

Northern Electric

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Cooperative Connections

JANUARY 2017 VOL. 17 NO. 9



Resolutions To Help You Save

P8-9

Board Accountability

Offices Will Be Closed Dec. 26 For Christmas & Jan. 2 For New Year's Day

Northern Electric Cooperative's regular board meeting was held November 28 at the headquarters in Bath with all directors present. As the first order of business, the board approved the October 27, 2016, minutes and October expenditures. The board then reviewed and accepted monthly reports by management including details on financial, operations, member services, safety and communications. Directors viewed the East River Electric Power Cooperative video report. East River Director Mark Sumption reported on actions taken by the ER Board at the November 3 meeting. South Dakota Rural Electric Association Director Mike McHugh reported on the SDREA board meeting which he attended on November 17-18, 2016, in Pierre. Director Donna Sharp, Manager Char Hager, and Communications Director Ben Dunsmoor reported on the Basin Electric Annual Meeting which they attended on November 8-10, 2016, in Bismarck, ND.

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.
- Legal and Legislative report included Manager Hager informing the board that the Northeast Rural Utilities Legislative Issues Forum that was to be held November 29, 2016, in Aberdeen was cancelled.
- 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 Thursday, December 22, 2016.
2. Approved payment of legal fees for Harvey Oliver in the amount of \$1,439.35.
3. Approved Work Order Inventories #16-10 for \$185,176.72 and #16-10MC for \$106,645.12 to be submitted to the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) for reimbursement from loan funds for electric plant construction already completed.
4. Authorized limited board attendance to the 2017 SDREA Annual Meeting and Legislative Dinner January 12-13 in Pierre and appointed Director Donna Sharp



Holiday Hours
Christmas
Closed Monday, December 26
New Year's
Closed Monday, January 2

delegate, Manager Char Hager alternate.

5. Authorized limited board attendance to the 2017 East River Energize Forum, February 1-2, in Sioux Falls.
6. Authorized acceptance and execution of arrangement letter offered by Eide Bailly LLP to perform the audits for 2016.
7. Approved the 2017 Capital Budget.
8. Approved the utilization of up to an additional half cent PCA until 2017 rate increase is implemented.
9. Approved revision to the existing Electric Tariff Rate-POET.
10. Held Executive Session.

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

Financial Report – October 2016

	October 2016	October 2015
kWh Sales	25,611,751 kWh	23,529,079 kWh
Electric Revenues	\$2,309,618	\$2,164,123
Total Cost of Service	\$2,202,563	\$2,127,327
Operating Margins	\$107,055	\$36,795
Year to Date Margins	\$109,621	\$43,394

Residential Average Monthly Usage and Bill

October '16	2,196 kWh	\$210.05	.0957 per kWh
October '15	1,833 kWh	\$184.05	.1004 per kWh

Wholesale power cost, taxes, interest and depreciation accounted for 86.3% of NEC's Total Cost of Service.

Northern Electric Cooperative Connections

(USPS 396-040)

CEO/General Manager

Char Hager

info@northernelectric.coop

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Mike McHugh, **President**

Donna Sharp, **Vice President**

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Wayne Holt, **Treasurer**

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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

Design assistance by SDREA and TDG Communications



Know what's below.
Call before you dig.

Editor's Column

The Election, Electricity, and the Aftermath

Regulations. Regulations. Regulations.

Over the past several years you have been reading about perceived, proposed, and actual regulations that have been bearing down on America's electric generators. But, now that Donald Trump – who is opposed to more regulations for power producers and manufacturers – has been elected president what will happen?

The short answer: the next four years will likely be friendlier for electric cooperatives and power suppliers.

The long-term answer: despite a Trump presidency cooperatives are still going to make investments in technology to reduce carbon emissions.

Why would co-ops continue to research carbon-capture and emission-reducing technology even though the president elect questions climate change and is against current proposed regulations? Because, despite efforts from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association and Basin Electric Power Cooperative in North Dakota to stop the Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Power Plan, co-op leaders still believe reducing emissions is a responsible long-term practice to embrace.

I had the opportunity to attend the Basin Electric Annual Meeting in early November in Bismarck, North Dakota, where I listened

to a panel of experts that included Senator Heidi Heitkamp, D-North Dakota. Basin Electric operates a fleet of power generating units – including coal-fired power plants – that supply a majority of the power used by Northern Electric members. The panel was discussing the impact of the election on co-ops. Heitkamp asked the crowded event hall of board members and

co-op managers if they thought the election changed the issue of power producers reducing carbon emissions. Not one electric co-op board member or manager in the hall raised their hands. It was a clear signal that co-ops know they have to move toward more environmentally-friendly generating sources.

The election, however, will likely bring some relief from the tight deadlines and aggressive emission-reduction targets laid out in the Clean Power Plan.

"The election was about opening a door and actually having a voice that will listen to us and find some compromise," Heitkamp told the co-op board members and managers gathered at the Basin Electric Annual Meeting. "We have an opportunity for the first time in a long time to come to the table and have a path forward."

And a path forward is what Basin Electric and electric co-ops across the country will continue to invest in, and investigate, as we look toward the future and the responsibility of providing clean, affordable, and reliable electricity for rural America.



Ben Dunsmoor
Communications Director

Carbon Monoxide Alarm Safety Tips

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a poisonous gas that is created when common fuels such as natural gas, oil, wood or coal burn incompletely. This odorless, colorless, tasteless gas is often called the “silent killer” because it is virtually undetectable without the use of detection technology like a CO alarm.

Installation Tips:

- Install CO alarms on every level of your home and outside each sleeping area.
- Interconnected CO alarms provide the best protection. When one sounds, they all sound.
- CO alarms are not a substitute for smoke alarms. Install both types of alarms in your home.
- Purchase CO alarms from a reputable retailer that you trust.
- Choose alarms that bear the label of a nationally recognized testing laboratory.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions regarding proper placement and installation height.



Maintenance Tips:

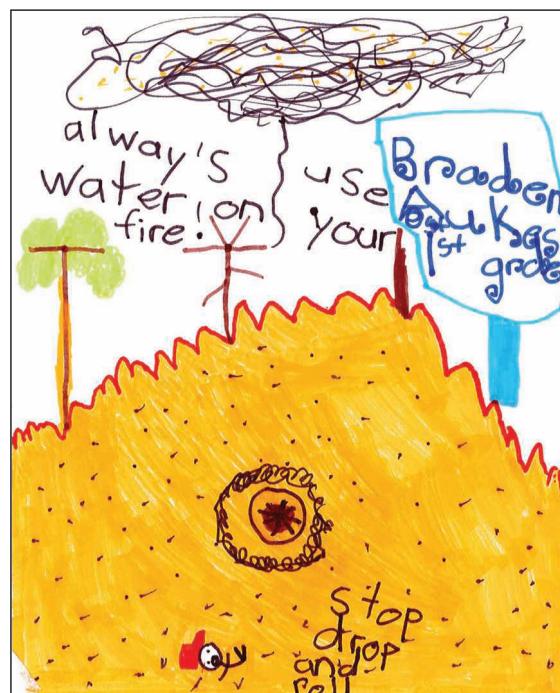
- Test CO alarms at least once a month by pressing the TEST button.
- CO alarm batteries should be replaced in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, at least once a year. If an alarm “chirps” or “beeps” to indicate low batteries, they should be replaced immediately.
- The lifespan of CO alarms varies. CO alarms should be replaced in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Alarm Tips:

- Make sure that everyone in your family knows the difference between the sound of the CO and smoke alarms, and what number to call for a CO emergency.
- If your CO alarm sounds, immediately move to fresh air outside. Alert others in the home to the danger and make sure everyone gets to fresh air safely.
- Never ignore a sounding CO alarm.

Source: esfi.org

Kids' Corner Safety Poster



“Always use water on your fire.”

Braden Aukes

Braden was in first-grade when he submitted this safety poster. He is the son of Brian Aukes, Beaver Creek, Minn. He is a member of Sioux Valley Energy, Colman, 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.

Super Soups

Cheeseburger Soup

1/2 lb. ground beef	3 cups diced, peeled potatoes
3/4 cup chopped onion	1/4 cup all-purpose flour
3/4 cup shredded carrots	2 cups cubed processed American cheese
3/4 cup diced celery	1-1/2 cups milk
1 tsp. dried basil	3/4 tsp. salt
1 tsp. dried parsley flakes	1/4 to 1/2 tsp. pepper
4 T. butter or margarine, divided	1/4 cup sour cream
3 cups chicken broth	

In a 3-quart saucepan, brown beef; drain and set aside. In the same saucepan, sauté onion, carrots, celery, basil and parsley in 1 T. butter until vegetables are tender, about 10 minutes. Add broth, potatoes and beef; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 10 to 12 minutes or until potatoes are tender. Meanwhile, in a small skillet, melt remaining butter. Add flour; cook and stir for 3 to 5 minutes or until bubbly. Add to soup; bring to a boil. Cook and stir for 2 minutes. Reduce heat to low. Add cheese, milk, salt and pepper; cook and stir until cheese melts. Remove from the heat; blend in sour cream. Yield: 8 servings

Nancy Noess, Mitchell

Butternut Squash Bisque

1 T. canola oil	4 cups peeled and cubed butternut squash
1 T. unsalted butter	Salt and pepper to taste
1/2 cup diced onion	1/2 cup heavy cream, optional
3/4 cup diced carrots	Ground nutmeg to taste
3 cups vegetable broth	

Heat oil and melt butter in a large pot over medium heat. Cook and stir onion until tender. Mix carrots and squash into pot. Pour in vegetable broth and season with salt, pepper and nutmeg. Bring to a boil; reduce heat and simmer until vegetables are tender. In a blender or food processor, puree soup mixture until smooth. Return to pot; stir in heavy cream. Heat through but do not boil. Serve warm with a dash of nutmeg. Yield: 4 servings

Debra Weaver, Box Elder

Super Easy Potato Soup

8 oz. cream cheese, cut into small pieces	2 lb. hash browns
1 can cream of chicken soup	1/3 cup chopped onion
32 oz. chicken broth	Diced bacon or ham, as desired
	Salt and pepper to taste

Mix together all ingredients in a slow cooker. Cook on LOW for 7 hours. May add diced green or red peppers and carrots for color.

Amy Schoenfelder, Cavour

Cream of Crab Soup

1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter	1/2 tsp. McCormick® Parsley Flakes
1 medium onion, coarsely chopped (1 cup)	4 cups milk or half-and-half
1/3 cup flour	1 lb. lump crab meat
1 T. OLD BAY® Seasoning	3 T. dry sherry

Melt butter in 3-quart saucepan on medium heat. Add onion; cook and stir 5 minutes or until softened. Add flour, Old Bay and parsley; whisk until well blended. Whisking constantly, gradually add milk. Bring to boil, stirring occasionally. Stir in crab meat. Reduce heat to low; simmer 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in sherry. Heat 1 to 2 minutes. Sprinkle with additional Old Bay, if desired. Yield: 6 servings

Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 285, Total Fat 14g, Cholesterol 119mg, Sodium 605mg, Carbohydrates 16g, Dietary Fiber 1g, Protein 22g

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Mushroom Salsa Chili

1 lb. ground beef	1 (4 oz.) can mushroom stems and pieces, drained
1 lb. bulk pork sausage	1/2 cup each chopped green pepper, sweet red and yellow pepper
2 (16 oz. each) cans kidney beans, rinsed and drained	
1 (24 oz.) jar chunky salsa	
1 (14.5 oz.) can diced tomatoes, undrained	1/2 tsp. dried oregano
1 large onion, chopped	1/4 tsp. garlic powder
1 (8 oz.) can tomato sauce	1/8 tsp. thyme
	1/8 tsp. dried marjoram

Cook beef and sausage over medium heat until meat is no longer pink; drain. Transfer meat to a 5-quart slow cooker. Stir in the remaining ingredients. Cover and cook on low for 8 to 9 hours or until vegetables are tender.

Stephanie Fossum, Hudson

Santa Fe Cheese Soup

1 (15 oz.) can whole kernel corn, drained	1 (4 oz.) can premium chuck white chicken, drained
1 (15 oz.) can pinto beans, rinsed and drained	1 (4 oz.) can chopped green chilies, if desired
1 (14 oz.) can chicken broth	1 lb. processed American cheese, cubed
1 (10 oz.) can diced tomatoes and green chilies, undrained	

In a 3-quart saucepan or slow cooker, combine all ingredients. Cook and stir until cheese is melted. Garnish with crushed tortilla chips. If using a slow cooker, cook on LOW for 2 to 3 hours, stirring occasionally. Note: May serve with a dollop of sour cream in each bowl.

Patricia Hopkins, Central City, NE

Please send your favorite brunch and seafood 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.

Northern Electric Rate Increase Coming In 2nd Quarter Of 2017

A rate increase for Northern Electric

Cooperative members will be implemented in the second quarter of 2017.

Back in July, Basin Electric Power Cooperative – which supplies a majority of the electricity Northern members use – announced it was raising rates by about 13 percent starting August 1, 2016, because of lower than expected electric sales, low market prices, and its continued investment in new infrastructure and emission-control technology.

However as it was previously announced in the August 2016 issue of *Cooperative Connections*, Northern Electric Cooperative and the other member co-ops of East River Electric Power Cooperative were able to delay the increase until January 1, 2017.

With 2017 knocking on the door, Northern Electric Cooperative would like to inform members that the pending rate increase will not be



implemented until the second quarter of the new year. The cooperative board and staff are currently completing the budgeting process and are continuing to analyze rates.

In the short term, Northern Electric plans to continue utilizing the power cost adjustment, or PCA. Currently, the PCA is one cent per kilowatt hour.

In November, the board approved adding up to an additional half cent to the PCA until the 2017 rate increase is implemented.

More information on rates for members will be made available prior to the implementation of the new rates.

Take Advantage Of Rebates And Heat Rates

As the cold weather sets in

Northern Electric Cooperative would like to remind members about its heat rate and various rebates.

Northern Electric members who heat their home, shop, or business with electric heat may qualify for a lower heat-rate charge than the regular kilowatt hour charge for lights and general use.

"The lower rate is in place to encourage members to heat their homes with a reliable source of energy that isn't vulnerable to price fluctuations," Northern Electric's Manager of

Member Services/Marketing Russ Ulmer said.

Members who have questions about the heat rate can call Northern Electric's Member Services representatives with any questions they may have.

Rebates

There are also several rebates available for co-op members for residential and commercial heating systems and electric water heaters.

A \$600 cash rebate is available for homeowners who install an Energy Star rated ground source or air source

heat pump in their home. Various commercial rebates are also available.

Members can also get an \$8 or \$10 per gallon rebate when they purchase a qualifying electric water heater. Members should call Northern Electric for additional details and specifications before purchasing a water heater.

For more information visit [www.northernelectric.coop](http://northernelectric.coop) and look at the 'Rebates & Incentives' page under the 'Member Programs' tab.

Members can also call 605-225-0310 and talk to a Member Services representative.

Tobin Selected As Scholar of the Week



Above: Northern Electric board member Glen Larson presented Aberdeen Central Senior Elizabeth Tobin with a \$100 check for being named the Touchstone Energy Scholar of the Week for the week of November 21.

Aberdeen Central High School senior Elizabeth Tobin is the first student from the Northern Electric Cooperative service territory to be named the Touchstone Energy Scholar of the Week this year.

"It's a nice honor to be recognized for this locally," Tobin said when she received the award.

Tobin has a 4.0 grade point average and serves as a math tutor for her fellow students. She also participates in National Honor Society.

Tobin said her recipe for academic success is to simply do the work that is assigned and do it to the best of her ability.

"As painful as it is, do the readings and put in the work, and it usually works out ok," Tobin said.

Following graduation, Tobin is thinking about going to the University of Minnesota where she will major in math.

Tobin received a \$100 check from Northern Electric Cooperative for being named the Scholar of the Week. Her name will be entered into a drawing at the end of the school year with the other students who have been named Scholar of the Week for the chance to win a \$1,000 or a \$500 scholarship.

A story featuring Tobin and her achievements aired on KSFY on November 21. KSFY Television is a partner in the Touchstone Energy Scholar of the Week program and highlights the recipients every week.

Country Cookin'

RECIPES NEEDED

Your recipe could be featured in the 33rd volume of East River Electric's *Country Cookin'* cookbook!

Help us create another great cookbook by submitting your favorite recipes as well as recipes for the cookbook's "Light Side" section.

Submit recipes via email to kstone@eastriver.coop, fax to 605-256-8057, or contact your local cooperative for more information.

Submission deadline is Monday, January 30, 2017.

Resolution to Save

Simple Steps to Saving on Your Energy Bill

AS THE NEW YEAR DAWNS, THOUSANDS OF AMERICANS will make resolutions. Resolutions to lose weight. Resolutions to exercise more. Resolutions to save money.

America's Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives offer key tips for reducing energy costs – and many are low- to no-cost solutions. And, some are easy to implement – and stick with throughout the year.

"In a home, heating, ventilation and cooling (HVAC) is the largest use of energy. Setting back your thermostat is the easiest and cheapest way to save energy," said Chad Reisenauer, a certified energy manager at Basin Electric Power Cooperative in Bismarck, N.D.

Here's the first 10 things to consider:

1. Replace any light bulb, especially ones that are on more than one hour per day, with a light-emitting diode (LED) bulb. Lighting ac-

counts for about 11 percent a typical home's energy use, so savings here can add up.

2. Close shades and drapes during the day to help keep heat out in summer. Opening coverings on south-facing windows can allow for radiant heat to enter during winter months. Heating and cooling accounts for the largest use of energy in a home.

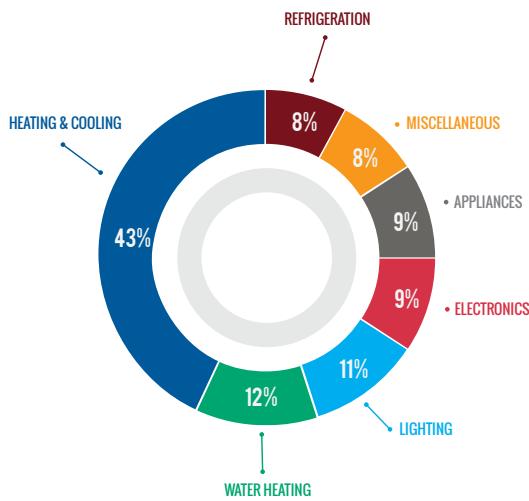
3. Plug electronic devices such as cable boxes, printers and TVs into power strips to turn off during vacations or long periods without use. Depending on your family, electronics can account for 8 percent to 15 percent of a home's electric bill.

4. Outside your home, caulk around all penetrations including telephone, electrical, cable, gas, water spigots, dryer vents, etc. Take the caulk gun inside, too. Caulking along baseboards with a clear sealant is recommended as



HOME ENERGY USE

WHERE DOES YOUR ENERGY GO?



Home energy use is different for everyone and hinges on several factors, including size of home, members in your household, your location and preferences. Knowing how your energy spend is divided will help you prioritize your energy saving habits.

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration. www.EIA.gov.

7. Keep your garage door down. A warmer garage in the winter and cooler garage in the summer will save energy.

8. Set water heater temperature no higher than 120° F. Water heating can account for 12 percent of a home's energy use. For smaller households of one or two members, the temperature can be turned down to 115° F.

9. Make sure dryer vent hose is not kinked or clogged. Also be sure to clean the dryer's lint trap before each use and ensure that the dryer's outdoor exhaust door is not blocked or clogged.

10. Ensure refrigerator door seals are tight. Set the refrigerator temperature to 34° F. to 37° F. and the freezer temperature to between 0° F. and 5° F.

"Most of these are low-cost/no-cost measures," said Alan Shedd, a professional engineer and certified energy manager who is the director of energy solutions for the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives brand. "While you can save more by sealing ductwork and air-sealing your house to reduce leaks, we don't want to discourage people from doing the simple things first."

"Check out the newly re-designed TogetherWeSave page on TouchstoneEnergy.coop. We've added an energy saving tips section that includes a Top-10 list. For a direct link use <http://www.touchstoneenergy.com/energy-money-saving-tips/more-tips/> and click on the "Top 10."

Inset above: Chad Reisenauer, a certified energy manager with Basin Electric Power Cooperative in Bismarck, N.D., takes measurements using a light meter at Wall Drug in Wall, S.D., as West River Electric Association's Veronica Kusser records the results. Another WREA team was counting each of the attraction's thousands of light bulbs as part of an energy audit to determine where energy savings could be found in the 85-year old tourist attraction.

is caulking around plumbing penetrations that come through walls beneath sinks.

5. Change HVAC air filters monthly. Make sure when changing the filters they are facing the correct direction. (Look for the arrow on the side of the filter.)

6. Use the dishwasher's air-dry cycle instead of the heat-dry cycle to dry dishes. The kitchen can account for 15 percent to 20 percent of your home's energy use.

Energy Savings Prescription Pays Off at Wall Drug

As the owners of iconic Wall Drug in Wall, S.D., prepared to celebrate their 85th year of operation, they turned to their local Touchstone Energy Cooperative, West River Electric Association, for an energy audit and a prescription to use electricity more wisely.

In January 2016, an energy audit of the facility was conducted. The sprawling complex which includes the street-level stores that are open to the public, also includes thousands of square feet of behind-the-scenes storage and offices that extend below and above the millions of visitors.

The audit accounted for the 5,400 light bulbs and more than 3,100 light fixtures throughout the attraction. It also looked at heating and cooling expenses associated with the facility as well as the efficiency of appliances and other electronics.

When all was said and done, the recommendations included some basic steps that are applicable in both homes and businesses.

The Hustead family – which owns Wall Drug – had already started converting much of the property to LED lighting. But, an important step behind-the-scenes had the potential to really add up in savings.

The audit recommended installing occupancy sensors – devices that sense when people enter and exit a room and adjust the lighting accordingly – was a major step in reducing costs.

Another major recommendation was that exterior doors be kept closed during summer months to keep cooler air inside the building.

On one meter alone (the attraction has several meters), energy consumption was significantly reduced by taking the recommended steps.

Find out more about energy-saving steps you can take by contacting the energy experts at your electric cooperative.



Students Should Apply Now For \$1,000 & \$500 Scholarships

SCHOLARSHIPS

The price of higher education is always a factor in deciding which school students will attend next fall.

Northern Electric Cooperative and North Dakota-based power supplier Basin Electric Power Cooperative are once again offering two scholarships this year to help with the cost of college.

"Supporting students who are part of our cooperative family is an important component of our culture, and we are pleased to present these scholarships to youth in our service territory every year," Northern Electric General Manager Char Hager said.

Taylor Ellingson is in her third year at Northern State University in Aberdeen and was the 2016 recipient of the \$1,000 scholarship from Basin Electric.

"I have paid my own way through all of college thus far, and I have come to realize that any amount of help is huge," Ellingson said.

Ellingson is currently pursuing a degree in international business and plans to graduate in May of 2018.

"Pursuing my academic career

in international business has been made possible by Northern Electric," Ellingson said.

South Dakota State University freshman Madison Styles received the \$500 scholarship from Northern Electric in 2016. The Northwestern High School graduate is using the scholarship as she pursues a degree in pharmaceuticals.

To be eligible for the scholarships parents of the students must be current consumers of Northern Electric Cooperative. The scholarship application process includes a short essay and documentation of academic and extracurricular activities. Applications and instructions on how to apply have been sent to all of the school districts in the Northern Electric service territory. Information can also be found at www.northernelectric.coop.

"A college degree and the knowledge it provides students is truly invaluable," Ellingson said. "I highly recommend that all other eligible students take the time to fill out this scholarship as it provides incredible opportunities."

How To Apply



Scholarship eligibility

Applicants must be U.S. citizens, under the age of 25, and natural or adopted children of Northern Electric consumers/members. Any applicant must be a student who is enrolled, or planning to enroll in, a full-time graduate or undergraduate course of study at an accredited, two-year or four-year college, university, or vocational/technical school.

How the selection process works

All applications are critically evaluated using a combination of several criteria including: SAT/ACT scores, grade-point average, work experience, participation in school and community activities, a statement by the student explaining his/her educational and career goals, financial need, and a written recommendation by a third party.

A committee of cooperative employees will evaluate the applications and submit the entry to Basin Electric for scholarship distribution.

Application

Applications are available from local high school guidance counselors, on the Northern Electric Cooperative website, or directly from Northern Electric offices. Completed applications **MUST BE RETURNED BY FEBRUARY 17, 2017** to:

Northern Electric Cooperative,
PO Box 457
Bath, SD 57427

For more information, contact Kay Albrecht at:

605-225-0310

Mellette Community Center Gets A Boost From Local Co-ops

by Ben Dunsmoor

Mellette, SD The residents of Mellette, South Dakota, need a place to gather. For more than 60 years that place was the American Legion building which sits on the southeast corner of 1st Avenue and Main Street. But by next year, residents hope a new 4,200 square foot community center will begin to host town meetings, community events, and weddings.

"There's just not enough space in town for larger gatherings," Mellette Community Development Foundation director Craig Oberle said.

Oberle is one of six members of the Mellette Community Development Foundation board who has been spearheading a fundraising effort for a new community building since this summer. The American Legion building, which was built in 1948, has been the gathering place for decades but it is showing its age and isn't equipped to handle many events, especially during the winter.



Above: The future site of the Mellette Community Center will be next to the post office on Main Street.

The Mellette Community Development Foundation hopes to raise \$220,000 to build a new 60 foot by 70-foot community building. The building will sit next to the post office on Main Street and will include a stage, a kitchen, and a large area to hold gatherings.

"It's like most small towns, if we

don't keep trying to progress we'll go backward," Oberle said.

The committee started its first round of fundraising in July and on December 2, Northern Electric in cooperation with East River Electric Power Cooperative and Basin Electric Power Cooperative, presented the project with a \$1,600 donation. The donation pushed the fundraising effort over the \$100,000 mark. The Mellette Community Development Foundation is now starting a second fundraising push to raise the rest of the money.

"We were pretty pleased with our first go around," Oberle said.

The property the new community center will sit on was donated and several local contractors have said they will donate their time to help build the center.

"It's coming together," Oberle said. "It's been a pretty good community effort."

And the committee hopes everything will come together so that the community can gather at the new building by the fall of 2017.



Above: Mellette Community Development Foundation members receive two \$800 checks from Northern Electric. (From L to R) MCDF directors Don Stahl and Kathy Larson, Northern Electric Board Member Vic Fischbach and General Manager Char Hager, and MCDF director Craig Oberle.

Illuminating Choices

Watts, Lumens, Kelvin Can Be Confusing When Buying Bulbs

GONE ARE THE DAYS WHEN GRABBING A LIGHTBULB at the hardware store was as simple as knowing whether you were in search of a 40-watt, 60-watt or a 100-watt bulb.

Today, a trek down the lighting aisle can be confusing and at times intimidating as one wades through the packaging.

If you have been gradually making the switch to the new energy efficient lighting choices, you've noticed that more changes have come to the light bulb aisle. Remember when the odd looking corkscrew compact fluorescent (CFL) bulb was introduced to consumers a few years ago? It's still there and so are most of the classic pear-shaped incandescent bulbs. But today's lighting choices have expanded and gotten serious makeovers – their packaging labels and lingo included. There are LEDs, CFLs, halogen, lumens, CRI and more, and there is a host of lighting brands. But in recent years, the focus has been on making *all* bulbs more energy efficient and cost effective.

End of an Era

We've basked in the golden glow of Thomas Edison's incandescent bulb since the 1800s, but January 2014 marked the end of its run. That's when the federal government finalized its mandated phase out of selected general-purpose light bulbs and Edison's less energy efficient incandescent ones. While you still may find 100- and 75-watt bulbs on store shelves, manufacturers in the U.S. stopped producing them. The old 40- and 60-watt bulbs, which represented over half the market, are following suit. What brought about the lighting change? In 2007, the U.S. Department of Energy estimated that home and commercial lighting was consuming more electricity annually – about 300 billion kilowatt-hours of lighting or the equivalent of about 100 power plants – but most of it was wasted. Old-fashioned incandescent bulbs used plenty of energy to produce only 10 percent light, with 90 percent of the energy given off as heat. In comparison, today's more energy-saving incandescent light bulbs use 25 percent less energy to do the job of lighting the same spaces in your home.

Look on the Bright Side

Prime replacements for the traditional incandescent light bulb are the higher-efficiency CFL

and LED or light emitting diode bulbs. But be prepared to pay more upfront for some of the bulbs you choose. Lighting experts say that LEDs are the best choice for energy efficiency and if price is not a concern – they can last for up to two decades, save you 75 percent or more in energy costs, and offer superior color and brightness. However, they can cost an estimated \$10 to \$60 per bulb.

The Energy Department assures consumers that there is a bright side – lower electricity bills over the longer term. These are their estimates: using a traditional incandescent bulb adds about \$4.80 per year to the average household electric bill, but a CFL bulb adds just \$1.20 a year and an LED about \$1 per year. That means that a typical household could potentially save about \$50 per year by replacing 15 old incandescent bulbs.

Lighting the Way

Since lighting accounts for nearly 20 percent of the average home's electricity use, don't stay in the dark when shopping for new bulbs that save on energy and your electric bill. **Things to know before you go:**

Lumens are the new watts. It's all about the lumens or the amount of light a light bulb emits. Remember this formula: The higher the lumens, the brighter the light – to replace a 100-watt incandescent bulb, choose a bulb that offers about 1,600 lumens. There are handy charts at www.energystar.gov/ that help you compare the old measure of watts to lumens.

Three-steps to your new bulbs. STEP 1: Choose the amount of lumens you need based on how bright you want a room; **STEP 2:** Determine which bulb has the lowest estimated energy cost per year. This will save you the most money; and **STEP 3:** Choose bulbs based on your needs – how long it will last and light appearance.

Read the label. Always check the package, making sure that it carries the U.S. Department of Energy's ENERGY STAR® logo. New Lighting Facts labels on boxes will also help consumers understand what they are purchasing – amount of lumens, estimated annual operating cost and light color.

By B. Denise Hawkins

Don't Watch for Watts, Look for Lumens!

Tips for lightbulb shopping by lumens instead of watts

A lumen is a measurement of how much light you are getting from a light bulb.

More lumens means a brighter light, fewer lumens a dimmer light.

*What you will see
on the package*

What watts translate to

*Brightness
Energy cost*

The bulb's life expectancy

Light appearance
(for example, if the bulb provides
"warm" or "cool" light)

Wattage

(the amount of energy the bulb uses)

Whether the bulb contains mercury

Lighting Facts Per Bulb	
Brightness	870 lumens
Estimated Yearly Energy Cost	\$1.57
Based on 3 hrs/day, 11¢/kWh Cost depends on rates and use	
Life	5.5 years
Based on 3 hrs/day	
Light Appearance	
Warm	Cool
2700 K	
Energy Used	13 watts
Contains Mercury	
For more on clean up and safe disposal, visit epa.gov/cfl	

Brightness
870
lumens
Estimated Energy Cost
\$1.57
per year

Watts vs. Lumens

WATTS (energy consumed)	Now you look for	
	LUMENS (brightness output)	Now you look for
150 w	2600 lm	
100 w	1600 lm	
75 w	1100 lm	
60 w	800 lm	
40 w	450 lm	

What Color Bulb Would Work Best For Your Use?



Light color is measured on a temperature scale referred to as Kelvin (K). Lower Kelvin numbers mean the light appears yellow; higher Kelvin numbers mean the light is whiter or bluer.

Common uses

2700K 3000K



warm white
soft white

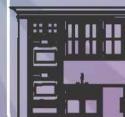


most spaces,
standard color

3500K 4100K



cool white
neutral white

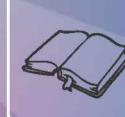


kitchens and
work spaces

5000K 6500K



natural
daylight



reading



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For more energy saving tips, visit www.YourCoopPower.com

Defending the Surge Is Your Home Protected?

AS THE TECHNOLOGY OF ELECTRIC DEVICES ADVANCES, so does the need to protect them from power surges.

With all the microprocessors that drive modern appliances, computers, and home entertainment systems, proper use of surge suppressors can save you the expense of replacing damaged equipment.

A power surge usually lasts only a fraction of a second, but the excessive voltage is enough to destroy circuitry inside sensitive electronics.

Digital devices have thousands of tiny on and off switches that continuously send and receive information during normal operation.

A shift in the smooth supply of electricity can disrupt this flow of information and cause the device to malfunction.

Flickering lights and blinking computers are sure signs of power fluctuations during a storm. A direct lightning strike will send up to 200,000 amps coursing through a power line, enough to burn up standard 20-amp electronics.

But most surges are less dramatic and occur without a homeowner's knowledge. These surges result from sudden changes in electricity caused by anything from a downed power line to the cycling energy use of a hair dryer.

Transient surges can produce instantaneous results: a crashed computer, for example. But often the damage goes undetected, only to surface later in a detrimental way, such as a microwave that suddenly stops working.

Homeowners can protect their electronics

with surge suppressors. As the term implies, these devices suppress an erratic power supply by diverting excess voltage to a ground wire. Suppressors will not protect a home from a direct lightning strike.

Suppressors come in a multitude of applications, from single-plug wall units to rack-mounted, home-entertainment system protection.

Many models also have options for telephone line and cable television connections to protect modems, fax machines and video equipment.

Here are some features to look for when buying a surge suppressor:

- Underwriter's Laboratories (UL) tested, with a UL 1449 listing and the term "Transient Voltage Surge Suppressor." The UL 1449 standard changed in 1998, so check old surge suppressors to make sure they still comply.

- An indicator light or some other feature is needed to show whether the device has experienced a power spike. If the light is out, the suppressor no longer works properly and should be replaced.

- Voltage suppression of 330 volts per UL standards. Higher voltage ratings give less protection.

- The suppressor must discharge excess energy to ground, not to neutral.

- Make sure any manufacturer insurance guarantees cover the cost of replacing damaged equipment.

- Check with your local utility before buying a surge suppressor. Your utility can recommend proper surge protection for various applications and often carries high-quality models at competitive prices.

Mike Federman is a contributing writer on energy at Ruralite Services.



Surge and Protect

Power Surges and How to Protect Yourself

The Issue

WHAT IS A "POWER SURGE"?

A power surge, or transient voltage, is a **sudden and unwanted increase in voltage that can damage, degrade or destroy** the sensitive electronic equipment in your home or business.



CAUSES

The National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA) estimates that **60-80% of surges are created within a facility**, such as when large appliances, like air conditioners, turn on and off. Surges can also originate from the **electric utility company during power grid switching**. Lastly, the most powerful surges can be caused by **lightning**.



IMPACT

A spike in voltage can be **harmful to electrical devices** in your home if the increase is above the device's intended operating voltage. This excess voltage can cause an arc of electrical current resulting in **heat that damages** the electrical components. Repeated small-scale surges may slowly **damage your electronic equipment** and **shorten the life** of appliances and electronics involved.



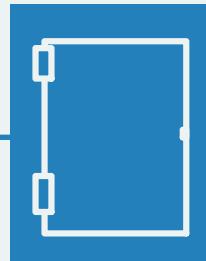
The Solutions

POINT-OF-USE SURGE PROTECTION DEVICES



Protect only the items that are **directly plugged into the device** from most electrical surges. It does not suppress or arrest a surge but **diverts the surge to ground**. Use point-of-use surge protectors that have an indicating light and/or audible alarm that alert when it needs replacement.

SERVICE ENTRANCE SURGE PROTECTION DEVICES



Mounted in or on your main electrical panel or at the base of the electric meter, this device provides **protection for your entire electrical system**.

This device covers components that cannot be connected to a point-of-use device, such as outlets and light switches.

REMINDERS

! No surge protection device can handle a **direct lightning strike**. The best surge protection is to **unplug devices from the wall** if you suspect a surge might be coming.

! Power strips **do NOT provide surge protection**. Be sure you are relying on the appropriate device for protection.

! Power strips and surge suppressors **don't provide more power to a location**, only more access to the same limited capacity of the circuit into which it is connected.

Regional Dateline

December 15-March 31

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

December 22-23

1880 Train Holiday Express
Hill City, SD, 605-574-2222

January 7-14

71st Annual Snow Queen
Festival, Junior Coronation
and Talent Contest will be held
at the Aberdeen Civic Theatre
on Jan. 7 at 7 p.m., SD Snow
Queen Coronation will be held
at the Aberdeen Civic Theatre
on Jan. 14 at 7 p.m., Tickets
are available at Lily's Floral
Design & Gifts and at the door,
Adults are \$15, Students are \$8
For more information, check
out our website
www.sdsnowqueen.com or
visit our Facebook page.

January 12

The Ennis Sisters in Concert
Spearfish, SD, 605-642-7973

January 12-14

16th Annual Ice Fishing
Tournament, Mobridge, SD
605-845-2500

January 18-26

38th Winter Art Show
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Spearfish, SD, 605-642-7973

January 19-21

Snowmobile Rally
Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

January 20-21

ISOC Deadwood SnoCross
Showdown, Deadwood, SD
605-578-1876

PHOTO COURTESY OF CHAD COPPES S.D. TOURISM



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.

January 21

Bark Beetle Blues Crawl
Custer, SD, 605-440-1405

January 21

Tommy: A Bluegrass Opry by
the HillBenders, Spearfish, SD
605-642-7973

January 27-February 5

Annual Black Hills Stock Show
& Rodeo, Rapid City, SD
605-355-3861

February 3-4

Who Got Greased? Murder
Mystery Dinner Theater
Elks Lodge, 705 Circle Drive
Aberdeen, SD, 605-380-9743

February 4

Twenty One Pilots in Concert
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7288

February 4

LHIA Fishing Derby
11 a.m. to 3 p.m., City Boat
Landing Access Point
Lake Hendricks, MN

February 7-11

Winter Farm Show
Watertown, SD, 605-886-5814

February 10-11

Strawbale Winery Valentine
Twilight Flights, Renner, SD
605-543-5071

February 10-12

35th Annual Black Hills Sport
Show and Outdoor Expo
Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4115

February 11

Sioux Empire on Tap
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7288

February 16-18

Sioux Falls Sno Jam Comedy
Festival, Sioux Falls, SD
siouxfallssnojamcomedyfest@
gmail.com

February 16-19

Steel Magnolias Community
Theater, Spearfish, SD
605-642-7973

Events of Special Note

November 18-January 8

Winter Wonderland, Falls Park
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-275-6060

December 31

Make-A-Wish New Year's Eve
Dance, Eagles Club, 8 p.m.
Aberdeen, SD, 605-225-7262

February 17-19

Sioux Empire Wacipi
Sioux Falls, SD, 310-922-1886

March 4-7

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

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 17-18

28 Below Fatbike Race
Lead, SD, 605-584-3435

March 24-25, March 31-April 1

59th Annual Schmeckfest
Freeman, SD, 605-925-4237

March 31-April 2

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