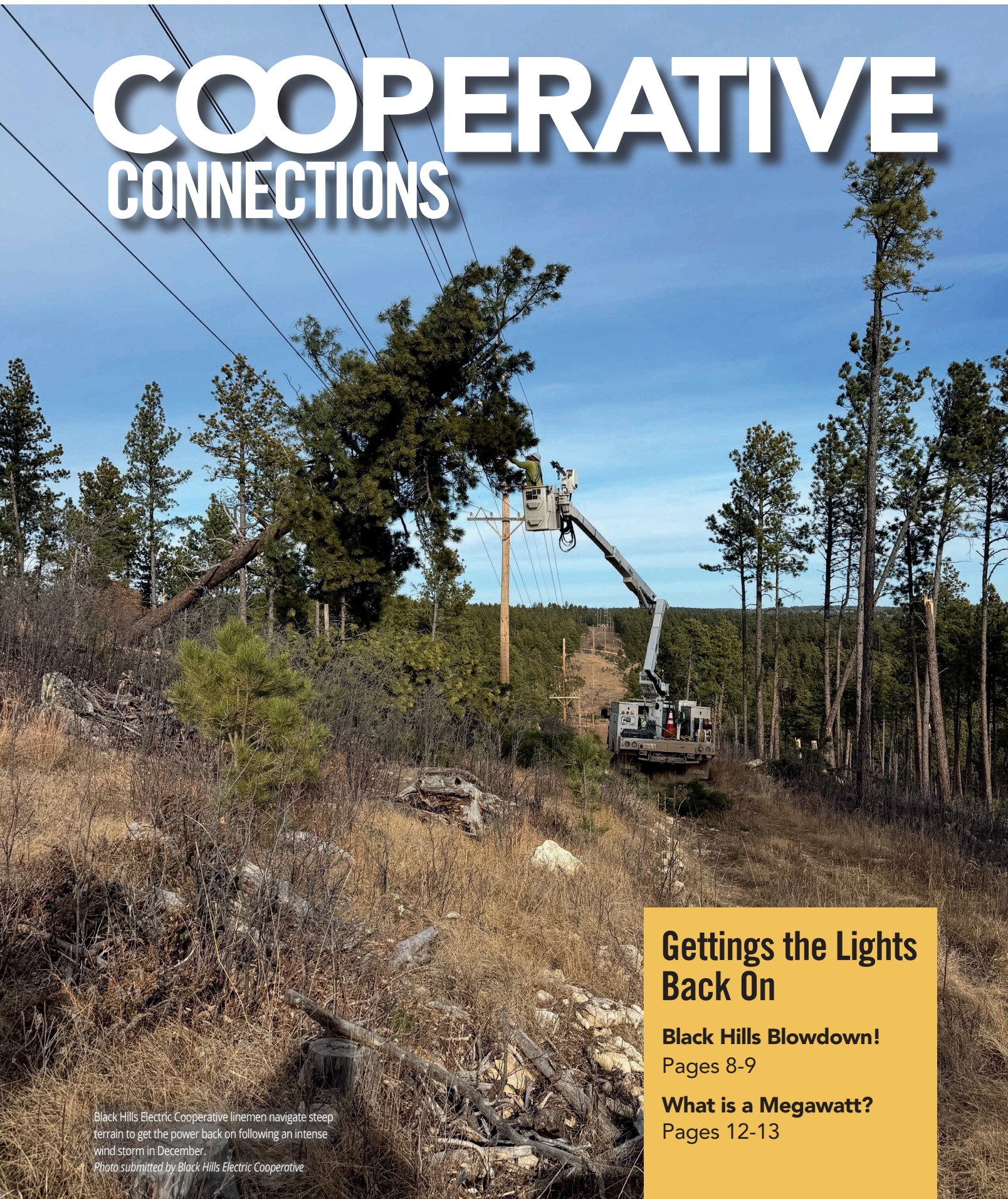


COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Black Hills Electric Cooperative linemen navigate steep terrain to get the power back on following an intense wind storm in December.
Photo submitted by Black Hills Electric Cooperative

Gettings the Lights Back On

Black Hills Blowdown!
Pages 8-9

What is a Megawatt?
Pages 12-13

A MESSAGE TO OUR MEMBERS



Matt Hotzler

Manager/CEO



Bert Rognes

Board President

We invite you to attend your Cooperative's Annual Meeting on Tuesday, March 24, 2026, at the Hamlin Education Center, 44577 188th Street, Hayti, SD (approximately 5 miles west of Hayti).

Registration begins at 6:30 p.m., with the business meeting starting at 7:00 p.m. Join us for cookies and coffee. Each membership that registers will receive a \$20 bill credit, and at the end of the meeting we will give away ten \$100 bill credits and two \$500 bill credits to members in attendance.

2025 Highlights

- **Rates** – Like many utilities, we have felt the effects of inflation. Rates increased in 2025 and again in 2026, largely due to rising wholesale power costs from Basin Electric. Power costs make up nearly 60% of our total expenses, so increases at the wholesale level directly impact your Cooperative. Basin experienced larger-than-planned increases driven by factors such as growth in traditional loads, fuel and market volatility, system reliability investments, and higher required planning reserves. Unfortunately, we anticipate another rate increase next year. Other contributing factors include the increased costs of the materials we use to construct powerlines and general inflation across most of the supplies and services we use. We continue to closely manage expenses while maintaining a safe and reliable system to help limit the impact on our members.
- **Operations** – In 2025, we installed 26 miles of new underground line, of which 14 miles was three-phase and the remainder single-phase. Of those miles, 16 replaced existing overhead lines, while 10 supported new construction. We built 58 new services and retired or disconnected 13, resulting in a net gain of 45 services.
- **Member Services** – Our Member Services team completed 2,303 service orders,

including 703 wiring service orders and 249 related to water heaters, secondary locates and repairs, heat meters, and irrigation. We also continued upgrading load control receivers – primarily for water heaters – with 556 units changed during the year. In addition, 795 power line carrier meters were replaced with radio-frequency meters, providing faster access to demand usage and outage information. In 2026, we will continue updating the load controllers and meters.

- **Bylaws** – Over the past year, the Board took a close look at H-D Electric's bylaws and prepared an updated version for members to consider at this annual meeting. The bylaws have served the Cooperative well for nearly 80 years, but they were written in very formal legal language when the Cooperative was first formed. The proposed updates are meant to make the bylaws easier to read and understand for members, directors, and staff. These changes aren't intended to alter how the Cooperative is governed, but instead clarify the language and make a few necessary updates to reflect current laws and how the Cooperative operates today.

Once again, we hope you'll plan to attend your Cooperative's Annual Meeting on Tuesday, March 24, 2026. And who knows – you might even head home with a nice bill credit!

For more information, please visit:
<http://www.h-delectric.coop/annual-meeting>.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR! Annual Meeting Has Been Set

Tuesday March 24, 2026
Hamlin Education Center
Hayti, S.D.

Registration: 6:30 p.m.
Meeting: 7 p.m.

Registration gift plus \$20 bill credit!
Plus, we are giving away ten \$100 bill credits and two \$500 bill credits!
Must be present to win.

**COOPERATIVE
CONNECTIONS**

H-D ELECTRIC

(USPS No. 018-905)

General Manager: Matt Hotzler

Headquarters Employees:

Annie Aberle – Finance and

Administration Manager

Michelle Prins – Billing Representative/
MDM Analyst

Heidi Brewer-Grimlie – Accounting Clerk

Jami Bolden – Member Service
Representative

Roger Cutshaw – Engineer

Darren Matthies – Building Property
Worker

Operations:

Troy Kwasniewski – Operations Manager

Todd Sprang – Line Foreman

Line Crew:

Pat Kirby – Operations Support

Kevin Holida – Lead Lineworker

Joe Raml – Lead Lineworker

Derek Bille – Lineworker

Eric Page – Lineworker

Joseph Jordan Jr. – Lineworker

Jonah Paintner – Apprentice Lineworker

Matt Miller – Lead Equipment Operator/
Mechanic

Brady Mellendorf - Equipment Operator/
Mechanic

Member Services:

Tom Lundberg – Member Services
Manager

Noah Reichling – Electrician Foreman

Jim Thompson – Lead Electrician

Deaven Boots – Apprentice Electrician

Jon Zirbel – Meter/Load Management

Board of Directors:

President Bert Rogness – Astoria

Vice President Terry Strohfus – Hazel

Treasurer Steven Hansen – Clear Lake

Secretary Todd Moritz – Castlewood

Sherwin Dekam – Castlewood

Dale Williams – Estelline

Casper Niemann – Lake Norden

Kevin DeBoer – Clear Lake

Calvin Musch – Revillo

H-D ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is published monthly by H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc., PO Box 1007, 18240 SD Hwy 15, Clear Lake, SD 57226-1007 for its members. Families subscribe to H-D Electric Cooperative Connections as part of their electric cooperative membership. H-D Electric Cooperative Connections' purpose is to provide reliable, helpful information to electric cooperative members on matters pertaining to rural electrification and better rural living. H-D Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Subscription information: Electric cooperative members devote 50 cents from their monthly electric payments for a subscription. Nonmember subscriptions are available for \$12 annually. Periodicals Postage Paid at Clear Lake, S.D., and at additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: H-D Electric Cooperative Connections, PO Box 1007, Clear Lake, SD 57226-1007; telephone (605) 874-2171; toll-free 1-800-358-7233; fax (605) 874-8173; e-mail info@h-delectric.coop

Design assistance by SDREA.

Notice of 2026 Annual Meeting

Dear Member:

February 17, 2026

The regular annual meeting of the members of H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc. will be held at the Hamlin Education Center in Hayti, SD on the 24th day of March 2026 at 7:00 p.m. pursuant to the provisions of Section I, Article VI of the Bylaws of said cooperative to act upon the following matters:

1. To elect Directors
2. Pass upon reports for the previous fiscal year
3. Transact such business as may come before the meeting.

REGISTRATION OPENS AT 6:30 p.m.

The meeting begins at 7 p.m.

Your registration card will be located on the back cover of this newsletter. Please cut it out, sign, and present the card at the registration table. Your registration card will entitle you to an Official Ballot, a \$20 bill credit, a registration gift, and a chance to win a prize. Prizes include ten \$100 energy credits, and two \$500 energy credits. You must be present to win.

If you are disabled and need a reasonable accommodation to have full and equal enjoyment of this program, please notify the business office at 605-874-2171.

Dated this 17th day of February 2026

Todd Moritz, Secretary
H-D ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

Operating Statistics

	December 2024	December 2025
Customers	3,878	3,923
Amount Collected	\$1,390,254	\$1,515,051
Average Bill	\$358.50	\$386.20
Average Kilowatt-Hour	3,513	3,754
Kilowatt-Hours Purchased	14,360,637	15,489,086
Kilowatt-Hours Sold	13,622,546	14,727,924

Ensuring Drone Safety Near Power Lines

As drones continue to gain popularity for recreational and commercial use, their integration into our daily lives should not lessen the consideration of safety – particularly when it comes to flying near power lines. The intersection of drone technology and electrical infrastructure necessitates adherence to safety protocols, regulations, and best practices to protect both pilots and the integrity of electrical systems.

Power lines are essential components of our electrical grid, delivering energy to homes and businesses. However, they can pose serious hazards for drone operators. Collisions with power lines can cause significant equipment damage, leading to costly repairs or replacements. More critically, such incidents can disrupt service for hundreds of members, creating outages that could last for hours or even days.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has established regulations governing drone use, including restrictions on flying in proximity to power lines. According to FAA guidelines, drone pilots must always maintain a visual line of sight with their aircraft and avoid flying over people. When operating near electrical infrastructure, it is crucial to adhere to the regulations pertaining to altitude and no-fly zones.

Drone operators should also be familiar with state and local laws, as some municipalities have designated specific areas as no-fly zones, particularly near critical infrastructure like power facilities. Understanding these regulations is not only a legal requirement but also an essential step in ensuring the safety of all involved.

Best Practices for Safe Operations

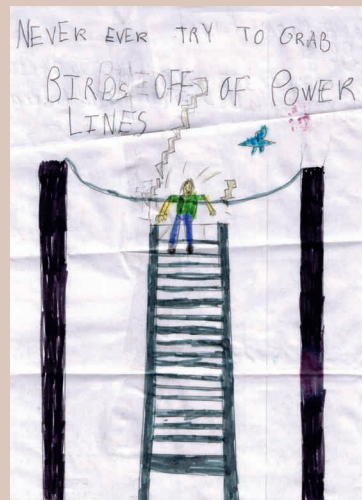
To minimize risks when flying drones near power lines, operators should adopt several best practices:

1. **Pre-Flight Planning:** Before taking off, thoroughly assess the flight area. Identify the location of power lines, potential obstacles, and any relevant no-fly zones. Consulting local maps and aerial photography can aid in understanding the landscape.
2. **Maintain Safe Distances:** When operating near power lines, always keep a safe distance. The FAA recommends a separation of at least 500 feet from energized power lines to avoid potential collisions. Keeping a safe buffer not only protects the drone but also mitigates risks to nearby electrical infrastructure.

3. **Use Technology Wisely:** Many modern drones come equipped with GPS and obstacle avoidance systems that can aid in safe navigation. Utilize these features and ensure that your drone's software is updated to reduce the likelihood of malfunction.
4. **Operating in Controlled Conditions:** Avoid flying drones in poor weather conditions such as high winds, rain, or reduced visibility. Harsh weather not only affects flight stability but can also lead to loss of control over the drone, increasing the risk of accidents.
5. **Emergency Procedures:** In case of a malfunction or loss of control, having an emergency plan in place is vital. Be prepared to communicate with local authorities if a drone becomes entangled in power lines or presents a safety concern.

As the popularity of drones continues to soar, awareness around safety protocols, especially near power lines, has become increasingly critical. By understanding the risks involved, adhering to regulations, and implementing best practices for safe drone operations, pilots can ensure the protection of themselves, others, and vital electrical infrastructure. Responsible drone use fosters innovation while ensuring safety remains paramount in our evolving technological landscape.

"Never ever try to grab birds off of power lines!"



**Naomi Krcil,
Age 8**

Naomi warns readers to never EVER grab birds off of a power line. Great picture, Naomi! Naomi's parents are Andrew and Andrea Krcil from Dante, S.D.

Kids, send your drawing with an electrical safety tip to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). If your poster is published, you'll receive a prize. All entries must include your name, age, mailing address and the names of your parents. Colored drawings are encouraged.

Scrumptious SALADS

MACARONI SALAD

Ingredients:

2 cups macaroni (cooked, drained, rinsed and cooled)
2 or more cups of carrots (chopped or shredded)
1 small chopped onion (optional)
1 cup chopped green pepper (optional)

Dressing

1 cup mayonnaise (Hellmans)
1/4 cup vinegar
1/2 cup sugar
7 oz. sweetened condensed milk
1/4 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. pepper

R. Gregg Fritz
H-D Electric

KARI REDER'S POTATO SALAD

Ingredients:

7-8 lbs. potatoes, Yukon gold or red
1 dozen eggs
1 med. sweet onion
2 cups Mayo
1 tbsp. cream
1/4 cup of apple cider vinegar
1/2 cup of sugar or splenda
1 1/2 tbsps. mustard
2 tbsps. celery seed
Celery salt, salt and pepper to taste

Method

Boil potatoes and eggs, peel and dice. Add the chopped onion. Mix together mayo, cream, apple cider vinegar, sugar, mustard, celery seed, celery salt, salt and pepper. Mix all together well and refrigerate.

Kari Reder
Northern Electric

SUMMER GARDEN PASTA SALAD

Ingredients:

1 lb. thin spaghetti, broken into 1" pieces
1 pt. cherry tomatoes, halved
2 med. zucchini, peeled & diced
2 med. cucumbers, diced
1 green pepper, diced
1 red pepper, diced
1 - 16 oz. can sliced black olives, drained

Dressing:

1 - 16 oz. bottle Italian dressing
1/4 cup parmesan cheese
1 tbsp. sesame seeds
1 tsp. paprika
1/2 tsp. celery seed
1/2 tsp. garlic salt

Method

Cook pasta; drain. Drizzle with 1-2 tps. olive oil. In large bowl, combine pasta, tomatoes, zucchini, cucumber, peppers and olives.

Whisk dressing ingredients together. Pour over salad ingredients and toss to coat.

Cover and refrigerate for three hours.

Jane Ham
Cam Wal Electric

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 2025. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

2025 ANNUAL MEETING UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF H-D ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC

MINUTES OF THE 82ND ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MEMBERS OF H-D ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE INC., HELD ON TUESDAY, MARCH 25, 2025 AT 7:00 P.M. AT THE H-D ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. HEADQUARTERS CLEAR LAKE, COUNTY OF DEUEL, STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA.

The 82nd annual meeting of the members of H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc. was held at the H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc. Headquarters, Clear Lake, Deuel County, South Dakota, on Tuesday, March 25, 2025, at 7:00 p.m., pursuant to the notice of the annual meeting duly mailed to all members.

The President of the Board, Mr. Bert Rogness, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., following refreshments in the shop of the headquarters building. Prior to the call to order, a video from East River Electric was played for the members.

The President of the board, Mr. Rogness, led the members in the Pledge of Allegiance and students from Deuel High School sang the National Anthem. Mr. Rogness gave the invocation.

The President of the Board, Mr. Rogness, acted as the Chairman of the meeting and reported a quorum of 198 members were present. A quorum being present, Mr. Rogness, Chairman, announced the meeting was duly convened.

Mr. Rogness introduced the former directors who were present, Doyle Thompson and Alvin Kangas. He thanked the former board members for attending the membership meeting. He also acknowledged those board members that have passed away and thanked them for their service to H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc. Mr. Rogness introduced the special guest from East River Electric Cooperative, Bob Sahr,

General Manager and Danny Brown, General Counsel. Mr. Rogness then introduced each of the current board members for H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc. In addition, he introduced the manager, and the project attorney.

Ms. Roxanne Bass read the notice and proof of mailing for the annual meeting.

Mr. Bert Rogness referred the members to the minutes of the 81st annual meeting of the members on March 19, 2024, printed in the H-D Electric Cooperative Connections and mailed to the members. On motion duly made, seconded and carried, the minutes of the 81st annual meeting held on March 19, 2024, were approved.

The panel, consisting of Mr. Bert Rogness, President, Mr. Matthew Hotzler, Manager, and Mr. Steve Hansen, Treasurer, presented the H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc. Annual Report with a PowerPoint presentation.

Mr. Matthew Hotzler, General Manager, advised the membership that there is an increase in rates planned for 2025. The last increase was in 2018.

Mr. Steven Hansen, treasurer, reviewed the financial reports which were available to the members in the Cooperative Connections Publication. Mr. Hansen reported that 2023 showed a clean audit, and the 2024 audit is in progress. There was growth during 2024. Mr. Hansen discussed revenue and expense with the margin stabilization funds, operating and non-operating margins, and capital credits from generation and transmission entities.

Mr. Bert Rogness, director of East River Electric Cooperative, Inc., presented a report of East River. Mr. Rogness discussed transmissions through East River, reliability and market rates.

Mr. Bert Rogness discussed youth events. Co-ops in the classrooms is planned this year. He announced the scholarship recipients from area schools.

Mr. Hotzler discussed SDREA. He discussed the investment made at the safety meetings of H-D Electric. He reported that SDREA conducts three safety meetings with H-D Electric each year.

Mr. Bert Rogness advised the membership that the financial report of 2024 needs to be approved by a resolution. On motion duly made, seconded and carried, it was resolved that the financial report for H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc. for 2024 is approved.

Mr. Bert Rogness then introduced the project attorney, Craig D. Evenson to explain the voting process. Mr. Craig D. Evenson advised the membership that candidates filing a petition in 2025 are the following:

District 1 – Terry Strohfus

District 2 – Sherwin DeKam

District 6 – Kevin DeBoer

On motion duly made, seconded and carried, the following directors were elected as the directors for H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc. for a term of three years:

District 1 – Terry Strohfus

District 2 – Sherwin DeKam

District 6 – Kevin DeBoer

Mr. Rogness asked if there was any old business. There was none.

Mr. Rogness asked the members if there was any new business. There was none.

Mr. Rogness then introduced Troy Kwasniewski and Heidi Grimlie to draw for door prizes.

Mr. Rogness then asked for a motion to adjourn. On motion duly made, seconded and carried the meeting was adjourned.

Final memberships registered was 199. Total attendance of 290.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc., which comprise the balance sheets as of December 31, 2024 and 2023, and the related statements of operations, patronage capital and other equities, and cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc. as of December 31, 2024 and 2023, and the results of its operations and cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS) and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States (Government Auditing Standards). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc. and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audits. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc.'s ability to continue as a going concern for one year after the date that the financial statements are available to be issued.

Auditors Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS and Government Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with GAAS and Government Auditing Standards, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc.'s internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc.'s ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those

charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control related matters that we identified during the audit.

Supplementary Information

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the basic financial statements taken as a whole. The Schedule of RUS, FFB, and CFC Long-Term Debt is presented for the purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audits of the financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the information is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the financial statements as a whole.

Other Reporting Required by Government Auditing Standards

In accordance with Government Auditing Standards, we have also issued a report dated April, 2025 on our consideration of H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc.'s internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grant agreements, and other matters. The purpose of that report is to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc.'s internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc., internal control over financial reporting and compliance.

Eide Bailly

Sioux Falls, South Dakota

April 21, 2025



Intense wind left the crossarm of a broken three-phase pole hanging after a holiday storm.
Photos submitted by Black Hills Electric Cooperative

GETTING THE LIGHTS BACK ON

Black Hills Electric Cooperative Works Tirelessly Following Holiday Storm

Frank Turner

frank.turner@sdrea.coop

In the early morning hours of Dec. 18, powerful winds swept across western South Dakota, leaving much of the Black Hills without electricity. The outage included the home of Bill Brisk, manager of operations at Black Hills Electric Cooperative.

Through wild winds, Brisk set out for his office at the cooperative at 3 a.m., where he discovered that the windstorm was unlike anything he had seen in his 36 years with the cooperative.

“We get wind in the Hills,” Brisk said. “But nothing like that. In all of the time that I’ve been at the cooperative, I’ve never seen wind that strong.”

Wind gusts were later estimated at more than 100 mph, tearing through the Black

Hills with unprecedented force.

When Brisk arrived, the scope of the damage became clear. Nearly the entire system was down, and more than 11,000 of the co-op’s approximately 11,500 meters were without power. By daybreak, more than 96% of Black Hills Electric Cooperative’s system was dark, the largest outage event in the cooperative’s history.

Although an influx of outage calls from members came in around midnight, Brisk made an early and critical decision; crews would not be sent out while the storm was still raging.

“We began receiving calls around midnight, but I did not have our crews go out, just for the fact that it was just too dangerous,” Brisk said. “Trees were breaking off, conditions were hazardous, and I didn’t want to put our crews in any

dangerous situations.”

Instead, crews waited for daylight, when conditions allowed for safe assessment – the first step of getting the lights back on.

Assessment almost always begins with reporting from the community. Due to an overwhelming call volume during storm events, local reports of outages are forwarded to Basin Electric Power Cooperative’s Security and Response Services. These services relay important updates to electric cooperatives. Dispatchers communicate with linemen via push-to-talk radios and cell phones, tracking linemen from the time they leave the shop until the outage has been restored.

In addition to local reports, linemen also conduct their own assessments. That morning, linemen reported countless uprooted and snapped trees, downed poles and even wires lay broken across forest floors and roadways. In some areas, trees fell into other trees, creating dangerous conditions for anyone working below.

“I believe this was one of the worst storms in our cooperative’s history, including winter storm Atlas,” said Brisk.

As the assessment was underway, line

crews worked to bring downed substations back online first, then main three-phase feeders, followed by smaller distribution lines that bring power directly to homes and businesses. That order helps restore electricity to the greatest number of members as quickly as possible.

In the Black Hills, terrain adds another layer of complexity. Many lines run through dense forest, steep canyons and areas far from maintained roads.

“This isn’t square-mile territory,” Brisk said. “You might have to drive five or six miles just to get around a canyon.”

By midday Dec. 18, it was decided the damage was too widespread for Black Hills Electric to tackle alone. Brisk reached out to Mark Patterson, South Dakota Rural Electric Association’s manager of loss control, to request mutual aid from neighboring cooperatives – reinforcing a long-standing cooperative tradition built on neighbors helping neighbors.

Within hours, assistance began mobilizing. Crews, trucks and equipment arrived from across western South Dakota. Six electric cooperatives and a contractor ultimately sent help, bringing 55 additional linemen to the Black Hills. Those crews came from Butte Electric Cooperative, Cherry-Todd Electric Cooperative, Lacreek Electric Association, West Central Electric Cooperative, West River Electric Association, Rushmore Electric Power Cooperative and Kainz Power Lines, a local contractor based out of Custer.

“I had each operations manager of the responding cooperatives call me and ask what we needed,” Brisk said. “We asked for bucket trucks, digger trucks, chainsaws, attachments for skid steers, and extra line crews, and they sent everything we asked for.”

Days began early and ended late with crews often working 12 to 16-hour shifts. Brisk emphasized safety repeatedly to the crews as they worked among unstable trees, high winds and rugged terrain.

Behind the scenes, the restoration effort extended beyond the field. Office staff coordinated logistics and prepared meals. Lunches were packed daily for crews heading out before dawn. Supplies

were tracked, equipment was staged and communication updates were shared with members.

“It wasn’t just the line crews,” Brisk said. “Everybody stepped up.”

As crews continued working and Christmas approached, it appeared unlikely that power would be fully restored in time for the holiday. The visiting crews made it clear they were willing to stay through the holiday.

“All the outside crews said they weren’t leaving,” Brisk said. “They stayed to help us finish.”

By Christmas Eve, most members had power for the holiday and visiting crews were able to return home. Even still, Black Hills Electric crews continued limited work through the holiday, work that continues today.

“To be truthful, we are still cutting trees, setting poles and repairing lines from this storm,” said Brisk.

The storm was later designated a FEMA-eligible event, requiring detailed tracking of labor, equipment and materials.

Looking back, Brisk said the restoration efforts relied heavily on cooperation and dedication among crews from the assisting cooperatives.

“It’s good to know you’ve got great neighbors,” he said. “When you need help, they come.”



An assisting lineman from West River Electric Cooperative installs a ground on the line to be further worked on.



Damage from the storm not only affected poles, but also uprooted trees.

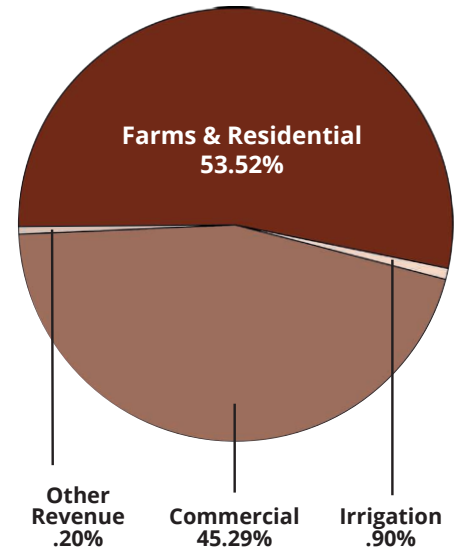


Bill Brisk, manager of operations at Black Hills Electric Cooperative, gives a morning briefing, updating the cooperative and assisting crews with storm recovery assignments.

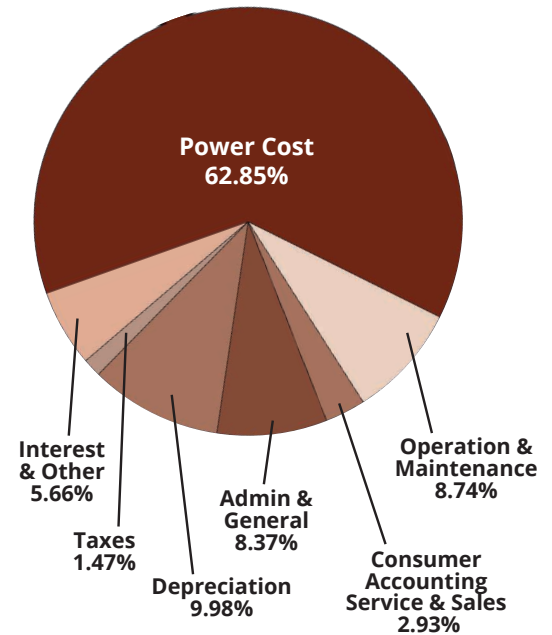
CO-OP FINANCES

Operating Summary		
	2024	2025
Income		
Farms and Residential	\$7,736,647	\$8,616,551
Commercial	\$5,676,257	\$7,291,336
Irrigation	\$359,328	\$145,691
Other Operating Revenue	\$46,827	\$47,063
REVENUE FROM ELECTRIC SALES	\$13,819,059	\$16,100,641
Margin Stabilization	379,248	389,544
TOTAL REVENUE	\$14,198,307	\$16,490,185
Expense		
Cost of Purchased Power	\$8,242,510	\$10,010,467
Operation of Lines	848,487	740,412
Maintenance of Lines	525,701	651,553
Consumers Accounting & Collecting	207,720	181,200
Customer Service Expense	230,952	278,317
Sales Expense	6,248	7,890
Other Administrative & General Expense	1,282,593	1,333,320
Depreciation	1,471,896	1,589,403
Taxes	203,220	233,941
Interest Expense	819,175	890,777
Other Misc. Expense	9,692	10,080
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$13,848,194	\$15,927,360
Operating Margins for the Year	\$350,113	\$562,825
Non-Operating Margins for the Year	\$345,486	\$250,928
G & T Capital Credits & Other	\$773,542	\$856,205
TOTAL MARGINS FOR THE YEAR	\$1,469,141	\$1,669,958
Balance Sheet		
	12/31/2024	12/31/2025
Assets		
Lines, Office Bldg, & Operating Equipment	\$52,000,052	\$56,326,084
Construction Work In Progress	178,349	132,804
Less: Reserve for Depreciation	(20,305,910)	(21,741,780)
TOTAL ELECTRIC PLANT LESS DEPR	\$31,872,491	\$34,717,108
Cash on Hand	\$45,759	\$35,130
Patronage Capital & Investments in Related Organizations	9,442,409	9,928,061
Working Capital, Member Loans & Investments in Other Organizations	4,288,592	2,828,315
TOTAL CASH AND INVESTMENTS	\$13,776,760	\$12,791,506
Receivables from Electric Consumers	\$1,422,224	\$1,541,609
Interest & Others	259,348	135,001
TOTAL RECEIVABLES	\$1,681,572	\$1,676,610
Material & Supplies	\$2,702,828	\$2,965,381
Prepaid Insurance & Dues	53,761	59,810
Deferred Debits	225,902	200,095
TOTAL MATERIAL & OTHER ASSETS	\$2,982,491	\$3,225,286
TOTAL OF WHAT WE OWN	\$50,313,314	\$52,410,510
Liabilities		
Amount borrowed from RUS and CFC	\$52,352,985	\$54,352,985
We paid back on Principal	(22,832,628)	(23,937,366)
Advance Payment to RUS	-	-
TOTAL LONG TERM DEBT	\$29,520,357	\$30,415,619
We Owe East River (Consumer Loans)	\$44,753	\$40,693
We Owe Consumers (Deposits)	33,783	36,990
Deferred Credits	411,187	440,393
Regulatory Liabilities	2,192,124	1,802,580
Accounts Payable & Other Liabilities	1,598,376	1,918,366
TOTAL OTHER LIABILITIES	\$4,280,223	\$4,239,022
TOTAL AMOUNT WE OWE	\$33,800,580	\$34,654,641
Patronage Capital & Other Equity	\$16,512,734	\$17,755,869
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$50,313,314	\$52,410,510

2025 Revenue Dollar



2025 Expense Dollar



2025 Financial Statements have not been audited.

Director Candidate Profiles

As of the January 28 magazine deadline, H-D Electric has received a completed petition for District 3 for the 2026 Director Elections. If more petitions are received on or before the February 27 petition deadline, a candidate profile will be posted on the H-D Electric website at www.h-delectric.coop.

District 3

Todd Moritz and his wife, Angela, have two children, Matthew, and Emily. Matthew is in his first year at LATC studying Ag Production and Emily is a junior at Great Plains Lutheran High School. The Moritz family lives East of Castlewood in Hamlin Township where they operate a farm/ranch.

Todd is a current board member at H-D



Todd Moritz
District 3

Electric, having just completed his 2nd term and most recently took on being the secretary. He is also the board secretary for the Sioux Rural Water System.

“We the members of H-D Electric are fortunate to have a strong cooperative with solid leadership and dedicated employees. I enjoy serving the members and look forward to continuing service.”

District 4

H-D Electric has not received any completed candidate petitions for District 4 on or before Jan. 28, 2026, the deadline date to be featured in the Cooperative Connections. If one or more petitions are received, on or before the Feb. 27, 2026, petition deadline, a candidate profile will be posted on the H-D Electric website at www.h-delectric.coop.

District 9

H-D Electric has not received any completed candidate petitions for District 9 on or before Jan. 28, 2026, the deadline date to be featured in the Cooperative Connections. If one or more petitions are received, on or before the Feb. 27, 2026, petition deadline, a candidate profile will be posted on the H-D Electric website at www.h-delectric.coop.

‘WHO POWERS YOU’ CONTEST NOMINATIONS NOW BEING ACCEPTED

Nominations are now open for “Who Powers You,” a contest being hosted by H-D Electric Cooperative and the region’s other Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives. The fifth annual “Who Powers You” contest seeks to highlight local figures and organizations who are making a difference in their communities.

No one succeeds alone, and that is especially true in rural areas, where friends and neighbors in tight-knit communities support, encourage and inspire each other. Those people don’t do it for the recognition, but they deserve to be recognized, and we’d like to help make that happen.

Member-owners, employees, organizations and residents who live, work or support communities within the service territory of the region’s Touchstone Energy Cooperatives are eligible to be nominated. Nominations will be accepted Feb. 1 through April 19, 2026. Three final winners will be selected by a panel of judges based on the impact that they have on the community. Weekly finalists will be announced and

featured on Keloland Living starting March 12, 2026, and the three contest winners will be announced on Keloland Living on May 28, 2026.

The Who Powers You contest grand prize winner will receive a \$3,000 prize. A second-place winner will receive \$1,500, and the contest’s third-place winner will receive \$500.

As an electric cooperative, our services extend beyond delivering safe, affordable and reliable power to our member-owners. “The Who Powers You contest highlights the commitment of our co-op to the communities and member-owners that we serve. We know that our co-op community is filled with people making a difference. Let’s celebrate them!”

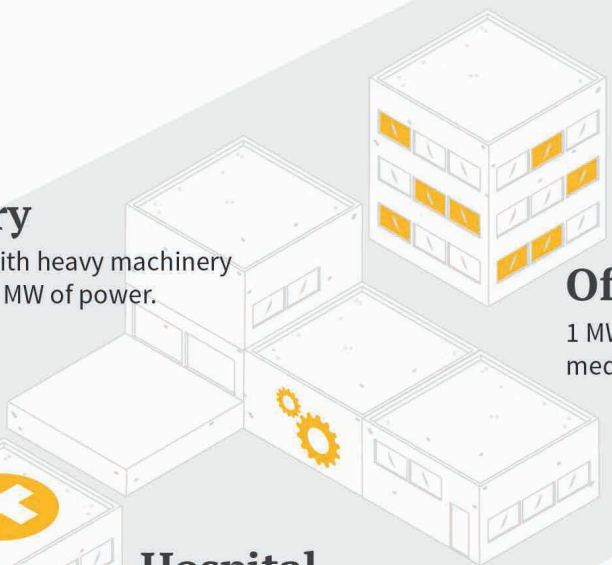
To learn more about the Who Powers You contest and to nominate someone in your community, visit WhoPowersYouContest.com.



What Can You Do With 1 Megawatt?

Factory

Facilities with heavy machinery can draw 1 MW of power.



Big Box Stores

1 MW will power a typical large retail store.

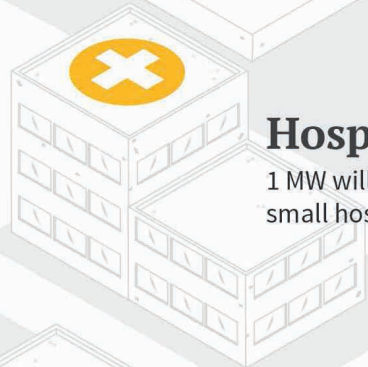


Office Building

1 MW can power several medium-sized office buildings.

Hospital

1 MW will power a small hospital.



Power Plant

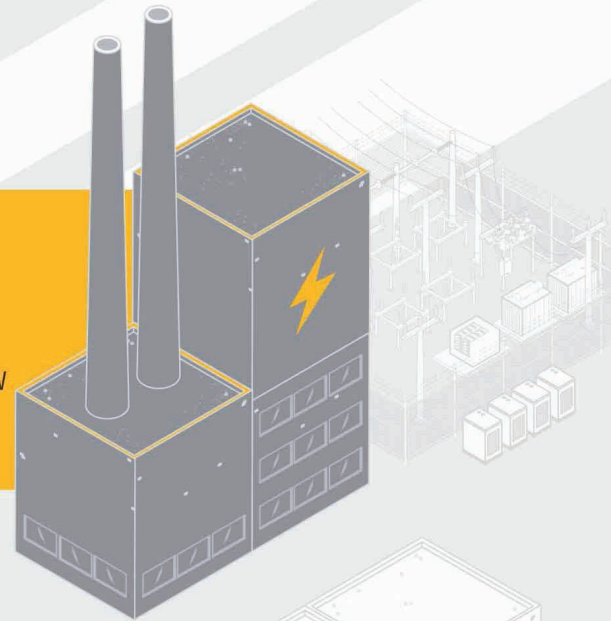
Typical outputs:

Coal: 500 MW to 1 GW

Gas: 50 MW to 1 GW

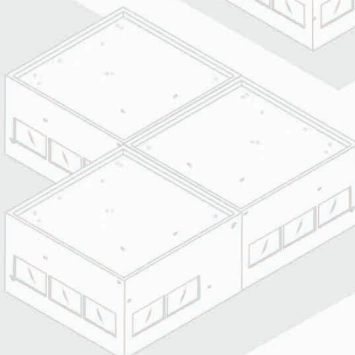
Nuclear: 500 MW to 1.5 GW

1 MW is 1 million watts of power.



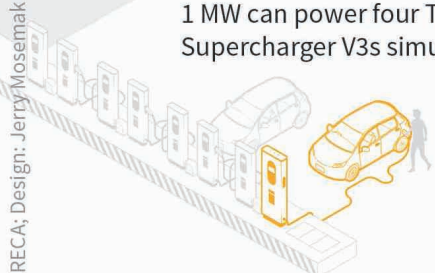
School

0.5 MW will power a medium-size public school.



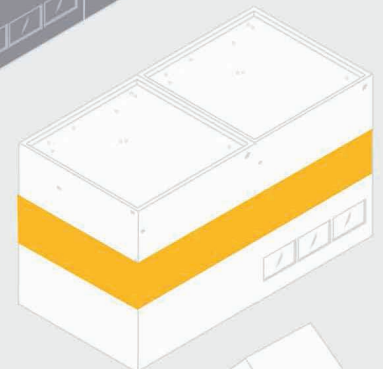
EV Charging

1 MW can power four Tesla Supercharger V3s simultaneously.



Data Center

1 MW will power one small data center.



Other facilities that can draw up to 1 MW of power:

- High-speed rail
- Large farms
- Wastewater treatment
- Stadiums

Residential

1 MW can power 750 to 1,000 homes.



WHAT IS A MEGAWATT?

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

If you're a regular Cooperative Connections reader, you've probably seen the term "megawatt" countless times. From articles about new power generation facilities, energy-saving tips, major infrastructure projects or energy policy, megawatts come up again and again. But what does a megawatt actually mean?

Watts, Kilowatts, Megawatts & More

A megawatt is a unit of power that measures the speed at which energy is generated or used at a given time. A megawatt is 1,000 kilowatts (KW), or 1 million watts.

You may recognize watts from the labels on everyday household items like light bulbs and phone chargers. These numbers indicate the amount of power the device draws while operating.

Here are the wattages for some common household items:

- LED Light bulb – 5-20 Watts
- Refrigerator – 350-800 Watts
- Desktop PC – 100-800 Watts
- LED Television: 30-300 Watts
- Microwave – 700-1,200 Watts
- Hair Dryer – 1,500-2,000 Watts
- Clothes Dryer – 1,800-5,000 Watts

At East River Electric Power Cooperative, the generation and transmission cooperative that sells power to member co-ops in Eastern South Dakota and Western Minnesota, Jennifer Gross uses a modified bicycle to help put power into perspective.

The bike is stationary – the pedals power a small generator wired to several different kinds of light bulbs. Gross, who is East River's education and outreach coordinator, says the "pedal power bike" demonstrates energy use in a tangible way and highlights the difference of energy-efficient products.

"It's actually quite difficult for the person pedaling to generate electricity consistently for more than a few minutes," Gross said.



"When they're pedaling to power the inefficient, old-school incandescent light bulbs, they can pedal for about one minute and not even keep it at 200 watts the whole time."

The electric grid experiences the most strain during peak demand times – the hours before and after work and school when most people are home doing laundry, watching TV etc.

In communities with hundreds to thousands of homes and businesses, electricity demand grows large enough to be measured in megawatts – the unit equal to 1,000 KW.

Your electric co-op's electricity is generated by Basin Electric Power Cooperative, which was formed in the 1960s by electric co-ops in the upper Midwest to generate electricity for co-ops. Serving over 3 million consumers across nine states, Basin generates power from its owned and leased assets, which include coal, natural gas, solar and wind. Basin's generation capability is so massive that it's measured in gigawatts – the unit equal to 1,000 MW.

Basin reports a maximum generating capacity of about 8,427 MW – or 8.427 GW. That figure reflects every available generation resource running at full output, including the oil-fueled peaking units used during times of high demand, along with purchases from the Western Area Power Administration and the Southwest Power Pool energy market.

On an even larger scale, the total installed generation capacity in the U.S. reaches the terawatt level, totalling about 1.3 TW, which is equal to 1,300 GW, 1.3 million MW or 1.3 billion KW – enough to simultaneously run about 1 billion hair dryers!

$$\begin{aligned}
 &1 \text{ Million Watts} \\
 &= \\
 &1,000 \text{ Kilowatts} \\
 &= \\
 &1 \text{ Megawatt} \\
 &= \\
 &1/1,000 \text{ Gigawatt}
 \end{aligned}$$

Your Co-op's Megawatts

As a co-op member, you're a part-owner of Basin Electric's generation resources. Here's a look at several of those facilities.



Antelope Valley Station
Beulah, N.D. • 1984
900 MW • Coal



Bison Gen. Station
Epping, N.D. • 2030
1,490 MW • Nat. Gas



Pioneer Gen. Station
Williston, N.D. • 2013
822 MW • Nat. Gas



Crow Lake Wind
White Lake, S.D. • 2011
172 MW • Wind



Wild Springs Solar
New Underwood, S.D.
2024 • 114 MW • Solar



MOVING A MOUNTAIN

Dakota Energy Cooperative raises line so the home can pass underneath.
Photo submitted by Dakota Energy Cooperative

Co-ops Assist Historic Home On Trek Through Rural South Dakota

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

Jeff and Sherri Johnson had been waiting for years to build their dream home on their McCook County land, but with ongoing supply chain challenges, it was becoming increasingly difficult – and expensive – to build on their rural acreage.

When Sherri saw the sale listing for a beautiful historic home in northwest South Dakota, she knew that it was more than a house; it was a dream come true.

"I had a dream a few years ago about a blue house moving, and I saw this house that had been on the market for a while in Lemmon," Johnson recalled. "I saw the house, and then I remembered the dream, because when God gives us a dream, it just goes deep in there and you remember."

She knew she had to act, and soon after, the Johnsons were the proud owners of the 1910 prairie-style home. All they had to do was get it to their land north of Montrose.

Sherri and Jeff contacted Milbank House Movers to figure out just how exactly to transport a 100-ton house over 400 miles.

"For a 37-foot tall loaded, 2 ½ story house, this was one of the longest moves we have done," explained Josh Wendland from Milbank House Movers. "We had to reach

out to all of the power companies along the moving route to get their input as to how far they felt we could travel each day with how many power lines we would have to deal with on any give segment of the route. It was determined that the total move of 421 miles should be segmented into seven travel days on the road ranging from 14 miles the first day up to 98 miles on the furthest traveled day."

At Moreau-Grand Electric, crews found the house was too tall to pass under their lines even if they raised them up with their bucket trucks.

"We had to totally just cut some of the lines, the structure was so tall we couldn't lift them up high enough," said JJ Martin, the co-op's member services director.

Martin said power outages were pretty minor in the service territory until the house reached the US 212/SD 63 junction west of Eagle Butte, where the Western Area Power Administration had to cut its transmission line taking the southern portion of Moreau-Grand Electric's service territory offline.

"Once the structure moved through, we put the lines back up, and the outage only took about an hour or two in total," Martin said. "After that, there were a few minor distribution outages until they finally

crossed the Cheyenne River."

At East River Electric, the generation and transmission cooperative serving co-ops in eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota, operations dispatch worked in advance to identify power line crossings along the route that would need to be lifted or disconnected.

"We have a lot of our line measurements for these situations, but if it's an odd route, we go and get new measurements of lines that we may not have measured – like if they're trying to go through an area to avoid bigger infrastructure or bridges," explained Clayton Tanner, East River's system operations superintendent. "Depending on how close the load will get to our infrastructure, we decide whether we have to have our guys on scene to watch it go through, or if we have to switch that line out and ground it because there's a chance of it arcing over. There have even been cases where we've dropped the line to the ground and had them drive over it."

The house crossed 12 of East River Electric's transmission lines; nine of the lines had to be de-energized, three of the lines were lifted, and crews watched the house pass underneath in two other locations.

Despite the home's unprecedented journey, spending a week trekking 421 miles across rural highways through eight electric cooperatives, the house arrived in one piece.

The house joins another historic building on Jeff and Sherri's land: a 1903 rural schoolhouse that sat in Turner County for much of its life before being moved to Minnehaha County to serve as a Methodist Church, and finally to McCook County in 2011 when Sherri and Jeff purchased the building to move it and restore it to its former turn-of-the-century glory.

When asked if she had ever thought she'd get this far along with the house moving project, Sherri nodded an affirmative yes.

"We already did it once with the church," she said. "I wished we could have been able to do this about 10 years ago, since it probably would have fit a little better. But you know what? Things work out exactly the way they are supposed to."

History of the House

Known as the Ole Quamman house, the 1910 prairie style foursquare house spent the last 115 years on 2nd Avenue in Lemmon. Ole Quamman was one of the first businessmen to arrive in Lemmon, which was founded just three years before in 1907. Quamman created the town's Petrified Wood Park & Museum in 1933 to showcase petrified wood from Perkins County. At its Lemmon address, the house featured two flowerpots decorated with petrified wood on its walkway – those traveled with the home to McCook County.

The South Dakota State Historical Society writes that the interior of the home is "lavishly styled" and features some of the latest design ideology of the time.

It was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2015, but lost its eligibility after the move. Sherri is applying to get the house back on the list for its architectural significance and level of preservation. She also plans to do the same with her historic church.

Sherri and Jeff Johnson with their new home on its foundation in McCook County. It sits on land that has been in Sherri's family for generations.

Photo by Jacob Boyko



The house crosses the Oahe Dam – officially entering east river South Dakota.
Submitted Photo



The house rounds one of the final corners. Southeastern Electric Cooperative was on the scene to connect power.
Submitted Photo



In the application to add the house to the National Register of Historic Places, the South Dakota State Historical Society writes that the interior of the home has an "elegant Arts and Crafts design."
Submitted Photo

FROM SHERRI'S JOURNAL

The only place I wanted a picture of the house moving along its 400-mile journey was at the Missouri River crossing. I was plenty early on the morning of Nov. 17, 2025, when I parked my car at Oahe Dam Visitor Center. It was cold, windy, and still dark outside as I aimed my headlights at the Oahe Mission School and Chapel historical marker. I started reading the sign, but abruptly stopped when I read '...at Bogue...' Bogue was the maiden name of my 3x great grandma. Not only was I reading a sign about a building being moved as I waited for my historic house to move across the dam, but the name on the sign perfectly connected to a name in my ancestry. Daylight eventually dawned, the clouds broke, and sunlight lit up the house as it crossed the river. I had planned a picture, but God did so much more that morning. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than we all ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us. (Ephesians 3:20)






MARCH 7
Ag Day
 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
 Washington Pavilion
 Sioux Falls, SD
 605-367-6000

Washington Pavilion Photo

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.

Please bring this page with you

Attention H-D Electric Cooperative Members:



MARK YOUR CALENDAR!
Attend H-D Electric's Annual Meeting
 Tuesday, March 24, 2026
6:30 p.m. Registration
7 p.m. Meeting Begins

Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Meeting Location:
Hamlin Education Center
 Hayti, SD

Voter Registration Form

To be used only by:
 Churches, Halls, Public Entities
 Corporations or Partnerships.
 Please present this form to receive a ballot.

REGISTRATION CARD

(Name of Organization)

delegate and appoints:

(Name of Voting Delegate)

as the person authorized to vote on behalf of the above entity at the 2026 annual meeting of H-D Electric Cooperative, Inc.

(Signature of Member)

(Signature of Officer)

MARCH 5
SD Jazz Festival
 7:30 p.m.
 Johnson Fine Arts Center
 Aberdeen, SD

MARCH 14
St. Uhro Finnish Festival
 11 a.m. Main Street Parade
 12 p.m. Community Ctr. Lunch
 Lake Norden, SD
 605-881-1758

MARCH 14
SNOLF (Snow Golf) Tournament
 Webster, SD
 Contact: Buster's Resort
 605-345-2787

MARCH 20-22, 27-29
Mighty Corson Art Players
 March 20-21, 27-28: 7:30 p.m.
 March 22, 29: 2:30 p.m.
 Corson Playhouse
 Corson, SD
 www.mightycorson.com

MARCH 28
Coteau Prairie Masters
Gardeners Ready, Set, Grow
 9 a.m.-12 p.m.
 Codington Cty. Extension Cplx.
 Watertown, SD

APRIL 3
Bachelors of Broadway:
Gentlemen of the Theatre
 7 p.m.
 Johnson Fine Arts Center
 Aberdeen, SD

APRIL 9-11
Annual Schmeckfest
 German Heritage Celebration
 Freeman, SD
 605-925-4237
 www.schmeckfest.com

APRIL 18
Brookings Quilt Show XII
 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
 Admission: \$10
 Dakota Bank Center
 Brookings, SD
 605-690-3246

Note: We publish contact information as provided. If no phone number is given, none will be listed. Please call ahead to verify the event is still being held.