-mail, remember to include your name, postal address and phone number. (You can send e-mails to South Dakota lawmakers at <http://legis.sd.gov/Contact/LegislatorEmail.aspx> while Minnesota's legislators can be reached at <http://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/legdir.aspx>) The best way to get a legislator's attention is with a short, well-reasoned letter. Here are a few do's and don'ts on how to write an effective letter to your representative:

Do ...

- Be brief; never write more than one page.
- Make your letter neat and easy to read (type or print).
- Make sure you understand the legislative process.
- Identify the issue at the top of the letter and cover only one issue per letter. If you have more than one issue that needs to be addressed, write separate letters for each issue.
- Remember; you're the expert; make your letter informative.
- Identify yourself and the reason for your expertise.
- Get right to the point. For example, you may wish to begin your letter like this: "I hope you will support (oppose) [indicate the specific bill number and the legislative body it is in]. Give your reasons for supporting or opposing the measure. Tell your legislator why you think the bill, if it becomes law, will help or hurt you, your children, your business or your community. Explain what it means to you.
- Use terms they will understand and avoid using abbreviations.
- Offer to be of assistance. Offer to testify if there is a hearing regarding the issue with which you're concerned.
- Ask for a reply if you want one. However, keep in mind how many meetings and hearings your legislator must attend. They will call or write to you as soon as they are able.
- Be polite and reasonable. Lawmakers can't please everyone. They may disagree with you. Try to respect their views. Don't lose your temper, even on paper. Tell your legislator what you think and why, but be polite.
- And finally, be sure to say "thanks."

Don't ...

- Don't use form letters or post cards. Use your own words. Use personal or business stationery or a plain sheet of paper.
- Don't threaten legislators. Legislators say, "Some folks don't know how you stand on an issue, but they'll attack you right off the bat. They'll say, 'Vote for HB _____ or else,' and you may already think it's a wonderful idea. Or they'll write, 'Why aren't you supporting this bill, you fool?'" and you're the sponsor of the bill. Threats and insults don't work."
- Don't address a legislator as "Congressman."

Taming Plug Loads

AS CHILDREN, MOST OF US WERE TOLD TO TURN OFF the TV when no one was in the room to keep from wasting energy. But with today's televisions, turning off the set doesn't save as much energy as you think. "Off" doesn't really mean off anymore.

Lights, air conditioning and heating use most of your home's electricity. However, all of the TVs, computers, printers, phone chargers and other devices add up. Many gadgets use energy even when you are not using them. These devices are commonly referred to as "parasitic loads," "phantom loads," or "energy vampires" – consuming electricity even when switched off. Phantom loads can be found in almost every room, but a favorite "coffin" is your entertainment center.

Most televisions slowly sip electricity while waiting for someone to press the "on" button. They use energy to remember channel lineups, language preferences and the time. DVD players, DVRs, and cable or satellite boxes also use energy when we think they're turned off.

In an average home, 5 percent to 8 percent of electricity consumption stems from small devices that drain energy even when no one is using them. To put that in perspective, the average North American household consumes roughly 10,800 kilowatt-hours (kWh) of electricity per year. If you estimate that 6.5 percent of your total electricity consumption comes from phantom loads, the amount drained by these vampires equals about 700

By
Brian Sloboda



kWh annually – or \$70 every year.

So how can you tell which devices are okay to leave plugged in and which need to have a wooden stake driven through their hearts? Find plug parasites and use smart strips.

Identify Plug Parasites

Microwave ovens and alarm clocks, which use relatively small amounts of standby power, are acceptable to leave plugged in. A digital video recorder (DVR) uses a fairly significant amount of power when turned off, but if you record programs frequently, you will want to leave it plugged in.

You don't have to worry about unplugging items with mechanical on/off switches, such as lamps, hair dryers or small kitchen appliances like toasters or mixers – they don't draw any power when turned off.

How do you save energy on the other devices in your home? Try plugging household electronics like personal computers, monitors, printers, speakers, stereos, DVD and video game players and cell phone chargers into power strips. Not only do power strips protect sensitive electronic components from power surges, you can quickly turn off several items at once. (Routers and modems also can be plugged into power strips, although they take longer to reactivate.)

Smart Strips = Easy Savings

Power strips, however, are often hidden behind entertainment centers or under desks and forgotten. A better solution may be found in “smart strips.”

Most smart strips feature three outlet

colors, each with a unique task. The blue outlet serves as a control plug, and is ideal for a heavily used device like a TV or computer. Anything plugged into red outlets stays on – electricity to these receptacles never cuts off – making them perfect for satellite boxes or other appliances that need constant power.

The remaining outlets, generally neutral or green in color, are sensitive to current flowing through the blue outlet, so turning off the TV or computer cuts power to them as well. Some smart power strips can be made even smarter with timers or occupancy sensors that determine when to cut power to various devices.

Smart strips are available online or at specialty electronic retailers and online. Payback generally can be achieved in under one year, depending on the type of equipment the strips control and how often they are used.

Maybe our parents asked us to turn the TV off because vampires, phantoms and parasites haunted their electric bills. These days, smart strips can chase these load monsters away from your home – and your pocketbook.

Brian Sloboda is a program manager specializing

in energy efficiency for the Cooperative Research Network, a service of the Arlington, Va.-based National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. CRN monitors, evaluates, and applies technologies that help electric cooperatives control costs, increase productivity, and enhance service to their consumers. Additional research provided by ESource.



Stake Energy Vampires with Smart Strips



In an average home, 5 percent to 8 percent of electric use stems from “energy vampires”— devices that use power even when turned off. Smart power strips help you unplug energy-draining devices when not in use easily.

There are typically three different types of outlets on a smart strip:



The blue outlet serves as a control plug (ideal for a TV or computer).



Devices plugged into red outlets stay on—electricity to these receptacles never cuts off, making them perfect for satellite boxes and other items that need constant power.



Remaining outlets, often green or neutral in color, are sensitive to current flowing through the blue outlet. Turning off a device plugged into the blue outlet cuts power to items connected to these outlets.

Smart strips are available online or at specialty electronic retailers and generally cost \$20 or more depending on their size.

Source: Cooperative Research Network, Bits Ltd.

Regional Haze:

A Look at Cross-State Air Pollution Rule

TO PROVIDE SOME BACKGROUND, THE CLEAN AIR Interstate Rule (CAIR) was created by the Environmental Protection Agency in 2005. The rule sought to reduce sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions across 28 states and the District of Columbia using a cap-and-trade approach. In 2008, this rule was remanded back to EPA by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit to create another rule consistent with the court's opinion.

New rule in 2011

In the meantime, the original requirements for pollution reduction remained in effect. The new rule, which was finalized in 2011 and replaced the CAIR, was titled the Clean Air Transport Rule (CATR). This is also known as the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule.

Courts delay implementation of new rule

As written, this rule would affect 27 states, in-

cluding Iowa, where Basin Electric Power Cooperative has facilities, and the initial requirements would go into effect in 2012 with stricter reductions slated for 2014. While some of the requirements could be satisfied through the purchase of emission permits, the rule would limit the trading regions and allowed for no trading of permits across regions. In late 2011, a federal court issued a stay delaying the implementation of this rule pending the outcome of a legal appeal. Ultimately, the rule was rejected on a 2-1 decision by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia in August 2012.

National Rural Electric Cooperative Association considers its position

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) weighed in heavily on this issue on behalf of cooperatives across the nation. They filed comments stressing the modeling used by EPA in this proposal, and the proposal itself,

By
Tim McCarthy

Laramie River Station, operated by Basin Electric Power Cooperative, would be especially hard-hit by proposed EPA rules. Upgrades would cost co-op members millions of dollars.



failed to consider existing emissions controls and the resulting cost of electrical generation when allocating emissions allowances. Getting emission allowance budgets allocated properly will be critical in any emission reduction plan. NRECA had also expressed a great deal of concern about the stringency and timing of the compliance periods within the rule and the inadequate time limits for comment submittal on three Notices of Data Availability (NODA) issued by the EPA. This is a complex issue and there is a great volume of information to be considered in establishing a position on the matter.

NRECA withholds support until allocation methods change

Finally, the NRECA had stated it could not support any of the emission allowance allocation options which were presented. It noted

all the proposed options presented numerous impossibilities for generating unit compliance.

These are issues NRECA felt could be addressed if the allocation methodology appropriately and accurately allocated the allowances in a manner that took into account the various emission characteristics and reduction capabilities between fuel types including coal, coal rank, gas, oil, gas/oil dual fuel and categories of generating unit design including coal boiler, combined-cycle and combustion turbine.

Explaining The Big 5 regulatory issues

Part One of a Five-Part Series

EPA has choices for next move
The EPA and the American Lung Association filed petitions for certiorari on March 29, 2013. The Supreme Court has granted cert and briefing is under way. CAIR remains in effect pending development of a valid replacement for CAIR.

Editor's Note:

This month we kick off a five-part series that will examine various federal regulatory proposals that affect you and your cooperative. This series focuses on regulatory policies – known as “The Big Five” – that will eventually have an impact on the price of electricity your co-op purchases from its power suppliers and delivers to you, our members.

EPA Re-Proposes Regional Haze Plan for Wyoming

Basin Electric believes the state's plan to protect visibility in national parks and wilderness areas is sufficient.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a re-proposed federal implementation plan (FIP) on May 23 to require additional expensive emission control technology at Laramie River Station near Wheatland, Wyo.

The EPA's re-proposed FIP partially approves and partially disapproves Wyoming's state implementation plan (SIP) for regional haze regulation under the Clean Air Act. Approval of the re-proposed FIP would cost Basin Electric hundreds of millions of dollars in emission control upgrades to Laramie River, which Basin Electric owns with five other participants of the Missouri Basin Power Project (MBPP). Basin Electric is the operator of the facility.

The Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality previously submitted its SIP to the EPA addressing regional haze, which focuses on nitrogen oxide (NOx), sulfur dioxide (SO2) and particulate matter. In June 2012, the EPA published its first proposed technology and emissions requirements for Wyoming's coal-based power plant facilities.

In those requirements, the EPA approved Wyoming's SO2 trading program, which would require no SO2 emission technology changes at Laramie River. All three units already operate with

SO2 scrubbers. The EPA, however, disapproved of the state's NOx-control plans and proposed a FIP that would have required selective non-catalytic reduction (SNCR) technology as additional NOx technology controls at Laramie River.

If the EPA's recent FIP is approved as re-proposed on May 23, the three units at Laramie River would need to add selective catalytic reduction (SCR) technology to reach full compliance. The exact additional cost of installing SCR technology is not known at this time, though it is anticipated to cost hundreds of millions of dollars more than SNCR technology.

Basin Electric released the following statement on the EPA's proposed rule:

“Basin Electric believes that protecting visibility in our national parks and wilderness areas is an important goal. However, we do not believe that the measures that the EPA proposes for Basin Electric's Laramie River Station are warranted, or consistent with state and federal air quality laws.

“The state of Wyoming adopted a Regional Haze Plan to protect visibility in national parks and wilderness areas after extensive and comprehensive analysis. Basin Electric supports that plan, which includes a requirement for the Laramie

River Station to reduce significantly its emissions of pollutants such as nitrogen oxides.

“That plan, including the emission reductions at Laramie River, adequately protects visibility and we believe it is inappropriate for the EPA to reject the state's plan and substitute its own. The EPA has not provided a suitable explanation for its proposal to override the state's well-considered judgment.”

The EPA submitted the notice for publication of the proposed rule in the *Federal Register*, where the official version will appear on the Government Printing Office's FDSys website and on www.regulations.gov in Docket No. EPA-R08-OAR-2012-0026.

Deadline extended for Wyoming FIP

The deadline has been extended for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to sign a notice of final rulemaking regarding the federal implementation plan (FIP) for regional haze the agency re-proposed for the State of Wyoming.

The previous deadline was Nov. 21, 2013, but the U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado has provided an extension to Jan. 10, 2014.

Staying Safe on the Road and at Home

WINTER STORMS IN SOUTH DAKOTA AND WESTERN Minnesota can be deadly.

According to the South Dakota Department of Transportation, conditions can change rapidly from clear and sunny to treacherous with zero visibility. The key to survival is to be prepared.

- Carry a charged cell phone, but don't rely on it to get you out of a bad situation. Service may not be available.
- Carry a winter travel survival kit.
- Let someone know when you depart, your route, and your expected arrival time.
- Dress according to the weather conditions.

- Keep dry and wear clothing in layers.
- Fill your fuel tank before you leave.
- Check road conditions and weather forecasts by calling 511 (a free call) or by going online to www.SafeTravelUSA.com.

Should I Travel?

Pay attention to travel advisories and weather warnings and get as much information as possible before deciding to travel on winter roads.

- Check with local media for current and forecasted weather and road reports.
- Call 511 from any Minnesota or South Dakota

FAMILY SUPPLY LIST

As recommended by Ready Kids and The Federal Emergency Management Agency

Emergency Supplies:

Water, food and clean air are important things to have if an emergency happens. Each family or individual's kit should be customized to meet specific needs, such as medications and infant formula. It should also be customized to include important family documents.

Recommended Supplies to Include in a Basic Kit:

- Water, one gallon of water per person per day, for drinking and sanitation
- Food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food
- Battery-powered radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert, and extra batteries for both
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First Aid kit
- Whistle to signal for help
- Infant formula and diapers, if you have an infant

- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation

- Dust mask or cotton t-shirt, to help filter the air

- Plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place

- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Can opener for food (if kit contains canned food)

Clothing and Bedding:

If you live in a cold weather climate, you must think about warmth. It is possible that the power will be out and you will not have heat. Rethink your clothing and bedding supplies to account for



growing children and other family changes. One complete change of warm clothing and shoes per person, including:

- A jacket or coat
- Long pants
- A long sleeve shirt
- Sturdy shoes
- A hat and gloves
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person

mobile phone or landline. The free services allows you to dial the highway number to get condition reports 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- Visit www.SafeTravelUSA.com for road conditions, weather reports and timely camera views of several major roadways.

- While traveling, look for electronic message signs along the Interstate. They will have information regarding any road closures.

Motorists should consider that motels and emergency shelters can fill up quickly if a road has to be closed. It is safer and more comfortable to stay at home or stop before you reach the storm while you wait for it to pass.

If you get stranded

If you are stranded in your vehicle during a winter storm

- Stay with your vehicle.

- Use your mobile phone to call 911.

Be aware of your location and situation.

- Move all your emergency supplies from the vehicle's trunk to the interior of the car as soon as you realize you may be staying for a while.

- Check your supplies to see what you have available and arrange them in order for their use. This will help you ration them in case you are stranded for a long period of time.

- Run the engine sparingly. Start with 15 minutes every hour and adjust if needed. While running the engine, keep a downwind window cracked to prevent carbon monoxide buildup.

- Keep the exhaust pipe clear of snow.

- If the cold is extreme, it may be necessary to keep the engine running continuously. It may not restart if shut off.

- Never go to sleep with the engine running.

- Turn on the dome light at night while the engine is running. It may help others to locate you. Turn it off when

you turn off the engine so you don't run down the car's battery.

- Put on warm clothing right away, before you start to get cold. It is easier to stay warm than it is to regain lost warmth. Loosen tight clothing so body heat can circulate. Remove metal jewelry, as it can chill you.

- Keep your feet off the floor if the heater is not on.

- Use newspapers, maps or even the removable car mats for added insulation.

- Do mild exercises to help you stay warm.

- Watch for signs of frostbite or hypothermia.

- Eat a snack of high calorie food just before sleeping to stimulate your metabolism (heat production). If you awaken due to the cold, eat some more high energy food and add another layer of insulation such as more clothing or a blanket.

- Tie a colorful banner on the car antenna. If you need to leave the car for any distance during the storm, tie a nylon rope to the car and yourself so you will be able to find your way back to the car.

Ice Storms

Ice storms are less common than snow storms in the Dakotas and Minnesota, but they are equally as dangerous.

- Don't drive in freezing rain. It isn't worth the effort or stress on your nerves. There isn't a regular or snow tire that will provide adequate traction on icy roads.

- Your windshield washer fluid will not keep the rain from freezing on the windshield, nor will your defroster keep the window clear enough to see for more than a few minutes. Failure of either, or both, of these systems will leave you blind.

- If freezing rain starts while you are on the road, get off the road and get to a safe place to wait out the storm.

- Remember to contact someone to let them know you have stopped and are safe.

Terms of the Season

Weather warnings

Winter storm watch – indicates that severe winter weather may affect your area.

Winter storm warning – indicates that severe winter weather conditions are confirmed for your area.

Blizzard warning – means that large amounts of falling or blowing snow and sustained winds of at least 35 mph are expected for several hours.

Travel Advisories

No Travel Advised – “No Travel Advised” means that road and weather conditions are such that travel conditions are extremely difficult and hazardous.

Motorists should not travel except for emergency situations.

Road Impassable – A “Road Impassable” advisory means that road or weather conditions are such that widespread heavy snow or drifting has occurred such that travel is not possible.

Road Closed – Road closures are predominantly done only on the Interstate system for which there are controlled points of access. However, in emergency situations, other state highways may also be closed. A Road Closure means that road or weather conditions are such that widespread ice, heavy snow, drifting, or extremely poor visibility has created hazardous and life-threatening travel conditions and that travel is prohibited.

Notification – Road conditions can be found on www.SafeTravelUSA.com, by calling 511, through radio announcements, media releases and dynamic message signs

For more information:

<http://www.sddot.com/resources/Brochures/WinterDrivingBrochure.pdf>

<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/workzone/>

<http://www.ready.gov/build-a-kit>

<http://www.breadysd.com/>

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Regional Dateline

December 27-28

4th Annual Mike Miller Classic
 Mitchell, SD, 605-995-8430

January 7-9

Dakota Farm Show
 USD Dakotadome
 Vermillion, SD, 507-437-7969

January 9-10

Green Day's American Idiot
 Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-6000

January 10

Casey Donahew Band
 Deadwood, SD, 605-559-1187

January 11

Christmas with the Animals
 Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7003

January 11-12

Winter Big Boy Toy Show
 Aberdeen, SD, 605-229-3632

January 14

35th Annual Ranchers
 Workshop, Sinte Gleska
 University (SGU) Multipurpose
 Building, Antelope Campus
 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. CT, Mission, SD
 605-259-3252 ext. 3

January 18

Gallagher, Deadwood, SD
 877-907-4726

January 18

James Valley Model
 Railroad Open House
 Aberdeen, SD, 605-226-2139

January 24-25

Mark Morris Dance Group
 Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-6000



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHAD COMPRESS/S.D. TOURISM

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

January 10-11

Ice Fishing Tournament
 Mobridge, SD, 605-845-2387

January 25

Kool Kids' Klassic Fishing Derby
 Bruce, SD, 605-627-5441
www.gfp.sd.gov

January 25

Bootlegger's Ball
 Brookings, SD, 605-688-5423
southdakotaartmuseum.com

January 31-February 1

Living History Fair
 Watertown, SD, 605-881-1758

January 31-February 2

Sinte Gleska University
 Founders Day Pow-wow
 Mission, SD, 605-856-8100

January 31-February 9

Black Hills Stock Show and
 Rodeo, Rapid City, SD
 605-355-3861
www.BlackHillsStockShow.com

February 1-2

Dakota Territory Gun
 Collector's Association Show
 Aberdeen, SD, 701-851-0129

February 11

Ag Fest, Pierre, SD
 605-945-2548

February 11-15

Winter Farm Show
 Watertown, SD, 605-886-5814
www.watertownsd.com

February 15

James Valley Model Railroad
 Open House, Aberdeen, SD
 605-226-2139

February 17

Farm and Home Show
 Wessington Springs, SD
 605-539-1929

February 21

Kenny Rogers in Concert
 Deadwood, SD, 605-559-1187

February 25-27

Ag Expo, Aberdeen, SD
 605-725-5551
www.aberdeenagexpo.com

February 26

17th Annual Liberty Ball Game
 7 p.m., Riggs High School Gym
 Pierre, SD, 605-341-4311

February 27-March 2

Annual Sioux Falls
 Sportsmen's Boat, Camping
 and Vacation Show
 Sioux Falls, SD, 763-755-8111

February 28-March 2

Home Builders Show
 Watertown, SD, 605-878-3033

March 1

Book Blast at the Empire Mall
 Sioux Falls, SD, 605-361-3301
www.simonkidgitsclub.com

March 8-9

2014 Gun Show
 American Legion Hall
 Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
 Sunday 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. MST
 Philip, SD, 605-859-2635
 605-859-2280, 605-859-2892
 or 605-859-2219

March 15

James Valley Model Railroad
 Open House, Aberdeen, SD
 605-226-2139