



Renville-Sibley

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

March 2019 Vol. 19 No. 11

Cooperative Connections



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Involved
Locally**

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Electric Co-op Policy Priorities for the New Congress



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With such a large freshman class of lawmakers, educating them about electric cooperatives and the issues we care about will take time and perseverance.

Source: Dan Riedinger, consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

Every time a new Congress convenes, electric cooperatives have the opportunity to educate new lawmakers on issues that matter most to their consumer-members and the communities they serve. The 116th Congress kicked off in January with more than 100 new members in the House and Senate.

Since then, co-ops have been working with the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), the national service organization that represents more than 900 not-for-profit electric cooperatives, to introduce ourselves to new members on Capitol Hill. Here are several priority issues that we're bringing to lawmakers' attention.

Energy Policy and Infrastructure

The potential for energy and infrastructure legislation presents a significant opportunity as electric cooperatives work to meet the growing needs of their local communities. NRECA will work to ensure that any infrastructure package focuses on more than roads and bridges, including opportunities to modernize the electric grid and expand rural broadband access. This is critical to ensuring that rural America is not left behind in the 21st century economy.

Environment

NRECA will promote and encourage bipartisan support for renewable energy research and development programs—including programs that focus on finding a viable use for carbon capture, utilization and storage, which comprise a suite of technologies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions from power plants. Cooperative renewables use has increased substantially in recent years, more than doubling since 2010.

Broadband

Expanded rural broadband access remains a priority for NRECA. As electric co-ops engage the new Congress, we will work to ensure that all rural broadband discussions include the electric co-op perspective on the need to expand high-speed internet service in rural areas. According to the Federal Communications Commission, 23 million rural Americans lack access to broadband — millions of them are members of an electric co-op. That's why roughly 100 electric cooperatives are working to close the digital divide by bringing broadband to their communities, and more are exploring the option.

Tax Policy

The 2017 tax reform law included a provision that treated federal grants as income. This threatens the tax-exempt status of some electric cooperatives, because many co-ops rely on government grants to maintain and expand their infrastructure and provide services to their local communities. America's electric cooperatives will seek to fix this unintended consequence of the tax law.

Grid Resilience

Protecting our nation's vast power grid is a national priority and focus for electric cooperatives. Ensuring appropriate information sharing and preserving existing partnerships and structures are essential to these efforts. We will advocate for resources and technologies that meet the unique cybersecurity and recovery needs of small and medium-sized utilities to help protect our systems.

With such a large freshman class of lawmakers, educating them about electric cooperatives and the issues we care about will take time and perseverance. Advocating for the interests of our consumer-members and the communities in which they live is at the very heart of our business.

Renville-Sibley

Cooperative Connections

(USPS 019-074)

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Web site: www.renville-sibley.coop

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Renville-Sibley Co-op to Hold Annual Meeting

The 81st annual meeting of Renville-Sibley Co-op Power Association will be held on Thursday, March 28, 2019, at the Island Ballroom in Bird Island. The meeting will begin at 6 p.m. with the dinner immediately following the meeting. The meeting is being called in accordance with the bylaws of the association to transact the following business:

1. Report of officers, directors and committees.
2. Election of three (3) directors, one (1) from District 1, one (1) from District 2 and one (1) from District 3.
3. Any other business which may properly come before the meeting.

The annual meeting report will be mailed to all members the second week of March. Members will receive their voting ballots for director election including candidate information, at that time. If you cannot attend and you wish to mail your ballot, you may do so. However, if mailed, it must be received through the mail by March 28, 2019.

Drawings for the early bird prizes will begin at 5:45 p.m. Drawings will also be held at the close of the annual meeting. Children in attendance will be eligible for prize drawings. A \$10 energy credit attendance prize will be given to members (one credit per member) who attend the annual meeting. All members are encouraged to attend the 81st annual meeting of Renville-Sibley Cooperative Power Association.

Alan Neyers, Secretary

NOTICE: Candidates for the director positions will be listed in the April Cooperative Connections and candidate information for each district will be included with the ballot mailing.

Renville-Sibley to Hold Member Informational Meetings

Each year, Renville-Sibley holds member informational meetings throughout the service area. These meetings are held at various days and times with the hope that if one day or time doesn't work for a member, another day or time might. All members are encouraged to attend these meetings to learn more about Renville-Sibley and the electric industry. This year, the schedule is as follows:

- Saturday, Feb. 23, at 9 a.m. – Danube – Community Center
- Monday, Feb. 25, at 6:30 p.m. – Bird Island – Athmann's Inn
- Tuesday, Feb. 26, at 9 a.m. – Fairfax – Lion's Den
- Thursday, Feb. 28, at 1:30 p.m. – Sacred Heart – Community Center

Protecting Your Home and Business

Every year, electrical equipment, wiring, appliances and tools cause injuries and fires at both homes and workplaces. Paying close attention to the condition of electrical equipment and taking appropriate and prompt action to correct electrical problems can help to ensure your safety and the safety of those around you. Below are guidelines to help identify and reduce electrical hazards.

Electrical Outlet Safety

- Avoid overloading outlets with too many appliances and ensure that electrical loads are appropriate for the circuits.
- Unplug appliances when they are not in use to conserve energy as well as minimize the opportunities for electric shock or fire.
- Use outlets instead of relying on extension cords and power strips. Consider having additional permanent outlets installed where needed.
- Use Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCIs) in wet/damp areas like kitchens, bathrooms and outdoors.



Electrical Cord Safety

- Inspect electrical cords to ensure that they are not frayed, cracked or damaged.
- Do not place electrical cords in high traffic areas, under carpets or across doorways where they pose a potential tripping hazard or could be easily damaged.

Certification and Awareness

- Ensure that all electrical products and equipment are certified by a nationally recognized testing laboratory, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL), and read the manufacturer's instructions carefully.
- Allow only trained and qualified electrical workers to perform work on electrical equipment.
- Be aware of signs of electrical problems such as flickering lights and/or buzzing, sizzling or humming sounds from electrical systems.

Source: www.acadiainsurance.com

Ladder Safety and How It Affects Everyone

THE NUMBERS SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES

+700

ladder injuries
every day*

113

deaths caused by
falls each year*

6-10 ft.

The **most common ladder falls** happen
between 6 and 10 feet off the ground

WHETHER YOU'RE USING A LADDER AT HOME OR AT WORK,
THESE NUMBERS AFFECT YOU.

2 most **common ladder accidents** include**:

1. **Missing the last step when climbing down**
2. **Overreaching**

**National Electronic Injury Surveillance System (NEISS) 2017 Data Highlights*, 2017, CPSC

***ALI Ladder Safety Training and Citation Report* - United States, 2018, American Ladder Institute

Take safety into your own hands by taking ladder safety seriously.
Visit www.LadderSafetyMonth.com to learn more.

National Ladder Safety
Month is presented by



Thank you to our
Top Cap sponsor



KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



"Be careful with farm equipment around power lines."

Carson Lee, 10 years old

Carson is the son of Chris and Marisa Lee, Fairfax, Minn. They are members of Renville-Sibley Co-op Power, Danube, Minn.

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.

Seafood Sensations

Clam Chowder Dip

- | | |
|--|--|
| 2 slices bacon, chopped | 1 cup shredded white Cheddar cheese, divided |
| 1/3 cup chopped onion | 1 (6.5 oz.) can chopped clams, drained |
| 1 pkg. McCormick® Original Country Gravy Mix | 2 tsp. McCormick® Parsley Flakes |
| 1-1/2 cups milk | |

Cook bacon in large skillet on medium-high heat until crisp. Remove bacon, reserving drippings in pan. Add onion; cook and stir 2 to 3 minutes or until translucent. Stir in gravy mix, milk and 1/2 cup shredded cheese. Bring to boil. Reduce heat and simmer 2 minutes or until gravy starts to thicken. Remove from heat. Stir in clams. Pour into 9-inch glass pie plate. Sprinkle with remaining 1/2 cup cheese. Bake at 350°F. for 15 minutes or until cheese is melted. Sprinkle with bacon and parsley. Serve with toasted baguette slices or crackers. Makes 12 servings.

Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 94, Total Fat 6g, Saturated Fat 3g, Protein 4g, Cholesterol 9mg, Sodium 278mg, Fiber 1g, Carbohydrates 6g,

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Shrimp Lover Squares

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1 (8. oz) tube refrigerated crescent rolls | 1/2 cup seafood sauce |
| 1 (8. oz) pkg. cream cheese, softened | 24 medium shrimp, cooked |
| 1/4 cup sour cream | 1/2 cup chopped green pepper |
| 1/2 tsp. dill weed | 1/3 cup chopped onion |
| 1/8 tsp. salt | 1 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese |

In a greased 9x13-inch pan, unroll the crescent dough; seal seams. Bake at 375°F. for 10 to 12 minutes or until golden brown. Cool completely on a wire rack. In a small mixing bowl, beat cream cheese, sour cream, dill weed and salt until smooth. Spread over crust. Top with seafood sauce, shrimp, green pepper, onion and cheese. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour. Cut into squares. Makes 2 dozen.

Becki Hauser, Tripp, SD

Crab Quiche

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

Mix together first 5 ingredients; set aside. Combine broccoli, crab, cheeses and onion; spread in piecrust. Pour liquid mixture over all. Bake at 350°F. for 50 to 55 minutes. Let cool 10 to 15 minutes before cutting.

Barbara Angerhofer, Hendricks, MN

Tilapia Parmesan

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2 lbs. tilapia fillets | 4 T. butter, room temperature |
| 2 T. lemon juice | 3 T. finely chopped onions |
| 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese | 1/4 tsp. dried basil |
| 3 T. mayonnaise | |

In a buttered 9x13-inch baking dish, lay fish fillets in a single layer. Do not stack fillets. Brush with juice. Bake at 350°F. for 10 to 20 minutes or until fish flakes. Meanwhile, combine cheese, mayonnaise, butter, onions and basil. Spread cheese mixture on fish fillets and bake an additional 5 minutes or until golden brown.

Cortney Reedy, Tea, SD

Please send your favorite appetizer, beverage, casserole or dairy 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 2019. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and co-op name.

Spring is Coming

Are Electric Mowers for You?



Pat Keegan

Collaborative Efficiency

Dear Pat: I'm seeing a lot of ads lately for electric lawn mowers. I want to save money and help the environment, but from what I've heard, a lot of electric mowers can be underpowered and the cordless ones lose their battery charge too quickly. Do you think it's worth making the switch from a gas mower to an electric mower? – Eric

Dear Eric: Until recently, corded and cordless electric mowers tended to be underpowered. For cordless mowers, this fact was made worse by their sub-par battery life.

But today, with those problems largely solved, the best electric mowers have the power and battery life to keep pace with a gas mower, depending on the size of your lawn.

A cordless, electric mower with a large 56-volt battery can run for about one hour. Plug-in electric mowers don't have this limitation, but using a long electrical cord can be challenging.

Quality electric mowers, especially the cordless, rechargeable ones, tend to cost twice as much as a new equivalent gas model. But you can recoup some of the expense with cheaper operating costs, since electricity is a less expensive fuel than gas and electric engines generally require less maintenance than gas engines.

Another important cost consideration is that rechargeable batteries typically need to be replaced after three to five years. The cost savings also depend on the size of your lot. A small lot uses less gas, so fuel cost savings are less significant.

You can save a significant amount of money on purchase price with a corded mower, if you don't mind the hassle of navigating around the cord.

There are additional benefits of electric mowers besides lower fuel and maintenance costs. Electric mowers are much quieter than gas mowers and they start instantly. Electric mowers produce less tailpipe emissions, but the overall environmental impact depends on how the electricity you're using (to charge the mower) is generated. The environmental benefits will be greater if the electricity is generated from renewable energy sources.

Given all these considerations, my advice is to weigh your priorities. If you are looking to buy new, have a small- to mid-size lot, prioritize environmental concerns and don't mind navigating a cord or recharging batteries, an electric mower could be the right choice for you.

If you don't mind the noise, maintenance and other hassles of a gas mower, have a large lot and prefer not to invest in the upfront purchase price, a gas mower may be a better option.

This column was co-written by Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen of Collaborative Efficiency. For more information on mower options, please visit: www.collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips.



There's also a third choice. If your goals are to save money and hassle while protecting the environment, you can minimize your need for a mower, or get rid of the need completely.

If you're willing to keep your lawn mowed regularly and don't mind breaking a sweat, consider a manual reel mower. Some models are more effective than you might think and they're far less expensive and require little maintenance or storage space.

The most dramatic step you could take is replacing your lawn completely, perhaps with water-efficient landscaping, a rock garden, a vegetable garden or even an artificial lawn. This could dramatically cut your water bill and the environmental impact of a lawn.

Any change you make, whether in mowing or landscaping, will require a little research. But it's great to know the option of an electric mower is more viable than ever!



Shallow Digging is Still Digging

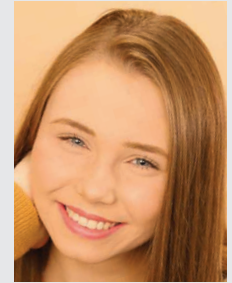
One in eight survey respondents have decided to dig without calling 811 because they thought their project was too shallow to interfere with buried facilities.

2018 CGA Public Awareness Research



Scholar Recognized

Congratulations to Lindsey Barton from MACCRAY High School for being selected as the January Scholar of the Month. She was nominated because she is a student leader as she is the captain of the dance team and color guard as well as editor of the yearbook. She is also involved in her community by participating in Golden Connections which is a group of students that visit the nursing home to spend time with the residents as well as being involved in her youth group. 943900



Lindsey Barton
MACCRAY High School

More information on the Scholar of the Month program can be found on our website www.renville-sibley.coop under the Customer Service tab.



Comparative Report

	Jan. 1, 2018 - Dec. 31, 2018	Jan. 1, 2017 - Dec. 31, 2017	Jan. 1, 2008 - Dec. 31, 2008
Average Number of Consumers	1,878	1,881	1,963
kWhs Purchased	192,571,523	178,485,738	167,720,893
Cost of Purchased Power	\$11,504,009	\$11,191,048	\$5,614,839.58

For Sale:

Renville-Sibley has a 8.5' x 22' CargoMate Glazer enclosed trailer for sale. Details include:

- Steel frame
- Round top/round front
- 2 - 7k axles
- Heavy duty cage upgrade
- 12" o.c. floor crossmembers
- Adjustable pintle coupler
- Rear ramp door
- Furnished and insulated ceiling
- Asking \$6,500

Please contact Renville-Sibley by email at renville-sibley@renville-sibley.coop or by phone at 800-826-2593 by Monday, March 11, 2019, if you are interested in purchasing this trailer. All interested names will be put into a hat with one name drawn at the close of business on Monday, March 11. The selected name will be contacted the following day.





Rushmore Electric's Mike Bowers, fifth from left, is one of 17 members of the Rapid City YMCA board of directors.

LOCAL COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Co-op Leaders Contribute to Local Boards, Youth Programs and More

Brenda Kleinjan

editor@sdrea.coop

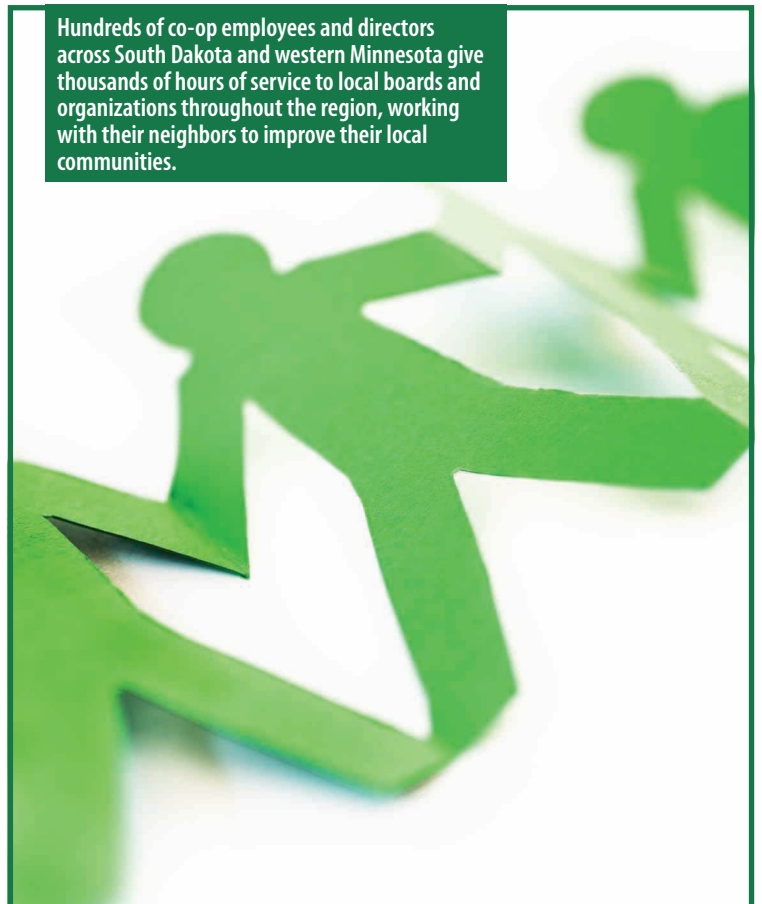
When cooperatives say they are committed to their communities, it's not just lip service. It's service rooted in fact.

From city councils, township boards and county commissions to school boards, church boards and other community organizations, co-op employees and directors are answering the call to serve on boards of various shapes and sizes.

Some specialize, focusing their involvement in one arena. Others are generalists, taking the skills and lessons they've learned through their roll at their local electric cooperative and translating it to benefit their local community through involvement on several boards and groups.

For much of his co-op career, Mike Bowers has also served on boards associated with the Rapid City YMCA. Bowers, the manager of Rushmore Engineering, a part of Rushmore

Hundreds of co-op employees and directors across South Dakota and western Minnesota give thousands of hours of service to local boards and organizations throughout the region, working with their neighbors to improve their local communities.



Electric Power Cooperative in Rapid City, has spent 20 years on the YMCA building committee. He's also been a part of the YMCA board of directors for 10 years, serving as secretary and board chairman.

But, his Y involvement has even deeper roots.

"I grew up with the Y," said the Wisconsin native. "I've been a Y member here for 42 years. I joined the Y the first month I was in town and never looked back."

Bowers said the YMCA's commitment to people in the community is appealing and resonates well with the work of electric cooperatives.

"Both invest in the community, absolutely," Bowers said. "The YMCA is very much a cooperative structure; not-for-profit, open to all and every member is an owner, if you stop to think about it."

The Rapid City YMCA and the Rapid City Area Schools are in the midst of a \$10 million renovation of a 68,000 square foot building in downtown Rapid City that once housed an electric and gas utility company. When completed, the facility will house YMCA early childhood development and also provide

infant childcare as well as hold school district administrative offices.

The facility, which is slated to open in August, will be known as the Rapid City Education Center. It recently secured \$1.1 million in funding from the Rapid City Vision Fund.

We all need to be involved and give back to the community.

"The Rapid City Education Center will more than double our capacity for childcare," Bowers said.

Bowers sums up his work with the YMCA succinctly.

"This is the way I want to be involved and give back," said Bowers.

Bowers is not alone in his commitment to his local community.

From youth wrestling, basketball, baseball and football programs to coaching varsity-level sports and serving as

referees, co-op employees and directors are working alongside their neighbors to ensure these programs succeed.

You'll also find co-op employees and directors setting aside their co-op hats to take on the work of members of school boards at several districts across the state.

Dozens of co-op employees serve as trustees and council members of towns and communities across the state. More than a dozen township boards are comprised of officers who work for electric cooperatives or who serve as a director for an electric cooperative. County commissions from Custer County in the west to Grant County in the northeast – and a few counties in between – have co-op employees and directors serving on their governing boards.

And, the work doesn't stop there. You'll find co-op directors and employees in service organizations like Lions, Rotary and Kiwanis, on in veteran's organizations like the American Legion and VFW, church boards, airport, library and transportation boards.

As Bowers notes, "We all need to be involved and give back to the community."



Chris Larson, General Manager of Clay-Union Electric Corporation in Vermillion, moderates the District 17 Legislative Public Forum held in October. Larson is member of the VCDL Governmental Affairs Committee, which hosted the candidate forum. Candidates present were, from left, Gregory Baldwin, Ray Ring, John Gors and Howard Grinager. Arthur Rusch attended by phone.

January Board Meeting Highlights

The January board meeting was rescheduled from Monday, Jan. 28 to Thursday Jan. 31, at 9 a.m., due to weather. All board members were present. Others present were CEO DeeAnne Newville, Gene Alex and Lenae Wordes.

The board reviewed and approved the following items:

- Minutes of the December board meeting
- Operating and disbursement reports for the month of December
- Capital credits to estates
- Safety report for January
- 2019 work plan inventory
- 2019 Depreciation Resolution
- NRECA director election voting delegates
- NRTC annual meeting voting delegate
- CFC voting delegate for 2019 annual meeting
- Revenue Deferral Resolution

The board reviewed:

- List of new members and 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 – 2018 (unaudited)
 - Organization activities
 - East River update
 - Basin Electric update
 - NRECA Update
 - MREA Update
 - Line crew work in progress, equipment update and outage update
 - Accounts Receivable
 - Nominating Committee meetings
 - Member Informational meetings
 - 81st annual meeting
 - Youth Tour
 - Scholarship Program
 - Member Trip

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 David Lindquist did not find his member number in the newsletter. The credit will continue to grow for a value of \$40. Another number has been hidden in this newsletter. If you find your number and call the office by March 4, you will receive this credit on your electric statement. Good luck in your search!

Mission Statement

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



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Spring is nearly here!

Now is the perfect time to test your A/C and ensure it's ready for summer. Remember to check the evaporator coil, which should be cleaned annually for optimal efficiency.

Source: Energy.gov



Notice: The February board meeting will be held Monday, Feb. 25, at 9 a.m. The March board meeting will be held on Monday, March 25, at 8 a.m.



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)?

- 1,000 kWh (kilowatt hours) produced by a renewable energy source equals 1 REC
- RECs are also called Green Tags
- RECs represent the valuable renewable attributes of wind 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

How much does it cost?

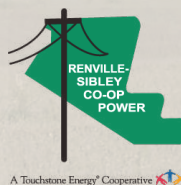
To participate a rate adder per kWh will be added to your bill:

\$0.001 /kWh for 100% renewable
 \$0.00075 /kWh for 75% renewable
 \$0.00050 /kWh for 50% renewable
 \$0.00025 /kWh for 25% renewable

For example, if your monthly usage is 1,200 kWh and you would like to participate at the 100% renewable level, you would pay an additional \$1.20 for the month.

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.



1.800.826.2593
renville-sibley@renville-sibley.coop

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



Kimball School received \$1,000 from Central Electric Cooperative's Operation Round Up® program to update their former playground for safety, entertainment and school pride.

MAKING CHANGE

Contributions by Co-op Members Add Up for Good

Brenda Kleinjan

editor@sdra.coop

Thirty years ago, South Carolina's Palmetto Electric Cooperative conceived of an idea to benefit residents in the three counties it serves. By having members round up their monthly electric bills, co-op members could have a lasting impact on charitable groups in the area.

Since that beginning in 1989, Operation Round Up® has been an incredibly successful way in which the co-op and its members have been able to help the less fortunate in their community. Through Operation Round Up, Palmetto Electric automatically rounds up a participating member's electric bills to the next highest dollar. For example, a consumer's monthly bill of \$52.73 would be automatically rounded up to \$53, with the additional 27 cents going to the Operation Round Up fund. On an annual basis, the co-op is able to donate roughly \$6 for each participating customer – and that pool of money is then allocated to a variety of worthy causes throughout their service area.

The concept spread nationwide and today, several cooperatives in South Dakota and western Minnesota have the program.



Central Electric Cooperative's Operation Round Up® program awarded \$2,300 to Helping with Horsepower, a therapeutic riding program at Reclamation Ranch outside of Mitchell, S.D., for a lift that allows wheel-chair-bound clients to ride horses.

Since 2000, members at Sioux Valley Energy have awarded more than \$1.5 million to community groups, including funding more than \$10,000 in scholarships each year to members and their children.

Across the border at Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative in Tyler, Minn., their Operation Round Up board funds grant requests ranging from fire department requests to school and other educational requests.

Danube, Minn.-based Renville-Sibley Co-op Power Association is launching its Operation Round Up in June.

“All co-ops adhere to the seven cooperative principles, including “Concern for Community.” The Operation Round Up® program is the perfect embodiment of this core principle,” said Lenae Wordes, Renville-Sibley’s communications manager. “The average co-op member donates \$6 with a maximum possible contribution of \$11.88 per year. This may not seem like a large amount, but when combined with nearly 1,900 of Renville-Sibley Co-op Power member accounts, it adds up to make an impact.”

“Renville-Sibley’s program will operate



with a board of trustees that is different from the board of directors for the electric co-op. This allows a group of members to focus on the mission of representing our communities,” said Wordes.

In the Watertown, S.D., area, Codington-Clark Electric’s Operation Round Up has helped 4-H clubs, a child hunger group and a local living history fair.

Central Electric Cooperative in Mitchell, S.D., awarded \$12,500 to 10 groups in November 2018. Among the groups receiving funding were community improvement associations and community centers, speed meters for two cities, 4-H, Habitat for Humanity and other groups. Since launching the program in 2015, the program has made \$72,500 in awards.

“Applications typically come from volunteers in your community who feel strongly about a project and making a difference,” said Courtney Deinert, Central’s manager of communications.

For the past 10 years, members of Oahe Electric Cooperative in Blunt, S.D., have distributed more than \$92,000 to groups and organizations in Hughes and Sully counties. The money raised has helped volunteer fire departments, animal rescue shelters and other groups selected by the Operation Round Up Board of Trustees.

At Elk Point, S.D., Union County Electric Cooperative started its program in 2018. This year, it awarded \$4,000 to four organizations including the local historical society, the Boys and Girls Club, an animal rescue and the local Veterans of Foreign Wars group.

Co-op members at West River Electric Association in Wall, S.D., are also involved. In 2018, the Operation Round Up fund awarded more than \$8,200 to groups ranging from rodeo booster clubs and cemetery associations to ambulance services, athletic groups and pre-school and community groups. One award helped purchase a heater for the New Underwood city pool.

Contact your local cooperative to find out what ways they are involved in their communities and how to participate.



The Letcher, S.D., 4-H “Kids Kountry Club” breaks ground on their new playground area after receiving a \$3,500 Operation Round Up grant from Central Electric Cooperative members.



Knob and tube wiring was common from 1880 to 1930 and is not likely to pass today's electrical safety requirements.

WOULD YOUR HOME PASS AN ELECTRICAL INSPECTION?

Safe Electricity

SafeElectricity.org

If you're getting ready to sell your home or just wondering how electrically sound it is, there are some general guidelines out there to assess the condition of your home's wiring and electrical bones. Although it varies depending on where you live, most local codes follow the National Electric Code (NEC).

The NEC is an industry-specific, jargon-filled document that outlines required practices for all aspects of residential and commercial electrical installation. Don't worry, you don't have to google it and read it from cover to cover, but know that your local code could vary. Local code always wins out when there are variances, so be sure to check with your qualified electrician or local building department (start with your city or town) for specific code requirements.

Electrical malfunction is dangerous. U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated average of 45,210 reported U.S. home structure fires involving electrical failure or malfunction per year from 2010 to 2014, according to the National Fire Protection Agency. The home fires resulted in 420 deaths, 1,370 injuries and an annual \$1.4 billion in direct property damage.

In general, here are some all-house guidelines that an inspector would look for; remember they may or may not align with your local electrical code but they are NEC-mandated. If your home

has any of the following defects, it may not pass an electrical safety inspection:

- Old knob-and-tube, along with BX cable wiring, common in the U.S. from about 1880 to 1930
- New lights and receptacles installed into old wiring
- Overcrowded wires; i.e. too many wires bundled together producing excess heat
- Spliced wires that were illegally installed (they must be installed by an approved method)
- Broken or missing carbon monoxide detectors or smoke alarms (whether smoke alarms must be hard wired depends on the age of the home and in most cases, whether any home improvement projects required a permit)
- Non-insulated/non-contact-rated recessed lights that touch attic insulation, which is a fire hazard
- Improper overcurrent protection, which means the breaker or fuse is too large for the wire rating
- Improper grounding and bonding of electrical panels and devices

Some other room-specific things to look for include:

Kitchen

- Does your electric range, cooktop or oven have a dedicated 240-volt circuit?
- Is the breaker for the range, cooktop or oven sized correctly?
- Does your island have its own outlet? (The NEC has outlet requirements for kitchen islands, peninsulas and countertops.)
- Does your microwave, refrigerator and garbage disposal each have its own circuit?

Bathroom

- Are outlets GFCI (ground fault circuit interrupters)? GFCIs are designed to protect people from electric shock around water.
- Do your combination fan/lights have their own 20-amp circuit?
- Do the light fixtures in the shower or tub area have a "lens" cover? Are they moisture resistant?

Other Rooms (living, dining, family, bedrooms)

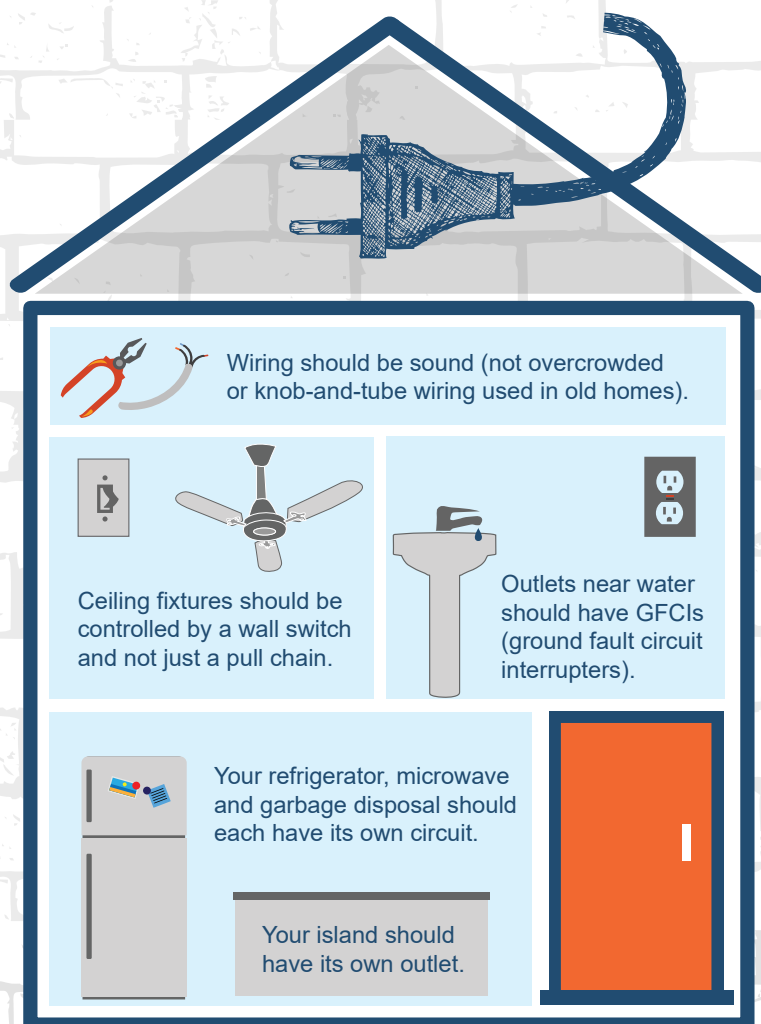
- Does each room have a wall switch installed beside the entry door?
- Are outlets installed no farther than 12 feet apart?
- Are ceiling fixtures controlled by a wall switch and not just a pull chain?
- There are also hallway, staircase and garage code requirements, as well as those for the electrical service panel and wiring. Check with your qualified electrician or the city or town where you live for specific code requirements in all areas of your home.
- Arc-Fault Circuit Interrupters (AFCI)
 - Many prominent electrical and homebuilding experts believe that using arc-fault circuit interrupters (AFCI) in these areas of homes has a significant impact on homeowner safety and that they reduce the number of lives lost in home electrical fires.
 - An AFCI is designed to detect series faults, line to neutral faults and line to ground faults, effectively stopping a fire before it starts.

For more about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

Home Electrical Inspection:

— Pass or Fail? —

Would your home pass an electrical inspection? Local electrical codes vary, so check with your qualified electrician, but here are **five things** your home should have:



Learn more at

Safe
Electricity.org

December 15-March 31

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

February 21-23

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

February 22-23

State Wrestling Tournaments, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4111

February 23

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

March 1-2

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

March 9-10

2019 Gun Show, American Legion Hall, Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. MST, Philip, SD, 605-441-8466 or 605-441-1216

March 9-10

Dakota Territory Gun Show, Davison County 4-H Grounds, Mitchell, SD, 605-630-2199

March 9-12

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

March 14-16

SD State Class A Boys Basketball Tournament, Premier Center, Sioux Falls, SD

March 14-16

SD State Class AA Boys and Girls Basketball Tournament, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD



March 15-16

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

March 14-16

SD State Class B Boys Basketball Tournament, Barnett Center, Aberdeen, SD

March 16-17

Dakota Territory Gun Show, Codington City Ag Building, Watertown, SD, 605-793-2347

March 22-23, 29-30

Mystery Dinner Theater, Legion Hall, Faulkton, SD, 605-380-1556

March 23

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

March 29-30, April 5-6

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

March 29-31

Black Hills Home Builders Home Show, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD, 605-348-7850

March 30-31

29th Annual Hats Off to the Artist Art Show, Community Center, Faulkton, SD, 605-598-4482

April 4

McCrossan Banquet Auction featuring Loop Rawlins and the PBR, 5:30 p.m., Arena, Sioux Falls, SD, Tickets: \$75 each, 605-339-1203, www.mccrossan.org

April 4-5

Holiday Arts Spring Craft Show, Masonic Hall, Mitchell, SD, 605-359-2049

April 5-6

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

April 5-7, 11-14

Green Earth Players presents Drinking Habits, Palace Theatre, Luverne, MN, 507-283-9226

April 5-7

Professional Bull Riders Unleash the Beast Tour, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7288

April 7

Unni Boksasp from Norway in Concert, 2 p.m., Riggs Theater, Pierre, SD, 605-222-1992

April 13-14

Dakota Territory Gun Show, Rushmore Civic Center, Rapid City, SD, 605-270-0764

April 18

John Mellencamp, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center Fine Arts Theatre, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4115

May 1-5

Black Hills Film Festival, Hill City, SD, 605-574-9454

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.