



# Sioux Valley Energy

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

## Cooperative Connections

MAY 2014 VOL. 15 NO. 1



# BALANCING REGULATIONS, STEWARDSHIP

Pg-8

# Culture of Safety

## Top Initiative at Sioux Valley Energy



**Tim McCarthy**  
General Manager/CEO

**"It will never happen to me"**... that's a sentiment that many of us have had when it comes to safety. We've all probably said things like "it's only a few blocks, I don't need to buckle up" or "I've plugged this in near water before and it was fine". No one ever expects an accident to happen but in our industry we have to be ever conscious and vigilant of the power of electricity.

At Sioux Valley Energy our goal is to go beyond just talking about safety. We strive to have safety infiltrate our culture; we want safety to be second nature. So everything we do-- whether it's working on a hot electric line or shoveling the walk after a snowfall—is centered on the safety of our employees and members.

Sioux Valley was recently recognized by the Minnesota Rural Electric Trust (MRET) with the 'Leroy Vanderpool Excellence in Safety Award' for our Minnesota operations. We have received other awards for our safety program in the past but that's not good enough. We will continue working towards a zero incident record. In our view, safe work is productive work and we refuse to take shortcuts that could result in an accident.

Your cooperative has embarked on a new journey as it pertains to its safety program. This includes our Board of Directors who recognize that safety is of paramount importance to the success and sustainability of the Cooperative and holds safety as an essential organizational value. The Board reaffirmed its commitment to safety at a strategic planning session in 2013 by modifying one of the Cooperative's Keys to Success by changing the "Commitment to Quality" Key to "Commitment to Quality and Safety".

We are also working with Caterpillar (yes, the company that

makes all those great big trucks) to continue to expand and build the culture of safety at Sioux Valley Energy. This is about developing a clear vision that paints a vivid picture of our organizational values and commitment to the overall concept of safety and building a culture that supports that vision in every interaction we have internally or externally.

This is our most important initiative—a culture of safety is not just another safety slogan. It's more important than our line construction program; it's more important than the Alliant territory purchase; it's more important than anything that has come in the past and anything that will come in the future. It's more important, because it's about caring for one another's well-being and making sure that each and every day all employees go home safe to their family and no member is ever hurt by our facilities.

The Caterpillar safety program is one that involves every employee. Each person at this organization will have a role in developing a process that will be put to paper and embraced by the entire Cooperative.

We are excited to have Caterpillar helping Sioux Valley Energy in this journey. We started the process by having each employee take a safety perception survey. That information has allowed us to identify areas of concern, as well as the areas where we excel in the eyes of the employees. All of our supervisors have taken part in a one-day training about improving the culture of safety. The next step is to engage a "steering committee" of about 12 employees. The work that the steering committee will do will be very important and will then trickle down to the rest of the employees who will then form working groups to identify/find solutions for safety issues.

We will keep you informed as we carry out this new program. However, I can't close without offering some reminders now that Spring is finally here. Please be aware of your surroundings. Know where the overhead lines are and call before you dig. Think about what you are doing when climbing ladders and getting on your roof. Don't think it could "never happen to you", because it could. Safety first—Always.



**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.**





A Southeastern Energy Cooperative

## Cooperative Connections

(USPS No. 497-440)

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**Sioux Valley Energy Cooperative Connections** is published monthly by Sioux Valley Southwestern Electric Cooperative, Inc., PO Box 216, Junction Hwy 34 & 77, Colman, SD 57017, for its members. Customers subscribe to the publication as part of their electric cooperative membership. The purpose of **Sioux Valley Energy Cooperative Connections** is to provide reliable, helpful information to Sioux Valley Energy customers on matters pertaining to electric cooperatives and better living.

Subscription information: Electric cooperative members devote not more than 50 cents from their monthly electric payments for a subscription. Non-member subscriptions are available for \$12 annually. Periodicals Postage Paid at Colman, SD 57017 and at additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:  
PO Box 216, Colman, SD 57017.

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

# SIOUX VALLEY ENERGY RECOGNIZED FOR SAFETY PROGRAM

**Sioux Valley Energy** was recognized for its outstanding employee safety program with the prestigious Leroy Vanderpool "Excellence in Safety" Award. The cooperative received the award at the Minnesota Rural Electric Association annual meeting in St. Paul, Minn. in March.

"Safety is our number one priority. We won't compromise on that issue—safe work is productive work in our eyes," Tim McCarthy, SVE General Manager/CEO said. He added, "We are honored that our safety program was recognized and the credit needs to go to our employees who have made safety a part of our culture at Sioux Valley."

Sioux Valley Energy was chosen by the Minnesota Rural Electric Trust (MRET) based on the following safety criteria: Employee safety performance, employee injury frequency rates and workers' compensation claim experience. The MRET also considered Sioux Valley Energy's safety program accomplishments.



**Pictured: Shawn Bruns, Sioux Valley Energy warehouse clerk and safety committee member, accepts the Leroy Vanderpool "Excellence in Safety" Award from Kirk Wolf, Minnesota Rural Electric Trust Board Member.**



## Meet LED Lucy!

**Get to know this bright gal and save on your lighting bill!  
Learn more about Sioux Valley Energy's new rebate program for LED lightbulbs.**

- \$5 rebate per bulb
- Must be 9 watts or greater
- Maximum rebate of \$100
- Will be issued as a bill credit

# Motorcycle Safety Tips

**Among all motor vehicles,** motorcycles are the most vulnerable on the road. Because motorcycles do not have seat belts, you can be thrown off your seat in a crash, which can result in serious injury or even death. Imagine your chance for survival if a truck strikes you, or if you strike it. Hitting a truck is like hitting a steel wall. However, your chance for survival will be increased if you wear a helmet and follow the safety tips below when riding your motorcycle.

## Watch the no-zones

Never hang out in a truck's blind spot or "No-Zone." Trucks have large No-Zones on both sides, the front and behind the truck. Truck drivers cannot see you when you ride in these blind spots. The front blind spot is particularly dangerous if you need to stop quickly. Because of their lightweight and braking system, motorcycles can stop much faster than trucks. A truck may not be able to stop as quickly as you do, so you need to take special precautions to avoid crashes before they happen.

## Always wear a helmet

Make sure to always wear a helmet. Beware of helmets that do not meet U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) standards. Check for the DOT label inside your helmet. Helmets are the most important piece of equipment you can wear when riding your motorcycle. A helmet could be your only source of protection in a serious crash.



## Drive to survive

Motorcycles are the smallest vehicles on the road. Unfortunately they provide virtually no protection in a crash. Other drivers may not see you on your motorcycle, so you must be aware of everything on the

road. Be extra cautious, paying attention to the signals and brake lights of other vehicles, especially trucks. Ride with caution and drive defensively. Never ride in between lanes in traffic or share a lane with another vehicle. Don't instigate aggressive driving with other motorists; you will only increase your chance of a crash.

## Check yourself and your bike

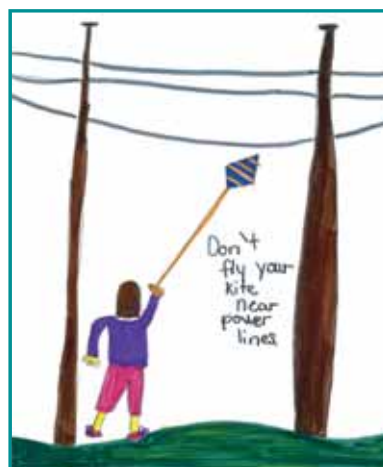
Conduct a safety inspection of your motorcycle before each ride and wear protective clothing including gloves, boots and a jacket. Proper maintenance and protective clothing will help reduce your chance of a crash or the severity of injury if you are involved in a crash, especially with a large truck or bus.

## Watch Your Speed

Of all vehicles, motorcycles accelerate the fastest, while trucks and buses are the slowest. Please watch your speed around trucks, especially in bad weather or at night. Colliding with the back of a truck will end your riding days.

Source: [sharetheroadsafely.org](http://sharetheroadsafely.org)

## Kids' Corner Safety Poster



**"Don't fly your kite near power lines."**

**Ciana Schwader, 10 years old**

*Ciana is the daughter of Joe and Tara Schwader, Howard, S.D. They are members of Central Electric Cooperative, Mitchell, 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.

## VISIT ACTION.COOP



RENEWABLE ENERGY



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America needs all of its energy sources to keep electric bills affordable.

VISIT  
ACTION.COOP  
TODAY



America needs an  
**ALL-OF-THE-ABOVE STRATEGY**



# Comforting Casseroles



## Chicken Cordon Bleu Casserole

- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1 lb. pasta, any fun-shaped pasta | 2 T. minced onion                        |
| 1 cup cooked and cubed chicken    | 2 cups shredded Swiss cheese             |
| 1 cup cooked and cubed ham        | Salt, pepper and cayenne pepper to taste |
| 1-1/2 cups milk                   | 1 cup panko crumbs                       |
| 8 oz. cream cheese                | 1/2 cup butter, melted                   |

Cook pasta; drain. Add chicken and ham; stir to combine. Combine milk, cream cheese and onion; heat until smooth. Stir in pasta mixture. Add cheese and seasonings. Put in a baking dish. Top with crumbs and butter. Bake at 350°F. for 35 minutes.

**Mary Truman, Kimball**

## Better Bean Casserole

- |                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 3 T. butter                          | 1 (15 oz.) jar alfredo sauce                                |
| 6 oz. mushrooms, sliced (2 1/2 cups) | 4 oz. cream cheese, softened                                |
| 1 tsp. chopped fresh thyme           | 1 T. flour  |
| 1/2 tsp. garlic powder               | 1-1/2 cups crushed sour cream & onion potato chips, divided |
| 1/4 tsp. pepper                      | 2 cans green beans, drained                                 |

Melt butter in skillet over medium heat. Add mushrooms, thyme, garlic powder and pepper; cook, stirring, until lightly browned – about 3 minutes. Reduce heat to low. Stir in alfredo sauce, cream cheese and flour; cook, stirring occasionally, until cream cheese is melted and sauce is heated through – about 3 to 4 minutes. Stir in 1/2 cup crushed potato chips and green beans. Transfer to ungreased 2-1/4 quart baking dish; cover. Bake at 350°F. until hot and bubbly – about 45 minutes. Sprinkle with remaining chips. Bake an additional 5 minutes until chips are lightly browned.

**Janie Wittmeier, Bruce**

## Stuffing Casserole

- |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1 lb. ground beef                      | 1 (16 oz.) can cream-style corn       |
| 1/4 cup chopped onion                  | 8 slices Velveeta cheese              |
| 1 (10.5 oz.) can cream of chicken soup | 1 (6 oz.) pkg. stove-top stuffing mix |

Brown ground beef and onion; drain. Add soup and corn. Place in a 9x13 pan. Top with stuffing mix prepared as directed on package. Bake at 350°F. for 1 hour.

**Donna Beck, Worthing**

## German Potato Salad Casserole

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 lb. ground beef (90% lean) or ground turkey | 1/2 tsp. salt (optional)                      |
| 1 cup chopped onion                           | 1/2 tsp. pepper                               |
| 2 cloves garlic, minced                       | 1 (15 oz.) can READ German Potato Salad       |
| 1 tsp. dried thyme leaves, crumbled           | 1 (14.5 oz.) can diced tomatoes, well drained |
|   | 1-1/2 cups shredded Swiss cheese, divided     |

Cook ground beef, onion, garlic and thyme in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat 8 to 10 minutes or until beef is no longer pink; drain. (Beef should be left in large crumbles.) Season with salt, if desired, and pepper. Stir in potato salad and tomatoes. Cook over medium heat until liquid is reduced and thickened, about 7 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in 1 cup cheese and spoon mixture into an ungreased 2-quart baking dish. Sprinkle remaining cheese on top. Bake at 350°F, uncovered, for 15 minutes or until bubbly. Remove from oven and let stand 5 minutes before serving. Makes 4 servings.

*Nutritional information per serving (using 90% lean ground beef): 476 calories; 36 g protein; 33 g carbohydrate; 22 g fat; 682 mg sodium; 110 mg cholesterol; 2 g dietary fiber; 3 mg iron; >1 mg thiamin; 933 IU Vitamin A; 15 mg Vitamin C*

**Pictured, Cooperative Connections**

## Hot Rice Dish

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 2-1/2 cups minute rice                    | 1 (10.5 oz.) can cream of chicken soup |
| 2 cups cubed chicken or ham               | 1/2 cup milk                           |
| 1/2 cup chopped celery                    | 1 can chopped, drained water chestnuts |
| 1/4 cup chopped onion                     | 1 jar cheese whiz                      |
| 1 (10 oz.) pkg. chopped broccoli (frozen) |  |

Combine all ingredients. Bake at 350°F. for 1 hour in a covered baking dish or cake pan.

**Denene Miles, Doland**

## Bacon Cheeseburger Casserole

- |                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1 lb. ground beef             | 8 slices bacon, cooked, crumbled                                 |
| 1 onion, chopped              | 4 cups (1/2 of 32 oz. pkg.) frozen bite-size seasoned tator tots |
| 1/3 cup ketchup               |  |
| 2 T. yellow mustard           |  |
| 1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese |  |

Brown ground beef with onions in skillet; drain. Stir in ketchup and mustard. Spoon into a 9-inch square baking dish sprayed with cooking spray; top with remaining ingredients. Bake at 400°F. for 30 to 35 minutes or until casserole is heated through and tator tots are golden brown.

**Jillian Nedved, Harrisburg**

*Please send your favorite ethnic, dessert and salad 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 2014. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.*

# Second Annual Power & Hope Award Nominees Recognized

The Cooperative honored three finalists for the second annual Touchstone Energy 'Power and Hope Award' at the District 7 Member Meeting held in Humboldt, S.D. on March 27. These members were nominated by their peers for the difference they make in their communities and the generosity, selflessness, and giving spirit they display. Each nominee will receive \$100 towards his/her favorite charity and an overall winner will be selected to receive a \$1,000 donation towards a 501(c)3 organization at the upcoming Annual Member Meeting scheduled for June 3 at the Colman S.D. headquarters. The culminating event has special significance as it marks the 75th anniversary for the cooperative.

The three finalists include: Troy Larson (Hartford), Deb Shumaker (Humboldt) and Barb Thaler (Hartford).

Mayor Paul Zimmer stated this of his nominee, "Troy Larson stands out far above any other with his top quality leadership, organization, motivation and inspirational style." Over the years, he has volunteered his time to work on committees for the sports complex, pool, and downtown area. In addition, he has served as a mentor at West Central School and has been involved with Junior Achievement for the last 14 years. The creation of the Bike and Recreation Trail, that has improved the quality of life for citizens in Hartford, is largely due to his leadership.

Deb Shumaker is described as a person who makes a big difference in the community and in serving families with her dedication of countless hours ordering merchandise, stocking shelves, and distributing the goods as the Co-Chairperson for the Humboldt Food Haven. She also volunteers as a Sunday school teacher at Faith Lutheran Church. Myron Kropp, who nominated Deb for this award said, "Whether at our food



Left to Right: Rodney DeMent-District 7 SVE Director, Barb Thaler-Hartford, S.D., Troy Larson-Hartford, S.D., Deb Shumaker-Humboldt, S.D.

pantry, our church or our community, she is always there to do her part. Her enthusiasm has inspired several other people to get involved."

Barb Thaler is recognized for her devotion to serving the community as the Rescue Chief for 15 years with Hartford Fire and Rescue and involvement with the American Legion Auxiliary and United Methodist Church. She also instructs CPR and medical emergency classes, along with coordinating many activities in the area such as the blood drive and adopt-a-highway program. "There are many people in South Dakota who share Barb's skills, but her compassion, drive, commitment to excellence and care for the community set her apart from the rest," shared Terry Hagen who submitted the nomination.

-Written by Sheila Gross, SVE

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# 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 and L&O Power Cooperative.

Debra Bieber, Sioux Valley Energy Director of Customer and Employee Relations, says 85 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.



**Anna Wolles**



**Annika Hindbjorgen**



**Bailey Quanbeck**



**Erin Buse**



**Jackson Richards**



**Jared Waltz**



**Jessica Sandbulte**



**Kayla Yount**



**Nathan Baatz**



**Rachel Goetz**



**Rebecca Lythgoe**



**Shane Mueller**



**Taylor Homann**



**Taylor Wingert**



**Tia Muller**



**Summer Smith**



**Matthew Raak**



**Makenzie Haensel**

## AWARD RECIPIENTS

### \$500 Scholarships:

**Matthew Raak, SW Minnesota Christian- Edgerton**

**Jessica Sandbulte, Hills-Beaver Creek High School**

**Jared Waltz, Home on the Rock Academy Homeschool**

**Shane Mueller, Garretson High School**

**Rebecca Lythgoe, Tri-Valley High School**

**Kayla Yount, West Central High School**

**Makenzie Haensel, West Central High School**

**Erin Buse, Brandon Valley High School**

**Taylor Wingert, Hills-Beaver Creek High School**

**Bailey Quanbeck, Brandon Valley High School**

**Annika Hindbjorgen, Brandon Valley High School**

**Summer Smith, West Central High School**

### \$1,000 Scholarships:

**Jackson Richards, Madison High School**

**Nathan Baatz, Pipestone Area High School**

**Taylor Homann, Pipestone Area High School**

**Tia Muller, Pipestone Area High School**

**Anna Wolles, Dell Rapids St. Mary**

**Rachel Goetz, Sioux Falls Washington High School**

# Regulation and Stewardship:

## *Co-ops Strive for Balance*

By Reed Karaim

**E**LECTRIC COOPERATIVES HAVE BEEN GOOD ENVIRONMENTAL stewards since their beginnings – living up to the co-op principle of Commitment to Community. After all, the first electric co-ops were primarily in rural areas, serving members who largely made their living off the land.

Those members knew the value of clean air, soil and water and today's electric co-ops continue to honor that heritage. In just the last decade, power supply cooperatives have invested more than \$3.4 billion to reduce emissions and boost efficiency. They are planning billions of dollars more in further upgrades.

Cooperatives have always balanced investments in efficiency and the environment with the need to control costs for members. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is considering a series of new environmental standards for coal power plants that potentially could have a devastating impact on the ability of electric cooperatives to provide their members with affordable and reliable electricity.

The federal agency is tightening a number of regulations that limit power plant emissions.

While complying with all these standards could cost power generation cooperatives millions of dollars, “the most pressing issue and the one that could





have the biggest impact on us is the proposed rule that will come out this June on carbon dioxide emissions for existing power plants,” says Kirk Johnson, senior vice president of government relations for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association in Arlington, Va.

Cooperatives are more dependent on coal-fired generation than the rest of the industry. The reason lies in the tumultuous decade of the 1970s.

## Electric Co-ops and Coal

Oil embargoes, gas lines, soaring prices and shortfalls. For much of the 1970s, the nation was caught up in a complicated energy crisis that involved disruptions in Middle Eastern oil supplies and a conviction the world was running out of oil and natural gas.

In 1977, President Jimmy Carter called on the United States to “shift to plentiful coal” to meet its growing energy needs. A year later, Congress went further, passing the Powerplant and Industrial Fuel Use Act to block the use of natural gas or oil to generate electricity.

Electric cooperatives stepped up to meet the challenge, adding 15,600 MW of coal-based capacity during the natural gas ban. “That’s when we built 70 percent of our coal generation, during the period leading up to and during the Fuel Use Act,” says John Novak, NRECA executive director of environmental issues. “We built these units when there was a need to build them and when the policy of the federal government was that coal was a domestic fuel source we should be using.”

The Fuel Use Act was repealed in 1987, but co-op efforts to help the nation meet its energy needs during a time of crisis have had long-term consequences. About 70 percent of the power generated by co-ops comes from coal plants, compared to about 37 percent for the industry overall, according to Novak.

He notes these coal-fired units still have many years of effective life and that generation and transmission cooperatives have already invested significantly to meet EPA regulations. Coupled with the other rules now being considered by the EPA, the rule on carbon dioxide emissions could be the “straw that breaks the camel’s back,” Novak says, making the continued operation of some plants financially unfeasible. If complying with the standard proves too costly, it may make more economic sense to shutter some units rather than spend millions to comply.

Cooperatives believe environmental regulation needs to be balanced with a realistic assessment of costs and benefits. The situation is particularly critical with regard to carbon dioxide emissions. “We’re asking the EPA to recognize the unique circumstances of not-for-profit electric cooperatives and to work with us to come up with a fair solution that allows us to continue to provide affordable and reliable power to our members,” says Novak.

**Coal-based plants like this have helped the nation meet its energy needs, especially during times of crisis. Today, about 70 percent of the power generated by co-ops nationwide comes from this fuel.** Photo by Steve Crane/Basin Electric

## Pursuing a Responsible Energy Future

The EPA moved to regulate carbon dioxide after the Supreme Court ruled in 2007 that the agency had authority under the Clean Air Act to regulate greenhouse gas emissions. But many analysts believe the Act was never intended to regulate carbon dioxide. It was enacted to address problems with smog and acid rain for which proven solutions existed. No commercially viable technology yet exists for removing carbon dioxide emissions from power plants.

Still, some environmental groups have been pressing the EPA for regulations that would mandate a 25 percent reduction in carbon emissions, which would require either closing plants or severely curtailing their operations. NRECA believes this approach exceeds the intent of the Clean Air Act.

“Some groups are pushing the EPA to go beyond the black-and-white letter of the law and require emission reductions that can’t be achieved with today’s technology,” says Johnson. “We don’t think that’s allowed by the law, and it will cause costs to skyrocket.”

The EPA’s effort to expand regulatory control of power plant emissions and other operations comes at a time when Congress has been unable to agree on legislation to address the same issues. Capitol Hill observers note the EPA took a more active role on greenhouse gases after Congress failed to pass a “cap and trade” program that would have curtailed the emissions.

More recent bills have been introduced to limit EPA’s authority to regulate carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions, but “any legislation whatsoever, whether it’s to strengthen or weaken the requirements, or do something in between, faces a very strong uphill fight because Congress is so divided,” says Johnson.

Electric cooperatives, however, continue to lobby for reasonable solutions to EPA concerns. For example, John Cassidy, senior principal for legislative advocacy at NRECA, notes co-ops have been working with a broad-based coalition to find an effective legislative approach to coal ash disposal. The legislation has received bipartisan support in the House, but faces a difficult road in the Senate. “We’re continuing to work with our membership to try and spread the message among policymakers,” Cassidy says.

Congress may be paralyzed, but electric cooperatives aren’t. Co-ops representatives, along with NRECA staff, have met with EPA officials to make their case. Co-ops also continue to work on upgrades and new technologies to make their plants even cleaner while still providing the service the public expects.

“Our folks are engaged in all kinds of activities to improve the efficiency and environmental performance of our power plants across the board,” says Johnson. “They’re very serious about finding solutions that are affordable for members.”

*Reed Karaim writes on consumer and cooperative affairs 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.*

2014

## Mark Your Calendar! Join us for the Sioux Valley Energy Annual Meeting.

**When: Tuesday, June 3, 2014**

**Where: SVE Headquarters -  
Colman, S.D.**

**Why: To Celebrate 75 years of  
Rural Electrification**

**What: Food, Fun and Fellowship!**

June

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

## Deubrook Student Heads to Washington D.C.



**Brianna Jurrens** a senior at Deubrook Area High School, has been selected to represent Sioux Valley Energy in Washington D.C. this summer for the national 'Rural Electric Youth Tour'. Brianna is the daughter of Chris and Becky Jurrens of Toronto, S.D.

While in Washington, Brianna will meet with the South Dakota congressional delegation, visit historical sites and meet more than 1,000 other teens from cooperatives

across the United States. Sioux Valley Energy provides funding for the trip.

Brianna is planning to attend South Dakota State University in the fall, majoring in nursing. "I hope to, one day, change someone's life or help them in any and every way possible, and I feel I can achieve this goal by becoming a nurse," Brianna wrote on her application.

She is involved in volleyball, yearbook, serves as student manager for boys basketball and football, National Honor Society, One-Act and All-School plays.

## Goetz Named 'Scholar of the Week'

**Rachel Goetz**, a student at Washington High School in Sioux Falls, was chosen as a Touchstone Energy Cooperative 'Scholar of the Week', Apr. 27 - May 3. Rachel was recognized with a cash award by Sioux Valley Energy. She is the daughter of Bob and Shelly Goetz of Sioux Falls. Rachel will be featured on the KSFY 6:00PM news on Thursday, May 1 and again on Friday, May 2 between 6:00AM and 7:00AM.

Touchstone Energy Cooperatives, like Sioux Valley Energy, and KSFY Television have joined together to recognize the achievements of high school seniors throughout the region.



Laura Meile, Counselor at Washington High School, nominated Rachel for the award.

Meile wrote on the nomination form, "What teachers have to say about Rachel is that she is 'the epitome of a steady, polite, optimistic student who is consistently ready for any academic challenge.'"



Deadline to apply:

Friday,  
May 9th



## EMPOWER YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

### OPPORTUNITIES TO GROW!

Trip to Basin Electric  
power generation  
facilities

Monetary  
Leadership  
Awards/Scholarships

Representative  
on Youth Tour to  
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ENERGY**

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

### Are you looking for a different way to look at leadership?

Sioux Valley Energy encourages you to apply for the opportunity to learn and EmPOWER yourself with a leadership skill-set through excitement and collaboration! Learn what makes cooperatives unique and how their business model EmPOWER's their members and communities to succeed.

### Four fun-filled program days focusing on:

- Career Options in Electric Industry
- Your Purpose and Passion in Life
- Communication Skills
- Network with Students
- Teamwork
- Cooperative Business Model
- Self Confidence
- Electrical Safety/CPR
- Legislative
- Finances

Guest Speaker-  
**OLYMPIA  
SCOTT**



2-Time WNBA Champion, US National Team Gold Medalist, President & CEO of Super Parenting LLC, Motivational Speaker, Published Author, Success Coach, Wife and Proud Mother, who was recently inducted into the Stanford University Athletic Hall of Fame

### To Apply:

- Be a sophomore or junior during the 2014-2015 school year with a grade point average of 3.0 or higher.
- Fill out an application and return to your guidance counselor by Friday, May 9, 2014.

Get your applications from your guidance counselor or online:

[empoweryouthleadership.com](http://empoweryouthleadership.com)

# Keeping Cool:

## *Proposed Intake Rules Costly*

**T**HE LAST OF THE BIG 5 REGULATORY ISSUES WE'LL examine is the Cooling Water 316(b) Regulations proposed by the Environmental Protection Agency.

### **Intent of Rule: Reduce Damage to Aquatic Life**

This rule was proposed under a section 316(b) of the Clean Water Act in April of 2011. The intent of the rule is to reduce damage to aquatic life through impingement or entrainment. Impingement is when aquatic creatures are trapped against the inlet screens of cooling water intake locations. Entrainment is when these creatures are actually drawn into the cooling water system.

### **Rule Requires Permits and Imposes Limits**

The rule required that National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits be obtained for facilities with cooling water intake structures. The permitting process ensures the location, design, construction and capacity of the structures reflect the best technology available (BTA) to minimize harmful impacts on the environment. In part, it also applies limits on the number of fish that can be harmed at any site that takes in at least 2 million gallons of water per day with the possibility of more stringent standards being applied at any facility that takes in at least 125 million gallons per day. The new rules will have no effect on health or water quality.

### **EPA Regulations Challenged by Electric and Environmental Stakeholders**

The origins of this rule are from Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) action in February 2004. The EPA took final action on regulations governing cooling water intake structures at certain power producing facilities. These regulations were challenged by both the electric industry and environmental stakeholders. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit ultimately agreed with many points raised by the environmental groups. Their decision was to remand this rule back to EPA. EPA, in turn, suspended the rule as the court's decision impacted its content greatly.

### **Supreme Court Allows Utilities to Apply Cost-benefit Analysis**

Subsequently, the Supreme Court agreed to review part of the rule pertaining to the EPA's ability to consider costs and benefits when choosing intake system technology to protect aquatic life. Finally, in April of 2009 the Supreme Court reversed the Second Circuit Courts ruling and decided it is permissible for utility companies and regulators to apply cost-benefit analysis when deciding what technology is necessary to protect aquatic life from large industrial cooling water intake structures. This action would allow utilities some measure of control over costs associated with compliance with the final

By Tim McCarthy

Water from the Missouri River supplies several power plants in North Dakota.



rule. However, this merely helps limit what will still result in very significant compliance costs.

By EPA's own analysis, annualized costs to comply with the impingement requirements in the proposed rule would exceed the environmental benefits by 20-to-1 (\$384 million to \$18 million). An EPRI review of peer reviewed literature found no evidence that regulating CWIS will improve fish populations.

### NRECA Pleased with Proposed Site-specific Ruling

While no final ruling has been issued, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) is pleased the proposed rule allows for site-specific analysis and for the consideration of costs when making decisions on which technologies must be installed. The proposed rule also does not require existing generation facilities with once-through cooling designs to retrofit their systems when it does not make economic sense, and when less expensive alternatives may exist. The NRECA emphasized that any new water discharge controls or clean water requirements should strive to meet established environmental goals to enhance water quality through scientifically sound, cost-effective methods, while allowing as much flexibility as possible to utilities in their efforts to meet these goals.

### Realistic Balance Between Environmental Impacts and Energy Costs Must Be Found

There is no current effective date established for the enforcement of the regulations outlined within this rule. It appears an impingement standard may go into effect between 2013 and 2020. EPA missed the Jan. 14, 2014, deadline which had already been extended from June 2013 to allow the Agency to initiate a formal consultation with the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and National Marine Fisheries Service under the Endangered Species Act.

Entrainment deadlines are expected to be set by individual states. This is a tough debate with extremists on both sides of the issue, one side saying the harm of any aquatic life is unacceptable, and the other saying we simply must produce regardless. In the end, it is a great example of what I have continually said about any energy policy. We must find a realistic balance between the environmental impacts and the costs to sustain our current way of life. If we can't find that balance, something will have to change significantly if it comes down to one side "winning" and one side "losing."

**Editor's Note:** This month addresses the final part of a five-part series that examined various federal regulatory proposals that affect you and your cooperative. This series focused on regulatory policies – known as "The Big Five" – that will eventually have an impact on the price of electricity your co-op purchases from its power suppliers and delivers to you, our members.

## Explaining The Big 5 regulatory issues

### Part Five of a Five-Part Series

## Water Rule Raises Concerns

**A water rule proposed** by the Environmental Protection Agency would grind the U.S. economy to a halt by expanding federal authority over everything from ditches to seasonal streams, House GOP lawmakers told the agency.

"Every hollow and valley in my region has some sort of a stream running through it, sometimes dry or intermittent, and those will be under your jurisdiction," said Rep. Hal Rogers, R-Ky. and chairman of the House Appropriations Committee. "You're grinding to a halt the economic engine of this country."

Rogers' comments were directed at EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy, the sole witness before the Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies on March 27.

The agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers released the "Waters of the U.S." proposed rule March 25 to clarify what bodies of water are subject to the Clean Water Act requirements.

Publication in the *Federal Register*, expected within a couple of weeks, will initiate 90 days for public comment.

Reaction from Capitol Hill was swift.

"You just fired the first shot over the bow in the West, because this is war," Rep. Mike Simpson, R-Idaho, told McCarthy at the hearing. "Water is obviously vitally important in Idaho. Just because the EPA or the Army Corps doesn't regulate it under the current rule doesn't mean that it isn't regulated. The states regulate it."

Rogers called the proposal "the biggest land grab in the history of any federal agency in the history of mankind, really."

Subcommittee Chairman Ken Calvert, R-Calif., echoed those conclusions: "Now every small business and farmer could be subject to EPA fines if they disturb a puddle on their land."

McCarthy responded that the agency was trying to follow a key Supreme Court decision and provide "certainty" to landowners about their clean water obligations. "The cost of uncertainty at this point is much larger than the cost of rule," McCarthy said. "We do not believe we are expanding the reach of the Clean Water Act beyond its historical waters."

Rogers remained unconvinced and contended that the courts will find that EPA "completely overreached beyond your legal authority given by the Congress." Rogers said he was also concerned that this proposal and EPA's pending greenhouse gas standards will extinguish the coal industry.

"Don't look for any friendship out of this seat," Rogers told McCarthy. "The nation needs this inexpensive electricity that comes from burning coal. Nothing else can produce the power that is already in place by burning coal. So whether you like it or not, and I know you don't, you are going to have to use coal to keep your lights on."

NRECA is also anxious about the repercussions of the water proposal and is engaged in a broad industry effort to reduce its impact on thousands of tributaries, ditches flood plains, wetlands and seasonal streams.

"We are reaching out to Congress and the states; we are working with a broad coalition of stakeholders to blunt the impact of this proposal and find a workable solution to maintain clean water for co-op communities without the unnecessary costs this proposal could impose," said Dorothy Kellogg, NRECA environmental principal for waste and water.

**By Cathy Cash, ECT Staff Writer**

# Geothermal Heat Pumps Provide Heating and Cooling Advantages



**Jim Dulley**

[www.dulley.com](http://www.dulley.com)

**Dear Jim:** I have an old inefficient propane furnace and central air conditioner. I was thinking of replacing them with a geothermal heat pump. Does this sound like a good idea and what types are best?  
— Steve H.

**Dear Steve:** With all the problems last winter with propane shortages and the price uncertainty of natural gas, many people are considering geothermal heat pumps. In fact, I just installed a variable-speed WaterFurnace 7-Series geothermal heat pump in my own home.

In addition to extremely efficient and comfortable heating, a geothermal heat pump also is the most efficient central air-conditioning system available. During summer, when in the cooling mode, it provides free water heating for additional savings.

Even though the overall geothermal heat pump installed cost is higher than other heat pump systems because of the ground loop, it will pay back its higher cost in savings. Also, if one is installed by 2016, there is a 30 percent federal tax credit on the total cost.

The difference between a standard and a geothermal heat pump is the geothermal unit uses liquid-filled (water/antifreeze mix) piping in the ground instead of the outdoor condenser unit. Since the ground stays at a fairly constant temperature, it is extremely efficient year-round. Most people install deep vertical loops, but I have a large backyard, so I installed a five-foot-deep horizontal loop.

The big advantage during winter is the heating output of a geothermal system does not drop as it gets colder outdoors. This is when your house also needs the most heat. For this reason, the expensive backup electric resistance heating very seldom comes on with a geothermal heat pump.

I chose this WaterFurnace model because, with its variable-speed compressor, it has the highest heating and cooling efficiencies. The heating COP (coefficient of performance) is 5.3. Using the free heat from underground, it produces more than \$5 worth of heat for each \$1 on my utility bill.

When cooling during the summer, the EER (energy efficiency ratio) is as high as 41. This is more than twice as efficient as the best new standard heat pumps and central air conditioners. Instead of the heat from the house being exhausted outdoors and wasted, it goes into the water heater for free heat.

For extra savings, I also installed an optional hot water assist unit. During winter, excess heat being produced by the geothermal heat pump goes into the standard electric water heater. This heats the water using just one-fifth as much electricity as the water heater elements.

The variable-speed compressor in my 7-Series model is connected to its matching thermostat to fine tune its heating and cooling output to the instantaneous needs of my house. This provides excellent comfort and maintains even room temperatures and lower noise levels.

By constantly varying the output, it runs in more efficient, slower, quieter and longer cycles. This is coupled with a variable-speed blower which matches the air flow from the registers to the compressor output. This is why the comfort is so good.

**In addition to extremely efficient and comfortable heating, a geothermal heat pump also is the most efficient central air-conditioning system available.**

Another significant advantage of the variable-speed compressor is humidity control during summer. Set the desired humidity on the thermostat. When it is humid, but not very hot outdoors, the blower slows down and the compressor runs fast to provide more dehumidification with less cooling. This type of compressor also provides a 120 percent instant supercool mode.

The next step down in comfort and efficiency is a model with a two-stage compressor. Most of the time, it runs at the lower-output speed. When it cannot heat or cool your house to the thermostat setting, it automatically switches to the higher speed for more output. Its EER is as high as 30.

The simplest design is a single-stage compressor which either is on or off. This still provides much better comfort and savings over a standard heat pump.

Have a question for Jim? Send inquiries to: James Dulley, *Cooperative Connections*, 6906 Royalgreen Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45244 or visit [www.dulley.com](http://www.dulley.com).



## Ag Contest Winners Named

**Milbank, S.D., High School's** Kiera Leddy earned a \$1,100 scholarship by having the top speech in the 53rd annual state finals of the South Dakota Resource Conservation Speech Contest held April 5 in Pierre, S.D.

Leddy was among 10 South Dakota teens representing district and area conservation districts in the contest.

Scholarships totaling \$2,300 for the winners are provided by Touchstone Energy® cooperative of South Dakota.

Second place, with a \$750 scholarship, went to Joanna Geffre of Aberdeen while the third-place prize of a \$450 scholarship was awarded to Tiffany Schell of New Underwood High School.

The contest is co-sponsored by the South Dakota Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the South Dakota Association of Conservation Districts.

# Scholarships Awarded to Future Linemen

**The South Dakota Rural Electric Line Superintendents Association** presented \$4,000 in scholarship awards to six students enrolled in the Mitchell Technical Institute Power Line Construction and Maintenance program recently.

Receiving \$1,000 awards were R.J. Shape, Spencer, and Rick Schiley, Webster. Receiving \$500 awards were Jacob Bialas, Parkston; Alex Duprel, Sturgis; Lucas Nehlich, Roscoe; and Jacob Stromseth, Watertown.

The committee also selected the recipient for the Mark and Kathy Hofer Power Line scholarship. The Hofers provide one scholarship each year to a qualified student in the program. This year's recipient was R.J. Shape. Hofer is a director for Central Electric Cooperative in Mitchell and represents the co-op on the South Dakota Rural Electric Association and represents the state on the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association



**SDRE line superintendents and scholarship recipients pose for a photo. Back row, from left: Mike Kelly, Northern Electric; Mark DeFea, Whetstone Valley Electric; Jacob Bialas, Parkston; Jacob Stromseth, Watertown; Rick Schiley, Webster; Alex Duprel, Sturgis; Lynn Kruse, Dakota Energy; Rob Vetch, FEM Electric; R.J. Shape, Spencer; and Lucas Nehlich, Roscoe. Front row: Bill Brink, Black Hills Electric; Randy Borer, Cherry-Todd Electric; and Dave Zaug, Codington-Clark Electric.**

tion board of directors.

A special memorial scholarship was awarded this year by committee member Lynn Kruse, operations manager at Dakota Energy Cooperative. The Larry Brink Memorial Scholarship of \$1,000 was awarded to Lucas Nehlich. Brink was a career power lineman and former operations manager at Dakota Energy.

Brink retired in 2002 and passed away in 2013. His wife, Mary, and children Jane, Kaye, Amy, Dan, and families, along with Dakota Energy, provided the funds for the scholarship.

The SDRE Line Superintendents have awarded more than \$70,000 since the program's inception in 1997.

## Governor Signs HB 1194

Utility groups from across the state witnessed Gov. Dennis Daugaard, center, sign a bill into law that provides provisions for utilities to cross railroads. Watching the signing are, from left, Greg Dean, director of industry relations for the South Dakota Telecommunications Association (SDTA); Darla Rogers, lead lobbyist for the South Dakota Rural Electric Association and SDTA; Margo Northrup, lobbyist for South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems (SDARWS); Dist. 23 Sen. Corey Brown, R-Gettysburg; Dist. 23 Rep. Charlie Hoffman, R-Eureka; Dist. 21 Rep. Lee Qualm, R-Platte; and SDARWS Executive Director Dennis Davis.



## Regional Dateline

### April 25-27 and May 2-4

Opland's Spring Show, ("Reminiscing," April 25-26 and May 2-3 at 7:30 p.m. April 27 and May 4 at 3 p.m. Performing Arts Center Pipestone, MN

### May 4

Brandon VFW Post 4726 and Auxiliary 48th Annual Loyalty Day Parade, 2 p.m., Parade route: west on Holly Blvd. to Main Street, turn south past the VFW and end at the corner of Aspen Blvd. You have the option of turning left or right to depart, Brandon, SD

### May 31

Everything's Coming Up Crafts (and Treasures, Lutheran Church, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Lunch Available, Renner, SD Contact at Linda Krumbach at 605-521-8357

### June 6-8

30th Annual Buffalo Days **Friday:** Cruise-In from 6 to 10 p.m., Main Street Downtown **Saturday: Dad's Belgian Waffles 7:30 to 10 a.m. at the (American Legion Building Arts in the Park from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Luverne City Park, Buffalo Days Parade 10 a.m. Main Street, **Sunday:** Tales from the Graves (#3) 1 to 4 p.m. St. Catherine's (Catholic Church Cemetery, Luverne, MN, Contact the Luverne Area Chamber 1-888-283-4061 [www.luvernechamber.com](http://www.luvernechamber.com)**



PHOTO COURTESY OF STEVEN DAHLMEIER

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 10

Consignment Auction  
10 a.m., Prairie Village  
Madison, SD, 605-256-3644  
[www.prairievillage.org/auction](http://www.prairievillage.org/auction)

### May 24-25

South Dakota Kayak Challenge  
Yankton, SD, 605-864-9011  
[www.sdkayakchallenge.org](http://www.sdkayakchallenge.org)

### June 10

Ag Women's Day, All women (involved in agriculture are invited to a special day just for you! 8:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Registration at 8 a.m. First Lutheran Church Activity Center, Brookings, SD 605-692-8003, Ext. 2

### June 8

Miss Prairie Village/Miss Prairie Princess Pageant  
Prairie Village, Madison, SD 605-256-3644  
[www.prairievillage.org](http://www.prairievillage.org)

### June 13

Northern Bull Riding Tour  
7 p.m., Prairie Village  
Madison, SD, 605-256-3644

### June 20-22

125th Anniversary Celebration  
Humboldt, SD, Call Wanda at 605-363-3223

### June 22

Prairie Village Variety Show  
Prairie Village, Madison, SD 605-256-3644

### June 27-29

(Motongator Joe's Country (Music Festival, Prairie Village  
Madison, SD, 866-245-2702  
[www.bigtimecountry.com](http://www.bigtimecountry.com)

### June 28

Free Gospel Concert  
1 to 5 p.m., Brandon Valley  
Performing Arts, Brandon SD 605-582-6766

### July 4

Moody County Time Capsule  
100 Year Celebration  
9 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
Vendors, games, contests  
Time capsule opening:  
1 to 2 p.m., Moody County  
Courthouse lawn  
Flandreau, SD  
Contact Time Capsule  
Committee at 605-997-3151 or 605-997-3171

### July 12-13

Railroad Days, Pizza Train  
Saturday at 6 p.m. by  
reservation, Free Hobo Stew  
Sunday, Prairie Village  
Madison, SD, 605-256-3644  
[www.prairievillage.org](http://www.prairievillage.org)

### July 25-27

Honey Days, Bruce, SD  
605-627-5671

### August 3

21st Annual Madison Car  
Show, Prairie Village  
Madison, SD, 605-256-3644

### August 9

Fifth Annual Camaro Fun  
Days, Pioneer Park, Parade  
Line Up 9 a.m., Poker Run  
10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.  
Cruise 3 p.m., Entry Fee:  
Four cans of food for Food  
Pantry, Music, Poker Run and  
Food Vendors, Brookings, SD  
Contact Terry at 605-695-1560  
or Calvin at 605-690-1057