

# Northern Electric

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

## Cooperative Connections

MARCH 2017 VOL. 17 NO. 11



A Lineman's Guide to  
**Good Eats!**

# Information on Board Action Regarding Northern Wireless on Page 6

**Northern Electric Cooperative's** regular board meeting was held January 25 at the headquarters in Bath with all directors present. Nolan Wipf attended via telephone. As the first order of business, the board approved the December 22, 2016, minutes and December expenditures. The board then reviewed and accepted monthly reports by management including details on financial, operations, member services and communications.

Directors viewed the East River Electric Power Cooperative video report. East River Director Mark Sumption reported on actions taken by the East River board at the January meeting. Manager Char Hager reported on the January East River MAC meeting. South Dakota Rural Electric Association Director Mike McHugh reported on the SDREA board meeting and annual meeting held January 11-13, 2017. Directors Donna Sharp, Glen Larson and Manager Char Hager reported on the SDREA Annual Meeting which was held January 12-13, 2017, in Pierre.

## MANAGER'S REPORT

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

- Update and discussion on new and progressing development projects and activities taking place in the community and our service area.
- Reminder that the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Annual Meeting will be February 26-March 1, 2017 in San Diego, CA.
- Informed the board of the CFC Forum, June 11-14, 2017 in San Antonio, TX.
- Informed the board of the American Coalition for Ethanol (ACE) Grassroots Washington, DC, Fly-In, March 22-23, 2017.
- Calendar review of upcoming meetings and events.

## BOARD REPORT

The board considered and/or acted upon the following:

1. Approved the date and time of the next regular board meeting for 9:00 A.M. on Monday, February 20, 2017.
2. Approved payment of legal fees for Harvey Oliver in the amount of \$2,607.12.

3. Approved Work Order Inventories #16-12 for \$698,121.92 and #16-12MC for \$36,551.68 to be submitted to Rural Utilities Service (RUS) for reimbursement from loan funds for electric plant construction already completed.

4. Authorized attendance to the 2017 NRECA Legislative Conference, April 24-26, in Washington, D.C.

5. Adopted a resolution approving the 2017 Load Forecast completed by Basin Electric. The forecast projects NEC's system demands and energy requirements through 2035.

6. Approved revision to the existing Electric Tariff Co-Generation rate.

7. Approved Northern Electric's 2017 preliminary Operating Budget.

8. Approved resolution to amend Rural Utilities Service deferral plan.

9. Held Executive Session.

10. Authorized the Board President to sign a non-binding letter of intent to sell Northern Wireless Communications to James Valley Telecommunications.

Questions or more details on any of these matters? Please ask your cooperative manager, staff or director.

## Financial Report – December 2016

	Dec. 2016	Dec. 2015
<b>kWh Sales</b>	34,545,551 kWh	29,365,762 kWh
<b>Electric Revenues</b>	\$2,700,781	\$2,245,837
<b>Total Cost of Service</b>	\$2,613,130	\$2,616,442
<b>Operating Margins</b>	\$87,650	-\$370,605
<b>Year to Date Margins</b>	\$926,628	\$1,215,843

### Residential Average Monthly Usage and Bill

<b>Dec. '16</b>	3,830 kWh	\$293.52	.0766 per kWh
<b>Dec. '15</b>	3,120 kWh	\$238.25	.0764 per kWh

*Wholesale power cost, taxes, interest and depreciation accounted for 85.3% of NEC's Total Cost of Service.*

# Northern Electric Cooperative Connections

(USPS 396-040)

## CEO/General Manager

Char Hager  
info@northernelectric.coop

## Board of Directors

Mike McHugh, **President**  
Donna Sharp, **Vice President**  
Randy Kienow, **Secretary**  
Wayne Holt, **Treasurer**  
Fran Esser  
Victor Fischbach  
Glen Larson  
Mark Sumption  
Nolan Wipf

Harvey Oliver,  
**NEC Attorney**

## Management Staff

Russel Ulmer, Manager of Member Services/Marketing  
Mark Fischer, Manager of Wireless Services  
Derek Gorecki, Manager of Information Technology  
Mike Kelly, Operations Manager  
Cathi Podoll, Chief Financial Officer  
Kay Albrecht, Executive Secretary  
Ben Dunsmoor, Communications Director

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NEC Web site: [www.northernelectric.coop](http://www.northernelectric.coop)  
**TOLL-FREE: 1-800-529-0310**

Design assistance by SDREA and TDG Communications



**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.**

## Editor's Column

# Learn Something. Take A Free Trip.

IT'S NOT QUITE SPRING IN SOUTH Dakota but it is the time of year when we start thinking about the warmer months ahead. It is also the time of year when we start thinking about those vacations we will be taking this summer. Sometimes summer vacations are simply for fun. Other vacations are meant for relaxation. Many times, however, we like to learn something and expand our horizons and understanding of new places when we take a trip. If you are reading this column you are likely a member of Northern Electric Cooperative and one of the cooperative principles is education. It is why Northern Electric sponsors three different educational trips for members and students every summer.



**Ben Dunsmoor**  
Communications Director

## Youth Excursion

Inside this issue, there is information about a great educational trip for high school students. It is called the South Dakota Rural Electric Youth Excursion. This four-day trip in July is completely paid for by electric cooperatives across the state. Northern Electric sponsors several students from our territory every year to go on Youth Excursion. Students travel to North Dakota with teens from other South Dakota electric cooperatives. The students get to visit Basin Electric Power Cooperative power plants and wind farms where most of the electricity you use comes from. Students also get to take part in experiments and learn about conservation and efficiency. Several social activities are planned during the four-day trip so the high school students who travel to Bismarck from all corners

of South Dakota get to know each other better. You can read more about Youth Excursion and how to apply on page 10 and 11 of this magazine.

## Youth Tour

Students who go on the Youth Excursion trip in July will qualify to go on Youth Tour the following year. Northern Electric sponsors one student from our service territory every year to travel to Washington D.C. to meet with more than a thousand teens from other electric cooperatives. The students not only learn about electric cooperatives more in depth but they also visit with members of their state's congressional delegation and visit all the historic sites in our nation's capital. Northern Electric uses an essay contest to select the teen who goes on Youth Tour from the list of past Youth Excursion participants.

## VIP Tour

There is also an educational opportunity for adults every year. The Northern Electric VIP Tour is held every June. The VIP Tour is like the Youth Excursion trip for adults. The two-day all-expense paid trip takes members up to Bismarck, North Dakota, to tour power plants and wind farms, and to learn about all the resources it takes to produce power 24 hours a day. More information will be made available about the dates for the VIP Tour and the application process in the next few months.

So, as you are planning your summer vacations this year please keep these fun, free, and educational opportunities in mind. If you go, we guarantee you will learn something.

## Protect Your Family

**According to the** National Fire Protection Association, electrical cords and temporary wiring account for more than 25 percent of the estimated 81,000 electrical system fires that occur each year. These fires can be prevented by following these essential home electrical safety tips.

### Extension cord safety

- Don't use extension cords as a substitute for repairing building wiring.
- Inspect extension cords for broken connectors, damaged insulation and missing hardware before each use.
- Do not run extension cords through walls, over beams, around corners or through doorways.
- Only use extension cords approved for the environment and loads expected.
- Equip extension cords with ground fault interruption (GFI) devices.
- Don't use coiled extension cords.
- Discard damaged extension cords; Don't try to repair them.
- Use only surge protected power strips. Inspect the power strips regularly for damage or signs of overloading.

### Temporary wiring

- Don't substitute temporary and flexible wiring for repairing building wiring.
- Use temporary wiring only when needed for maintenance, repair or demolition activities.
  - Limit temporary wiring for holiday or ornamental lighting to no more than 90 days.
  - In outdoor settings, use only outdoor approved temporary wiring and extension cords.
- Don't route temporary wiring across floors, around doors or through walls.
- Locate temporary wiring at least 7 feet above any walking or working surface.
- Protect temporary wiring from sharp edges, heat and sunlight to avoid breakdown of the insulation.



### Equipment power cords

- Inspect equipment cords for damage before each use.
- Don't operate equipment cords without a ground connection unless they are double insulated.
- Don't splice equipment cords to repair damage or to extend the original length.

### Maintenance and inspection

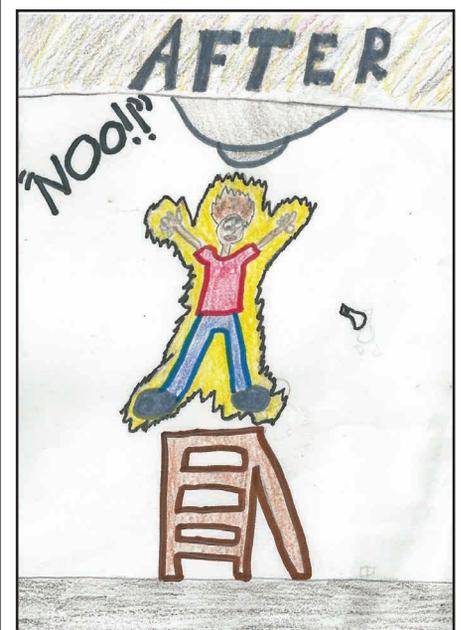
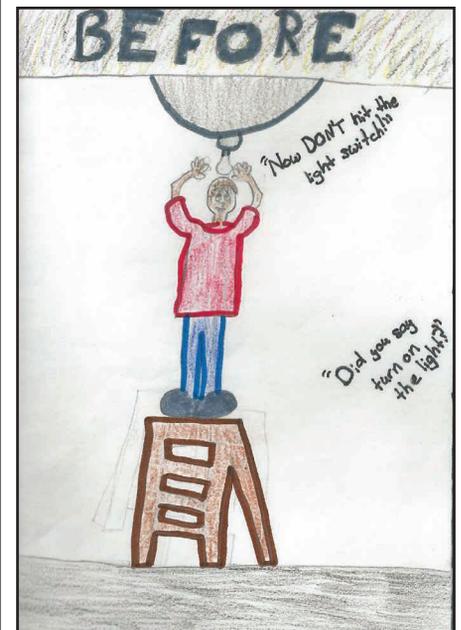
- Lock out or tag all electrical equipment or lines while they are being serviced, maintained or adjusted.
- Inspect all electrical appliances to ensure they're properly grounded. Cords that are frayed or damaged should be removed and replaced immediately, not spliced or taped. Shut down main power source when replacing fuses.

### Safeguards to install

- Write the purpose of each circuit breaker, fuse or switch on the panel board.
- Label all disconnecting switches and circuit breakers.
- Make sure there is sufficient access and working space around all electrical equipment for safe operation and maintenance.
  - Cover all unused electrical openings (including conduit knockouts) with electrical enclosures and fittings.

Source: [nationwide.com](http://nationwide.com)

## Kids' Corner Safety Poster



### Ashton Massey, Fourth-grader at Menno School District

*Ashton is the daughter of Frank and Stacey Massey, Olivet, S.D. They are members of Southeastern Electric Cooperative, Marion, 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.

# Savory Seafood



## Lemon Pasta with Spinach and Shrimp

- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 2 T. butter                                      | 1/4 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice |
| 2 T. olive oil                                   | 1 T. grated lemon zest               |
| 1 lb. uncooked large shrimp, peeled and deveined | 1/3 cup ricotta cheese               |
| 1/4 tsp. salt                                    | 1/2 tsp. black pepper                |
| 8 oz. pasta such as fusilli                      | 8 oz. baby spinach leaves, fresh     |
| 1 cup finely chopped onion                       | 1 cup fresh grated Parmesan cheese   |
| 1 cup chicken broth                              |                                      |

Melt butter in large skillet. Add olive oil and heat until very hot. Add shrimp and salt; saute until shrimp turns pink. Remove shrimp and set aside. Cook pasta in well-salted water until al dente. While pasta is cooking, add onion to butter and olive oil mixture; cook over medium heat until onion is soft. Add broth to pan, along with lemon juice and zest. Cook and stir until mixture reduces slightly and takes on a thicker consistency. Add ricotta cheese and pepper, stirring until smooth. Pull the al dente pasta out of the boiling water with a strainer. Drop it into the sauce. The little bit of starchy water that goes in with the pasta will help thicken the sauce. Stir in shrimp and spinach. The spinach will wilt as it heats up. When well combined and heated through, stir in Parmesan cheese. Makes 4 servings.

**Deborah Rieck, Edgerton, MN**

## Simple Salmon Soup

- |                                      |                                    |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 (14-3/4 oz.) can salmon, undrained | 1/2 tsp. dried dill weed           |
| 1 (10-3/4 oz.) can celery soup       | Chopped fresh parsley or chives    |
| 4 cups milk                          | Sliced, hard-cooked eggs, optional |

Remove and discard skin and bones from salmon. Break salmon into small pieces. Place into a large 4-quart saucepan. Combine soup, milk and dill weed; add to salmon. Heat over medium until hot, stirring occasionally.

**June Herke, Watertown**

## Tuna and Noodles – On the Light Side

- |                              |                          |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 T. diet margarine          | 1 can tuna, drained      |
| 2 T. flour                   | Salt and pepper to taste |
| 1/2 cup evaporated skim milk | 4 oz. cooked peas        |
| 1/2 can mushrooms, drained   | 1/2 cup cooked noodles   |
| 2 tsp. onion flakes          |                          |

Combine margarine and flour in saucepan. Gradually add milk. Cook over medium heat, stirring until thickened. Remove from heat and add remaining ingredients. Place in casserole dish. Bake at 350°F. for 30 minutes.

**Mary Ellen Luikens, Scotland**

## Baked Fish Dijon

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1-1/2 lbs. firm white fish fillets, such as cod, pollock, flounder or sole | 1 tsp. McCormick® Dill Weed              |
| Juice of 1 lemon   | 1/2 tsp. McCormick® Black Pepper, Ground |
| 1 T. Dijon mustard   | 1/4 tsp. McCormick® Garlic Powder        |
| 1 T. olive oil   | 1 carrot, peeled and shredded            |
|  | 3 T. grated Parmesan cheese              |

Rinse fish and pat dry. Set aside. Mix lemon juice, mustard, oil, dill, pepper and garlic powder in small bowl. Brush dressing on both sides of fish fillets. Arrange fish, overlapping thinnest portions, in 13x9-inch baking dish. Drizzle remaining dressing over fish. Arrange shredded carrot over fish. Sprinkle with cheese. Bake at 350°F. about 12 minutes or until fish flakes easily with fork. Makes 6 servings.

*Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 131, Total Fat 4g, Cholesterol 54mg, Sodium 154mg, Carbohydrates 2g, Dietary Fiber 1g, Protein 20g*

**Pictured, Cooperative Connections**

## Crab Quiche

- |                                    |                                     |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 4 eggs, beaten                     | 6 oz. imitation crab                |
| 3/4 cup milk                       | 1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese       |
| 1/2 tsp. salt                      | 1 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese |
| 1/2 tsp. ground thyme              | 2 T. minced onion                   |
| 1 T. chopped pimento               | 1 unbaked 10-inch pie shell         |
| 1-1/2 cups fresh broccoli, chopped |                                     |

Combine eggs, milk, salt, thyme and pimento; set aside. Toss chopped broccoli, crab, cheeses and onion together; place in pie shell. Pour liquid mixture over all. Bake at 350°F. for 50 to 55 minutes. Let cool 10 to 15 minutes before cutting. The red and green are pretty for a Christmas brunch.

**Barbara Angerhofer, Hendricks, MN**

## Salmon Casserole

- |                                |                             |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 can salmon                   | 1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce |
| 1/8 tsp. pepper                | <b>Milk Gravy:</b>          |
| 1 cup crushed saltine crackers | 2 T. butter                 |
| 1 egg                          | 2 T. flour                  |
| 1/3 cup chopped onion          | 2 cups milk                 |
| 1 can cream of mushroom soup   | Salt and pepper, to taste   |
| 2 T. chopped celery            | 2 slices cheese, if desired |

Combine all casserole ingredients; put in loaf pan. Bake, uncovered, at 350°F. for 30 to 40 minutes. For gravy, in skillet combine butter, flour, salt and pepper. Add milk slowly; cooking until thickened. Add cheese if desired. Serve over top of casserole.

**Mary Jessen, Holabird**

*Please send your favorite appetizer, beverage or casserole recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in June 2017. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.*

# Board Signs Letter of Intent To Sell Northern Wireless Communications



## HISTORY

**A**T THE JANUARY 2017 REGULAR BOARD MEETING the Northern Electric Cooperative Board of Directors signed a non-binding letter of intent to sell Northern Wireless Communications, its wholly-owned broadband wireless subsidiary, to James Valley Telecommunications.

If the sale is approved by the directors of both cooperatives, James Valley Telecommunications intends to purchase Northern Wireless Communications and begin serving its customers under the James Valley Telecommunications and Northern Valley Communications names with their suite of high-speed internet, cable, home phone, cell phone, and web-hosting services. Northern Wireless currently has nearly 1,600 high-speed internet customers in ten different counties in northeast South Dakota.

“We are looking forward to exploring this opportunity with another local member-owned cooperative,” Northern Electric CEO/General Manager Char Hager said.

Should the sale be finalized, James Valley will transition Northern Wireless customers from their current wireless broadband internet service to a new wired or fixed wireless internet connection.

### 1988

Northern Rural Cable Television (NRCTV) was launched. It was the first rural cooperative wireless cable system in the nation.

### 1997

NRCTV markets its internet service as ‘WOWNET,’ with-out-wires.

### 2010

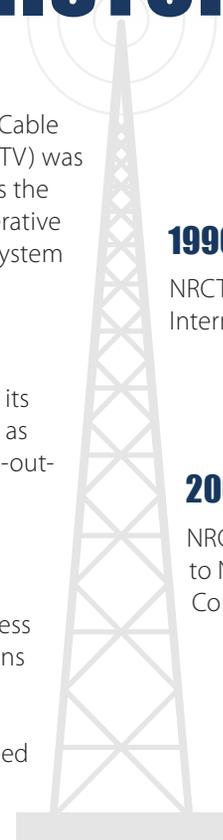
Northern Wireless Communications stops offering TV service and offers high-speed broadband exclusively.

### 1996

NRCTV also becomes an Internet Service Provider.

### 2005

NRCTV changes its name to Northern Wireless Communications.



# The Three-Tier Power Supply Network

*How Does Electricity Get From The Power Plant To Your Home?*

by Ben Dunsmoor

**E**LECTRICITY TAKES A LONG JOURNEY from the time you flip the switch to the time the light turns on in your bedroom. Electricity travels hundreds of miles – at the speed of light – every time you plug in your smartphone or turn on the TV.

So, where does the electricity used by Northern Electric Cooperative consumers come from? A three-tier process is used to get electricity from the power plant to your home in an instant.

## Distribution Cooperatives

Northern Electric Cooperative is at the end of the line, operating like a retail store, selling directly to homes, farms, and businesses. Northern Electric Cooperative is considered a distribution cooperative and does not generate the electricity that is used in the local service territory. Northern Electric pays a power bill every month to its wholesale power provider East River Electric Power Cooperative in Madison, South Dakota.

## East River Electric Power Cooperative

East River Electric was formed in 1949 to build high-voltage transmission lines and deliver electricity from the power plant to distribution cooperatives like Northern Electric. East River serves as the wholesale power provider to 25 member systems through its network of more than 200 substations located throughout eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota. Distribution substations are like the ‘delivery point’ for electricity and Northern Electric builds its lines from local substations to farms, homes, and businesses. There

are 17 East River substations in the Northern Electric service territory.

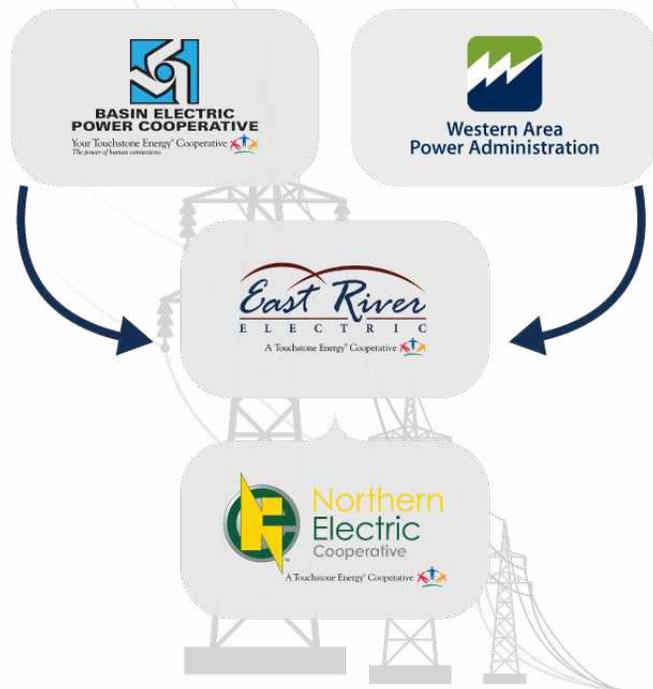
## Generation and Transmission

East River gets its electricity from two different sources; Basin Electric Power Cooperative in North Dakota and the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA). WAPA administers the electricity generated by federal hydroelectric dams, including the dams on the Missouri River. Hydropower was one of the original sources of electricity allocated to rural electric cooperatives by the federal government in the 1950’s.

The demand for electricity in rural areas outgrew the production of the federal hydropower dams quickly so generation and transmission – or *G&T* – cooperatives were formed. Basin Electric Power Cooperative is a *G&T* that was formed in North Dakota in

1960 when East River and ten other power supply systems created Basin to build power plants that would supply electricity to the Great Plains. Basin Electric is like a ‘factory’ in that it operates natural gas and coal-fired power plants and wind farms to produce the electricity that is used. Today, Basin Electric generates power for 141 member systems in nine states that serve more than three million electric co-op members.

It takes a lot of effort and coordination to make sure electricity gets from the power plant to the switch safely and reliably every single day. It is an effort that requires a multi-layered system, a solid network of infrastructure and technology, and dedicated employees who ensure that the lights stay on for rural America.



# A Lineman's Guide to Good Eats

WHEN ONE'S 'MOBILE OFFICE' CAN TAKE ONE MILES and miles away from home in a given day, grabbing a quick bite to eat at home at noon isn't always an option.

For the hundreds of co-op linemen in the state, their work environment may often mean a sack lunch packed at home. But sometimes, the worksite is close enough that a lunch break at a favorite dining spot can happen. And, given that many towns in cooperative areas don't have a national chain restaurant in them, local eateries delight locals and visitors alike.

(At one time, according to the consumerist.com, a point east of Bison, S.D. was the furthest point from a McDonald's in the lower 48-states. But, when a California McDonald's closed its doors, a point in Nevada edged out the South Dakota loca-

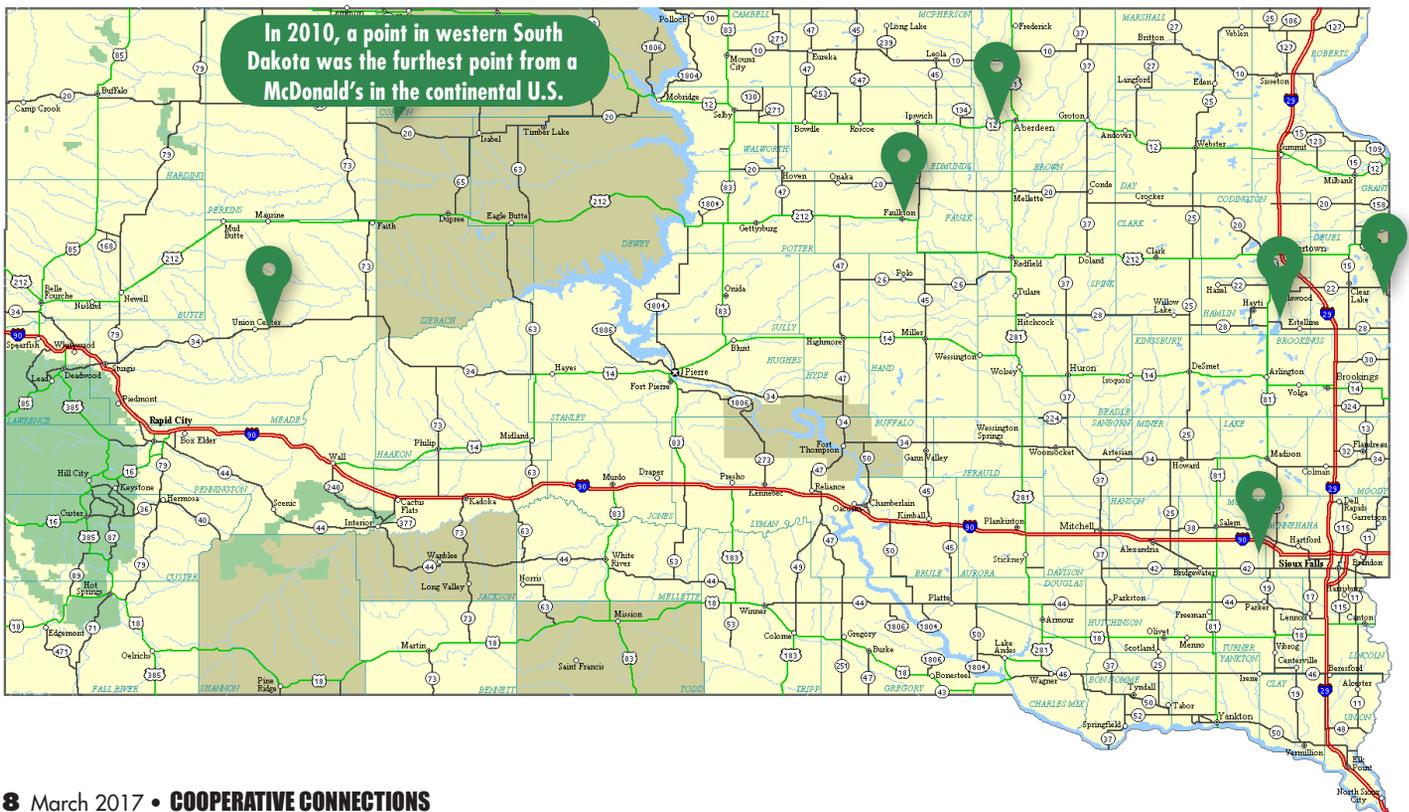
tion by eight miles in 2013, measuring 115 miles to the closest golden arches.)

We asked a few linemen in different parts of the state for some recommendations for their favorite places to grab a bite to eat.

The responses varied and by no means does it provide a comprehensive list to the hundreds of great places to eat in South Dakota and western Minnesota, but below are a few of the recommendations.

The stretch of S.D. Highway 34 extending west from Fort Pierre to Sturgis doesn't look like it would yield many culinary offerings, but the food is good at Nellie's in Enning and down the road at Bull Creek in Union Center, said West River Electric Association Line Foreman Lane Butler, who works out of the co-op's Enning outpost.

Brenda Kleinjan



# Eats and Drinks from South Dakota Tourism

Heading to the northeast, the Burger Shack in Faulkton hit the recommendation list. Located along U.S. Highway 212, the eatery specializes in different types of burgers.

Looking for a Mom and Pop type dining experience in northeast South Dakota?

Depending on the season, you may find Northern Electric Cooperative journeyman lineman Tyler Marken and his colleagues eating at one of several places, including the Wake Side Resort at Mina Lake west of Aberdeen. (Other places on the list? Pounders in Aberdeen, Anchors Away at Richmond Lake and the Airport Cafe made Marken's list.)

Heading south along the Interstate 29 corridor, H-D Electric lineworker Josh Risty offered a few suggestions.

The Sioux Land Bar and Grill along the shores of Lake Poinsett in Hamlin County made his list as did the State Line Bar and Grill on Lake Cochrane near Gary on the South Dakota/Minnesota border.

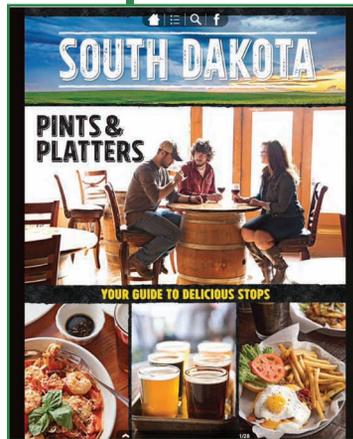
Having worked several storm jobs assisting other cooperatives, Risty had this observation.

"The local diners have always done a great job. I would say at times it is better than the restaurants anywhere," said Risty.

Getting into the Sioux Falls area there scores of options, but as one heads a bit to the west, The Battle Creek Steakhouse on Lake Vermillion near Canistota was one recommended by employees at Southeastern Electric Cooperative at Marion.

## Looking for local recommendations and possibly meal deals?

The Touchstone Energy® Cooperative Connections Card has hundreds of restaurants participating. Many restaurants listed offer deals for co-op members. (There's even an app for Android and Apple devices so you have easy access to listings, even when on the road.)



**Still seeking more?** Check out the featured "Eat and Drink" listings at [travelsouthdakota.com](http://travelsouthdakota.com). Among the 169 places listed are:

**Aberdeen:** The Brass Kettle

**Arlington:** 1481 Grille

**Belle Fourche:** Belle Fourche Country Club

**Brookings:** Cafe Coteau; Nick's Hamburger Shop; The Pheasant Restaurant and Lounge

**Crazy Horse:** Laughing Water Restaurant

**Custer:** Bavarian Inn; Black Hills Burger and Bun; Blue Bell Lodge; Bobkat's Purple Pie Place; Legion Lake Lodge; Oliver's Twist Ice Cream and Eatery State Game Lodge; Sylvan Lake Lodge

**DeSmet:** Oxbow Restaurant

**Elk Point:** Edgar's Old Fashioned Soda Fountain and Pioneer Drug; H&S BBQ N More; Los Amigo's Restaurant

**Gettysburg:** Bob's Resort

**Hartford:** Hartford Steak Co. Tavern

**Hill City:** Alpine Inn, Hubcap Diner; Miner Brewing Company

**Huron:** 21 Baker Street; 444 Bar & Grill/Elks Lodge; Big D's Timeout Sports Bar & Grill; Burger Plus; Don't Spill the Beans; Putters and Scoops

**Keystone:** Mount Slushmore; Teddy's Deli

**Lead:** Stampmill Inn, Restaurant and Saloon

**Milbank:** Millstone Family Restaurant

**Mitchell:** Chef Louie's

**Oacoma:** Cedar Shore Resort

**Philip:** Badlands Trading Post

**Pierre:** Cattleman's Club Steakhouse; La Minestra; Mad Mary's Steakhouse and Saloon; Spring Creek Resort and Marina; View 34

You can also download the "Pints and Platters" e-guide at <https://www.travelsouthdakota.com/things-to-do/eat-drink>

**Rapid City:** Botticelli Ristorante Italiano; Everest Cuisine; Firehouse Brewing Company; Kathmandu Bistro; Kol; Tally's Silver Spoon; ¿Que Pasa? Cantina

**Sioux Falls:** Bracco World Cafe and Island Bar; Camille's Sidewalk Cafe; CH Patisserie; Foley's Fish, Chop and Steakhouse; Phillips Avenue Diner; Sanaa's 8th Street Gourmet

**Vermillion:** Cafe Brule; Old Lumber Company Grill and Bar; RED Steakhouse; The Silk Road Cafe

**Wall:** The Wall Drug Store, Inc.

**Wessington Springs:** Springs Inn Cafe and Lounge; Sweet Grass Bakery and Coffee Shop

**Whitewood:** Bullwacker's Saloon

**Yankton:** The Landing Restaurant and Lounge

Check out the full listing at <https://www.travelsouthdakota.com/things-to-do/eat-drink/list>

# Sign Your Students Up NOW For A **FREE Summer Vacation!**

S.D. RURAL ELECTRIC  
**YOUTH  
EXCURSION  
2017**



by **Ben Dunsmoor**

**F**UN, EDUCATIONAL, AND INTERESTING are words students commonly use to describe the South Dakota Rural Electric Youth Excursion. High school students from co-op families across South Dakota are eligible to go on the annual four-day trip to North Dakota to learn about electric generation, conservation, and efficiency. The 2017 Youth Excursion trip will take place from July 24-27.

“The Youth Excursion provides teens a fun way to explore the energy that powers their daily lives,” South Dakota Rural Electric Association Director of Communications Brenda Kleinjan said. “They have time for hanging out with teens from across the state and they also try out hands-on experiments with energy. They’ll see energy production from the source through its journey all the way to their homes.”

Every summer, Northern Electric sponsors students for this free educational

opportunity. To apply students simply have to fill out a registration form that can be found in this magazine or online at [www.northernelectric.coop/content/youth-excursion-application](http://www.northernelectric.coop/content/youth-excursion-application).

During the four-day all-expense paid excursion students will tour the Basin Electric Power Cooperative facilities in North Dakota where a majority of the electricity they use is produced. Students get an up-close look at a coal-fired power plant, a North Dakota wind farm, the Dakota Gasification plant, and a coal mine.

“I applied to go on the Youth Excursion because it sounded like a good opportunity to meet new people and gain more knowledge,” Desiree Burggraff of Redfield said. “I learned more about the different ways to create electricity and what is the most effective in creating power for a large region.”

Burggraff was one of the students from Northern Electric’s service territory

who attended Youth Excursion in 2016. Youth Excursion participants stay at Bismarck State College and Northern Electric Cooperative pays for the transportation, lodging, and meals for the students selected for the trip.

During the four-day trip students will not only tour power-generation facilities but they will also participate in hands-on electrical experiments and attend social activities like swimming, shopping, and a Lewis & Clark Riverboat cruise down the Missouri River.

“I would encourage people to go on this trip because you meet new people and you learn a lot of interesting things,” 2016 Youth Excursion participant Seth Howell of Columbia said. “I learned a lot about working and communicating with others.”

Students from the Northern Electric service territory who attend Youth Excursion will be eligible to apply for the Youth Tour trip to Washington D.C. the



following year. Youth Tour is a gathering of teens from electric cooperatives across the country and is held every June in the nation's capital. Only Northern Electric teens who have previously attended Youth Excursion can apply for the all-expense paid trip to Washington D.C.

Former Youth Excursion participants frequently talk about the great experiences and connections they make with other students after returning from the trip.

"I would highly recommend other high school students attend this trip because it was a good balance between having fun and learning," Burggraff said.

The deadline to apply for the 2017 Youth Excursion is April, 26, 2017.



**Above (Left):** Students work on a wind energy project during the 2016 Youth Excursion.

**Above (Right):** Youth Excursion participants take in the view at the top of Basin Electric's Antelope Valley Station power plant.

**Left:** Youth Excursion students look at the equipment on the turbine floor of the Antelope Valley Station near Beulah, North Dakota.

## 2017 Youth Excursion



High School students of Northern Electric members



Tour power plants, wind farms, and participate in fun group activities



July 24-27



Send in the application on this page to PO Box 457 Bath, SD 57427 or apply online at [www.northernelectric.coop](http://www.northernelectric.coop)



### 2017 Youth Excursion Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Present Year In School: \_\_\_\_\_

T-Shirt Size: \_\_\_\_\_

# Area Co-ops Represented by Trio

## Three area men among 11 directors guiding Basin Electric Power Cooperative

By Chris Gessele and Tracie Bettenhausen  
Basin Electric Power Cooperative

**A**S A COOPERATIVE MEMBER, YOU PROBABLY REALIZE THAT the board of directors of your local electric cooperative is comprised of people you probably call “neighbor.” But did you know that your cooperative makes up one of the largest cooperatives in the nation?

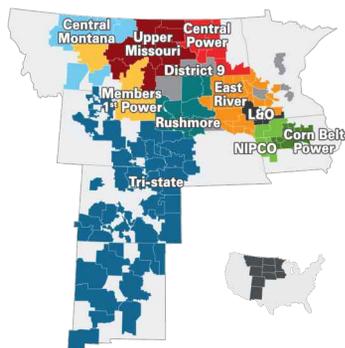
Rural electric cooperative pioneers in the Missouri River basin created Basin Electric Power Cooperative in Bismarck, N.D., in 1961 to provide supplemental wholesale power to their distribution cooperatives. Basin Electric’s growth and success during the past 50-plus years is due to the commitment, support and resolve of these visionary co-op leaders and their consumers.

Basin Electric’s 11-member board of directors are elected by its members – more than 140 cooperatives in nine states. These directors have been elected to the boards of their local distribution systems and then, with the exception of District 9, to their respective intermediate generation and transmission systems. Many of the Class A members are generation and transmission (G&T) electric cooperatives.

Basin Electric’s member systems’ service territories span 540,000 square miles from the Canadian to the Mexican borders. Its members constitute a vital network of generation, transmission and distribution systems that deliver electricity to 3 million consumers in parts of North Dakota,

South Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado, Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, Montana and New Mexico.

Here are profiles on three directors representing South Dakota and Minnesota electric cooperatives.



## Kermit Pearson:

The more he got involved, the more he realized serving rural electric cooperatives was what he was meant to do.

When Kermit Pearson was asked to join the Webster, S.D.-based Lake Region Electric Association board in 1981, it was something he didn’t expect.

He had no experience in the electric cooperative world and had no family history there either. He was 35 years old and says even at that time, most of the directors on electric cooperative boards were nearing retirement age.

He was filling the seat of Art Jones, a pioneer in electric cooperative history. Jones helped to organize Lake Region Electric, East River Electric Power Cooperative and finally Basin Electric where he served as the first board president.

“There was some legacy there to follow,” Pearson says. He felt young, but the more he got involved, the more Pearson realized serving rural electric cooperatives was what he was meant to do.

In addition to the Lake Region Electric board, Pearson has served on the East River Electric board since 1989 and has served on the Basin Electric board since 1997, representing District 1. Currently he serves as the Basin Electric board’s vice president and represents Basin Electric on the South Dakota Rural Electric Association board of directors.

Since that unexpected phone call, Pearson has never been involved with another board. His energy is directed into the rural electrics. “Electric cooperatives are so well run and well organized and there are quality people in these organizations throughout,” he says. “Being around good people is fun and it’s fun when you’re all fighting for the same cause – to improve the quality of life for rural people.”

Pearson farms and ranches in partnership with his brother, Neal. The Pearson Gelbvieh Cattle Company sits a dozen miles east of Britton, S.D., in the northeastern corner of the state. Off the road leading to Fort Sisseton State Park, the farmstead has a nice thick buffer of trees, some that have been planted over the past 67 years by a Pearson, and at least one that was a good 25 years old before the Pearsons ever set foot on the place. There are lakes in almost every direction and many are named for the distance they are from the fort – Four Mile Lake, Nine Mile Lake and so on. In addition to the purebred Gelbvieh herd, Pearson grows soybeans, wheat, oats and alfalfa.

He hasn’t always lived this life, though. After college at South Dakota State University, Pearson taught vocational agriculture in Redfield, S.D., and then managed the South Dakota State Fair in Huron, S.D.

Kermit and Peggy Pearson were starting their lives together about that time and decided life in Huron would not be a long-term thing. The desire to farm and ranch pulled Pearson back toward his home. “Neal and dad were working together at that time. If we were to grow and expand, it took another hand and that was me,” he says. “I had an interest in the purebred aspect of the cattle operation. I guess you can’t take the farm out of a boy.”

Thinking back, Kermit Pearson says his state government experience with the South Dakota State Fair and his previous teaching experience is what made the Nominating Committee at Lake Region Electric think of him for a board seat.

From the days when Art Jones was the first president of the Basin Electric board, to his Lake Region Electric successor’s work today, Pearson says, “Basin Electric has always survived and not only have we survived, but we have grown and prospered as a result of the way we tackled those issues. We have a good cause to fight for.”

Pearson serves as the Basin Electric vice president.



# Gary Drost:

**Drost represents District 2, L&O Power Cooperative, and serves as Basin Electric's secretary/treasurer.**

**Gary Drost and his** co-op companions stepped into the Longworth House Office Building cafeteria — a noisy and bustling expanse of well-dressed people. The cafeteria didn't seem much different than the rest of Capitol Hill.

Drost represents Basin Electric's District 2, L&O Power Cooperative of Rock Rapids, Iowa, and serves as Basin Electric's secretary/treasurer. He also serves on several Basin Electric subsidiary boards. He represents Sioux Valley Energy of Colman, S.D., on the L&O board of directors.

Drost's cafeteria stop was part of a mid-September 2014 trip to Washington, D.C., with other cooperative colleagues to visit legislators and attend the annual Fall Fly-In reception for congressional staffers, which is coordinated by Basin Electric. During the visits, the group visited the Minnesota, South Dakota and North Dakota congressional delegation and Roger Johnson, National Farmers Union president.

Each legislator was joined by at least one staff member who would take notes and ask visitors questions about the issues they face.

"We've been told by legislators, 'When you folks come in, we listen. You don't come in with three or four people — you come in with a delegation that's much larger.' There's strength in numbers," Drost says.

It was warm outside as the group moved between buildings. That fact and the day's frantic pace didn't wear down Drost: He's busy enough on his farm near Luverne, Minn., where he and Debra grow corn and soybeans. They farm with their son, who also raises beef cattle and hogs. Gary and Debra also have a daughter and three grandchildren.

Drost's life as a co-op director can take him far from home, but he knows the importance of these trips: co-ops were born in politics, linking co-op leaders and the nation's leaders.

It was a nonstop, tightly scheduled stay in D.C. for Drost and his cooperative counterparts, though well worth the effort to visit about topics that could have profound effects on the energy industry.

"The rural electric program was born in politics and will survive or die in politics," Drost says.

Drost, a former lineman and retired U.S. Navy Reserve serviceman, has been a Basin Electric director since 1999 and electric cooperative board member since 1987. He remembers his first visit to Basin Electric's annual meeting of the membership as a new cooperative board director.

"I was just awestruck by what Basin Electric was and everything Basin Electric was doing. I wouldn't have dreamed that 12 years later I'd be a director on the Basin Electric board," he says.

In 1987, the cooperative and its members were challenged by surplus generation. Drost and the other directors face challenges of a different sort today.

"It's a pretty exciting time because of the challenges of growth and capacity shortages we face going forward. Everything is continually changing, and we must meet the membership's needs while also recognizing needs of the future member," Drost says. "I'm comfortable looking toward the future because we have a committed staff and board at Basin Electric, and a membership that is committed to Basin Electric and is very much a part of our future."



# Mike McQuiston:

**McQuiston's first co-op memories are tied to needing the cooperation of neighboring homes.**

**The drive to Mike** McQuiston's ranch in central South Dakota is similar to a trip into a national park. Prairie scenery gives way to bluffs and hills and valleys, roads wind and get more rugged and the sky opens up to endlessness.

Out in the pasture, driving in four-wheel over lumps and bumps, suddenly the land in front of your windshield gives way to the view of Lake Oahe sprawling as far as your eyesight can stretch.

"This part of the world can humble you pretty quickly," says McQuiston, Basin Electric director for District 7, Rushmore Electric Power Cooperative in Rapid City, S.D.

McQuiston is showing off the artesian well system on his land. Wells 2,400 feet deep, flowing 35 to 40 gallons per minute. The water is potable but "it's got a taste to it. You don't have to take your vitamins," he jokes.

The wells keep the cattle watered and a reverse osmosis system in the house allows his family to use the water as well.

Living along the Missouri River, just north of the Oahe Dam, means McQuiston has the kind of views people will drive for hours to see. His family has a history on this land going back five generations. In the 1960s, his grandparents moved their house and barn to a higher altitude so that when the dam was built, they wouldn't be flooded. The house remains on that far-off hill, nobody living there for 40 years now.

McQuiston's first co-op memories are tied to needing the cooperation of neighboring homes. "Probably the first co-op function I went to was rural water and what is now Golden West Telecommunications. They were our phone provider," he says. "I can remember taking an old phone, going over to the neighbor's and there was a pole with a little deal at the bottom where you could wire the phone in. That's what we did when we had to make a phone call. And that was just the way it was."

Today, he takes his children, Zach and Ally, to electric co-op annual meetings. Zach went on the Rural Electric Cooperative Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., in 2016.

And since McQuiston has been on the Basin Electric board since 2013, he made the choice to put his cattle out on shares so he has the time to attend Ally's soccer games and Zach's football and basketball games. "I decided, until they are out of school, I'm going to do electric stuff and I'm going to chase them and go where they go," he says.

McQuiston first got into "electric stuff" in 1996, when he was elected to the board of West Central Electric Cooperative, headquartered in Murdo, S.D. He knew quite a few of the co-op's members then because he spent his high school years working for the veterinarian at the local sale barn.

In 2010, McQuiston was elected to the Rushmore Electric Power Cooperative board, a Class A Basin Electric member. He also served on the South Dakota Rural Electric Association board from 2003-2010.

He was 26 years old when elected to the West Central Electric board. "You go to the meetings, you meet the people and you talk ag, so I really enjoyed it," he says. "Once you know your goal is to keep the lights on and the rates down, that fit me really well."



# Are You Paying Too Much For Heat?

*Northern Electric Members May Qualify For A Lower Heat Rate*



by **Ben Dunsmoor**

**A**S THE ICY GRIP OF WINTER continues to tighten across the Northern Electric service territory many consumers are noticing that their electric bills have increased.

Electric statements that were sent out in January for the December usage resulted in several high-bill calls to the Northern Electric office.

Weather always plays a big role in the amount of energy that is used by a consumer, and the new format of the monthly statements that were unveiled this summer allows members to see the average daily temperature for the month that is being billed. The bills that were received in January show that the average daily temperature for December 2016 was 14 degrees compared to 23 degrees the year before. It was nearly 40 percent colder this past December than it was in December of 2015. That factor alone will lead to higher bills.

“A lot of the bills that we have been investigating are a direct result of the

subzero temperatures we experienced in December,” Manager of Marketing and Member Services Russ Ulmer said.

Northern Electric members may also see a higher bill in the winter if their electric heat is not calculated on a separate meter – or submeter – which means they are not receiving the co-op heat rate. Northern Electric members who have a separate meter connected to their heating system qualify for a special heat rate of 4.7 cents per kilowatt hour. The normal energy charge is 7.5 cents.

“The heat rate encourages responsible use of electric heat and keeps costs low for our consumers during the coldest months of the year,” Ulmer said.

Members must call the Northern Electric office at 605-225-0310 and talk with a Member Services Representative to determine if they qualify for the rate. The Member Services Representative will review the member’s account and possibly stop out at the service location to ensure that the proper metering setup and rates are being implemented

on the account. There is no charge to investigate and install a submeter on an account.

Members can also keep a close eye on their accounts throughout the winter months by signing up for SmartHub – an online account management tool available to Northern Electric members. Northern Electric consumers can use SmartHub to pay their bill online, set up automatic payments, view their daily electric use, and compare their usage to previous months and years. To sign up for SmartHub members simply need to go to [www.northernelectric.coop](http://www.northernelectric.coop) and click the ‘new user’ link in the SmartHub login box on the homepage.

Taking steps to set up the proper metering for electric heat and regular monitoring of electric use through SmartHub and monthly statements can help answer some of the questions about the fluctuations of monthly bills especially as winter continues to tighten its grip.

# What To Look For On Your Electric Bill

YNNN



**Northern Electric Cooperative**  
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

PO Box 457 | Bath, SD 57427

Office hours: 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM Monday - Friday  
Phone: 605-225-0310 1-800-529-0310  
Website Address: www.northernelectric.coop  
Email: billing@northernelectric.coop

XXX X XX X.XXX  
MEMBER NAME  
MEMBER ADDRESS  
CITY STATE ZIP CODE

X XXX  
X-X X-X



Statement Date	06/06/2016
Customer ID	XXXXX
Payment Due	<b>06/23/2016</b>

### Service Summary

Previous Balance	159.83
Balance Forward	159.83
Current Charges	261.69
<b>Total Amount Due 06/23/16</b>	<b>421.52</b>
<b>Amount Due After 06/23/16</b>	<b>426.52</b>

### Message from Northern Electric

This is where the company message will print.

Page 1 of 2

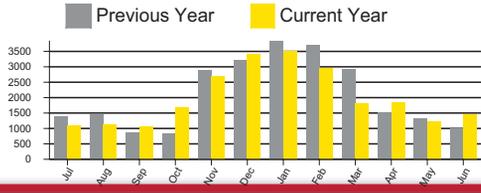
**kWh Usage History:** Bar graph displays historical usage data and offers year-to-year comparisons.

Account Number: XXXX

Map Location: XX-XX-XX

Service Description	Service Address	Rate	Meter Number	Services From	Services To	Days	Readings Previous	Readings Present	Meter Multiplier	kWh Usage	kW Usage
ON POLE S OF HOUSE	Member Address	B001	XXXXXXXX	06/01/16	06/15/16	14	3523	4982	1	1459	0.0

### kWh Usage History



PERIOD ENDING	06/01/15	06/01/16
Avg Daily Temp	69	69
Avg Daily kWh	33	104
Avg Daily Cost	\$4.27	\$11.60

### Current Service Detail

Facility Chg		53.00
Energy Chg 17133535	\$0.075 per kWh	109.43
Energy Chg 98236548	\$0.047 per kWh	68.57
PCA	\$0.010 per kWh	14.59
<b>Total Electric Charges</b>		<b>245.59</b>
Unmetered 100/150 Watt Light		9.00
Water Heater Credit		6.00 CR
Finance Charge		5.00
<b>Total Other Charges</b>		<b>8.00</b>
State Sales Tax		8.10
<b>Total Current Charges</b>		<b>261.69</b>

**Monthly Use Data:** Gives members information about average daily temperature, average daily electric use, and average daily costs.

**Energy Charges:** Energy rate and monthly charges per kWh appear in this region. Heat rate energy charge will also appear here when applied.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.  
Return this portion with your payment.

MEMBER NAME  
MEMBER ADDRESS  
CITY STATE ZIP CODE

Account	XXXX
<b>Total Amount Due 06/23/16</b>	<b>\$421.52</b>
<b>Total Due After 06/23/16</b>	<b>\$426.52</b>

Make checks payable to Northern Electric



Account Balance, Monthly Usage, and Bill Payments are available at www.northernelectric.coop



Pay-By-Phone toll-free  
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NORTHERN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE  
PO BOX 457  
BATH SD 57427-0457



440210000003868000035295000035795061520169

## Regional Dateline

### December 15-March 31

South Dakota Snowmobile  
Trails Season, Lead, SD  
605-584-3896

### February 24-25

SD State High School Wrestling  
Tournaments, Sioux Falls, SD  
605-224-9261

### February 25

11th Annual Outhouse Races  
and Chili Cook-off Contest  
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
Nemo, SD, 605-578-2708

### March 8-12

SD State Pool Tournament  
Rushmore Plaza Civic Center  
Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4115

### March 9-11

SD State High School A Girls  
Basketball Tournament  
Frost Arena, Brookings, SD  
605-224-9261

### March 9-11

SD State High School B Girls  
Basketball Tournament  
Huron Arena, Huron, SD  
605-224-9261

### March 11-12

2017 Gun Show, American  
Legion Hall, Saturday 9 a.m.  
to 5 p.m., Sunday 9 a.m. to  
3 p.m. MST, Philip, SD  
605-859-2635, 605-859-2280  
605-859-2892

### March 16-18

SD State High School AA Boys  
and Girls Basketball  
Tournament, Rushmore Plaza  
Civic Center, Rapid City, SD  
605-224-9261



To have your event listed on this page, send complete information, including date, event, place and contact to your local electric cooperative. Include your name, address and daytime telephone number. Information must be submitted at least eight weeks prior to your event. Please call ahead to confirm date, time and location of event.

## Events of Special Note

### March 4-7

2017 Summit League  
Basketball Championship  
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7288

### March 24

SPURS Spring Dance with  
Dustin Evans & Good Times  
Band, Dakota Event Center  
8 to 11 p.m., Tickets at SPURS  
and the Hitch 'N Post  
Aberdeen, SD, 605-226-1099

### March 16-18

SD State High School A Boys  
Basketball Tournament  
Premier Center  
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-224-9261

### March 24-26

Black Hills Home Builders  
Home Show, Rushmore Plaza  
Civic Center, Rapid City, SD  
blackhillshomebuilders.com

### March 31-April 2

Professional Bull Riders  
Built Ford Tough Series  
Sioux Falls, SD  
605-367-7288

### March 16-18

SD State High School B Boys  
Basketball Tournament  
Barnett Center, Aberdeen, SD  
605-224-9261

### March 25-26

SD State AAU Wrestling  
Tournament, Rushmore Plaza  
Civic Center, Rapid City, SD  
605-394-4115

### April 1-2

Art Show, Community Center  
Faulkton, SD, 605-598-4160

### March 18-19

Black Hills Motorcycle Show  
Rushmore Hall, Rushmore  
Plaza Civic Center  
Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4115

### March 28

Badlands Bad River Regional  
Job Fair and Business Expo  
School Fine Arts Building  
Philip, SD, 605-441-2059

### April 7-8

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

### March 23-25

SD All-State Band Concert  
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-224-9261

### March 30

I Love The 90's Tour  
Rushmore Plaza Civic Center  
Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4115

### April 14-16

Sioux Empire Film Festival  
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-4616

### March 24

Mother King In Concert  
Spearfish, SD, 605-642-7973

### March 31-April 1

Holiday Arts Spring Craft  
Show, Friday 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.  
Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Masonic Temple, Mitchell, SD  
605-248-2526

### April 20

Peter Mawanga and the  
Amaravi Movement  
Spearfish, SD, 605-642-7973

### May 6-7

23rd Annual Bike Show Dako-  
ta Events Center  
Aberdeen, SD, 605-216-2174