



# Cooperative Connections

**Preparedness  
Is Key For  
Natural  
Disasters.**

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**DOE Gets  
Studious.**

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# Look Out for Scams



**DeeAnne Newville, CEO**

dnewville@renville-sibley.coop

Unfortunately, in today's world, scams are inevitable. Scammers can threaten you with everything from legal action involving the IRS to turning off power to your home.

Utility scams often involve an individual or group posing as an employee of your electric cooperative. The scammer may use threatening language in order to frighten you into offering your credit card or bank account information. Don't fall victim to these types of scams.

## Understand the threats posed and your best course of action:

If someone calls your home or cell phone demanding you pay your electric bill immediately, gather as much information as you can from that individual, hang-up the phone and contact the local authorities. Scammers often use threats and urgency to pressure you into giving them your bank account number or loading a pre-paid credit or debit card (such as a Green Dot card). Renville-Sibley will never ask you to offer up personal finance information over the phone. If you have any doubts about your utility bill, contact us either in person or over the phone at 320-826-2593 or 800-826-2593.

- If someone comes to your home claiming to be an employee of Renville-Sibley that needs to collect money or inspect parts of your property, call us to verify they are, in fact, an employee. If they are not, call local authorities for assistance and do not let the individual into your home.

## There are other types of scams consumers should watch out for:

- Government agencies like the IRS will never call to inform you that you have unpaid taxes or other liens against you. You will always receive this type of information in the mail. If someone calls claiming to be the IRS, hang-up immediately.
- If you receive an email from an unknown sender, an email riddled with spelling errors and typos, or an email threatening action unless a sum of money is paid, do not click any links provided within the email and do not respond to the email. Simply delete the email or send it to your spam folder.
- If someone calls your home claiming to have discovered a virus on your computer, hang-up. This caller's intent is to access personal information you may be keeping on your computer. 966400

For more information about scams from the Minnesota Attorney General's office, go to [www.ag.state.mn.us/Consumer/Scams](http://www.ag.state.mn.us/Consumer/Scams).

If you have concerns about a particular call you have received or believe you are a victim of a scam, the Minnesota Attorney General's office would like to hear from you. You may call them at 800-657-3787 or submit a consumer assistance request of fraud report form found on their website to:

Office of Minnesota Attorney General Lori Swanson  
445 Minnesota Street, Suite 1400  
St. Paul, MN 55101

## RECIPES NEEDED FOR

# THE Country Cookin' Cookbook

Your recipe could be featured in the 34<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:kstone@eastriver.coop), fax to 605-256-8057, or contact your local cooperative for more information.**

**Submission deadline is Monday, January 29, 2018.**

# Renville-Sibley

## Cooperative Connections

(USPS 019-074)

### Board of Directors

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Anthony Carruth – Journeyman Lineman  
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Brayden Fischer – Journeyman Lineman  
Amy Ervin – Consumer Accounts Representative  
Cindy Mertens – Administrative Services Manager  
DeeAnne Newville – CEO  
Brandon Ochs – Journeyman Lineman  
Clint Olson – Journeyman Lineman  
Lenae Wordes – Communications Manager

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Web site: [www.renville-sibley.coop](http://www.renville-sibley.coop)

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TEEN NEWS

### Attention Teens

# Scholarships to be Awarded

Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association will be offering \$3,000 in scholarship money to students in this region. The scholarships are for the 2018-2019 school year.

Renville-Sibley is allocated a \$1,000 scholarship from Basin Electric to be awarded at the discretion of the cooperative. Another \$1,000 scholarship is from Renville-Sibley.

A committee of Renville-Sibley board members, as well as an employee of the cooperative, will select the recipients of the \$1,000 Basin Scholarship and the \$1,000 Renville-Sibley Scholarship. These scholarships will be awarded based on a combination of SAT/ACT scores and overall grade point average, work experiences, participation in school and community activities, a personal statement of career goals and a written recommendation by a third party. Additional consideration will be given to applicants interested in a position related to the electric industry for the Renville-Sibley scholarship.

The remaining \$1,000 scholarship is distributed from uncashed capital credit checks and is awarded by a **random drawing** at the annual meeting from the remaining completed applications.

All scholarship applicants must be U.S. citizens and a dependent of a member of Renville-Sibley Cooperative. They must be a high school senior who plans to enroll as a full-time student in an undergraduate course of study at an accredited two-year or four-year college, university or vocational/technical school. Applications will be accepted until Feb. 16, 2018. Winners will be announced to the public at the cooperative's annual meeting on April 5, 2018.

Renville-Sibley participates with other Minnesota electric cooperatives in sponsoring the continuation of the Jay York Scholarship. Mr. York was a Lake Wilson farmer who dedicated his life to the rural electric program and to education in rural Minnesota. He was the first Minnesotan to serve as president of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). Scholarships are available each year from this program and are selected by random drawing. Each participating cooperative may submit one candidate's name for the drawing. The amount of this scholarship is determined based on the number of cooperatives that participate in the program. Over the past 20 years, Renville-Sibley has awarded eight Jay York scholarships.

Only one completed application is required for an applicant to be considered a candidate for any of the available scholarships. Incomplete applications will be excluded. For more information and a scholarship application form, contact Renville-Sibley at 1-800-826-2593 or 826-2593. Application forms are also available at our web site [www.renville-sibley.coop](http://www.renville-sibley.coop).



## Home Heating Safety Tips

There is something about the winter months and curling up with a good book by the fireplace. But did you know that heating equipment is one of the leading causes of home fire deaths? Half of home heating equipment fires are reported during the months of December, January and February. With a few simple safety tips and precautions, you can prevent most heating fires from happening.

- Keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from heating equipment, like the furnace, fireplace, wood stove or portable space heater.
- Have a three-foot "kid-free zone" around open fires and space heaters.
- Never use your oven to heat your home.
- Have a qualified professional install stationary space heating equipment, water heaters or central heating equipment according to the local codes and manufacturer's instructions.
- Have heating equipment and chimneys cleaned and inspected every year by a qualified professional.
- Remember to turn portable heaters off when leaving the room or going to bed.
- Always use the right kind of fuel, specified by the manufacturer, for fuel burning space heaters.
- Make sure the fireplace has a sturdy screen to stop sparks from flying into the room. Ashes should be cool before putting them in a metal container. Keep the container a safe distance away from your home.
- Test smoke alarms at least once a month.



### Heating Equipment Smarts

- Install wood burning stoves following manufacturer's instructions or have a professional do the installation. All fuel-burning equipment should be vented to the outside to avoid carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning.
- Install and maintain CO alarms to avoid the risk of CO poisoning. If you smell gas in your gas heater, do not light the appliance. Leave the home immediately and call your local fire department or gas company.

Source: nfpa.org

## Rural Infrastructure Issues

Rural America needs more than roads and bridges when it comes to infrastructure. The National Rural Electric Association is working to remind policymakers about the broader infrastructure needs of rural America and the importance of reliable power.

Electric co-ops have three major priorities when it comes to infrastructure:

- Any infrastructure package should recognize the need to maintain and enhance the rural electric grid, which powers 42 million Americans.
- Electric co-ops are also working to ensure more timely permitting decisions to expedite and reduce the costs of critical infrastructure projects. Regulatory review time lines for infrastructure can stretch on for years. These delays present reliability problems, strain existing infrastructure and can force electric co-ops to take drastic measures to keep the lights on.
- Rural broadband deployment also must be an infrastructure priority. Broadband access is limited across much of the nation's rural landscape but is a key ingredient to a healthy 21st century rural economy. Electric co-ops are working to expand rural broadband access and look forward to working with other stakeholders to close the digital divide.

### KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



#### "Stay away from broken power lines!"

**Alaina Dekrey**, 9 years old

Alaina is the daughter of Don and Cassandra Dekrey, Blunt, S.D. They are members of Oahe Electric Cooperative, Blunt.

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.

# Kettle Creations

## Chicken Rice Soup

1 T. oil	1/2 tsp. minced garlic
1 lb. boneless skinless chicken breasts	1/4 tsp. thyme leaves
1 cup chopped onion	2 bay leaves
4-1/2 cups water	1/2 cup sliced carrots
4 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth	1/2 cup sliced celery
	1 package ZATARAIN'S® Yellow Rice

Heat oil in large saucepot or Dutch oven on medium-high heat. Add chicken; cook 3 minutes per side or until lightly browned. Remove chicken; set aside. Add onion to Dutch oven; cook and stir 3 minutes or until softened. Add water, chicken broth, garlic, thyme and bay leaves. Bring to boil. Add carrot, celery, Rice Mix and chicken. Reduce heat to low; simmer 10 minutes or until chicken is cooked through. Remove chicken; set aside to cool. Cover and simmer soup additional 20 minutes or until rice and vegetables are tender. Shred chicken and add to soup. Remove bay leaves before serving. Makes 10 (1 cup) Servings

*Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 150, Total Fat 2g, Sodium 636mg, Cholesterol 27mg, Carbohydrates 27g, Protein 13g, Dietary Fiber 1g.*

**Pictured, Cooperative Connections**

## Beef and Barley Soup

3 lb. beef roast	1 cup water
32 oz. beef broth	1/8 tsp. thyme
1/2 cup diced celery	Salt and pepper (to taste)
1/2 cup diced carrots	1/2 cup barley (quick)
1 cup peeled and diced potatoes	

Combine roast, broth and veggies in crock pot and turn on High. In bowl, combine water, thyme, salt and pepper. Pour mixture over roast. After about 6 hours, remove roast from crock pot. Trim fat and shred beef. Place shredded beef back in crock pot. Add barley. You may add more water if desired. Cook an additional hour on High.

Note: If freezing, freeze before adding barley. Barley can be added after soup thaws.

**Melanie Eichmann, Canistota**

## Shamrock Soup

6 celery ribs, chopped	2 cups chopped cooked cabbage
4 medium carrots, sliced	1 tsp. dill weed
2 cups cubed peeled potatoes	1 tsp. salt
5 cups water	1 tsp. seasoned salt
3 cups diced cooked corned beef	1/2 tsp. pepper

In a large stock pot, bring celery, carrots, potatoes and water to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer until tender, about 20 minutes. Add remaining ingredients. Cover and simmer an additional 15 to 20 minutes.

**Patricia Hopkins, Central City, NE**

## Potato-Sweet Pea Soup

3 lb. bag petite red potatoes, unpeeled and chopped into 1/2-inch to 3/4-inch pieces	1 tsp. Season-All seasoned salt
1 small onion, chopped	3/4 cup powdered coffee creamer
1 cup chopped or shredded carrots	3 T. butter
1 (13 oz.) bag frozen sweet garden peas	1 (12 oz.) can evaporated milk
1 tsp. salt	4 to 5 strips bacon, cooked and crumbled
1/2 tsp. pepper	

Boil potatoes, onion and carrots until almost done; add peas and continue boiling until tender. Drain water, reserving 3 cups. Add remaining ingredients except bacon. Reheat to a boil; add bacon.

**Frankie Hofer, Rapid City**

Please send your favorite bread/breakfast or 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 2018. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

# November

## Board Meeting Highlights

The November board meeting was held on Monday, Nov. 27, at 8 a.m. All board members were present. Others present were CEO DeeAnne Newville, Lenae Wordes and Gene Alex.

### The following items were reviewed and approved by the board:

- Minutes of the October board meeting
- Operating and disbursement reports for the month of November
- Safety report for November

### Notice:

The December board meeting will be held on Thursday, Dec. 21, 2017, at 9 a.m.

The January board meeting will be held on Monday, Jan. 29, 2018, at 9 a.m.

### The board reviewed:

- List of new members and capital credits transferred
- Al Haman from Star Energy shared information on this business
- Reports from staff members as to the activities in their department. Items in the reports include:
  - High level Statement of Operations review – YTD through October 2017 (unaudited)
  - Organization activities
  - East River update
  - NRECA update
  - MREA update
  - Line crew work in progress and pending work
  - Accounts receivable
  - Upcoming meetings were discussed.

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

## 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 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

## Where's the Number?

Last month, Hawk Creek Church found its member number in the newsletter. Congratulations! The church will receive a \$10 credit on its next statement. The credit will now start over at a value of \$10. A new number has been hidden somewhere in this newsletter. If you find your number and call the office by Jan. 3, you will receive this credit on your electric statement. Good luck in your search!

## Notice:

Renville-Sibley's office will be closed on Monday, Dec. 25, for Christmas Day and Monday, Jan. 1, for New Year's Day.

## Mission Statement:

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

### Outage Report

(affecting 10 members or more)

<b>Date:</b>	11-15-17
<b>Time off:</b>	2:37 p.m.
<b>Time on:</b>	3 p.m.
<b>Substation:</b>	Henryville
<b>Cause:</b>	Replaced cutout and hotline clamp

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

### Don't be a statistic. Call 811 before digging.

45 percent of American homeowners who plan to dig this year said in a recent survey that they would NOT call 811 beforehand, putting themselves and their communities at risk.







2017 Minnesota Youth Tour participants take a photo with Sen. Amy Klobuchar.

# Teens: You Could Win a Trip to Washington, D.C.

Each year, rural electric cooperatives across the nation sponsor roughly 1,800 students on the Rural Electric Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. The youth tour program continues to foster the grassroots spirit of the rural electric cooperatives by demonstrating to high school juniors and seniors how our government works and what the electric cooperative business model is all about. Renville-Sibley's 2017 Youth Tour delegate, Amy Albrecht, commented, "This trip was truly an experience of a lifetime." You can read more about Amy's experience in the November 2017 *Renville-Sibley Cooperative Connections*.

In 2018, Renville-Sibley will be sending one high school junior or senior on an all-expenses-paid trip to the Washington, D.C. Youth Tour. The selected student will spend six days in our nation's capitol visiting museums, chatting with politicians and making memories and friends that will last a lifetime. What is the best part of this trip? The best part is the fact that Renville-Sibley will pay all of the expenses.

More information and how to apply can be found below.

## Contest purpose:

Select one youth to represent Renville-Sibley Co-op Power on the Washington, D.C., Youth Tour.

## Eligibility:

The contest is open to any current high school junior or senior whose family is a member of our cooperative.

## Requirements:

Contestant shall write a 300-word essay. The topic is to imagine traveling backward or forward in time and write about the value of electricity to the people living in that time period.

Complete a Youth Tour application form which can be found on Renville-Sibley's web site at [www.renville-sibley.coop](http://www.renville-sibley.coop).

## Additional Information:

- Deadline for application is Feb. 16, 2018
- The winner will be announced by March 16, 2018
- **Tour Dates:** June 9-14, 2018

## Sample itinerary (subject to change):

### ■ Saturday, June 9

- Travel day
- Electric Cooperatives 101 class

### ■ Sunday, June 10

- Walking tour of monuments, Arlington Cemetery, Smithsonian museums, night monument tour

### ■ Monday, June 11

- Mount Vernon, National Museum of the Marine Corp, Old Town Alexandria and NRECA Youth Night

### ■ Tuesday, June 12

- Group picture in front of White House, Newseum, National Archives, Smithsonians, Holocaust Museum and attend a John F. Kennedy Performing Arts Center show

### ■ Wednesday, June 13

- Library of Congress, U.S. Capitol tour, visit the Galleries, Capitol visits with senators and representatives, United States Botanical Gardens and Souvenir City
- NRECA dinner and dance

### ■ Thursday, June 14

- Travel day

More information can be found at the National Youth Tour website <http://youthtour.coop>

Every year, the U.S. is hit by many natural disasters, including snow and ice storms, tornadoes, hurricanes and wildfires. Before disaster strikes, familiarize yourself with the types of disasters that are common in your region.

# PREPARING FOR DISASTER

## Planning Ahead Can be Key For Your Family

**Thomas Kirk**

Associate Analyst, NRECA

Every year, the U.S. is hit by many natural disasters, including snow and ice storms, tornadoes, hurricanes and wildfires. These types of disasters pose a significant threat to our communities and homes. The most important step you can take to keep you and your family safe is to prepare beforehand, but knowing what to do during and after the event is crucial as well.

Before disaster strikes, familiarize yourself with the types of disasters that are common in your region, especially if you're new to the area. Many of the specifics depend on what type of disaster you're expecting, but there are several general guidelines to keep in mind as you prepare:

- **Water:** You will need one gallon per person per day. If you assume your family of four may be stranded for a week, store a minimum of 28 gallons.
- **Food:** Stock up on non-perishable or long shelf-life items, such as wheat, soybeans, canned fruits, peanut butter, jelly and condensed soups.
- **First Aid Kit:** Make sure your kit includes adhesive bandages (assorted sizes), antiseptic wipes, aspirin, hydrocortisone ointment, scissors and a thermometer. For a full list of suggested items, visit [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org).
- **Flashlights and candles:** Be sure to keep extra batteries and matches (in a waterproof container) on hand.



Ice-laden lines sag after the Christmas Day 2016 storm which caused multi-day outages in South Dakota and western Minnesota.



For additional guidance on emergency items to keep around the house, visit [www.ready.gov/build-a-kit](http://www.ready.gov/build-a-kit). Also consider training offered by local emergency management services such as Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) classes.

Some disasters occur suddenly, but many bring advance warnings, like hurricanes and winter storms. Pay special attention during the week leading up to the event for local and state government warnings and evacuation notices. Make sure every family member knows what your emergency plan is: staying or leaving, safe

rooms in the house, where supplies are located, what to do if anyone is separated and how to notify loved ones that you're safe after the event. It's also a good idea to know where your home's main water and gas shutoff valves are located.

While the U.S. electric grid is reliable, it is possible to lose power during a storm. The outage could be momentary or last hours or even days. If you live in an area where loss of power after a storm could be dangerous, consider purchasing a backup generator for your home. These can cost anywhere from a few hundred to few thousand dollars, depending on

your needs. Be sure to test the generator before the disaster to ensure it's operating properly.

If you don't have a backup generator and lose power, don't panic. Most power outages in the U.S. are short and will not last more than a few hours. However, without knowing in advance how long the outage will last, it's wise to assume and act as though it will last for days. Here are a few general tips for wise energy practices during a disaster:

- Consume perishable and refrigerated foods first before they spoil.
- Pack frozen foods close together and consider freezing water bottles to eliminate any air pockets. The frozen water will help keep the food cooler longer.
- Make sure you have alternative lighting sources, like candles and flashlights (with spare batteries) located throughout the home.
- Keep manual tools such as a can opener on hand to replace any electronic gadgets you typically use.
- Similar to filling a bathtub with water before a storm, make sure that all cell phones are fully charged.
- If the disaster involves lightning, unplug all electronic devices to protect against a power surge.

After the storm, be cautious when leaving your home. Listen to government warnings and use common sense when approaching any damaged buildings or fallen trees. If you see a power line that is down, always assume the wires are live and dangerous. If possible, call your local electric cooperative to report the downed power line.

With a little bit of forethought, you're highly likely to make it through a disaster without too many problems. Remember, you and your family's safety should always come first.

For more information on disaster preparedness, visit [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov).

Thomas Kirk is an associate analyst of distributed energy resources for the Arlington, Va.-based National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Business & Technology Strategies (BTS) division.

## Keep Food Safe Before, During and After a Power Outage

Unfortunately, power outages do occur from time to time. It's important to know how to keep your food safe during an outage. Use these tips from USDA to help minimize food loss and reduce your risk of illness.

### Before power outage



Keep refrigerator at **40° or below**. Freeze items like fresh meat and poultry that you won't use immediately. Keep freezer set to **0° or below**. Group frozen foods to help items stay colder longer.



If you anticipate an extended power outage, buy dry or block ice to keep the fridge and/or freezer cold.

### During power outage

#### Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed!

If the doors stay closed during the length of the outage:



A full freezer will hold its temperature for **48 hours**.



A refrigerator will keep food safe for **four hours**.

### After power outage

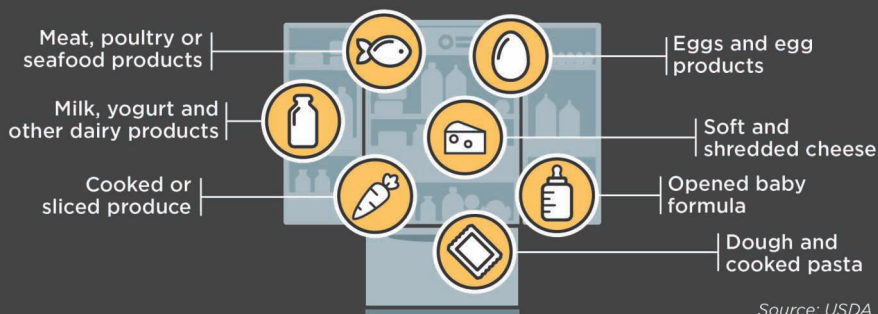


Check the temperature inside your refrigerator and/or freezer.



If the temperatures are safe, the food should be safe to eat.

### Foods that should be thrown out after an extended power outage:



Source: USDA



**BOLD student Ashton Dunks** peddles a bike to generate enough electricity to power the light bulbs and a fan to cool Jenny Gross.

# CHARGED UP

## Renville-Sibley Teaches Students About Electricity

### Lenae Wordes

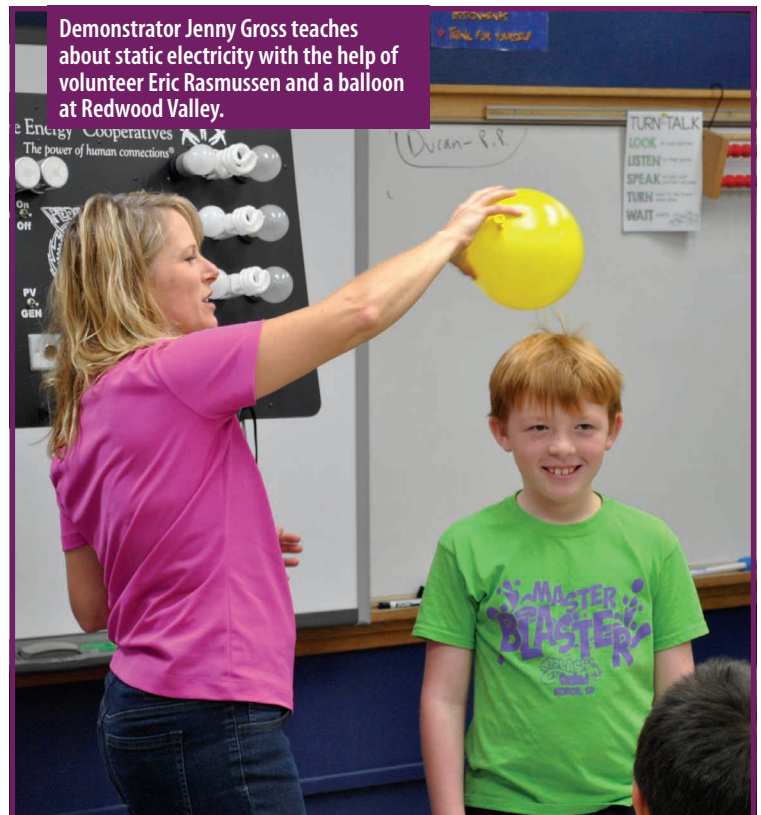
[lwordes@renville-sibley.coop](mailto:lwordes@renville-sibley.coop)

What do socks, flashlights and bicycles have in common? All these materials were used to teach nearly 150 children in schools throughout Renville-Sibley Co-op Power's service territory about electricity.

Co-ops in the Classroom is a program offered by Renville-Sibley's wholesale power provider, East River Electric Power Cooperative. Jenny Gross, communications coordinator for East River, travels throughout East River's service territory in eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota to teach children about electrical safety, generation, conservation and economics. In November, Gross, Renville-Sibley's Communication Manager Lenae Wordes and Consumer Accounts Representative Amy Ervin brought this energy education to fourth-grade students at Renville County West, BOLD and Redwood Valley in Renville-Sibley's service territory. The second-grade students at Renville County West learned about being safe around overhead and underground power lines.

During the course of the hour or more long presentations, Gross took the fourth-grade students on the journey of electricity at the atomic level, all the way to the hundreds of miles it travels from the power plant to our homes.

**Demonstrator Jenny Gross** teaches about static electricity with the help of volunteer **Eric Rasmussen** and a balloon at Redwood Valley.





A variety of hands-on demonstrations engaged the students. A Van de Graaff generator demonstrated the movement of electrons with some hair-raising results.

“That one is always a crowd-pleaser,” said Wordes. “Not only does it provide a visible and audible example of how electricity moves, students also get a kick out of seeing their hair stand up and shocking their friends. Sometimes we even get the teachers to join in.”

Another device that invokes a lot of excitement is the Pedal Power bicycle generator. Students are asked to become power plants as they provide the energy that produces electricity for lights and small household devices. “The Pedal Power turns the concept of electricity from something abstract into something tangible. By providing the energy needed to make a light bulb turn on, the students are able to quantify just how much more energy an incandescent light bulb requires than a CFL or LED,” said Wordes.

By the end of the presentation, students had developed a new



The Powertown demonstration teaches second-grade RCW students about safety near power lines.

### A variety of hands-on demonstrations engaged the students.

understanding and appreciation for electricity.

Renville-Sibley has brought the Co-ops in the Classroom program to area schools for a number of years now, but we are already making plans to bring the program back next year. In addition to school presentations, Gross does energy education for camps, civic groups, fairs and other special events.



RCW fourth-grade students Kalleigh Wertish and Mackton Bratsch learn about static electricity from the Van de Graaff generator.

# The Encyclopedia of Modern Electricity

DOE study describes how coal plants and solar cells can share the same power lines – and more.

By Paul Wesslund

NRECA

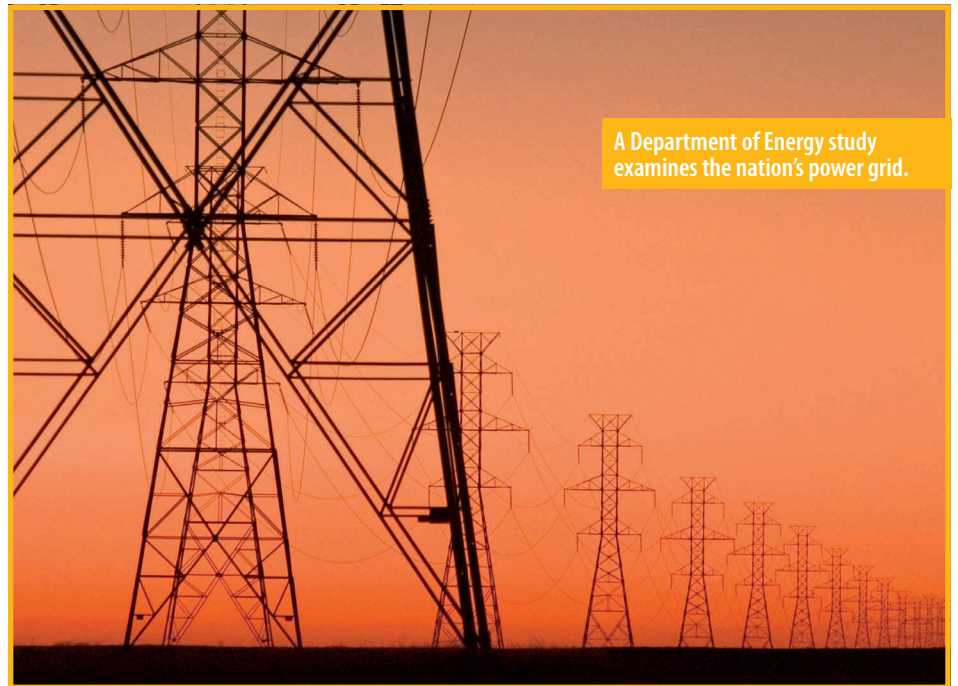
Coal-fired power plants are closing. Homeowners with rooftop solar panels are selling unused electricity back to their utility. Windfarms are springing up across the Great Plains. Fracking and other drilling techniques have cut the cost of natural gas by more than half since 2002 and doubled the amount of electricity generated by natural gas.

What does all this mean for the nation's network of wires and power plants otherwise known as the electric grid? The answer lies within a new report from the U.S. Department of Energy, says Pam Silberstein, senior director of power supply for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

"It's incredibly well-written, well-researched, very thorough, very comprehensive," says Silberstein. "It's a well put-together compilation of the state of the grid."

**The study is a quick turnaround response to an April 14 memo from Department of Energy Secretary Rick Perry**

DOE's August 2017 Staff Report to the Secretary on Electric Markets and Reliability describes the complex state of the electric grid and goes into great detail on how utility trends might affect the price and availability of electricity. It highlights



A Department of Energy study examines the nation's power grid.

the importance of retraining coal and nuclear power workers and the effects that renewable energy has on the stability and reliability of the existing electric utility system.

## Better reliability

Another way to describe the report: If someone decided that every high school student should understand how the nation's system of electric wires and power plants works, this study would make a good textbook.

Silberstein sees the grid study as a report that puts in one place all the changes affecting utilities and what those changes might mean. She says, "We're asking our utility systems to meet a lot of demands they haven't been asked to do before."

The study is a quick-turnaround response to an April 14 memo from Energy Secretary Rick Perry to DOE's chief of staff to "explore critical issues central to protecting the long-term reliability of the electric grid."

Plenty has changed for electric utilities over the past 20 years and this DOE study describes that new landscape with enough detail to satisfy the most hard-core energy nerd:

- About 15 percent of the nation's power plants have been retired since 2002, mainly coal and nuclear plants. That trend is expected to continue due to low natural gas prices, slower growth in demand for electricity, environmental regulations and more solar and wind power. While new generating



capacity from sources including natural gas and renewable energy has amounted to about three times the plant retirements, that radical change in the energy mix requires new ways of managing the flow of electricity from the power plants where it is made, to the homes and businesses where it is used.

- People are demanding better reliability in their electricity; enough that utilities have supplemented their goals of reliability with a new term, “resilience.” Basically that means being able to get the lights back on faster after a natural disaster. That has utilities experimenting with things like utility-scale storage batteries and more precise targeting of which customers should get power restored first.
- A lot of states are passing Renewable Portfolio Standards that mandate levels of green energy, creating a patchwork of requirements in the national grid.
- New and growing additions to the electric grid are changing the way it needs to be managed. Those new power sources include rooftop solar panels that sell electricity back to the utility, natural gas plants that require new pipelines, solar and wind farms in remote areas that need to be connected with new transmission lines and “demand response programs” in which utilities can turn off home water heaters and air conditioners for short periods during times of peak demand.

### Recommendations from the study include:

- Updating the pricing arrangements that govern the buying and selling of electricity.
- Improving disaster preparedness.
- Reviewing regulations that limit the growth of power generation, especially for coal, nuclear, and hydroelectricity.
- Focusing on workforce development as energy workers face a changing energy marketplace.
- Modernizing the software that manages electricity transmission.
- Coordinating with Canada and Mexico to enhance electric reliability across all of North America.

The study also notes the importance of cybersecurity to the electric grid, but said that would be addressed in an upcoming joint report from the Department of Energy and the Department of Homeland Security.

Paul Wesslund writes on cooperative issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

## THE EVER-CHANGING ELECTRIC GRID

A recent DOE report on the nation's electric grid tells the story of an extreme makeover that is impacting the price and availability of electricity. Let's take a look at some of those changes and how they impact utilities:

### Less Coal and Nuclear:

About 15 percent of the nation's power plants have been retired since 2002, while new generating capacity from sources like natural gas and renewable energy has amounted to about three times the plant retirements. This radical change to our energy mix means utilities must find new ways to manage the flow of electricity.

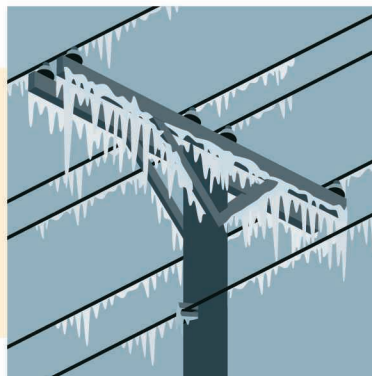


### More Renewables:

Over the last year, renewable energy generation increased from 7 percent to 10 percent. These new and growing additions to the electric grid are changing the way it needs to be managed.

### Green States:

29 states and the District of Columbia have adopted Renewable Portfolio Standards, which require a certain amount of electricity to be produced from renewable energy. This means utilities have to manage a patchwork of different requirements.



### Storm Recovery:

People want electricity all the time. In addition to reliability, utilities are exploring a goal of resilience, which means faster recovery and restoration after major storms and natural disasters.

SOURCE:  
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY (DOE)

## When Winter Winds Howl Power Lines Can Gallop

Severe weather with strong winds can cause damage to trees, buildings and electrical equipment. While power lines can sway in high winds, add freezing rain or icy conditions and the result can be galloping power lines.

Galloping is the bouncing or bucking movement of overhead lines and can cause several problems, from temporary power interruptions to equipment damage, the collapse of power poles and downed lines.

Galloping lines often result from ice buildup on one side of the power line due to strong winds. The buildup of ice creates an airfoil, which changes the flow of air around the line, causing bouncing wires or galloping power lines.

There isn't much utility workers can do until the wind dies down. That's why many power lines have objects, like twisted wire or round or angular pieces of metal attached to the line. These help reduce galloping of lines and prevent potential danger.

### If you see galloping power lines:

- Keep your distance – ice can break off or power lines break loose.
- Contact your utility to make them aware of the potential damage as soon as possible.

### If you see a downed line:

- Stay far away and warn others to stay away too.
- Remember, a downed line can remain energized even if it is not sparking or arcing.
- Always report the location of a downed power line and damaged electrical equipment.

Be sure to have a storm preparedness kit ready before a storm strikes to help get you and your family through a power outage. This kit should include bottled water, non-perishable food, blankets, warm clothing, first aid kit/medicine, flashlight, radio, extra batteries and toiletries.

To learn more about storm and outage safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

## Member Information Meetings Scheduled

Renville-Sibley will be hosting our annual member information meetings throughout the service area the week of Feb. 19, 2018. More information about the meeting dates will be in the February issue of *Cooperative Connections*.

## Scholar Honored

We would also like to recognize Carly Orwick as November's Touchstone Energy® Scholar of the Month. Carly is a senior at MACCRAY High School. She was nominated because she is very driven and never settles for less than her best. Carly is involved in many school activities including sports, National Honor Society, Student Activity Leadership Team and Golden Connections to name a few. Carly's future goal is to become an OB-GYN. Renville-Sibley Co-op Power salutes Carly as this month's Touchstone Energy Scholar of the month.

More information on the Scholar of the Month program can be found on our website under the Customer Service tab.



## Comparative Report

	Jan. 1, 2017 (through Oct. 31)	Jan. 1, 2016 (through Oct. 31)	Jan. 1, 2007 (through Oct. 31)
<b>Average No. of Consumers</b>	1,885	1,885	1,967
<b>kWhs Purchased</b>	116,365,288	132,920,796	112,189,244
<b>Cost of Purchased Power</b>	\$7,098,583.86	\$7,575,496.95	\$3,513,548.93

## Correction:

In the December issue of *Renville-Sibley Cooperative Connections*, the value of the Renewable Energy Credits was incorrectly stated. If you use 1,200 kWh a month, this is how the additional charge will impact your monthly bill:

100 percent Renewable:	\$1.20	(\$0.00100/kWh)
75 percent Renewable:	\$0.90	(\$0.00075/kWh)
50 percent Renewable:	\$0.60	(\$0.00050/kWh)
25 percent Renewable:	\$0.30	(\$0.00025/kWh)



## Member Involvement

# Are You Interested in a New Adventure?

Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association is beginning to plan for the 80th annual meeting of the membership that will be held April 5 at the Island Ballroom in Bird Island, Minn. Three (3) directors will be elected during that time, each for a three-year term.

- The First District, consisting of the townships of Cornish, Severance and Moltke in Sibley County; the townships of Ridgely and West Newton in Nicollet County; and the townships of Cairo, Wellington, Martinsburg, Camp, Bandon and Palmyra in Renville County, is represented by Alan Neyers, Whitey Hiderman and Philip Nestande. Alan Neyers' term will expire in 2018.
- The Second District, consisting of the townships of Honner and Delhi in Redwood County; and the townships of Beaver Falls, Flora, Henryville, Birch Cooley, Norfolk, Melville, Bird Island and Kingman in Renville County, is represented by Randy Dolezal, Wayland Zaske and Matt Haubrich. Randy Dolezal's term will expire in 2018.
- The Third District, consisting of the townships of Roseland and Holland in Kandiyohi County; Rheiderland in Chippewa County, and the townships of Troy, Winfield, Emmet, Crooks, Sacred Heart, Hawk Creek, Ericson and Wang in Renville County, is represented by Steve Benson, Gary Peterson and Roger Manthei. Gary Peterson's term will expire in 2018.

### As stated in the Renville-Sibley bylaws, the following are the Qualifications and Tenure for the position of Director:

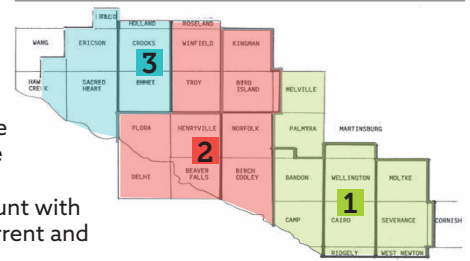
Each director shall be a member of the Cooperative and shall be elected by the members within their respective district at the annual meeting of the members for a term of three years. No member shall be eligible to become or remain a director or to hold any position of trust in the Cooperative who is not a bona fide resident in the area served by the cooperative, or who is in any way employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise or a business selling electric energy or supplies to the cooperative, or a business primarily engaged in selling electrical or space heating/cooling appliances, fixtures, or supplies to the members. When a membership is held jointly by two or more persons, including husband and wife, only one of such joint tenants may be elected a director, provided, however, that neither one shall be eligible to become a director, unless all shall meet the qualifications herein set forth.

### Director qualifications required for service to the cooperative shall include:

- Must be an individual and must be at least 21 years of age.
- Must be fluent in the English language since nearly all business at the cooperative is conducted in English.
- Must be competent and able to execute a contract.
- Must not have been convicted of a felony or crime involving moral turpitude during the preceding 10 years prior to becoming a director for the cooperative or during the period while serving as a director.
- Must have a high school diploma or equivalent.
- Must make a reasonable effort to become and remain knowledgeable about special issues regarding electric cooperatives by attending training, workshops and seminars.
- Must attend at least three-fourths (3/4) of all monthly scheduled board meetings during any twelve (12) month period.
- Anyone interested in candidacy for a director position in 2018, the following guidelines must apply:

- Must be a resident within the district seeking the candidacy
- Receive electric service from Renville-Sibley at the residence within the district
- The member's account with Renville-Sibley is current and in good standing.

### Director Districts



### As a Director, the member agrees to:

- Abide by, promote and uphold the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, both of which can be found on our website, and Policies of Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association.
- Attend regular and special Board meetings of the cooperative.
- Attend, when appointed, committee meeting of the cooperative.

If anyone should decide to seek candidacy for the board of directors, there are many rewards to be enjoyed when elected. A director has the opportunity to demonstrate their leadership quality and increase their knowledge within the cooperative business environment and the electric industry. As a director, this person could play a significant role in the future development of Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association.

A director also has a very important responsibility which is to uphold and abide the bylaws of the cooperative. Directors are to act as the trustees for the assets of the cooperative and are assigned the duties of formulating, approving and reviewing the policies that provide guidelines for the cooperative.

The board is responsible for sending representatives to the affiliated association meetings that often include voting requirements. They include East River Electric Power Cooperative, Minnesota Rural Electric Association, Basin Electric Power Cooperative, National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation, CoBank, Cooperative Network and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

Directors attend seminars and meetings of several organizations to learn about the industry. Directors are asked to lobby and remain informed on legislative issues that could impact this industry and/or the cooperative way of doing business. The board meets monthly and reviews financial reports, work plans, annual audits, planning documents and evaluates the cooperative operations while approving budgets and purchases.

Most of all, a director should be available to visit with their constituents and have a genuine spirit of helping others at all times.

Board meetings are typically held on the last Monday of every month, beginning at 9 a.m. in December, January and February and beginning at 8 a.m. the rest of the year. The estimated time needed to be committed annually is approximately 30 days which includes monthly meetings and committee assignments. Directors are compensated per diem for their time as well as all personal expenses.

If you are interested in becoming a candidate for the Renville-Sibley board of directors, contact the Renville-Sibley office at 1-800-826-2593 before Jan. 15 for further information.

**December 15-March 31**

South Dakota snowmobile trails season, Lead, SD, 605-584-3896

**December 23**

Skates and a Movie, Rapid City, SD, 605-716-7979

**December 31**

Make-A-Wish New Year's Eve Dance, Ramkota Hotel and Convention Center, Aberdeen, SD, 605-370-4588

**December 31**

HOT 93.1 Downtown Countdown, Rapid City, SD, 605-716-7979

**January 6**

Cyanotype Photography Process, Spearfish, SD, 605-642-7973

**January 11-13**

Ice Fishing Tournament and Expo, Mobridge, SD, 605-845-2500

**January 12-13**

Red Dirt Festival, Deadwood, SD, 605-559-0386

**January 13**

Christmas with the Animals, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7003

**January 17-25**

Winter Art Show, Spearfish, SD, 605-642-7973

**January 19**

Portland Cello Project Concert, Spearfish, SD, 605-642-7973

**January 19-20**

Media One Funkski, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-339-0000

**January 19-20**

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



**January 9**

South Dakota Legislature Convenes, Pierre, SD

**February 20**

Minnesota Legislature Convenes, St. Paul, MN

**January 20**

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

**January 21**

REO Speedwagon, Deadwood, SD, 605-559-0386

**January 26-February 4**

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

**January 27**

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

**February 3**

Tomahawk Snow Jam, Deadwood, SD, 605-569-2871

**February 6-10**

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

**February 9-10**

Mardi Gras Weekend, Main Street, Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

**February 15-17**

Sno Jam Comedy Festival, Sioux Falls, SD, siouxfallssno-jamcomedyfest@gmail.com

**February 16-18**

2018 National Pheasant Fest and Quail Classic, Sioux Falls, SD, 651-209-4933

**February 16-18**

Annual Frost Fest, Brookings, SD, 605-692-6125

**February 24**

Snow Jam, Lead, SD, 605-569-2871

**February 24**

Annual Outhouse Races and Chili Cook-off Contest, Nemo, SD, 605-578-2708

**March 3-6**

2018 Summit League Basketball Championship, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7288

**March 10-11**

2018 Gun Show, American Legion Hall, Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. MST, Philip, SD, 605-859-2280 or 605-441-8466

**March 16-17**

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

**March 16-17, 23-24**

60th Annual Schmeckfest, Freeman, SD, 605-925-4237

**March 17**

Annual Ag Day at the Washington Pavilion, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-6000

**March 27**

Socks in the Frying Pan Concert, Spearfish, SD, 605-642-7973

**March 31**

Eggstravaganza, Rapid City, SD, 605-716-7979

**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.**