

Cooperative Connections

**Deep freeze
challenges
power grid**

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**The latest on EVs
in SD**

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**Co-ops respond
as extreme winter
weather brings up
concerns over power
supply and demand**



Working Together

Cooperative Consumers Protected from Volatile Markets



Stephanie Horst

horst@byelectric.com

This is why it is important for a co-op to be part of an organization that owns generation and transmission which can help shield you, our member-owners, against having to pay high market prices.

As we saw during the cold snap over the week of Feb. 14 and the energy emergency that followed, having a stable, reliable, and affordable power supply is critical to our lives. By now, we have all heard the news following the Texas energy emergency of residents in that state getting monthly residential electrical bills of over \$10,000. Those astonishing costs are caused by electric utilities being at the mercy of a volatile energy market and, in turn, passing the costs along to their customers.

These shocking stories coming out of Texas bring the question: Can that happen to us here?

First and foremost, our hearts go out to those Texas consumers who are experiencing such staggering financial burdens caused by exposure to a volatile energy market. As a member-owner of our electric cooperative, you belong to a broad cooperative network which helps to prevent wild swings in energy prices that we saw in other parts of the country where some utilities are fully exposed to the energy market – simply buying electricity without generating electricity.

The electricity that powers your home begins with Basin Electric Power Cooperative, which owns generation facilities and supplies our cooperative with a diverse energy mix. East River Electric Power Cooperative is the transmission cooperative in our network that owns and operates over 3,000 miles of transmission lines and 250 substations across South Dakota and Minnesota, and as a member of Basin, has ownership in Basin's generation. Through that infrastructure, East River safely and reliably delivers low-cost wholesale power from Basin Electric and hydropower through the Western Area Power Administration to member distribution systems like ours which, in turn, deliver power to homes and businesses in our region. Our cooperative as an owner of East River, has ownership in the Basin generation and East River transmission system. And you, as an owner of our cooperative have that same ownership.

East River and Basin Electric are members of the Southwest Power Pool (SPP). Basin Electric owns generation and transmission resources, and East River owns transmission and substation infrastructure in SPP which allows our cooperative network to sell power on the market when prices are high and buy power on the market when prices are low. Selling generation is a hedge against wild swings in the market. It helps Basin Electric and East River provide stable and affordable electric rates all year long. Through Basin Electric's sales of generation into the market and East River's return on transmission infrastructure in SPP, East River's membership has seen a multi-million-dollar annual benefit, with added financial benefits to other member cooperatives in the Basin Electric family.

Our cooperative works together with East River and Basin Electric to share risk and avoid fluctuations in the energy market like we saw in Texas. For-profit energy brokers can be exposed to fluctuations in the markets and consumers pay the price. This is why it is important for a co-op to be part of an organization that owns generation and transmission which can help shield you, our member-owners, against having to pay high market prices. East River's members will pay the same rate during and after the energy emergency as we paid before because we have long term resources to serve our load. That's the power of being connected to a cooperative power supply, rather than relying on for-profit energy brokers.

Your Co-op Connections Card will arrive in your mailbox at the end of March! See page 11 for more details.

Bon Homme Yankton Electric

Cooperative Connections

(USPS No. 018-973)

**Bon Homme Yankton Electric
Association, Inc**
PO Box 158
134 S Lidice St
Tabor, SD 57063

Office Hours:
Monday through Friday
7:30am - 4:30pm

To pay by phone, call:
1-888-395-5315

To report an outage, call:
Local call from Tabor, Tyndall and
Yankton:
605-463-2507
Toll Free in South Dakota:
1-800-925-2929

**NOTICE: Electric bills must be paid
by 10:00am on the 20th of each
month to avoid a \$10 late fee.**

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Announcing South Dakota Connect Con: A Youth Leadership Experience

Attention high school students! If your parent or guardian is an active member of Bon Homme Yankton Electric, you have a chance to take an all-expenses-paid trip to the beautiful Black Hills this summer for a youth leadership event!

If chosen, you will travel with other students from electric cooperatives throughout the state and take part in South Dakota's Connect Con: A Youth Leadership Experience.

Participants will stay on campus at Black Hills State University in Spearfish, S.D. from July 26-29. Once participants arrive on the campus via bus on July 26, they can look forward to two whole days of building friendships, developing professional skills and deepening their knowledge of the thriving electric industry.

During their stay, students will get to listen to industry experts and participate in hands-on activities designed to enhance their leadership skills. Students will be given the opportunity to tour the Spearfish Hydro Plant and Butte Electric Cooperative, learning about the past, present and future of South Dakota's energy industry along the way.

There will also be plenty of time built in for recreation and socializing – students will play games, go hiking in the scenic Spearfish Canyon and much more. Participants can look forward to connecting with students from all across South Dakota, learning from each other and building strong friendships.

Call our office at (605) 463-2507 or email jarens@byelectric.com with any questions.

How to Apply

- Students may apply if their parent or guardian is an active member of Bon Homme Yankton Electric.
- Students must be in high school.
- Students must apply for the trip at byelectric.coop/youth-tour



Home Improvements Don't Have to be Expensive

You don't have to replace your air conditioner with a high-efficiency system or make other major improvements to reduce energy consumption. There are low-cost efficiencies anyone can implement to help reduce energy bills.

- **Mind the thermostat.** You might be able to trim your energy bill by carefully managing the temperature in your home. Consider setting your thermostat to 78 degrees when you're running the air conditioner. If that's not cool enough, use fans to help circulate the air to help you feel cooler.
- **Go programmable.** If you don't always remember to adjust your thermostat manually, you could benefit from a programmable model. In the right situation and set correctly, programmable thermostats can save your household \$150 a year. Some models can be managed from your smartphone or other devices.
- **Stop air leaks.** Small gaps around windows, doors, wiring and plumbing penetrations can be major sources of energy loss. This problem can be alleviated with a little weatherstripping and caulk. A \$10 door draft stopper (also known as a "door snake") is a simple way to block gaps underneath exterior doors. Sealing air leaks around your home could shave up to one-fifth off your heating and cooling bills.
- **Manage your windows and window coverings.** Your windows may be letting heat out during the winter and letting heat in during the summer. Window coverings like medium or heavyweight curtains and thermal blinds can help. During the summer, keep window coverings closed to block the sun and keep it from heating conditioned indoor air. On cooler spring days, turn off your air conditioner, open the windows and enjoy the breeze - and lower electricity bills.
- **Look for energy wasters.** There are small steps you can take every day to reduce your energy use. Water heaters should be kept at the warm setting (120 degrees). Wash dishes and clothes on the most economical settings that will do the job, and always wash full loads. Use the microwave instead of the oven when possible. And unplug phone chargers, electronics and small appliances when not in use.

A Note of Appreciation for the Service Co-ops Provide

By Mark Peacock, Dupree

Most of us wake up each day with an agenda and a schedule that ensures we do things in pretty much the same way from the moment we open our eyes to the moment we arrive at wherever it is we spend our day working.

But on those rare occasions when I walk through our warm home and turn on the bathroom light, which in our home has an overhead radiant heat lamp, and start the shower, which releases hot water from the water heater nestled in the basement, I sometimes take a brief pause in my routine.

I pause to feel the heat of the water wash over me...if only for a minute or so, to enjoy and appreciate what a wonderful experience having a hot shower in a well-warmed, well-lit bathroom in a very comfortable home represents. It means I live in a country and in a state and in a county that has invested in the infrastructure and made a commitment to allowing normal, everyday Americans the opportunity to enjoy such a treat in the middle of a South Dakota winter.

And I smile, because we may not get all we want in life, but we may, for a brief moment, feel all the warmth it takes to start off the day in a positive way. Thank you and your energy partners for making my day and the days of thousands of others begin just a little better, a little bit warmer, a little bit brighter, and a whole lot more optimistic.

KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



Stay Indoors During a Storm

Celeste Meyer, 6 years old

Celeste is the daughter of Brice and Sarah Meyer. She is a resident of Trent and a member of Sioux Valley Electric.

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.



Slushes, Punches, Lattes

Fruit Slush

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 6-oz. can orange juice concentrate | 1/3 cup halved maraschino cherries with juice |
| 1 6-oz. can lemonade concentrate | 2 firm bananas, sliced |
| 3 or 4 juice cans water | 2 10-oz. boxes frozen strawberries, thawed |
| 2 20-oz. cans crushed pineapple with juice | |

Stir all ingredients together and freeze in 9 x 13 inch pan or ice cream bucket. Remove from freezer a few minutes before serving. To serve, put scoop of slush in glass and fill glass with 7-Up or Squirt.

Mary Jessen, Holabird

Banana Slush Punch

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 7-8 bananas | concentrate |
| 2 12-oz. cans of orange juice concentrate | 1 46-oz. can of pineapple juice |
| 1 12-oz. can of lemonade | |

Blend bananas with all ingredients above. Bring to boil 6 cups water and 3 cups sugar. Cool. Combine banana mixture with sugar water. Freeze. At the time of serving, mixture should be slushy. Add two 2-liter bottles of Sprite or Fresca to the banana/water mixture and serve.

Julie Hummel, Hawarden, IA

Seasonal Punch

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 12-oz. can frozen orange juice | 4 quarts water |
| 12-oz. can Frozen Lemonade | 3-3/4 cups sugar |
| 4 pkgs. Koolade, any flavor | 2 Liters 7-Up (or Diet 7-Up) |

Mix orange juice, lemonade, Koolade, water and sugar, store in fridge to keep cold. Also refrigerate the 2 liters of 7-Up. Prior to serving - pour in the 2 liter of 7-Up and gently stir to mix. You can use any color Koolade, maybe green for Easter, red for 4th of July, Labor Day and Christmas, and orange for Halloween. Refreshing punch goes well with meals or anytime of day.

Pam Conn, Sioux Falls

Spiced Cocoa Mix

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1/4 cup cocoa | 1/2 cup nondairy powdered creamer |
| 1 cup powdered sugar | 3/4 tsp. cinnamon |
| 2 cups nonfat dry milk powder | 1/2 tsp. nutmeg |

Sift powdered sugar and cocoa together. Add remaining ingredients. Mix well. For each serving, use 1/3 cup mix and 3/4 cup boiling water. Stir. May add a teaspoon of coffee crystals, a dollop of whipped cream, or a teaspoon of liquid flavored coffee creamer.

Elaine Rowett, Sturgis

Creamy Hot Chocolate

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1/2 cup dry baking cocoa | 7-1/2 cups water |
| 14-oz. can sweetened condensed milk | 1-1/2 tsp vanilla |
| 1/8 tsp salt | |

Mix cocoa, milk, salt into a crock pot. Add water gradually, stirring into smooth. Cover and cook on high 2 hours, or low 4 hours. Stir in vanilla before serving.

Melissa Roerig, Sioux Falls

Chocolate Latte

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| 1/2 cup hot brewed coffee or 2 shots espresso | 2 teaspoons cocoa nibs |
| 1 Premier Protein 30g High Protein Chocolate Shake | |

In large 14-16-oz. mug, prepare espresso or coffee. Pour chocolate shake on top to combine. Top with cocoa nibs.

www.premierprotein.com

Please send your favorite casserole 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 2021. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

WELCOME MEMBERS

Avon

Ethan Schroeder
Loren & Rachel Bertus
Riley Berndt

Mission Hill

Bruce Renchy

Scotland

Craig Neth

Tabor

Emma & Ryan Kotrous
Sarah Ruml

Tyndall

Chantelle Walter

Yankton

Nate & Kiley Landman
Ty Soulek
Marshall & Teri Zastrow
Travis & Nicole Schnabel
Thomas & Natasha Schall
Sean Ward
Brad & Shelia Sik
Casey Cameron

Statement of non-discrimination

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer. If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

Thank a Lineworker Day

Lineworkers serve on the front lines of our nation's energy needs, and on April 12, 2021, Bon Homme Yankton Electric, along with other electric cooperatives across the country, will honor the brave men and women who work hard to keep the lights on.

Line crews work around the clock, sometimes in difficult and dangerous conditions, to keep power flowing to our local communities. Whether they're restoring power after a major storm or maintaining critical infrastructure to our electric system, lineworkers are at the heart of our co-op.

When a storm hits, they set aside their personal priorities because Mother Nature doesn't work around holidays, vacations and birthdays. A service-oriented mentality is one of the many admirable characteristics of an electric lineworker.

Bon Homme Yankton Electric is proud to honor the 7 lineworkers that maintain 1,296 miles of power lines in our service territory.

Our team of lineworkers includes Alex Caba, Gunnar Dally, Nathan Kloucek, Shawn Kafka, Travis Gause, Travis Zomer, and Tyler Suess. Our electricians Kevin Meyer and Wes Kloucek also work on the lines, and Ken Carda, the Operations Manager, and Aaron Melichar, the Material/Facilities Coordinator, also play crucial roles to keep the lights on.

Bon Homme Yankton Electric invites all co-op members to take a moment and thank a lineworker for the important work they do.



Back row: Shawn Kafka, Gunnar Dally, Travis Gause, Wes Kloucek, Nathan Kloucek, Ken Carda
Front row: Aaron Melichar, Travis Zomer, Alex Caba, Kevin Meyer, Tyler Suess

THANK A LINEWORKER!

This month, we're recognizing lineworkers for the amazing job they do to make sure we have electricity! Think about all the ways you use electricity every day. Do you use a phone, watch TV, play video games or turn on lights? You're able to do all of these things because of lineworkers.

Below is space to write a short thank you note to Bon Homme Yankton Electric lineworkers. Write your note, then ask an adult to help you send it back to us so we can share it with our crews.



WE ♥ OUR
LINEWORKERS

Send your note to the mailing address below, or snap a photo with your phone and email it to us!

Bon Homme Yankton Electric
PO Box 158
Tabor, SD 57063
or jarens@byelectric.com

Training Program Provides Foundation of Co-op Knowledge

Sternhagen Earns CCD Certification

Congratulations to Bon Homme Yankton Electric Board Member Dean Sternhagen for completing all of the required training courses to become a Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD). To receive this designation, Sternhagen completed five courses and a learning assessment of each respective course.

These training courses are specifically designed to provide the foundation of knowledge needed for effective leadership as a Bon Homme Yankton Electric board member and are administered by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association based in Arlington, VA.

Co-op board members take on a tremendous responsibility for providing leadership, direction, and policy positions that are necessary for the organizations ongoing success on behalf of its members. Completing these courses demonstrates the commitment he has to the success of your cooperative. Congratulations Dean!



Board President Paul Voigt (left) presents Dean Sternhagen (right) with CCD Certificate

STATISTICAL COMPARISON

JANUARY	2020	2021	2021 YTD
Number of Meters	3,867	3,908	
Total Revenue	\$1,060,552	\$1,012,802	\$1,012,802
Cost of Power	\$638,089	\$566,574	\$566,574
Total Cost of Service	\$1,002,280	\$886,270	\$886,270
kWhs Purchased	10,714,441	9,810,782	9,810,782
kWhs Sold	10,233,765	9,415,505	9,415,505
Line Loss %	4.09%	3.64%	3.64%
Residential Average kWh	2,399	2,124	2,124
Residential Average Bill	\$238	\$220	\$220

BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

February 2021

The February board meeting was held on February 17, at 8am as a hybrid in person and Zoom meeting. All board members were present. Others present were Attorney Sheila Woodward, General Manager Stephanie Horst, Office Manager Nicole Einrem, and Operations Manager Ken Carda.

The Board Reviewed and Approved:

- Minutes of the Previous Meeting
- Capital Credits to Estates in the amount of \$3,381.82
- Closed Work Order Inventory in the amount of \$661,909.39
- New Members & Cancellations
- Special Equipment purchases in the amount of \$32,884.71

The Board Reviewed and Approved Reports:

- East River Cyber Security/IT Report
- Reports from staff members as to the activities in their departments.
 - Office: Monthly Financial Report, Check Register, & 2020 Year End
 - Member Service/ Communications Report
 - Operations Report
 - Safety Report
 - General Manager's Report
- Reports from board members
 - South Dakota Rural Electric
 - East River Electric Power Cooperative
 - Energize Forum
 - Attorney Report

The Board Reviewed and Approved:

- Policy 50-08 & Policy 40-02
- CRC Mail In Voting Delegate/Alternate
- Recognition of Dean Sternhagen's CCD Certification
- Executive Session - Enter & Exit
- Next meeting date set for Wed., March 17, at 8 am.



A peek inside the Southwest Power Pool control room shows system operators working to make sure power supply always matches demand across 14 states on the grid. Photo provided by SPP.

AN ENERGY EMERGENCY

Why Did February Outages Happen and Could They Happen Again?

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

The national power grid has been hailed as one of the greatest and most complex engineering feats ever achieved. Every second of every day it works to keep electricity flowing freely to homes, schools, farms, hospitals and businesses in every region of the country.

But while it stands as one of mankind's most marvelous inventions, sometimes it's simply no match for Mother Nature.

This electric superhighway was put to the test in mid-February when a bone-chilling air mass swept through large swaths of the country and caused a spike in the demand for power. As the temperatures dropped, millions of Americans attempted to stave off the frigid air by reaching for electric blankets, plugging in space heaters and nudging their thermostats up a few notches. With so many people clamoring to stay warm, the sudden spike in demand for power caused the gatekeepers of the grid to reach their option of last resort: ordering temporary disruptions in service to maintain the delicate balance between demand and supply that's required to keep the network from completely melting down.

The result was several waves of controlled and coordinated rolling blackouts often spanning one hour and isolated incidents of up to three hours for some consumers. The service interruptions impacted nearly one-third of the nation. Industry officials explain that this response to skyrocketing demand was necessary to keep the grid from sustaining extensive damage and causing a repeat of the historic event that occurred in the summer of 2003. The Northeast Blackout extended across the eastern seaboard, through parts of the Midwest and into southern Canada and left approximately 50 million in the dark.

"Controlled outages are necessary to prevent widespread damage to the grid, which could cause a cascade of outages that could potentially be far more devastating," explained Barbara Sugg, CEO of the Southwest Power Pool (SPP). "There's no doubt this would have been a much more significant event if our individual customers and businesses and industries had not all pulled together to reduce the load."

Air Traffic Controllers for the Grid

Sugg describes her organization as an "air traffic controller" for the grid. In fact, the SPP is what's known in the electric utility industry as a Regional Transmission Organization (RTO). It's one of the four quasi-government entities responsible for maintaining the critical balance between supply and demand along the nation's power grid. While RTOs don't create or generate power, they are charged under the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) with the task of making sure the power produced by other utilities flows smoothly across the grid and gets to the places where consumers need it, when they need it.

SPP is the power transmission overseer for 14 states - including South Dakota - and more than 17 million people in the midsection of the U.S. from North Dakota to the Texas Panhandle. Electric co-ops in South Dakota are also part of the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), a federal agency that markets power produced from hydroelectric dams in the Upper Midwest. It operates the larger bulk transmission facilities in 15 central and western states in its geographical footprint.

Most of the time the high-voltage transmission process operates without a hitch, and electric generation can be moved across the grid when there is high demand in one area and excess generation in another. But when foul weather comes into the picture grid operators focus on activating their emergency response plans. Those plans typically include communicating with generators to coordinate arrangements for assuring that an ample supply of power will be available to meet projected demand when the inclement weather strikes.

Lanny Nickell, operations manager for SPP, points out that while arrangements were in place to face the February cold snap, the winter blast turned out to be an unprecedented event for the organization. As the temperatures dropped, SPP initiated the process of contacting power generators and transmitters to warn that the looming storm may cause the system to be severely strained. Six days later, SPP officials went

through a series of three Energy Emergency Alert levels and eventually declared a Level 3 emergency, which required “controlled interruptions of service,” or rolling blackouts. It was the first time in the SPP’s 80 years that a Level 3 emergency was declared.

“Despite our plans, the severe weather coupled with a limited fuel supply hampered our ability to balance our supply with the demand from end-use consumers,” Nickell said. “So, first we had to go out and ask for a voluntary reduction in energy use. Then, we held off as long as we could to make the call to interrupt service in a controlled fashion, but it was necessary to prevent overloading the system and causing an even bigger problem and much longer outages.”

Nickell explained that without an affordable and viable means of storing high-voltage electricity for future use, power is created in one location and consumed in another location in real time. The balance must be maintained even though both supply and consumption change on a second-by-second basis.

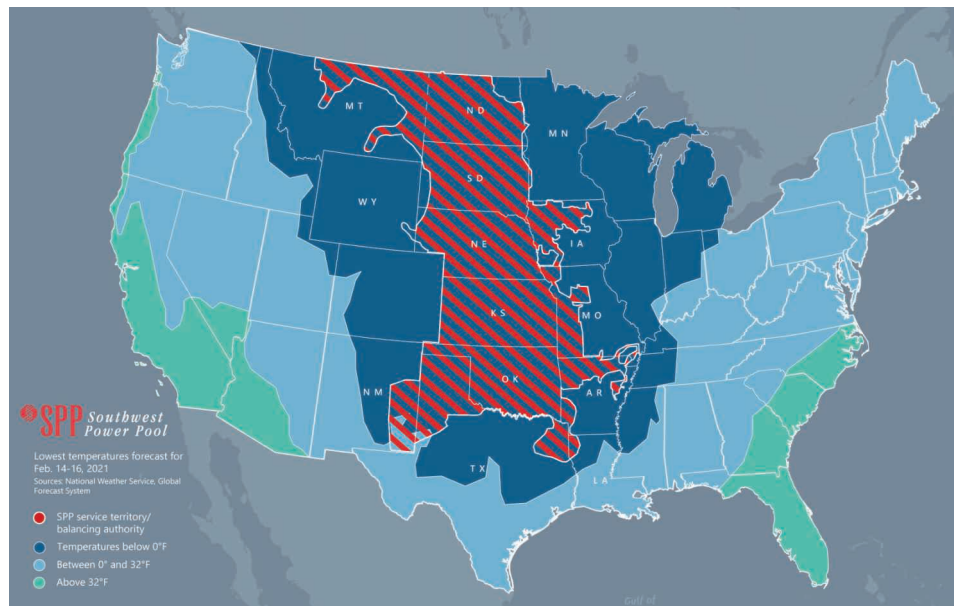
“Once we observe an imbalance, we have to react within seconds to reduce the demand,” Nickell said. “This is why it’s very difficult for us to announce well beforehand when these things will happen because they happen at the speed of light.”

A Smorgasbord of Fuel Sources

Interruptions in service are more than minor inconveniences for many co-op members, especially when severe weather conditions are in play. The February storm and the ensuing service outages triggered wide-ranging discussions about the push toward renewable resources to generate electricity.

Supporters of fossil fuels point out that decades-long efforts to curb coal and natural gas played a part in restricting the kinds of available resources that could have prevented widespread outages. Coal has long been a reliable source of “baseload power” requirements, or the amount of power necessary to provide an adequate supply to meet basic needs without interruption. It’s utilized largely because it can be more easily controlled compared to intermittent sources. Advocates emphasize that wind turbines were frozen in place and solar panels were buried in snow and limited by scarce sunlight during this event.

Renewable fuel source proponents echoed SPP officials in noting that the February storm was an historic occurrence. They contend that renewable power promotes a cleaner environment, decreases energy reliance on other countries, adds jobs to the economy and that innovations in the emerging industry



could be effective in responding to any future storms. Presently, roughly 25 percent of South Dakota’s overall energy supply comes from wind turbines. For electric co-ops, that figure is closer to 20 percent. Proponents of wind also point to issues with natural gas delivery and the inability of some fossil fuel plants to produce electricity through the storm. A combination of high demand, lower-than-normal wind resources and natural gas delivery problems all met at the same time to contribute to the energy emergency.

As for those members of RTOs who receive the call to actually implement controlled outages - particularly transmission and distribution cooperatives - there are very few options available when demand begins to significantly outpace supply on the grid.

Chris Studer is chief member and public relations officer for East River Electric, a co-op that provides transmission and substation services for distribution entities in South Dakota and Minnesota. He said the cooperative’s hands are essentially tied when SPP reaches the point of calling for rolling outages.

“The utilities involved in the SPP are required to carry a surplus of generation resources throughout the year over and above their historic peak demand so they are prepared for extreme circumstances. However, when wind resources and other generation are constrained, there is a limited amount of other generation available to serve the region’s recent record demand for electricity,” he said.

Distribution co-ops find they have even less control when RTOs and power marketing agencies restrict the flow of power, but they still find ways to mitigate the situation. Officials at West River Electric based in Wall, implemented

“Once we observe an imbalance, we have to react within seconds to reduce the demand. This is why it’s very difficult for us to announce well beforehand when these things will happen because they happen at the speed of light.”

- Lanny Nickell, SPP

the co-op’s load management program after receiving the request for reduced demand hoping it would be enough. But it was not, and some of the co-op’s members were subject to a 50-minute unplanned blackout. CEO Dick Johnson said he had never experienced a similar event in his 27 years in the industry. He added that he hopes the emergency situation prompts discussions centered around policy proposals that will prevent future emergencies.

“I think we should have a national conversation that includes large new baseload generation, whether that be hydroelectric, nuclear or carbon capture on coal plants. We must also have a conversation about building necessary electric and gas transmission infrastructure to allow us to get electricity and gas to the places where it is needed when times like this happen. If not, I am afraid it will happen again in the future, only more frequently.”

CLASSIFIEDS

May Issue Deadline: April 1, 2020.
Email your classified ad to: jarens@byelectric.com. Members can post one free ad per year. Repeats or longer ads are \$1/column inch.

FOR RENT: 1 bedroom apartment. Tabor Manor. Contact Gary at 605-463-2209 or Ron at 605-463-2256.

Beseda Hall, Tabor, SD for rent for any special occasion such as weddings, anniversaries, graduation or birthdays! For more information contact Linda Bares at 605-661-6220 or snlbases@gmail.com.

FOR RENT: Tabor Self Storage. Call 605-660-0274 or 605-660-3497.



Steps to Take Before Installing Solar



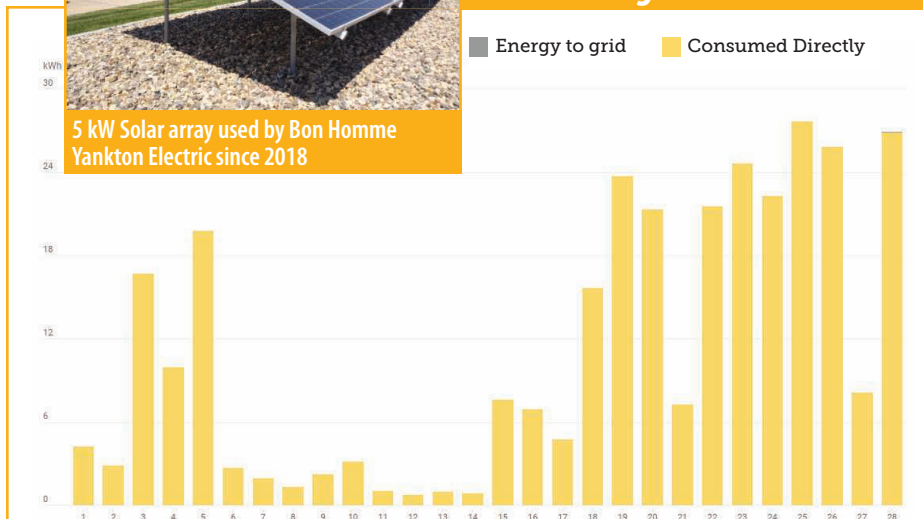
As your energy experts, we are here to offer advice and help you set up your system safely.

- ✓ Contact a qualified solar contractor
- ✓ Contact Bon Homme Yankton Electric before purchasing or installing a system
- ✓ Complete our Distributed Generation Application
- ✓ Complete our Battery Storage Application if relevant
- ✓ Complete an Interconnection Agreement
- ✓ Complete inspections and other requirements according to Bon Homme Yankton Electric policies



5 kW Solar array used by Bon Homme Yankton Electric since 2018

February Solar Stats



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Some manufacturers set water heater thermostats at 140 degrees, but most households usually only require them to be set at 120 degrees. Consider lowering your water heater's temperature to save energy and slow mineral buildup in the heater and pipes.

Source: www.energy.gov



Exciting New Benefit for Bon Homme Yankton Electric Members!

Co-op Connections Card Program

Bon Homme Yankton Electric is offering an exciting new program for our members. We have joined the Co-op Connections Card Program which is a free member benefit program that gives Bon Homme Yankton Electric members access to thousands of discounts.

Bon Homme Yankton members will receive their plastic Co-op Connections cards by mail at the end of March.

If you have any questions about this program or you are a local business owner who would like to participate in this program, please contact our Marketing and Communications Coordinator Jaclyn Arens at jarens@byelectric.com or (605) 463-2507.

Is the program really free?

Each co-op member will receive a free Co-op Connections Card in the mail. There's no sign-up. No annual fees. You will get your Co-op Connections Card simply because you're a member of Bon Homme Yankton Electric!

How do I receive discounts with the Co-op Connections program?

You are able to start saving immediately if you have access to a computer or smartphone.

- First, visit www.connections.coop to create a free account to have access to thousands of deals right at your fingertips.
- Next, simply download the free Co-op Connections app from the Google Play or Apple App Store to your smartphone and log in to your account to start saving today!

When you receive your plastic Co-op Connections Card, you can simply show it at local participating businesses.

When will I receive my card?

All Bon Homme Yankton Electric members will receive a card in the mail at the end of March 2021.

What are some features of the Co-op Connections program?

The program allows you to see participating businesses through the mobile app and use coupons straight from your phone.

Where can I see a list of participating businesses?

See local participating businesses to the right. This list will continuously update especially since the program is brand new. To see the most current list, visit the Co-op Connections app or our website at our website byelectric.coop/co-op-connections-card

Businesses interested in joining the program, please contact Jaclyn Arens at jarens@byelectric.com or call (605) 463-2507.

Co-op Connections Card Program Vendors

Yankton Pizza Ranch	(605)665-1222	Yankton	Buy an adult buffet at regular price and get a second for \$7.99
O'Malley's	(605)665-2411	Yankton	Free item when a second item of equal or greater value is purchased - \$5 max
Upper Deck Bar & Grill	(605)665-3137	Yankton	\$5 off any purchase of \$25 or more
El Tapatio	(605)260-1701	Yankton	\$3 off the regular price of any dinner entree when a second dinner entree of equal or greater value and 2 drinks are purchased
King Buffet	(605)260-8888	Yankton	10% off the total bill
Beehive Salon	(605)661-2827	Yankton	20% off total bill - \$25 max
Shindler Foot Clinic	(605)665-3869	Yankton	\$10 off any purchase of \$40 or more
Abby's Auto Detailing	(605)665-0801	Yankton	\$10 off any purchase of \$50 or more
Dunham's Sports	(605)665-0100	Yankton	10% off entire regular priced purchase
Fish-N-Stuff	(605)665-2626	Yankton	Free item when a second item of equal or greater value is purchased - \$4 max
JJ Benji Screenprint	(605)260-0920	Yankton	Free team logo sportswear when a second team logo sportswear of equal or greater value is purchased
Monta's Framing & Design	(605)608-0622	Yankton	\$10 off any purchase of \$40 or more
Signs By Design	(605)464-4100	Yankton	\$10 off any purchase of \$50 or more
Head2Heels	(605)665-2599	Yankton	10% off any regular priced item



This electric vehicle owned by Sioux Valley Energy is used as a fleet vehicle for the cooperative but also serves to educate members about EV technology and performance.

Electric Vehicles in SD

Electric Co-ops Working to Build Fast Charging Stations

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

General Motors turned a lot of heads earlier this year when the auto industry titan announced its intention to phase out all gas and diesel engines by 2035. GM made sure its message was loud and clear by running ads during the Super Bowl.

Not to be outdone, Ford CEO Jim Farley soon followed suit by announcing the company's plans to invest \$29 billion in the development of autonomous vehicles (AVs) and electric vehicles (EVs) by 2025. And against a backdrop of companies like Tesla and Workhorse seeing triple-digit stock gains, President Joe Biden rolled out plans to turn the entire 650,000-vehicle federal government fleet to all electric.

With a solid upward trend in support of E-mobility and electric vehicles sweeping the globe, electric cooperatives throughout the region are doing their part to provide the power those vehicles will need to carry their passengers from Point A to Point B.

According to Ben Pierson, manager of beneficial electrification at Sioux Valley

Energy, the state's electric cooperatives are facing a chicken-and-egg proposition in deciding whether - and how much - to invest in an industry that's still in its early stages. Pierson has been involved in rallying support for the formation of a DC fast charging network that will make it easy for EV drivers to navigate across and throughout the state. The stations will be placed 75-100 miles apart but will have to be constructed before the demand is fully materialized. He has received interest from groups representing tourism, economic development, transportation and state government.

Pierson has been working with municipal and investor-owned utilities to build out the infrastructure, with an emphasis on making sure there are enough charging stations along I-90 to get travelers from one side of the state to the other with confidence. Stations will also be installed along the I-29 corridor in Brookings and Watertown in Phase 1, with plans to include a station in Vermillion as part of Phase 2. Pierson points out that "range anxiety" is a major obstacle for consumers and early adopters who are considering the purchase of an EV. Presently, EVs

make up less than 1 percent of the total U.S. vehicle fleet while 10 percent of the vehicles sold in Europe last December were pure electric.

A recent study by the Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chicago indicated that EVs are driven about half the distance - an average of 5,300 miles a year - compared to conventional internal combustion engine vehicles. One conclusion taken from the study is that EV owners see those vehicles as complements to their transportation needs instead of a replacement for their conventional cars.

"When industry giants like Ford and GM are making a commitment to electric vehicles, that's a huge indicator that EVs are more than just a passing fad and are something we should invest in," Pierson said. "But like any industry transformation, it can be a frightening proposition for people to experience a paradigm shift like this. With our members in mind, we're committed to staying out ahead of the wave and doing what we can to make sure the power delivery infrastructure is in place when the other pieces and parts of the total picture emerge."

DC Fast Charging Infrastructure Plan



Utilities are in the process of conducting siting plans and ordering equipment needed to install the network of charging stations. In the state Legislature, lawmakers favored a \$50 annual fee on electric vehicles which don't contribute the gas tax revenue that goes toward construction and maintenance of road and highway infrastructure. Presently, there are roughly 400 EVs on South Dakota roadways.

"We're just tremendously excited to be a part of this project," Pierson said. "Our goal is to help our members in any way we can and we want to be there on the ground floor as the industry continues to expand."

Collaborating with Pierson is Robert Raker, manager of public relations at West River Electric. They are working with utilities throughout South Dakota

and Minnesota to build out the DC fast charging infrastructure. The plan is to initially focus on major highways and interstates and then branch out from there.

The way Raker sees it, getting involved in constructing a charging station network is a sound investment in the economic growth and development of cooperative communities. He said cooperatives are leading the way by purchasing EVs of their own as demonstration models for their members and also as part of the cooperative's fleet. West River Electric's Nissan Leaf is used for business purposes throughout the day and is quite the attraction at community events on the weekends. He noted that co-ops have a long history of innovation and progress.

"Many co-ops are formulating plans to

migrate their light-duty service vehicles to EV," Raker said. "Co-ops have always been at the tip of the innovation spear. We were the first to bring power to rural South Dakota and we made sure people had access to power in order to run their farms, homes and appliances...things that would make their lives easier while allowing their communities to prosper."

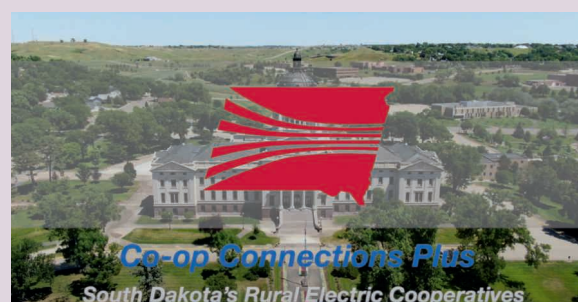
Part of West River's overall EV strategy, Raker said, is to address the issue of whether the escalating number of EVs will increase stress on the electric power grid.

"EVs make the perfect load for co-ops," he said. "They can be charged during off-peak hours so they are not detrimental to the grid. Like it or not, EVs are coming. We can't change the wind so we'll have to adjust our sails."

Visit Co-op Connections Plus

Take a moment to visit our new online companion to *Cooperative Connections*. Co-op Connections Plus is a YouTube channel that features a more in-depth treatment of stories appearing in this publication as well as other subjects of interest to rural South Dakotans.

Search for "Co-op Connections Plus" and you'll find videos on human trafficking, support programs for veterans, grain bin safety, the Co-ops Vote campaign and more. Be sure to "like" and "subscribe."



Bright Futures Virtual Career Fair Showcases Rural, Agri-Business Job Opportunities

Shayla Ebsen

Grow a rewarding and challenging career right here at home. That was the overarching theme of the Bright Futures virtual career fair that was hosted on Feb. 24 by the region's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives. South Dakota and western Minnesota high school and post-secondary students, educational advisers, teachers, and parents from across the region attended the free virtual career event that highlighted rural-based careers and explored industries like finance, precision ag and agricultural trades.

"Our cooperative family is committed to enhancing the communities we serve," said Jennifer Gross, education and outreach coordinator at East River Electric Power Cooperative, one of the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives that hosted the event.

Attendees were able to connect with each other, respond to survey questions, post their own comments and photos, and participate in real-time Q&A sessions with presenters.

"We hosted this unique event to inspire our youth with local stories emphasizing job opportunities, career development, personal fulfillment and financial advancement. There are hidden career gems throughout South Dakota and Minnesota. This event shined a light on all the ways our rural areas offer a bright future!"

The five-hour virtual event featured a blend of keynote speakers and breakout



sessions. Attendees were able to connect with each other, respond to survey questions, post their own comments and photos, and participate in real-time Q&A sessions with presenters.

South Dakota Representative Dusty Johnson opened the event with a timely discussion about politics, agriculture and our region's future. Johnson also discussed how decisions made in Washington, D.C., have a big impact on what happens in our region and why it's important for citizens to remain engaged. A few of the many companies featured during the career fair included Farm Credit Services of America, C&B Operations, Raven Industries, Midwest Vet Services, Salem Vet Clinic and Pipestone System. A panel discussion led by East River Electric Business Development Director Mike Jaspers explored opportunities that are on the horizon for the next generation of farmers, ranchers and rural social media influencers. South Dakota Ag and Rural Leadership Foundation CEO Don Norton provided the event's closing remarks.

"The nature of work in rural America is changing. Growing industries such as precision agriculture, livestock development, food processing, manufacturing, energy, communications and more require different skills, as well as an entrepre-



East River Education and Outreach Coordinator Jennifer Gross interviewed Matt Leighton from Titan Machinery.

neurial spirit," said Gross. "This is truly a great time to be starting your career in our region and our goal was to highlight those awesome opportunities for our next generation of leaders."

Recorded videos from the event will be available free for viewing at yourcoop-power.com/futures. Additionally, the webpage will include information on internships and job opportunities at many of the employers that were featured in the event.

POWER GRID GLOSSARY

Learn More About the Power Grid by Knowing These Terms

Billy Gibson

billy.gibson@sdrea.coop

Power grids are essential in moving electricity from its source to the places where it's needed, but they are often overlooked and rarely mentioned - that is until a major storm strikes and the juice ceases to flow. Here is a glossary of terms that will help cooperative consumers learn more about how power moves across long distances to their homes and businesses.

BASELOAD POWER PLANT - A large, efficient generating station, typically with a capacity factor of at least 65 percent, that provides dependable power year-round at a low cost. Coal-fired, nuclear, hydro and large natural gas-fired power plants make up most baseload generation, although smaller-scale biomass facilities and geothermal power systems, if properly operated, can also produce baseload power in much smaller quantities.

FOSSIL FUELS - Hydrocarbon-based material such as coal, oil, or natural gas found within the top layer of Earth's crust and used

to produce heat or power; also called conventional fuels. These materials were formed in the ground hundreds of millions of years ago from plant and animal remains.

GRID - A network of interconnected high-voltage transmission lines and power generating facilities that allows utilities and other suppliers to share resources on a regional basis. The North American Electric Reliability Corp. oversees reliability of the electric grid covering the U.S. and most of Canada.

REGIONAL TRANSMISSION ORGANIZATION - A power transmission system operator that coordinates, controls, and monitors a multi-state electric grid. The transfer of electricity between states is considered interstate commerce, and electric grids spanning multiple states are therefore regulated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

PEAK DEMAND - The industry's equivalent of rush-hour traffic, when power costs run the highest. It's the greatest demand placed on an electric system, measured in kilowatts or megawatts; also, the time of day or season of the year when that demand occurs.

PEAK LOAD - The amount of power required by a consumer or utility system during times when electric consumption reaches its highest point; measured in kilowatts or megawatts.

POWER MARKETING ADMINISTRATION - A federal agency within the DOE responsible for marketing hydropower, primarily from multiple-purpose water projects operated by the Bureau of Reclamation, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the International Boundary and Water Commission.

RENEWABLES - Sources of energy generation that are naturally replenishable, including wind, solar, biomass, geothermal, hydro, and hydrokinetic (ocean wave and tidal) power.

ROLLING BLACKOUTS - Controlled power outages designed to lessen the threat of a major cascading outage, caused by short supply and high demand for power affecting major transmission systems. Rolling blackouts are scheduled for predetermined sectors of the transmission grid at timed intervals.

SOUTHWEST POWER POOL - An entity that manages the electric grid and wholesale power market for the central U.S. As a regional transmission organization, the non-profit corporation is mandated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to ensure reliable supplies of power, adequate transmission infrastructure and competitive wholesale electricity prices.

WESTERN AREA POWER ADMINISTRATION - Markets and delivers hydroelectric power and related services within a 15-state region of the central and western U.S. One of four power marketing administrations within the U.S. DOE having the role to market and transmit electricity from multi-use water projects to retail power distribution companies and public authorities.



Sensible Solutions for Our Energy Future

South Dakota's electric cooperatives support reasonable strategies for our energy future that make sense for our members:

- Renewable energy solutions that are both productive and practical
- Rate structures that take affordability into account
- Balanced strategies centered on the best interests of co-op consumers
- Technology-based policies that promote economic development

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

March 19-20

Sioux Empire Arts & Crafts Show, W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds Expo Building, Sioux Falls, SD 605-332-6000

March 23-24 CANCELED

Shen Yun, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center Fine Arts Theatre, Rapid City, SD 605-394-4115

March 25

A Lakota View of the Dead Hills, Homestake Adams Research and Cultural Center, Deadwood, SD 605-722-4800

March 27

Hill City Community Easter Egg Hunt, Hill City Area Chamber of Commerce, Hill City, SD 605-574-2368

March 27

Lion's Club Easter Egg Hunt, City Park, Groton, SD 605-846-7607

March 27

SD State High School All-State Band Concert, Mitchell Fine Arts Center, Mitchell, SD

April 1-3

ACL Regional #6 Cornhole Tournament, Corn Palace, Mitchell, SD 605-996-5567

April 3

Spring Fling Fun & Glow Egg Hunt, Rush Mountain Adventure Park, Keystone, SD 605-255-4384



April 8

The Wildest Banquet Auction in the Midwest, Sioux Falls Arena/Virtual, Sioux Falls, SD 605-339-1203

April 9-10

Forks, Corks and Kegs Food, Wine and Beer Festival, Main Street, Deadwood, SD 605-578-1876

April 9-18

Four Weddings & An Elvis, Mitchell Area Community Theatre, Mitchell, SD 605-996-9137

April 17

Winefest Renaissance, Boys and Girls Club of Aberdeen Area, Aberdeen, SD 605-225-8714

April 20

All-State Chorus & Orchestra Concert, Denny Sanford PREMIER Center, Sioux Falls, SD

April 22-May 2

Beauty and the Beast, Sioux Empire Community Theatre, Sioux Falls, SD 605-367-6000

April 23-24

Junkin' Market Days, W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds Expo Building, Sioux Falls, SD 605-941-4958

April 30-May 2

Radium Girls, Pierre Players Community Theatre, Pierre, SD 605-224-7826

May 8

Davis Flea Market & Artisan Fair, Main Street, Davis, SD 605-940-0069

May 15

Red Dirt Music Festival featuring Casey Donahew, Ian Munsick and Randy Burghardt Deadwood Mountain Grand, Deadwood, SD 605-559-0386

May 21-23

Annual Sound of Silence Tesla Rally, Downtown, Custer, SD 605-673-2244

May 21-23

State Parks Open House and Free Fishing Weekend, All State Parks and Recreation Areas, SD 605-773-3391

May 22

Frühlingsfest & Spring Market, Main Street, Rapid City, SD 605-716-7979

June 5-6

18th Annual Wessington Springs Foothills Rodeo, Wessington Springs Rodeo Grounds, Wessington Springs, SD 605-770-5720

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.