



Sioux Valley Energy

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

Cooperative Connections

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Tech Ed
Building Skills
for Workforce
of Tomorrow P8-9

Get Out and Vote! Co-ops Vote.



Tim McCarthy
General Manager/CEO

I often watch the political process and wonder if my opinion even matters—if my vote counts, especially after watching some of the most recent presidential debates on television. While it may seem that way on occasion, I assure you— your vote DOES count and DOES impact your electric cooperative and the communities it serves. Recently electric cooperatives launched a non-

partisan, nationwide effort to promote civic engagement and voter participation in the communities they serve.

The effort, called ‘Co-ops Vote’, is a movement by electric cooperatives to engage their members in the political process. The key isn’t always who you vote for, it has more to do with being engaged in the process because you deserve to have your voice heard through voting. It’s both your right and your responsibility!

The Co-ops Vote initiative will focus on eight issues that are important to the health and prosperity of communities served by electric cooperatives:

- Rural Broadband Access
- Hiring and Honoring Veterans
- Low-Income Energy Assistance
- Cybersecurity
- Water Regulation
- Rural Health Care Access
- Affordable and Reliable Energy
- Renewable Energy

It was once said that electric cooperatives were born in politics—it’s basically part of our DNA and that needs to continue through members exercising their right to vote, taking part in the political process.

A new website, vote.coop, offers co-op members information on the voter registration process in their state, dates of elections, information on the candidates running in those elections, and explanations of the eight key issues the campaign aims to address.

In keeping with its non-partisan goals, the initiative will not be endorsing specific candidates for office.

Mel Coleman, president of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) and CEO of North Arkansas Electric Cooperative said the program would help ensure the voices of rural Americans are heard.

“We want to make sure our government knows that rural America matters,” Coleman said. “This campaign isn’t about divisive, partisan issues. It’s about real people in real places facing real challenges. It’s about our co-ops living out the principles of our movement: Concern for community and democratic control.”

Part of the reason ‘Co-ops Vote’ is being launched is because of the extreme partisan gridlock in Washington and the explosive growth of money in politics.

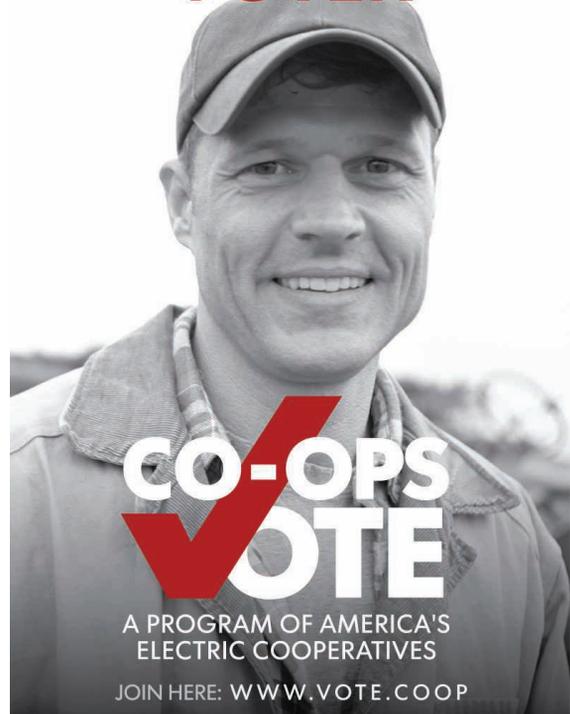
NRECA CEO, Jeffrey Conner recently stated that “Elections aren’t won and lost in November anymore, they’re really decided in primaries months sooner, when fewer voters recognize the opportunity to vote, fewer participate and only a handful of issues are up for debate.”

This results in a Congress where more members represent the extremes of each political party and are less inclined to seek compromise and bipartisan solutions to problems. The electric cooperative movement has always been non-partisan, and our communities are facing too many challenges to withstand such divisiveness. Our region (SD and MN) has been very fortunate to be represented by individuals who have been supportive of electric cooperatives. We hope this will continue through active participation.

In South Dakota, the primary elections take place on Tuesday, June 7 (one-day after our annual meeting). In Minnesota, the presidential primary election already took place on March 1 and all other primaries will occur on August 9. The general election for both states is Tuesday, November 8.

For more information about Co-ops Vote visit vote.coop.

I AM A CO-OP VOTER





A Touchstone Energy Cooperative
The power of human connections

Cooperative Connections

(USPS No. 497-440)

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Sioux Valley Energy's headquarters, Colman, S.D.

Need to upgrade or relocate your service?

The **Sioux Valley Energy Engineering Department** can help members through the process for a new electric service or an upgrade/relocation up to the meter. An electrician works on the system after the meter. Members should call at least six to eight weeks prior to when the electric service needs to be built or upgraded. The Cooperative does require a contribution-in-aid and an estimate can be provided to you on that fee. The following information is required to request an upgrade/relocation or a new service:

Service Upgrade/Relocation

1. Name/Organization
2. Account number
3. Meter number
4. Service address
5. Mailing address (if different from service address)
6. Best Phone number to contact you during the day
7. Indication if you are in the planning process or just want an estimate
8. Email address
9. Date service is needed

The following information is also helpful when installing a new service:

New Service

1. Date of Birth
2. Social Security Number
3. Township, Range, Section and Quarter location (see legal description)
4. Electrician name/number
5. Contractor name/number
6. Type of service
7. Phase
8. Service size
9. Type of heat

The SVE Engineering Department encourages members to fill out the online forms. This will provide the Engineering Department with the information they need to begin the process. Those forms can be located at <http://www.siouxvalleyenergy.com/content/new-constructionupgrade-service>.

Want to receive this magazine electronically?

Let us know!

Email carrie.law@siouxvalleyenergy.com.

Include your name, the email address you want to use, and your location number or billing address.

Power Tools and Equipment Safety

Many do-it-yourself projects involve the use of power tools. Working with power tools requires skilled instruction and training. They can be deadly if not properly used or maintained. The most common scenario for power tool-related electrocutions is when the equipment comes in contact with live electrical wires while it is being used.

Facts and Statistics:

- According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), there are nearly 400 electrocutions in the United States each year.
- Approximately 15 percent of electrocutions are related to consumer products.
- 8 percent of consumer product-related electrocutions each year are attributed to electrical accidents with power drills, saws, sanders, hedge trimmers and other electric power tools.
- 9 percent of consumer product-related electrocutions each year are caused by accidents involving the use of lawn and garden equipment and ladders, which come into contact with overhead power lines.

Power Tool Safety Tips:

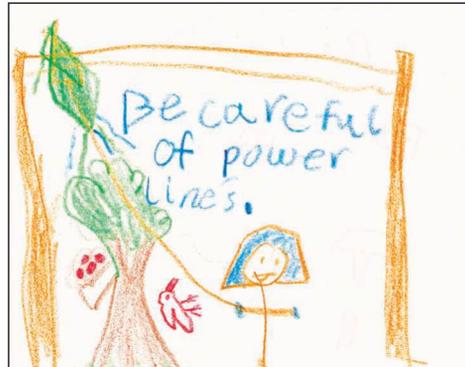
- Use ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) with every power tool to protect against electric shocks.
- Do not use power tools with an extension cord that exceeds 100 feet in length.
- Never use power tools near live electrical wires or water pipes.
- Use extreme caution when cutting or drilling into walls where electrical wires or water pipes could be accidentally touched or penetrated.
- If a power tool trips a safety device while in use, take the tool to a manufacturer-authorized repair center for service.
- When working with electricity, use tools with insulated grips.
- Do not use power tools without the proper guards.
- When using a wet-dry vacuum cleaner or a pressure washer, be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions to avoid electric shock.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

- Safeguards on outdoor electric tools are there for a reason. Make sure that they are always in place before operating.
- Invest in the safety goggles, hearing protection, dust masks, gloves and other safety gear as recommended for each tool. A few dollars now are well worth the lifetime of good sight and hearing that they are protecting.
- Wear the appropriate clothes for the job. Wearing sandals while mowing the lawn is just asking for trouble.

Source: *esfi.org*

Kids' Corner Safety Poster "Be careful of power lines."



Dani Carlson, 7 years old
Dani is the daughter of John Carlson and Kristina Matucha, Burke, S.D. They are members of Rosebud Electric, Gregory, 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.

JOIN THE CAMPAIGN

CO-OPS VOTE

A PROGRAM OF AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES
JOIN HERE: WWW.VOTE.COOP

Appetizers and Beverages



Hot Olive Puff

- 1 cup grated natural sharp cheese
- 3 T. soft butter
- 1/2 cup flour
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. paprika
- 24 stuffed green olives

Blend cheese with butter. Stir in flour, salt and paprika; mix well. Wrap 1 tsp. dough around each olive, completely covering olive. Bake at 400°F. for 10 to 15 minutes or until golden brown. May be prepared ahead and frozen until time to bake.

Carolyn K. Wickert, Baltic

Powerhouse Green Smoothie

- 3/4 cup seedless green grapes
- 1/2 cup ripe banana slices
- 1/4 cup chopped kale
- 2/3 cup non-fat plain Greek yogurt
- 1-1/2 tsp. canola oil
- 1/2 cup ice cubes

In blender, combine all ingredients. Blend for about 30 seconds to 1 minute or until desired smoothness is achieved. Yields 1 serving. Serving size: 1-2/3 cups

Nutritional analysis per serving: 290 calories; 7 g total fat (0.5 g saturated fat); 0 mg cholesterol; 42 g carbohydrates; 3 g fiber; 31 g sugars; 17 g protein; 75 mg sodium; 502 mg potassium

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Cucumber Sandwiches

- 1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, softened
- 3 to 4 T. sour cream or real mayonnaise
- 1 (1 oz.) pkg. Hidden Valley Ranch salad dressing mix, dry
- 1 (1 lb.) pkg. small cocktail bread, rye or pumpernickel
- 2 large cucumbers, sliced 1/4-inch thick
- Dill weed

Combine first 3 ingredients in bowl; mix well. Spread on slices of bread. Top with a cucumber slice and sprinkle with dill weed. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Jan Nelson, Belle Fourche

Sunrise Smoothie

- 1-1/2 cups frozen sliced strawberries
- 3/4 cup milk
- 3/4 cup or 1 (6 oz.) can pineapple juice
- 1/2 cup vanilla yogurt
- 1/4 cup frozen pineapple pieces
- 2 T. sugar
- 2 T. orange juice
- 6 large ice cubes

Place all ingredients into blender. Blend until smooth. Garnish with fresh fruit. Serve immediately.

Charlotte Hoverstadt, Webster

Glazed Meatballs

- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1/2 cup dry bread crumbs
- 1/3 cup minced onions
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 T. parsley
- 1/2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1/2 cup bottled chili sauce
- 12 oz. grape jelly

Combine first 7 ingredients; mix well. Shape into 1-inch balls. Place in cake pan. Bake at 375°F. for 20 to 30 minutes, until browned. Mix together chili sauce and grape jelly. Warm in microwave 2 minutes. Place meatballs in slow cooker. Add sauce and warm for 2 to 3 hours.

Margene Paige, Presho

Pepperoni Dip

- 1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 3 oz. chopped pepperoni
- 1 can chopped green chiles, undrained
- 1 to 2 T. minced onion

Combine all ingredients and put in a small baking dish. Bake at 325°F. for 30 minutes. Serve with crackers.

Nancy Noess, Mitchell

Fruit Dip

- 1 can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 (6 oz.) can lemonade
- 1 (8 oz.) container Cool Whip

Mix together all ingredients. Serve with any kind of fruit.

Catherine Jungwirth, Ashton

Please send your favorite casserole, dairy and dessert recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in June 2016. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

Scholarship Winners Announced

Eighteen graduating high school seniors were awarded college scholarships from Sioux Valley Energy and its power suppliers this year. The majority of scholarship funds came from Sioux Valley Energy's Operation Roundup® program, with additional monies from Basin Electric Power Cooperative, L&O Power Cooperative, and the Rodney Park Memorial Scholarship.

Debra Bieber, Sioux Valley Energy Director of Customer and Employee Relations, says 70 students applied for the \$12,000 worth of scholarships available through Sioux Valley Energy.

"Applications were judged on the basis of grades, ACT or SAT test scores, work experience, school activities, volunteer community service and an essay question," said Bieber.



Alex Klein



Andy Holmes



Bridget Dunn



Bridgette Ramlo



Brooke Manzey



Danielle Wosje



Dusty Dykstra



Ethan Brown



Evan Fick



Hannah Hoogland



Joel Kocer



John Eilertson



Kirsten Knutson



Marissa Philips



Molly Heyn



Hanna Mutschelknaus



Sarah Lutz



Thea Richards



Jace Jones

AWARD RECIPIENTS

\$500 Scholarships:

Thea Richards, Hills-Beaver Creek High School

Dusty Dykstra, Parker High School

Hanna Mutschelknaus, Brandon Valley High School

Brooke Manzey, Pipestone Area High School

Danielle Wosje, Sioux Valley High School

Bridget Dunn, Dell Rapids St. Mary's Catholic High School

Sierra Lutz, Estelline High School

John Eilertson, Rutland High School

Molly Heyn, Chester High School

Marissa Philips, Chester High School

\$750 Scholarships:

Alex Klein, West Central High School

Ethan Brown, Brandon Valley High School

Kirsten Knutson, Brandon Valley High School

Evan Fick, Garretson High School

\$1,000 Scholarships:

Andy Holmes, Brandon Valley High School

Joel Kocer, Brandon Valley High School (Basin Electric Scholarship)

Hannah Hoogland, Luverne Public High School

Bridgette Ramlo, Brookings High School

Jace Jones, Colman-Egan High School (Rodney Park Memorial Scholarship)

Touchstone Energy Scholar of the Week: Austin Arends

Austin Arends, a student at Tri-Valley High School, has been chosen as a Touchstone Energy Cooperative 'Scholar of the Week'. Austin was recognized with a cash award by Sioux Valley Energy and was featured on the KSFY news for his accomplishments. He is the son of Lloyd and Linda Arends of Baltic.

Touchstone Energy Cooperatives, like Sioux Valley Energy, and KSFY Television have joined together to recognize the achievements of high school seniors throughout the region. Recipients are highly motivated high school seniors who excel in the classroom and community. This program was founded on the four pillars of Touchstone Energy: Integrity, Accountability, Innovation and a Commitment to Community.

"Austin's accomplishments both in and out of the classroom are examples of what we need in our future leaders," said Tim McCarthy, Sioux Valley Energy General Manager/CEO.

Sheri Booze, guidance counselor at Tri-Valley High School, nominated Austin for the award. Booze cited Austin's 3.88 GPA and extra-curricular activities as examples of his success. He has been involved in Student Council, Teens Encountering Christ, Youth Group and National Honor Society.



Jennie Patrick presents Austin Arends with a cash award for his Touchstone Energy of the Week award.

Area teachers encouraged to attend energy seminar

Registration is now open for the Lignite Energy Council's 31st Annual Teacher Education Seminar: Energy, Economics and Environment. The four-day seminar gives elementary, middle and high school teachers in North Dakota, Minnesota, South Dakota and Montana a first-hand look at lignite mining and related energy production.

The seminar will be held June 13-16 at Bismarck State College's National Energy Center of Excellence, Bismarck, ND.

"Teachers from all grade and subject levels should apply before April 15, 2016, but the earlier the better as the seminar does fill up fast," said Kay LaCoe, Lignite Energy Council director of membership marketing. "One of the biggest draws of our seminar is that it offers two graduate credits paid for by the Lignite Energy Council, not to mention the popular tours

of lignite facilities such as a lignite mine and power plant."

Teachers who attend and complete a lesson plan can choose from one of three North Dakota institutions from which to receive their graduate credits: University of North Dakota, North Dakota State University and Minot State University.

The seminar provides instruction on these topics and more: history, geology, land reclamation, environmental protection and economics of the lignite industry; the need for more workers; energy conservation; and transmission. Besides the classroom instruction and the tours, teachers will take home handouts, videos, coal samples and activities that can be used in the classroom.

The online application for all teachers is available at <http://www.lignite.com/teachers>.

Skilled Education

Technical Schools See to Tomorrow's Workforce

TWO SOUTH DAKOTA TECHNICAL INSTITUTES ARE once again being recognized on the national stage for their efforts to educate tomorrow's workforce.

Highlighting the critical importance of improving student success in America's community colleges, the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program named Lake Area Technical Institute (LATI) and Mitchell Technical Institute (MTI) among the nation's top 150 community colleges eligible to compete for the 2017 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence and \$1 million in prize funds, as well as Siemens Technical Scholars Program student scholarships.

The Prize, awarded every two years, is the nation's signature recognition of high achievement and performance among America's community colleges and recognizes institutions for exceptional student outcomes in four areas: student learning, certificate and degree completion, employment and earnings, and access and success for minority and low-income students. Both schools have made the list since the inception of the award and Lake Area Tech has been a Finalist with Distinction each time.

Six Minnesota schools also made the list: Alexandria Technical and Community College in Alexandria; Anoka-Ramsey Community College in Coon Rapids; Minnesota State Community and Technical

College in Fergus Falls; Minnesota West Community and Technical College in Granite Falls, Northland Community and Technical College in Thief River Falls; and Ridgewater College in Willmar.

"Everyone in our organizations is focused on one mission: building South Dakota's technically skilled workforce. Our students can be confident their education prepares them for in-demand technical careers; and business and industry can be assured our graduates are ready to tackle the challenges of today's dynamic and technology-driven environment. As a system of four technical schools, we are committed to continually improving. National recognition like the Aspen College Excellence program affirms our efforts are making a difference," LATI President Mike Cartney and MTI President Mark Wilson said in a joint statement.

Nearly half of America's college students attend community college, with more than 7 million students – youth and adult learners – working towards certificates and degrees in these institutions across the country. More than 6,300 students are currently enrolled in South Dakota's technical institute system.

"Community colleges have tremendous power to change lives and their success will increasingly define our nation's economic strength and the potential for

By
Brenda
Kleinjan

Right: Classroom instruction is part of technical institute education. Here, a Mitchell Technical Institute instructor works with a student in the classroom.
On the Cover: MTI instructor Jason Juhnke supervises a student in MTI's Heating and Cooling Technology program.

Photos courtesy Mitchell Technical Institute



social mobility in our country,” said Josh Wyner, executive director of the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program. “This competition is designed to spotlight the excellent work being done in the most effective community colleges, those that best help students obtain meaningful, high-quality education and training for competitive-wage jobs after college. We hope it will raise the bar and provide a roadmap to better student outcomes for community colleges nationwide.”

Tiffany Sanderson, director of South Dakota’s Division of Career and Technical Education, points out, “The four technical institutes in Watertown, Mitchell, Sioux Falls and Rapid City do an outstanding job of preparing students as skilled scholars, ready to contribute to business’ goals and the communities where they live. For half of our schools to be named to the nation’s top 15 percent of two-year colleges, speaks heavily to their quality.”

South Dakota’s technical institutes came into being in 1965 as an extension of the K-12 education system. Since then, their status has changed to fully-accredited postsecondary institutions that award Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) degrees in technical areas requiring unique training and education from other postsecondary institutions.

Supporters for tech ed point out that the schools status under the South Dakota state constitution has not been recognized as the last change to the constitution dealing with post-secondary education was made in 1944. As a consequence, the state’s technical institutes lack a clearly defined and recognized status, they say.

Voters in the November general election will be asked to consider supporting Amendment R – The Skilled Workforce Amendment, which advocates say will provide the foundation for fixing the shortage of skilled workers in South Dakota. The amendment would elevate the mission of the state’s four technical institutes to a constitutional mandate, allowing for a stronger voice in prioritizing state and federal assets in support of the technical institute mission and increase their output – entry level skilled workers. Amendment R is a result of a House Joint Resolution that was passed unanimously through both the House and the Senate and had proponents from the South Dakota Board of Regents, the governor’s office, business and industry, technical institutes and school districts.

Without the mandate, technical institutes have no advocate to represent their realistic funding and program needs during the state’s appropriations process. Per student funding is significantly lower for technical institutes than it is for universities of K-12 districts. This creates staggering disparities, organizers with Tech Schools for South Dakota note. South Dakota’s technical institutes cost less to operate than two-year colleges in the six surrounding states, but receive less state support. Students are left to make up the difference, paying more than their counterparts at any two-year colleges in neighboring states.

Building a Better Future

Build Dakota is a new scholarship program created through a \$50 million investment funded by a \$25 million donation from T. Denny Sanford and a \$25 million contribution from the South Dakota Future Fund.

Build Dakota Scholarships will be awarded to skilled scholars entering high-need workforce programs at South Dakota technical institutes.

Build Dakota gives students entering South Dakota tech schools an opportunity to plan a foundation for their future. You’ll come out of school with no student debt and a set of skills in high demand, so you’ll be ready to hit the ground running and start your career right away.

The scholarship application priority period is Oct. 1 through Dec. 31. However, some schools may still be accepting applications through March 20 for the 2016-2017 school year.

Program Details

- Both in-state students and out-of-state students are eligible for the scholarships.
- The scholarships will support tuition, fees, books and other required program expenses in the eligible technical institute programs.
- Recipients of the scholarships will commit to living and working in the state, in their field of study, for three years following graduation.
- In the first five years, a projected 300 scholarships will be awarded annually. Beyond the first five years, the endowment will support approximately 50 full-ride scholarships.



Eligibility Requirements

- U.S. citizen or U.S. national
- Applicants need not be South Dakota residents

Financial Need

Demonstrated aptitude through one or more of the following:

- The National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) or other industry-recognized certifications in the career area.
- Technical, dual or concurrent credit courses taken in the career interest area.
- Career and Technical Education coursework completed in the career interest area.
- Work-based learning experiences, internships or work experience in the career interest area.
- Enrolling as a first-time student.

Student Commitment

In accepting scholarship awards, recipients will agree to:

- Enroll full-time in a technical institute program determined as a high-need workforce area in South Dakota.
- Following graduation, work full-time in the field of study in South Dakota for a minimum of three years.

The Skilled Workforce Amendment:

Recognizes today’s need for a job-focused post-secondary education system

Helps provide businesses with much-needed skilled employees

Educates skilled workers for immediate employment right here in South Dakota

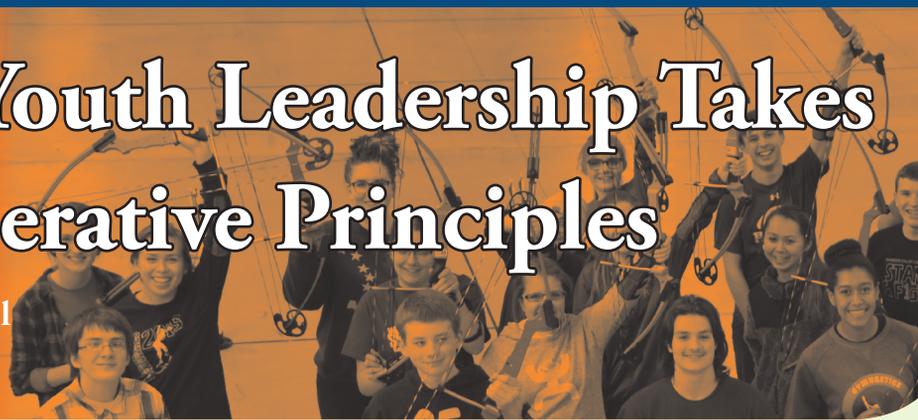
Allows our technical schools direct access to government decision-makers

Clarifies where our technical schools fit in our state’s education landscape

Aligns South Dakota’s public education system with trends in jobs-related education

EmPOWER Youth Leadership Takes Aim on Cooperative Principles

by Sam Ykema, Luverne High School
Food/Decor District
2016-2017 Advisory Committee Member



Being part of the EmPOWER gang brings you a lot of new experiences, especially speakers. Each speaker has a different message and idea to convey to us. Our guest speaker in our last session on January 18th, was Craig Hillier. Now, we all get an itinerary for each session day, and Craig was scheduled from 9-12. Three hours of a motivational speaker? At this point we think Jennie, our leadership coordinator, is out of her mind! But when introducing Craig, she explained how she met him and how fast time flew with him. Still, three hours though? I think a few of us were anticipating a long, drawn-out speech. But then Craig spoke. And right off the bat we played a game. He would play a song and we would have to stand up from the circle we formed with our chairs in order to guess where the song was from. The prize? A pass to the front of the lunch line when the clock struck twelve. You see, teenagers and the lunch line have a special relationship. Teenagers love food.

Craig began his speech after that and we played three other games. One of those games included finding a partner and learning about them. We then received two strings. We hooked them together with one person having one string and the other partner having the other, and the goal was to get free from each other.

Basically no one could do it, but everyone gave their best effort. Craig then stopped us all and helped guide us and after we figured it out, he brought the game back to leadership. Craig pointed out that once we all had the same goal, we were able to succeed. A major part of leadership is working towards the same goal.

Through another activity, we were encouraged to envision ourselves going further and further to get to our goal. After you imagined it and thought about it, you can do it. We did this activity through stretching our bodies and the more we thought about it, the further we could go. This is one of the most important lessons I took away from Craig's presentation.

After our discussions, we played one final game with Craig which focused on being a team player.

At this point we had lunch and met with our "districts". My district is in charge of the food and decor for the meetings. The other districts are the Community Outreach, Social Media, Journalism and Promotions. After our meetings were adjourned and a second serving of ice cream was added to our bowls, we listened to a presentation from the advisory committee, who are a group of students that were in the EmPOWER program last year and help planned this year's events. Their presentation was on the seven principles of co-ops. We learned even more about



L to R: Thea Richards, Hannah Jorgenson, Katrina Burckhard, Ethan Geraets, Morgan Johnson, and Laura Selman learn the seven cooperative principles on the target while shooting archery.

Touchstone Energy and other brands we have heard of, who, to my surprise, are co-ops as well!

Personally, the next part of the agenda was something I had been looking forward to all day long: archery using targets based on the seven cooperative principles. Our team had to score 20 points in order to get a new target for the next



L to R: Kaci Hall and Rachel Regalado attempt to unwind.

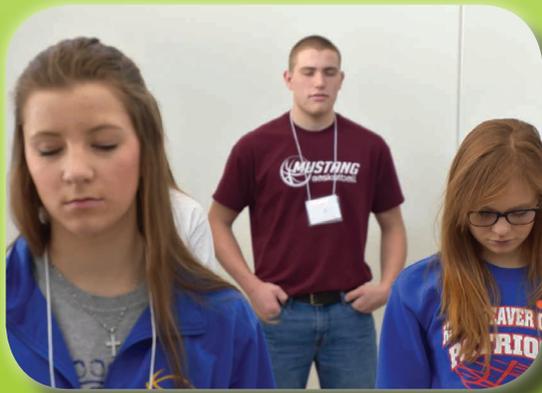




L to R: Hannah Osterberg, Sara Haugen, Marissa Hanley, and Mary Dybedahl testing their building skills.



Students learn to move forward as a team.



L to R: Chantel Brende, Jacob Kasowski, and Thea Richards envision a goal of going further.



L to R: Marissa Hanley and Zach Puetz

round. Each of the seven cooperative principles were worth different amount of points. A few of us were particularly good at archery! But, I would say the majority of us would have a hard time becoming professionals!

At 3 o'clock our session ended but for those of us who wanted to keep the day going, we had the opportunity to tour Daktronics. I would consider the EmPOWER group this year to be really invested in all the opportunities the program gives us, so needless to say, most of us went on the tour.

I feel like every EmPOWER session improves over the last one and I think all of us are ready for the next one! We are all excited for the next session to see what the advisory committee and Jennie have in store for us!



Youth Leadership *Making Your Mark on the World!*

How Do I Sign Up?

Contact:
Jennie Patrick,
EmPOWER
Youth Leadership Coordinator
800-234-1960
jennie.patrick@siouxvalleyenergy.com

Applications are due
Friday, May 13th!

EmPOWERYouthLeadership.com



Beyond Belief

Don't Let Scams Make You an April Fool

A QUICK SEARCH OF THE INTERNET REVEALS MANY great ways to save energy around your home. Simple things, such as adding insulation or using energy efficient light bulbs, are simple and relatively inexpensive ways to save small amounts of energy. The same search will also reveal “amazing” products that claim to cut up to a third of your energy bill – without you changing anything about your energy use habits. Claims like this sound too good to be true, and there is good reason for that. These claims almost always turn out to be exaggerations or downright lies.

By Brian Sloboda

An energy efficiency scam is generally easy for a person who works at an electric co-op to spot and identify. However, it isn't so easy for most people. Scams generally center around misstatements of science or confusion over utility programs.

A popular scam is a little box that promises to save you energy. The box is a device that supposedly saves energy without the consumer making any changes to behavior, turning anything off or adjusting the thermostat. The people who sell these boxes

often claim outrageous energy savings – sometimes as much as 30 percent or more. They often use terms, such as power conditioning, capacitors and power factor, all of which are legitimate industry terms.

The sales pitch usually goes something like this: The device being sold will control alternating current, power factor and reduce the cost of electric bills. It will condition your power and make appliances last longer. The device uses no power and has no moving parts. It will make the motors in your home run better. The sales material often claims that the utility doesn't want you to know about the device. That last part is actually true – because it is a rip off. Variations of the product have been sold to both residential and commercial customers.

There are several questions that you should ask a salesman (or yourself!) when reading an ad for the next magical cure-all:

1. Does it violate the laws of science? Some products claim that they are capable of “changing the molecular structure ... to release never-before tapped power.” Changing the laws of science is no



Big Rip Off

easy task. If the inventors truly can do this, the product will surely be sold at every store in the nation and they will become very wealthy. They won't be mailing out flyers or operating from a poorly designed web site.

2. Was the product tested by an independent group like a national lab or university? If the performance of the product was not tested and certified by a lab or other entity not connected to the company selling it, then be skeptical. Call the third party group and talk to them. Sometimes scammers lie about the tests.

3. Is it too good to be true? In today's economic times, saving money is top of mind. We want something to be true so that we can save money, improve our lives and feed our families. But wanting something to work doesn't mean it will.

Sometimes energy scammers contact consumers directly, either by calling or stopping by and claiming they represent the local electric co-op. Never give anyone personal or financial information who claims to be an employee of the co-op without confirming their identity. If they call, ask for a call back number, then verify their identity with your co-op. If they stop by, ask the person for a valid employee ID.

The key is to be skeptical and ask questions. Asking tough questions and being skeptical will not offend honest people. Remember, if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

Brian Sloboda is a technical research analyst specializing in energy efficiency and renewable energy for the Business Technology Strategies (BTS), a service of the Arlington, Va.-based National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

How to Spot a Scam

<http://www.ag.state.mn.us/Consumer/Publications/howtospotascam.asp>

Scammers are constantly reinventing new ways to perpetrate old ploys. Whether you're contacted by phone, mail, email, text or in-person, the following tips provide advice on how to spot a scam.

Look For These Tell-Tale Red Flags

You are contacted out of the blue. Scam artists aim fake invoices, phony debt collection notices and spam emails at unsuspecting consumers hoping they will pay before checking their records. You should never send money or provide personal information to unknown or unfamiliar people or entities. For example:

"Steve" received a call from a man with a heavy foreign accent who claimed to be calling from the IRS about supposed unpaid taxes. Steve knew he'd paid his taxes on time and didn't owe any money. When the individual said he had to pay immediately to avoid a penalty, Steve hung up.

You are required to send money upfront to receive a prize. Legitimate companies never require someone to pay money upfront to receive a prize. Consider this:

"Bill" received a mailing that claimed he'd won \$1 million in an overseas lottery. The mailing stated that he needed to pay \$500 for "taxes" to receive his winnings. Bill knew that foreign lotteries were illegal — and he certainly hadn't entered one — so he tossed the mailing in the trash.

You are asked to send money via a wire transfer or "reload pack." Scam artists often instruct consumers to send money by wire transfer or reloadable money packs. Sending money in these forms is the same as sending cash — it is nearly untraceable and once the money is sent, it is generally gone for good. Just consider:

"Mike" received a call from someone who claimed to represent the "U.S. Government Grant Department." The caller asked him to put \$325 on a reloadable money pack and call back with the numbers on the back of the card to receive a \$5,000 grant. Mike hung up because he knew that giving the number on the back of the card to the individual was as good as giving him cash.

You are asked to provide personal or financial information. Banks, government agencies and legitimate companies only ask consumers to provide personal information in rare circumstances and don't do so by email or text message. Scam artists impersonate these types of entities and use deceptive messages to lure consumers into providing their private information so they can use it to commit fraud. Never provide your private information in response to an unsolicited call, email or text message. Instead, call the entity at the number listed on its website or the back of your card. For example:

"Roberto" received a text message that appeared to come from his bank. It said he should call a toll-free number to reactivate his credit card. Roberto knew his credit card was working properly and didn't recognize the texter's

number. He called his bank using the telephone number listed on the back of his credit card, which confirmed the message was a scam.

You are asked to keep it a secret. Scam artists may ask consumers not to tell anyone about the situation so the consumer doesn't get advice from someone who might detect the scam. If you are asked to keep a transaction a secret, you should do the opposite: immediately contact trusted family members or friends to investigate the situation and get their opinion:

"Delores" received a call from a man she thought was her grandson, "Mike." He said that he was in trouble and needed money fast. Mike claimed that he was embarrassed about the situation and pleaded with Delores not to tell anyone about the matter, especially his parents. After the call ended, Delores called her daughter, who said Mike wasn't in any trouble at all.

You are asked to act quickly. Scam artists may say that there is a limited time to act in order to get people to pay money before they have time to think the situation through:

"John and Mary" were in the market to sell their timeshare in the Bahamas. They received a call from a supposedly local Bahamian company that claimed it had found a buyer who wanted to buy the unit that same day and asked John and Mary to immediately pay a large upfront fee. When they asked for a few days to think about it, the individual claimed that they must send him the money that day or forfeit the opportunity. John and Mary let the "deal" go because they weren't going to send money before they had time to review the documents and research the company. It's a good thing they did, because this was a scam.

You receive payment in the form of a cashier's check or money order. Scam artists can create counterfeit checks and money orders that look remarkably authentic. After your financial institution cashes a check or money order, it generally has up to two weeks to reverse the transaction. If the check or money order ultimately ends up being counterfeit, your financial institution will probably hold you responsible for any portion of the funds that were used or sent back to the scam artist. For example:

"Terri" was trying to sell her car on an online classified site. One of the offers she received included a check for an amount greater than the sale price. The purported buyer told her the overpayment was for shipping and asked her to wire the money to a transporter. Terri asked her bank to look over the check. Sure enough, it was counterfeit. It's a good thing Terri didn't wire the overage to the transporter, because her money would have been gone for good.

It sounds too good to be true. If something sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Consider this:

"Rhoda" received a mailing that offered an "exclusive" work-at-home opportunity earning \$5,000 a week. Rhoda became suspicious when she noticed the bulk mailing stamp on the envelope. She asked herself, "how many others had received a similar offer?" A quick Internet search told her that thousands of people apparently had — and the offer was a scam.

America Mobilizes for Energy Efficiency

Progress since the first Earth Day continues into the future

APRIL 22 WILL MARK THE 45TH CELEBRATION OF Earth Day. The rallies and marches in the spring of 1970 called for more attention to protecting the environment. If you measure the success of that cause by greater energy efficiency, the results have been remarkable and the future holds great promise.

By Paul Wesslund

Here are a few examples of increases in energy efficiency during the past decades:

- The fuel economy of cars and other motor

vehicles in the U.S. has improved from 12.2 miles per gallon in 1975 to 17.6 in 2013. You might think this would mean cars have lost some of their “giddyup,” but horsepower steadily increased during that time, and 0-60 mph acceleration went from 14 seconds to 8 seconds.

- New light bulb technologies shine when it comes to using less energy. The Department of Energy says that from 2001 to 2010, lumens per watt rose from 45 to 58. That resulted in a 9

ENERGY EFFICIENCY ON THE RISE

In the spirit of celebrating Earth Day in April, here is a snapshot of a few major efficiency trends in the U.S.



The fuel economy of cars and other motor vehicles in the U.S. has improved from 12.2 miles per gallon in 1975 to 17.6 miles per gallon in 2013.

The Department of Energy's ENERGY STAR program has saved \$34 billion in energy bills since the program began in 1992.



The Department of Energy reports that super-efficient LED bulbs saved \$1.8 billion in energy costs in 2013.



percent drop in the amount of electricity used for lighting during a decade when the number of bulbs increased 18 percent.

• The Department of Energy's ENERGY STAR® program of efficiency ratings for everything from appliances to buildings says people bought 5.2 billion ENERGY STAR-rated products, saving \$34 billion in energy bills since the program began in 1992.

Here's what experts predict for the future.

The Department of Energy reports that super-efficient light-emitting diode (LED) bulbs saved \$1.8 billion in energy costs in 2013, and that \$39 billion would be saved if all bulbs switched to LEDs.

A report from the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy says "There are large and cost-effective energy efficiency opportunities that, by 2050, can collectively reduce energy use by 40 to 60 percent relative to current forecasts."

"The best is yet to come," says Brian Sloboda, an energy expert with the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. Sloboda sees "amazing new technologies" that will continue the progress in energy efficiency.

He cites lighting as an example of how far we've come and how far we can still go. Light bulb efficiency has skyrocketed in the last 20 years, from incandescent lights, to compact fluorescent lights (the curly CFL bulbs), to LEDs. A promising new technology, OLEDs – organic light emitting diodes, isn't even a bulb, but lighting made of flexible material that can be applied to a variety of surfaces.

"Instead of having ceiling lights, the ceiling would actually be made of OLED material. During the day it looks like a regular ceiling, but at night the ceiling itself would glow," says Sloboda. "Instead of having light poles or roadway lighting, you could actually make the OLED material into the roadway so the stripes on the road provide the lighting. It could completely change the way architects design our buildings."

The American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEE) lists a variety of steps for a more efficient future. Those include better energy habits in our own lives, more efficient electronic equipment and smart systems (like thermostats) that adjust to your daily schedule.

"If we aggressively pursue these efficiency opportunities," says the ACEE, "we can roughly double the rate of efficiency improvement in the next 35 years relative to the past 35 and reduce energy use to half the current forecasts."

Paul Wesslund writes on cooperative issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

Residential Lighting Goes High-Tech

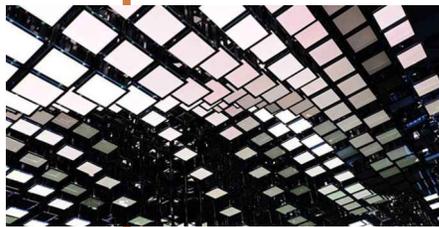
By Brian Sloboda and Laura Moorfield

Until recently, homes were lit with a single technology – incandescent lamps. This is the bulb that generations of Americans learned by, lived by – and even ate by. But those days are long gone.

Over the past 20 years, electric co-ops have promoted efficient lighting by adding CFLs to the mix. In 2012, about 30 percent of U.S. residential sockets were filled with CFLs, with incandescents making up the remaining 70 percent. Today, LED bulbs and fixtures are increasingly preferred in many residential and commercial applications for their efficiency, quality of light and compatibility with automatic controls.

Changes to federal lighting standards went into effect for incandescent bulbs in 2007, when Congress passed and President George W. Bush signed the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (EISA), which included provisions to reduce the energy use of everyday light bulbs.

At the same time, through industry efforts and government investment, LEDs dramatically improved in performance and dropped in price, making them appealing options for many applications.



These innovative OLED panels are only 0.7mm thick, but they produce bright illumination with a visual quality unrivaled by other light sources. <http://www.usa.lighting.philips.com/products/oled.html>

LED lamp more of a consumer electronic than just a light bulb.

LEDs are essentially computer chips, so they are more difficult to produce than incandescent bulbs. This is one product where cheaper versions often produce a life span and color that is not what the consumer wants. Higher quality LEDs from reputable brands – such as GE, Philips, Cree and Sylvania to name a few – have tested well.

However, some fixtures inside the home do not work well with LEDs. Consumers with older dimmer switches often find that they must purchase newer switches to work with the LEDs. Consumers should pick LED lamps that come with a solid warranty in case there is a problem with quality.

What's next? While LEDs are still on the cusp of becoming our everyday lighting, there are other technologies in development. Organic Light Emitting Diodes (OLEDs) are similar to LEDs in that they are solid-state devices that produce light when current passes through them. But unlike LEDs, they are made up of multiple, organic semi-conductive layers that produce diffused light. OLEDs are extremely thin and flexible, which has enabled them to be effectively used in displays, like mobile phone screens and TVs. Manufacturers are developing OLED lighting as well – primarily for decorative architectural panels at this point, although some OLED lamps are available today.

It appears that the age of the LED has begun. They are shatter resistant and have a long life. And yes, some even come with their own app.

Brian Sloboda is a program manager specializing in energy efficiency for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. Laura Moorefield consults for utilities, state and federal governments, and non-profits on energy efficiency, renewables, and program design. Laura founded Moorefield Research & Consulting, LLC in 2013. She currently resides in Durango, CO and is a member of La Plata Electric Association.

Regional Dateline

March 20

Colman Fire and Rescue
Annual Pancake Feed
9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Fire Hall
on Main Street, Colman, SD
Contact Lisa Allen at
605-530-0337

March 20

Winter Meat Shoot, Practice
Rounds and Shoot at 11 a.m.
Izaak Walton League
5000 North Oakview Place
Sioux Falls, SD, Contact
Darrell at 605-332-9527

March 27

Winter Meat Shoot, Practice
rounds at 10 a.m., Shoot at
11 a.m., Rock Valley Gun Club
2378 310th Street
Rock Valley, IA, Contact Garry
at 712-540-9757, Matt at
712-470-6794 or Loren at
712-451-8366

April 1-3, 8-10

Opland's Spring Show
"We've Got Rhythm"
April 1-2 and 8-9 at 7:30 p.m.
April 3 and 10 at 3 p.m.
Performing Arts Center
Pipestone, MN, 507-825-2020
1-877-722-2787

April 4

Gardening with the Masters
"The First Step" Outdoor
Campus, Sioux Falls, SD
605-362-2777

April 16

Spring Loaded Home, Health
and Living Show, 9 a.m. to
4 p.m., Luverne Businesses
and Blue Mound Banquet

PHOTO COURTESY OF CUSTER STAMPEDE BUFFALO ART AUCTION



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.

Events of Special Note

May 7

Cinco De Mayo Fiesta
11 a.m. to 7 p.m.
FREE - open to the public
Falls Park, Sioux Falls, SD
www.cincofiesta.com

May 20

11th Annual Custer Stampede
Buffalo Art Auction Unveiling
Custer, SD, 605-673-2244

Center (401 W. Hatting), Free
seminars at the Historic Palace
Theatre, Luverne, MN
507-283-4061 or Toll free at
888-283-4061, Sponsored by
Luverne Area Chamber
www.luvernechamber.com

May 7

Consignment Auction, 10 a.m.
Prairie Village, Madison, SD
605-256-3644
www.prairievillage.org/auction

May 7

Gardening with the Masters
"Garden Planting in Situ" Falls
Park Community Garden
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-362-2777

May 9

Gardening with the Masters
"My Lush, Green Lawn"
Outdoor Campus
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-362-2777

June 1

Gardening with the Masters
"Enemy #1" Outdoor Campus
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-362-2777

June 5

Miss Prairie Village/Miss
Prairie Princess Pageant
Prairie Village, Madison, SD
605-480-2633
www.prairievillage.org

June 10

Northern Bull Riding Tour
Bull riding at 7 p.m.
Prairie Village, Madison, SD
605-256-3644
www.prairievillage.org

June 22

McCrossan Golf Classic for
Kids and Appreciation BBQ
Central Valley Golf Course
Noon shotgun start
Appreciation BBQ at the Ranch
Hartford, SD, Contact Christy
Menning or Nikki Williams at
605-339-1203

June 26

Prairie Village Variety Show
Prairie Village, Madison, SD
605-256-3644
www.prairievillage.org

July 9

Gardening with the Masters
"Garden Watering and
Weeding in Situ" SHUMC
Community Garden
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-362-2777