



Cooperative Connections

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COVID Fight**

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Make Safety Priority One When Doing Home Improvement and Repair Projects

More people are doing their own remodeling, repairs, maintenance, landscaping and construction projects inside and outside the home. Safe Electricity urges all do-it-yourselfers to take precautions, especially when working around electrical equipment and overhead power lines.

Make sure outdoor outlets have a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI). Use a portable GFCI if your outdoor outlets don't have them. It's also a good idea to have GFCIs professionally installed in wet areas of the home, such as the kitchen, bath, and laundry.

Safety tips to remember include:

- Look up and around you. Always know of the location of power lines, particularly when using long metal tools, like ladders, pool skimmers and pruning poles, or when installing rooftop antennas and satellite dishes or doing roof repair work.
- Be especially careful when working near power lines attached to your house. Keep equipment and yourself at least 10 feet from lines. Never trim trees near power lines — leave that to the professionals. Never use water or blower extensions to clean gutters near electric lines. Contact a professional maintenance contractor.
- If your projects include digging, like building a deck or planting a tree, call the national underground utility locator at 8-1-1 before you begin. Never assume the location or depth of underground utility lines. This service is free, prevents the inconvenience of having utilities interrupted and can help you avoid serious injury.
- Always check the condition of cords and power tools before using them. Repair or replace worn or damaged cords and tools.
- Electricity + water = danger. If it's raining or the ground is wet, don't use electric power or yard tools. Never use electrical appliances or touch circuit breakers or fuses when you're wet or standing in water. Keep electric equipment at least 10 feet from wet areas.
- Make certain home electrical systems and wiring are adequate to support increased electric demands of new electric appliances, home additions or remodeling projects. An older home may be inadequately wired for today's electricity consumption, putting your family at risk for fire and electrical shock. Have a professional replace worn and outdated circuitry and add outlets for appliances and electronics – this is not a job for casual do-it-yourselfers!

Lacreek Electric Annual Meeting Postponed

In response to COVID-19, Lacreek Electric Association, Inc., has begun to take the recommended steps to ensure the safety of our members and our employees. Based on recommendations from the Center for Disease Control, your board of directors has made a decision to postpone the 2020 annual meeting until a later date.

We appreciate your understanding regarding this matter.



Find Your Account Number:

It's Worth \$20!

A member's account number has been hidden somewhere in this newsletter. If you find your account number, call the office before May 4 and you will receive a **\$20 credit** on your next month's billing.

Check your mail!



The capital credit checks will be mailed out to the members the first part of April and should be received before April 23.

Lacreek Electric

Cooperative Connections

(USPS No. 018-912)

Board of Directors

Clarence Allen – President
 Wade Risse – Vice President
 Brent Ireland – Secretary
 Troy Kuxhaus – Treasurer
 Melvin Cummings – Clifford Lafferty
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 Tom Schlack – Marion Schultz
 Jerry Sharp – Connie Whirlwind
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 Sherry Bakley –
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 Finance and Benefits Manager
 Mike Pisha – Operations Manager
 Stacey Robinson – Member Service
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 Lisa Jensen –
 Member Service Representative
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 Member Service Representative

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 Journeyman Linemen:
 Dane Claussen – Ryan Pettit
 Aaron Risse – Lonny Lesmeister –
 Jordon Bakley – Garrett Metzinger
 Apprentice Linemen:
 Tyler Brown – Alex Christensen –
 Brad Hahn – Trace Scott
 Journeyman Electrician: Roy Guptill
 Warehouse Man: Cody Larson
 Maintenance Man: Justin Smokov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

This publication is mailed the 15th of the month prior to the issue date. Layout is at least three weeks prior to mailing. LACREEK ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is published monthly by Lacreek Electric Association, Inc., PO Box 220, Martin, SD 57551 for its members. Families subscribe to Lacreek Electric Cooperative Connections as part of their electric cooperative membership.

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 Martin, SD and at additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Lacreek Electric Cooperative Connections, PO Box 220, Martin, SD 57551; telephone (605) 685-6581; fax (605) 685-6957

LEA and COVID-19



Josh Fanning

General Manager

Dear Members,

As we all deal with the new realities brought on by the coronavirus, I want to assure you that your local electric cooperative is here to help you. We have always had an Emergency Plan that has served us well in a variety of circumstances, from ice storms to tornadoes to flash floods. Early in this crisis, our staff updated that plan with a special emphasis on ensuring we can continue to provide the reliable electric service you have come to expect from your electric cooperative.

So far, that is exactly what has happened. We know that after a sufficient supply of food and water, electricity is the No. 1 thing you need to maintain some sense of normalcy as we hunker down in our homes. With that in mind, keeping the power flowing is Job No. 1 for everyone involved in maintaining the electric cooperative system.

That starts with your cooperative, Lacreek Electric, which has taken extreme measures to ensure its workforce is healthy. We want to ensure you, the member are important to the cooperative and that our service remains the same.

We thought you might want to know some of the steps we have taken in order to keep your power flowing. We've closed our front lobby to prevent the spread of germs; however, our front entry way remains open to put your payment in the drop box or pay by credit card. We encourage our members to paying online at www.lacreek.com, by Smart Hub (download the app with either your iPhone or Android phone), by calling toll free 1-855-385-9980 or by just mailing the payment via USPS. With any of these options you will need to include your Lacreek account number.

We've divided departments into shifts so that they can practice social distancing even when in the office. If you call, the phones will be answered as always.

We have separated our line crews from other employees and even from each other to limit possible spread of the virus. New routines are in place for contractors working on our system in order to keep them away from employees.

So far, it is working well and everyone has adapted to the new norm. Nothing brings out the best in our employees better than a crisis situation. It's kind of like gold that has been tested in fire...stronger and more beautiful!

Our focus here is on doing our part to keep your life as normal as possible through this situation and beyond. The cooperative way of doing business has brought us this far, and the cooperative way will help us through this crisis.

All the best to everyone. Stay healthy, stay home and we will get through this together the cooperative way!

We continue to serve you, the member.

Lacreek Electric's front entryway remains open to serve our members in light of COVID-19; however, the front lobby is closed. You can still pay your bill in our front entryway by dropping your payment into our drop box or by credit card. We do recommend paying your bill via Smart Hub (download the app with either your iPhone or Android phone), online at www.lacreek.com or by calling toll free 1-855-385-9980; which all 3 options are available 24/7. With these 3 options, you will need your Lacreek account number to make a payment.

If you have any questions, please call us at 605-685-6581.

10 Steps to Avoid Scams

There are thousands of new scams every year and you can't keep up with all of them (we know, we try!). But if you can just remember these 10 things, you can avoid most scams and help protect yourself and your family.

- 1) Never send money to someone you have never met face-to-face.** Seriously, just don't ever do it. And really, really don't do it if they ask you to use wire transfer, a prepaid debit card or a gift card (those cannot be traced and are as good as cash).
- 2) Don't click on links or open attachments in unsolicited email.** Links can download malware onto your computer and/or steal your identity. Be cautious even with email that looks familiar; it could be fake.
- 3) Don't believe everything you see.** Scammers are great at mimicking official seals, fonts and other details. Just because a website or email looks official does not mean that it is. Even Caller ID can be faked.
- 4) Don't buy online unless the transaction is secure.** Make sure the website has "https" in the URL (the extra s is for "secure") and a small lock icon on the address bar. Even then, the site could be shady. Check out the company first at BBB.org. Read reviews about the quality of the merchandise and make sure you are not buying cheap and/or counterfeit goods.
- 5) Be extremely cautious when dealing with anyone you've met online.** Scammers use dating websites, Craigslist, social media and many other sites to reach potential targets. They can quickly feel like a friend or even a romantic partner, but that is part of the con to get you to trust them.
- 6) Never share personally identifiable information with someone who has contacted you unsolicited, whether it's over the phone, by email, on social media, even at your front door.** This includes banking and credit card information, your birthdate and Social Security/Social Insurance numbers.
- 7) Don't be pressured to act immediately.** Scammers typically try to make you think something is scarce or a limited time offer. They want to push you into action before you have time to think or to discuss it with a family member, friend or financial advisor. High-pressure sales tactics are also used by some legitimate businesses, but it's never a good idea to make an important decision quickly.
- 8) Use secure, traceable transactions when making payments for goods, services, taxes and debts.** Do not pay by wire transfer, prepaid money card, gift card or other non-traditional payment method. Say no to cash-only deals, high pressure sales tactics, high upfront payments, overpayments and handshake deals without a contract.
- 9) Whenever possible, work with local businesses that have proper identification, licensing and insurance, especially contractors who will be coming into your home or anyone dealing with your money or sensitive information.** Check them out at BBB.org to see what other consumers have experienced.
- 10) Be cautious about what you share on social media and consider only connecting with people you already know.** Be sure to use privacy settings on all social media and online accounts. Imposters often get information about their targets from their online interactions and can make themselves sound like a friend or family member because they know so much about you.

Source: www.bbb.org



Utility service has never been more important.

If you're planning landscaping or any other digging projects, contact 811 first – the kids telelearning and adults telecommuting will thank you.

Call 811 or go to your state 811 center's website before digging.

Call811.com/811-your-state




Stay safe during social distancing by calling 811 before starting any new project, so you can stay connected to the internet and utility services you rely on.

Call 811 or go to your state 811 center's website before digging.

Call811.com/811-your-state



KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



"Do not play around electrical boxes."

Kayla Engelbrecht, 9 years old

Kayla is the grand-daughter of Alan and JoAnn Engelbrecht, Brandon, S.D. They are members of Sioux Valley Energy, Colman, S.D.

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

Comforting Casseroles

Chicken-Broccoli-Rice Casserole

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 lb. chicken tenders or boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1-inch strips | 2 tsp. onion powder |
| 1 cup long grain rice | 1-1/2 tsp. rosemary leaves, crushed |
| 1-1/2 cups Kitchen Basics® Original Chicken Stock | 1/2 tsp. pepper |
| 1 cup milk | 1/2 tsp. salt |
| 2 tsp. garlic powder | 2 cups fresh or frozen broccoli florets |
| | 1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese |

Spread chicken and rice in greased 2-quart baking dish. Mix stock, milk and seasonings in medium bowl with wire whisk until well blended. Slowly pour over chicken and rice. Cover with foil. Bake at 400°F. for 45 minutes. Remove foil. Stir in broccoli. Sprinkle with cheese. Bake, uncovered, 15 minutes longer or until rice has absorbed all the liquid and broccoli is tender. Makes 6 (1 cup) servings.

Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 317, Total Fat 9g, Cholesterol 69mg, Sodium 492mg, Carbohydrates 31g, Fiber 1g, Protein 28g

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Ham and Rye Casserole

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1 cup chopped onion | 1 (8 oz) pkg. American cheese, cubed |
| 1/2 cup chopped celery | 2-1/2 cups milk |
| 1/4 cup butter | 3 eggs |
| 4 cups cubed rye bread | 1-1/2 tsp. prepared mustard |
| 1 (8 oz.) pkg. ham, cut into strips or may use cubed ham | Salt and pepper, to taste |

In a saucepan, saute onion and celery in butter until tender. In a 2-quart buttered baking dish, combine onion, celery, bread, ham and half the cheese. In a bowl, beat together milk, eggs, mustard, salt and pepper until well blended. Pour over all; top with remaining cheese. Bake at 350°F. for 1 hour or until golden brown and puffed.

Martha Mehlhaff, Aberdeen, SD

Corn Casserole

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 cup broken spaghetti, uncooked | 1/2 cup milk |
| 1 can cream-style corn | 1 can whole kernel corn |
| 1 cup cubed processed cheese | Diced onions, optional |
| | Salt and pepper to taste |

Combine all ingredients in a 1.5-quart casserole. Bake at 350°F. for 1 hour, stirring after the first 30 minutes.

Emily Luikens, Tea, SD

Cheesy Potato Beef Bake

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 1 lb. ground beef | 2 tsp. butter |
| 2 (4 oz. each) cans mushroom stems and pieces, drained | 1 tsp. salt |
| 2 (5-1/4 oz. each) pkgs. au gratin potatoes | 1/2 tsp. seasoned salt |
| 4 cups boiling water | 1/2 tsp. pepper |
| 1-1/3 cups milk | 1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese |

In a skillet over medium heat, cook beef until no longer pink; drain. Place in a greased 9x13-inch baking pan. Top with mushrooms. Combine potatoes and contents of sauce mix packets, water, milk, butter, salt, seasoned salt and pepper. Pour over beef and mushrooms. Cover and bake at 400°F. for 30 minutes or until heated through. Sprinkle with cheese. Bake, uncovered, for 5 minutes longer or until cheese is melted. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.

Stephanie Fossum, Hudson, SD

Please send your favorite dairy, dessert or vegetarian 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 2020. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

Five Steps

to a Clear Decision on New Windows



Pat Keegan

Collaborative Efficiency

Sometimes home improvement projects can grow into something bigger.

This column was co-written by Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen of Collaborative Efficiency.

For more information on choosing windows, please visit: www.collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips.

Dear Pat and Brad: Thanks for answering my question last month about replacing older windows. Clearly there are benefits in addition to energy savings, so we've decided to go ahead with replacing our windows. Can you offer any tips on deciding which new windows to purchase? – Grace

Dear Grace: I'm glad to hear you're thinking this through. Here are five tips I'll offer as you think about the types of new windows you should purchase.

Think beyond windows. Sometimes home improvement projects can grow into something bigger. And that's not necessarily a bad thing. There are advantages to replacing windows and siding at the same time, for example. You could consider adding rigid foam insulation to the exterior wall before installing siding. You could also pump some additional insulation into the wall cavities. These measures will reduce heat loss through the wall and make your home more comfortable. Another advantage of replacing siding as you replace windows is to make it easier to install flashing around the window. Flashing is what prevents water from making its way into the wall from the outside.

- 1) **Are you replacing doors, too?** Maybe you'd like to reduce or increase the size of one or more windows. A larger window can let in more light and transform a room. A smaller window that lets in less sunshine can make a room less likely to overheat in the summer. Remember that high-efficiency windows are less efficient than a well-insulated wall, so increasing or decreasing window area can impact heating and cooling costs.
- 2) **What is your type?** Do you want fixed-pane units that don't open at all? Or casement windows that open with a crank? How about sliders or double-hung windows that open from the top and bottom? Maybe awning-style options that open out from the bottom? A bay window can add extra space and light. There are so many options that can fit many different situations. I recommend a thorough search online, or visit a local window store to see examples of these styles.
- 3) **Frame the issues.** If the number of styles wasn't bewildering enough, now you get to choose the frame and sash (the inner frame that holds the glass). Vinyl is the least expensive and most common option; it can also be quite energy efficient and does not require painting. Vinyl frames vary greatly in quality and the less expensive models may be susceptible to warping. Aluminum is an affordable option, but if the frames don't have a thermal break, they can lose heat and cause condensation. Wood windows offer high quality – but the biggest drawbacks are the price and maintenance requirements. There are wood options with vinyl cladding that never need painting. Fiberglass and composite windows are a newer option that fall between vinyl and wood in quality and price.

Also, you may be able to save money by not doing a full window replacement. If your existing frames and sills are free of rot and in good condition and you aren't looking to make any alterations to the walls around them, you could look into replacing the glass and keeping the existing frames.

- 4) **Glass assemblies.** Single-pane windows no longer meet building codes. Your two choices are double- and triple-pane. An add-on that is often well worth the price is a low-E coating that reflects heat back into the room. You can also boost energy efficiency with windows that have either Argon or CO₂ gas between the panes.
- 5) **Compare the numbers.** Fortunately, there's an easy way to compare the efficiency of windows. Almost all windows are independently tested and rated by the National Fenestration Rating Council (NFRC). The most important number on the NFRC label is the U-factor. The lower the U-factor, the more efficient the window is. It's best if the window has an ENERGY STAR® label, but the NFRC label will tell you which ENERGY STAR® window is more efficient.

I hope these tips help in the decision of choosing your new windows. Remember, you'll have to live with them for several years, so be sure to do your research and consider all options. And because new window installation is a complicated process, it's best to have them installed by a qualified professional with solid references.

WITC receives 2020 Climate Leadership Award

The Wyoming Integrated Test Center (ITC) was awarded an 'Innovative Partnership Certificate' at the 2020 Climate Leadership Awards in Detroit, Mich., recognizing the pioneering initiative that has brought together private and public leaders to drive the next generation of clean energy technology in the heart of coal country.



Awardees are honored for exemplary corporate, organizational and individual leadership in reducing carbon pollution and addressing climate

change in their operations and strategies.

The ITC is located at Basin Electric's Dry Fork Station, a coal-based power plant located near Gillette. The plant processes sub-bituminous coal from the Western Fuels' Dry Fork Mine. The ITC provides space for researchers to test, in a real-life setting, carbon capture, utilization and sequestration technologies.

"Basin Electric supports the ITC because our cooperative believes in an all of the above energy generation strategy, utilizing multiple sources of fuel to serve our members. This critical research could help unlock a means to continue using an abundant and reliable fuel source while reducing our carbon footprint," said Paul Sukut, Basin Electric CEO and general manager. "It's exciting to see the ITC being recognized for their important research that will not only be a benefit to our members, but also the communities in which we live."

Another initiative that Basin Electric supports is CarbonSAFE in both North Dakota and Wyoming. These projects are focused on investigating the feasibility of practical, secure and permanent geologic storage of carbon dioxide emissions from coal-based electricity generation. Basin Electric provided letters of commitment for the Wyoming project, outlining up to \$1.5 million in cash and/or in-kind services to support that work.

More information about the Climate Leadership Award winners is available at <https://www.climateleadershipconference.org/awards/>

Self-Care and Resilience Strategies

It is essential to take care of yourself. Just as you would tend to an acute physical injury by seeking support, alleviating symptoms of pain and taking steps to ensure recovery, the same is true for an emotional or psychological challenge or obstacle. And, just as the human body is often ingenious in the way it can mend itself, so too the mind and heart can be incredibly resilient.

Building and Engaging Resilience

Below are some tips for taking care of yourself and engaging your resilience. Please feel free to use those ideas that you find most useful and continue to engage your own coping strategies.

■ Physical self-care

- Get enough sleep
- Get regular physical activity
- Eat regular, well-balanced meals
- Reduce alcohol and caffeine consumption
- Release tension in healthy ways
- Take deep breaths
- Balance work, play and rest
- Limit or eliminate exposure to media

■ Emotional self-care

- Know your vulnerabilities
- Get help early on if you are feeling overwhelmed
- Use relaxation skills that work best for you
- Listen to music that soothes you
- Re-establish a routine, if possible
- Engage socially to avoid feeling isolated
- Set limits, if necessary, when others are too demanding of your time or energy (Give yourself time to heal and renew.)

■ Social self-care

- Be aware of withdrawal and isolation
- Get nurturance/care from loved ones
- Use friends and family and community for support
- See how work can offer support
- Seek out others for social activities
- Recognize that humor can be a useful respite
- Make an effort to have fun

■ Spiritual self-care

- Use religious and/or spiritual resources and communities
- Read inspirational works
- Pray
- Practice gratitude
- Meditate
- Connect with nature
- Find creative ways to express yourself (i.e., drawing, painting, writing, etc.)

■ Remember to:

- Recognize signs of stress and look after yourself
- Identify what you can and cannot change
- Accept your limitations
- Keep expectations realistic
- Make deliberate plans to care for yourself
- Allow others to give to you
- Find a reason to smile or laugh every day

Checklist for Resilience:

■ Ask Yourself These Questions

- What are my strengths?
- What has helped me endure previous difficult times?
- What healthy things can I do to soothe myself when I'm faced with uncertainty?
- Is there something I can do to influence what will happen next? If so, what?
- What are my resources to increase my resilience?
- How can I ask for what I need?

https://doh.sd.gov/documents/COVID19/Strategies4Self-Care_Resilience.pdf



A DEADLY MISTAKE

Family Shares Grief to Teach Others

Shayla Ebsen

sebsen@eastriver.coop

June 7, 2016, is a day that will be forever imprinted in Greg McCann's mind. It began as a normal June day on his farm in southeastern South Dakota. The crops had been planted and, like every year in June, they were needing to be sprayed. Greg's 35-year-old son, Grant, helped out on the farm and planned to spray the fields that day.

"He went and got the sprayer filled and ready. After he got the sprayer ready and conditions were right, well, then, he went to spray," said Greg. "He called me to see if I could move an irrigator for him and that was the last time I talked to him. He entered the field and the driveway to the field went under a power line."

Unfortunately, Grant didn't drive far enough into the field. He stopped at an angle close to the power lines. As he began unfolding the 90-foot sprayer booms, they touched the energized power line, which instantly electrified the tractor.

"He tried to call Wayne, the young man who runs my farm, but he wasn't able to get through because there was so much static, so we don't know what happened after that," said Greg.

The sprayer was caught in a Bon Homme Yankton Electric Cooperative distribution power line. Co-op Electrician Kevin Meyer was just a few miles away when he and his apprentice received an outage call.

"A radio call came across that another neighbor farmer was out of power as it started out as an individual outage," said Meyer. "We packed up our tools and stuff and left the yard. As we were leaving the yard, I received another call from a supervisor saying that we got a call that there's a



Thirty-five-year-old Grant McCann was involved in a fatal accident involving a sprayer and a power line in 2016.

**There's
no fix.
There's no
second
chances."**

sprayer that looks like it might have made contact with a line that's probably the first place to go and it's looking like we have more consumers out."

Meyer and his apprentice didn't know what they might discover but knew they had to move fast.

"As we're rolling up on scene, one neighbor was there sitting on the road on his four-wheeler and he just said someone is down in front of the tractor," said Meyer. "It was very tough to see other than you could see someone was there but didn't know who it was and at that particular time, I knew that it could be Greg, Grant or my cousin, Wayne. So, in all that, you're mentally preparing yourself for what you're about to discover."

What they would discover is that Grant made a mistake that would end his life. Rather than staying in the cab and waiting for help, he had stepped out of the sprayer.

"The consequences of that mistake took my only son," said Greg. "He was my friend, my partner, my confidant. Now every day I remember that terrible morning and I see Grant lying dead on the ground. There's no fix. There's no second chances."

No one can know what was going through Grant's head at the moment he left the cab. But Greg wants others to learn from that mistake, so it doesn't happen to anyone else.

"If Grant would've stayed in the tractor and not touched anything, I think he'd be here today. But he didn't," said Greg. "I don't want anyone to have to experience the sadness and the emptiness that I and Grant's family and friends are experiencing and will be experiencing for a long, long time."

The consequences of that mistake took my only son.

Do you know what to do if a vehicle you're in contacts a power line? First, stay in the vehicle and call 911 for help. If you must exit the vehicle because of a fire, tuck your arms across your body and jump clear of any wires with your feet together, never touching the equipment and ground at the same time. Then shuffle or hop at least 40 feet away with your feet together. Stay away

from the equipment until the authorities tell you it is safe.

"People get in a hurry and they don't regard the risk as a risk and one mistake and it's too late," said Greg. "The consequences are so grim and terrible, that there's no good reason not to be really careful and be aware of where you're at and the machinery you're using and where it's located. Once it's done, there's no turning back."

With the spread of COVID-19 into our region as well as the pandemic's financial impacts, everyone has a lot on their mind this year. Letting distractions take your mind away from work in the fields significantly increases the likelihood of farming accidents. Minimize distractions and stay focused in the fields. If you notice your mind wandering at any point, bring it back to the task at hand.

As we enter this year's planting and spraying seasons, remain aware of where electrical equipment is located when you're working on the farm and remember the steps to take if your equipment contacts a power line. You could save your life, or the life of someone you love. Visit poweringyoursafety.com to learn more.



Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives



PoweringYourSafety.com

KNOW WHAT TO DO IF YOU HIT A POWER LINE

STAY PUT



If your equipment contacts a power line, stay inside.
DO NOT EXIT. Call 911.

JUMP CLEAR



If you must exit due to a fire, jump from the equipment so that no part of your body touches the equipment and ground at the same time. Hop or shuffle with your feet together at least 40 feet away.

STAY AWAY



When you are clear of the area, call for help and keep others away. **DO NOT** approach your vehicle again until utility crews and emergency responders tell you it is safe.

BOARD ROOM

February 2020 Board Meeting

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Lacreek Electric Association, Inc. was held in the office of the Cooperative, located in the Town of Martin, South Dakota, Feb. 19, 2020, beginning at 1 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by President Allen and the following directors were present: Tom Schlack, Brent Ireland, Wade Risse, Connie Whirlwind Horse, Scott Larson, Marion Schultz, Troy Kuxhaus, Neal Livermont and Donovan Young Man. Absent were Jerry Sharp, Melvin Cummings and Clifford Lafferty. Also present were General Manager Josh Fanning, Operations Manager Mike Pisha, Finance & Benefits Manager Anna Haynes, Work Order and Billing Manager Sherry Bakley and Member Services Representative Manager Stacey Robinson.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Allen.

A motion was made, seconded and carried to have Member Service Representative Manager Stacey Robinson record the board minutes.

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the January 2020 minutes.

There were no additions to the agenda.

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the Operating Report for

December that was presented by Finance & Benefits Manager Anna Haynes.

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the checks and disbursements for January. The March Check Audit Committee will be (Connie "chairman", Donovan and Jerry).

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the January Analysis of Investments that was presented by Finance & Benefits Manager Anna Haynes

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the list of new members, attached hereto.

Sherry reported on PrePay which will be available to the members in April.

Member Services Representative Manager Stacey Robinson gave an update on the annual meeting and provided information on the director courses.

Mike reported that they will be retiring the distribution from the transmission line east of Long Valley to Norris which will begin this week; that a contractor has been hired to retire the Wanblee East Circuit 3 Phase Line; continuing work on the reject pole change outs and OCR maintenance; that the installation of the Electronic Breakers at the Vetal Sub is completed; on truck repairs; that Altec will start Aerial Unit

inspections on Monday; advertising for two, 1,000-hour summer help and about personal.

The safety report was presented by Mike. Wade, Marion and Tom reported on the Electric Co-op Day at the Capitol they attended.

Josh reported on purchasing; on Educating Educators; on insurance rates; about solar wells; on a new granary in our territory; about load control; on South Dakota Bills SB 227 and HB 126 and about meetings attended or will attend. 1301700101

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve member's account write offs.

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the resolution to retire capital credits.

Discussion was held on the Rushmore Electric Power Cooperative Annual Meeting with Donovan Young Man being the delegate and Clarence Allen being the alternate. Marion, Troy and Josh also plan to attend.

Discussion was held on scholarships.

Reviewed directors up for Election at the 2020 Annual Meeting.

Next Board Meeting – March 17, 2020 at 1 p.m.

Farm Electrical Safety

Preparation and Awareness are Key

Farming is among the more dangerous occupations for several reasons, including potential for encounters with electrical hazards. Before taking to the fields, the Safe Electricity program urges farm workers to be aware of overhead power lines and to keep equipment and extensions far away from them.



Safe Electricity encourages farm managers to share this information with their families and workers to keep them safe from electrical accidents.

- Start each morning by planning your day's work. Know what jobs will happen near power lines and have a plan to keep the assigned workers safe.
- Keep yourself and equipment at least 10 feet away from power lines in all directions, at all times. Use a spotter when moving tall equipment and loads.
- Use care when raising augers or the bed of a grain truck. It can be difficult to estimate distance, and sometimes, a power line is closer than it looks. Use a spotter to make certain you stay far away from power lines.
- Always lower equipment extensions, portable augers or elevators to their lowest possible level, under 14 feet, before moving or transporting them. Wind, uneven ground, shifting weight or other conditions can cause you to lose control of equipment and make contact with power lines.
- Be aware of increased height when loading and transporting larger modern tractors with higher antennas.
- Never attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path. If power lines near your property have sagged over time, call your utility to repair them.
- Don't use metal poles when breaking up bridged grain inside and around bins.
- As in any outdoor work, be careful not to raise any equipment, such as ladders, poles or rods, into power lines. Remember, non-metallic materials, such as lumber, tree limbs, tires, ropes and hay, will conduct electricity, depending on dampness and dust and dirt contamination.
- Use qualified electricians for work on drying equipment and other farm electrical systems.
- If you are on equipment that contacts a power line, do not exit the equipment. When you step off the equipment, you become the electricity's path to ground and receive a potentially fatal shock. Wait until utility workers have de-energized the line and confirmed it is safe for you to exit the vehicle. If the vehicle is on fire and you must exit, jump clear of the vehicle with both feet together. Hop as far from the vehicle as you can with your feet together. Keep your feet together to prevent current flow through your body, which could be deadly.
- Electrical work around the farm can also pose hazards. Often, the need for an electrical repair comes when a farmer has been working long hours and is fatigued. At such times, it's best to step back and wait until you've rested.

Read Your Heat Meter

April is the last month to read your heat meter to receive credit for this heat season!



Please read your heat meter to receive your heat credit during the heat season which is October through April.

If you would like to have an office-read heat meter, please contact our office at 605-685-6581.

A \$25 charge is required to install this type of meter.

IN CASE OF AN OUTAGE

1ST: Check the fuses or breakers in your home or building in which you do not have power.

2ND: Check meter for display and readings. If the meter is blank, you are probably experiencing an outage and need to call our office immediately.

3RD: If your meter has a display, check your breaker below your meter on the yard pole.

4TH: Please contact your neighbor to see if they are experiencing a power outage because it would be helpful to know if other members in the area are also out of power.

5TH: Make sure you have the name the bill is in, the meter number and/or the account number.

6TH: Call Lacreek Electric at 605-685-6581 or if you are calling long distance dial 1-800-655-9324.

**Office Hours: 7 a.m.-4:30 p.m. MDT •
Open over noon hour.
Closed Saturday, Sunday and
holidays**



3M ABERDEEN PLAYING CRITICAL ROLE IN COVID-19 RESPONSE

Plant Is Producing Millions of N95 Respirators

Ben Dunsmoor

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Standing outside the 430,000-square-foot 3M plant in Aberdeen, S.D., you can hear the whirl of productivity. The Aberdeen plant makes N95 masks which have been one of the most crucial pieces of personal protective equipment for frontline personnel responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Andrew Rehder, the manager of the 3M Aberdeen plant, told *Bloomberg Businessweek*, in a story published in March, that the Aberdeen plant has been operating at ‘surge capacity’ since the end of January.

“I just think as we’ve continued to see things spread across the world, it’s put more responsibility on us to make sure that every day and every minute we’re making every mask we can,” Rehder told Bloomberg.

It has also put a responsibility on Northern Electric Cooperative to ensure the 3M plant has a consistent and reliable source of power. Northern Electric has served the plant with electricity since it was constructed in 1974.



N95 respirators are loaded onto a jet at the Aberdeen Regional Airport in April. The masks produced at the 3M Aberdeen plant are being shipped directly to areas of the country that need them the most. (Photo Courtesy: 3M Twitter account / twitter.com/3M)

“We know the 3M plant in Aberdeen is playing a critical role in the response to this global pandemic,” Northern Electric Cooperative CEO/General Manager Char Hager said. “Northern Electric also recognizes that our co-op plays a crucial role in supplying 3M with reliable electricity and we take that responsibility seriously.”

The masks being produced in Aberdeen are being shipped across the country just as fast as they are being manufactured. A jet has been sitting at the Aberdeen Regional Airport during April to transport N95 respirators from the Aberdeen plant directly to areas of the country that need them most.

3M CEO Mike Roman said in a blog post on the company’s website that 500,000 masks were shipped from the Aberdeen plant at the end of March to New York and Seattle. Both of those cities have recorded some of the largest number of COVID-19 cases in the country. 3M expects a total global output of 1.1 billion masks this year and they are planning investments in the next 60 to 90 days that will double that capacity to 2 billion masks globally within the next 12 months.

“We continue to act with urgency to address this crisis from every angle and do all we can to protect our heroic nurses,

doctors and first responders,” Roman said in a statement on the company’s website.

This isn’t the first time the Aberdeen plant has been called upon to increase production during an emergency. The plant has also played a critical role in making masks for the SARS, bird-flu and H1N1 outbreaks, as well as the Mount Saint Helens’ eruption, Hurricane Katrina and numerous forest fires.

“We know the 3M plant in Aberdeen is playing a critical role in the response to this global pandemic.”

– Char Hager, Northern Electric CEO/General Manager

Northern Electric Cooperative has been in contact with local and corporate 3M managers and executives to ensure the Aberdeen plant has the power supply it needs as the company responds to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We have communicated our response plans to 3M officials and have assured them that our crews will be ready and

available to respond to any emergency or outage,” Hager said. “We have also been in contact with our wholesale power supplier, East River Electric Power Cooperative, and we have told 3M that supplying their plant in Aberdeen with reliable electricity is the top priority for our cooperatives.”

The Aberdeen 3M plant is the city’s second-largest employer with 650 employees. But, Rehder told *Bloomberg Businessweek* that the plant now has more than 700 employees who are working around the clock to make sure health care workers and first responders across the country have the masks they need to protect them from COVID-19.

“People are very proud to work in a place that is making respirators, especially with the need that is out there now,” Rehder said.

Hager said the increased production at the plant in Aberdeen and the hard work of 3M employees is a perfect example of rural America stepping up to help the country during this time of uncertainty.

“We are proud of the work they do at the plant and we are proud of our co-op employees who are dedicated to keeping the lights on for 3M and for all our co-op members,” Hager said.



Northern Electric Cooperative is the power supplier for the 3M plant in Aberdeen which has been operating at ‘surge capacity’ since January in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Understanding OPIOID ADDICTION

Jocelyn Romey

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One in four people who are prescribed opioids struggle with addiction. This is only one statistic from the South Dakota Department of Health that resonates how powerful and potentially dangerous opioids can be.

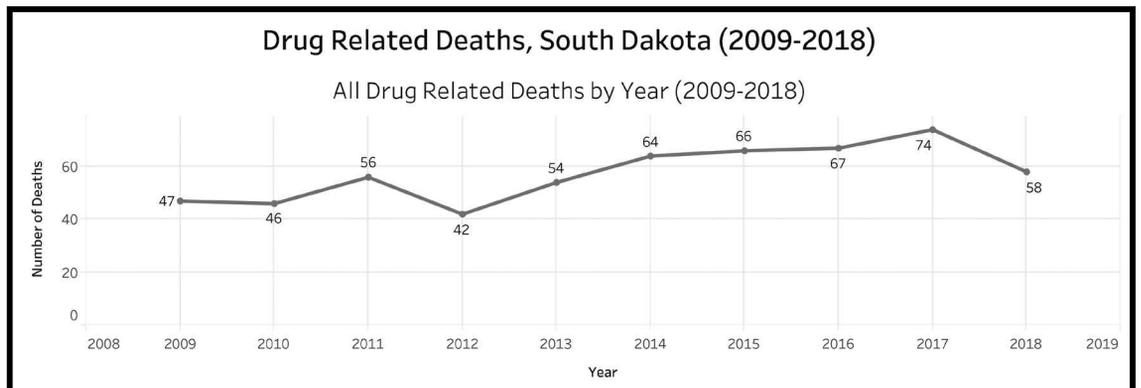
Opioids are a strong narcotic commonly prescribed for chronic pain after injury or surgery. Many know of the extreme addiction and destructive use of heroin – an unlawful opioid, but other opioid addictions may not be as visible if prescribed. A dependency can begin before anyone is aware of an addiction. Unintentional misuse or overdose of prescription opioids are also risks for anyone who takes them.

“My addiction started out very innocently. I had a back issue and so I was prescribed some Vicodin for it...and then I couldn’t stop, I couldn’t turn back. I felt hopeless,” said one woman from Pierre in an Avoid Opioid Prescription Addiction video. “Opioids deserve to be treated with respect. I think the seriousness of it isn’t always understood by people until it’s too late. People do recover and they can recover.”

An opioid addiction is actually considered a disorder and the National Institute on Drug Abuse has labeled drug addiction and opioid use disorder as a chronic disease characterized by drug use that is difficult to control despite harmful consequences. Many people mistakenly think that

Prescription Opioid Side Effects

- Increased sensitivity to pain
- Nausea and vomiting
- Constipation
- Sleepiness and dizziness
- Dry mouth, itching and sweating
- Confusion
- Low energy and depression
- Low levels of testosterone which can result in lower sex drive



those who use drugs lack willpower or moral principles and that they could stop their drug use simply by choosing to. In reality, quitting usually takes more than good intentions or a strong will.

Due to the harmful nature of these drugs, there are risks associated with taking opioids – addiction, long-term health problems, paralysis and death. In South Dakota, opioid-related deaths are lower than the national average, but the numbers have been on a steady rise since 2012.

Research shows that drug overdose deaths tend to overly impact rural communities despite having lower drug use rates than urban communities. In 2009, deaths from drug overdose surpassed deaths from motor vehicle accidents in the U.S. Sixty percent of these drug overdose deaths in rural areas are due to injection-related HIV, hepatitis C and other bloodborne infections while using illicit prescription opioids and heroin.

More in-depth statistics on opioid vulnerability assessments by county are available through South Dakota’s Department of Health website or via <https://doh.sd.gov/statistics/VulnerabilityAssessment.aspx>.

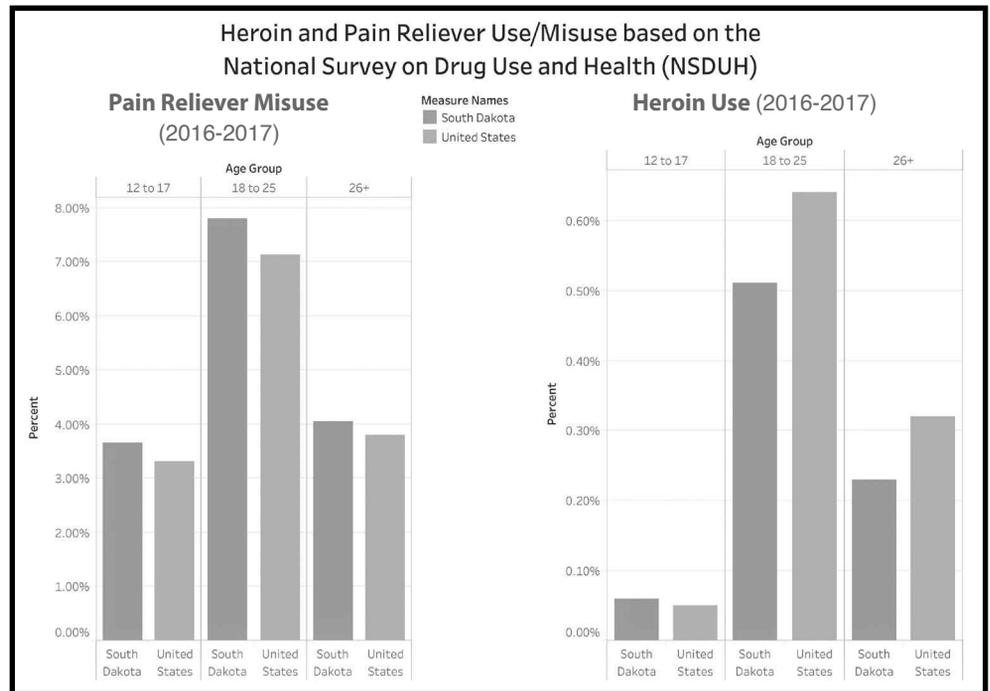
People who are addicted to opioids may seek and use them compulsively despite harmful consequences. The following are common warning signs of misuse, abuse or addiction to opioids given by South Dakota’s Department of Health.

- Neglecting responsibilities at work, school or home because of drug use.
- Using drugs under dangerous conditions or taking risks such as driving while on drugs.
- Drug use that results in legal trouble such as stealing to support a drug habit.
- Drug use that causes problems in relationships such as arguments with family members and loss of friends.
- People affected by drug addiction may stop participating in activities they once enjoyed and may use drugs even when they realize the drugs could be causing problems.

Source: South Dakota Department of Health

Commonly Prescribed Opioids

- Actiq
- Astramorph
- Codeine
- Conzip
- Demerol
- DepoDur
- Dilaudid
- Duragesic
- Duramorph
- Endocet
- Exalgo
- Hydrocodone (Vicodin)
- Hydromorphone
- Fentanyl
- Lorcet
- Lortab
- Meperidine
- Methadone
- Morphine
- MS-Contin
- Norco
- Oxycodone (Oxycontin/Oxecta)
- Percocet
- Roxicet
- Roxicodone
- Tramadol
- Ultram
- Ventura



Resource Hotline

Call 1-800-920-4343. Available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. It's free and confidential.

Our trained specialists can connect you with **Opioid Care Coordination**, social support, counseling, treatment options, and services in your area. Find out **what happens when you call the Resource Hotline**, and how we can help you or a loved one.

Opioid Texting Support

Text OPIOID to 898211 to connect with local resources that best fit your needs. Answer a few questions and get help for yourself or a loved one who is struggling.



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

May 2-3

Quilt Guild Show, Brookings, SD, 605-690-3246

May 8-9

Craft Beer Fest: Hops and Hogs, Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

May 9

Art Wine and Food Truck Festival, Spearfish, SD, 605-644-6585

May 15-17

Sound of Silence Tesla Rally, Custer, SD, 605-673-2244

May 15-17

State Parks Open House and Free Fishing Weekend, Pierre, SD, 605-773-3391

May 23-24

Annual SDRA Foothills Rodeo, Wessington Springs, SD, 605-770-4370

May 29-30

South Dakota Regional Senior Games, Sioux Falls, SD, Contact Nick Brady at 605-978-6924

June 4-6

Annual Black Hills Quilt Show & Sale, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4115

June 5-6

Senior Games, Spearfish, SD, Contact Brett Rauterhaus at 605-722-1430

June 5-7

Fort Sisseton Historical Festival, Lake City, SD, 605-448-5474

June 5-7

Fish Days, Lake Andes, SD, 605-487-7694



May 9:
Traditional
Wacipi at the
Dignity Statue,
Chamberlain, SD,
605-234-5472

June 5-7

Wheel Jam, Huron, SD, 605-353-7340

June 5-7

Regional Qualifying High School Rodeos:
■ Rodeo Grounds, Wall, SD, 605-529-5868
■ Rodeo Grounds, Highmore, SD, 605-529-5868
■ Tipperary Arena, Buffalo, SD, 605-529-5868
■ Heartland Arena, Huron, SD, 605-529-5868

June 6-7

Siouxland Renaissance Festival, Sioux Falls, SD, 866-489-9241

June 11, August 13 and October 8

Kids Mystery Dinner Theater, Brookings, SD, 605-692-6700

June 12-14

Regional Qualifying High School Rodeos:
■ Tripp County Fairgrounds, Winner, SD, 605-529-5868
■ Rodeo Grounds, Sturgis, SD, 605-529-5868
■ Rodeo Grounds, Dupree, SD, 605-529-5868
■ Derby Downs Arena, Watertown, SD, 605-529-5868

June 16-21

SD State High School Finals Rodeo, Stanley County Fairgrounds, Fort Pierre, SD, 605-529-5868

June 25-27

Red Power Round Up, Fairgrounds, Huron, SD, 605-460-0197
redpowerroundup2020.com

June 26-27

Senior Games, Madison, SD, Contact Bernie Schuurmans at 605-270-3327

July 14

Rock Nobles Cattlemen 2020 Summer Beef Tour, Register Before June 1: \$20, After June 1: \$40, Worthington, MN, 507-967-2380, www.mnsca.org

October 7-8

Energize! Explore Innovative Rural Communities Conference, Milbank, SD, <https://extension.sdstate.edu>

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.