

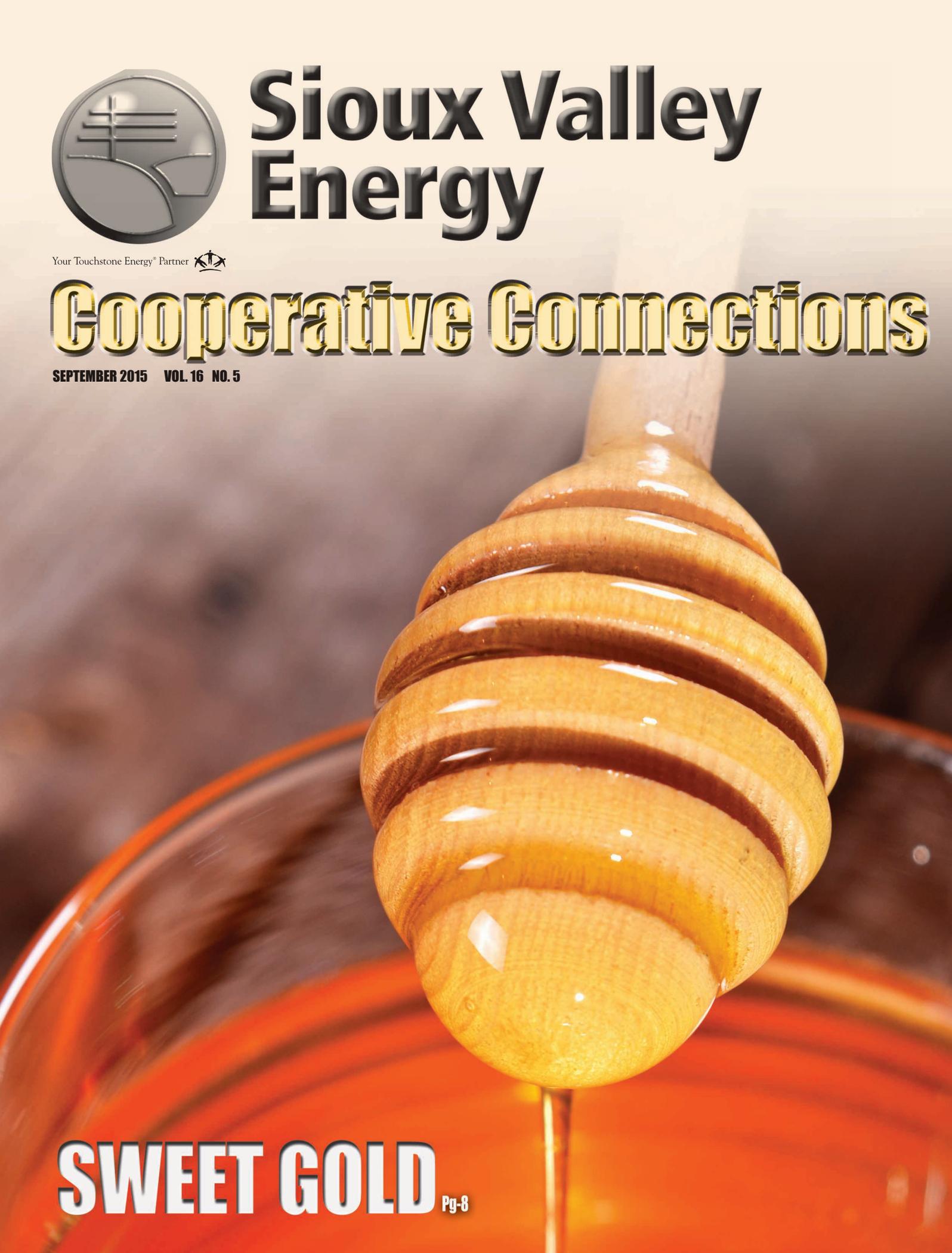


Sioux Valley Energy

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

Cooperative Connections

SEPTEMBER 2015 VOL. 16 NO. 5



SWEET GOLD Pg. 8

Line Construction

SVE Considers Several Factors



Tim McCarthy
General Manager/CEO

This year Sioux Valley Energy will replace 100 miles of aging overhead lines and underground cable. In the coming years, that number will ramp up to 125 miles of replacement each year. We have an aggressive line/cable replacement program so that the Cooperative can maintain high reliability, create a redundant system and continue to provide electricity to a growing membership and meet today's electrical demand. As part

of that process SVE has made the decision to convert some old underground cable to overhead lines. We base that decision on several factors: cost, accessibility, capacity, longevity and system performance.

System Performance: Our entire system has approximately 5,388 total miles of line...in Minnesota 96 percent of the line is underground, in South Dakota 41 percent is underground. The electrical system works most efficiently when there is a balance of underground and overhead line. One of the factors we consider when deciding if a line should go underground or overhead is the potential for line loss. What exactly is line loss? Line loss is a waste of electric energy due to inefficiencies such as heat on the system. It's basically the difference between the amount of power purchased and power sold. The average line loss in South Dakota is 2.8 percent, in Minnesota its 4.7 percent. So for example, if one unit of power cost you \$1 and you lose 4.7 percent—you are paying \$1 to get \$.953 worth of power. That may not seem like much, but considering SVE purchased over 764-million kwh for members in 2014, it can add up quickly.

Accessibility: Overhead lines are typically more accessible for maintenance and outages. We still have underground cable which runs through the middle of fields. These lines are not easily accessible and when we do have outages we often times have to disturb the property to fix them. Overhead lines, relocated near the roadways, are easier to fix because we can physically see the problem and can get to them easily. This most often results in shorter outage durations when there is a problem. It is much harder to find an underground fault simply because we cannot see where the fault is. Will the overhead lines be more accessible to weather and storms? Yes, but today's construction standards for overhead lines are much higher than years past. Our new overhead lines are built to withstand 50 mph winds with 1.5 inches of ice and 90 mph

straight-line winds with no ice. The line spans are much shorter and the conducting line is much thicker resulting in greater strength overall.

Longevity: Overhead lines can last between two and three times longer than underground cable. As an example, much of the electric system in Minnesota has been replaced two times (original overhead, unjacketed underground cable and now jacketed underground cable). A significant percentage of overhead line in South Dakota is still in place after 60 and 70 years. However, SVE has spent the last two decades replacing nearly 1,400 miles of underground cable—it still has a lot of life left in it and we plan to continue utilizing that underground cable where it makes sense.

Capacity: Electric loads throughout the entire service territory are growing—individuals and businesses need more power than they ever have before. The infrastructure that was once used to bring power to SVE members needs to be robust and redundant, often requiring higher capacity lines. This is achieved through the larger conducting line that is being used with the new overhead construction standards. A robust system allows for growth—which we are anticipating to continue for some time. A redundant system provides back up when there are outages. Basically, redundancy helps the Cooperative re-route power when there are outages, restoring service quicker and ultimately improving reliability.

Cost: Cost is a significant factor when determining whether a line should be built/converted to underground or overhead. SVE has nearly \$136-million invested in its overhead and underground distribution system infrastructure--82 percent of that investment has gone towards underground lines. The reason is twofold: First, as stated earlier in my column—we haven't needed to replace much of the overhead system because it lasts longer. Secondly, underground cable and the equipment that is needed for it to work properly is much more expensive than overhead. We took a close look at a recent line conversion project, where we replaced 4 miles of underground cable with a higher capacity overhead line. We spent approximately \$330,000 on the project. Had we gone with a higher capacity underground cable—that cost would have jumped to over \$900,000. The graphic shown on the next page demonstrates the types of cable that we utilize—we are moving towards higher capacity lines and with that the cost differential between overhead and underground lines are significant.

It's our job to make the best decisions we can for the entire membership—and that includes considering cost, system performance, capacity requirements, accessibility and potential longevity when deciding whether or not to install an overhead or underground line.

Cooperative Connections

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

Average Cost to Construct One Mile of Electric Line

Overhead and Underground Construction Costs



1/0 ACSR - \$64,500
215 amps



4/0 ACSR - \$83,800
330 amps

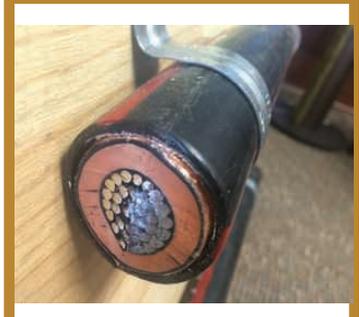


336 ACSR - \$100,600
510 amps

→
Equivalent per
Mile of Line



4/0 URD - \$90,300
220 amps



500 MCM - \$243,900
380 amps

→
Equivalent per
Mile of Line

→
Equivalent per
Mile of Line



750 MCM - \$280,100
470 amps

**ALWAYS
CALL
BEFORE YOU
DIG**



Six Rules for School Safety

Back-to-school does not have to mean back-to-worrying. Though safety inside school is ultimately the responsibility of the principal and school staff, parents can take a few basic steps to ensure a safe school experience. These are recommended by the National Association of Elementary School Principals:

- **Learn the school's emergency procedures.**

Emergency plans and phone numbers are usually included in school handbooks and posted in classrooms. Taking a few extra minutes to familiarize yourself and your child with emergency information can give him the confidence he needs to act quickly in emergency situations.

- **Know travel routes to and from the school.**

Make sure you and your child know both primary and alternate routes. In an emergency, roads can be blocked and it's important to have a backup plan.

- **Know and follow school security and safety measures.** These might include signing in when visiting the school, being escorted when walking through the building or wearing a visitor pass. Following these procedures also sets a great example for your kids.

- **Talk with your child about safety. Be specific.**

Talk about instinct and paying attention to funny feelings of fear. Explain what to do if she doesn't feel safe (find a teacher, call 911, etc.). Make sure she knows how to contact you or a trusted neighbor who is likely to be at home.

- **Inform school staff about health and emotional concerns.** Whether your child has a food allergy, a physical disability or has been subject to bullying, make sure to keep your child's teachers and principal in the loop.

- **Get involved.** Talk with the principal about what you can do to increase school safety, such as organizing parents to form a neighborhood watch before and after school. Sometimes parent groups are highly successful in making improvements in traffic safety during drop off and pick up times.

Source: www.scholastic.com

EPA's Greenhouse Gas Regulations Fail to Consider the Economic Impact on Americans

America's electric cooperatives, through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) expressed concerns with the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) final rules regulating greenhouse gas emissions from new, existing, modified and reconstructed power plants which were announced Aug. 3.

"Any increase in the cost of electricity most dramatically impacts those who can least afford it, and the fallout from the EPA's rule will cascade across the nation for years to come," said NRECA CEO Jo Ann Emerson in early August.

"While we appreciate the efforts intended to help offset the financial burden of rising electricity prices and jobs lost due to prematurely shuttered power plants, the final rule still appears to reflect the fundamental flaws of the original proposal. It exceeds the EPA's legal authority under the Clean Air Act, and it will raise electricity rates for our country's most vulnerable populations while challenging the reliability of the grid.

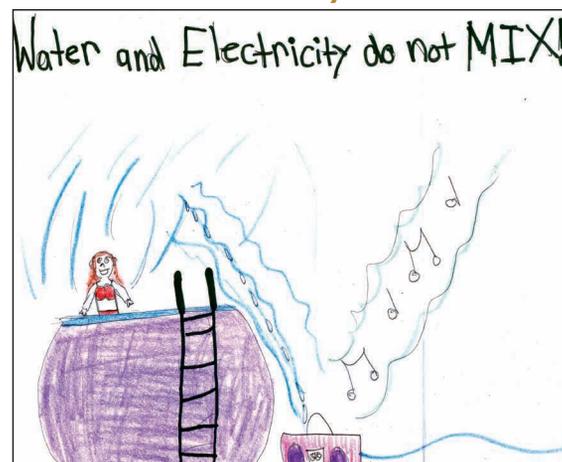
"We will continue reviewing this extremely complex rule and have additional comments on behalf of America's not-for-profit, consumer-owned electric cooperatives in the coming days."

For more information and an interactive map, visit <http://www.nreca.coop/111d>.



Electric bills for Americans could go up with EPA's final power plant rule.

Kids' Corner Safety Poster



"Water and electricity do not mix!"

Sally Hakin, 12 years old

Sally is the daughter of Tim and Anita Hakin, Herrick, S.D. They are members of Rosebud Electric Cooperative, 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.

Garden Delights



Cabbage Sloppy Joes

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 lb. ground beef | 2 T. lemon juice |
| 1-1/2 cups finely shredded cabbage | 1 T. white vinegar |
| 1 medium onion, chopped | 1 T. Worcestershire sauce |
| 1 celery rib, chopped | 1 T. prepared mustard |
| 1/4 cup chopped green pepper | 1 tsp. salt |
| 1 cup ketchup | Dash pepper |
| 3 T. brown sugar | 8 sandwich rolls |

In a large skillet, cook beef, cabbage, onion, celery and green pepper over medium heat until meat is no longer pink and the vegetables are crisp-tender; drain. Stir in ketchup, brown sugar, lemon juice, vinegar, Worcestershire sauce, mustard, salt and pepper. Cover and simmer for 10 minutes until cabbage is tender. Serve on rolls.

Stephanie Fossum, Hudson

Cucumber Leek Soup

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1 T. butter, unsalted | 1/4 cup fresh mint leaves |
| 2 large leeks (about 1/2 pound), trimmed, cleaned and sliced | Black pepper |
| 3 large seedless cucumbers (4 cups), peeled and coarsely chopped | Salt |
| 1-1/2 cups low-fat milk | 3/4 cup low-fat plain yogurt |
| 1 T. lemon juice | 1 T. honey |
| | 1/2 cup chopped grape tomatoes |
| | 1/4 cup feta or blue cheese crumbles |

In a large skillet, melt butter over medium heat. Add leeks and sauté for 5 minutes. Mix in cucumbers; sauté for 1 minute then remove from heat. Add leeks, cucumbers, milk, lemon juice and mint to a blender or food processor; puree for 1 minute. Add pepper and salt to taste; blend together. In a separate bowl, mix yogurt and honey together. Fold into cucumber soup. For best flavor results, chill in refrigerator for 1 hour. When ready to serve, ladle soup into four bowls. Add 2 T. of tomatoes and 1 T. of cheese crumbles in the center of each bowl. Makes 4 servings.

Nutritional information per serving: 190 calories; 7g total fat; 4g saturated fat; 9g protein; 25g carbohydrate; 3g dietary fiber; 23mg cholesterol; 243mg sodium

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Tomato Soup

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| 2 gallons tomatoes, chopped | 1 cup melted butter |
| 1 bunch celery, chopped | 1/8 cup salt |
| 1 green pepper, chopped | 1-1/2 cups sugar |
| 6 medium onions, chopped | 1-1/2 cups flour |

Boil vegetables until tender; strain through a colander. This should yield about 4 quarts juice. Mix together butter, salt, sugar and flour. Add to juice slowly, stirring constantly. Boil 20 minutes; will thicken as it boils. Pour into jars and pressure cook 10 minutes at 5 lbs.

Diane Bartnick, New Effington

Asparagus Cheese Strata

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 1-1/2 lbs. fresh asparagus, cut into 2-inch pieces | 2 cups cubed, fully cooked ham |
| 3 T. melted butter | 6 eggs |
| 1 loaf sliced bread, crusts removed | 3 cups milk |
| 3/4 cup shredded Cheddar cheese, divided | 2 tsp. dried minced onion |
| | 1/2 tsp. salt |
| | 1/4 tsp. dry mustard |

In a saucepan, cover asparagus with water. Cover and cook until tender but still firm; drain and set aside. Lightly brush butter over 1 side of bread. Place 1/2 of bread, buttered side up, in a greased 9x13-inch pan. Sprinkle with 1/2 of cheese. Layer with asparagus and ham. Cover with remaining bread, buttered side up. Beat eggs. Add milk, onion, salt and mustard. Pour over bread. Bake uncovered at 325°F. for 50 minutes. Sprinkle with remaining cheese. Bake an additional 10 minutes or until cheese is melted and a knife inserted in center comes out clean.

Shirley Miller, Winfred

Zucchini Supreme Casserole

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1/4 cup diced onion | 1 cup sour cream |
| 2 lbs. zucchini, diced (about 6 cups) | 1 cup shredded carrots |
| 1 can cream of mushroom soup | Diced chicken or turkey |
| | 1 pkg. seasoned croutons |
| | 1/2 cup butter, melted |

Cook onion and zucchini together in a little salted water until soft; drain. Combine soup and sour cream. Add carrots and meat. Fold in zucchini mixture. Toss croutons with melted butter. Place 1/2 croutons in bottom of casserole dish. Spread zucchini mixture over top. Sprinkle with remaining croutons. Bake at 400°F. for 50 minutes.

Paula Vogel, Ethan

Rhubarb Muffins

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 2 cups brown sugar, divided | 1 tsp. baking soda |
| 2 eggs | 2 cups diced rhubarb |
| 1 tsp. vanilla | 1/2 tsp. salt |
| 1 cup vegetable oil | 1-1/4 cups chopped nuts, divided |
| 1 cup buttermilk | 2 T. cinnamon |
| 3 cups flour | |

Combine 1-1/2 cups brown sugar, eggs, vanilla, oil and buttermilk. Add flour, baking soda, rhubarb, salt and 3/4 cup nuts. Put in muffin pan. Combine remaining brown sugar, nuts and cinnamon. Sprinkle over top. Bake at 325°F. for 20 to 25 minutes.

Mary Jessen, Holabird

Please send your favorite pasta and crockpot recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2015. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

Members Save When They Use the Co-op Connections Card

All SVE members have received a Co-op Connections Card which gives you access to hundreds of local and national discounts on goods and services. Looking for a deal on an oil change? What about a discount for your next family meal? A wide variety of merchants throughout the cooperative's service territory accept the card. Over 200 local businesses in Arlington, Aurora, Badger, Baltic, Brandon, Brookings, Bruce, Chester, Colman, Colton, Dell Rapids, Edgerton, Elkton, Estelline, Flandreau, Garretson, Hardwick, Hartford, Humboldt, Luverne, Madison, Pipestone, Renner, Sioux Falls, Tea, Valley Springs, Wentworth and Winfred are offering discounts.

Take a look at the insert included in this magazine (pages 8-9) for all of the local participating merchants and their available discounts.

The card also gives you access to online savings at more than 95 national retailers like Barnes&Noble.com, Hertz Rental Cars, Best Western hotels and ProFlowers.com. You can check out these great national and local discounts at <http://www.connections.coop/co-ops/sioux-valley-energy>.

One of the other features of the Co-op Connections Card is the pharmacy discount. While it is not insurance, the discount can mean significant savings on prescription drugs. The logo and information on the back of your card is recognized at more than 60,000 national, regional, and local pharmacies.

The pharmacy discount has been widely used by members of Touchstone Energy co-ops across the country, resulting in combined savings of nearly \$20 million on prescriptions.

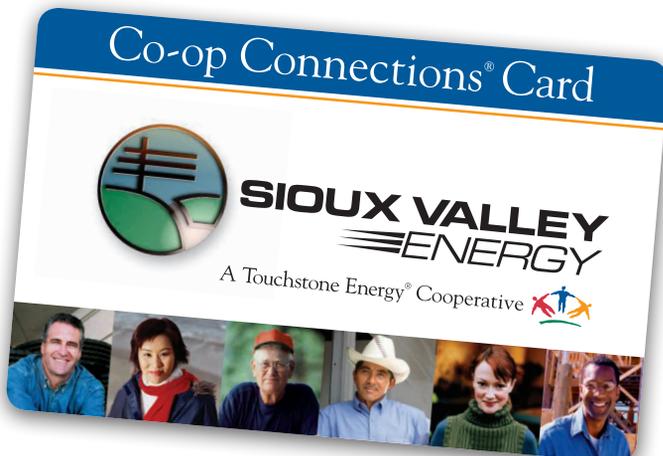
Want to find out more? Log on to www.locateproviders.com to search for pharmacies in our area honoring the card. Use code 2203 as the group number under the "Groups" login section. Next, enter your zip code.

There is a distinction between national and local savings programs. The card offers a program called "*healthy-savings*", this is a national discount program. The other local discounts are listed in the insert as well as on the website. Not all local providers are part of the "*healthy-savings*" network but are instead offering their own local discounts. To learn more about discounts offered by our local businesses, log on to: <http://www.connections.coop/co-ops/sioux-valley-energy>. To see if there is a participating national "*healthy-savings*" provider near you, log on to <http://www.connections.coop/healthy-savings>.

As a Touchstone Energy co-op, Sioux Valley Energy strives to serve its members according to four core values: integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community. The Co-op Connections Card is one of the ways we live up to those values.

Call 800-234-1960 or email info@siouxvalleyenergy.com if you have questions regarding the Co-op Connections Card program.

Co-op Connection Card - Benefiting SVE Members



The Co-op Connections Membership Card can help you save money...

Whether shopping at local businesses or national retail chains, now you too can receive savings on everyday purchases. It's just one more way you benefit from being a member of Sioux Valley Energy, a Touchstone Energy® cooperative.

Pharmacy discounts are Not Insurance, and are Not Intended as a Substitute for Insurance.

The discount is only available at participating pharmacies.

Prescription Drug Discount FAQs

What if the pharmacist doesn't recognize the card name?

- There are thousands of prescription discount plans in the United States so the Co-op Connections Card may not be recognized by the pharmacy at first. When the pharmacist sees the pharmacy benefit manager information on the back of the card, they will know which program you are a part of.

I was told the pharmacy program is just a way to sell my personal information. Is this true?

- No, there is no personal information required to take advantage of the prescription discount. Each Co-op Connections Card has the same member ID number. This prevents privacy violations by third parties.

Can the pharmacy benefit be used in conjunction with my insurance?

- No, the card cannot be used with insurance. However, we encourage members to have the pharmacist process the Co-op Connections Card and the insurance card to compare which provides the lowest price. The member will receive the lowest price on prescriptions, whether that is the pharmacy's retail price or the negotiated discount price. With insurance, you will pay your co-pay amount no matter what the pharmacy charges for the medication. At times, the discounted price through your Co-op Connections Card will be lower than your co-pay. The prescription discount will also help you get lower prices on medications considered experimental or lifestyle that are often not covered by insurance.

How does the pharmacist know how much to charge?

- When a member presents any card, insurance or discount, the pharmacist will put the information into their computer and also put in their retail price for the medication. The information is sent to the processor who will sort through the pharmacies various contracts and agreements. The processor sends back the amount the pharmacy has agreed to accept for that particular medication, as well as the price the member will need to pay at the time of service. For example, if a pharmacy is selling a generic drug for \$4 but its contracted rate with the Co-op Connections Program is \$7, the system will tell the pharmacist to charge \$4. With insured plans, if a customer had a co-pay of \$15, he would pay \$15 regardless of the pharmacy's retail rate.

I was surprised by a processing fee for each prescription filled. Why would I use the Co-op Connections Program if I am charged each time?

- In order for a pharmacy to accept any plan, insurance or discount, the pharmacy contracts with a claims processor. The pharmacist must use a processor to determine the amount a consumer or insurance company will need to pay. The discounted price with the Co-op Connections® card is the same amount as

what the pharmacist gets paid as a reimbursement from an insurance carrier. However, the processor charges for the use of their system, hence the processing fee. The processing fee is a common practice for both discount and insured business. The difference is how the money flows. When a pharmacist receives their reimbursement back from the insurance company, the processing fee has already been deducted, and the pharmacy receives a net amount. Since no claims are involved in the discount process, the processing fee needs to be collected by the processor directly from the pharmacy. The member pays the amount that includes the cost of the drug and the dispensing/processing fee. This processing fee varies from drug to drug and pharmacy to pharmacy, depending on how the pharmacy contracted with the processor. Each pharmacy location or chain signs agreements with network processors. The fees are outlined in those agreements.

Who sets the prices for the prescriptions—the pharmacy, HealthTrans or New Benefits? How do pharmacies get repaid for the difference between the discount they offer and the cost of the medicines?

- The price for the prescriptions is based on a pre-negotiated contract with the processor (HealthTrans). The member receives the negotiated price or the pharmacy's standard retail rate (usual and customary rate)—whichever is lower. The pharmacist adjudicates the claim at the time of service to determine the price to charge the member on that day. The pharmacy is paid the negotiated discounted rate. This rate is the same or a little higher than the rate they have agreed to accept for insurance plans. There is no reimbursement to the pharmacy because it is paid the agreed upon rate by the member at the point of service. The prices are based on the following formula: Average Wholesale Price minus X% plus processing fee. The processor negotiates with pharmacies for a broad range of reimbursements including traditional insurance plans, worker's compensation, government programs, and cash discount plans. At times a pharmacy will sell a drug for lower than the industry standard Average Wholesale Price, like the current trend of \$4 generics. In cases like this, the negotiated price may be higher than the retail price. The customer pays the lower price.

Can I use the Co-op Connections Card in conjunction with Medicare?

- You may use the Co-op Connections Card during your deductible period or the coverage gap (doughnut hole). In some cases, a network pharmacy may accept the Co-op Connections Card or offer another cash price discount so that you can pay less for a prescription than your plan's negotiated price. This is considered a one-time lower cash or special price. If you are able to get a cash discount and pay an amount that's lower than your plan's price, you must send your receipt to your Medicare drug plan. This ensures that your plan counts the amount you paid toward your out-of-pocket costs.

Raising Royalty

Scientific Process Helps South Dakota Beekeeper Build Better Bees

JON KIECKHEFER, A FORMER AGRONOMIST FOR SOUTH Dakota State University's Cooperative Extension Service, now spends most of his time raising bees west of Volga. But unlike most beekeepers, the Brookings native's primary goal isn't to produce honey.

"I'm not like other commercial beekeepers," he said. "Most do it for pollination and honey production. For the most part I raise and sell queens."

Kieckhefer's interest in honeybees began when he was 12 years old and a dead tree on his family's property turned out to be the home of a bee colony. His father, an entomologist with the United States Department of Agriculture, helped Kieckhefer move that bee colony from a birdhouse to a glass-covered box. The bees were successfully relocated. A dryer vent hose allowed them to come and go and the glass cover on the box allowed Kieckhefer to peek in on them when he wanted.

"I was like any kid fascinated with insects," he said. "I wanted to save them. I wanted to have them and be able to watch them."

That fascination caused him to start keeping his own bee colonies during graduate school at the

University of Kansas. Several of his friends raised bees as a hobby. He began doing the same. When he moved back to South Dakota, the bees came with him. Demand and economics pushed him in the direction of breeding and selling queen bees. At that time, a colony cost \$100 to \$200. A queen cost

\$20 to \$25. His bees wintered well, which attracted the attention of other beekeepers.

"More and more guys wanted to buy queens from me because I kept my bees in the winter," he said. "I didn't do anything special – if they survived they survived and if they didn't, they didn't."

He keeps 500 hives and harvests 15,000 to 20,000 pounds of honey from them per year, which he sells to wholesalers. And if he can help pollinate a local field, he does. But he primarily breeds and raises queens that have specific genetic traits he can

guarantee by tracing their pedigree. They aren't big honey producers but they survive cold northern winters better, resist mites that decimate a hive when they get inside or make them more hygienic, which also cuts down on the mite problem. And it makes it possible for beekeepers to use fewer pesticides. When his bees are paired with bees that have



Workers act as attendants to the queen when they are in close proximity. The workers face the queen and tend to her needs. A queen is often marked by a beekeeper with a dot of paint on her thorax. The color of paint denotes the year she was raised. Years ending in 0 or 5 are blue. The mark identifies the age of the queen and makes her easier to find in the hive.

By Susan Smith

Milkweed is attractive to honeybees as a food resource, but carries a hidden peril with it. Honeybees are often unable to muster enough force to pull the pollen away from the flower. Page 9 Inset: Dandelions are valuable sources of pollen and nectar early in the spring for honeybees.



a high production value, it's like the best of both worlds.

He uses a process of instrument insemination with his queen bees so that he knows which males with which traits are used in the fertilization process. Bees are everywhere in South Dakota, he said. Without the insemination process, Kieckhefer said it's difficult to know which males the queen mates with. He marks male bees with paint so he knows their original hive and the day they hatched. The average honeybeekeeper is not going to pay for a queen with a specific genetic makeup. But people who breed queens to sell to those producers do see the value in being able to guarantee bees that winter well or have other genetic benefits.

"The value is in the known genetic trait," Kieckhefer said.

That trait can then be used in other stock. The worker bees in a hive create a queen by feeding a female egg more protein – called royal jelly. This causes the ovaries to develop



early, creating the queen. Worker bees short of a queen in their colony will choose one or a few cells with eggs inside to feed more of the royal jelly. People think a queen controls a colony of bees, Kieckhefer says, but that isn't completely true. Once the queens stop producing eggs, they are dethroned, so to speak. They will mate shortly after hatching and then keep that sperm for their lifetime – usually two to three years – some live longer. Once that sperm runs out, so does their productive life.

"The queen is there doing the egg laying for the hive," Kieckhefer said. "As soon as workers get upset with her, they just kill her and make a new one."

Kieckhefer sells a couple of different grades of queen – a production grade that can mate with whomever it wants because it is not going to be useful to produce queens with specific traits. Some of those queens go to South Dakota or Minnesota and mostly to hobbyist beekeepers. The pedigreed queens all go to queen breeders on the East or West Coast.

Currently there are more managed honeybee colonies than any time since the 1970s. Honeybeekeepers lose bees

every year to death from natural causes, disease and not withstanding the winter. Beginning in 2006, Colony Collapse Disorder decimated a fair amount of hives. The cause is still unclear. Some blame the mites, some think it's related to pesticides and some even blame cell phone towers and power lines, Kieckhefer said.

"No one has come up with a satisfactory explanation of the vast loss," Kieckhefer said. But beekeepers are a fairly resistant bunch and make up their losses quickly, especially with new bees hatching every day in the summer months.

"Honeybees aren't in great danger of extinction," Kieckhefer said.

There are no native honeybee species in the United States. Colonists brought them all in from Eurasia for the purpose of producing honey, which is still the

main attraction of keeping bees.

"Everyone's after that sweetness," Kieckhefer said.

According to the South Dakota Department of Agriculture, South Dakota typically

ranks in the top five states for honey production, ranking third in 2008 with 21.3 million pounds. The state's bees produce a "highly desirable, mild-flavored and light-colored alfalfa and sweet clover blend." The value of the state's honey crop in 2008 was \$28.6 million. Pollinating South Dakota's cash crop is another major component of beekeeping. It's something a producer typically gets for free via the natural process the bees go through to produce honey, but it adds \$10.7 billion in value to state crops.

Kieckhefer continues to keep bees – enduring daily stings, sometimes in uncomfortable places like inside the nostril or ear drum – because of the addictive quality of the work. Most people who try to keep bees either stop right away, he said, because they hate being stung or become addicted and collect more and more hives.

"There's nothing more relaxing than working with bees," he said. "You stop thinking about yourself and focus on the bees. It's kind of a meditative experience to do that. You're working in their world rather than your own."



Sweet clover is the flower that produces most of the "clover honey" that characterizes much of the honey production in the Dakotas. Sweet clover produces heavy nectar flows and the resulting honey is light in color and mild in flavor. Yellow and white sweet clovers are common plants in roadside ditches and pastures in the Dakotas and migratory beekeeping operations try to time moving their bees into the northern plains to maximize honey crops from sweet clover blooms.



A honeybee colony reproduces by raising a new queen, then one of the queens (usually the old queen) and roughly half of the workers leave to find a new hive location. While the workers are searching for a suitable site to build a new hive, the group of bees – called a swarm – may alight temporarily in exposed locations. The queen in this swarm of bees on a wooden fence post was somewhere in the middle of the mass of bees.

Loan Funds Help Jasper Fire Department Purchase Truck

Sioux Valley Energy received funding from the United States Department of Agriculture Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program to provide a zero percent interest loan of \$115,000 to the Jasper Rural Fire Department. The loan was used to purchase a new truck. The fire department will pay the loan back to the Rural Electric Economic Development, Inc. loan fund. The new 2015 Ford F-550 Chassis replaced a 1985 mini pumper truck. The new truck is equipped with “jaws of life” rescue equipment and a front spray system that can handle small grass fires.

The truck will enable the department to be the first responder vehicle to accidents, fires, and emergency health needs in this rural area and to transport victims to area hospitals and trauma centers.

The balance of the \$143,944 purchase price of the truck will come from the fire department and donations from local citizens. The zero interest loan will save approximately \$31,750 in taxpayer funds compared to a conventional 4% loan of the same term.

The City of Jasper and the Jasper Rural Fire Department work together to provide fire protection and emergency services to the area. The Jasper Rural Fire Department is



operated with 22 volunteers. In 2001, the city and the Jasper Rural Fire Department jointly financed the construction of the Emergency Services Building that they share. The Jasper Rural Fire Department serves residents, rural business owners, and farmers in parts of seven townships within South Dakota and Minnesota, the town of Jasper, and City of Ihlen, covering approximately 138 square miles.

Pipestone Open House

An open house and ribbon cutting ceremony was held on July 9th at Sioux Valley Energy's newly constructed service center in Pipestone, MN. John Draper, Pipestone Chamber of Commerce President, presented the Cooperative's General Manager/CEO Tim McCarthy a plaque to recognize the substantial investment in the community and contributions to the economic vitality of the Pipestone area. Bill VanHoecke of KLOH Radio announced live radio remotes throughout the duration of the event. Over 500 guests enjoyed a pork barbecue meal that was prepared by Terry and Sylvia Wolters

of the Pipestone Systems and the Pipestone County Pork Producers. Tours of the facility were also given.

Sioux Valley Energy merged with Southwest Minnesota Cooperative Electric (SMCE) in 1996. The original facility was built in 1947. The new service center is an 11,800 square foot Morton Building that includes an office area, warehouse, shop, and room to house equipment. Energy efficiency measures were also part of the design including LED and fluorescent lighting, R-30 and R-50 insulation, in-floor heating and an air-to-air heat pump with 25 kw electric backup. The total cost of the project was \$1.4-million.

Sioux Valley Energy currently serves just over 3,000 members in the Minnesota counties of Pipestone and Rock. The Cooperative as a whole serves approximately 24,000 accounts, maintains over 5,400 miles of electric line, and has 100 employees. Three of the eleven-member Board of Directors represent the Minnesota districts. Those directors are Gary Drost of Luverne, Gregg Johnson of Pipestone, and Arlyn Zylstra of Jasper. The new Pipestone Service Center will meet the needs of Sioux Valley Energy's Minnesota members, directors, and employees for many years to come.



SVE Welcomes More than 800 New Members in Rock County

Sioux Valley Energy with 11 other electric distribution cooperatives, wrote a new page in history with the completion of the acquisition of Alliant Energy's electric service territory in southern Minnesota. As a result, all southern Minnesota customers of Alliant Energy are now member-owners of their respective electric cooperative.

"It is a very unique situation for electric cooperatives to have the opportunity to purchase service territory from investor-owned utilities," said Tim McCarthy, general manager and CEO of Sioux Valley Energy. "Further, it is the first time to our knowledge that several – we have 12 – electric cooperatives have banded together to acquire new service territory."

In 2013, the 12 cooperatives formed Southern Minnesota Energy Cooperative (SMEC) as the single point of contact for the purchase of electric service territory in southern Minnesota from Alliant Energy. The more than two-year process of acquiring the territory involved receiving approvals from the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, Iowa Utilities Board and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. The acquisition transfers approximately 43,000 electric accounts to local electric cooperatives.

Sioux Valley Energy added more than 800 new members to its current membership of 23,000. Cities added to those

Sioux Valley already serves are Ash Creek, Beaver Creek, Hills, Kanaranzi, Kenneth, Magnolia and Steen.

"We are excited to share the benefits of being a member of a cooperative with these new member-owners," McCarthy added. "Our team of dedicated employees has been serving this area with reliable, affordable electricity for more than 70 years. We look forward to meeting and building relationships with these individuals, families and business owners."

All of the cooperatives' new member-owners were mailed a transition guide, letter and postcard with their cooperative's contact information. New members also received a membership packet.

"It has been a win-win opportunity from the beginning," said McCarthy. "For our new member-owners, they will receive high-quality service at lower rates than if Alliant Energy had continued to serve as their electric utility. For our legacy member-owners, this acquisition grows and increases the efficiency of each cooperative by spreading fixed costs over more member-owners."

McCarthy added that every participating electric cooperative has worked with exceptional diligence over the last two years to assure a smooth transition. "We are ready to welcome our new member-owners," he said.

SVE Members Visit Basin Electric

Just under 50 SVE members and employees traveled to Beulah, ND to learn how electricity is generated and flows through the system; eventually allowing a flip of the switch to start the flow of power.

Trip participants toured the Western Area Power Administration Operations Center, Coteau Freedom Coal Mine, Antelope Valley Power Plant, Great Plains Synfuels Plant and enjoyed a Lewis and Clark Riverboat Cruise. One participant offered comments on the tour, "When you learn how much the plants, equipment, maintenance, employees, etc. cost to produce this great amount of energy, we realize we

are truly blessed to have the low-cost electricity always there for us at the flip of a switch."

Another member added, "All the equipment: boilers, turbines and generators--WOW! And the way they clean the air at the process!"

The three-day trip also included cooperative members from Iowa and Minnesota.

Each year at the cooperative's 11 district meetings, SVE members have the chance to win the all-expense paid trip for two. The Energy Trail tour draws hundreds each year from electric cooperatives throughout the mid-section of the country.



Under the Stars

Drive-in Movie Theaters Draw Movie Fans

OUDDOOR DRIVE-IN MOVIE THEATERS MAY BE A RELIC of the past in much of rural America, but in a few South Dakota communities, they are still packing in the crowds for full-length movies under the stars.

For a couple of generations, the term “big screen” forever will mean a massive, flat movie screen sticking above the prairie with a first-run movie viewed by families from the comfort of their automobiles. It’s Danny Zuko and Sandy from the movie “Grease,” a memory of a simpler time when a date on a summer night meant a trip to a double-feature or a dusk-to-dawn extravaganza on a holiday weekend.

Only a handful of drive-in theaters continue to operate in South Dakota, but the owners of those that still show movies say business is strong.

“This past year has been excellent, just phenomenal,” says Ron Maier, owner of the Pheasant Drive-In in Mobridge. “Really, I can’t believe it.”

Maier, who says he grew up in and around the movie-theater business, “can’t remember a time when I wasn’t around the movie business.”

He has gone digital with the business, as have other remaining outdoor theaters. The movie companies, he says, quit offering film a couple of years ago. The conversion was a significant investment, but Maier says it has been worth the effort.

“We’re seeing a lot of repeat customers, a lot of people bringing their grandchildren,” he said. “It’s maybe some nostalgia. They kind of remember the good old days.”

While Maier is keeping a long-time business in operation, Roy Reitenbaugh is finding success with his three-year-old twin screens near Hermosa. In a sort of West River version of

the “Field of Dreams” theme, “If you build it, they will come,” Reitenbaugh opened Roy’s Black Hills Twin Drive-In in July of 2012. The drive-in shows movies seven days a week, offers a concession stand and has drawn a steady stream of tourists during the summer.

“We’ve had people from France, Finland, England, Canada, you name it,” Reitenbaugh says. A Canadian family told him they’d planned their vacation two months earlier and a stop at his outdoor



By Terry Woster

Below: The concession stand glows as a trailer shows before a Monday night showing at Miller’s Midway Theater this summer.

Inset: Popcorn, soda and candy are must-haves in the concession stand. **Opposite Page:** Cars and lawn chairs line the Midway Theater’s lot for the showing of *Minions* this summer.





Photos by Brenda Kleinjon/SDREA

theater was a priority. The price is \$8 for adults and \$6 for children.

Drive-in theaters of old often featured variations of “buck night,” a promotion that allowed a carload – as many people as could fit in the vehicle, trunk and all, sometimes – to attend a showing for \$1 or \$2 or whatever bargain price the market would bear. At Reitenbaugh’s theater, Thursday nights are carload nights, with a \$16 tab for as many people as fit into the vehicle.

“They really believe in it down here,” he says of his carload-night audiences.

Black Hills Electric Cooperative, Custer, S.D., provides the power for the twin theaters. Mike Chase of BHEC says it was unusual to be asked to provide the power to a brand-new drive-in theater, but the job itself was pretty routine.

Over on Highway 14 near Miller, the Midway Drive-In has been in operation since 1953.

The bill featured “Minions” the first weekend in August, followed by “Spy.” Five families currently own the theater, says Mike Donlin, one of the owners.

“Kids’ movies do better than anything else, but we try to cater to different crowds,” Donlin said.

Operating the drive-in is both a business and a way to keep a piece of the past alive, he said.

“People our age know about drive-ins, but their kids and grandkids often have never experienced an outdoor movie,” Donlin said. “In a way, it’s preserving a piece of history. From an accountant’s point of view, I don’t know that these things would pay, but we have five families involved and some day the kids and grandkids, they’ll be the

ones to take it over.”

Donlin started in the drive-in business as a youngster, receiving a lesson on operating the projection equipment on a Tuesday and running the show the next night.

The screen blew down in a strong summer storm in 1968, the Midway’s web site says. It also says, “The screen was rebuilt right away and movies were shown throughout the rest of the summer.”

Friday evenings at the Midway are “Pierre night,” Donlin said. “For some reason, a majority of the audience on those nights consists of folks from Pierre who have driven 70 miles to see a movie, outside, on a big screen, with the last rays of sun disappearing in the west and stars filling the open sky above.

Outdoor theaters may be a dying breed elsewhere, but in a few South Dakota communities, they thrive. Asked what he sees as the future of his business, Maier in Mobridge says simply, “I can’t remember not being around the movie business. I guess I really haven’t thought of slowing down.”

Gregory: Hilltop Drive-In Theatre
33575 US Hwy 18 Gregory, SD • Phone: 605-830-6058

Hermosa: Roy's Black Hills Twin Drive-In
810 Tanaya St., Hermosa, SD • Phone: 605-255-5333

Luverne: Verne Drive-In Theater
US Hwy 75, Luverne, MN • Phone: 507-283-0007

Miller: Midway Theater
US Hwy 14 Midway between Miller and St. Lawrence, SD
Phone: 605-870-0108

Mobridge: Pheasant Drive-In Theater
1600 20th St W, Mobridge, SD • Phone: 605-845-2021

Redfield: Pheasant City Drive In Theater
17230 US Hwy 281, Redfield, SD • Phone: 605-460-1944

Pheasant City Drive In Theater, Redfield

Bin Building Frenzy Underway

The Right Place

SUMMER STORMS AND NORMAL EXPANSION PLANS have several ag producers in the state planning to build new or replacement grain bins throughout the state.

Early on in the process – right up there with choosing the bin size and lining up a building crew – should be a call to the local electric cooperative.

The call can help producers properly place their new bins in relationship to existing power lines. Adequate clearances can reduce the risk of accidental contact between power lines and tall farm equipment such as portable grain augers, elevators or grain probing devices. The National Electrical Safety Code (NESC)* requires specific line clearance requirements for grain bins located near power lines. Building a grain bin too close to a power line may mean that it will have to be moved, often at the farmer's expense. For example, a 35-foot tall bin should be placed no less than 104 feet away from the power line. Taller bins that can be filled by a portable grain auger must be placed even further from power lines.

Proper siting of grain bins in relation to existing high voltage power lines is extremely important.

In addition to safety considerations, there are also requirements for power line clearances which are mandated by national wiring codes. A bin placed too close to a power line may need to be moved or the power line relocated (i.e. raised or rerouted) due to a code violation. These changes are likely to be expensive and may be charged to the bin owner. Talk with your electric supplier **before** the bin site is confirmed.

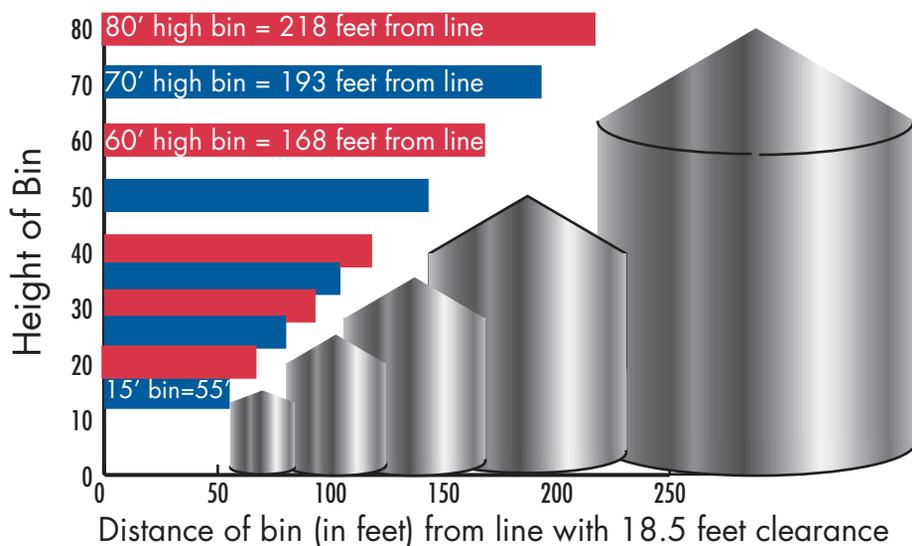
The NESC specifies the line clearance requirements for grain bins located close to power lines. The NESC specifies both the horizontal distance between the side of the bin and an adjacent power line and the vertical clearance above the bin to the nearest power line (NESC Article 234, Section F).

To assist in understanding clearance rules mandated by the NESC, a further explanation is provided in Appendix I of this pamphlet. Appendix II provides a complete listing of the requirements as reprinted from the NESC. Notice that bins filled by permanently installed augers, conveyers or elevator systems are treated separately from bins filled by portable augers. These rules also apply to feed storage bins, such as hopper bottom bins serving live-

stock production buildings. Anyone involved in the site planning and construction of grain bins should read and understand Appendix II.

Note: Requirements of the National Electrical Safety Code, Article 234, Section F pertain only to bins or power lines constructed after August 1989. Bins or power lines installed prior to this date are not required to conform to these clearance rules. However, additions to an older bin which increases its height may cause it to now be covered by NESC requirements.

The simplest and least expensive way to avoid these costly line construction requirements is to locate bins far enough away from overhead power lines so that the NESC clearance envelope is not violated. The table below lists the minimum horizontal distance needed between



Based on a typical power line having a vertical clearance of 18.5 feet above the ground and a supply line phase to ground voltage of more than 750 V to 22KV; National Electrical Safety Code Rule 232.

grain bins of various sizes and a typical power line. Placing bins at these distances reduces the chance of an electrical accident and avoids the need for special power line construction. This helps both the farmer and the power supplier.

The taller the bin, the greater the distance it must be from the power line.

* The NESC is a code which specifies minimum construction standards for safe transmission and distribution of electricity to the meter location.

Appendix I: Discussion of National Electrical Safety Code, Article 234, Section F

This section provides additional discussion and details on the requirements of NESC 234, Section F. Note that only bins or power lines constructed after August 1989 are affected by these requirements.

Considering horizontal clearances first, the NESC specifies clearances for both the nonloading and loading sides of a grain bin (refer to Figure 234-3 on the adjoining page). The nonloading side of a bin is that area where an auger, conveyor, elevator or other filling device cannot operate due to an obstruction. Typical obstructions include public roads, permanent fences, abutting buildings or any other permanent structure. Just because the bin is not typically filled from a particular side does not define it as the nonloading side of the bin. A permanent obstruction must exist that prevents loading of the bin.

The required distance from the power line to the side wall of the bin for nonloading sides must be at least 15 feet. If the 15-foot distance is not met, either the power line or the grain bin must be moved.

On the loading side(s) of the bin, distances must be greater, due to a greater risk of accidents. The distance horizontally from the bin wall to the power line is determined by the height of the highest access door or other probing port of the bin. In 234-3, this height is defined as V. Adding a distance of 18 feet to V determines the value H in Figure 234-3. Beyond this H distance, a minimum sloped clearance of 1 foot vertical drop for each 1.5 feet of horizontal travel must be designed. The NESC ruling also specifies the vertical clearance above the bin between the top of the bin and the nearest overhead line. A clearance of at least 18 feet directly above the highest opening or probing port must be maintained. This 18-foot clearance must encircle the bin around all loading sides, out to distance H as shown in the figure. These rules define the "envelope clearance" that must exist around the bin.

Appendix II: Reprint of Article 234, Section F from the National Electrical Safety Code.

Clearances of Wires, Conductors, Cables and Rigid Live Parts From Grain Bins

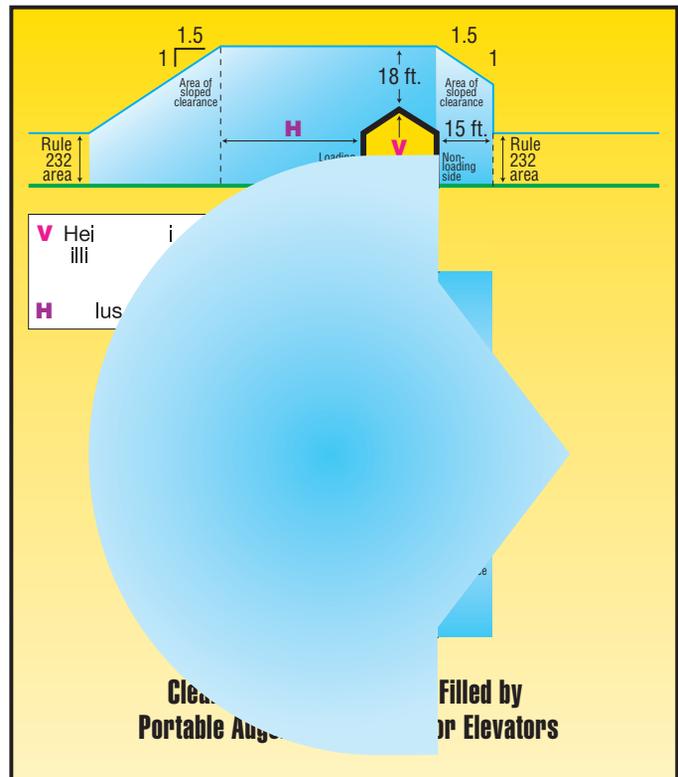
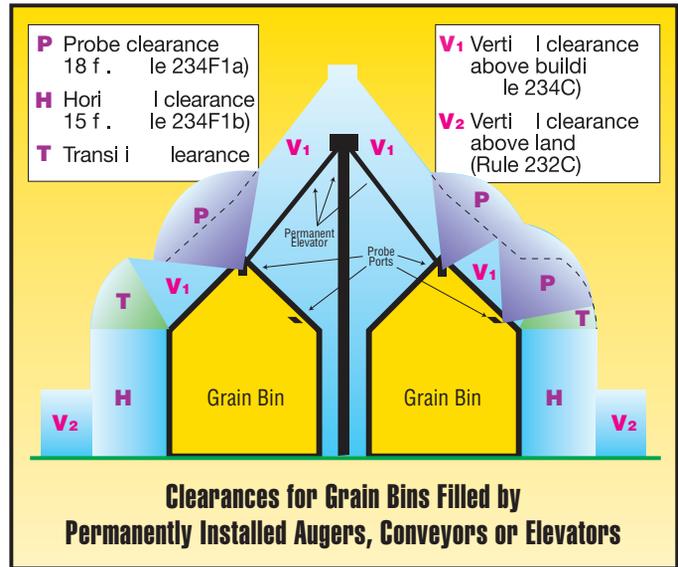
1. Grain Bins Loaded By Permanently Installed Augers, Conveyors or Elevator Systems: All portions of grain bins that are expected to be loaded by the use of a permanently installed auger, conveyor or elevator system may be considered as a building or other installation under Rule 234C for the purpose of determining appropriate clearances of wires, conductors, cables and rigid live parts, except that a vertical clearance above the bin of not less than 18 feet (5.5 meters) shall be maintained above the level of the highest probe port.

2. Grain Bins Loaded by Portable Augers, Conveyors or Elevators (With No Wind Displacement)

a. The clearance of wires, conductors, cables and rigid live parts from grain bins that are expected to be loaded by the use of portable auger, conveyor or elevator shall be not less than the values illustrated in Fig. 234-3.

EXCEPTION: Clearances of the following items on the nonloading side of grain bins shall be not less than those required by Rule 234C for clearances from buildings:

- 1) support arms, effectively grounded equipment cases



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2) Insulated communication conductors and cables, messengers, surge-protection wires, grounded guys, neutral conductors meeting Rule 230E1 and supply cables meeting Rule 230C1.

3) Supply cables of 0 to 750 V meeting Rules 230C2 or 230C3

b. Any side of a grain bin is considered to be a nonloading side if it is so designated or if it is so closely abutting another structure or obstruction or so close to a public road or other right-of-way that a portable auger, conveyor or elevator is not reasonably anticipated to be used over that side or portion to fill the grain bin.

c. Where an agreement excludes the use of portable augers, conveyors or elevators from a designated portion of a grain bin, such portion is considered to be a nonloading side.

August 27-30

53rd Annual Steam Threshing Jamboree featuring Ford-Ferguson tractors, trucks & cars, parades, largest flea market in the area, over 700 antique tractors, antique car show, horse & steam powered threshing, saw mill & machinery demos, wagon train, tractor pulls, train & carousel rides, musical entertainment, food, Prairie Village Madison, SD, 605-256-3644



PHOTO COURTESY OF MARY COFFIN

Events of Special Note

August 22

McCrossan Xtreme Event Rodeo, 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.
Pre-Show Entertainment
5:30 Rodeo, McCrossan Boys Ranch, Sioux Falls, SD
605-339-1203

September 6

Studebaker and Packard Car and Truck Show, Custer, SD
605-431-4502

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.

August 29

Blackout Motors Show and Shine, Noon to 7 p.m.
Yelduz Shrine Center
Aberdeen, SD, 605-645-8790

September 3-7

South Dakota State Fair
Huron, SD, 605-353-7340

September 3-7

CRST Labor Day Fair
Powwow and Rodeo
Eagle Butte, SD, 605-964-6685

September 4-6

LifeLight Festival
Worthing, SD, 605-338-2847

September 4-6

Flavor Days, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Spearfish, SD, 605-645-1880

September 5

Roughstock Challenge, 7 p.m.
Tripp County Rodeo Grounds
Winner, SD, 605-842-1533

September 5

Third Annual Rush-No-More Car Show and Shine
Sturgis, SD, 605-347-2916

September 6

South Dakota Auctioneers Association State Bid Calling Contest, South Dakota 4-H Foundation Benefit Auction
South Dakota State Fair
Dakota Land Stage, 2 p.m.
Huron, SD

September 11-13

James Valley Threshing and Tractor Show
Andover, SD, 605-881-5978

September 12

Foothills Bud Light Bull Bash
Jerauld County 4-H Rodeo Grounds, Wessington Springs, SD
605-770-4370

September 12

Sidewalk Arts Festival
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-7397

September 12

Living History Fall Festival
Granary Rural Cultural Center, Groton, SD
granaryfinearts.org

September 12

Cassie & The Bobs "Music of Patsy Cline" Concert
Prairie Village, Madison, SD
605-256-3644
www.prairievillage.org

September 17-18

St. Joseph's Indian School
39th Annual Powwow
Chamberlain, SD
605-234-3452

September 18-19

Deadwood Jam, Main Street
Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

September 18-20

North Country Fiber Fair
Watertown, SD, 605-956-7909

September 19-20

NESD Celtic Faire and Games
Aberdeen, SD, 605-380-5828

September 26

Family Health and Safety Festival, Sioux Falls, SD
605-371-1000

September 26

65th Annual Tri-State Band Festival, 9:30 a.m. Parade Competition, Main Street
12:30 p.m. Field Competition, Cardinal Football Field, Luverne Public Schools
Over 24 bands from Minnesota, South Dakota and Iowa take part in one of the longest running community marching competitions in the region, Luverne, MN
www.luvernechamber.com

October 3

Pumpkin Train
Ride the train to the pumpkin patch & kids pick pumpkins
Prairie Village, Madison, SD
605-256-3644
www.prairievillage.org

October 10-11

Pipestone Paranormal Weekend, Pipestone County Museum, Pipestone, MN
507-825-2563
pipctymu@iw.net