

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Co-ops Power Next Generation

**How Co-ops are
Engaging Youth**
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**811: Call Before
You Dig**
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BOARD REPORT



FEM staff meet with the board of directors at the February board meeting.

February Board Report

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of FEM Electric was held in Ipswich, South Dakota at 8:30 a.m. on February 14, 2025, pursuant to due call and notice. It being determined that a quorum was present, President Gary Bachman called the meeting to order. Treasurer Paula Petersen kept the minutes of the meeting. The following directors were declared present by roll call: Gary Bachman, Paula Petersen, Tom Thorpe, Kelly Melius (telephone). Electrical Manager Ryan Holien, Director of Finance and Benefits Rhonda Tuscherer, Operations Manager Sean Christiansen and CEO Scott Moore.

Guest Employee: Chad Dutenhoffer

Changes to the agenda: None

Changes/Additions to Minutes from January 21, 2025, meeting: None

Next Meeting Date: After a review of the calendars, directors agreed that the next regular meeting of the board would be on Tuesday, March 18, 2025, at 8:30 a.m. to be held at FEM Electric Board Room in Ipswich, South Dakota.

Motion by Tom Thorpe, seconded by Paula Petersen and carried to approve administrative business.

Motion by Paula Petersen, seconded by Kelly Melius and carried to acknowledge manager and staff reports.

January 2025 Cyber Security Report was acknowledged.

Resolutions and Contracts:

Motion by Tom Thorpe seconded by Kelly Melius and carried to approve Revisions to Policy #523 Line Extension Policy.

Membership Business:

Board acknowledged membership business.

New Memberships, Member Cancellations and Contracts:

Disconnects: Harlan & Stella Buechler, Bowdle, SD, Pasture Pump; James & Rosella Heyne, Roscoe, SD, Active Farm; Charles & Leila Maule, Aberdeen, SD, Shop; Miztel Crop Insurance, Bowdle, SD, Shop; Jackie Mehlhaff, Eureka, SD, Pasture Pump; Scott Strobel, Eureka, SD, Pasture Pump; 10 Malsam Farm, LLC, Aberdeen, SD, Active Farm; Charles Hettich, Roscoe, SD, Active Farm; Dwayne Leboldus, Sioux Falls, SD, Active Farm

Reconnects: Max & Francine Buechler, Bowdle, SD, Pasture Pump; Brad & Ashley Heyne, Hosmer, SD, Active Farm; Kenneth Stugelmayer, Long Lake, SD, Shop; Lisa & James Geier JR., Bowdle, SD, Shop; Travis Mehlhaff, Eureka, SD, 2x Pasture Pump; Micah & Louise Malsam,

Eureka, SD, Active Farm; Norman & Diana Hettich, Roscoe, SD, Active Farm; Bryce & Katie Rohrbach, Roscoe, SD, Active Farm

Retired Locations: Bryce & Katie Rohrbach, Roscoe, SD, Active Farm

Capital Credits:

Estates: February 2025 - One = \$0 FEM / forfeit Basin and East River

73 & Older: February - 2025 - None

Board acknowledged receipt of following financial business.

Financial Business: The board acknowledged reviewing the following financial information: The check register for the month of January 2025 contained information on checks #34988 through #35072 and all automatic payments/withdrawals for January 2025 totaling \$392,882.51.

Director of Finance Rhonda Tuscherer reviewed:

2024 East River and Basin Allocations
Pre-audit December 2024 Financials
Financial Ratios December 2024
2025 KWH Tax Report/City Gross Receipts
Financials January 2025
Federated Insurance Group Retention earned Dividend Refund

The board had a discussion on raising the amount allowed to purchase without board approval. CEO Moore said the amounts currently set are ok and requested they stay the same.

Motion by Paula Petersen seconded by Tom Thorpe and carried to approve board expense reports and attorney fees.

Legal Update: none

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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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Design assistance by SDREA

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



Scott Moore
General Manager/CEO

Record low temperatures in February, followed by very mild temperatures as we move into March, seems somewhat strange but I'm guessing this isn't too abnormal. Every day we get one day closer to spring and construction season. FEM Electric borrows money from USDA's Rural Utilities Service (RUS) and with the uncertainty in DC we could see some delays in approvals of paperwork. The uncertainty isn't new to the RUS program, and FEM Electric has options to keep our work and finances moving forward in a positive direction.

With spring approaching, the operations department is getting requests for new services while others want to upgrade existing electrical services. These requests hopefully show we still have a strong rural economy. Some moisture would go a long way in placing smiles on everyone's face along with a bit of optimism.

We are fortunate in north central South Dakota to have progressive agriculture

producers always looking to increase their yields and rate of gain for their cattle. I hope as we get older, and our hair becomes somewhat grayer, that you have already thought of succession planning, allowing the next generation to take over agriculture operations or businesses so we can keep our rural way of life and economy strong. Helping to create business, job opportunities and affordable housing in these smaller communities will allow the next generation the opportunity to return to rural South Dakota.

Please mark your calendar for June 24, 2025, as the date of FEM Electric's annual meeting at Ipswich Public School. If you are free August 19-20, 2025, and want a short informational bus trip to Bismarck to tour one of Basin Electric's generating stations please call Sonje Oban at 605-426-6891 to get signed up. Our business is no different than yours until you pull the curtains back. Every business is complicated but knowing how your power is created and transported to your

Continued on page 6

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

@FEMEelectric on 

@fem_electric on 

@FEMEelectric 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

April 29, 2025 for April's energy

May 28, 2025 for May's energy

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

Distracted Driving

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Distracted driving is any activity that diverts attention from driving, including talking or texting on your phone, eating and drinking, talking to people in your vehicle, fiddling with the stereo, entertainment or navigation system – anything that takes your attention away from the task of safe driving.

Texting is the most alarming distraction. Sending or reading a text takes your eyes off the road for five seconds. At 55 mph, that's like driving the length of an entire football field with your eyes closed.

You cannot drive safely unless the task of driving has your full attention. Any non-driving activity you engage in is a potential distraction and increases your risk of crashing.

Consequences

Using a cell phone while driving creates enormous potential for deaths and injuries on U.S. roads. In 2022, 3,308 people were killed in motor vehicle crashes involving distracted drivers.

Get Involved

We can all play a part in the fight to save lives by ending distracted driving.



Teens

Teens can be the best messengers with their peers, so we encourage them to speak up when they see a friend driving while distracted, to have their friends sign a pledge to never drive distracted, to become involved in their local Students Against Destructive Decisions chapter, and to share messages on social media that remind their friends, family and neighbors not to make the deadly choice to drive distracted.

Parents

Parents first must lead by example – by never driving distracted – as well as have a talk with their young driver about distraction and all of the responsibilities that come with driving. Have everyone in the family sign the pledge to commit to distraction-free driving. Remind your teen driver that in states with graduated driver licensing (GDL), a violation of distracted-driving laws could mean a delayed or suspended license.

Educators and Employers

Educators and employers can play a part, too. Spread the word at your school or workplace about the dangers of distracted driving. Ask your students to commit to distraction-free driving or set a company policy on distracted driving.



“Do not climb trees near power lines.”

Naomi Krcil, Age 7

Naomi cautions readers about the dangers of climbing trees near power lines. Thank you for your picture, Naomi! Naomi's parents are Andrew and Andrea Krcil, members of Charles Mix Electric Association.

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.

Let's Have BRUNCH

EASY BREAKFAST MUFFIN

Ingredients:

2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 cup granulated sugar
2 tsps. baking powder
1/2 tsp. salt
2 eggs (beaten)
1/2 cup vegetable oil
1/2 cup milk

Method

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Line a 12 cup muffin tin with paper liners or spray each cup with cooking spray. In a mixing bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking powder and salt.

Add in eggs, oil and milk and mix only until combined, don't beat or over mix or they will be dry! Fold in 1/2 cup mix-ins if desired.

Scoop into prepared muffin tin and bake for 15 to 18 minutes or just until golden and a toothpick comes clean. Serve with butter and jam.

Lyon-Lincoln Electric Member

UMM BRUNCH

Ingredients:

Scallops
English Muffin
Eggs

Method

Soak scallops in cold water in fridge for two hours, pat dry, sauté in butter and garlic until opaque (approx. 4 min). Put on toasted English muffin. Cook poached eggs in 10-inch skillet with 1 tbsp. vinegar (3-5 mins.) Remove with slotted spoon and drain on paper towel. Add to the scallops and top with Hollandaise Sauce.

Hollandaise Sauce:

Cut 1/2 stick butter into thirds. In double boiler, combine 1 piece of butter and 3 egg yolks, 1 tbsp. lemon juice and 1 tbsp. water. Place it over boiling water and cook while whisking rapidly. Add remaining butter one at a time, continue to cook. Add salt and pepper to taste.

**Kari Reder
Northern Electric Member**

SAUSAGE AND EGG TACOS

Ingredients:

4 oz. breakfast sausage, casings removed
1 tbsp. perfect pinch roasted garlic bell pepper seasoning
6 eggs
2 tbsps. milk
1 tbsp. butter
6 small flour tortillas, warmed
1/4 cup shredded Mexican cheese blend
1 med. ripe avocado, peeled, pitted and sliced

Method

Heat medium skillet on medium-high heat. Add sausage and Seasoning; cook and stir until sausage is browned and crumbled. Remove sausage from pan; keep warm. Drain fat from pan.

Beat eggs and milk in medium bowl with wire whisk. Melt butter in same skillet on medium heat. Add egg mixture; cook and stir until eggs are firm.

For each taco, place one tortilla on plate. Top with eggs, sausage, cheese and avocado. Sprinkle with additional seasoning, if desired.

McCormick.com

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 2025. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

BOARD REPORT CONTINUED

Board Report Continued from page 2

Meeting Report:

East River monthly board report was given by Gary Bachman along with a video report.

Tom Thorpe reported on East River Energized Forum.

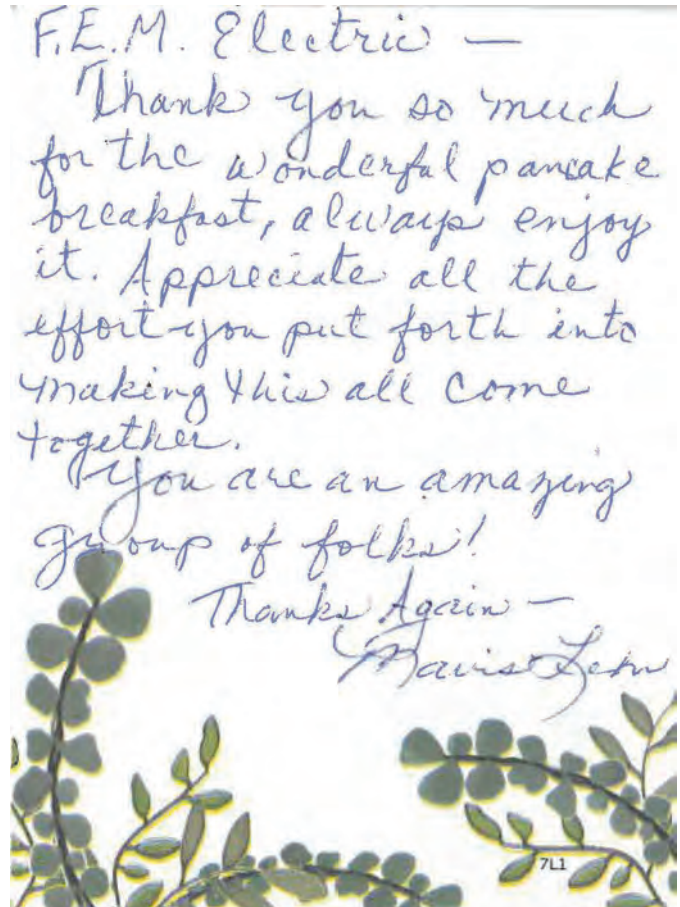
Safety meeting minutes from January 7, 2025, were acknowledged.

Adjourn: President Gary Bachman declared the meeting adjourned.

Manager's Article Continued from page 3

home or business can be beneficial in your future decisions.

If you are planning to add any electrical load, please call Ryan Holien or Sean Christiansen early in the planning stages at 605-426-6891.



SCHOLAR OF THE WEEK



FEM Electric and Dakota News Now are pleased to announce that Maxwell Kulesa was selected as the Touchstone Energy Scholar of the Week and will receive a \$250 scholarship. His story was featured on Dakota News Now the week of February 23rd through March 1st, 2025.

In 2002, Touchstone Energy Cooperatives joined with Dakota News Now to recognize area high school seniors for their academic and community achievements. Seniors who are selected for scholarships often excel in the classroom, and are highly involved in extracurriculars inside and outside the school.

Maxwell is a senior at Ipswich High School in Ipswich, South Dakota. He is involved in football, basketball and track. He also participates in FBLA, band, National Honor Society and is taking AP courses.

At this time, Maxwell is undecided about a college or university.

Maxwell's parents are Scott and Angie Kulesa of Ipswich, South Dakota.

FEM Electric would like to extend a congratulations to Maxwell Kulesa for winning Touchstone Energy's Scholar of the Week!

LINeworkers ARE WIRED FOR SERVICE

In the quiet hours before dawn breaks, while many of us are still nestled in our beds, lineworkers begin their day, often clad in flame-resistant clothing, safety goggles, rubber gloves and thick, heavy boots.

They are the individuals who epitomize dedication to service in its purest form. As we celebrate Lineworker Appreciation Day on April 14, this is an important moment to reflect on the essential role they play in our daily lives.

Amid towering utility poles and power lines, lineworkers exhibit a strength that goes far beyond the physical. Whether battling inclement weather, troubleshooting technical problems or navigating treacherous heights, lineworkers demonstrate resilience and a quiet determination to keep our lights on, our homes comfortable, and our communities connected.

FEM Electric crews travel across our three-county service territory, building, maintaining and repairing parts of our local system. Their extraordinary skills ensure our homes remain connected to the grid, businesses stay operational, and emergency services remain accessible—a lifeline that connects

us all.

In moments of crisis, when the lights go out and we find ourselves in the dark, lineworkers emerge as beacons of hope. Their swift response restores normalcy, offering reassurance in times of uncertainty. Whether repairing storm-ravaged power lines or ensuring continuity during emergencies, their unwavering commitment illuminates life when we need it most.

FEM Electric lineworkers also answer the call beyond the boundaries of home. Our crews travel to fellow co-ops, near or far, when widespread outages occur and additional support is needed. Cooperation among cooperatives is one of our seven guiding principles, and no one embodies this core commitment better than lineworkers.

This month, as we celebrate the remarkable men and women who ensure reliable power, let's recognize their unwavering dedication to the local communities they serve.

The next time you flip a switch, please take a moment to remember those who make it possible—lineworkers, who are wired for service and dedicated to illuminating life.





FROM CELEBRATION TO INSPIRATION

Megawatt welcomes members to the football tailgate party hosted by West River Electric.
Photo by Amanda Haugen

How Electric Co-ops Are Powering the Next Generation

Frank Turner

frank.turner@sdrea.coop

April marks Lineman Appreciation Month, the perfect time to spotlight the essential role that electric cooperative employees play in their communities. In line with their commitment to education and community involvement, electric cooperatives are celebrating lineworkers through youth engagement initiatives, and it all stems from one of the electric cooperatives' seven cooperative principles: concern for community. For years, programs such as Cooperatives in the Classroom have provided schoolchildren with innovative, hands-on learning opportunities, demonstrating the critical work electric cooperatives perform in their communities.

Whether it's engaging youth through a Neon Leon safety demonstration or taking students to explore Basin Electric's energy infrastructure during the SDREA Youth Excursion, electric cooperatives across the state are constantly finding new and exciting ways to engage the youth within their communities and inspire the next generation. Below are two new avenues for spurring youth engagement in cooperatives across the state:

Megawatt Mascot

Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it's Megawatt, Rushmore Electric Power Cooperative's newest lineman mascot. This summer, select electric cooperatives in western South Dakota are suiting up to introduce Megawatt – a friendly-faced lineman adorned with a hard hat, safety gloves and

bright red cape – to their members.

"The goal is to get younger kids to start thinking about linemen in a certain way – almost larger than life and the backbone of the electric cooperative," said Rushmore Electric Chief Marketing Officer Matt Brunner. "The hope is that it translates into them considering the lineman profession when they get older."

Megawatt has already made his debut at several member appreciation events, bringing high-energy fun to parades and tailgates as a true champion of the cooperative spirit. So far, Brunner said the mascot has left a big impression.

"The kids and adults have loved it, and the interactions have been great," Brunner said. "If nothing else, it's unique. People are constantly asking, 'Who is that?' The costume does a great job of starting the conversation: what is a lineman, and what do they do?"

Beyond lineworkers, cooperatives offer a diverse range of career paths.

From engineers to accountants, the cooperative world is full of exciting roles that include opportunities in communications, where professionals share the cooperative's achievements and member services, where employees work directly with the community to meet their needs.

Brunner said he expects the idea to continue gaining momentum over the coming months with new avenues of appreciation for linemen and a better understanding of the day in the life of a lineman, as well as other exciting careers in the electric cooperative industry.

STEM Gains Steam

Jennifer Gross, education and outreach coordinator at East River Electric Power Cooperative, has inspired classrooms for years with a variety of engaging demonstrations, covering everything from science to safety. Last year, Gross introduced a new activity to spark curiosity while incorporating STEM – an approach to education that integrates science, technology, engineering and mathematics into learning. The result led to a crafting activity where kids use simple materials to fashion their own wind turbine.

“We are always trying to come up with new ideas for students,” Gross said. “Incorporating STEM into this project seemed like a natural fit because both teachers and students are very receptive to it.”

The idea is straightforward. Students construct a small-scale turbine from wooden dowels, fins, and a motor capable of generating power. Once completed, they connect their tiny turbine to a multimeter, which measures the energy generated. Instead of relying on natural wind, students use a fan to simulate a windy day. By altering their model turbines, students can find the optimal design for the best output of energy. And just like that, students can step into the role of engineers.



Megawatt is joined by U.S. Air Force personnel enjoying the Annual Base Picnic.
Photo by Amanda Haugen

Gross said the students and the project have a lot in common. Once the building begins, the students' minds begin to whirl – just like a turbine. The activity prompts question after question: Why does the wind blow? How does a wind turbine work? How does the shape and weight of the blade influence the experiment?

“The students enjoy being engineers for this project,” Gross said. “They enjoy having the freedom to choose their materials and design. There's no right or wrong way to do it, and they enjoy that. I mention to the students that careers in wind energy are in high demand and some are 4-year degrees and others are fewer years, but the push for renewable energy sources is growing and our state produces plenty of wind.”

Whether it's through a hands-on activity or an engaging mascot, cooperatives aim to not only educate but inspire, ensuring that today's students can become tomorrow's linemen, engineers, communicators or member service representatives. By

sparkling curiosity and introducing young people to the world of cooperatives early on, they're opening the door to careers that keep communities powered and connected.





This is just one example of how students create wind turbines using materials such as balsa wood, foam, card stock, cardboard and paper cups.
Photo by Jennifer Gross



OUTDOOR ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIPS FOR KIDS

Share these **ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIPS** with children and teens to help keep them safe.

1 DO NOT climb or sit on green boxes or other electrical equipment.



2 STAY AWAY from electrical equipment marked "keep out," "high voltage" or "danger."

3 NEVER ENTER the fenced area around a substation to retrieve an item or pet.



FLY kites, remote-control devices and drones FAR AWAY from overhead power lines.



Safe Electricity.org®

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Turn your suds into savings. Lower your energy use in the laundry room by washing clothes with cold water whenever possible, as heating water accounts for most of the energy used in a laundry cycle. Wash full loads to make the most of energy savings, and use high-efficiency detergent designed for cold washes. For drying cycles, clean the lint filter before each load to improve airflow and use dryer balls to reduce drying time.



Good Friday

FEM Electric will be closed April 18th observance of the holiday.

Uncover Your Energy's Roots!



South Dakota Rural Electric - - - - -
YOUTH EXCURSION
- - - - - July 21-23, 2025



All area high school freshmen, sophomores and juniors that go to school in FEM Electric's territory are eligible to apply.

- **Learn where South Dakota's electricity comes from!**
- **Tour the Great Plains Synfuel Plant, Freedom Coal Mine and Antelope Valley Station Power Plant!**

FEM Electric will provide transportation, lodging, meals, entertainment and sightseeing events. Students are required to supply their own personal/shopping money.

For more information, contact:

Crystal Thorson

thorson@femelectric.coop

FEM Electric Association, Inc.

800 5th Ave.

Ipswich, SD 57451

605-426-6891

www.femelectric.coop/youth-excursion

facebook.com/FEMElectric

Application Deadline: June 2nd, 2025



DIGGING SAFELY

Call 811 Before You Dig Every Dig. Every Time.

Jocelyn Johnson

jocelyn.johnson@sdra.coop

Every year, underground utility lines are damaged by homeowners and contractors who dig without calling 811. This single call is a crucial step in any project. Striking a water, gas or power line can cause serious injuries, costly repairs and service outages for an entire neighborhood. Whether you're beginning construction on a major project or are simply planting a tree, calling 811 before you dig is a free and simple solution to what could potentially be considerable damage.

What is 811?

The South Dakota One-Call System, or 811, is a mandatory statewide

one-call notification system that was established by South Dakota Statute in 1993. 811 is now recognized as the national "Call Before You Dig" number in the U.S., designed to safeguard people and protect underground utilities. It's a free service that coordinates with your utility providers to help locate and mark underground lines.

Codi Gregg, executive director for South Dakota 811, said, "The main purpose of the program is to avoid digging into any utility and potentially causing a loss of life, loss of property, or any infrastructure buried in the ground."

"We are fully funded by the utilities who want to protect the services they provide," Gregg continued. "It is

811
GET TO KNOW THE COLOR CODE
 Below are The American Public Works Association (APWA) Uniform Color Codes for temporary marking of underground utilities.

WHITE		RED	
Proposed Excavation		Electric	
BLUE		ORANGE	
Water		Communication / CATV	
PURPLE		PINK	
Reclaimed Water, Irrigation, Slurry		Temporary Survey Marking	
YELLOW		GREEN	
Gas, Oil, Steam		Sewer / Storm Drain	

South Dakota state law that you contact 811 two business days before you dig.”

South Dakota has underground utility lines for electricity, gas, water, sewage and telecommunications. Inadvertently hitting one of these lines could cause power outages, property damage, water contamination, gas leaks, legal liabilities and injury.

Gregg explained that when an excavator makes the 811 call before they dig, utilities receive the locate and have 48 hours to mark all lines in the designated area with color-coded flags or paint.

“If you happen to dig into a utility or find one that was not located while excavating, you have to report that to 811. If you happen to dig into a gas line or anything toxic, you must call 911 first, then 811.”

How It Works

Contractors, homeowners, ranchers and farmers can easily make a request for underground utility lines to be marked by

following these steps before every project.

1. Call 811 or submit an online request at least 48 hours prior to your project.
 - Information can be found online at www.sdonecall.com.
2. Wait for utility markings.
 - Utility companies will send professionals to mark buried lines using color-coded paint or flags.
3. Get locates on secondary or privately-owned lines if needed.
4. Check markings.
 - Confirm all utility companies listed on your ticket have responded to the request after the two-business days have passed.
5. Dig safely.

Real-Life Examples of Hitting Underground Utility Lines

Contractor Hits Unmarked Secondary Line

Tom Lundberg, member services manager from H-D Electric Cooperative in Clear Lake, S.D., gives the following account of a contact made to a secondary line:

“Normal situations start out like this – South Dakota 811 calls are made from an excavator or member (persons doing the work), and flags and paint go on the ground marking the underground services. This is a normal occurrence. However, some digs are more complicated, and there may be what we call secondary wires, pipes, sewer lines, etc. located in the dig area as well. The words primary and secondary are confusing to some people and they assume that all is well after the 811 call is made. Primary lines are owned and operated by the utility. Secondary lines are member-owned lines that are not marked by any utility. They must be marked by the member-owner of the property.

Unfortunately, we have had many of these lines hit during a dig, which makes it an emergency service call. One example is when we had a 600-amp service for a member that was damaged by a contractor. The call came in to us, and we responded to the site. We realized it could have been a very dangerous situation if the contractor would have entered the dig. Luckily, they guarded the hole until we arrived. The underground wires were extremely damaged, and the contact did not take out the transformer fuse or any kind of overcurrent protection. When I arrived, there was water in the hole, and I could hear the muddy water boiling. At that time, I assumed it was still energized. The first thing I did was turn the power off and assess the extent of the damage. The mud and water were so hot that I had to wait for a while for it to cool off. Repairs were made and everything was put back together. I double checked my work, then turned the power back on. This happened because secondary locates were not completed – resulting

in a three-hour delay for the business and a costly repair.

We have had many of these calls over the years, and we want to communicate that anyone digging for a project must ensure all the dig area is marked for primary and secondary functions (wire, pipe, gas, telephone, sewer).

Long story short, the impact of not marking all the dig area can cost you time, loss of production, money and even worse – injury or death.”

Out-of-State Contractor Hits Underground Power Line

Mike Stadler, manager of electric operations from Grand Electric Cooperative in Bison, S.D., gives the following account of a contact made by company digging gravel:

“We had a dig-in a couple of years ago at a gravel pit. The county contracted a crushing company out of state to mine more gravel from an existing pit they had rights to. The crushing company started by digging test holes with a bulldozer. They would take the bulldozer and dig a hole about eight feet deep, just one dozer width wide, to see how good the gravel was before they committed to mining the whole area. We had underground cable around the pit. When they were exploring new areas to mine, they dug right through our cable and didn’t know it (keep in mind the test holes are 8 feet deep, and our cable is four feet deep). They dug the hole, went in and looked at the gravel, decided it wasn’t worth it, and covered the hole back up. Meanwhile, we had an outage.

When our crew began searching for the cause of the outage, they discovered the fresh dirt which was moved and had to dig it back up to fix it. When I asked the contractor why he didn’t call a locate, he stated the county superintendent said he didn’t have to because there was nothing there. They were very reluctant to pay the bill and thought the county should be liable. When I explained to them it was the law that all contractors are required to call 811, and it didn’t matter what the county told them, they paid the bill. We have since educated the county on 811 laws.”

Join us for a **TOUR**

**VIP
Member**

See first hand where your power comes from as we guide you on a tour of Basin Electric Power Cooperative and generation facilities.



**August
19-20
2025**



Charter Bus Tour to Bismarck

***Free for members of FEM Electric**

Travel, tours, hotel accommodations, meals and evening entertainment are provided for you by your cooperative.

TO GET ON THE LIST or FOR MORE INFORMATION



Contact: Sonje Oban

Call: (605) 426-6891 or 1-800-587-5880

Email: oban@femelectric.coop

Visit our website: www.femelectric.coop

BASIN TOUR

AUGUST 19TH - 20TH
Join us for a tour of Basin Electric and more!

At least one registrant must be a current member of FEM Electric to be eligible, and priority will be given to members who have not attended the tour before. There is no cost to cooperative members for this tour. **Must be 18 years or older.**



Name(s):

Address:

Phone(s):

Pick-Up Point (select one):

- IPSWICH ROSCOE BOWDLE EUREKA

An itinerary and additional information will be sent out about one month prior to the tour. Please be watching your mail sometime in July.

Please read through tour guidelines as listed on the Member Basin Electric Tour page of the FEM Electric website to be fully prepared for this event.



femelectric.coop | Return Form to:

FEM Electric
Attn: Sonje Oban
PO Box 468
Ipswich, SD 57451
oban@femelectric.coop



APRIL 11-12
Forks, Corks & Kegs
Food, Wine & Beer Festival
 Deadwood, SD
 605-578-1876

*Photo courtesy of
 Travel South Dakota*

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.

APRIL 3
Viva Las Vegas
McCrossan Banquet Auction
 5:30 p.m.
 Sioux Falls Arena
 Single Ticket \$100
 Tables Available
 Sioux Falls, SD
 605-339-1203

APRIL 3
Bachelors of Broadway:
Gentlemen of the Theatre
 7 p.m.
 NSU Johnson Fine Arts Center
 aberdeencommunityconcerts.org

APRIL 4
Mitchell Technical College
2025 Alumni Gathering
Cornhole Tournament
 5 p.m. Social
 6:30 p.m. Tournament
 The World's Only Corn Palace
 Mitchell, SD
 605-995-7342

APRIL 4-5
Annual Schmeckfest
 German Heritage Celebration
 748 S Main St.
 Freeman, SD
 605-925-4237

APRIL 4-6, 11-13
Women Playing Hamlet
 April 4-5, 11-12: 7:30 p.m.
 April 6, 13: 2:30 p.m.
 Mighty Corson Art Players
 Corson, SD
 www.mightycorson.com

APRIL 5-6
Youth & Family Kids Fair
 Sat. 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.
 Sun. 12-4 p.m.
 The Monument
 Rapid City, SD
 605-342-4195

APRIL 6
Hay County Jamboree
 2 p.m. Matinee
 Gayville Music Hall
 Gayville, SD
 605-760-5799

APRIL 11-12
Junkin' Market Days Spring Market
 Fri. 4-7 p.m.
 Sat. 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
 W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds
 Sioux Falls, SD
 www.junkinmarketdays.com

APRIL 24-26
HuntSAFE Course
 Davison County Fairgrounds &
 Mitchell Trap Club
 Mitchell, SD
 605-770-5555
 gfp.sd.gov/hunter-education

APRIL 27
Country Roads
 2 p.m. Matinee
 Gayville Music Hall
 Gayville, SD
 605-760-5799

MAY 2-3
SD Spring Square Dance Festival
 Fri. 7:30-10:30 p.m.
 Sat. 9:30 a.m.-7:30 p.m.
 Faith Lutheran Church
 601 N. Cliff Ave.
 Sioux Falls, SD
 Call for events & times
 605-360-2524

MAY 3-4
Prairie Village Events
 Sat. Consignment Auction
 Sun. Season Opening
 Madison, SD
 www.prairievillage.org

MAY 3
West River Pheasants
Forever Banquet
 5 p.m. Central Time
 Draper Auditorium
 Draper, SD
 605-516-0143

MAY 3
American Legion Post 15
Just Because It's Time to Dance
 6-10:30 p.m.
 Tables Available
 El Riad Shrine
 Sioux Falls, SD
 605-336-3470

MAY 31
Auto Parts Swap Meet & Car Show
 8 a.m.-2 p.m.
 Brown County Fairgrounds
 Aberdeen, SD

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