



Cooperative Connections



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MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS

WEST CENTRAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

OCTOBER 4, 2017

The Annual Meeting of the members of West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc. was held at the Kadoka Auditorium, City of Kadoka, Jackson County, State of South Dakota, pursuant to due notice to the members, commencing at 5:00 o'clock PM, MDT on Wednesday, October 4, 2017.

The meeting was called to order by President Mike McQuiston who announced that a quorum was present.

The invocation was given by Pastor Ken Toews of Kadoka.

All Veterans were recognized.

The National Anthem was sung.

The CEO introduced the directors from the various zones. He then recognized past directors of West Central.

The President introduced Steve Reed, West Central CEO, David Larson, Attorney, and Vic Simmons, CEO of Rushmore Electric Power.

The business meeting commenced with the reading of the official notice of the meeting by Secretary/Treasurer Ken Miller. CEO Reed read the proof of mailing.

President McQuiston announced that the minutes of last year's Annual Meeting were published in the *Cooperative Connections* and asked if the members wished to have them read, or was there a motion

to approve the minutes as published. A motion was made, seconded and upon being placed before the membership, the motion was approved. Thereupon the president declared the motion carried and the minutes approved.

President McQuiston announced that the Financial Report, the President's Report and the CEO's Report were published in the *Cooperative Connections* and asked if the members wished to have them read, or was there a motion to approve the reports as published. A motion was made, seconded and upon being placed before the membership, the motion was approved. Thereupon the president declared the motion carried and the reports approved.

President McQuiston and CEO Reed gave brief reports.

CEO Reed then recognized the employees.

President McQuiston then called upon the Legal Counsel for West Central, Mr. David Larson of Chamberlain, South Dakota. Mr. Larson reported on the legal status of West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc., as follows:

From a legal point of view, the past year has been relatively uneventful. The cooperative has not been sued, is not suing anybody else, and we are unaware of any claims being made against the cooperative.

A review of the minutes indicates that all actions taken during the past year comply with the by-laws, articles of incorporation, South Dakota Law, and RUS regulations.

David Larson, Corporate Attorney, announced the results of the Director election process. The Directors were elected earlier through the zone meeting process as defined in the Cooperative's By-Laws. This year four Directors were elected, each to serve a three-year term, and they are as follows:

■ **Lyman County – Rural Director**

- Zone 1 – Jim Smith

■ **Jones County – Rural Director**

- Zone 2 – Paul Patterson

■ **Haakon County – Town Director**

- Zone 4 – Marty Hansen

■ **Stanley County – At-Large Director**

- Zone 5 – Mike McQuiston

President McQuiston then called for new business.

Vic Simmons, CEO of Rushmore Electric Power, gave a brief address.

Jessie Tucker conducted prize drawings at intervals throughout the meeting.

There being no further business to come before the board, President McQuiston declared the meeting adjourned.

Join us Oct. 3 at the Fine Arts Building in Philip for West Central Electric's annual meeting.



West Central Electric Cooperative Connections

(USPS No. 018-988)

President

Mike McQuiston, Fort Pierre

Vice President

Shad Riggle, Hayes

Secretary/Treasurer

Kenneth Miller, Draper

Directors

Rich Bendt, Kadoka
Marty Hansen, Philip
David J. Mertens, Kennebec
Kevin Neuhauser, Midland
Paul Patterson, Draper
Jim Smith, Vivian
Jim Willert, Belvidere

Attorney

David Larson, Chamberlain

CEO/Manager

Steve Reed, Murdo

**Our Mission is to Provide
Safe, Reliable Service
to our Member Owners.**

West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc., is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

**Call 605-669-8100
24-hour Dispatching**

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Twitter: @WCElectric; Facebook: www.facebook.com/WestCentralElectricCooperative

Design assistance by SDREA

OFFICIAL NOTICE

OF ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MEMBERS OF WEST CENTRAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

The Annual Meeting of the Members of West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc., will be held at the Fine Arts Building in the City of Philip, Haakon County, State of South Dakota, on Wednesday, October 3, 2018 at 5:00 P.M., MDT, to take action on the following matters:

1. Report of officers and directors.
2. The announcement of three (3) directors of the cooperative.
3. Transact any and all other business, which may come before the meeting, in conjunction with the announcement

of three (3) directors for three (3) year terms scheduled for this meeting, the following members have been nominated for directors as provided by the by-laws:

- Ken Miller, Jones County, Zone Two (2), Town Director,
- Jim Willert, Jackson County, Zone Three (3), Rural Director,
- Shad Riggle, Stanley County, Zone Five (5), At-Large Director.

Ken Miller – Secretary

Agenda

69th Annual Meeting

Date: Wednesday, Oct. 3, 2018

Location: Fine Arts Building, Philip

Time: Registration Opens at 4 p.m. (MDT)

Agenda:

Business Meeting
Called to Order at 5 p.m. (MDT)
Invocation
Introduction of Cooperative Directors
Recognition of Past Directors
Introduction of Meeting Guests
Notice of Annual Meeting
Proof of Mailing
Minutes of 2017 Annual Meeting
President's Report
Manager's Report
Attorney's Report
Announcement of Directors
Unfinished Business
New Business

All members attending will receive a West Central Electric mini speaker or pizza cutter.

Cash prices
will be given and
giveaways include
a pizza cutter or
wireless speaker!



S.D. Fire Marshal: Know That Fires Can Start Anywhere

This year's Fire Prevention Week encourages people to be mindful that fires can start anywhere. Fire Prevention Week is Oct. 7-13 and will be observed by fire departments throughout South Dakota. This year's theme is "Look. Listen. Learn. Be Aware – fire can happen anywhere."

"It is easy to take fire safety for granted, especially if we are staying in a new hotel or working in a new building," says State Fire Marshal Paul Merriman. "But it is important to be aware of your surroundings and know where the exits are if a fire starts."

Merriman says the three "L's" in this year's theme signify essential ways people can reduce their risk to fire:

- Look for places fire can start
- Listen for the sound of the smoke alarm
- Learn two ways out of each room

At the same time, Merriman says individuals and families should make sure they have two ways out of their home in case of fire. He says people need to remember that fires can start anywhere in the home due to an electrical problem or another issue.

"Families should hold fire drills in their homes at least twice a year; once during the day and another time at night," Merriman says. "It is important that everyone, especially children, know how to get out of a burning structure using more than one exit."

Another emphasis during the week will be the use of smoke alarms. Merriman says the importance of smoke alarms can't be stressed enough.

"We have seen too many house fires where there were no smoke alarms present or the alarms in the homes were not properly working," he says. "Smoke alarms can help save lives. But they do no good when not properly maintained."

Smoke alarm messages for this week include:

- Install smoke alarms in every bedroom, outside each separate sleeping area and on every level of the home, including the basement.
- Test alarms at least monthly by pushing the test button.
- Make sure everyone in the home knows the sound of the smoke alarm and understands what to do when they hear it.
- If the smoke alarm sounds, get outside and stay outside. Go to your outside meeting place.
- Call the Fire Department from outside the home.

To learn more, go to www.firepreventionweek.org.

The state Fire Marshal's Office is part of the South Dakota Department of Public Safety.

Farm Bill Conference: Electric Co-op Priorities



Strengthen RUS electric loan program



Support House broadband provisions



Promote innovative rural development programs

KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



"Don't plant trees below power lines."

Erin Kangas, 10 years old

Erin is the daughter of Andrew and Gail Kangas, Lake Norden, S.D. They are members of H-D Electric Cooperative, Clear Lake, 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.



Perfect Pasta

Pasta Rings and Deviled Ham Salad

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1 (7oz.) pkg. macaroni rings, cooked and drained | 1/3 cup dill pickle relish |
| 2 cups ground cooked ham | 1-1/4 cups mayonnaise |
| 3 hard-boiled eggs, chopped | 1 tsp. mustard |
| 1 cup finely chopped celery | 1/4 tsp. pepper |

In a large bowl, combine all ingredients. Chill thoroughly before serving.

Becki Hauser, Tripp, SD

Hamburger-Macaroni Casserole

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 lb. ground beef, do not brown | 1 can tomato soup |
| 1 T. instant onion | 1 can cheese soup |
| 1/2 cup diced celery | 1 tsp. sugar |
| 1/2 cup diced green pepper | 1 tsp. salt |
| 1 cup uncooked macaroni | 1/4 T. basil, optional |

Combine all ingredients in casserole; refrigerate overnight. Bake at 350°F. for 1 hour. Serves 6.

Shirley Thedorff, Centerville, SD

Easy Chicken Noodle Dish

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1/3 cup chopped onion | 1 tsp. salt |
| 1 T. butter | 1 cup sour cream |
| 3 cups noodles, uncooked | 2 cups cooked chicken |
| 2-3/4 cups chicken broth | 1/4 cup silvered almonds |
| 1/4 tsp. lemon extract | 3 T. snipped parsley |

Sauté onion in butter. Add noodles, chicken broth, extract and salt. Bring to a boil. Cover and cook on low heat for 25 minutes or until noodles are tender. Stir in sour cream, chicken, almonds and parsley. Serve hot in bowls. Serves 4.

Verna Knapp, Waubay, SD

Creamy Parmesa and Sun-dried Tomato Chicken Penne

- | | |
|---|---|
| 2 cups penne pasta | 1 tsp. McCormick Gourmet™ Organic Italian Seasoning |
| 2 T. butter | 1/2 tsp. McCormick® California Style Onion Powder |
| 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped | 1/2 tsp. McCormick Gourmet™ Sicilian Sea Salt |
| 1 lb. chicken tenders | 1/4 tsp. McCormick Gourmet™ Organic Black Pepper, Coarse Ground |
| 1 cup half-and-half | 3/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese |
| 2 T. cornstarch | |
| 1 (14.5 oz.) can petite diced tomatoes, undrained | |
| 1/4 cup chopped sun-dried tomatoes | |

Cook pasta as directed on package. Drain well. Meanwhile, melt butter in large skillet on medium-high heat. Add garlic; cook and stir 30 seconds. Add chicken; cook and stir 5 minutes or until lightly browned. Mix half-and-half and cornstarch in small bowl until smooth. Add to skillet along with tomatoes, sun-dried tomatoes, seasonings and Parmesan cheese. Bring to boil, stirring constantly with wire whisk until well blended. Reduce heat to low; simmer 5 minutes. Stir in pasta; toss gently to coat. Serve with additional Parmesan cheese, if desired. Makes 8 servings.

Shrimp variation: Use 1 lb. large shrimp, peeled and deveined, in place of the chicken. Cook and stir shrimp in melted butter 2 minutes. Continue as directed.

Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 292, Total Fat 12g, Saturated Fat 7g, Cholesterol 66mg, Sodium 486mg, Protein 22g, Carbohydrates 24g, Dietary Fiber 2g

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Please send your favorite slow cooker, holiday favorite or soup 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 2018. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

Stay Comfortable This Winter



Pat Keegan

Collaborative Efficiency

On average, a typical home loses about half its air every hour and that amount can increase when outdoor temperatures are extremely cold and the wind is blowing.

Dear Pat: Last year, we spent our first winter in our new place, which is actually an older home. Even with the heat turned up, it always felt chilly indoors. This year, we added insulation, but we're wondering if there are additional steps we can take to make the house more comfortable this winter. Can you offer any advice? – Emily

Dear Emily: When we talk about comfort in our homes, we usually think about where the thermostat is set. But, as you're finding, there's more to the picture than just the indoor temperature.

An important piece of the comfort puzzle is radiant heat, which transfers heat from a warm surface to a colder one. A person sitting in a room that's 70 degrees can still feel chilly if there's a cold surface nearby, like a single-pane window, a hardwood floor or an exterior wall. Covering these cold surfaces can help. Try using area rugs, wall quilts or tapestries, bookcases and heavy curtains to help prevent heat loss and make your home feel more comfortable. Keep in mind, radiant heat can really work in your favor. A dark-colored tile floor that receives several hours of direct sun can retain heat during the day and radiate it into the room during the evening.

Another possible cause of discomfort during the winter is air movement. We recognize this when weather forecasts report chill factor, which is a calculation of air temperature and wind speed.

Moving air makes us feel colder, which is why we use fans in the summer. But during the winter, cold, outdoor air can infiltrate our homes.

On average, a typical home loses about half its air every hour and that amount can increase when outdoor temperatures are extremely cold and the wind is blowing. In this case, the best way to keep your home toasty is to minimize air leaks. You can easily locate air leaks in your home with a blower door test, which is typically conducted by an energy auditor. These are some of the most common spots air leaks occur:

- Penetrations and cracks around windows and doors
- Exterior cracks in brickwork and siding
- Plumbing and wiring penetrations from the exterior to the interior of the home
- Mail slots or pet doors

A variety of products like caulk, weather stripping, outlet cover gaskets and dryer vent covers can be used to seal these leaks.

A fireplace can also be a major source of air leakage. If you don't use the fireplace, you can seal the opening or install an inflatable chimney balloon. Before using the fireplace, consider this: unless you have a high-efficiency insert, your fireplace will suck heated air from the room out through the chimney. Always close the fireplace flue when it's not in use.

Your pursuit of comfort should also include a careful look at your home's heating system. Is it distributing heat evenly and efficiently? Forced-air systems distribute air through supply ducts and registers. Small rooms may only have one register, but large rooms could have several. You may find some supply registers are blowing copious amounts of warm air and others little at all.

Ideally, every room should have return air registers. If you see possible shortcomings with your forced-air system, enlist the help of a certified contractor that really knows how to improve ductwork.

Ensure your furnace is running at peak efficiency by scheduling an annual inspection. Check your filter monthly and replace or clean it as necessary. If you heat your home with radiators, bleed them at the beginning of the season so they flow more efficiently.

Beyond that, you can always warm yourself by wearing heavier clothing, doing some light exercise throughout the day and snuggling with a pet or under a blanket.

By taking some of these small steps, I hope you will enjoy a more comfortable winter in your new (older) home!

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



Winner, Winner, Grill a Dinner!

Two lucky people won Meco® Americana Grills after registering at the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives booths at Dakotafest and the South Dakota State Fair.

Douglas Electric Member Brady Moke of Armour was the winner at Dakotafest held Aug. 21-23 at Mitchell.

Kay Fawcett of Miller was the winner at the South Dakota State Fair held Aug. 30-Sept. 3.

Between the two shows, more than 2,000 people signed up to win.



October is
Cooperative
Month

High School Big Idea Competition Launches Statewide

South Dakota high school students are invited to compete in the 11th annual BIG Idea Competition business idea competition where winners will receive more than \$5,500 in cash awards and scholarships.

Students may work individually or as a team and will be able to submit their business idea applications online from Sept. 1 until Oct. 31. The online application, as well as various resources and examples, can be accessed at the BIG Idea website: www.BIGIdeaSD.com. For the optional marketing design competition, students will create an ad to support their business idea. A Wellness Category, sponsored by Sanford Health, offers an additional \$500 cash prize to the best business idea in this category. New this year is a Food Animal Agriculture Category sponsored by Midwest Ag Supply, which offers an additional \$500 cash prize for the best business idea in this category.



Coordinator Kelly Weaver of the Small Business Development Center said, "Understanding the basics of business is important to students, regardless of their career path. The BIG Idea Competition is a great way for students to learn about those business basics. For those students interested in pursuing a business, we can connect them with resources and mentors to help further their entrepreneurial growth and business success. We are also excited to be offering even more prizes this year."

The final competition and awards event will be held on Wednesday, Dec. 5, at Northern State University in Aberdeen. Students will participate in various activities surrounding entrepreneurship. Prior to the awards presentation, all finalists will give an elevator pitch of their business idea.

Build Dakota Scholarship Recipients Announced

The Build Dakota Scholarship Board has selected 356 students as recipients of the Build Dakota Scholarship for the 2018-19 school year.

The scholarships cover tuition and fees, books, equipment and other related program expenses for eligible programs within eight high-need industry areas at South Dakota's four technical institutes. Recipients were selected from a total of 1,150 applications.

"The Build Dakota Scholarship allows students to step into high-need, well-paying career fields free of debt," said Gov. Dennis Daugaard. "It is encouraging to see the growing number of industry partnerships, through which businesses sponsor students and commit to pay part of their program expenses. These partnerships help Build Dakota dollars stretch even further and of this year's scholarship recipients, 216 students have an industry partner."

The Build Dakota Scholarship program was announced in late 2014. The scholarship is funded by a \$25 million donation from T. Denny Sanford and \$25 million in future funds committed by Gov. Daugaard.



Build Dakota aims to support students entering high-need workforce programs at South Dakota's technical institutes to fill the state's technical career fields with skilled professionals.

In-state and out-of-state students of all ages are eligible to apply. Scholarship applicants must be accepted into their approved program of interest. Recipients of the scholarship must enroll full-time, complete their educational program on schedule and commit to stay in South Dakota to work in their field of study for three years following graduation.

Applications for the 2019-20 school year open in January 2019. Find more information, visit builddakotascholarships.com.



Line workers account for a portion of energy-related careers.

ENERGIZED JOBS

Careers in Energy Fields Hold Potential

Brenda Kleinjan

editor@sdrea.coop

America's energy sector looks to put a spotlight on careers within the field during Careers in Energy Week Oct. 15-19.

According to information from the Center for Energy Workforce Development (CEWD), key jobs in the energy workforce – line workers, technicians, plant/field operators and engineers – represent 44 percent of the energy workforce. And, demand for these jobs has remained steady.

Industry leaders work to ensure there is a balance in the supply of qualified workers with specific demands. The goal is to have the right number of workers with the right skills at the right time and in the right place.

A 2015 CEWD report noted that while the workforce is getting younger in these key jobs, gaps still exist for engineers and technicians and, in some areas, especially small, more rural areas, utilities, in particular can struggle with attracting

Jobs in the energy sector hold potential for many seeking careers.



Photo by iStock/Getty Images/Theerapong28

talent and replacing expertise lost by retiring workers.

According to U.S. Department of Labor statistics, more than 116,000 people work as electrical power line installers and repairers. In South Dakota 850 people have such jobs, representing about 2.04 jobs per 100,000 jobs in the state, ranking it among the highest location quotients in the nation. (The location quotient is the ratio of the area concentration of occupational employment to the national average concentration. A location quotient greater than one indicates the occupation has a higher share of employment than average, and a location quotient less than one indicates the occupation is less prevalent in the area than average.)

Another visible energy job in the area deals with wind energy. According to United States Department of Labor statistics, there are 4,390 wind turbine service technicians nationwide, with 510 calling the Dakotas and Minnesota home.

The *U.S. Energy and Employment Report* released in May 2018 by the National Association of State Energy Officials and the Energy Futures Initiative noted that

the traditional energy and energy efficiency sectors employed approximately 6.5 million Americans out of a total workforce of approximately 145 million. The report noted this was a 2 percent increase from the previous year, adding 133,000 net new jobs.

The report noted that within the traditional energy sector, electric power genera-

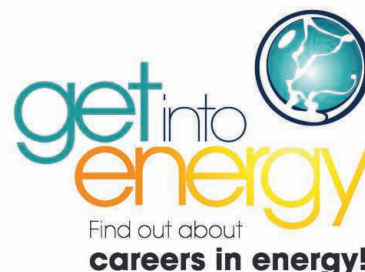
Electric power generation and fuels directly employed more than 1.9 million workers in 2017.

tion and fuels directly employed more than 1.9 million workers in 2017, an increase of 15,000 jobs from 2016. In 2017, 55 percent – or 1.1 million – of these employees worked in traditional coal, oil and gas electric power generation and fuels, while almost 800,000 workers were employed in other generation technologies including renewables, nuclear and natural gas.

Firms covered by the survey anticipate about a 6 percent growth in jobs in 2018.

But while these sectors are anticipating growth, more than 70 percent of employers reported difficulty in hiring qualified workers in the past 12 months.

Two South Dakota technical schools – Lake Area Technical Institute in Watertown, S.D., and Mitchell Technical Institute in Mitchell, S.D., offer energy-sector career training and have received national recognition for the educational programs and Minnesota's technical schools have strong energy-related programs.



OCTOBER 15-19, 2018

Among energy sector workers are the nation's 4,300 wind service technicians, 510 of which are in the Dakotas and Minnesota.



Voting Authorization Necessary for Organizations

A number of questions seem to arise concerning voting at the annual/zone meetings by nonindividual members of the cooperative, such as schools, municipalities, churches, organizations, and corporations. All of these members are entitled to representation and one vote, but the proper procedure must be followed to exercise this right.

Each such member should see that a representative is designated in writing prior to the meeting. The representative must be a person who will not be voting another membership as no person shall be entitled to more than one vote on each matter submitted to a vote at the meeting. This written authorization must be in the following form and must be filed with the Secretary of the Cooperative prior to formal commencement of the meeting.

To avoid errors, we urge you to get these in just as soon as possible for approval.

Authorization to Vote

This is to certify that the _____ of _____ in a duly assembled meeting, designated _____ who is a(n) _____ of said organization, to represent the _____ at the regular Annual/Zone Meeting of the members of West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc., to be held October 3, 2018, and said person is authorized to cast such member's vote on all issues that may come before said meeting.

The undersigned verifies that (s)he is the _____ of said organization and authorized to execute this instrument on behalf thereof.

State of South Dakota)
)ss.


County of _____)

On this ____ day of _____, 2018 before me the undersigned Notary Public of the State of South Dakota, personally appeared _____

known to me to be the person named in the above foregoing instrument, who acknowledged that (s)he executed the same for the purpose therein specified, (s)he being authorized so to do.

Notary Public, South Dakota

My commission expires _____, 20____



SmartHub® allows you to manage all aspects of your electrical account online or with your mobile device.

- SET BILL REMINDERS
- PAY BILL
- SAFE & SECURE
- FREE
- GET SERVICE USAGE DETAILS
- CONTACT CUSTOMER SERVICE

Remember to **ATTEND** Your Annual Meeting

**Come Join Us
for Your 69th
Annual Meeting on
Oct. 3 at the
Fine Arts Building
in Philip, S.D.
Registration starts
at 4 p.m. MT.
The meeting
starts at 5 p.m.
and the delicious
meal follows.**

Cash prizes will be given
and giveaways include
a pizza cutter and
wireless speaker!



Celebrating Cooperatives

Co-ops Play Important Role in Economy

Brenda Kleinjan

editor@sdra.coop

**Cooperatives
generate jobs in
their communities,
keep profits local
and pay local taxes
to help support
community services.**

CO-OP CARLA'S AMAZING DAY

HOW COOPERATIVE IS YOUR DAY?

Cooperative Carla knows that joining and supporting cooperatives helps to make her community stronger and build a better world. She also knows that the owners of cooperatives are the ones closest to the business and she's proud to benefit from membership in cooperatives and happy to support cooperatives around her.

Carla's typical day is pretty amazing.



COOPERATIVES FOR A
**BETTER
WORLD**



From the moment one wakes up to the minute one falls asleep – and throughout the night – cooperatives play a role in the daily lives of most South Dakotans and many Minnesotans.

Power from electric cooperatives charges phones, illuminates lights, heats homes and provides the electricity integral to many farms and businesses in the area. Telecommuni-

cation cooperatives across the region connect families and businesses with internet, phone and cable services, keeping them informed and connected to the world around them.

Gasoline, ethanol and propane are often bought from regional cooperatives that are among the largest cooperatives in the nation.

Grains and other products are bought and sold through farmer cooperatives big and small.

Hundreds of financial transactions occur daily at the areas credit unions.

In fact, there are more than 40,000 cooperative businesses in the United States with 350 million members (many people belong to more than one co-op). These cooperatives generate \$514 billion in revenue and more than \$25 billion in wages, according to a study conducted by the Univer-



Carla is also planning on making some updates to her living room. She stops by her local hardware store for some paint samples and takes a look at her options at the local flooring and lighting stores - all cooperatives!

Did you know, purchasing cooperatives like **Ace Hardware, Carpet One Floor & Home** and **Lighting One** help independent, local businesses compete with big box stores?

sity of Wisconsin Center for Cooperatives, with support from USDA Rural Development (<http://reic.uwcc.wisc.edu/default.htm>).

- Cooperatives represent a strong business model and greatly contribute to both the national and local economies.
- Studies show that consumers want to do business with companies that share their values, making today's environment ideal for cooperatives and their commitment to the communities in which their members live and work.
- Co-ops don't have to answer to outside shareholders; they care about meeting their members' needs.
- Co-ops represent democracy in action, with control exercised by a board of directors elected from the ranks of members; the board hires and directs management and is ultimately responsible to the members;
- Cooperatives generate jobs in their communities, keep profits local and pay local taxes to help support community services. Cooperatives often take part in community improvement programs, ensuring that everyone has an opportunity to benefit from the cooperative experience.

Co-op Month Fun Facts

- Minnesota was the first state to declare an official Co-op Month proclamation in 1948.
- Co-op Month has been a nationally recognized celebration since 1964, when U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Orville Freeman, a former Minnesota governor, proclaimed October Co-op Month.
- The first national theme in 1964 was "Cooperatives: USDA Helps Build a Better America."
- The U.S. Government sponsored Co-op Month from 1964-70.
- Since 1971, cooperatives, statewide associations and the National Cooperative Business Association have fueled their own events and promotions.



RISE & SHINE

As Carla turns off the alarm clock and turns on the lights she thinks about her membership in her local electric co-op.

Carla is one of
42 Million Americans
whose homes are powered by local **Electric Co-ops!**



Carla always starts off the day with coffee and breakfast from the local food co-op where she always finds fresh, healthy options for her family. Food co-ops spend more revenues locally - by buying more products locally and contributing more to the local economy than conventional grocery stores.



For every **\$1,000** spent at a **food co-op**,

\$1,604

goes back into the local economy.

Food co-ops buy more organic produce and recycle more plastic than conventional grocers too!

Over **2 million farmers** own the companies that cooperatively market their dairy products. **Organic Valley, Cabot Creamery Cooperative, Land O' Lakes** sound familiar? They're all Co-ops!



Even the milk in her cereal is from a farmer-owned dairy cooperative.



OFF TO WORK

Carla works at a worker-owned cooperative that produces paper products. She takes pride in her work knowing that she is able to weigh in on big decisions and owns a share of the business.

Carla is one of
100 Million People
who work for **Co-ops** around the world!



Four Reasons Co-op Careers Are Unique

Paul Wesslund

NRECA

This is an exciting time to be a part of the energy industry.

The search for a purposeful career can begin and end at your local electric cooperative.

Those aren't just words or wishes. Working toward a greater purpose is at the heart of the co-op business model.

Electric co-ops are community-focused organizations that deliver safe, reliable and affordable energy to the consumer-members they serve. This is an exciting time to be a part of the energy industry. Technology is continuously advancing and consumers want more say in the way they manage their energy use. That means electric co-ops need a variety of skillsets to develop new technologies and infrastructure, keep the electric grid secure and power the lives and economy of our local communities.

Here are four reasons why electric cooperative careers offer a unique opportunity to make a difference:

1. Member-Led

Because consumer-members lead and own the organization, co-op employees can take comfort knowing that the loyalty of their employer is with those served by the cooperative.

"If you work for an investor-owned business, you might be helping people in your community, but more likely you're helping stockholders who could live anywhere in the world," says Adam Schwartz, founder of the consulting firm,



Why choose a career with an electric co-op?

- **LOCAL**, community-focused organization
- **DYNAMIC** and exciting industry
- **COMPETITIVE WAGES** and excellent benefits
- **VARIETY** of job opportunities



Touchstone Energy®
Cooperatives

The Cooperative Way. "Co-ops, with the services they provide, can have a great impact on the quality of life in the local community."

2. Locally Owned

The best thing about an electric utility owned by its consumer-members is that all it will ever care about is its local community. And that makes a difference to an employee, says Michelle Rinn, senior vice president of human resources at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

"People want to feel like they're doing work that matters, like they're contrib-

uting to the world at large," she says. "For co-ops, that comes from a connection to the community and the fact that the folks you're taking care of really are your neighbors, the people you go to church with or you see at the grocery store every day."

Rinn says that when it comes to a job that provides electricity, "That's work that matters. Especially when there's a storm and the lights go out."

Both Rinn and Schwartz agree that electric co-ops also achieve a larger employment goal by providing jobs in smaller communities where they're typically located. As

long as people will need electricity, electric co-ops will help the local economy with a strong, stable business.

3. Variety of Jobs

The more than 900 electric co-ops in 47 states require a lot of different skillsets to keep the lights on. That means potential employment seekers could find work in construction, electrical equipment operation, engineering, customer service, communications and public relations, employee benefits coordination, software analysis and vehicle maintenance, to name a few.

Schwartz says another high-tech co-op career is emerging as local economic development efforts begin to ask electric co-ops for help in providing high-speed broadband service for their communities.

Rinn sees different advantages for employees depending on the size of their co-op. In larger cooperatives, a variety of professions are available. At smaller cooperatives, employees have the opportunity to flex multiple professional muscles in a single role.

“At a really small co-op, people have to wear multiple hats,” she says. “You don’t come in and you’re just the accountant, or you’re just the receptionist, or you’re just the executive assistant. There’s the opportunity to work on a lot of different things and build a broad range of skills.”

4. Guided by Co-op Principles

The first modern co-op was formed in 1844 and developed a set of principles that guides co-ops today. Those include voluntary, open membership; democratic control by the membership; members’ economic participation; autonomy and independence; education and training; cooperation among cooperatives; and concern for community.

America’s electric cooperatives are looking for individuals to lead the charge in meeting our nation’s energy needs. Together, we can create a brighter future for all.

To learn more about electric co-op career opportunities, visit:

- **South Dakota:** <https://www.sdrea.coop/content/employment>
- **Minnesota:** <https://www.mrea.coop/networking/>
- **Nationally:** <https://www.touchstoneenergy.com/co-op-business-resources/careers/find-co-op-jobs/>

Spark Your New Career

With more than 63,000 employees nationwide, the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives network offers numerous career opportunities. Our member cooperatives are seeking the best workers to supplement their teams and better serve their own members. Some of the best, brightest, most creative and dedicated people have chosen to serve their communities and develop their careers with us.

Work Environment

Recognized as a leader in the field of innovation and customer satisfaction, the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives network also offers its employees competitive salaries, excellent benefit packages and the satisfaction of knowing the work performed directly benefits their communities. Our co-ops are dedicated to helping further their employees’ careers, offering a full range of opportunities for distance learning, accreditation or professional development programs.

Nationwide Employment

The electric cooperative network stretches across 47 states, from the smallest rural communities to large, bustling cities. Employees can trust that the same healthy, creative work environment and commitment to service is found across all areas, including benefit packages and career opportunities that transfer from co-op to co-op.

Co-op Job Benefits

Electric cooperatives developed their own co-op-tailored benefits more than 60 years ago through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). These benefits, which most co-ops subscribe to, are the standard for all electric co-op benefits, no matter the size of the co-op and are transferable between co-ops that participate in their plans.

Committed to Job Training and Education

Cooperatives are committed to giving our employees opportunities to learn, grow and advance in their careers. Whether you’re looking to increase your skillset, advance in your job or change jobs, you can take advantage of a full range of distance learning and professional accreditation and certification programs, as well as professional development programs. Most electric co-ops even offer tuition reimbursement to obtain a certification or degree.

Diversity Powers Every Co-op

Working in cooperation to create a better community is a key principle of America’s electric cooperatives. That includes the belief in treating all people with respect and dignity and commitment to the goals of equal opportunity. Electric co-ops strive to create a work environment that fosters and supports fairness, equity and respect for social and cultural diversity, free from unlawful discrimination and harassment.

At Touchstone Energy Cooperatives, we recognize our talented and diverse workforce as a key competitive advantage. Our business success is a reflection of the quality and skill of our people. More than that, we value our diversity because it contributes to the richness and strength of our entire network. By including the ideas, opinions, perspectives and talents of all who comprise our workforce, we enrich our entire co-op network and the member-owners we serve.

We’re committed to employing the best people to do the best job possible.

September 20-23

South Dakota Film Festival,
Aberdeen, SD, 605-725-2697

September 20-23

South Dakota Festival of
Books, Brookings, SD,
605-688-6113

September 21-23

South Dakota Quilt Guild,
Crossroads Event Center,
Huron, SD, 605-352-9953

September 21-23

Annual Sturgis Off Road Rally,
Ballpark Road, Sturgis, SD,
605-720-0800

September 22

Harvest Fest, Spearfish, SD,
605-717-9294

September 22, October 6

Lawn Mower Races, Pukwana,
SD, 605-680-1718

September 25-29

Black Hills Plein Air Paint-Out,
Hill City, SD, 605-645-7196

September 27-29

Custer State Park Buffalo
Roundup & Arts Festival,
Custer, SD, 605-255-4515

September 28-29

PREMIER Rodeo, Sioux Falls,
SD, 605-367-7288

September 28-30

SiouxperCon, Sioux Falls, SD,
admin@siouxpercon.com

September 29

Wheelin' to Wall, Main Street,
Wall, SD, 605-685-3882

September 29

Living History Fall Festival,
Groton, SD, 605-715-7117

September 29-30

Northern Plains Indian Art
Market, Sioux Falls, SD,
605-856-8193

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LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT

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yourcoopower.com/LivestockSummit




September 30

Fall Volksmarch, Crazy Horse
Memorial, Crazy Horse, SD,
605-673-4681

October 5-7

Black Hills Powwow, Rapid
City, SD, 605-341-0925

October 6

Agritourism Tours, Free,
Brandon, SD; 605-681-6793 or
SDSPAinfo@gmail.com

October 6

Pumpkin Train, Prairie Village,
Madison, SD, 800-693-3644

October 11-12

South Dakota Women in
Ag 2018 Conference,
The Lodge, Deadwood, SD,
605-390-4241,
amy.pravecek@zoetis.com,
southdakotawomeninag.com

October 11-13

Wild West Songwriters
Festival, Deadwood, SD,
605-578-1876

October 11-14

Great Scarecrow Festival,
Huron, SD, 605-352-9781

October 12

Pumpkin Fest and Parade of
Lights, Webster, SD,
605-345-4668

October 20-21

South Dakota State and
National Cornhusking
Contest, State is on the 20th
and National on the 21st,
9 a.m., Flandreau, SD

October 20-January 6

Pheasant Hunting Season,
Statewide, Pierre, SD,
605-223-7660

October 24

Methodist Church Bazaar,
5 to 7 p.m., Roast beef,
chicken, ham and all the
trimmings, Reliance, SD

October 26-28

Autumn Festival, An Arts and
Crafts Affair, Sioux Falls, SD,
402-331-2889

November 1-3

South Dakota Local Foods
Conference, Brookings, SD,
Contact 605-681-6793 or
SDSPAinfo@gmail.com

November 8-10

Ringneck Festival and Bird
Dog Challenge, Huron, SD,
605-352-0000

November 9

Hairball, Deadwood Mountain
Grand, Deadwood, SD,
605-559-1188

November 16-17

Holiday Arts Christmas Craft
Show, Masonic Temple,
Mitchell, SD, 605-359-2049

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.