



# COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

## Let's Go Fly a Kite

**Brookings Kite Festival  
Creates Excitement**

Pages 8-9

**Cooperative Metering**

Pages 12-13

*Photo Credit: Visit Brookings*

## Petitions for Director Elections are now available



### NOMINATING PETITIONS DUE BY AUGUST 15.

Director elections will take place at the 2024 Annual Meeting on August 22, 2024.

Terms expiring in each district are:

- Chase Binger, Beadle Electric
- Todd Bushong, Ree Electric
- Chad Dearborn, Ree Electric

Dakota Energy uses a petition process to nominate directors. A petition must be circulated for each candidate. Candidates must be cooperative members and reside in the district they wish to represent. A designated representative of an entity may seek election, however, the representative must be a permanent, year-round resident in the district to be served.

Each petition must be signed by at least 15 cooperative members.

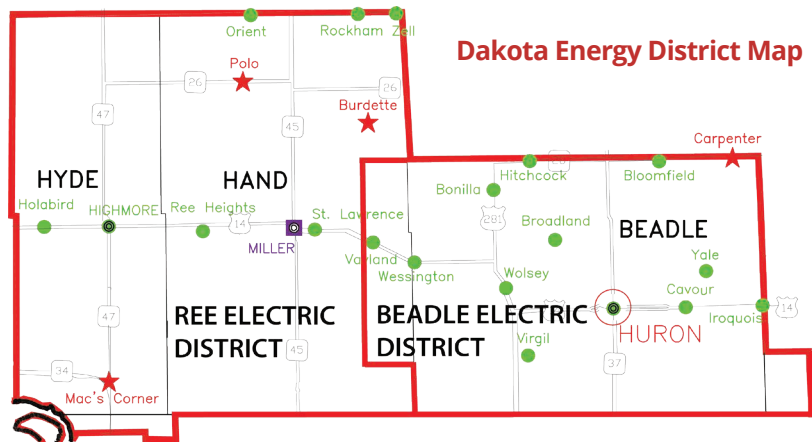
Only one party of a joint membership may sign a petition; but not both.

Petitions are available at Dakota Energy's offices in Huron and Miller. Director petitions must be submitted at the cooperative headquarters in Huron by 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 15, 2024.:

- No petition filed after August 15, 2024 shall be considered valid.

- Nominations are not permitted from the floor during the meeting.

For a complete copy of Dakota Energy Cooperative's Bylaws, contact Dakota Energy at 605-352-8591 or stop by the offices. The Bylaws are also available.



### DAKOTA ENERGY COOPERATIVE ANNUAL MEETING

**DATE:** THURSDAY, AUGUST 22, 2024  
**TIME:** 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

**LOCATIONS:** Dakota Energy Offices  
Huron & Miller

Highmore City Auditorium  
Highmore

**FORMAT:** In-Person and Drive-Thru

**QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION:** 1:15 - 1:45 PM



**DAKOTA ENERGY COOPERATIVE, INC.**

**COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS**



(USPS No. 018-949)

**Board President:** Darrell Raschke, Huron

**Board of Directors**

- Nick Nemeč, Holabird - Vice President
- Tommy Baruth, Alpena - Secretary
- Brian Bonebright, Wessington - Treasurer
- Brian Baum, Alpena
- Chase Binger, Hitchcock
- Todd Bushong, Tulare
- Chad Dearborn, Miller
- Doug Schaefer, Orient

**CEO/General Manager:** Chad Felderman

**Manager of Operations:** Matt Zomer

**Manager of Finance & Administration:** Eric Hasart

**Manager of Human Resources & Communications:** Jodene Decker

**Manager of Member Services:** Jeff Gilbert

Dakota Energy Cooperative Connections is the monthly publication for the members of Dakota Energy Cooperative, PO Box 830, 40294 US Hwy 14, Huron, SD 57350. Members subscribe to Cooperative Connections as part of their electric cooperative membership. The purpose of Dakota Energy Cooperative Connections is to provide reliable, helpful information to electric cooperative members on electric cooperative matters and better rural living.

**Subscription information:** Dakota Energy Cooperative members devote 50 cents from their monthly electric payments for a subscription. Non-member subscriptions are available for \$12 annually. USPS No. 0819-949 Periodicals Postage Paid at Huron, SD 57350. Postmaster: Please send address changes to Dakota Energy Cooperative Connections, PO Box 830, Huron, SD 57350; telephone (605) 352-8591; fax (605) 524-7064; email dakotaenergy@dakotaenergy.coop

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

[www.dakotaenergy.com](http://www.dakotaenergy.com)  
 Facebook @dakotaenergy  
 Twitter @DakotaEC



# Dakota Energy Welcomes Brecken Glanzer



Brecken Glanzer has embarked on a unique journey this summer, joining the operations and member services crews at Dakota Energy. He has been granted the opportunity to work alongside both our line workers and electricians, gaining invaluable exposure to power line construction and maintenance, as well as residential and commercial electrical wiring.

Brecken, a recent graduate from Huron High School, is set to further his education and skills at Mitchell Technical College this fall. He has enrolled in their Power Line Construction and Maintenance program.

# Fireworks Safety

Summer is synonymous with barbecues, parades and fireworks. The National Safety Council advises everyone to enjoy fireworks at public displays conducted by professionals, and not to use any fireworks at home. They may be legal but they are not safe.

Every year, thousands of people are injured badly enough to require medical treatment after fireworks-related incidents, with many of the injuries to children and young adults. While the majority of these incidents are due to amateurs attempting to use professional-grade, homemade or other illegal fireworks or explosives, less powerful devices like small firecrackers and sparklers can also cause significant injury.

Additionally, fireworks start an average of 19,000 fires each year.

### Fireworks Safety Tips: If You Choose to Use Legal Fireworks

If consumer fireworks are legal to buy where you live and you choose to use them, be sure to follow the following safety tips:

- Never allow young children to handle fireworks
- Older children should use them only under close adult supervision
- Never use fireworks while impaired by drugs or alcohol
- Anyone using fireworks or standing nearby should wear protective eyewear
- Never hold lighted fireworks in your hands
- Never light them indoors
- Only use them away from people, houses and flammable material
- Never point or throw fireworks at another person
- Only light one device at a time and maintain a safe distance after lighting
- Never ignite devices in a container
- Do not try to re-light or handle malfunctioning fireworks
- Soak both spent and unused fireworks in water for a few hours before discarding
- Keep a bucket of water nearby to fully extinguish fireworks that don't go off or in case of fire
- Never use illegal fireworks

Better yet, grab a blanket and a patch of lawn, kick back and let the experts handle the fireworks show.

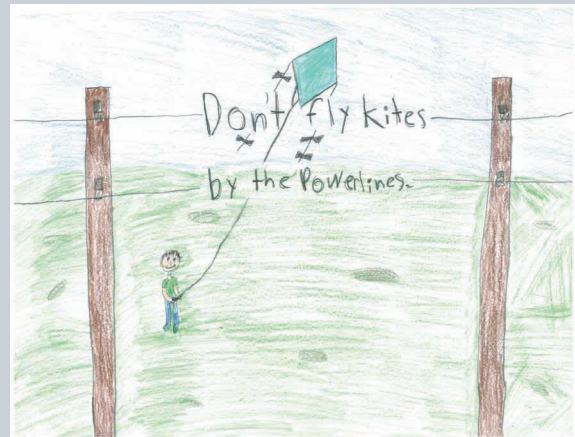
### Sparklers Are Dangerous

Every year, young children can be found along parade routes and at festivals with sparklers in hand, but sparklers are a lot more dangerous than most people think.

Sparklers burn at about 2,000 degrees – hot enough to melt some metals. Sparklers can quickly ignite clothing, and children have received severe burns from dropping sparklers on their feet. According to the National Fire Protection Association, sparklers alone account for more than 25% of emergency room visits for fireworks injuries. For children under five years of age, sparklers accounted for nearly half of the total estimated injuries.

Consider using safer alternatives, such as glow sticks, confetti poppers or colored streamers.

*Source: National Safety Council*



**“Let’s Go Fly a Kite Up to  
the Highest Heights.”**

### Eldon Femrite, Age 12

Eldon Femrite warns readers to not fly kites by power lines this summer. Eldon’s parents are Jody and Rosemary Femrite, members of Codington-Clark 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.

# DELICIOUS Desserts

## NO CHURN ICE CREAM

### Ingredients:

2 cups heavy cream  
14 oz. sweetened condensed milk  
Other mix-ins as desired

### Method

In a mixing bowl, whip heavy cream until stiff peaks form.

Mix in sweetened condensed milk and any flavors/mix-ins you like (strawberries, Oreos, lemon, vanilla extract, etc.).

Pour into loaf pan and freeze until solid (2+ hours).

Kayla Beaner  
Centerville, S.D.

## CINNAMON PECAN PIE

### Ingredients:

1 refrigerated pie crust, (from 14.1-oz. pkg.)  
3 eggs, lightly beaten  
1 cup firmly packed light brown sugar  
1 cup light corn syrup  
2 tbsps. butter, melted  
1 tsp. cinnamon extract  
1 1/2 cups pecan pieces

### Method

Preheat oven to 350°F. Prepare pie crust as directed on package for one-crust pie using 9-inch pie plate.

Mix eggs, sugar, corn syrup, butter and cinnamon flavor in large bowl until well blended. Stir in pecans.

Pour into crust. Bake 50 to 55 minutes or until knife inserted halfway between center and edge comes out clean. Cool completely on wire rack.

McCormick.com

## RHUBARB PIE

### Ingredients:

#### Crust

1-2 cups flour  
1/2 stick butter or margarine  
1/4 cup water

#### Pie

3 tbsps. butter or margarine  
1 cup sugar  
3 eggs, separated  
2 tbsps. flour  
1/2 tsp. salt  
2 1/2 cups cut rhubarb  
Smucker's caramel sundae syrup

### Method

**Crust:** Add ingredients and knead to complete pie crust. Amounts will vary due to humidity. Knead dough into pie pan and poke holes into the bottom as needed. You may make creative edges as you wish, however it is not necessary.

**Pie:** Soften butter or margarine and stir together with the sugar, egg yolks, flour, and salt. Beat egg whites until stiff. Add rhubarb and fold in the egg whites. Add the filling to the 8-inch, unbaked pie crust. You may add a drizzle of Smucker's sundae syrup for additional flavoring before baking. Bake in oven set at 400 until golden brown. You may also add more caramel syrup to pie after baking for ultimate effect.

Lisa Kummer Soukup  
Tea, S.D.

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.



**Jeff Gilbert**  
Manager of  
Member Services

## Handle Irrigation Equipment with Care

Producers rely on irrigation systems to provide water to their crops. Many pivot systems use a high-voltage (480-volt) power supply to pump water and run several electrical motors at the towers used to move the system. Safety becomes even more critical when dealing with high-voltage irrigation systems due to the increased risk of electric shock and other hazards.

Although producers are usually great at fixing anything and everything, it's a good idea to have a qualified electrician install and maintain your irrigation's electrical system, which must meet the National Electrical Code. Hire someone who is experienced and well-versed in irrigation systems.

You might take for granted your irrigation electrical system while it is working correctly, but it needs proper attention:

- If your electrically driven center pivot system is not working correctly, it could be deadly or hazardous.
- If electrical equipment or wiring is faulty, you could get shocked or electrocuted.

- Irrigation systems run by an electric motor must be adequately grounded.
- A system's electricals should have a fuse or some means of disconnection.
- Always shut off and lock the master control switch before servicing the machine.
- Do not allow irrigation water nozzles to spray on power lines.
- Install lightning arrestors to help protect your equipment.
- Seal holes to keep rodent damage to a minimum.
- Inspect the pump and wiring before the start of each irrigation season, and consult your electrician with any concerns.

Call Dakota Energy's Member Service Department to have a qualified electrician answer any questions you have about the irrigation electrical system.

# APRIL 2024

The Board of Directors met on Tuesday, April 23, 2024, with Directors Baruth, Baum, Binger, Bonebright, Bushong, Dearborn, Nemeč, Raschke, and Schaefer present. Manager Felderman and Employees Decker, Gilbert, Hasart, Picek, Rakness, and Zomer were present.

## MANAGER'S REPORT

Manager Felderman reported on the following items:

- Energy sales and revenue
- Basin's Filing in FERC
- Crow Creek
- Basin
- CRC
- NextGen
- GHDC
- 2024 Annual Meeting
- Glacial Lakes shutdown
- Poles changes
- Service rebuilds
- Wolsey substation metering equipment retired
- Storm damage

## MEMBER SERVICES REPORT

Manager of Member Services Gilbert reported on the following items:

- Wiring department workload
- Potential hazards
- Load control savings
- Kohler certification update
- SDREA Member Services Meeting
- State Fair assistance
- School safety presentations

## HUMAN RESOURCES/ COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

Manager of HR/Communications Decker reported on the following items:

- Sale barn coffee events
- School safety presentations
- Summer help hired
- Career fair
- Line Patrol Charity Ride bowling tourney
- Basin member employee scholarship awarded to Journey Palmer

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY REPORT

Information Technology Administrator Rakness reported on the following items:

- Computer purchases
- Security camera installation
- Venture Communications phone and Internet
- Website and cybersecurity

## BOARD ACTION

The following items were acted upon:

- Accepted the reports presented
- Approved SD Timed Event Championship sponsorship
- Approved board policies

## BOARD REPORTS

Director Raschke reported on East River's April 2024 regular board meeting.

Director Nemeč reported on SDREA March 2024 regular board meeting.

Next monthly board meeting is June 25, 2024 at 10:00 am in the Huron office.

## OFFICE SERVICES REPORT

Manager of Finance and Administration Hasart reported on the following items:

- March financial reports
- 2023 Capital credit allocation
- 10-year financial forecast
- SDREA Office Manager's & Accounting Meeting
- US Census Economic Survey
- Data center rate presentation by East River Chief Financial Officer Scott Shewey

## OPERATIONS REPORT

Manager of Operations Zomer reported on the following items:

- Construction, maintenance, and retirement activities
- Larson's URD installation West of the Miller substation

### Year-to-Date Financial Report

	Apr-24	Year-to-Date
Total Revenue .....	\$2,049,093	\$9,114,130
Cost of Power .....	\$1,457,572	\$6,480,039
Operating Expenses .....	\$612,894	\$2,537,690
Total Margins .....	\$46,627	\$423,275
KwH's Purchased .....	19,849,513	90,063,245
Services in Place .....		3,626
Miles of Line .....		2,535
Members per Mile .....		1.43



**ON THE GO AND IN CONTROL**

**MANAGE**

**your account**

**VIEW AND PAY**

**your bill**

**MONITOR**

**usage 24/7**

**... all in the palm of your hand and online**



## KITE FESTIVAL



*Photo Credit: Visit Brookings*

# Let's Go Fly a Kite

**Shannon Marvel**

shannon.marvel@sdrea.coop

The sky becomes more of an art canvas during the Brookings Kite Festival. For the last 25 years, kite fliers from across the country gather to let their art take flight at the festival.

One of those artists is Mike Gee of North Dakota.

“We go down there to Brookings and really like the kite flying field there. It’s just nice to come down and fly kites with friends who also enjoy flying kites,” Gee said.

Gee flies what’s called “show kites”, which are big, inflatable kites that can span 20 feet across the sky.

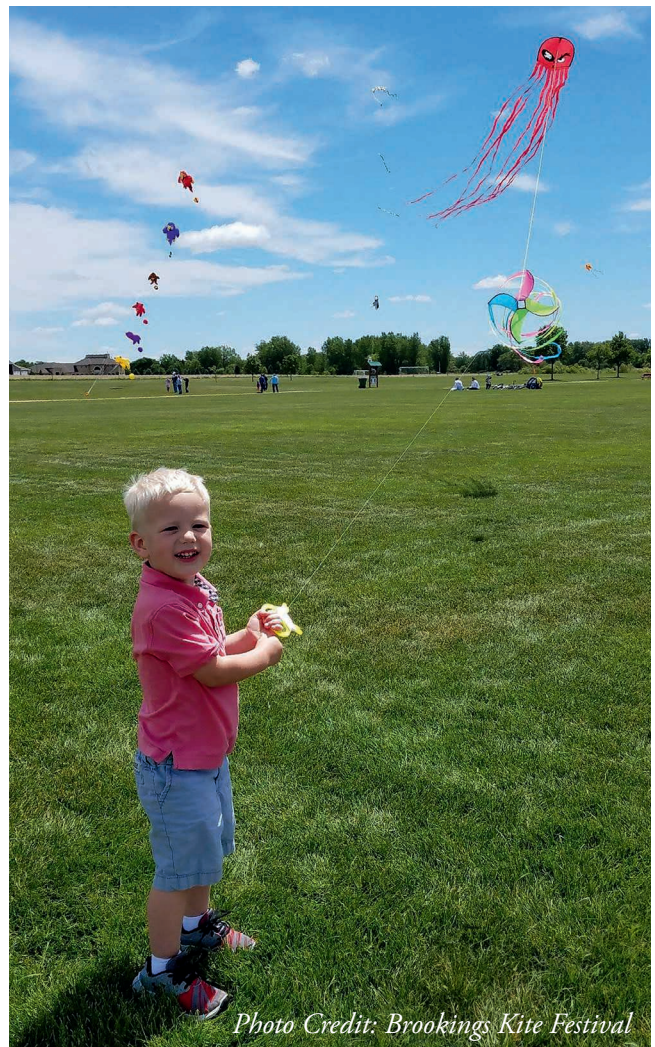
There are other kites flown during the festival, including soft kites, stick kites and sport kites.

A sport kite is one that is attached to two or four lines. Often they’ll be flown in teams and perform maneuvers in the sky.

“If you talk about crazy kites, there’s a wide variety. There are so many different creative people building things in creative ways,” Gee said. “It is definitely an art. It’s what you put on the canvas that makes it special.”

The kites are typically made with nylon, sail making cloth that doesn’t stretch.

“You can’t just go to the fabric store and buy tent fabric. We have a couple different weights of fabrics we use. And you need that tail on there to keep the kite stable,” Gee said.



*Photo Credit: Brookings Kite Festival*





*Photo Credit: Brookings Register*

Sally Damm Norby, of the Brookings Optimists Club, said the festival got its start when Lynn Versher, former director of the South Dakota Art Museum, approached Optimist member Bill Flynn about creating a joint effort to bring big kites to Brookings.

“This volunteer organization aims to make a positive impact on the lives of youth and communities. The Brookings club’s primary focus is on advancing the opportunities and programs for youth events that are encouraging with exceptional supportive outcomes. The Brookings Optimist Kite Festival offers a comprehensive learning experience that incorporates expressions of culture, science, creativity, civic involvement, and is

environmentally friendly,” Norby said.

Youth are encouraged to come down and learn how to make a kite of their own, with professional guidance.

Gee said he encourages visitors to come up to kite fliers to ask questions or strike up a conversation.

“One thing I really like about kite flying is it seems like no matter who you talk to on the field, someone can relate to an experience of flying a kite,” Gee said. “When we start flying kites, it brings back memories of when other folks were kids flying kites. It’s kind of emotional for some people.”

This year’s event will take place on June 22-23 at the Fishback Soccer Park in Brookings.

Gee said this location is a safe spot to fly kites, and well away from any electrical line hazards.

“If you’ve flown kites long enough, you have a story about power lines. When you hit a line, you call the power company, and they advise you of what to do. The best thing to do is avoid those wires. I always think, ‘If my line breaks, which way is my kite going to go and what’s over there,’” Gee said.

Gee encourages visitors to come down to the Brookings Kite Festival with their lawn chairs and blankets and stay for more than just a half hour.

“The thing is when the wind changes direction or speed, the kites change. There’s just so much going on throughout the day. You’ve really got to sit back and pay attention,” Gee said.



*Photo Credit: Visit Brookings*

# The Power of Smart Home Technologies

Smart home technologies are transforming how we live, making our homes more comfortable, convenient, and energy efficient than ever before.

With just a tap on your phone or a voice command to your virtual assistant (like Alexa or Siri), you can conveniently control many aspects of your home environment. If you're new to the smart tech world, there are several cost-effective devices you can try as you explore ways to make your home smarter.

One of the best and most inexpensive places to start is with a smart bulb or plug. Smart LED bulbs allow you to control home lighting remotely through a smartphone app or voice commands. You can set schedules to automatically turn lights off or on, which can help you save energy and boost home security.

Smart plugs are another inexpensive way to give electronics

and small appliances the smart home treatment. Smart plugs allow you to set schedules and remotely control power to lamps, small appliances and electronics, minimizing standby energy consumption and maximizing convenience. For example, you can sync the timing of your bedside lamp, alarm, speakers and coffee maker to turn on at the same time each morning.

If Alexa or Siri is already part of your household, you can build on your existing "tech ecosystem" by adding a smart hub, like Amazon Echo or Apple HomePod. Voice assistants that are synced to smart devices like bulbs and plugs provide additional options for device management and allow family members to interact with the various devices through voice control rather than individual apps.

Home heating and cooling account for a significant portion of energy use, so one of the best

investments you can make in smart tech is a smart thermostat. While traditional programmable thermostats can be set to your schedule and preferences, a smart thermostat takes this one step further by learning and adjusting to your routine and building a schedule around it.

Smart security systems are popular options for homeowners looking for advanced security solutions that incorporate cameras, sensors and cloud-based video recordings. As with other smart technologies, smart security systems provide convenient, flexible ways to monitor homes and businesses. Giving you peace of mind even when you're away.

Whether you're looking to automate every aspect of your home or simply want to try a device or two, smart technologies have the power to transform your living space into a home where comfort and convenience reign supreme.



## TIPS FOR INTEGRATING SMART HOME TECH

If you're new to smart home technologies, keep the following tips in mind as you explore home automation options.

- 1. Define goals.** Determine the areas in your home you want to make smart, like lighting, security and entertainment systems.
- 2. Choose compatible devices.** A smart hub can make integration easier with a central device to control multiple smart technologies.
- 3. Check Wi-Fi strength.** Smart home technologies require a stable internet connection to function properly, so consider factors like router placement and signal strength.
- 4. Prioritize security.** Set strong, unique passwords for your Wi-Fi network, set devices to update automatically and limit personal data collection.

## Paying Your Bill



**Eric Hasart**  
Manager of  
Finance and  
Administration

In the ever-changing world of technology, Dakota Energy offers multiple ways to pay your electric bill.

One way you can pay your bill is to register with SmartHub. SmartHub is a free online application that you can access by smartphone or computer. SmartHub allows you to view your bill and billing history, make or schedule payments, and track daily and monthly usage.

Dakota Energy offers a Pay Now solution. All you need is your account number and a debit or credit card, and you can make a payment.

We also have a Pay by Phone option. Simply pay your bill by calling 1-844-829-1959 with your current bill and a debit or credit card.

You can sign up for Automated Bill Pay or ACH. Your payment will be automatically deducted from your bank account or credit card. Members have the option of either the 10th or 25th of each month to have their amount deducted.



Dakota Energy also offers a budget billing program. Members pay the same amount each month based on the previous year's average kWh usage. Each June is the true up month for budget billing.

As always, you can send a check in the mail or drop it off at one of our offices. You can leave a payment in the drop box any time of the day.

If you have any questions or need help with any of our payment solutions, don't hesitate to contact our office at 605-352-8591.

## COMMON CAUSES OF POWER OUTAGES

There is never a good time for the power to go out, but if it happens on a sunny day, you might be left wondering why. Here are the most common causes of a power outage.

### WEATHER

High winds, snow and ice can cause tree limbs to fall on power lines. Other weather effects, like wildfires and lightning strikes, can cause major damage to equipment.

### CRITTERS

Squirrels, birds, snakes and other animals can inadvertently contact power lines, causing short circuits and disruptions to electrical supply.

### ACCIDENTS

Vehicles can crash into utility poles, bringing down power lines. Construction and excavation work can also result in disruptions to underground lines.

### Scheduled MAINTENANCE

Occasionally, we plan outages to perform upgrades or repairs to parts of the local grid.



# COOPERATIVE METERING

**Roger Lawien**

More than 40 cooperative linemen and metering specialists gathered in Pierre for South Dakota Rural Electric’s Meter School. This two-day gathering offers the opportunity to enhance skills, build a community of professionals, and learn the nuances of metering. As our need for more energy continues to grow, so does how we properly meter consumption.

Modern electric meters do much more than keep track of the electricity we consume. Correct electric metering is also essential for grid reliability and stability. Accurate measurements aid your cooperative in identifying and addressing issues such as voltage fluctuations or load imbalances promptly.

This proactive approach enhances the resilience of the electrical grid, reducing the likelihood of outages and ensuring a continuous and reliable power supply. At its core, accurate metering ensures fair and precise billing, preventing financial disputes and establishing trust between cooperatives and members.

From an economic standpoint, correct electric metering plays a pivotal role in resource allocation allowing member owned cooperatives to better understand consumption patterns, enabling them to optimize energy distribution and invest strategically in infrastructure development. This, in turn, leads to more efficient operations, cost savings, and improved overall service quality.

Precise metering supports energy conservation.

Members can sign into their account online, view consumption. Armed with accurate usage data they are empowered to make informed decisions about their energy consumption. This encourages responsible energy usage practices, reducing waste and lowering overall demand.

Metering guru and instructor John Pollard said it best. “These training schools are important. Metering is a craft handed down from generation to generation. With the advances of solid-state metering, these students are the supreme candidates to lead us into the future.”

Your electric cooperative is your partner in getting it done!



2023 SDREA Meter School Instructors Photo by Roger Lawien

---

# What is a Smart Meter?

A smart meter is a common term for Automated Metering Infrastructure, or AMI. These are connected devices that transmit information back to the electric utility's meter data management system and the information collected is used primarily for billing and outage response purposes. Smart meters started to be installed about 25 years ago. Individual utilities have different aged systems, but all electric cooperatives in South Dakota have two-way communication with every meter in the system.

## What advantages do Smart Meters bring?

Before smart meters were installed, customers were required to read their own analog meter and report their monthly usage for billing purposes, or a utility employee would physically travel to every home, farm or business in their large service territories to read usage data. Smart Meters take the burden off customers and employees, saving time and money for all consumers. In some cases, the aggregated energy usage information from their home can be visible to the customer via the Internet or a phone application.

- Smart Meters can be used to pinpoint exact locations of power outages more quickly by transmitting an “out of power” notification, meaning a faster response time to outages.
- Smart Meters allow information to be shared with individual consumers about their energy usage – allowing them to find energy efficiency opportunities or potential problems in their home.
- Smart Meters improve electric service reliability and power quality. Information obtained from the automated meters often identifies problems that can be repaired before they cause an outage.
- Information can be used by engineers to more effectively and appropriately size lines and transformers, saving the cooperative and members money.

## What information does a Smart Meter record?

Automated meters record an electronic kilowatt-hour (kWh) reading, the date and time of energy usage, the overall peak demand of the electric account, if the meter has been tampered with, and the number of times the meter has experienced a loss of power.

## Security of information

Electric cooperatives do not sell or share consumer data. Cooperatives abide by all laws regarding the privacy, protection and disclosure of personal information. The meters and associated communications systems are equipped with security features to prevent unauthorized access.

## Are there potential health impacts from a smart meter?

Research conducted by the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI), the Utilities Telecom Council (UTC) and other similar groups have shown no health impacts from automated meters. The radio frequencies emitted by digital meters are well below the maximum recommended in federal guidelines. A digital meter equipped to send and receive data has an RF density hundreds of times lower than the RF density of a cell phone, and the meters are installed on the outside of homes or buildings.



# Paddling to the Arctic

## The Legacy of Dick Davidson and the South Dakota Canoe and Kayak Association

**Frank Turner**

frank.turner@sdrea.coop

**GOALS**

To travel from South Dakota to the Arctic by canoe in one season. This is obviously no small challenge. If the season is giving, the added goals of reaching Alaska and even reaching both the Arctic Ocean (Beaufort Sea) and the Pacific Ocean (Bering Sea) would be added as noted later in 'Trip Segments'.

**PARTY**

A party of one in a solo canoe (at this time and likely during the trip).

**GEAR**

All gear will be carried at the start of the trip and only replacement gear (hopefully none) will be purchased in route. The gear must and will serve in all conditions of the trip, including weather ranging from hot, sultry days to possible blizzard conditions, including canoeing circumstances like numerous whitewater ascents and great lakes travel.

**FOOD**

Most food will be purchased in route. Resupply points will range from modern to basic. The incidence of points, after Lake Winnipeg, will range from several days to three or four weeks.

**SUPPORT**

None.

These are the original notes of outdoor activist and local canoe legend Dick Davidson, detailing his ambitious 1988 journey from South Dakota to the Arctic Circle by canoe. Embarking from Big Stone Lake, the 58-year-old from Sioux Falls attempted to paddle and portage his canoe 4,300 miles over several months through Canadian rivers and streams. Unfortunately, fires and drought in Manitoba prevented him from seeing reaching his goal. Even still, the ambitious journey captured Davidson's commitment to living a life dedicated to outdoor expeditions.

Davidson passed away in Sioux Falls in 2009, but his legacy and passion for canoeing live on through what is now known as the South Dakota Canoe and Kayak Association, a nonprofit

outdoor recreation organization he founded in 1981. Unlike his solo adventures through the Canadian wilderness, Davidson established the association alongside several co-founders, canoe enthusiasts, and friends, including founding member Dave Greenlee of Sioux Falls.

Although the group participated in races, canoe building, and conservation activism, Greenlee noted that the group mainly gathered mostly “for the sheer fun of canoeing.”

But they weren't just enthusiasts, this group of committed canoers were fanatics, appealing to all types of canoers from time-tested adventurers like Davidson to the casual outdoor enthusiast. Many of the founding members of the club would look for any opportunity to canoe, even taking to streams in near-freezing temperatures.

“Sometimes in the early spring season when the ice was still out, we would check the rain gauges after a quick rain to see if there was enough flow to enable a quick opening run for our canoes over the ice,” said Greenlee.

Another founding member, Tom Behrend, recalled crafting his own canoes and paddles from scratch, often gifting his creations to friends and enthusiasts for just the cost of the supplies.

“I would hold a class every year on how to build a canoe,” said Behrend. “A group of 10 to 15 of our members would meet every Thursday night in the winter time in somebody's heated garage. We would build these beautiful canoes with caned seats and all the goodies and then raffle them off once they were finished. It was a great way to raise money for the nonprofit.”

For the less devout, the association offered events catered to amateurs, offering downstream floats and river-bound birdwatches. Greenlee recalled organizing an introductory canoeing instructional for blind individuals. The experience, he said, was incredibly rewarding, both the participants and the instructor had something to learn.

“I had been asked a couple of times to lead a canoeing instructional for the Girl Scouts,” said Greenlee. “Then somebody said, ‘We have a group of individuals who are visually impaired who want to learn what canoeing is like.’ I was used to teaching young kids who just want to get out on the water and flail around and paddle, but this group was actually interested in learning about the canoe.”

Greenlee continued, “I remember taking one of the individuals out onto the water and saying ‘I'm going to turn to the left here and now we are facing West.’ He said, ‘I know that.’ So, I asked, ‘How do you know that?’ And he said, ‘I know the direction because I can feel the sun on my face.’ How many times had I been in a canoe, looking at the shore and landmarks, but I never realized that I could close my eyes and tell which direction I was going by feeling the sun on my face... He was teaching me.”

Today, the South Dakota Canoe and Kayak Association is still the state's premier paddling group, promoting safety,



A photo from an old article in the Argus Leader highlighting the preparations of Davidson's attempted 4,300 mile trip to the Arctic Circle by canoe. Photo by Mike Roemer, circa 1988. Courtesy of the Argus Leader.

education, conservation, and paddling outdoors. With roughly 100 members from across the state, the association centers around amateur paddling events, safety and outreach. Recent safety efforts include entry-level canoeing lessons and the association's recent WEAR IT campaign, which successfully installed more than 50 safety signs along recreation areas of the Missouri River encouraging kayakers and canoers to wear lifejackets.

“We host educational pool sessions across the state in Watertown and Sioux Falls where we practice falling out of the kayak and canoe and getting back in,” said Pat Wellner, the association's current president. “It's all about encouraging safe practices while enjoying the outdoors.”

Wellner encouraged outdoor enthusiasts of all levels to join the association by visiting the association's website at [sdcka.org](http://sdcka.org).

“Having the lakes and rivers of South Dakota is a great way to see the state from a different perspective that many don't get to see,” said Wellner. “If anyone is interested in becoming a member, I would encourage them to check out the website, and when you are on the water, please wear a life jacket.”

## REGISTER TO WIN!

Bring this coupon and mailing label to the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives booth at Dakotafest or the South Dakota State Fair to win a prize!

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

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



**Aug. 24**  
**2024 McCrossan Boys Ranch Xtreme Event Rodeo**  
McCrossan Boys Ranch Campus  
Sioux Falls, SD  
605-339-1203

**JULY 1-4**  
**Annual Black Hills Roundup**  
7 p.m.  
Black Hills Roundup Grounds  
Belle Fourche, SD  
605-723-2010  
blackhillsroundup.com

**JULY 5-7, 12-14, 19-21**  
**Laura Ingalls Wilder Pageant**  
Prairie Girl: Laura's Dakota Stories  
Gates open 6 p.m.  
Performance at 8 p.m.  
\$15 adults, \$10 kids 6-12  
Theater on the Prairie  
De Smet, SD

**JULY 5-7**  
**Badlands Astronomy Festival**  
10 a.m.-11:30 p.m.  
Ben Reifel Visitor Center  
Interior, SD  
605-433-5243

**JULY 7-12**  
**Deadwood 3 Wheeler Rally**  
All day  
Deadwood Event Complex  
Deadwood, SD  
800-274-1876 ext 1103

**JULY 13**  
**Sanford Lab Neutrino Day**  
9 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Sanford Lab Visitor Center  
Lead, SD  
605-722-8650

**JULY 14-18**  
**Dakota 600**  
8-11 a.m.  
Black Hills National Forest  
Rapid City, SD  
605-645-1756  
dakota600.com

**July 19**  
**Zucchini Fest**  
5 p.m.  
Main Street  
Bristol, SD  
605-590-0000

**JULY 19-20**  
**Storybook Land Festival**  
4-8:30 p.m. on Friday  
10 a.m.-4 p.m. on Saturday  
Storybook Land in Wylie Park  
Aberdeen, SD  
605-626-7015

**JULY 19-20**  
**Cookin' on Kameska**  
All day  
Admission \$10  
Stokes-Thomas Lake City Park  
on Lake Kameska  
Watertown, SD  
605-886-5814

**JULY 26-28**  
**Bruce Honey Days**  
5k walk/run, parade,  
cookouts, craft show, 3-on-3  
basketball tournament, street  
dance and more.  
Jay Street  
Bruce, SD  
605-627-5671

**July 27**  
**South Dakota Chislic Festival**  
10 a.m.-9 p.m.  
Freeman Prairie Arboretum  
Freeman, SD  
605-496-9946

**AUG. 6-8**  
**IDEAg's Farmfest**  
8 a.m.-4 p.m.  
Redwood County, MN  
651-316-4369

**AUG. 17**  
**"Harvest of Champions"**  
7 p.m.  
Dakota State Fair Speedway  
Huron, SD

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.

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