

COOPERATIVE

CONNECTIONS

Let's Go Fly a Kite

Brookings Kite Festival Creates Excitement

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Cooperative Metering

Pages 12-13

Photo Credit: Visit Brookings



BOARD REPORT



The FEM Board of Directors meet with staff at the May meeting.

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of FEM Electric was held in Ipswich, South Dakota at 8:30 a.m. on May 21, 2024, pursuant to due call and notice. It being determined that a quorum was present, President Gary Bachman called the meeting to order. Secretary Eric Odenbach kept the minutes of the meeting. The following directors were declared present by roll call: Gary Bachman, Paula Petersen, Kelly Melius, Eric Odenbach, Tom Thorpe. Operations Manager Sean Christiansen, Director of Finance and Benefits Rhonda Tuscherer, Manager/CEO Scott Moore, Electrical Manager Ryan Holien.

Guest Employee - Will Olson

Changes to the agenda: add 6) K. South Dakota Association of Cooperatives membership.

Changes/Additions to Minutes from April 15, 2024, meeting: none

Next Meeting Date: After a review of calendars, directors agreed that the next regular meeting of the board would be on Friday, June 21, 2024, at 8:30 a.m. to be held at FEM Electric Board Room in Ipswich, South Dakota.

Motion by Tom Thorpe, seconded by Kelly Melius and carried to approve administrative business.

Motion by Eric Odenbach, seconded by Paula Petersen and carried to acknowledge manager and staff reports.

Board acknowledged the April 2024 Cyber Security Report.

Resolutions and Contracts:

Board acknowledged receipt of CFC Annual Meeting.

Motion by Kelly Melius seconded by Paula Petersen and carried to appoint Scott Moore as CFC Voting Delegate.

Board acknowledged NCSC Notice of Annual Meeting.

Motion by Tom Thorpe seconded by Eric Odenbach and carried to appoint Scott Moore as NCSC Voting Delegate.

Board acknowledged notice of NRECA Proposed Resolution deadline.

Motion by Kelly Melius seconded by Eric Odenbach and carried to nominate Gary Bachman as District 1 Basin Electric Voting Delegate.

Motion by Kelly Melius seconded by Eric Odenbach and carried to approve SPP Crypto Block Chain Rate, MISO Crypto Block Chain Rate, SPP-Demand Response Rate, MISO-Demand Response Resource Rate with condition of approval by FERC

(Federal Energy Regulatory Commission) on Basins rates as submitted.

Moore submitted information on membership to the South Dakota Association of Cooperatives. No action was taken.

Membership Business:

Board acknowledged membership business.

New Memberships, Member Cancellations and Contracts:

Disconnects: Steven Grabow, Aberdeen, SD, Active Farm; Tim Kessler, Leola, SD, Active Farm, Pasture Pump; Gordie & Renae Gauer, Aberdeen, SD, Pasture Pump

Reconnects: 3 Suns, LLC, Fargo, ND, Active Farm; 2 Way Enterprises, LLC, Ellendale, ND, Active Farm, Pasture Pump; Evan Dutenhoffer, Wetonka, SD, Pasture Pump

Contracts: Jerrad & Danielle Hoffman, Bowdle, SD, Irrigation; Brady Weiszhaar, Leola, SD, House

Retired Locations: None

Motion by Kelly Melius seconded by Paula Petersen to approve two construction contracts for new service.

Capital Credits:

Estates - May 2024 - two = \$3,758.99

73 & Older - May 2024 - three = \$5,744.45

Motion by Eric Odenbach seconded by Tom Thorpe and carried to approve returning the following capital credits:

Continued on pg 6

**COOPERATIVE
CONNECTIONS**

**FEM ELECTRIC
ASSOCIATION**

(USPS 189-720)

Board of Directors

Gary Bachman, President
Tom Thorpe, Vice President
Eric Odenbach, Secretary
Paula Petersen, Treasurer
Kelly Melius, Asst. Secretary/
Treasurer
Vaughn Beck, Attorney

CEO/General Manager

Scott Moore
info@femelectric.coop

Management Staff

Sean Christiansen
Operations Manager
Ryan Holien
Electrical Department Manager
Rhonda Tuscherer
*Director of Finance and
Benefits*

Editor's e-mail:

oban@femelectric.coop

FEM ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is the monthly publication for the members of FEM Electric Association, Inc., 800 5th Ave., Ipswich, SD 57451. FEM Electric Cooperative Connections' purpose is to provide reliable, helpful information to members on electric cooperative matters and better living.

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How to contact us:

FEM Electric
PO Box 468
Ipswich, SD 57451
Phone: 1-800-587-5880 or
605-426-6891
E-mail: info@femelectric.coop
Website:
www.femelectric.coop
Design assistance by SDREA

**FEM Electric is an equal
opportunity provider and
employer.**



Scott Moore
General Manager/CEO

First, a quick notice that the FEM Electric Annual Meeting is June 25, 2024, at the Ipswich Public School. Your presence would be appreciated. There's a free meal, cash drawing, and forty-dollar energy credit along with scholarships for high school juniors and seniors.

By the time this magazine gets to your favorite reading spot, and you have time to glance through the pages, summer will be close to half completed. We live in a fast-paced world and the electric industry is no different. Requests for new electrical services from our local members are strong and FEM Electric is looking at good growth and a strong rural economy. I'm a big believer that when the time is right, and things fall into place, good projects happen.

Eastern South Dakota and rural American electric companies have been flooded with requests for new projects, many coming from the "New Green Deal". Throw in large crypto loads, AI requests, and many new renewable generation

projects that most people haven't even heard about yet, and hang on, we have a 2000-pound bull by the tail. Watch out for his hind feet.

FEM Electric has been fortunate to receive many new and upgraded transmission lines and substations over the past ten years to help strengthen our power reliability that we deliver to you, our members. With these additions and belonging to RTO's (Regional Transmission Operators) we have extra electrical capacity in many areas in eastern South Dakota and rural America. Throw in abundance of land and affordable energy we look like a "Field of Opportunity".

My prediction is our landscape will change in coming years with. Very few well pumps driven by small windmills currently exist, but we will see the big boys, wind farms, dot rural South Dakota with their red blinking lights. This means large power lines working as an interstate system moving power east to Minnesota and Illinois. While some

Continued on pg 6

**FOLLOW US ON
SOCIAL MEDIA**

@FEMEelectric on

@fem_electric on

@FEMelectric on

We'll post outage updates, safety tips, news and more to keep our members informed on all the latest from FEM Electric.

Statement Mailing Dates

July 30, 2024 for July's energy
August 28, 2024 for August's energy

Regardless of the statement mail out date, payments are due in the office by the 9th of the following month.

Fireworks Safety

Summer is synonymous with barbecues, parades and fireworks. The National Safety Council advises everyone to enjoy fireworks at public displays conducted by professionals, and not to use any fireworks at home. They may be legal but they are not safe.

Every year, thousands of people are injured badly enough to require medical treatment after fireworks-related incidents, with many of the injuries to children and young adults. While the majority of these incidents are due to amateurs attempting to use professional-grade, homemade or other illegal fireworks or explosives, less powerful devices like small firecrackers and sparklers can also cause significant injury.

Additionally, fireworks start an average of 19,000 fires each year.

Fireworks Safety Tips: If You Choose to Use Legal Fireworks

If consumer fireworks are legal to buy where you live and you choose to use them, be sure to follow the following safety tips:

- Never allow young children to handle fireworks
- Older children should use them only under close adult supervision
- Never use fireworks while impaired by drugs or alcohol
- Anyone using fireworks or standing nearby should wear protective eyewear
- Never hold lighted fireworks in your hands
- Never light them indoors
- Only use them away from people, houses and flammable material
- Never point or throw fireworks at another person
- Only light one device at a time and maintain a safe distance after lighting
- Never ignite devices in a container
- Do not try to re-light or handle malfunctioning fireworks
- Soak both spent and unused fireworks in water for a few hours before discarding
- Keep a bucket of water nearby to fully extinguish fireworks that don't go off or in case of fire
- Never use illegal fireworks

Better yet, grab a blanket and a patch of lawn, kick back and let the experts handle the fireworks show.

Sparklers Are Dangerous

Every year, young children can be found along parade routes and at festivals with sparklers in hand, but sparklers are a lot more dangerous than most people think.

Sparklers burn at about 2,000 degrees – hot enough to melt some metals. Sparklers can quickly ignite clothing, and children have received severe burns from dropping sparklers on their feet. According to the National Fire Protection Association, sparklers alone account for more than 25% of emergency room visits for fireworks injuries. For children under five years of age, sparklers accounted for nearly half of the total estimated injuries.

Consider using safer alternatives, such as glow sticks, confetti poppers or colored streamers.

Source: National Safety Council



**“Let’s Go Fly a Kite Up to
the Highest Heights.”**

Eldon Femrite, Age 12

Eldon Femrite warns readers to not fly kites by power lines this summer. Eldon’s parents are Jody and Rosemary Femrite, members of Codington-Clark 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.

DELICIOUS Desserts

NO CHURN ICE CREAM

Ingredients:

2 cups heavy cream
14 oz. sweetened condensed milk
Other mix-ins as desired

Method

In a mixing bowl, whip heavy cream until stiff peaks form.

Mix in sweetened condensed milk and any flavors/mix-ins you like (strawberries, Oreos, lemon, vanilla extract, etc.).

Pour into loaf pan and freeze until solid (2+ hours).

Kayla Beaner
Centerville, S.D.

CINNAMON PECAN PIE

Ingredients:

1 refrigerated pie crust, (from 14.1-oz. pkg.)
3 eggs, lightly beaten
1 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
1 cup light corn syrup
2 tbsps. butter, melted
1 tbsps. cinnamon extract
1 1/2 cups pecan pieces

Method

Preheat oven to 350°F. Prepare pie crust as directed on package for one-crust pie using 9-inch pie plate.

Mix eggs, sugar, corn syrup, butter and cinnamon flavor in large bowl until well blended. Stir in pecans.

Pour into crust. Bake 50 to 55 minutes or until knife inserted halfway between center and edge comes out clean. Cool completely on wire rack.

McCormick.com

RHUBARB PIE

Ingredients:

Crust

1-2 cups flour
1/2 stick butter or margarine
1/4 cup water

Pie

3 tbsps. butter or margarine
1 cup sugar
3 eggs, separated
2 tbsps. flour
1/2 tsp. salt
2 1/2 cups cut rhubarb
Smucker's caramel sundae syrup

Method

Crust: Add ingredients and knead to complete pie crust. Amounts will vary due to humidity. Knead dough into pie pan and poke holes into the bottom as needed. You may make creative edges as you wish, however it is not necessary.

Pie: Soften butter or margarine and stir together with the sugar, egg yolks, flour, and salt. Beat egg whites until stiff. Add rhubarb and fold in the egg whites. Add the filling to the 8-inch, unbaked pie crust. You may add a drizzle of Smucker's sundae syrup for additional flavoring before baking. Bake in oven set at 400 until golden brown. You may also add more caramel syrup to pie after baking for ultimate effect.

Lisa Kummer Soukup
Tea, S.D.

Please send your favorite 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 2024. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

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2009 - FEM Electric	(\$4.92)
2011 - FEM Electric	\$345,077.20
2012 - FEM Electric	\$73,119.61
2008 - Portion Basin Electric	\$198,983.27
2004 - Portion East River Electric	\$72,710.53
Subtotal	\$698,885.69
Less Value Added Loans	(\$206.96)
Total	\$698,678.73

Board acknowledged receipt of following financial business.

Financial Business: The board acknowledged reviewing the following financial information: The check register for the month of April 2024 contained information on checks #34277 through #34354 and all automatic payments/withdrawals for April 2024 totaling \$448,183.45.

Board acknowledged receipt of April 2024 financials.

Motion by Eric Odenbach seconded by Kelly Melius and carried to approve board expense reports and attorney fees.

Legal Update: Moore update board on a past due collection along with two IRS notices.

Meeting Report:
East River monthly video was watched.

Gary Bachman reported on NRECA Legislative Washington DC Fly-In.

Safety meeting minutes from April 16 and 23rd, 2024, were acknowledged.

Adjourn: President Gary Bachman declared the meeting adjourned.



Continued from pg 3

citizens and most politicians want renewable power, they don't necessarily want the towers that produce energy. The old "Not my Front Yard" concept.

Why do we live in South Dakota? "It's the greatest State in the Nation". We are changing. Amazon has moved to urban South Dakota creating over one thousand jobs, and Schwan Food just announced they have plans to bring a large processing plant to urban South Dakota creating another six hundred plus jobs. Ellsworth Air force Base is home to a new bomber wing creating a new work force in western South Dakota.

What do these projects and many more, mean to FEM and FEM Electric board and management? It is our job to continue to serve each member, no matter their electric usage, with safe, reliable, and affordable power. We seize opportunities when they become available and that can benefit our existing and future members. Hopefully we can accomplish this without getting slapped in the face with a messy bull's tail. Those who have owned or worked cattle will get the pun.

If you are planning to add any additional electric load, please call Ryan Holien or Sean Christiansen 605-426-6891.

Please remember to be safe while working and enjoying your summer activities.

FEM WELCOMES LAYNE HENRICH

FEM staff welcomed Layne Henrich as a full time apprentice lineman on May 13th. He graduated from Mitchell Technical College. Welcome to the team, Layne!





FEM REPORTS TAXES PAID TO SCHOOLS

FEM Electric is an electric cooperative based in Ipswich, SD that serves the rural communities of Faulk, Edmunds and McPherson counties including the Town of Long Lake. As a non-profit corporation, it sometimes gives people the false impression that FEM does not pay taxes. However, under state law, rural electric cooperatives are required to pay a generation tax based on kilowatt hour sales to local school districts in their service area. FEM is also required to pay a 2% gross receipts tax to cities in our territory if a service falls within the city limits.

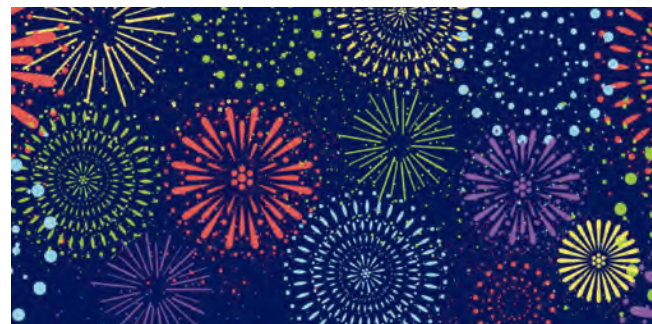
School districts located within the FEM Electric Cooperative service area receive \$536,193 in generation tax as a result of electric sales to the members.

districts through the County Treasurer’s office. The following table shows the gross revenue that will be paid to each school district by the County.

GENERATION TAX BY COUNTY			
COUNTY	FEM	ER/BASIN	TOTAL
Faulk	\$35,809	\$34,058	\$69,867
Edmunds	\$199,247	\$189,506	\$388,753
McPherson	\$39,391	\$37,466	\$76,857
Potter	\$240	\$228	\$468
Spink	\$127	\$121	\$248
Walworth	<1	<1	<1
TOTALS	\$274,814	\$261,379	\$536,193

GENERATION TAX BY SCHOOL DISTRICT	
SCHOOL DISTRICT	TOTAL
Hoven 53-2	\$1,870
Northwestern Area 56-7	\$9,564
Faulkton Area 24-3	\$57,956
Edmunds Central 22-5	\$34,932
Ipswich Area 22-6	\$338,080
Bowdle 22-1	\$22,182
Warner 6-5	\$54
Eureka 44-1	\$16,521
Leola 44-2	\$55,034
TOTAL	\$536,193

In addition to providing electric service to our members, FEM financially contributes directly to our schools through the Cooperative’s generation tax – we also contribute to our schools by providing donations of bottled water for fundraising, offer scholarships, provide electrical safety programs, education programs, and provide youth tours to students in our area schools.



Of this total, \$274,814 will be paid by FEM Electric and \$261,379 will be paid by East River Electric Power Cooperative of Madison, SD and Basin Electric Power Cooperative of Bismarck, ND.

The gross revenue tax is allocated to the different school

KITE FESTIVAL



Photo Credit: Visit Brookings

Let's Go Fly a Kite

Shannon Marvel

shannon.marvel@sdrea.coop

The sky becomes more of an art canvas during the Brookings Kite Festival. For the last 25 years, kite fliers from across the country gather to let their art take flight at the festival.

One of those artists is Mike Gee of North Dakota.

“We go down there to Brookings and really like the kite flying field there. It’s just nice to come down and fly kites with friends who also enjoy flying kites,” Gee said.

Gee flies what’s called “show kites”, which are big, inflatable kites that can span 20 feet across the sky.

There are other kites flown during the festival, including soft kites, stick kites and sport kites.

A sport kite is one that is attached to two or four lines. Often they’ll be flown in teams and perform maneuvers in the sky.

“If you talk about crazy kites, there’s a wide variety. There are so many different creative people building things in creative ways,” Gee said. “It is definitely an art. It’s what you put on the canvas that makes it special.”

The kites are typically made with nylon, sail making cloth that doesn’t stretch.

“You can’t just go to the fabric store and buy tent fabric. We have a couple different weights of fabrics we use. And you need that tail on there to keep the kite stable,” Gee said.

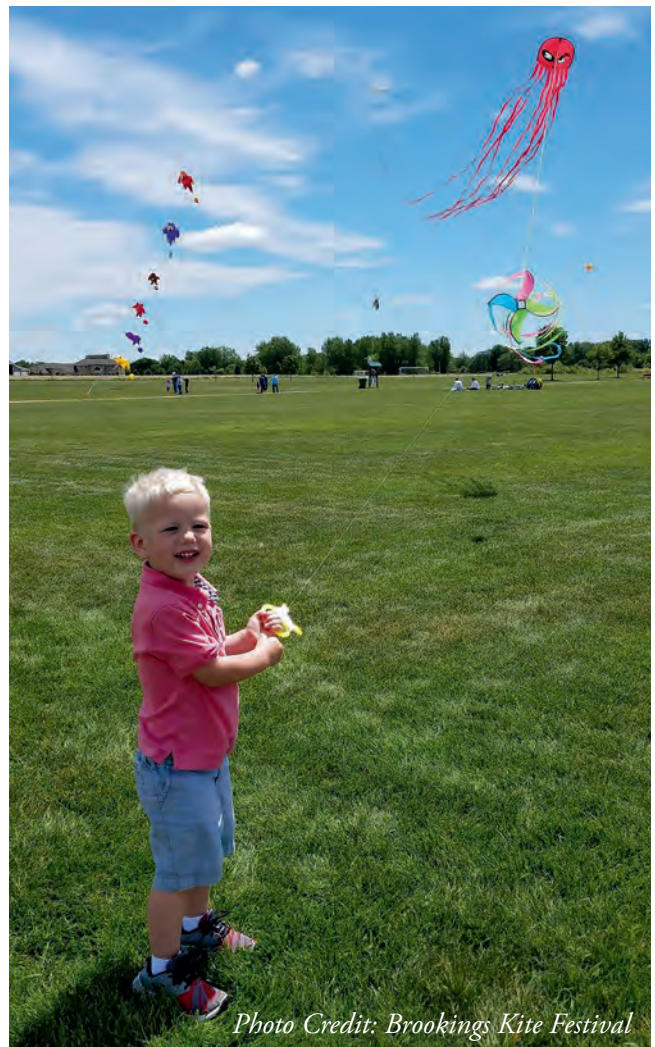


Photo Credit: Brookings Kite Festival



Photo Credit: Brookings Register

Sally Damm Norby, of the Brookings Optimists Club, said the festival got its start when Lynn Versher, former director of the South Dakota Art Museum, approached Optimist member Bill Flynn about creating a joint effort to bring big kites to Brookings.

“This volunteer organization aims to make a positive impact on the lives of youth and communities. The Brookings club’s primary focus is on advancing the opportunities and programs for youth events that are encouraging with exceptional supportive outcomes. The Brookings Optimist Kite Festival offers a comprehensive learning experience that incorporates expressions of culture, science, creativity, civic involvement, and is

environmentally friendly,” Norby said.

Youth are encouraged to come down and learn how to make a kite of their own, with professional guidance.

Gee said he encourages visitors to come up to kite fliers to ask questions or strike up a conversation.

“One thing I really like about kite flying is it seems like no matter who you talk to on the field, someone can relate to an experience of flying a kite,” Gee said. “When we start flying kites, it brings back memories of when other folks were kids flying kites. It’s kind of emotional for some people.”

This year’s event will take place on June 22-23 at the Fishback Soccer Park in Brookings.

Gee said this location is a safe spot to fly kites, and well away from any electrical line hazards.

“If you’ve flown kites long enough, you have a story about power lines. When you hit a line, you call the power company, and they advise you of what to do. The best thing to do is avoid those wires. I always think, ‘If my line breaks, which way is my kite going to go and what’s over there,’” Gee said.

Gee encourages visitors to come down to the Brookings Kite Festival with their lawn chairs and blankets and stay for more than just a half hour.

“The thing is when the wind changes direction or speed, the kites change. There’s just so much going on throughout the day. You’ve really got to sit back and pay attention,” Gee said.



Photo Credit: Visit Brookings



CAPITAL CREDITS COMING TO MEMBERS IN JUNE

At the end of June, some active FEM members will see an additional line on their June billing statement. We've highlighted the line in our example. What does this credit mean to our members?

It's just one way that being a member of a cooperative is different. Capital credit retirements are FEM's way of paying our members back for their investment in FEM.

FEM uses a portion of what member's pay in to cover expenses and invest in the cooperative's system as whole. Years where FEM has a positive margin, that money is set aside (or allocated) to be paid back to members in the form of capital credit retirements.

Retirements are not paid out to members right away. FEM begins returning capital

credits no later than 18 years of membership, and in recent years it has been as early as 12 years if the financial health of the cooperative is secure. After 18 years (give or take), members should receive retirements every year. Retirements include allocations from East River and Basin Electric as well. FEM is a member of both cooperatives, and passes along any allocations or retirements received from either cooperative onto our membership.

There have been years where FEM did not retire capital credits. Those years the financial health of FEM required capital credits be used for expenses, such as the years around the 2010 ice storm where much of FEM's system had to be rebuilt. However, the years capital credit retirements are made show that the FEM Electric board of directors and FEM staff have done a good job managing expenses and income.

Members should review their June statement to see if they have received a retirement, and pay attention to the amount they owe. Some retirements may leave members with a credit on their bill that will carry over to the following month, or months!

Questions about capital credits? Give the FEM office a call at 605-426-6891 or at 1-800-587-5880!

FEM Electric PO BOX 468
IPSWICH SD 57451-0468
Your Tomorrow Energy Cooperative

Office Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00 - 4:30
Phone: 605.426.6891 or 800.587.5880
Pay by Phone: 844.965.1321
Website: femelectric.coop

JOHN DOE
JANE DOE
1234 MAIN ST.
ANYWHERE, USA 12345

Statement Date	06/28/2024
Account Number	1234567
Payment Due 07/09/2024	

Service Summary	
Previous Balance	123.45
Payments Received 06/07/2024	-123.45
Balance Forward	0.00
Current Charges	-244.06
Total Amount Due	-244.06

Message from FEM
PLEASE NOTE YOUR CAPITAL CREDIT GENERAL RETIREMENT IS SHOWN ON YOUR STATEMENT THIS MONTH. IF YOU HAVE MORE THAN ONE LOCATION THE RETIREMENT AMOUNT WILL BE SHOWN ON THE DETAIL FOR YOUR PRIMARY LOCATION.

Location Number: 1234 Service Address: NW 01-234-56 Description: AF

Meter #	Services	From	To	Days	Previous	Present	Meter Multiplier	kWh Usage	kW Usage
12345678		05/29/2024	06/27/2024	29	105792	107035	1.0	1,243	0.0
23456789		05/29/2024	06/27/2024	29	2929	2931	20.0	40	0.0

kWh Usage History

Month	Previous Year (kWh)	Current Year (kWh)
Jan	1000	1200
Feb	1100	1300
Mar	1200	1400
Apr	1300	1500
May	1400	1600

COMPARISONS

	Days	kWh	Avg Temp	Avg kWh
Current Month	29	1243	74	43
Previous Month	33	1766	63	54

Current Service Detail

Availability Charge		62.00
Kwh Charge	1,203 kWh @ .1070	128.72
Kwh Charge	40 kWh @ .1070	4.28
Total Electric Charges		195.00
Capital Credit Retirement		-447.83
State Tax		8.77
Total Other Charges		-439.06
Total Amount Due		-244.06

** A finance charge of 1.5% per month or a minimum of \$15.00 per location will be assessed if payment is not received by the date due.



thank
you

Thank you for supporting the Leola FFA Chapter. Your kind generosity was very much appreciated. Thank you again!

-Leola FFA Chapter

Mina Lake CELEBRATIONS

Thank you for sponsoring the 2024 Mina Lake Casino Night. Your generous contribution helped make this the largest and best attended event to date.

We truly appreciate your ongoing support!

Sincerely,

Mina Lake Celebrations



ways to prepare your home for Summer Vacation

Once you have packed your bags, **get your house ready for vacation too.**

1. Set or program your thermostat to 85 degrees.
2. Unplug small appliances and electronics.
3. Turn your natural gas water heater to low.
4. Turn off your electric hot water heater.
5. Use light timers or smart lighting.
6. Ensure your sump pump is operational.
7. Clean out your refrigerator.
8. Pause your mail.
9. Make sure doors and windows are locked.
10. Let a neighbor know your plans.

Safe
Electricity.org®



COOPERATIVE METERING

Roger Lawien

More than 40 cooperative linemen and metering specialists gathered in Pierre for South Dakota Rural Electric's Meter School. This two-day gathering offers the opportunity to enhance skills, build a community of professionals, and learn the nuances of metering. As our need for more energy continues to grow, so does how we properly meter consumption.

Modern electric meters do much more than keep track of the electricity we consume. Correct electric metering is also essential for grid reliability and stability. Accurate measurements aid your cooperative in identifying and addressing issues such as voltage fluctuations or load imbalances promptly.

This proactive approach enhances the resilience of the electrical grid, reducing the likelihood of outages and ensuring a continuous and reliable power supply. At its core, accurate metering ensures fair and precise billing, preventing financial disputes and establishing trust between cooperatives and members.

From an economic standpoint, correct electric metering plays a pivotal role in resource allocation allowing member owned cooperatives to better understand consumption patterns, enabling them to optimize energy distribution and invest strategically in infrastructure development. This, in turn, leads to more efficient operations, cost savings, and improved overall service quality.

Precise metering supports energy conservation.

Members can sign into their account online, view consumption. Armed with accurate usage data they are empowered to make informed decisions about their energy consumption. This encourages responsible energy usage practices, reducing waste and lowering overall demand.

Metering guru and instructor John Pollard said it best. "These training schools are important. Metering is a craft handed down from generation to generation. With the advances of solid-state metering, these students are the supreme candidates to lead us into the future."

Your electric cooperative is your partner in getting it done!



2023 SDREA Meter School Instructors Photo by Roger Lawien

What is a Smart Meter?

A smart meter is a common term for Automated Metering Infrastructure, or AMI. These are connected devices that transmit information back to the electric utility's meter data management system and the information collected is used primarily for billing and outage response purposes. Smart meters started to be installed about 25 years ago. Individual utilities have different aged systems, but all electric cooperatives in South Dakota have two-way communication with every meter in the system.

What advantages do Smart Meters bring?

Before smart meters were installed, customers were required to read their own analog meter and report their monthly usage for billing purposes, or a utility employee would physically travel to every home, farm or business in their large service territories to read usage data. Smart Meters take the burden off customers and employees, saving time and money for all consumers. In some cases, the aggregated energy usage information from their home can be visible to the customer via the Internet or a phone application.

- Smart Meters can be used to pinpoint exact locations of power outages more quickly by transmitting an “out of power” notification, meaning a faster response time to outages.
- Smart Meters allow information to be shared with individual consumers about their energy usage – allowing them to find energy efficiency opportunities or potential problems in their home.
- Smart Meters improve electric service reliability and power quality. Information obtained from the automated meters often identifies problems that can be repaired before they cause an outage.
- Information can be used by engineers to more effectively and appropriately size lines and transformers, saving the cooperative and members money.

What information does a Smart Meter record?

Automated meters record an electronic kilowatt-hour (kWh) reading, the date and time of energy usage, the overall peak demand of the electric account, if the meter has been tampered with, and the number of times the meter has experienced a loss of power.

Security of information

Electric cooperatives do not sell or share consumer data. Cooperatives abide by all laws regarding the privacy, protection and disclosure of personal information. The meters and associated communications systems are equipped with security features to prevent unauthorized access.

Are there potential health impacts from a smart meter?

Research conducted by the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI), the Utilities Telecom Council (UTC) and other similar groups have shown no health impacts from automated meters. The radio frequencies emitted by digital meters are well below the maximum recommended in federal guidelines. A digital meter equipped to send and receive data has an RF density hundreds of times lower than the RF density of a cell phone, and the meters are installed on the outside of homes or buildings.



BENEFITS OF GRILLING

GRILLING: A DELICIOUS AND ENERGY-FRIENDLY OPTION FOR COOKING

Grilling and America go together like hot dogs, baseball, and apple pie. There's nothing like a sizzling grill on a summer day. But guess what? Grilling not only satisfies our cravings for great food but also helps preserve the environment. So, let's fire up the grill and save energy!

The cost of staying cool

As refreshing as it is to feel the cool breeze of an air conditioner (AC) on a hot summer day, its energy consumption can be hefty. Depending on the model, it can consume as much energy as a marathon runner (and run almost non-stop), using anywhere from 0.48 to 5.14 kWh per hour. That is enough to make anyone break a sweat.

Did you know that millions of people add to their AC's energy consumption without realizing it? How? By opening the oven door while cooking. According to the book "Bakewise" by Shirley O. Corriher, an oven can lose up to 150 degrees within 30 seconds. Where does all that heat go? You guessed it — right into your home. Plus, even with the door closed, your oven still radiates heat into your home since it has nowhere else to go.

The solution: grilling

If you are looking to maintain a cool vibe and lower your AC's energy consumption, head outside to the grill.

Rather than generating heat indoors, the heat is dispersed outside, reducing strain on the AC, which ultimately lowers utility bills. Additionally, you will be chowing down in no time like a true grill master, as grills reach a toasty 375 degrees in just 5 minutes. Compare that to the oven's sluggish 20-minute warm-up, and you'll be laughing all the way to the butcher shop.

Tips for safe grilling

Make sure your next BBQ extravaganza is a sizzling success without any burns or mishaps. Here are some safety tips to follow:

- Take it outside. Only use grills in the great outdoors.
- Keep your grill at least 10 feet from any buildings or structures.
- Make sure your grill is on a flat, steady surface.

- Stay close. Never leave your grill unattended while preheating, cooking, or cooling down.
- Dress for success. Avoid loose or long clothing that can catch fire.
- Keep a water spray bottle beside your grill to tackle any little flames that flare up quickly.
- Keep your cool with a fire extinguisher nearby, just in case.

Keeping your grill clean

Grills should undergo deep cleaning once or twice per year. Follow these steps to keep your gas grill in prime condition:

- Burn away buildup: Turn on the grill, close the lid and set the heat to maximum for at least 30 minutes. This process will eliminate any remaining grease or food debris.
- Scrub it clean: In a bowl, mix warm water with soap and dip a wire brush into the mixture. Scrub the grates to remove any carbon buildup.
- Let it cool: Allow the grill to cool down completely before storing it. Now your grill is ready for your next barbecue feast.
- Regular maintenance: In between uses, preheat your grill, and then scrape it off with a wire-bristled brush before adding food.

Happy grill, happy life

In addition to keeping it clean, it is also important to regularly check the propane tank and replace it if necessary. Inspect the hoses and connections for any leaks or damage. Make sure the burners are free of debris and function properly. Finally, covering your grill when not in use can help protect it from the elements and prolong its lifespan.

Menu options are truly endless when it comes to grilling. Grab your apron, fire up the grill and get ready to impress your friends and family with your grilling skills while saving energy.

Article compliments of SafeElectricity.org



WAIT!
DON'T PLUG
THAT IN



DON'T PLUG THESE 15 THINGS INTO A POWER STRIP

It is fine to plug in some things into a power strip, such as computers, lamps, phones and other light-load electronics.

However, appliances that require a lot of power should not be plugged into a power strip. Do not use a power strip with the following appliances:

IN THE KITCHEN

- × Refrigerators
- × Microwave ovens
- × Toasters
- × Coffee makers
- × Blenders
- × Slow cookers
- × Rice cookers

IN THE BATHROOM

- × Hair dryers
- × Curling irons
- × Other hairstyling tools

IN THE LAUNDRY ROOM

- × Washing machines
- × Dryers

ANYWHERE

- × Sump pumps
- × Space heaters
- × Portable air conditioners



Do not overload power strips by plugging in appliances that consume more watts than the cord can handle. This can cause the power strip to overheat or start a fire.

Safe
Electricity.org®

Learn more at:

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Electricity used to operate major appliances accounts for a significant portion of your home energy use.

Here's an easy way to lighten the load on your clothes dryer. Before you dry a load of damp clothing, toss in a clean, dry towel. The towel will absorb excess water, shortening the drying time. If your dryer does not include an autosense feature to determine drying time, remember to reduce the timer to about half of what you normally would. Remove the towel about 15 minutes after the cycle begins. Shorter drying times will extend the life of your dryer and save energy.

Source:

homesandgardens.com



REGISTER TO WIN!

Bring this coupon and mailing label to the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives booth at Dakotafest or the South Dakota State Fair to win a prize!

Your Phone Number: _____

Your E-mail Address: _____



Aug. 24
2024 McCrossan Boys Ranch Xtreme Event Rodeo
McCrossan Boys Ranch Campus
Sioux Falls, SD
605-339-1203

JULY 1-4
Annual Black Hills Roundup
7 p.m.
Black Hills Roundup Grounds
Belle Fourche, SD
605-723-2010
blackhillsroundup.com

JULY 5-7, 12-14, 19-21
Laura Ingalls Wilder Pageant
Prairie Girl: Laura's Dakota Stories
Gates open 6 p.m.
Performance at 8 p.m.
\$15 adults, \$10 kids 6-12
Theater on the Prairie
De Smet, SD

JULY 5-7
Badlands Astronomy Festival
10 a.m.-11:30 p.m.
Ben Reifel Visitor Center
Interior, SD
605-433-5243

JULY 7-12
Deadwood 3 Wheeler Rally
All day
Deadwood Event Complex
Deadwood, SD
800-274-1876 ext 1103

JULY 13
Sanford Lab Neutrino Day
9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Sanford Lab Visitor Center
Lead, SD
605-722-8650

JULY 14-18
Dakota 600
8 -11 a.m.
Black Hills National Forest
Rapid City, SD
605-645-1756
dakota600.com

July 19
Zucchini Fest
5 p.m.
Main Street
Bristol, SD
605-590-0000

JULY 19-20
Storybook Land Festival
4-8:30 p.m. on Friday
10 a.m.-4 p.m. on Saturday
Storybook Land in Wylie Park
Aberdeen, SD
605-626-7015

JULY 19-20
Farley Fest
All day
Lake Farley Park
Milbank, SD
605-432-6656

JULY 19-20
Cookin' on Kameska
All day
Admission \$10
Stokes-Thomas Lake City Park
on Lake Kameska
Watertown, SD
605-886-5814

JULY 26-28
Bruce Honey Days
5k walk/run, parade,
cookouts, craft show, 3-on-3
basketball tournament, street
dance and more.
Jay Street
Bruce, SD
605-627-5671

July 27
South Dakota Chislic Festival
10 a.m.-9 p.m.
Freeman Prairie Arboretum
Freeman, SD
605-496-9946

AUG. 6-8
IDEAg's Farmfest
8 a.m.-4 p.m.
Redwood County, MN
651-316-4369

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.

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