



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



**RENVILLE-SIBLEY**  
OCTOBER 2023 VOL. 24 NO. 6

# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



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# Empowering Our Community: More Than Just Words



**Scott Tedrick**  
Guest Columnist

The Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association (RSCPA) unveiled its new \$8.3 million, 10-acre headquarters in Danube during an Open House and Dedication Ceremony on Tuesday. Amidst a heat index in the one-hundred-and-teens, the importance and benefits of the electric cooperative were palpable.

“It is with great pride that we stand here today, surrounded by the devoted individuals who have been part of this journey,” said RSCPA CEO DeeAnne Norris. “I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to the City of Danube, current and former board members, employees, Engan & Associates Architects, Breitbach Construction Company and the members of Renville-Sibley.”

Norris was joined by RSCPA Board Chair Roger Manthei, Vice Chair Whitey Hinderman and Engan Associates Architects Senior Designer and Project Manager Barbara Marks in addressing the crowd from within the facility’s spacious utility truck garage. There, rows of tables were stationed for a subsequent board-served lunch situated alongside a variety of interactive informational exhibits that drew intrigue and fanfare from all ages.

Manthei took the time to share insights into the cooperative’s journey toward reaching the momentous day. He recounted how deliberations for the cooperative’s new facility were extensive and patient, beginning as far back as 2007 before being tabled and resurfacing again in 2015.

“After much research and discussion, in March of 2020, the board formally approved building a new facility. That decision is what has led us to the event today.”

Marks, who is also a residential member of the cooperative, acknowledged the collective pride in the finished product, before going in depth on the spirit that underscored its fruition.

First reiterating a quote she articulated at the project’s groundbreaking in July of last year, she noted it was President Theodore Roosevelt who said, “The cooperative plan is the best plan for organization wherever man has the right spirit to carry out.”



“That right spirit, that’s why we’re here,” she said, before continuing:

“Some endeavors do work better than others. We sometimes live in a polarized world where its us versus them—me, me, me—and all or nothing, and if I don’t get it my way, nobody gets their way. But this project began with trust. We built trust by speaking honestly, we clarified common goals, we didn’t compete with each other. We dropped ego and were vulnerable with each other. We accepted blame and we shared credit. We helped each other,” she said.

With a final word of gratitude from Hinderman, the scores of those in attendance were invited to enjoy lunch, explore the exhibits and tour the facility built to serve its cooperative membership for decades to come.

As for its former headquarters and pole yard, Norris said that both properties are being listed through Fitzner Real Estate & Land Co. Interested parties can contact Broker Shane Fitzner at 320-212-8658 for more information.

## History of the RSCPA

RSCPA was initially started in 1938 to bring electricity to rural residents in Renville and Sibley Counties. In 2022, the organization sold 177 million kilowatt-hours to its 1,586 members and 1,882 electric accounts situated in six adjacent counties, although 90 percent of members are located in Renville County. In sum, 14 employees manage the operation, including the maintenance of 1,046 miles of distribution lines, 360 miles of which have been located underground.

In the beginning, the cooperative operated out of a trio of sites in Fairfax until a vote by the co-op’s



membership approved the relocation of the co-op's headquarters to Danube in 1948. After renting an office and garage space, the cooperative purchased the 1931 Lueck Garage Building in 1949, which would go on to serve as the cooperative's headquarters for the next 73 years.

Over the course of those seven-plus decades, the facility was remodeled on six different occasions. The first occurred in 1960 when a brick front was installed and plate windows were replaced by block windows. In 1973, the interior was remodeled, while 1982 saw the addition of a 50 x 90 foot warehouse space to the building's east side. Additional remodeling took place in 1991 and saw the purchase of property north of Danube for a second warehouse and pole yard. The interior was then remodeled again in 1999. Lastly, a portion of warehouse space was converted into a boardroom in 2002.

While the building committee began meeting in 2015, it wasn't until 2020 that the RSCPA Board formally approved a new facility. Initial timelines expected to see the completion of the facility last spring before pandemic-related occurrences created project delays and increased overall costs. In the end, though, it may have been fortuitous.

The first design renderings were completed by Engan and Associates in May of 2021 and put out for bid. Due to extreme increases in the price of steel, however, the projects was redesigned and re-bid including pre-cast concrete as a potential alternative to a steel-framed structure. 946500

According to Marks, pre-cast concrete is preferable to steel as a building material because of its greater strength and longevity in addition to lower maintenance costs and climate control benefits.

Looking to the future, Norris said the building project has been designed to allow for future expansion of programs and services. Additionally, the CEO said she will watch for grant opportunities to develop a bolstered vision for the site that would incorporate solar panels, an electric car charging station, and an interpretive trail into a cohesive package. The solar panels would feed the charging stations while picnic tables and a path with information on electric co-ops, beneficial electrification, and renewable energy would run under the solar panel canopies providing the visitors an amenity while they charge.

Amidst it all the cooperative spirit shines through.

## COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

### RENVILLE-SIBLEY CO-OP POWER

(USPS 019-074)

#### Board of Directors

Roger Manthei – Chair  
Whitey Hinderman – Vice Chair  
Wayland Zaske – Secretary/Treasurer  
Jeff Boersma  
Gary Eekhoff  
Alan Neyers  
Gary Peterson  
Kylie Rieke  
Helen Ruebel

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Brian Athmann – Journeyman Lineman  
Shawn Beckler – Crew Chief  
Mike Benson – Journeyman Lineman  
Brad Braulick – Crew Chief  
Nick Bruns – Technology Manager  
Anthony Carruth – Journeyman Lineman  
Amy Ervin – Member and Board Services Representative  
Brayden Fischer – Journeyman Lineman  
Cindy Mertens – Administrative Services Manager  
DeeAnne Norris – CEO  
Cali Olson – Cooperative Support Specialist  
Clint Olson – Journeyman Lineman  
Kathy Ridl – Office Assistant  
Shane Suess – PT Janitor

RENVILLE-SIBLEY COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is published monthly by Renville-Sibley Co-op Power Association, 515 Highway 212 W, Danube, MN, 56230 for its members. Electric cooperative members devote 75 cents from their monthly electric payments for a subscription. Non-member subscriptions are available for \$9 annually. Periodicals Postage Paid at Danube Post Office, Danube, MN 56230 and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Renville-Sibley Cooperative Connections, PO Box 68, Danube, MN 56230; Telephone (320) 826-2593; Toll Free 1-800-826-2593; Fax (320) 826-2679.

**Web site:** [www.rscpa.coop](http://www.rscpa.coop)

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# October is Fire Safety Month

Is your workplace or home fireproof? Each year, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) celebrates National Fire Safety Month in October. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2016, there were 88 occupational fatalities as a result of workplace fires or explosions. This is down from 2015, in which there were 121. While the statistics show that the number of fatalities due to fires or explosions in the workplace is on a downward slope, any number other than 0 is unacceptable and demands the attention from management, safety professionals and employees in every company. Not only do fires present a severe life safety hazard, they also can be detrimental to business success due to the possible destruction of business equipment and facilities. This campaign serves as a reminder to us all of the importance of fire safety awareness in both the workplace and our home lives.

The safety reminders communicated in the workplace can be easily translated to fire safety in the home. Establish a family emergency action plan, discuss escape routes with family members, and locate fire extinguishers in your home. Additionally, conduct a mock fire drill with your family members to ensure you and your loved ones know how to get out safely. During this drill, outline meeting places that are at a safe distance from the home. Designate a neighbor to contact for help in the event of an emergency. Simple exercises such as the aforementioned could mean the difference maker in your family making it out alive in the event of a fire in your home.

Below are key components to ensuring your workplace and home are fireproof:

- **Eliminate Clutter** – Exercise good housekeeping. Clutter can easily become a fuel source in the event of a fire, allowing a fire to spread quickly. Furthermore, clutter can restrict access to emergency equipment and exit routes.
- **Fire Extinguishers** – Maintain the appropriate type and number of fire extinguishers. Conduct monthly and annual extinguisher inspections to ensure they are in good, working condition. Provide training for employees on the correct use of fire extinguishers.
- **Chemical Safety** – Use and store chemicals safely. Read hazard warning labels and safety data sheets

to determine flammability and other fire hazards. Ensure your chemical storage areas provide adequate ventilation for the storage of chemical or other hazardous substances.

- **Waste Control and Storage** – Limit the accumulation of flammable or combustible materials and residues as to prevent the risk for such materials contributing to a fire emergency.
- **Exits** – Ensure emergency exit route diagrams are posted and accessible in all areas of the facility for all employees to easily view. Additionally, ensure means of egress are well-lit with regulated exit signs and free from debris or clutter.

Remember it is always better to be proactive rather than reactive and it is best to alleviate hazards or hiccups in times of peace than in times of chaos. Utilize the above tips to reduce the risk for catastrophe or at least minimize the damage.

*Source: Safety Resources, Inc.*



**Keep cords away from water!**

**Maddy Pannell, Age 12**

Maddy Pannell advises people it's not safe to plug in appliances around water. Maddy is the daughter of Scott and Kim Pannell from Sioux Falls, S.D., members of Southeastern Electric Cooperative.

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.



# PASTA PERFECT

## ITALIAN SPAGHETTI

### Ingredients:

1-8 oz. can tomato sauce  
1-6 oz. can tomato paste  
1 1/2 paste cans water  
1 small onion, chopped  
2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce  
1 tsp. garlic salt  
1/2 tsp. chili powder  
3 shakes cayenne pepper  
1/8 tsp. black pepper  
1 tsp. basil  
1 tsp. oregano  
1/2 to 1 lb. ground beef

### METHOD

Combine all ingredients except ground beef. Cover and simmer 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Brown beef and add to sauce. Serve over cooked noodles. May add green peppers or mushrooms.

**Gail Keating**  
**Flandreau, S.D.**

## GARDEN HARVEST PASTA SHELLS

### Ingredients:

2 tbsps. vegetable oil  
2 medium zucchini, shredded  
1/2 cup finely shredded carrots  
2 cups chopped fresh broccoli  
1 small onion, chopped  
Salt and pepper  
1 lb part-skim ricotta cheese  
2 cups shredded mozzarella  
1 egg, lightly beaten  
1/4 cup grated parmesan  
1 tbsp. dried basil  
27.5 oz. jar pasta sauce  
12 oz. pkg jumbo pasta shells, cooked and drained

### METHOD

Heat oven to 350. In a large skillet heat oil, then saute broccoli, zucchini, carrots, and onions until tender. Season with salt and pepper. Set aside. In a large bowl, thoroughly combine ricotta, mozzarella, egg, parmesan, and basil. Add vegetables and stir to combine. Spread 1 cup of the pasta sauce evenly in a 9" x 13" baking dish. Fill pasta shells with the vegetable and cheese mixture and arrange in the baking dish. Spoon the remaining sauce over the shells. Cover and bake for 45 minutes. Uncover and bake another 10 minutes or until bubbly.

**Faye Chambliss**  
**Murdo, S.D.**

## CREAMY CHICKEN AND BACON PASTA

### Ingredients:

8 oz. spaghetti  
1 1/2 lbs. boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into 3/4-inch chunks  
2 tbsps. flour  
4 slices bacon  
1 cup milk  
4 oz. (1/2 package) cream cheese, at room temperature  
1 1/2 tsps. basil leaves  
1 1/2 tsps. garlic powder  
1/2 tsp. salt  
1/4 tsp. coarse ground black pepper

### METHOD

Cook spaghetti as directed on package. Drain well. Meanwhile, toss chicken with flour. Set aside. Cook bacon in large skillet on medium heat until crisp. Drain on paper towels. Set aside. Remove all but 1 tbsp drippings from skillet. Add chicken; cook and stir 4 minutes or until golden brown. Stir in milk, cream cheese and seasonings until well blended. Reduce heat to low; simmer 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Cut bacon into bite-size pieces. Add to skillet. Place spaghetti in serving bowl. Add chicken mixture; toss well. Serve immediately.

[mccormick.com](http://mccormick.com)

Please send your favorite recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2023. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

# Cold Weather Rule and Energy Assistance Program

In accordance with Minnesota's Cold Weather Rule, electric service cannot be disconnected for nonpayment between Oct. 1 and April 30 if electricity is the primary heat source and ALL of the following statements apply:

## 216B.097 COLD WEATHER RULE; COOPERATIVE

**Subdivision 1. Application; notice to residential customer. (a) A municipal utility or a cooperative electric association must not disconnect and must reconnect the utility service of a residential customer during the period between October 1 and April 30 if the disconnection affects the primary heat source for the residential unit and all of the following conditions are met:**

- (1) The household income of the customer is at or below 50 percent of the state median household income. A municipal utility or cooperative electric association utility may (i) verify income on forms it provides or (ii) obtain verification of income from the local energy assistance provider. A customer is deemed to meet the income requirements of this clause if the customer receives any form of public assistance, including energy assistance, that uses an income eligibility threshold set at or below 50 percent of the state median household income.
- (2) A customer enters into and makes reasonably timely payments under a payment agreement that considers the financial resources of the household.
- (3) A customer receives referrals to energy assistance, weatherization, conservation, or other programs likely to reduce the customer's energy bills.

**(b) A municipal utility or a cooperative electric association must, between August 15 and October 1 each year, notify all residential customers of the provisions of this section.**

**Subd. 2. Notice to residential customer facing disconnection. (a) Before**

**disconnecting service to a residential customer during the period between October 1 and April 30, a municipal utility or cooperative electric association must provide the following information to a customer:**

- (1) a notice of proposed disconnection;
- (2) a statement explaining the customer's rights and responsibilities;
- (3) a list of local energy assistance providers;
- (4) forms on which to declare inability to pay; and
- (5) a statement explaining available time payment plans and other opportunities to secure continued utility service.

**(b) At the same time that notice is given under paragraph (a), the utility must also give written or electronic notice of the proposed disconnection to the local energy assistance provider and the department.**

**Subd. 3. Restrictions if disconnection necessary. (a) If a residential customer must be involuntarily disconnected remotely using advanced metering infrastructure or physically at the property being disconnected between October 1 and April 30 for failure to comply with subdivision 1, the disconnection must not occur:**

- (1) on a Friday, unless the customer declines to enter into a payment agreement offered that day in person or via personal contact by telephone by a municipal utility or cooperative electric association;
- (2) on a weekend, holiday, or the day before a holiday;
- (3) when utility offices are closed; or
- (4) after the close of business on a day when disconnection is permitted, unless a field representative of a municipal utility or cooperative electric association who is authorized to enter into a payment agreement, accept payment, and continue service, offers a payment

agreement to the customer.

**Further, the disconnection must not occur until at least 30 days after the notice required in subdivision 2 has been mailed to the customer or 15 days after the notice has been personally delivered to the customer.**

**(b) The customer must not be disconnected until the utility attempts to confirm whether the residential unit is actually occupied, which the utility may accomplish by:**

- (1) visiting the residential unit; or
- (2) examining energy usage data obtained through advanced metering infrastructure to determine whether there is energy usage over at least a 24-hour period that indicates occupancy.

**(a) A utility may not disconnect a residential customer who is in compliance with section 216B.098, subdivision 5.**

**(b) If, prior to disconnection, a customer appeals a notice of involuntary disconnection, as provided by the utility's established appeal procedure, the utility must not disconnect until the appeal is resolved.**

**(c) For the purposes of this section, "advanced metering infrastructure" means an integrated system of smart meters, communication networks, and data management systems that enables two-way communication between a utility and its customers.**

**Subd. 4. Application to service limiters.**

**For the purposes of this section, "disconnection" includes a service or load limiter or any device that limits or interrupts electric service in any way.**

**Subd. 5. Cost recovery. A municipal utility or cooperative electric association may recover the reasonable costs of disconnecting and reconnecting a residential customer, based on the costs of providing notice to the customer and other entities and whether the process was accomplished physically at the property**

being disconnected or reconnected or remotely using advanced metering infrastructure.

**History:** 1991 c 235 art 2 s 1; 2001 c 212 art 4 s 2; 1Sp2003 c 11 art 3 s 2; 2007 c 57 art 2 s 14,15; 1Sp2021 c 4 art 8 s 11-14

To learn more about the EAP program or to apply for assistance:

- Visit the Minnesota Department of Commerce Energy Assistance website, <https://mn.gov/commerce/consumers/consumer-assistance/energy-assistance/>, for more details and to access the application portal.
- Contact your county EAP service provider for additional information and assistance (list providers & phone numbers).

**Here is a list of local energy assistance providers:**

#### **Minnesota Valley Action Council**

706 N Victory Drive  
Mankato, MN 56001  
800-767-7139 (Toll-Free)  
507-345-6822 (Mankato)

#### **United Community Action Partnership**

Marshall Office:  
1400 S Saratoga St  
Marshall, MN 56258  
Marshall (Corporate) 507-537-1416  
Willmar Office:  
200 SW 4<sup>th</sup> St  
Willmar, MN 56201  
Willmar 320-235-0850

#### **Prairie Five Community Action Council**

719 North 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 302  
P.O. Box 159  
Montevideo, MN 56265-0159  
320-269-6578 (Montevideo) or  
800-292-5437

Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association exists because of you, and we are dedicated to the people and communities we serve. If you are having difficulty paying your electric bill and do not qualify for either of these programs, please contact Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association to set up a payment plan.

## **Utility Payment Arrangements for Military Service Personnel**

### **325E.028 UTILITY PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR MILITARY SERVICE PERSONNEL.**

#### **Subdivision 1. Restriction on disconnection; payment schedules. (a)**

**A municipal utility, cooperative electric association, or public utility must not disconnect the utility service of a residential customer if a member of the household has been issued orders into active duty, for deployment, or for a permanent change in duty station during the period of active duty, deployment, or change in duty station if such a residential customer:**

- (1) has a household income below the state median household income or is receiving energy assistance and enters into an agreement with the municipal utility, cooperative electric association, or public utility under which the residential customer pays ten percent of the customer's gross monthly income toward the customer's bill and the residential customer remains reasonably current with those payments; or
- (2) has a household income above the state median household income and enters into an agreement with the municipal utility, cooperative electric association, or public utility establishing a reasonable payment schedule that considers the financial resources of the household and the residential customer remains reasonably current with payments under the payment schedule.

**(b) For purposes of this subdivision, "household income" means household income measured after the date of the orders specified in paragraph (a).**

**Subd. 2. Annual notice to all customers; inability to pay forms. (a)** A municipal utility, cooperative electric association, or public utility must notify all residential customers annually of the provisions of this section.

**(b) A municipal utility, cooperative electric association, or public utility must provide**

a form to a residential customer to request the protections of this section upon the residential customer's request.

**Subd. 3. Application to service limiters.**

For the purposes of this section, "disconnection" includes a service or load limiter or any device that limits or interrupts electric service in any way.

**Subd. 4. Income verification.** Verification of income may be conducted by the local energy assistance provider or the municipal utility, cooperative electric association, or public utility unless the customer is automatically eligible for protection against disconnection as a recipient of any form of public assistance, including energy assistance that uses income eligibility in an amount at or below the income eligibility in subdivision 1, paragraph (a), clause (1).

**Subd. 5. Appeal process. (a)** The municipal utility, cooperative electric association, or public utility shall provide the residential customer with a commission-approved written notice of the right to appeal to the commission or other appropriate governing body when the utility and residential customer are unable to agree on the establishment, reasonableness, or modification of a payment schedule, or on the reasonable timeliness of the payments under a payment schedule, provided for by this section. Any appeal must be made within seven working days after the residential customer's receipt of personally served notice, or within ten working days after the utility has deposited first class mail notice in the United States mail.

**(b)** The utility shall not disconnect service while a payment schedule is pending appeal, or until any appeal involving payment schedules has been determined by the commission.

**Subd. 6. Enforcement.** This section may be enforced pursuant to chapter 216B.

**History:** 2007 c 111 s 1; 2015 c 21 art 1 s 72



# FOR THE LOVE OF HUNTING DOGS

Source: Travel South Dakota

## A Successful Hunt May Depend on Your Dog

**Shannon Marvel**

shannon.marvel@sdrea.coop

With numerous television appearances and A-list clients under his belt, Day County resident and Lake Region Electric Cooperative member Tom Dokken has become one of the premiere hunting dog trainers of our time.

But you won't hear the modest pro brag about himself. Instead, Dokken gives credit to the hard work and the innate capabilities of the dogs themselves.

The 70-year-old Minnesota native has been professionally working with dogs over the last 50 years at his training facility, Dokken Oak Ridge Kennels, Inc. in Northfield, Minnesota.

It's one of the largest gun dog training kennels in the region.

His love for hunting alongside a canine

companion harkens back to his teenage years when he'd tag along to go hunting throughout the country with his friend and his friend's Labrador Retriever, Charlie.

"We were probably 16 years old when we started hunting together. He had a lab and I didn't have one. We hunted with that dog just about every weekend."

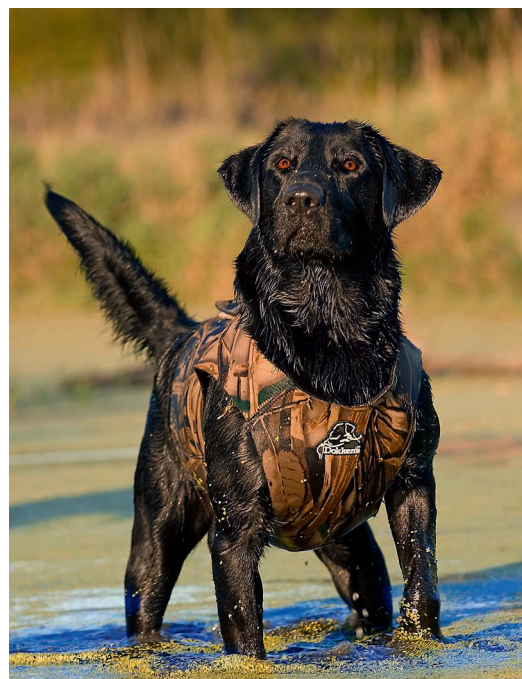
After a few years, Dokken decided it was time to get his own dog.

And to that dog goes all the credit, in Dokken's eyes.

"I started training her then I started running field trials. I did really well, not because of me, but I had a good dog who did

really well on a national level," he recalled.

After that, Dokken was hooked and knew training dogs was what he wanted to do for a living. He's since established



An adult black lab out hunting



himself as one of the top hunting dog trainers in the world, even bolstering a line of dog training products – Dokken Dog Supply – which is carried in sporting good stores across the country.

“That’s just as a result developing products we wanted for training themselves,” Dokken said of his supply company.

Some of the dogs Dokken has trained have hunted under some big names, including President George W. Bush and country music legend Hank Williams, Jr., along with many major professional athletes.

But it takes some prying to get that kind of info out of the humble Dokken, and he’s quick to emphasize that everyone that he does business with is treated the same, no matter what.

“Every customer is important. One person doesn’t get treated different than the other,” Dokken said.

His facility employs four full-time trainers, as well as office staff.

When Dokken isn’t training one of the 350 hunting dogs that come to his Minnesota training facility each year, he’s at home with his wife, Tina, in Day County.

“My wife and I live north of Webster. That’s our connection with the area. I’ve hunted down in the Lily area for years. We’ve had our place here 18 years or better,” Dokken explained.

“My mom’s family homestead is down in the Selby area, so as kids we’d be back on the farm for a good portion of the summer,” he added.

Dokken said his business trains pretty much any of the sporting, pointing and flushing breeds. But in the Upper Midwest, the more popular breed tends to be the Labrador Retriever.

Dokken has a special place in his heart for labs, which he described as a hardy breed able to withstand the punishing winter conditions known to challenge hunters in South Dakota during pheasant season.

And in South Dakota, pheasants are

king, according to Dokken.

“As far as population of pheasant – up in our area the weather sometimes knocks them back a little bit. Last year we had rain in December, which is a little bit of a factor when it comes to pheasant numbers,” Dokken said.

“The further south and west you get, the population changes too. Regardless, South Dakota numbers will always be top in the U.S.”

Hunters who have a dog in their arsenal have a much greater advantage over those who do not. For one, they can flush birds out of thick cover and, unlike the average human, have an absolute blast doing so.

“Without a dog – if you’re a pheasant hunter – you’re not going to have the ability to get the birds up and get them out of higher and denser cover. Finding birds that you’ve shot is going to be a real challenge as well. A dog is a great conservation tool as well,” Dokken said.

From a training standpoint, Dokken advises dog owners to start teaching their hunting partners good habits when they’re really young.

The earlier the training begins, the more success you’re setting the dog up for down the line.



Dokken with two adult labs

“Try to buy the best bloodlines that you can because if you do, in most cases your success rate just gets higher.”

Dokken says it boils down to three things: teaching, repetition and reinforcement. For the human, practicing patience is crucial.

“A majority the time the dog is not in the wrong, it’s that the dog can’t understand what you want,” he said.

The entire job is a dream for Dokken and his team, and one he hopes to continue for decades more to come.

“It’s what we do,” he said. “It’s a labor of love.”



Source: Travel South Dakota



RENNVILLE-SIBLEY  
CO-OP POWER

## Choose Renewable Energy for Your Home or Business

You can easily purchase renewable energy from your local electric cooperative, Renville-Sibley Co-op Power. Renville-Sibley has Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) available for purchase to offset your current usage with 25%, 50%, 75% and 100% renewable energy options. The price of the RECs will be added to your current electric bill.

The electricity you receive will still be the same reliable, affordable energy you have always received from Renville-Sibley Co-op Power but, by participating in this program, you will be supporting current and future renewable projects in our area.

Your home or business will be joining hundreds of other people from across the nation who are supporting renewable energy. By purchasing RECs, your business could add value to your products or services, promote future regional renewable projects and showcase your support for renewable energy sources.

## FAQ's

### What is a Renewable Energy Credit (REC)?

- 1 MWh (megawatt hour) produced by a renewable energy source equals 1 REC
- RECs are also called Green Tags
- RECs represent the valuable renewable attributes of wind energy

### How much does it cost?

\$1 per MWh. The average Renville-Sibley member uses 1,200 kWh a month. Participating in the REC program would add the following amount to your monthly bill:

100%	=	\$1.20
75%	=	\$0.90
50%	=	\$0.60
25%	=	\$0.30

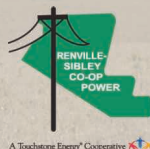
### Do I need to purchase any special equipment?

No. Renville-Sibley will continue to fulfill all your electric needs and you can enjoy the benefits of renewable energy.

### Where do the RECs come from?

The RECs come from several wind farms in the region that supply renewable energy to Renville-Sibley Co-op Power. These include, but are not limited to:

- North Dakota: PrairieWinds 1, Wilton 1 & 2, Baldwin Wind Project and Minot Wind Project
- South Dakota: Crow Lake Wind, the Chamberlain turbines, Day County Wind Farm and South Dakota Wind Project



1.800.826.2593  
renville-sibley@rscpa.coop

Renville-Sibley Co-op Power is an equal opportunity provider & employer



# August Board Meeting Highlights

The August board meeting was held on Tuesday, August 25 at 8 a.m. All board members were present. Others present were CEO DeeAnne Norris, Cindy Mertens, Gene Allex, and Amy Ervin.

The board reviewed and approved the following items:

- Minutes of the July 25 board meeting
- Operating and disbursement reports for the month of June
- Capital Credits to Estates
- Safety Report for August
- AB45 Loan Approval
- REED Loan Request for Olivia Ambulance Services, Inc.
- Cooperative Network Annual Meeting Voting Delegates
- NRECA Annual Meeting Voting Delegates
- Mid-West Electric Consumers Association Annual Meeting Voting Delegates
- RESCO Annual Meeting Voting Delegates
- Federated Rural Electric Annual Meeting Voting Delegates
- CFC District 6 Voting Delegates

The board reviewed:

- Total new members
- Capital Credits Transferred
- Reports from staff members as to the activities in their department. Items in the reports include:
  - High-level Statement of Operations review – YTD through July (unaudited)
  - Organization activities
  - East River update
  - Basin Electric update
  - NRECA update
  - MREA update
  - Linecrew work in progress, equipment update, and outage update
  - Accounts Receivable
- Open House
- Farmfest
- Family-a-Fair night
- Sale of Cooperative facilities

Please contact the Renville-Sibley office if you would like more information regarding the board meeting.

## WHERE'S THE NUMBER?

Last month RSCPA member did not find their member number in the newsletter. The value of the energy credit will be increased to a value of \$135. Another number has been hidden in this newsletter. If you find your number and call the office by the 2nd of October, you will receive this credit on your electric statement. Good luck in your search!

## OUTAGE REPORT

*Affecting 10 members or more*

### **Date: 7-15-23**

Time off: 11:58 AM  
Time on: 1:40 PM  
Substation: Cairo  
Cause: Cause Unknown

### **Date: 7-17-23**

Time off: 9:00 AM  
Time on: 11:38 AM  
Substation: Emmet  
Cause: Other Prearranged

### **Date: 7-21-23**

Time off: 9:00 AM  
Time on: 9:33 AM  
Substation: Birch Cooley  
Cause: Other Prearranged

### **Date: 7-28-23**

Time off: 12:25 AM  
Time on: 2:40 AM  
Substation: Cairo  
Cause: Tree Failure from Overhang or Dead Tree without Ice/Snow

Please contact Renville-Sibley's office for more details about these power outages.

## Notice:

The September board meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 26 at 8 a.m.

The October board meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 24 at 8 a.m.



## Touchstone Energy Celebrates 25 Years with Commercial Debut

**Frank Turner**

[frank.turner@sdrea.coop](mailto:frank.turner@sdrea.coop)

Touchstone Energy Cooperatives is encouraging member electric cooperatives and their member-owners to pop some popcorn, settle in, and join them in celebrating the organization's 25th anniversary on Nov. 29, when they'll debut their

newest line of 2024 commercials.

The historic milestone will commemorate a quarter-century of Touchstone Energy's drive to establish a universal brand – seen on t-shirts, logos, and even soaring hot air balloons – for co-ops nationwide. Select commercials from the lineup, which will feature on the Touchstone Energy website, will highlight the local South

Dakota prairie landscape and local co-op employees with Sioux Valley Energy.

Touchstone Energy Board of Directors President and Sioux Valley CEO Tim McCarthy said he is glad to see South Dakota being represented on a national scope. "We are excited to be celebrating this historic milestone," said McCarthy. "Touchstone Energy continues to be an invaluable resource for co-ops in South Dakota and throughout our nationwide network."

Touchstone Energy's journey began 25 years ago when a group of movers and shakers recognized the need for an outward-facing organization that would connect the image of



co-ops across the nation. Although individually small, cooperatives from all around the nation believed a unified brand would broaden and strengthen their presence. Together, these co-ops owned and operated more distribution lines than any other sector in the electric utility industry and served more than half of the American landmass. On Nov. 26, 1998, 17 founding co-ops established Touchstone Energy, powering through a time of regulatory uncertainty.

“In the late ‘90s, there were some revolutionary things happening in the energy industry,” said Jana Adams, executive director of Touchstone Energy. “The cooperatives really wisely said: as individual entities we are small, but if we come together and create a recognizable brand, we will have a better opportunity to compete in this evolving energy landscape.”

From the start, Touchstone Energy was set on making an impression. By purchasing six iconic Touchstone Energy branded hot air balloons and sponsoring notable events such as the famous NASCAR Talladega 300 race, Touchstone Energy quickly transformed into a nationally recognizable brand.

To date, Touchstone Energy’s membership has grown to nearly 700 co-ops, which now reaches more than 30 million member-owners across 46 states. Along with this remarkable growth, Touchstone Energy has enhanced its services, including advertising, social media management, and web development, among others. Over time, Touchstone Energy’s wide range of services, said Adams, have become a crucial communication resource for their membership.

“Our first national ad was in the early 2000s, and to this day, we run advertisements in every single zip code served by a Touchstone Energy cooperative,” said Adams. “We are

constantly innovating and giving our cooperative members the opportunity to highlight the great work they do and the achievements they have.”

Looking back on the last quarter century, Adams said Touchstone Energy is thrilled to connect to its original roots and celebrate its longstanding service to co-ops across the country.



Touchstone Energy celebrates 25 years while producing new commercials in South Dakota.



“We encourage everybody to join us on Nov. 29 for our 2024 national ad premier and to celebrate the 25 years behind us, but more importantly the many years ahead of us where we continue to work together,” she said.



## Family-a-Fair Night Recap

Thursday, August 10th was a beautiful night to be at the annual Family-a-Fair Night event! A total of 422 people attended the Renville County Fair compliments of Renville-Sibley. The Fair is a great opportunity for Renville-Sibley to visit with our members and enjoy the excitement of the fair. All members in attendance were registered for a \$50 energy credit and kids 12 and under



Members waiting in line for their FREE ticket into the Renville County Fair for the annual Family-a-Fair night courtesy of Renville-Sibley

had the opportunity to register for the kid's prize. Congratulations to Dan Gass for winning the \$50 energy credit and to Marjorie Fank for winning the kid's gift. We'd like to extend a thank you to the Dairy Association and the Pork Producers for allowing Renville-Sibley the opportunity to give our members a \$1 off coupon to enjoy a malt or a pork sandwich. Our thanks also goes to the Renville County Fair Board for working with us to offer this wonderful event to our members. See you next year at the fair!

### Comparative Report

	Current YTD	One Year Ago YTD	10 Years Ago YTD
Average # of Consumers	1,878	1,889	1,918
kWhs purchased	9,159,772	7,564,596	8,821,142
Cost of purchased power	\$541,621.16	\$517,410.68	\$470,977.41

## FREE Want Ad Service

Members can submit ads for the following categories: Giveaway, For Sale, For Rent, and Wanted. Ads should be or are limited to no more than 15 words and must be received by the first of the month to be included in the following month's newsletter. Renville-Sibley reserves the right to edit content or exclude ads due to space restrictions. Ads will be run one time only unless resubmitted. Please complete the following information and mail it to the Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power, PO Box 68, Danube, MN 56230.

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

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

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

Ad to be placed (limit of 15 words per ad)

\_\_\_\_\_

Type of ad: ☐ Giveaway ☐ For Sale ☐ For Rent ☐ Wanted

## THANK YOU

I am very grateful for being selected as the Scholar of the Month and then being drawn for the Scholar of the Year as well. Receiving this scholarship means a lot and it's great to have local support.

– Isaac Haen

## REMINDER

Renville-Sibley encourages any member planning on making changes to their service in 2023 or 2024 to please contact the office as soon as possible. In order to complete these projects on time, material may need to be ordered well in advance as often there is extended lead time to get the appropriate material. In addition, crew time will be scheduled in the order projects and materials are received.

## OPERATION ROUND UP

The next Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association Charitable Trust will meet on October 17, 2023. The next application deadline is October 1, 2023.

## FOR SALE:

**Grass Fed – Grass Finished Beef. Quarters-Halves-Whole. Also burger – individual cuts. Call for pricing.**

Dave Pastoors  
Olivia, MN 56277  
320-522-4851

## WANTED:

**Someone to cut down and dead trees.**

Darlene Konz  
Olivia, MN 56277  
320-523-2612





## Farmfest Recap

Renville-Sibley joined together with other electric cooperatives in southern Minnesota at Farmfest once again to share information on electricity. On display this year was an EGO Riding lawn mower and an EGO Push lawn mower. Members from Renville-Sibley along with other participating cooperatives, who brought in the Farmfest coupon from the newsletter could enter their name into a drawing

for one of five electric prizes to be given away: a misting fan, leaf blower, lawn mower, string trimmer, or a chainsaw. Unfortunately, Renville-Sibley did not have a member's name drawn this year.

Thank you to everyone who stopped at the Farmfest booth. We look forward to seeing you again next year at this event!



## Mission Statement

Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association will provide efficient, reliable electric energy and services to enhance the quality of rural living.

## Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



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.

**SEPT 22-23**  
**Holiday Arts & Crafts Fair**  
 9 a.m.  
 Davison County Fairgrounds  
 Activity Center  
 Mitchell SD  
 605-359-2049

**SEPT 22-24**  
**Coal Springs Threshing Bee**  
 Meadow, SD  
 605-788-2229

**SEPT 23**  
**German Fest**  
 Webster, SD  
 605-380-0588

**SEPT 23**  
**Springfield Dakota Senior Meals Fall Festival**  
 9 a.m.  
 Springfield Community Building  
 Springfield, SD

**SEPT 24**  
**Annual Bazaar & Fall Fest**  
 4-7 p.m.  
 St. John the Baptist Catholic Church  
 Wagner, SD

**SEPT 30**  
**Day of Wellness**  
 10 a.m.  
 Sturgis Armory  
 Sturgis, SD

**SEPT 30**  
**Mission Quilt and Bake Sale**  
 Zoar Lutheran Church  
 Revillo, SD

**SEPT 29-30**  
**Junkin' Market Days**  
 Ramkota Exhibit Hall  
 Sioux Falls, SD  
 605-941-4958

**OCT 6-7**  
**Holman Acres Pumpkin Fest & Vendor Show**  
 Philip, SD  
 605-441-1060

**OCT 7**  
**Spirit of Dakota Award**  
 Huron Event Center  
 Huron, SD  
 605-352-6073

**OCT 12-19**  
**"In Flanders Fields" Art Exhibition & Silent Auction**  
 Vermillion Public Library  
 Vermillion, SD

**OCT 14**  
**Oktoberfest**  
**Leo Lonney Polka Band**  
 6 p.m.  
 Menno, SD  
 605-660-1839

**OCT 19-21**  
**Fall Fundraising Rummage Sale**  
 Spearfish Senior Center  
 Spearfish, SD  
 605-642-2827

**OCT 21**  
**Fall Festival**  
 11 a.m.  
 18473 U.S. HWY 83  
 Onida, SD  
 605-788-2229

**OCT. 28-29**  
**Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Association**  
 Ramkota Hotel Exhibit Hall  
 Sioux Falls, SD  
 605-731-9155

**NOV 11**  
**Sisseton Area Merchants & Crafters Holiday Extravaganza**  
 Sisseton, SD  
 605-698-7425

**NOV 12**  
**Lutefisk, Lefse & Meatball**  
 4-7 p.m.  
 Trinity Lutheran Church  
 Chamberlain, SD  
 605-730-0553

**NOV 24**  
**Parade of Lights**  
 7 p.m.  
 Dakota Avenue  
 Huron, SD  
 605-788-2229

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