

# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



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# ELECTRICITY DEMAND



**Jeremy Lindemann**  
CEO/GM

Hello LREA Members,  
Well, by the time this newsletter gets to your mailbox we will have concluded the election. Regardless of whether your candidate won or not, I hope that we can put party differences aside and work together to get things done that are needed to keep this country moving forward and make the lives of the citizens better. I believe we need a commonsense approach, and we need to work together to solve the issues.

One issue we are facing is the rising demand for electricity. Many factors are causing the rise in demand for electricity and here are just a few examples: Electric vehicles are coming to rural markets, also large loads such as AI data centers are set to come on-line requiring huge amounts of power to run them 24/7. One AI data center can require as much power as the City of Aberdeen; bit coin mining facilities are also being built and they can be just as large or larger. Developers are looking to states such as South Dakota, North Dakota and Wyoming to build these facilities due to favorable local government policies and electric rates.

As we look nationally, believe it or not, we have people calling for the closing of power plants, when the reality is we should be building more. This is where common sense comes into play and working together is important, especially at the government level. According to reports put out by government agencies, we will need double the amount of power that we currently have available to us in order to meet the ever growing demand for electricity and technology that we use to power our way of life. We will need to build

new transmission lines and construct new power generation to meet these demands, but government regulations are actively shutting down reliable power generation.

Lake Region and our g&ts are committed to providing reliable power to our members. To achieve this goal, I believe we should be using all the resources available to us. We need to continue to build our “all of the above” approach to generating power for the grid. Generation sources such as coal, natural gas, wind, solar and nuclear will all be needed along with a technological breakthrough in battery storage.

We need a commonsense approach to energy policy. We must keep the lights on and have power available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. Electricity is not magic, although it may seem like it! The reality is that it must be generated, and it must be transmitted across the power lines to members. We will be faced with energy policy changes that we may need to change, and it will take a grassroots effort from everyone working together to provide safe, reliable, affordable electricity!

Until next time, we will keep the lights on!  
Jeremy Lindemann  
CEO/General Manager

## WELCOME

TO OUR NEW MEMBERS!

Brent and Jacalyn Wolfe

Brian Bosse

Barney Villa and Darwin Nercisian

Greg Zubke

Midwest Catv

Mitchell Frewaldt

**COOPERATIVE  
CONNECTIONS**

**LAKE REGION ELECTRIC  
RIPPLES**

(USPS 018-904)

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LAKE REGION RIPPLES COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is the monthly publication for the members of Lake Region Electric Association, Inc., PO Box 341, 1212 N Main St., Webster, SD 57274. Lake Region Electric Cooperative Connections' purpose is to provide reliable, helpful information to members on electric cooperative matters and better living.

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24 hour Dispatching/Outage Line  
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**New Lake Region Electric Rates  
Effective January 1, 2025**

Rate Class	Old Rate	New Rate
<b>Residential</b>		
Base Charge	\$55	\$65
First 1,400 kWh	10.89 ¢ per	11.29 ¢ per
All Additional kWh	10.29 ¢ per	10.69 ¢ per
<b>Electric Heat Meter</b>		
Base Charge	\$5	\$5
Electric Heat kWh (Controlled)	5.76 ¢ per	5.76 ¢ per
Electric Heat kWh (Non-controlled)		
October – April	5.76 ¢ per	5.76 ¢ per
May - September	9.39 ¢ per	9.39 ¢ per
<b>400 Amp</b>		
Base Charge	\$65	\$75
First 1,400 kWh	10.89 ¢ per	11.29 ¢ per
All Additional kWh	10.29 ¢ per	10.69 ¢ per
<b>600 Amp</b>		
Base Charge	\$75	\$85
First 1,400 kWh	9.69 ¢ per	10.09 ¢ per
All Additional kWh	9.09 ¢ per	9.49 ¢ per
Demand Charge per Billing kW	\$2.50	\$3.50
<b>800 Amp</b>		
Base Charge	\$85	\$95
First 1,400 kWh	9.69 ¢ per	10.09 ¢ per
All Additional kWh	9.09 ¢ per	9.49 ¢ per
Demand Charge per Billing kW	\$2.50	\$3.50
<b>Small Three Phase</b>		
Base Charge	\$70	\$80
First 1,400 kWh	9.93 ¢ per	10.33 ¢ per
All Additional kWh	9.33 ¢ per	9.73 ¢ per
Demand Charge per Billing kW		
First 20 kW	\$1.50	\$2.50
Next 30 kW	\$1.50	\$2.50
All Additional kW	\$17.25	\$17.25
<b>Grain Dryer</b>		
Base Charge	\$55	\$65
First 1,400 KWH	9.69 ¢ per	10.09 ¢ per
All Additional kWh	9.09 ¢ per	9.49 ¢ per
Demand Charge per Billing kW	\$2.50	\$3.50
<b>Large Three Phase (Controlled)</b>		
Base Charge	\$110	\$120
First 100 kWh per Billing kW	6.66 ¢ per	7.06 ¢ per
Additional kWh per Billing kW	4.36 ¢ per	4.76 ¢ per
Demand Charge per Billing kW	\$6.75	\$6.75
<b>Large Three Phase (Non-Controlled)</b>		
Base Charge	\$110	\$120
First 100 kWh per Billing kW	6.66 ¢ per	7.06 ¢ per
All Additional kWh per Billing kW	4.36 ¢ per	4.76 ¢ per
Demand Charge per Billing kW	\$17.25	\$17.25
<b>Irrigation (Controlled)</b>		
Base Charge	\$80	\$90
All kWh Charge	5.99 ¢ per	6.39 ¢ per
Demand Charge per Billing kW	\$6.75	\$6.75
<b>Irrigation (Non-Controlled)</b>		
Base Charge	\$80.00	\$90
All kWh Charge	5.99 ¢ per	6.39 ¢ per
Demand Charge per Billing kW	\$17.25	\$17.25

# Snow Safety

There is no end to the terms for “really big snowstorm,” and those terms come in handy, particularly in America’s snowiest cities. Just check out these average annual snowfall totals in towns of at least 10,000 residents, according to the Farmer’s Almanac:

Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan – 119.3 inches  
Syracuse, New York – 114.3 inches  
Juneau, Alaska – 93.6 inches  
Flagstaff, Arizona – 87.6 inches  
Duluth, Minnesota – 83.5 inches  
Erie, Pennsylvania – 80.9 inches  
Burlington, Vermont – 80.2 inches  
Muskegon, Michigan – 79.3 inches  
Casper, Wyoming – 77 inches  
Portland, Maine – 70 inches

But with really big snow storms – and even everyday, run-of-the-mill snowfalls – comes a risk of death by shoveling. Nationwide, snow shoveling is responsible for thousands of injuries and as many as 100 deaths each year.

So, why so many deaths? Shoveling snow is just another household chore, right?

Not really, says the American Heart Association. While most people won’t have a problem, shoveling snow can put some people at risk of heart attack. Sudden exertion, like moving hundreds of pounds of snow after being sedentary for several months, can put a big strain on the heart. Pushing a heavy snow blower also can cause injury.

And, there’s the cold factor. Cold weather can increase heart rate and blood pressure. It can make blood clot more easily and constrict arteries, which decreases blood supply. This is true even in healthy people. Individuals over the age of 40 or who are relatively inactive should be particularly careful.

**National Safety Council recommends the following tips to shovel safely:**

- Do not shovel after eating or while smoking.
- Take it slow and stretch out before you begin.
- Shovel only fresh, powdery snow; it’s lighter.
- Push the snow rather than lifting it.
- If you do lift it, use a small shovel or only partially fill the shovel.

- Lift with your legs, not your back.
- Do not work to the point of exhaustion.
- Know the signs of a heart attack, stop immediately and call 911 if you’re experiencing any of them; every minute counts.

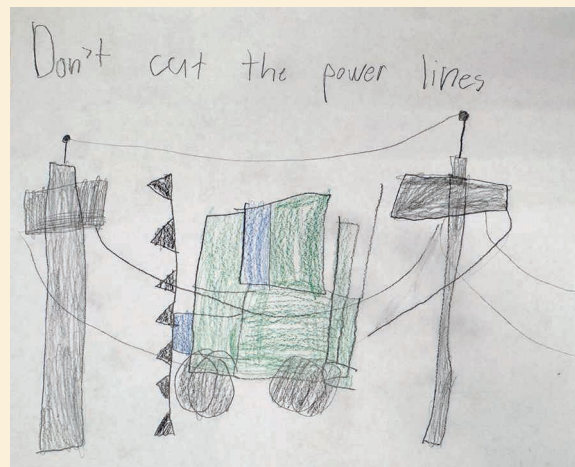
Don’t pick up that shovel without a doctor’s permission if you have a history of heart disease. A clear driveway is not worth your life.

### Snow Blower Safety

In addition to possible heart strain from pushing a heavy snow blower, stay safe with these tips:

- If the blower jams, turn it off.
- Keep your hands away from the moving parts.
- Be aware of the carbon monoxide risk of running a snow blower in an enclosed space.
- Add fuel outdoors, before starting, and never add fuel when it is running.
- Never leave it unattended when it is running.

*Source: National Safety Council*



### “Don’t Cut the Power Lines!”

#### David Raak, Age 7 ½

David Raak cautions readers to be careful when working around power lines. Thank you for your picture, David! David’s parents are Nathaniel and Katie Raak, members of Central Electric.

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.

# Crockpot GREATNESS

## CROCKPOT CORN

### Ingredients:

3 16-oz. packages frozen corn  
8 oz. cream cheese  
1/2 cup (1 stick) butter  
2 tbsps. sugar  
2 tbsps. water

### Method

Place corn in crockpot. Cut cream cheese and butter into small cubes. Add cream cheese, butter, sugar and water to corn. Stir. Cook on high for 45 minutes. Stir. Turn to low and cook for three more hours, stirring occasionally.

**Elaine Rieck**  
Harrisburg, S.D.

## CROCKPOT BAKED BEANS

### Ingredients:

2 cans black beans  
2 cans red beans (drained)  
2 cans great northern  
1 can baked beans with brown sugar  
1 lb. diced ham  
1 heaping tsp. mustard (regular)  
2 full tbsps. ketchup  
Garlic powder (optional)  
1 small onion (chopped)

### Method

Mix all ingredients in crockpot except ham. Cook 2 hours on high. Mix in ham and cook another hour on high. Enjoy!

**Rose Tucker**  
Hot Springs, S.D.

## CHICKEN FIESTA SLOW COOKER RECIPE

### Ingredients:

2 lbs. boneless skinless chicken breasts  
1 package slow cooker fiesta chicken seasoning mix  
2 cans (14 1/2 oz. each) diced tomatoes, undrained  
1 can (15 3/4 oz.) whole kernel corn, drained  
1 can (15 oz.) black beans, drained and rinsed

### Method

Place chicken in slow cooker. Mix seasoning, tomatoes, corn and beans until blended. Pour over chicken. Cover. Cook eight hours on LOW or four hours on HIGH. Remove chicken from slow cooker. Shred chicken, using two forks. Return chicken to slow cooker; mix well. Serve over cooked rice with assorted toppings, if desired.

**McCormick.com**

Please send your favorite recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2024. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

# Legislative Forum

Laura London

Five area electric cooperatives invited elected officials from the Northeast South Dakota districts to discuss issues impacting the utility industry and our members. Directors, managers and employees representing Lake Region Electric Association, Northern Electric, CamWal Electric, FEM Electric and Traverse Electric hosted the annual forum at the Moccasin Creek Country Club in Aberdeen. Char Hager, Northern's CEO & General Manager, was master of ceremonies for the event. SDREA General Manager Steve Barnett presented information about South Dakota's electric cooperatives. East River's Chief Member & Public Relations Officer Chris Studer presented information on issues affecting our cooperatives, including electric reliability and load growth in Basin and East River territories.

Emphasis was put on a finding by the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) identifying the top risk for electric reliability as Public Policy. South Dakota electric cooperatives have had a long standing "all-of-the-above" generation strategy to maintain reliability for our members. That reliability

is being threatened by generation assets taken offline too quickly (coal, natural gas, nuclear) that are being replaced with intermittent sources (solar, wind). Regulatory efforts like the EPA's Power Plant Rule threaten reliability.

Load growth and large loads coming online throughout Basin and East River territories are driving the need for additional power generation and transmission. Some good questions were posed by the legislators interested in what taking on large loads would mean for electric consumers in South Dakota, specifically in our region. Studer and LREA Board President Kermit Pearson gave a brief explanation of the need for cooperatives to help power these large loads while maintaining reliable power for the existing members of our cooperatives. Pearson, who serves as Vice President on the Basin Electric board and serves on East River's board, went on to say that Basin has been investing in additional generation and transmission. In order to meet the growing power needs of consumers, we need to increase generation from reliable sources such as natural gas, a valuable resource that is accessible in the Bakken formation in North Dakota. Studer continued the presentation discussing

preparations for the 2025 Legislative Session and how South Dakota Rural Electric Association's focus is on protecting the interest of the cooperative members. Potential legislation being watched for at the state level during the upcoming legislation include carbon dioxide pipelines and retail net metering.

Legislators in attendance at the forum were: Rep. Brandei Schaeftbauer, District 3; Rep. Al Novstrup, District 3; Sen. Carl Perry Dist. 3; Sen. Mark Lapka, District 23. Lake Region feels it is important to continually educate ourselves and others. We invite discussion on upcoming legislation with our representatives who were unable to attend the forum to help broaden understanding of the impact of legislation on our electric cooperative and our members.

## Legislators in Lake Region Electric Territory

**District: 01 Counties: Brown, Day, Marshall, Roberts**

- **Representative Logan Manhart:**  
2640 130th St NW Lot 81,  
Aberdeen, SD 57401
- **Representative Christopher Reder:**  
13958 387th Ave,  
Warner, SD 57479
- **Senator Michael Rohl:**  
38635 129th St.,  
Aberdeen, SD 57401



Left to right: Lindemann, Studer, Sen. Perry, Rep. Schaeftbauer, Sen. Lapka, Rep. Novstrup, Pearson



A historic photo shows a man standing in front of an auger used to dig holes for utility poles.  
*Photo submitted by Moreau-Grand Electric*



Janet Gesinger  
*Photo by Frank Turner*

## When the Lights Turned On: Janet Gesinger Remembers the Days Before Power

**Frank Turner**

[frank.turner@sdrea.coop](mailto:frank.turner@sdrea.coop)

Memory is a fickle thing. It's funny how a certain smell or simple photo can evoke vivid memories of an age long past. After all, how can a memory be lost when we can't even remember losing it?

At the age of 89, Janet Gesinger doesn't remember the exact moment when Cam Wal Electric, her local rural electric cooperative, introduced electricity to her childhood farm and ranch 13 miles west of Gettysburg, but she does remember the days without it.

"It's amazing that I can remember some things from my childhood so vividly, but I couldn't tell you what I had for lunch last week," Gesinger laughed.

Gesinger remembers growing up on the farm during a time when the glow of kerosene lamps helped her family navigate the dark and a cistern well kept their food cool.

"I don't know how we could see with the little lamps, but we did," she said. "People were careful because they knew

what the risks were, carrying around those lamps."

At the age of 9, Gesinger and her three older siblings lost their mother. The profound loss meant that Gesinger had to step up to help her siblings and father keep the farm and ranch going.

"I ended up helping my dad outside more than I did anything inside the house," she said. "We lived in such a remote place. There weren't even gravel roads back then. If I ever wanted to leave the farm, I had to help my brother milk cows and do chores so he would take me into town."

In high school, Gesinger's horizons broadened past the farm, and she began working as a waitress at the Medicine Rock Café where she met her late husband, Robert Gesinger. A year later the couple married and moved to Robert's family farm and ranch just a few miles north of Ridgeview in 1954. The Ridgeview community gained power just one year earlier in 1953, and Janet continues to live there now as a member of Moreau-Grand Electric.

When Janet moved to Ridgeview it was a bustling, small town with a grain elevator, a grocery store with a post office in it, a liquor store, a school, and electricity. Today, nearly all those amenities are a distant memory, but the rural electricity that continues to power the homes of the roughly 25 residents of Ridgeview, including Janet, remains.

"Ridgeview had gotten electricity just before we got married," she said.

Once she lived in a home with electricity, Janet found it hard to imagine life without it. One winter storm in 2010 wreaked havoc on the rural landscape and broke more than 200 utility poles, leaving Robert and Janet without power for 21 days.

"By day three of the outage, we ended up getting a PTO driven generator that could hook up to the tractor," Janet said. "Robert was sure glad when the power came back on, because that way we didn't have to fuel the tractor twice a day to run it – and the cost of diesel to run it."

Reflecting on her experiences, Janet acknowledges the transformative impact of electricity on rural life and finds it hard to imagine a world without electricity.

"It's an amazing convenience that we rely on," Janet said. "People today couldn't live without it because what in the world would ever replace it? We have a lot of technology in this world, but there is nothing that can replace electricity."

PLANNING AHEAD



An aerial view of the Pioneer Generation Station Phase IV near Williston, N.D. Photo submitted by Basin Electric Power Cooperative.

# FORECASTING THE FUTURE

## Basin Electric's Vision for Reliable Energy

**Frank Turner**

frank.turner@sdrea.coop

Keeping the lights on in a dynamic world isn't as simple as flipping a switch. It requires a forward-thinking approach, almost like gazing into a crystal ball, to anticipate future energy demand. Energy infrastructure projects begin long before the first shovel breaks ground, and it's a challenge that Basin Electric Power Cooperative confronts every day to ensure consistent and

reliable power amid an ever-changing landscape of new technologies and growing membership.

A new plant or transmission line can take years of planning and coordination by Basin Electric and its member cooperatives. The process is similar to predicting the weather; it all begins with a forecast to determine what energy demand is brewing on the horizon.

Basin Electric works with the members and other stakeholders to

develop highly accurate load forecasts. Those load forecasts are then compared against our existing resource portfolio. If any gaps are identified, resource alternatives are identified and reviewed against each other to arrive at the best resource portfolio outcome.

"Once a need for a new generation project or transmission project has been identified, Basin Electric assembles a project team," explained Matt Ehrman, vice president of engineering and construction at Basin Electric.

"Developing and defining project scope is vital to project success as it's really the foundation for the project," Ehrman continued. "Good upfront planning minimizes project execution



risks later, so Basin places a lot of emphasis on the development work that happens before any detailed engineering design can begin.”

Basin Electric is currently undertaking one of its largest single-site electric generation projects in the last 40 years near Williston, North Dakota, known as Pioneer Generation Station Phase IV. Once completed, this project will add 580 megawatts of natural gas generation capacity to Basin Electric’s energy portfolio. Although the project broke ground in March 2023, planning for the project began in 2021, standing as a testament to the cooperative’s long-term mindset and commitment to meeting its load forecast.

So what goes into the planning of such a major project? Ehrman says everything from identifying project objectives to permitting and contracting strategies to engineering studies all take place within the years leading up to new infrastructure.

“In the case of a generation project, the project site, fuel, water, and transmission sources are identified during the project development phase,” Ehrman said. “After the development phase is complete, the more detailed engineering design work can begin. This is when the engineers really begin to dig into the details of how to arrange and interconnect all of the many different types of equipment



The first gas turbine delivery for Pioneer Generation Station Phase IV. Photo submitted by Basin Electric Power Cooperative.

required for a given project. Eventually, those design details are used to develop construction specifications, contractors are selected and construction begins.”

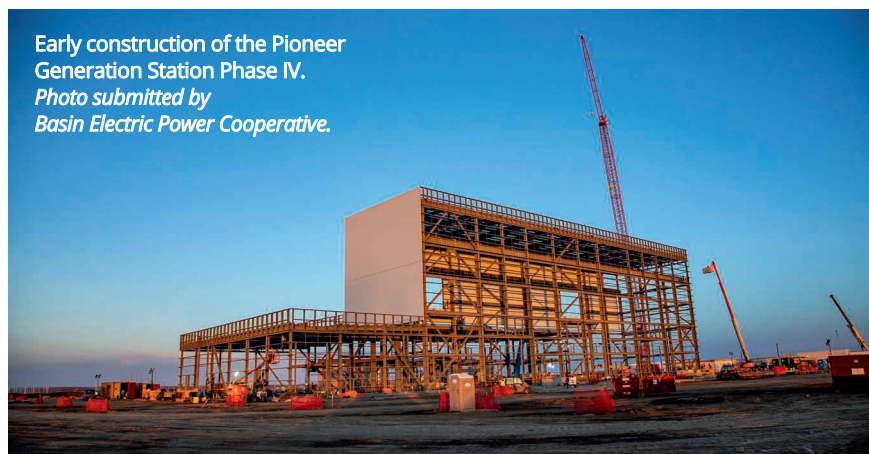
Beyond the demanding complexity of the project itself, Basin Electric’s project team must also navigate regulatory matters and policy. While many projects share similarities, no two are identical when navigating federal, state, and local permitting requirements.

“Large generation and transmission projects can take years to permit, and the permitting duration depends on the project,” Ehrman said. “Basin’s

teams have successfully permitted and executed many projects over the years and as a result have learned a lot about those processes in our service territory.”

Slated to be operational in 2025, Pioneer Generation Station Phase IV will come on board during a time when electricity demand is increasing significantly. The completion of the project will expand Basin Electric’s resource portfolio, which uses a vast diversity of generation resources to serve its member cooperatives. Even still, Ehrman said it still takes a massive effort to stay prepared for what the future may bring.

“Planning and building energy infrastructure is a massive team effort that involves teams from Basin and its membership,” he said. “These are complex projects, and there are challenges involved in all phases of the projects. Basin has extremely talented, dedicated and hard-working teams developing these projects that really enjoy working out all the technical and non-technical details while mitigating risks to achieve success and deliver the best possible outcome for the membership.”



Early construction of the Pioneer Generation Station Phase IV. Photo submitted by Basin Electric Power Cooperative.

# SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE



Laura London

Lake Region Electric Association offers scholarships to help ease some of the burden for members with students planning to attend college or technical school.

Education and Concern for Community are two of the seven Cooperative Principles that we are guided by. One way that we show this dedication and concern is by providing scholarship

opportunities for those who intend to further their education by attending a vocational program or a traditional college or university. Lake Region Electric Association has two scholarship opportunities available for area students: The Duane Snaza Memorial Scholarship, the Basin Electric Power Cooperative Scholarship. Lake Region Electric Association also helps facilitate the Charles Johnson Trust Scholarship.

The Basin Electric Power Cooperative (BEPC) / Lake Region Scholarship is funded by LREA's energy partner, Basin Electric. This \$1,000 is awarded to the dependent children, including adopted or stepchildren, of member-owners of Lake Region Electric Association. The applicant must be a U.S. citizen and must be a student who is enrolled, or is planning to enroll, in a full-time undergraduate course of study at an accredited, two-year or four-year college, university or vocational/technical school.

Recipients for this scholarship are selected based on academic record, potential to succeed, leadership and participation in school and community activities, honors, work experience, a statement of education and career goals, and an outside appraisal.

The Duane Snaza Memorial Scholarship was created by Lake Region Electric Association's Board of Directors to honor a former employee. Duane Snaza worked at LREA for three summers. Duane's mother, Jackie Snaza, is a LREA member-owner.

This \$1,000 scholarship will be awarded to one student who is the dependent child, including adopted or stepchild, of member-owners of Lake Region Electric Association. The applicant must be a U.S. citizen and must be a student who is enrolled, or is planning to enroll, in a full-time undergraduate

course of study at an accredited, two-year or four-year college, university or vocational/technical school.

This scholarship is awarded based on the following criteria: participation in school and community activities, grade-point average, work experience, SAT/ACT scores, statement by student explaining his/her educational and career goals, a written recommendation by a third party and presentation of the application.

To apply for these scholarship opportunities, students must complete the required criteria and the scholarship application, which can be obtained from your high school counselor, by visiting our website [www.lakeregion.coop](http://www.lakeregion.coop), or from the Lake Region Electric Association Office. Applicants must provide all of the required information and complete the scholarship application. Submissions MUST BE POSTMARKED OR RETURNED BY FEB. 14, 2025, to Lake Region Electric Association, PO Box 341, Webster, SD 57274. For more information, contact Laura London at Lake Region Electric Association by email: [llondon@lakeregion.coop](mailto:llondon@lakeregion.coop) or by telephone: 605-345-3379 or 1-800-657-5869.

**TAKE REGION ELECTRIC**  
A TrueSource Energy Company

## Scholarships Available

<p><b>Basin Electric / Lake Region Scholarship</b></p> <p><b>\$1,000<sup>00</sup></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application</li> <li>• Academic Record</li> <li>• Potential to Succeed</li> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Community Involvement</li> <li>• Honors</li> <li>• Work Experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application</li> <li>• Academic Record</li> <li>• Potential to Succeed</li> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Community Involvement</li> <li>• Honors</li> <li>• Work Experience</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application</li> <li>• Potential to Succeed</li> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Community Involvement</li> <li>• Honors</li> <li>• Work Experience</li> </ul>	<p><b>Duane Snaza Lake Region Memorial Scholarship</b></p> <p><b>\$1,000<sup>00</sup></b></p>

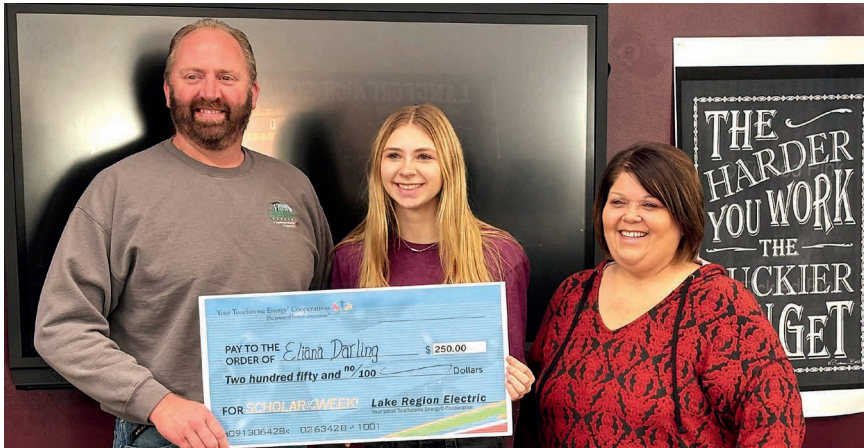
For questions about scholarships, contact Laura London at Lake Region

Phone: 605-345-3379  
Email: [LLondon@lakeregion.coop](mailto:LLondon@lakeregion.coop)

Applications are available from your school counselor or on our website: [www.lakeregion.coop](http://www.lakeregion.coop)

Completed applications must be postmarked or returned to the Lake Region Office by February 14, 2025

# LAKE REGION ELECTRIC RECOGNIZES LANGFORD STUDENT AS SCHOLAR OF THE WEEK



Lake Region Electric Association is pleased to announce Langford Area High School student Eliana Darling as a Touchstone Energy® Scholar of the Week winner for the week of November 24, 2024 - November 30, 2024. The scholar of the week program is a partnership between Dakota News Now Television, Lake Region Electric Association and other local Touchstone Energy Cooperatives that honors accomplished high school students.

Nominations for the weekly awards are submitted by area school principals and faculty, whose selections are based on excellence in the classroom and service in the community. “Eliana shows up every day with the attitude that she’s giving her very best. She is a student who believes in upholding our school traditions and values and shows leadership to younger students by being a role model in our school and community. Eliana is not only a stellar musician, but a great student, and valuable team leader. Everyone you talk to feels blessed to have her,” said Kelly Wieser who

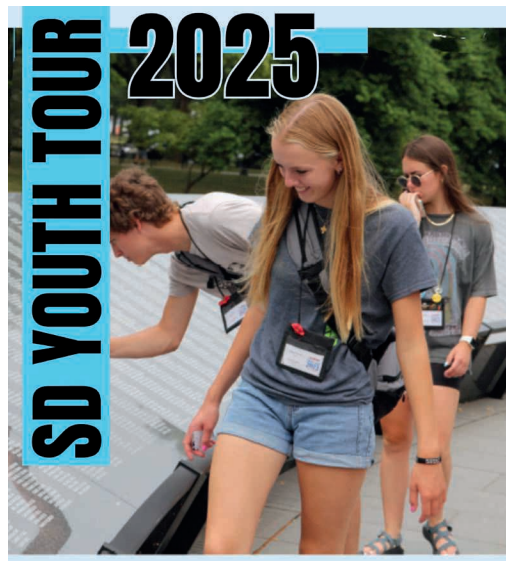
nominated Eliana for this award. Eliana maintains a 4.0 GPA while participating in many activities such as volleyball, basketball, student council, school play, choir, band, all state chorus, honor band, marching band drum major, and girls state. She also supports her community in various roles including church youth

leader, church camp counselor.

“Lake Region Electric Association salutes Eliana and all students who set an example of hard work and high academic standards,” said Lake Region Electric Association General Manager Jeremy Lindemann. As a Scholar of the Week, Eliana was featured on Dakota News Now and received a \$250 scholarship from Lake Region Electric Association. Eliana is also eligible to receive a \$1,000 scholarship or one of two \$500 scholarships that will be given away this spring at the annual Scholar of the Year banquet.

Touchstone Energy Cooperatives are local, active members of their communities, dedicated to building our communities and improving our way of life. Since the Scholar of the Week program began, more than \$80,000 in scholarships have been awarded to more than 530 students. The program is a great partnership between local Touchstone Energy Cooperatives and their members and truly captures the commitment that electric cooperatives have to the communities they serve.

For more information about Lake Region Electric Association or Touchstone Energy Cooperatives, please contact Laura London at 605-345-3379.



## High School Juniors & Seniors:

Join students from across South Dakota for a free,\* once-in-a-lifetime trip to Washington, D.C., sponsored by your rural electric cooperative.

**June 15-21**

Applications Can Be Found On our Website: [www.lakeregion.coop](http://www.lakeregion.coop)

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT  
 Laura London  
 LLondon@Lakeregion.coop  
 Lake Region Electric Association  
 PO Box 341  
 Webster, SD 57274  
 605-345-3379



\*Travel, lodging and meals are paid by your cooperative.



## LOOKING AHEAD

An aerial view of the Wild Springs Solar Project near New Underwood, S.D. Photo submitted by East River Electric

### Wind Energy Association Changes Name, Advocates For All Renewables

**Jacob Boyko**  
jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

The South Dakota Wind Energy Association is getting a fresh coat of paint this year with a rebrand that will expand the association’s advocacy mission to include more forms of renewable energy.

As solar energy generation in the state increases with new and upcoming projects, expanding the association — now called the South Dakota Renewable Energy Association — to include other forms of renewable energy and battery storage was the clear way forward according to association president and Sioux Valley Energy Director Gary Fish.

“The association started out as being very wind oriented, and that’s our legacy,” Fish explained. “But we also have somewhat migrated to having an energy portfolio where wind coexists

with coal, natural gas and solar, and that was the driver behind changing our name.”

The change comes in the wake of South Dakota’s first large-scale solar farm near New Underwood, which began commercial operation in March 2024. Basin Electric Power Cooperative will purchase 114 megawatts of the 128-megawatt renewable project.

The association began with the

leadership of East River Electric Power Cooperative in the mid-2000s as the generation and transmission co-op looked for ways to develop wind generation in the state to serve its growing member utilities and bring economic development and job opportunities to the state.

“Wind energy was at that time starting to become a more viable utility-scale source of power generation,” said Chris Studer, chief member and public relations officer at East River Electric.

A look on the ground as crews prepare the Wild Springs Solar Project for power generation. Photo submitted by East River Electric



“East River led an effort to build an association of stakeholders in South Dakota that can help advocate for the wind industry.”

It’s a mission that’s propelled South Dakota to being the state with the third highest renewable energy makeup, with more than 54% of in-state power generated from renewable wind and solar resources.

“We’ve gone from essentially zero wind energy to more than 3,000 megawatts of installed capacity in the state,” Studer said. “We have far surpassed what our original goal was.”

In the South Dakota Wind Energy Association’s initial stages, the board was composed mostly of utilities and developers focused on studying potential economic benefits and the infrastructure needs that come with increasing generation.

“I think everyone knew we had a great wind resource, but the real issue was having additional transmission to get the power out,” Fish said. “Could we build

the towers? Yes. Could we get the power to market? That was the challenge.”

As the association successfully made the case for wind energy, the membership grew to include other G&Ts and investor-owned utilities, landowner groups, turbine manufacturers, servicing companies and others from the wind energy supply chain.

One of the first large-scale renewable energy wins for the South Dakota Wind Energy Association and rural electric cooperatives was the 2011 commissioning of the 172-megawatt Crow Lake Project north of White Lake, South Dakota. The association membership helped support the launch of South Dakota Wind Partners to bring local residents an opportunity to invest in and own several turbines in the project.

According to East River Electric, the program generated about \$16 million worth of local investment.

“It was a very unique and successful

project that the South Dakota Wind Energy Association had involvement in and advocated for,” Studer said. “The people that invested got tax equity benefits over time, and after about 10 years they sold it back to Basin Electric and got their investments back.”

Moving forward, the association will continue to advocate for a renewable energy-friendly business environment to propel South Dakota energy projects forward.

“South Dakota Renewable Energy Association is here to make sure our state’s tax policies are fair, that developers still want to come here and develop renewable energy projects, and that there’s a market for all of the supply chain that’s needed for wind energy and now for solar, as well as the necessary transmission,” Studer continued.

A new South Dakota Renewable Energy Association website and promotional material will debut within the next several months.



The Crow Lake Wind Project near White Lake, S.D., is the largest wind project owned solely by a cooperative in the United States. The \$363 million wind project went into operation in 2011.

*Photo submitted by East River Electric*

Lake Region Electric Association

# 2024 Recap

Looking back at 2024, LREA had another busy year! Despite changes and a few challenges, we remained focused on infrastructure upgrades and member service.

## Tim McIntyre Retirement

After 20 years with Lake Region Electric and 37 years in the utility industry, Tim McIntyre announced his retirement as CEO & General Manager. McIntyre made his announcement at the annual meeting. "What a privilege it has been to be a part of this employee team. I give a heart-filled thank you to my employees, directors and to you, the member-owners of Lake Region Electric for such a wonderful career."



## Rate Increase

Lake Region Electric had their first rate increase in ten years. The increase went into effect May 1st. A Cost of Service Study indicated a rate increase was necessary due to increasing rising costs of materials, infrastructure upgrades, and the overall cost of doing business. The mid-2024 increase was \$10 increase to the base rate and \$0.002 per kWh of energy use.



## Capital Credits Returned

\$791,802 in patronage returned to members in the form of Capital Credits.



## Year End Numbers

Miles of Line  
2,180  
Underground = 796  
Overhead = 868

Meters  
3,453  
Members  
2,160

Employees 22  
1 CEO/General Manager, 4 Managers, 7 Line Crew, 3 Electricians, 2 Utility Specialists, 1 Material Clerk, 1 Accountant, 2 Office Staff, 1 Custodian

Governance  
Directors 7  
Incumbent Directors Kilker & Kuecker ran unopposed in the 2024 election.

*Lake Region Electric will be CLOSED Wednesday, January 1st, 2025 .*



### Storms

2024 began with clean up and repairs from a winter ice storm that blew through Lake Region Territory. Over the span of 3 days, 221 Lake Region members experienced outages lasting anywhere from one hour to 26 hours; with the majority out for around 10 hours. The ice concentration around the Hillhead substation caused the most outages.

July 31, 2024, Thunderstorms rolled through the area causing widespread outages for members of Lake Region. Lightening and high winds with gusts reaching 55 miles per hour downed trees and poles as well as causing other damage to equipment. Crews had most outages restored in less than four hours but worked over the next week to repair damages. Approximately 135 labor hours were spent on storm repair and clean up.



### Safety

LREA hosted a demonstration for area First Responders. Dozens of members of local Fire Departments, EMTs, Police and Sheriff's Office employees attended to view demonstrations that included high voltage, down wires, farm power, meters, and more. LREA plans to continue to host events to promote safety and positive relationships in the community.

### Lindemann Joins LREA as New CEO/GM

The Lake Region Board of Directors conducted an extensive search to find the right candidate to be the new CEO and General Manager of our cooperative. Lindemann spent the past 22 years working for Roseau Electric, a cooperative in northern Minnesota. He is no stranger to South Dakota, having lived in the state when he was younger, spending time hunting and fishing with his father and other family members. Lindemann was scheduled to start working for Lake Region October 1st but hit the ground running, coming on board September 23rd.



### Youth



#### Scholarships

Basin/LREA - \$1,000 - Emma Kraft  
 Basin Employee - \$1,000 - Carter Williams  
 LREA Duane Snaza - \$1,000 - Ella Hegg

#### Youth Tour

Hunter Biel represented LREA in Washington DC with the Rural Electric Youth Tour.

#### Kids Learn Electrical Safety

LREA put on multiple programs to teach kids electrical safety, including a class for 4-H to learn how to make extension cords.

*Have a SAFE and Happy New Year!*

## REGISTER TO WIN!

Bring this coupon and mailing label to the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives booth at Black Hills Stock Show & Rodeo to win a Blackstone electric grill!

Your Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Your E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_



**JAN. 11**  
**Snow Queen Coronation**  
7 p.m.  
Aberdeen Civic Theater  
Aberdeen, SD  
SDSnowQueen.com

Photo courtesy of South Dakota Snow Queen Festival

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.

**UNTIL DEC. 26**  
**Christmas at the Capitol**  
8 a.m.-10 p.m.  
Pierre, SD  
605-773-3178

**UNTIL DEC. 29**  
**Trees & Trains Exhibit at SD State Railroad Museum**  
Hill City, SD  
605-665-3636

**UNTIL DEC. 31**  
**Olde Tyme Christmas at participating businesses, Lane of Lights Viewing**  
Hill City, SD

**UNTIL DEC. 31**  
**Garden Glow at McCrory Gardens**  
5-9 p.m.  
Brookings, SD

**UNTIL DEC. 31**  
**Hall of Trees**  
12-4 p.m. Mon.-Sat.  
The Mead Museum  
Yankton, SD

**DEC. 31**  
**American Legion Post 15 Save the Last Dance 2024**  
8 p.m.-12:30 a.m.  
El Riad Shrine  
Sioux Falls, SD  
605-336-3470

**DEC. 31-JAN. 1**  
**New Year's Eve in Deadwood**  
Deadwood, SD  
800-999-1876

**JAN. 5, FEB. 2**  
**American Legion Post 15 Pancake Breakfast**  
8:30 a.m.-12 p.m.  
1600 W. Russel St.  
Sioux Falls, SD  
605-336-3470

**JAN. 7-9**  
**Dakota Farm Show**  
Tue. & Wed. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Thurs. 9 a.m.-3 p.m.  
USD DakotaDome  
Vermillion, SD

**JAN. 11.**  
**Coats for Kids Bowling Tournament**  
Meadowood Lanes  
Rapid City, SD  
605-393-2081

**JAN. 15**  
**46th Ranchers Workshop**  
9 a.m.-3 p.m.  
Community Events Center  
White River, SD  
605-259-3252 ext. 3

**JAN. 18**  
**Breakin' the Winter Blues Chili Cookoff**  
Main Street  
Hill City, SD

**JAN. 26**  
**Souper Supper Fundraiser Rapid Valley United Methodist Church**  
5:30-7:30 p.m.  
Tickets \$6  
5103 Longview Dr.  
Rapid City, SD

**JAN. 31-FEB. 8**  
**Black Hills Stock Show & Rodeo**  
Central States Fairground  
Rapid City, SD  
605-355-3861

**FEB. 14-17**  
**11th Annual Frost Fest**  
9 a.m.-3 p.m.  
Brookings, SD  
605-692-7444

**FEB. 22**  
**Bellator Titans Charter Casino Night Fundraiser**  
6-11 p.m.  
316 2nd St.  
Aberdeen, SD

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