

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

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Board Approves Next Step in Building Project



Todd Hettich
Board Vice
President / Building
Committee Chair

At the September 2025 board meeting, the Building Committee brought forward a recommendation to contract with JDH Construction for the demolition of the existing building and construction of a new headquarters building at the current location near Bath. The board voted unanimously to approve the committee's recommendation.

Board President Nolan Wipf first informed the membership of the deteriorating state of the headquarters building at the 2023 Northern Electric Annual Meeting. The existing building has been serving the cooperative since 1967. The board commissioned an assessment of the building, which revealed many significant issues that needed to be addressed. Building reports were also provided at the 2024 and 2025 annual meetings and in the Cooperative Connections Magazine.

In November of 2023, a building committee was formed and tasked with finding a solution that would provide a facility that is functional and able to serve the cooperative's needs well into the future. Initially, the committee explored remodeling the existing building and adding an addition. After further investigation, the committee had concerns about the uncertainty related to some of the major issues revealed in the assessment. The committee came back to the board with a recommendation to construct a new building on the existing site. This project

only includes the office building; the shop will not be impacted. We worked with CO-OP Architecture to design and develop the plans for the new facility. As stated above, the cooperative will be working with JDH Construction and CO-OP Architecture on the construction of the new facility.

The board and committee did not make the decision to move forward with this project lightly. The committee went through several iterations of the design and also a value engineering process to ensure the best value for the members was achieved. This extensive process allowed NEC to stay under the original budget set forth. As mentioned, we reported on the state of the building and provided updates on the headquarters project at previous meetings. We carefully reviewed and considered various options and determined this option is the best for the cooperative and our members.

Construction is expected to start in November 2025. During the construction phase,

Headquarters will be relocated during construction to 2914 Industrial Ave #3, Aberdeen, SD.

headquarters will be temporarily relocated to 2914 Industrial Ave #3, Aberdeen, SD. Walk-in traffic will not be available on Oct. 23, but Northern Electric staff will still be available by phone. The phone number will remain the same, 605-225-0310. Starting Oct. 24, 2025, Northern Electric staff will be located at the temporary building. Members will be able to meet with employees and pay their bills at the temporary location.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your board representative. We will continue to give updates on progress or any changes.



Rendering of the entrance of the new headquarters building in Bath.

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

NORTHERN ELECTRIC

(USPS 396-040)

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Northern Electric Cooperative Connections is the monthly publication for the members of Northern Electric Cooperative, PO Box 457, Bath, SD 57427. Families subscribe to Cooperative Connections as part of their electric cooperative membership. The purpose of Northern Electric Cooperative Connections is to provide reliable, helpful information to electric cooperative members on electric cooperative matters and better rural living.

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SEPTEMBER BOARD REPORT

Northern Electric Cooperative's regular board meeting was held Sept. 29, 2025, at the headquarters in Bath with all directors in attendance. As the first order of business, the Board approved the August 22, 2025, minutes and August expenditures. The board then reviewed and accepted monthly reports by management.

East River Director Kirk Schaunaman reported on actions taken by the East River Board at the regular meeting held Sept. 4, 2025. The next East River Board Meeting will be on Oct. 2, 2025. South Dakota Rural Electric Association Director Nolan Wipf reported on the actions taken by the SDREA Board at the regular meeting held Sept. 18-19, 2025. The next SDREA board meeting will be held Dec. 1-2. Directors Kirk Schaunaman, Todd Hettich, CFO Lorisa Rudolph and General Manager Char Hager reported on the 2025 East River Annual Meeting, held Sept. 3 in Sioux Falls, SD. Director Todd Hettich reported on the NRECA Regional Meetings 5 & 6 held Sept. 23-25 in Madison, WI. Hettich also gave an update on the RESCO board activities.

MANAGER'S REPORT

General Manager Char Hager's report to the board included the following items:

- Report on the REED Board Meeting held on Sept. 4.
- Report on the employee meeting held on Sept. 10.
- Report on NEC's tailgate on Sept. 5 at the Hitchcock-Tulare vs Northwestern football game at Tulare.

BOARD REPORT

The board considered and/or acted upon the following:

- The date and time of the next regular board meeting is set for 8:30 a.m. on Monday, Oct. 27, 2025.
- Approved Work Order Inventories #25-08 for \$1,086,626.06 and #25-08MC \$78,384.60 to be submitted to the Rural Utilities Service for reimbursement from loan funds for electric plant construction already completed.
- Approved requests for capital credit retirements of \$87,046.32.
- Approved execution of contracts with JDH Construction for construction of the new headquarters building.
- No executive session was held.

Talk to your director or co-op manager if you have questions on these matters.

FINANCIAL REPORT

	August-25	August-24
kWh Sales.....	21,125,255.....	22,634,712
Electric Revenues	\$2,485,458.....	\$2,572,812
Total Cost of Service	\$2,620,414.....	\$2,413,494
Operating Margins.....	(\$134,956).....	\$159,318
Year to Date Margins.....	(\$28,443)	\$432,248

RESIDENTIAL AVERAGE MONTHLY USAGE AND BILL

AUGUST 2025	1,387 kwh.....	\$210.44	\$0.1517
AUGUST 2024	1,359 kwh.....	\$199.51	\$0.1468

Wholesale power costs, taxes, interest, and depreciation account for 83.3% of NEC's total cost of Service.

Stay Safe This Holiday Season:

Tips for a Merry and Accident-Free Celebration

The holidays bring families together with twinkling lights, festive meals and cozy traditions. But they also bring seasonal risks that can turn celebrations into emergencies if precautions aren't taken. Local safety officials are reminding residents to keep safety in mind when cooking, decorating, and entertaining this year.

Extension Cords

With more lights and electronics plugged in during the holidays, extension cords are often stretched to their limits. Experts urge homeowners not to overload outlets and to replace any cords that are frayed or damaged. Only outdoor-rated cords should be used outside, especially in snowy or wet conditions.

Families should avoid running cords under rugs or across doorways where they can overheat or become tripping hazards.

Turkey Fryers

Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners have grown to include deep-fried turkeys, but safety must come first. Fryers should only be used outdoors, on a flat surface and far away from buildings, garages or wooden decks. Fire officials caution that a partially frozen or wet turkey can cause oil to boil over and ignite, leading to severe burns or home fires.

A fire extinguisher rated for grease fires should always be kept nearby, and fryers should never be left unattended while in use. One distracted moment can cause a disaster.

Ladders

From hanging lights to topping off the tree, ladders are part of the holiday routine. Falls are among the most common seasonal injuries, so ladders should be set on level ground and never leaned against unstable surfaces. Having another person hold the ladder is strongly advised.

Candles and Fireplaces

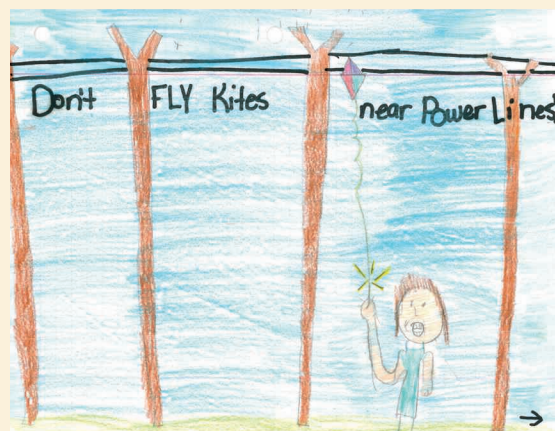
Candles and fireplaces are popular during the holiday season, but they also raise the risk of home fires, especially when combined with the extra decorations and greenery that fill many homes in December. According to the National Fire Protection Association, candles cause an average of

46% of fires in December each year. Never leaving a flame unattended and incorporating a few safety rules can prevent a devastating fire.

Lights and Decorations

Before hanging holiday lights, inspect strands for cracked socket, frayed wires or loose connections, and replace any damaged sets. Outdoor lights should always be weather-rated, and lights should be turned off before bedtime or when leaving the house. Timers and smart plugs can help make this easier.

Decorations should be securely fastened to prevent them from tipping or falling, especially in homes with children or pets. Heavy ornaments should be placed higher on the tree, out of reach of small hands and wagging tails. Fire officials also recommend choosing flame-resistant or non-combustible decor whenever possible and keeping all decorations away from heaters, fireplaces or open flames.



"Don't fly kites near power lines!"

Kristen Vanden Berg, Age 11

Kristen cautions readers on the dangers of flying kites near power lines. Great picture, Kristen! Kristen's parents are Andy and Geraldine Vanden Berg from Corsica, S.D.

Kids, send your drawing with an electrical safety tip to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). If your poster is published, you'll receive a prize. All entries must include your name, age, mailing address and the names of your parents. Colored drawings are encouraged.

Holiday SIDE DISHES

CORN CASSEROLE

Ingredients:

2 15 oz. cans whole kernel corn, drained
15 oz. can cream corn
1/2 cup butter, melted
1 box Jiffy cornbread mix
1/2 pt. whipped cream

Method

Combine whole kernel corn, cream corn, butter, Jiffy cornbread mix and whipping cream. Mix thoroughly. Pour into greased 8.5"x11" pan and bake at 350° F for 40-45 minutes.

Sharon Houchin
Central Electric

BETTER THAN STUFFING

Ingredients:

1 box chicken/turkey stuffing mix
Chicken broth
Celery
Carrots
Onions
1 stick herbed butter (or make your own)
2 cups chicken/turkey gravy

Method

Prepare stuffing according to directions but substitute water with broth. Dice and sauté celery, carrots (total of two cups) and onions in herbed butter. Fold into stuffing. Put into baking pan and top with gravy. Poke gravy into stuffing – just a little bit. Don't completely mix. Bake at 350° F for 20 minutes and broil briefly at the end.

Valerie Marso
Oahe Electric

RAW VEGETABLE SALSA

Ingredients:

2-4 medium cucumbers, cubed
2-4 medium tomatoes, cubed
1 small onion or 1/2 of a white or yellow onion sliced
1 tsp. salt
1 tbsp. sugar
2 tbsps. apple cider vinegar
Additions: black pepper to taste, chopped basil, or chopped green bell pepper.

Method

Place cubed tomatoes and peeled cucumbers into a bowl. Add sliced onion.

Mix in remaining ingredients and stir. Marinate for several hours or overnight.

This salad keeps for 3-4 days refrigerated.

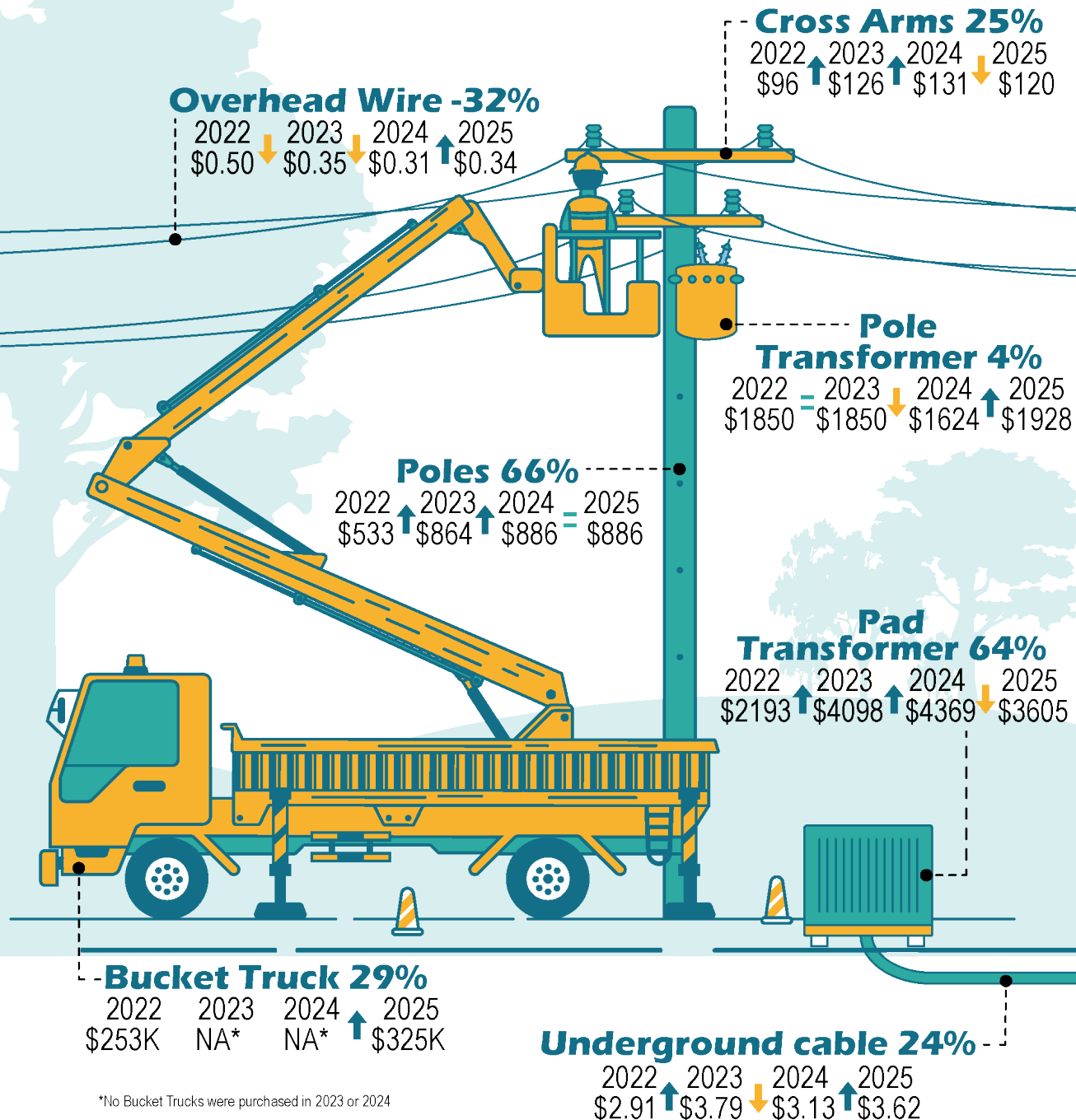
Raw Vegetable salads full of electrolytes, vitamin C and fiber.

Laurie Wernke
Southeastern Electric

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.

Infrastructure Cost Comparisons

Over the last four years, fluctuating prices have made it difficult for Northern Electric Cooperative to budget for our essential materials. Below shows the percent in price change since 2022, as well as the prices paid in each year.





HUNTER'S SAFETY

HuntSAFE volunteer instructors, from left, Kit Talich, Derek Wolf and Greg Miller, demonstrate proper gun safety during a HuntSAFE course. Not pictured is instructor Mike McKernan.

Photo by Frank Turner.

Co-op employees get involved in HuntSAFE

Frank Turner

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For more than 10 years, West Central Electric Cooperative Staff Engineer Kit Talich has volunteered with the HuntSAFE program in his hometown of Murdo. Run by South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks with help from local instructors, HuntSAFE teaches young people how to hunt both safely and ethically.

Just last month, Talich was in front of a class at Jones County Elementary School, holding a specially modified firearm designed only for demonstrations. The training guns have no firing pins, but the lessons carry real weight as Talich taught sixth-grade students how to cross a fence safely, keep a muzzle pointed in the right direction and always treat a firearm as if it is loaded.

"I went in for a year or two just to help out," Talich recalled. "Then I took the instructor exam and got certified in 2015, and I've been teaching ever since."

HuntSAFE is designed for youth hunters in South Dakota. In order to hunt under certain youth tags, students must first complete the program and earn their HuntSAFE card. The course covers everything from basic firearm mechanics to safe handling, outdoor ethics and wildlife conservation.

"It's about 10 to 12 hours of classroom in-

struction, plus a field day," Talich explained. "We go over the book material, but then the kids also have to handle firearms, cross fences, shoot clay pigeons and demonstrate that they understand the safety rules."

Talich said his co-op's culture of community commitment has always made volunteering possible.

"The co-op has always been very supportive," Talich said. "They've encouraged me to take time out of my day to help with the program. Everyone's on board with safe hunting and safe handling of firearms. It fits right in with the cooperative principle of concern for community."

While many of the students go on to hunt deer, pheasants or other game, Talich emphasizes that HuntSAFE is about more than just filling a tag.

"A lot of these kids may never go hunting, but living in rural South Dakota, chances are they'll be around firearms at some point," he said. "The most important thing is that they know how to safely handle a firearm or that they have the confidence to speak up if someone else isn't handling one safely."

In the safety course, Talich often highlights four core safety rules: always treat every gun as if it is loaded, always point the muzzle in a safe direction, keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot, and be sure of your target and what is beyond.

"If you follow those four, the chances of anyone getting hurt are very, very low," he said. "It's rewarding to watch them learn and take it seriously. And it's rewarding to know they're taking those lessons home – sometimes even teaching their younger siblings or cousins what they've learned."

After nearly two decades at the cooperative, Talich is preparing to join Sioux Valley Energy — a career move that also means stepping away from his role in the HuntSAFE classroom. To ensure the program continues, another West Central Electric employee is ready to take his place. Derek Wolf, who has already been helping in the classroom alongside Talich, said he is thrilled to continue representing West Central Electric in the program.

"I just grew up around hunting and firearms, and I think it's a neat program for kids to be involved in," Wolf said. "Whether they end up hunting or just knowing gun safety, I think it's huge. Obviously, Kit's been doing it a lot of years, and he saw I was interested. With him stepping out, it just made sense to step in."

Looking back at 10 years of volunteering, Talich said he is glad to see another co-op face step forward to champion gun safety.

"It's important to me that the program keeps going strong," Talich said. "It's good to know there are people like Wolf who are willing to step up and carry it on."



CARING FOR CAREGIVERS

Exploring Structured Family Caregiving Services for South Dakota's Caregivers

Frank Turner

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November is recognized nationally as Family Caregivers Month, a time to honor the essential role of caregivers and highlight the resources available to them and the loved ones they support.

Yet, families face a growing challenge: how to care for aging loved ones when services are often far from home. Nursing homes or assisted living centers may be located hours away, and even when they are nearby, the cost or availability of space can present real barriers.

One answer has been the Structured Family Caregiving program, launched by the South Dakota Department of Human Services (DHS) in 2019.

According to Heather Krzmarzick, Director of the Division of Long-Term Services and Supports within DHS, the program is one of many resources at DHS that are

Several resources are available for caregivers in South Dakota through the Department of Human Services.

Photos by Homecare Services.

available to help older adults and their caregivers. It provides training, coaching, ongoing support and even a modest stipend to those offering significant care for an older adult in the home.

“Structured Family Caregiving serves caregivers who live with their family member and provide substantial care for them, including personal care, supervision, medication management and other things, such as managing finances and transportation for necessary appointments and community activities,” Krzmarzick said.

In many ways, the program echoes the electric cooperative story. Just as co-ops once brought electricity to rural areas that were otherwise overlooked, the program helps families meet a need that might otherwise go unserved. In places where nursing homes or assisted living centers are many miles away, the program gives families a practical way to continue care at home, often the place where people feel most comfortable.

“Structured Family Caregiving is important because it

supports the vital work of family caregivers, strengthens families and improves outcomes, especially in underserved or isolated regions,” she said. “The program honors South Dakota’s values of strong families, independence and community.”

In addition to expanding community-based care options to rural areas, the program allows families to potentially prevent or delay the move to a nursing home and reduce the economic burden that often comes with that transition. Krzmarzick said DHS also offers other programs for those that may need a little extra assistance to remain safely in their homes but don’t require the intensive services of a nursing facility.

“Each caregiver has unique needs and preferences,” she said. “As such, the services and supports are designed to meet the varying needs of each caregiver and help care for a person at home as long as possible.”

To be eligible for the program, the care recipient must be 65 or older or

18 or older with a qualifying disability and meet both functional and financial criteria to qualify for the program.

Since its creation, the program has grown steadily, giving more families the tools to succeed. Krzmarzick said it has allowed many older adults and adults with disabilities to remain in their homes while supporting family caregivers with knowledge, training and a small amount of financial assistance.

Agency Director Steven Novotny with Homecare Services of South Dakota, Inc., one of many in-home care providers in the state, said that few other programs reach and serve those who need care quite like the program.

“Structured Family Caregiving has the unique ability to serve consumers in every community across our state, large or small. Under this program, individuals can receive care from a trusted family member or friend, which allows them to remain independent and living in their community,” he said. “Our caring staff at Homecare Services of South Dakota have seen

firsthand the positive impact on families when we are able to provide support and training to the caregivers that are stepping into what is often a challenging role caring for a loved one.”

Krzmarzick said the Structured Family Caregiving program is just one of many support options that DHS offers individuals and their caregivers in South Dakota. Resources are available online at dhs.sd.gov or through Dakota at Home, South Dakota’s Aging and Disability Resource Center, at 1-833-663-9673.

“All caregivers, not just those utilizing the Structured Family Caregiving Program, may access free training and resources to help improve confidence in their caregiving abilities, reduce stress and prevent burnout,” Krzmarzick said. “Caregivers may also be eligible for other programs that offer respite options. Our Dakota at Home specialists are dedicated to helping you find services and supports to meet your specific needs or the needs of a family member.”





Volunteers at heart of holiday tradition

CONTINUED SUPPORT ENSURES NO ONE CELEBRATES THANKSGIVING ALONE

Kathy Haas

khaas@northernelectric.coop

Volunteers have already started preparations for this year's Community Thanksgiving. Grocery deals are being scoped out, duties divvied up, and the plethora of dishes claimed. This will be the 15th consecutive year an all-volunteer crew will host a free holiday meal at the Groton Community Center.

The annual tradition has been an area staple since 2010. Barb

Paepke didn't want anyone to have to celebrate Thanksgiving alone. She wanted to give people the option to join together with others over a traditional, sit-down meal on Thanksgiving.

"My wife came home one day, and she said, 'I think we should do a Thanksgiving dinner.' And I said, 'Okay. We can try it.' And it worked great," said Tom.

Barb and Tom Paepke may have had the initial idea, but they credit the volunteers for keeping it going.

ABOVE: Volunteers set the table and decorate for the Thanksgiving dinner.

Photo Courtesy of Barb and Tom Paepke

Each year, the number of volunteers increases, as does the attendees. From monetary donations to time, Barb and Tom are thankful for the caring people who make the meal possible, year after year.

"A lot of people will donate supplies. Which is great!" Barb said. "They can't come and give their time, but they help that way. And we have a lot of friends that have given cash to help defray the cost, too. So, it all helps out."

The first year was just the Paepkes and several of their friends. About

30-40 people attended that year, Barb said. Since then, their friends have been joined by new friends. The group has seen increasing community engagement from all ages.

"We've had some young people, call and say, 'Can we help?' We said, 'Sure!' We love to see the young ones get involved," said Tom.

The hope is that the next generation will continue the tradition, said Barb. The meal has been steadily growing, both in attendees and volunteers. Last year, around 170 people sat down for a meal. While 20 people volunteered to serve the meal, more volunteers did work behind the scenes, Barb said.

The labor of cooking is spread among the volunteers. Most of the food is homemade and mostly in the volunteer's home. There isn't any place available that has the space to cook 18 turkeys, Tom said. So, the volunteers cook the turkeys at home, then bring the bird to the

community center to be cut up and served. They have found alternatives for some of the more labor-intensive dishes.

"We used to do homemade mashed potatoes, but we were peeling mashing about 100 pounds of potatoes, and our workers said, let's do Cash-Wa frozen potatoes," Tom said.

The meal is a proper sit-down dinner, with decorations and all the fixings. The meal is served from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., and while reservations are requested, walks in are also welcome. Each place setting has a menu for the attendee to fill out. Then the meal is served, restaurant style. Reservations help the group plan how much food to make. There have been years when they ran out of food, Barb said.

Everyone is welcome, not just Groton residents, Barb said. People from all over the area, including Britton, Andover, and Aberdeen have attended the Thanksgiving meal. They have even served

people from out of state, who were just driving through and needed somewhere to eat.

The Community Thanksgiving extends beyond the sit-down meal. Volunteers also take deliveries to area residents who request it.

"We make sure they have enough food, so they'll have supper that night or leftovers, just like at a regular Thanksgiving dinner," Barb said.

Freewill donations are used to cover the expenses, since the meal does get to be pretty expensive, Barb said. Any leftover money is split between the programs at the Groton school and city of Groton. Half goes to help offset additional school costs, such as school trips, for kids in need. The other half goes toward fuel assistance during the winter months.

"We can't emphasize enough that without volunteers, we wouldn't be able to do this," Tom said.

If you want to help out, volunteers can call Barb and Tom at 605-397-6693.



About 20 volunteers serve over 150 people at the sit-down Thanksgiving dinner. Each year the number of volunteers and attendees increases. **Photo courtesy of Barb and Tom Paepke**



LINEMENS' TRAINING READYED CREW FOR CHAINSAW ACCIDENT

(From left) When Brandon Schmiege cut his forearm, fellow linemen Tristan Hall, Luke Koval and Brian Davis knew exactly how to respond.
Photo submitted by Whetstone Valley Electric Cooperative.

When a Routine Day of Trimming Trees Turned Critical, Cooperative Employees Were Prepared to Help

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

Perched within the manlift on a bucket truck, Brandon Schmiege methodically sawed away large tree branches near overhead power lines, dropping them to the ground more than 50 feet below.

It's nothing out of the ordinary, explained the 19-year veteran lineman from Whetstone Valley Electric Cooperative in Milbank, South Dakota. After a while, you become accustomed to the work – and its hazards.

From the bucket he was standing in, Brandon reached with

his chainsaw for one of the last few cuts he'd need to make. But as he began the cut, the chainsaw kicked up and he lost control. Steadying himself and throwing the brake on the saw, Brandon looked down at his left arm. He'd been badly cut.

"I saw quite a bit of blood right away," Brandon said. "My first thought was that I needed to get down fast."

Gathering his strength and trying his best to stay calm, Brandon maneuvered his bucket down through the tree limbs back to the ground where linemen Brian Davis, Luke Koval and Tristan Hall noticed something wasn't right.

"I think we all sensed something happened," Brian explained. "The way he was coming down like that, and he'd just fueled up the saw, so we were wondering what had happened."

Luke ran to go shut off the woodchipper, which was drowning out Brandon's yelling. As the engine died, they finally heard Brandon yell, "Call for help!"

Brian raced to the truck to radio back to the office in Milbank, calling in a “Mayday” along with the crew’s location.

With a first-aid and tourniquet kit in hand, Brian sprinted toward Brandon, where Tristan and Luke had removed Brandon’s safety harness and wrapped a towel over the wound on Brandon’s forearm and applied pressure to slow the bleeding.

As the team secured a tourniquet tightly around Brandon’s upper arm, the crew kept in touch with the office by cell phone. The office staff, having called 911 as soon as they heard ‘Mayday,’ worked together to relay the street address and details of the injury to emergency dispatchers.

Seeing the urgency of the situation, the team placed Brandon in the service pickup and Tristan began driving him to the hospital. As the linemen were driving back into town, the ambulance met them and took Brandon to the hospital in Milbank where they stabilized him and discovered he’d severed two arteries in his forearm. He was then transferred to

Sioux Falls and underwent surgery.

Luckily, Whetstone Valley Electric and the South Dakota Rural Electric Association had conducted first-aid training for linemen just several weeks before. The instruction included CPR, AEDs, tourniquets and wound care.

“Regular first-aid training and keeping first-aid supplies on hand is so important because our linemen are often out somewhere rural,” explained Joe Denison, SDREA’s loss control professional and certified paramedic for the Arlington and Lake Norden ambulances. “If we have to wait 30 minutes for an ambulance, that can be too late.”

Whetstone Valley Electric General Manager Dave Page says despite the incident, he finds it encouraging that the employees followed procedure — maintaining clear communication with each other and with 911, administering first aid on site, and knowing exactly what to do each step of the way.

“It wasn’t only the training that was provided, but it was the attention that

these guys gave to that training - where it stuck, and their response was automatic,” Dave said. “In addition, the Mayday training that we do here at Whetstone went a long way to help us all stick to the plan and see a successful outcome.”

Now back on the job, Brandon credits his safe outcome to the co-op’s focus on regular safety training and having first aid supplies in the vehicles.

“I don’t think the makeshift towel tourniquet would have stopped the bleeding,” Brandon said, looking down at the scar on his forearm.

Brian added, “I don’t want to think about the outcome if we didn’t have a plan in place.”

To help prevent those worst case scenarios, electric cooperatives continually scrutinize safety training and workplace incidents. Whetstone Valley Electric Cooperative is sharing this story with its members-owners and fellow cooperatives to promote preparedness for unexpected incidents like this one, and overall encourage a culture of safety awareness.

3 Ways to Help Limit Tree Trimming

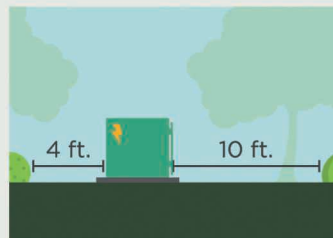
Did you know electric utilities are required to trim trees and other types of vegetation that grow too close to overhead power lines? We know you love your trees, and we will do everything we can to avoid trimming them.

Here’s how you can help:

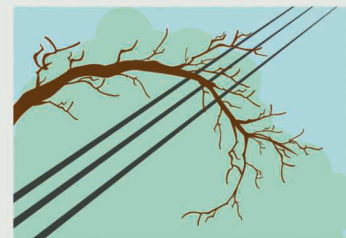
1. Plant trees in the right place. Trees that will be <40 ft. should be planted at least 25 ft. away from power lines (>40ft. should be at least 50 ft. away).



2. Don’t block pad-mounted transformers. Plant shrubs at least 10 ft. away from transformer doors and 4 ft. from transformer sides.



3. Report dangerous branches. If you spot a tree or branch that is dangerously close to power lines, please let us know.



Trimming improves safety for all.

Let’s work together to enjoy the beauty of trees and reliable electricity.

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION

(Form 3526) (Required by 39 U.S. C. 3685)

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b. Paid Circulation		
(1) Paid Outside-County Mail Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541	1472	1471
(2) Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541	3547	3585
(3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS	0	0
(4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS	0	0
c. Total Paid Distribution	5019	5056
d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution		
(1) Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County Copies included on PS Form 3541	77	77
(2) Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies included on PS Form 3541	66	65
(3) Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through USPS	0	0
(4) Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail	0	0
e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution	143	142
f. Total Distribution	5162	5198
g. Copies not Distributed	50	50
h. Total	5212	5248
i. Percent Paid	97%	97%
16. Electronic Copy Circulation		
a. Paid Electronic Copies	0	0
b. Total Paid Print Copies	5019	5056
c. Total Print Distribution	5162	5198
d. Percent Paid	97%	97%

17. Publication of Statement Ownership will be printed in the November 2025 issue of this publication.

Kathy Haas, Editor

09/29/25

STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Person with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992.

Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

Mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of Asst. Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

Fax:

(202) 690-7442; or

Email:

program.intake@usda.gov

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

HEATING ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE THROUGH STATE PROGRAM

2025-2026 HEATING INCOME LIMITS

Household size	Maximum 3-month Income
1 Person	\$7,825
2 Person	\$10,575
3 Person	\$13,325
4 Person	\$16,075
5 Person	\$18,825
6 Person	\$21,575
7 Person	\$22,514
8 Person	\$23,014
9 Person	\$23,514
10 Person	\$24,431

DSS CONTACT INFO

For more information or to obtain an application for LIEAP, contact DSS:

Call 1-800-233-8503

Email DSSHeat@state.sd.us

Visit dss.sd.gov/economicassistance

Scan the QR code for the LIEAP application.



South Dakotans who need help paying their heating bills this winter can request energy assistance from the Department of Social Services (DSS). Energy assistance can help low-income families pay for heating costs. However, the assistance does not cover all costs associated with heating. Funds for the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) are distributed on a first-come basis for meter readings from October 1 – May 15.

To be eligible for the South Dakota DSS Low Income Energy Assistance Program:

- Applicants must complete the DSS Low Income Energy Assistance Application.
- The total gross income of the household must not exceed maximum income guidelines (reference chart to right).
- The applicant must be responsible for paying the home heating costs.

DSS also has an Energy Crisis Intervention Program (ECIP) that is available from October 1 – March 31. This program offers income-eligible households emergency assistance if they have a disconnection notice for their heat source or an eviction notice if the heat bill is included with rent.

Please contact the Northern Electric Cooperative with questions by calling 605-225-0310 or stopping by our office in the temporary building at 2914 Industrial Ave #3, Aberdeen, SD.



NOV 22, 26, 28-29

Christmas Tree Sales

Nov. 22: 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Nov. 26: 5-8 p.m.

Nov. 28-29: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

6B Seed And Supplies

Alpena, SD

www.6Bseedandsupplies.com

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.

OCT. 25

8th Annual Ladies Day

11 a.m.-4 p.m.

Variety of Vendors

The Crossing Bar

Mina, SD

605-390-2939

OCT. 31

Downtown Trick-or-Treat

4-6 p.m.

Groton, SD

NOV. 1-2

Gun Show

Sat 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Sun. 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Redfield, SD

605-472-0965

NOV. 1

The Waddington Bros. Concert

7 p.m.

Johnson Fine Arts Center

Aberdeen, SD

NOV. 1-2

The Black Market/

Formerly Benson's Flea Market

Sat. 9 a.m.-5 p.m..

Sun. 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds Expo Bldg.

Sioux Falls, SD

NOV. 7-9

Hill City Girlfriends' Weekend

Information on Facebook Page

Hill City, SD

NOV. 8

TNT's Gifts & Goodies Galore

10 a.m.-2 p.m.

510 S. Main St..

Dimock, SD

NOV. 8

More Than a Meal Gala

5:30 p.m.

Aberdeen, SD

Tickets: 605-229-4741

NOV. 14-15

Junkin' Market Days

Fri. 4-7 p.m., Sat. 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Ramkota Exhibit Hall

Sioux Falls, SD

NOV. 15

Club 14 Craft + Vendor Fair

9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Hendricks Public School

Hendricks, MN

605-690-5586

NOV. 15

Dueling Pianos

Playing for Permanency

5:30 p.m.

Holiday Inn & Convention Center

Spearfish, SD

605-722-4558

NOV. 16

An Old-Fashioned Thanksgiving

2 p.m.

Gayville Music Hall

Gayville, SD

605-760-5799

NOV. 16

FEZtival of Trees

Mon.-Fri. 4-7 p.m.

Sat. 11 a.m.-6 p.m.

802 S. Main St.

Aberdeen, SD

605-225-4841

NOV. 22

Lille Norge Fest

8 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Canyon Lake Activity Center

Viking Hall

2900 Canyon Lake Dr.

Rapid City, SD

NOV. 27

Community Thanksgiving

11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Groton Community Center

Groton, SD

NOV. 28

Snacks With Santa

2-4 p.m.

Hill City Center

Hill City, SD

DEC. 6

Parade of Lights

6 p.m.

Redfield, SD

605-472-0965

DEC. 14

Shaun Johnson Big Band

Experience Holiday Show

4 p.m.

Johnson Fine Arts Center

Aberdeen, SD

Note: We publish contact information as provided. If no phone number is given, none will be listed. Please call ahead to verify the event is still being held.