

South Dakota Electric

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Cooperative Connections

APRIL 2014 VOL. 66 NO. 4



50 YEARS OF CARING

Pg. 8



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South Dakota Electric Cooperative Connections

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Editorial

Digging? Call First



Ed Anderson
General Manager, South Dakota
Rural Electric Association

With the winter of 2013-14 nearly behind us, eager homeowners are gearing up to start those outdoor digging projects they've been dreaming about all winter. Before you reach for that shovel to start digging, remember to call 811, the national call-before-you-dig number, to ensure that your buried utility lines are marked.

The Common Ground Alliance and its 1,500 members, including South Dakota One Call and South Dakota's electric cooperatives, recognize April as National Safe Digging Month. Throughout April,

National Safe Digging Month will be promoted through statewide outreach and local events. For more information, visit www.call811.com.

National Safe Digging Month was designated to remind all of us that our land is made up of a complex underground infrastructure of pipelines, wires and cables. Striking an underground utility line while digging can cause harm to you or those around you, disrupt service to an entire neighborhood, and potentially result in fines and repair costs.

A call must be placed to 811 before every digging project, from simple landscaping projects like planting trees or shrubs, to building a deck or installing a rural mailbox. Every six minutes an underground utility line is damaged because someone decided to dig without first calling 811. Don't become part of the statistic – make sure to call 811!

Here's how it works:

- One free, simple phone call to 811 makes it easy for South Dakota One Call to notify all appropriate utility companies of your intent to dig.
- Call at least 48 hours prior to digging to ensure enough time for utility lines to be properly marked.
- When you call 811, a representative from South Dakota One Call will ask for the location and description of your digging project.

- South Dakota One Call will notify affected utility companies, who will then send a professional locator to the proposed dig site to mark the approximate location of your lines.

- Once lines have been properly marked, roll up those sleeves and carefully dig around the marked areas.



Spring Safety and Injury Prevention Tips

As the spring season gets underway, individuals are encouraged to avoid injuries by reviewing these safety tips before heading out to the yard:

- Whether it is lifting a bag of mulch or a large flower pot, plan your lift and don't be in a hurry. Bend at the knees, not the waist and keep your back straight. Lift with your legs and thigh muscles keeping the item close to you as you lift. Do not twist at the waist and always ask for help for items that are heavy or bulky.
- Inspect lawn and garden power tools for frayed power cords and cracked or broken casings. If the item is damaged, have it repaired by a qualified technician or replace it. Thoroughly inspect tools prior to every use.
- Take care of your back during yard clean-up and planting. Sprains and strains can be avoided by varying tasks so that you're not making the same movement over and over for long periods of time.
- Before using the lawn mower for the first time this year, review the owner's manual. Be sure you know how to stop the mower in case of an emergency. Store gas in an appropriate UL approved container and store it away from your home.
- Whether your ladder is brand new or it has seen a few spring cleanings, read the instructions and warning labels before using it. Remember to use the 4-to-1 rule: for every four feet of ladder height, the bottom of the ladder should be one foot away from the wall or object it is leaning against.
- Always wear appropriate protective clothing that is necessary for the task, such as gloves, long pants, eye protection and sturdy footwear. This is especially critical when handling pesticides and fertilizers. Always wash hands and clothing after handling these materials.
- And don't forget to wear sunscreen.

For more information, go to cdc.gov (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) and click on gardening safety tips.

Source: fairfaxcounty.gov

Kids' Corner Safety Poster "Don't dig near power lines"



Katelin Schroeder, 10 years old

Katelin is the daughter of Terry and Shelly Schroeder, Beaver Creek, Minn. They are members of Sioux Valley Energy, Colman, S.D.

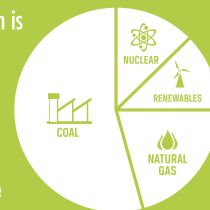
Kids, send your drawing with an electrical safety tip to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). If your poster is published, you'll receive a prize. All entries must include your name, age, mailing address and the names of your parents. Colored drawings are encouraged.

TOP 4 FACTS

ABOUT THE EPA'S NEW CLIMATE REGULATIONS

1 ABANDONS ALL-OF-THE-ABOVE

The Administration is reversing course, ditching our All-of-The-Above energy strategy for an All-But-One approach that bans coal plants



2 TECHNOLOGY GAMBLE

New regulations essentially require technology that's not commercially viable and prohibitively expensive — leading to higher bills down the line.



3 LIMITS ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE, DOMESTIC ENERGY

By banning coal plants, Americans forfeit a 236-year domestic source of energy with a historically stable price.



4 HISTORY REPEAT: ALL-BUT-ONE DOESN'T WORK

A 1978 mandate prevented use of natural gas and forced utilities into coal or nuclear — before common sense prevailed and it was repealed nine years later



COOPERATIVE
ACTION NETWORK

ACTION.COOP

Appetizers & Beverages



Bacon Cheddar Dip

2 cups sour cream
1 cup finely shredded Cheddar cheese
1 envelope ranch dressing mix
4 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled

In a large bowl, combine the sour cream, Cheddar cheese, salad dressing mix and bacon. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour. Serve with crackers and/or vegetables.

Stephanie Fossum, Hudson, SD

Banana Slush

2 (12 oz.) cans orange juice
5 mashed bananas
1 (12 oz.) can frozen lemonade
4 cups sugar
1 (46 oz.) can unsweetened pineapple juice
6 cups warm water

Blend together orange juice and bananas in blender. Combine next 4 ingredients. Mix all together. Freeze. Serve with 7-up.

Shirley Dreher, Clark, SD

Mocha Punch

6 cups boiling water
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup hot chocolate mix
1/4 cup instant coffee crystals
1/2 gallon vanilla ice cream
1/2 gallon chocolate ice cream
Whipped cream

Combine first 4 ingredients; refrigerate. Pour in punch bowl. Add ice cream. Top with whipped cream if desired.

Note: I like to make the syrup mixture and refrigerate overnight. Also, the syrup mixes with the ice cream easier if the ice cream sets for 10 minutes to soften before adding to syrup mixture.

Frankie Howey-Hofer, Rapid City, SD

Holiday Dip

1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, softened
3/4 cup Heinz chili sauce
2 T. minced onion
1/4 tsp. of salt
1/8 tsp. of pepper

Beat cream cheese till fluffy; blend in remaining ingredients. Cover and chill. Serve with crackers and/or vegetables.

Mary Swenson, Brandon, SD

Soy and Spinach Artichoke Dip

1 lb. silken tofu, crumbled
1 lb. low fat cream cheese, cubed
1 cup low fat mayonnaise
1/2 tsp. ground pepper
1/2 cup green onions, chopped
1 lb. frozen chopped spinach, thawed and drained
1 lb. marinated artichoke hearts, drained and coarsely chopped
Parmesan cheese, grated for garnish

Beat tofu until smooth. Mix in cream cheese, mayonnaise and pepper in mixer bowl. Fold in green onions, spinach and artichokes. Divide mixture equally into 12 (4 oz.) au gratin dishes. Sprinkle Parmesan cheese on top, if desired. Bake at 350°F for 15 to 20 minutes or until bubbly and browned on top. Serve with low-carb crackers or bread for an all-around low-carb snack or lunch! Makes 12 servings.

Nutritional information per 4 oz. serving: 62 calories, 6.6 g protein, 5.7 g carbohydrates, 1.5 g fiber, 1.4 g fat, 254 mg sodium

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Hot Spiced Cider

1 gallon apple cider
1 quart cranberry juice
1 quart orange juice
4 country spice tea bags

Combine first 3 ingredients in a large 30-cup coffee maker. In top basket, place tea bags. Brew for 45 minutes.

Lenora Pawlowski, Wessington Springs, SD

Pizza Egg Rolls

1 lb. bulk Italian sausage
3/4 cup diced green pepper
1 garlic clove, minced
1 (15 oz.) can crushed tomatoes
1/4 cup tomato paste
1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. dried oregano
1/4 tsp. sugar
1/8 tsp. dried rosemary, crushed
Dash pepper
1 (8 oz.) block mozzarella cheese, cut into 1/4-inch cubes
13 egg roll wrappers
1 egg, slightly beaten
Oil

In a large skillet, cook sausage, green pepper and garlic over medium heat until meat is no longer pink; drain. Stir in tomatoes, tomato paste and seasonings. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Uncover and simmer an additional 10 minutes. Remove from heat; cool for 20 minutes. Stir in cheese. Place 1/3 cup sausage mixture in the center of each egg roll wrapper. Fold bottom corner over filling; fold sides toward center over filling. Brush remaining corner with egg; roll up tightly to seal. In an electric skillet or a deep-fat fryer, heat 1 inch of oil to 375°F. Fry egg rolls in batches for 1 to 2 minutes on each side or until golden brown. Drain on paper towels.

Deloris Bachman, Rapid City, SD

Please send your favorite ethnic and dessert recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in June 2014. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.

Cool Energy Bills with Metal Roofing

ASPHALT SHINGLES ARE STILL THE NORM IN MOST regions, but the next roof over your head could be an energy-saving metal one made of stainless steel and painted to reflect hot sun rays. Thomas Jefferson chose metal roofing to shelter Monticello, his Virginia estate. Centuries later, historians say, Jefferson's "tin" roof "is in fine shape."

By B. Denise Hawkins

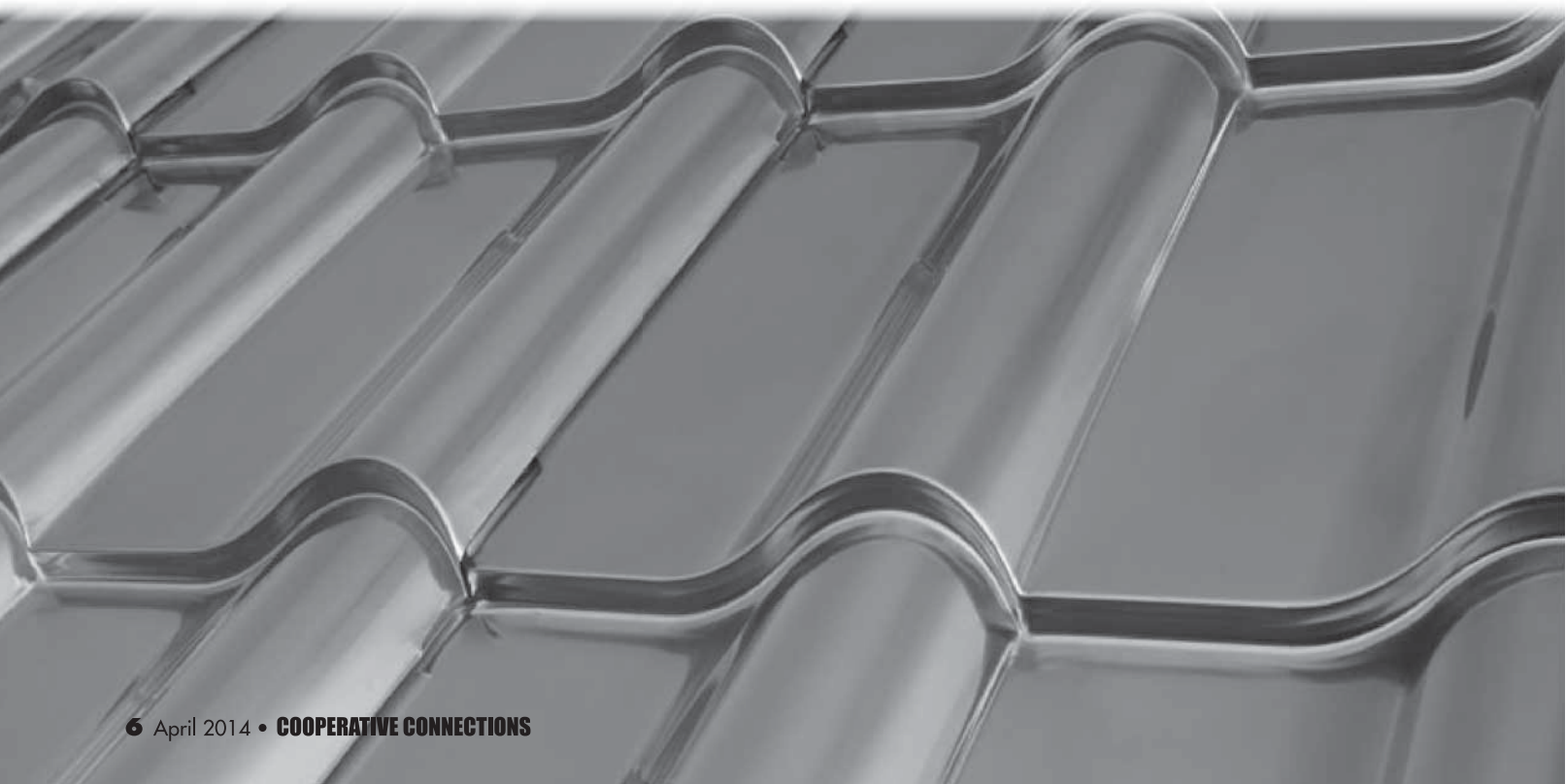
B. Denise Hawkins writes on energy efficiency issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

That kind of durability, say metal roofing retailers and manufacturers, is a strong selling point for making converts of a growing band of homeowners who want a building material that is not only sustainable, energy efficient, and cost-effective, but more aesthetically pleasing than asphalt. Today, consumers can select metals from copper to zinc. They can also choose roofing styles ranging from traditional vertical seams to those that resemble wood shake, slate, shingles, and clay tiles. A multi-year study conducted by the Oak Ridge National Laboratory's Building Technology Center suggests that replacing conventional asphalt roofs with metal ones can reduce air conditioning energy use by up to 25 percent.

Wondering whether your house should be clad with a metal roof? ENERGY STAR offers this guidance: homes hampered with high air-condi-

tioning bills, have large roof surfaces, lower levels of insulation, and are located in hot, sunny climates benefit the most from metal roofing. Painted metal roofs, also known as "cool metal roofs," are designed to reflect more sunlight and absorb less heat than a standard roof. Special reflective color pigments in the paint make that possible. But whether using white or a darker paint color, heat will still reflect well and help reduce cooling loads in the summer and insulate homes during the winter.

With metal roofs, there are also other ways for homeowners to save money over time, but the initial purchase price can be a factor. The cost for using metal roofing systems in home renovations or in new residential construction is higher than most other roofing materials, say manufacturers. But compared to traditional dark gray asphalt shingles and other non-metal roofs that last on average 17 years and require replacing about every decade or two, metal roofs last longer. The lifespan of metal roofs is about two to three times longer, says William "Bill" Hippard, chairman of the non-profit Metal Roofing Alliance, a coalition dedicated to educating consumers about the benefits of modern metal roofing, and the product is virtually maintenance-free.



Build Skills at Campaign Academy

Individuals who've considered running for public office or who may be pondering such a run are encouraged to attend Campaign Academy '14.

Offered by America's electric cooperatives, the Campaign Academy is designed to help potential candidates and their campaign staffs hone the skills needed to run a campaign.

The 2014 academy will be held April 7 at the Sioux Falls Holiday Inn City Centre and on April 9 at the Rushmore Plaza Holiday Inn in Rapid City. The training is designed for people running local and state races as well as their fundraisers, campaign managers and others who will assist with the campaign.

During the academy, attendees will learn the basics of writing a campaign plan, implementing a finance plan, learn about election and finance laws, learn media relation and advertising tips and the importance of getting out the vote on election day. There will also be a round table discussion with elected officials.

Registration materials are available at local electric cooperatives or online at www.sdrea.coop. The cost to attend is \$25, which includes lunch. Registration deadline is March 26.

South Dakota Electric Cooperatives'
CAMPAIGN
academy **14**
Gathering the Tools for a Successful Election Campaign

Rapid City Central Advances to National Science Bowl

Rapid City Central High School Team No. 1 defeated Rapid City Stevens High School Team No. 1 to become the 21st annual South Dakota Regional Science Bowl Champions on Saturday, March 1, 2014, at the Huron Event Center, Huron, S.D., earning the opportunity to compete at the U.S. Department of Energy's National Science Bowl in Washington, D.C., April 24-28. The contest, hosted by Western Area Power Administration, tests knowledge in astronomy, biology, chemistry, math, physics and earth and general science. Twenty teams from high schools throughout South Dakota competed in this year's event which consisted of a round robin format in the morning and the top eight teams continued to the double elimination in the afternoon.

The top eight teams included two teams from Rapid



Rapid City Central Team No. 1 consisted of Nathaniel Bennett, Nicholas Fay, Thomas De Long, Shane Lapczynski, coach Michael Slaback and Adam Grigg.

City Stevens, Rapid City Christian, Rapid City Central Team No. 1, two teams from Brandon Valley, Northwestern Team No. 1 and Aberdeen Central Team No. 1.

Rapid City Central Team No. 1 was undefeated in the afternoon double elimination rounds until facing the Rapid City Stevens Team No. 1 that came back through the losing bracket. In Round 12, Stevens

defeated Central 68 to 4.

Rapid City Central demonstrated their determination and rallied in the second half of the 13th round, answering a toss-up question correctly in the last minute of the game to defeat Stevens with a score of 30 to 26.

Minnesota will be represented by Wayzata Team No. 1 at the national event.

Electric Co-op Day at the Capitol

Electric cooperative leaders and employees from across the state gathered in Pierre Feb. 25 for the second annual Electric Cooperative Day at the Capitol. The event gave electric co-ops the opportunity to connect with lawmakers and watch the legislative process. The group also took a photo with Gov. Dennis Daugaard.



Fundraiser Makes Profound Impact

“I’m so proud of all this fundraiser has been able to accomplish.”

by Chris Studer

FIVE DECADES AGO A SMALL-TOWN FUNDRAISER began in rural South Dakota which has had a profound impact on countless families across the state.

East River Electric Power Cooperative, based in Madison, was a bit of a ‘new kid on the block’ in 1964, organized just 15 years before. The wholesale electric power cooperative’s staff had an idea that would create a culture of generosity and a legacy of service that has been going strong for 50 years; even with its not-for-everyone cuisine.

The cooperative’s employees wanted to start an annual fundraiser feed that would benefit children with disabilities. The Elks Club, where many East River employees claimed membership, played host and seemed the logical place to hold such an event.

Doug O’Connell, now retired from East River, was an Elks member and one of the original organizers. He said early on they served beef stroganoff. Then they tried frying steaks. Neither would stick.

“We had so many people, we couldn’t fry the steaks fast enough,” O’Connell said.

Then he had an idea. “I thought, ‘Why don’t we try mountain oysters?’ and everyone just went along with it,” O’Connell recalled.

If you don’t know what a ‘mountain oyster’ is, a quick Google search will give you the idea. But this deep-fried ‘delicacy’ isn’t for everyone.

“Not everyone likes them of course. We always had ham, too,” O’Connell joked. The ham has now





Above: An East River Electric employee fries up the mountain oysters for the fry. **Opposite Page:** East River employee Paul Lambert serves the fried cuisine. **On the cover:** Former East River General Manager Jeff Nelson, right, with Madison artist and Children's Care client April Cundy. Nelson is holding one of Cundy's works of art. Cundy's artwork is auctioned each year at the Mountain Oyster Feed.

turned to pork loin sandwiches for the more timid palettes.

Loren Zingmark, who would later become East River Electric's general manager, remembers the early days.

"Even right away when we started the fundraiser people would be standing in line," Zingmark remembers. "It was very popular and continues to be."

Each year, hundreds of people turn out to consume mountain oysters (or pork sandwiches) at the fundraiser. Now held at Nicky's restaurant in Madison, the fundraiser benefits the Children's Care Hospital & School of Sioux Falls and Rapid City which provides outreach services for young people with a wide range of disabilities statewide in school districts, daycares and homes.

"Children's Care provides incredible programs that have impacted the lives of so many children and their families," said Angie Neises, chair of East River Electric's Employee Committee which organizes the annual fundraiser. "We're honored to be able to help them continue their mission."

That mission has had a direct impact on the Cundy family of Madison. Nearly 30 years to the day after East River employees created the fundraiser, Randy and Linda Cundy welcomed a beautiful little girl into the world. Born in March 1994, April Cundy came three weeks early and seemed healthy and strong.

"We anticipated the joy of bringing her home," Linda Cundy said. "Health issues arose almost immediately and continued until she was almost 2 years old." April wasn't progressing developmentally. She first received services at Children's Care at the age of 5. At 12, April was diagnosed with Angelman Syndrome, a neuro-genetic disorder that affects speech and development.

"It's probably difficult for anyone who doesn't have a challenging child to know how parents might feel raising a child at home with a disability," Linda said. "We wanted to

keep dreaming of the gymnastic meets, basketball games, concerts, church activities, friends' birthday parties," Linda said.

But they realized they needed help that Children's Care could provide.

"We don't know what we would have done without their specialized care all these years. It has been a key to April's success in life," she said.

Children's Care teacher Annie O'Fallon Norton is credited with recognizing April's love and talent for painting. April has since created countless works of art on canvas or wood. She gives them as gifts, sells her creations at art shows and even has her own business called Abstract Art by April. You can see her work at www.abstractartbyapril.com.

East River employees are an extended family for the Cundys. In 2010, the April Cundy Award was established, given to the employee who most exhibits traits like April's: kindness, compassion, enthusiasm, generosity and cheer.

"We're humbled that our daughter is being honored in such a way," Linda said. The award recipient also receives one of April's paintings. Each year East River employees take a collection and bid on one of April's paintings at the Mountain Oyster Feed, raising as much as \$800.

"We are very thankful for East River and all of the businesses who donate gifts for the silent auction and for the people who make it a priority to attend each year," Linda said.

Thanks to Children's Care, April, now 20, will transition to an adult home with South Dakota Achieve in Sioux Falls where she'll live within the next year and a half.

In the 50 years since the fundraiser began, nearly \$165,000 has been raised through ticket sales, donations and auction items. The funds offset transportation and other costs to help Children's Care provide outreach services to rural South Dakota.

"It is truly heartwarming to see some of the same East River Electric

employees and community members at the Mountain Oyster Feed year after year," said Jessica Wells, president of the Children's Care Foundation. "From the volunteers that do food preparation and cooking, to the servers, dessert makers, auction volunteers, and attendees, all contribute to the overwhelming success of this event. It certainly speaks well of the entire Madison community."

Although he retired from East River, O'Connell still serves as one of the mountain oyster cooks. He said the fact that the tradition of service has lasted five decades gives him immense pride.

"I've been invited to the hospital and had dinner with the children," O'Connell said. "It's unexplainable. I'm so proud of all this fundraiser has been able to accomplish."

And it has helped children and families accomplish so much with the help of Children's Care. This year's event is scheduled for April 3.

"In 2010, the April Cundy Award was established, given to the employee who most exhibits traits like April's: kindness, compassion, enthusiasm, generosity and cheer."

NRECA CEO Emerson: Fight for Affordable Energy

NRECA CEO JO ANN EMERSON CALLED ON electric cooperative leaders to forge a new legacy for the co-op movement by mobilizing their 42 million members to advance the cause of reliable, affordable electricity. Speaking at the 72nd NRECA annual meeting, Emerson challenged co-op managers, directors and staffers to swell the ranks of the Action.coop campaign and bring what she called “common sense” to federal energy policy.

“This is a fight for our survival, and, by God, we are going to put everything we have into it,” she said March 3 at the Music City Center. “We turned the lights on. We keep the lights burning. And now, our goal is to make the light bulb come on in Washington.”

Delivering a serious yet upbeat message, Emerson said co-ops face a great challenge in dealing with Environmental Protection Agency regulations that target the nation’s fuel mix.

But co-ops’ will to meet that challenge is even greater, Emerson added, as she asked attendees to

enlist 10 people each in Action.coop when they return to their communities. Action.coop already is responsible for 284,500 messages to EPA, she said.

“Our challenge is set: Tell the EPA what climate regulations will do to our families, our businesses and our communities. And it doesn’t matter if they don’t like our story because at least they will hear our story. And, wow, do we have a story to tell. Cooperatives work,” Emerson said.

Emerson spoke on the first day of the three-day annual meeting, which organizers estimated will attract 9,600 participants to activities under the theme “Co-op Nation: Strong and Proud.”

The centerpiece of the annual meeting was the March 4 business meeting, where voting delegates reviewed member resolutions and help to set a course for the association’s future.

Other highlights include dpolicy briefings on key issues, director education programs, a sold-out TechAdvantage Expo of vendors and a performance by country artist Martina McBride.

By
Steven Johnson
ECT Staff Writer

NRECA CEO Jo Ann Emerson addressed attendees of NRECA’s 72nd annual meeting in Nashville, Tenn., on March 3.





Left: Southeastern Electric Don Heeren, left, and Whetstone Valley Electric director Darren Strasser vote on a resolution during the NRECA business meeting. **Below:** Dakota Energy Cooperative's Jodene Decker and director Dave Gross consult the meeting agenda before heading to forum sessions. **Below left:** Representatives from Northern Electric Cooperative and FEM Electric Association listen during the NRTC annual meeting.



Left: South Dakota's Youth Leadership Council delegate, Alex Kiley of Belle Fourche, assists with the NRECA business meeting. **Below:** Butte Electric Cooperative director Thomas Bruner speaks on a resolution in front of the NRECA voting delegates. Each NRECA member cooperative has one vote.

In a 25-minute speech interrupted half-a-dozen times by applause, Emerson emphasized that co-ops are national leaders in energy efficiency and renewable energy, owning and purchasing more than 5.7 gigawatts of renewable capacity and 10 GW of hydropower.

"That's more than 10 percent of the U.S. total. With one-twentieth of the generation in the U.S. and one-eighth of the energy customers, that is a remarkable achievement," Emerson said.

Yet intermittent sources such as wind and solar cannot replace the coal-based generation that has been the backbone of the electric grid, Emerson warned.

As a result, she said, co-ops need to be heard on EPA plans that would hamstring future coal plants by requiring

expensive carbon capture and storage controls that are not commercially viable. EPA plans to issue emissions standards for existing coal plants in June.

"These regulations practically mandate an increase to the cost of energy. It is wishful thinking and at great expense to our members," she said.

Emerson said co-ops have the power to build a future in which they act as engines of community development, improve the quality of life in rural America and deliver electricity free of unreasonable

restraints.

"This vision is closer than we think. This vision is within our reach. But we're going to have to fight for it, whether we want to or not," she said.



H-D Electric manager Matt Hotzler casts the co-ops ballot at the National Rural Telecommunications Cooperative annual meeting in Nashville, Tenn.



Cam Wal director Dwight Rossow congratulates Tom Hayes of Sleepy Eye, Minn. Hayes is replacing Rossow as the Region VI director on the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation board of directors

CCR: Regulation's Bad Moon Rising

FOR MANY, THE TERM “CCR” BRINGS UP LYRICS such as “Fortunate Son,” “Proud Mary” and “Bad Moon Rising.” But for your local electric cooperative and its power suppliers, the CCR in question is the coal combustions residuals rule.

CCR is among key pieces of regulatory policy that include the Mercury and Air Toxin Standards, the Cross State Air Pollution Rule, the Cooling Water Intake Rule and the EPA Greenhouse Gas Regulations that will take effect in the next few years. Many members have asked about these policies that have come to be known as “The Big Five” in the electric industry. In each article I attempt to summarize these regulatory initiatives and provide some insight to the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association’s cooperative members’ stance on each. This month’s focus is the Coal Combustion Residuals (CCR) Rule.

CCR commonly known as coal ash

To provide some background, CCR is commonly referred to as “coal ash.” This is material produced when coal is burned to produce electricity. About 45 percent of residuals are used beneficially.

Most of this goes into the making of wallboard and concrete. The rest is disposed of in landfills or surface impoundments. CCRs are made up of four distinct residuals: fly ash, bottom ash, boiler slag and flue gas desulfurization materials.

CCR Rules Address Management and Disposal

A CCR Rule was proposed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in June 2010. The proposal put forth two alternatives to address the risks of CCR management under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). One option is to list residuals as a special hazardous waste when disposed of in landfills or surface impoundments. The other is to regulate as a non-hazardous waste.

Under the latter option, the EPA would have the authority to set performance standards for waste management facilities. Enforcement of these standards would be by the states and citizens through the RCRA citizen lawsuit provisions. EPA would retain statutory authority to take action against CCR disposal facilities posing imminent and substantial endangerment to human health or the environment.

By
Tim McCarthy

*With updates
from Cathy Cash,
ECT Staff Writer*

**Coal ash is a recognized
component in concrete
and wallboard.**



EPA Previously Ruled CCRs Non-hazardous

No final ruling has been issued on which option will be adopted. However, on four prior occasions the EPA determined that CCRs do not warrant regulation as a hazard. In fact, in 2000 the EPA made a regulatory determination that regulating CCRs as a hazard would be environmentally counterproductive as it would impede its beneficial uses in other products, such as those as mentioned above.

NRECA Opposes Hazardous Designation

NRECA has filed comments with EPA opposing a hazardous designation for CCRs. Not only did NRECA cite specific examples of how companies and communities would be negatively impacted, they provided legal basis why the EPA cannot reverse the 2000 decision it made that CCRs should not be deemed hazardous.

In early 2014, the EPA signed an agreement with industry and environmentalists requiring the agency to decide this year how it will regulate coal ash from power plants.

Under the consent decree, the EPA has until Dec. 19 to determine whether it will regulate coal combustion residuals as hazardous or nonhazardous under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. The consent decree was filed Jan. 29 in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia.

Agency officials have indicated a preference for a nonhazardous designation, which would not upset recycling of the byproducts for construction purposes. Industry leaders say they will continue to work towards an outcome that is feasible for states and the power sector.

"We are hopeful EPA will reach such a nonhazardous designation. We do, however, have serious problems with the nonhazardous approach in EPA's 2010 proposal," said Dorothy Kellogg, NRECA senior principal for environmental issues.

"Because EPA lacks authority to compel states to adopt federal nonhazardous standards, the proposed program would be enforced through citizen suits and the courts. We need coal ash legislation like that passed by the House to settle this matter."

House members from both parties overwhelmingly passed a bill last July that would require EPA to defer to states to manage and dispose of coal ash. The new consent decree deadline has triggered House leaders to urge the Senate to do the same and end the regulatory uncertainty surrounding the EPA rule that is chilling investment and job creation.

NRECA and a broad coalition of American workers support the Coal Residuals Reuse and Management Act of 2013 that was crafted by Rep. David McKinley, R-W.Va.

"A legislative solution will give more certainty for the hundreds of thousands of Americans whose jobs depend on it," he said. "With this court decision, it makes it even more imperative for the Senate to pass this bill."

EPA Urged to Promote Beneficial Uses of Coal Ash

Now that the EPA has recognized the benefits of coal ash as a component in concrete and wallboard, cooperatives say it is time for the agency to conclude that the material is also safe for other uses, like highway embankments, structural fill and fertilizer.

"Decades of experience demonstrate the benefits of coal ash as an ingredient in concrete and wallboard. We appreciate EPA's recent recognition based on sound science and accepted standards, but the agency can do more to promote other beneficial uses of coal ash," said John Novak, NRECA executive director for environmental issues.

"EPA should expedite its analysis of using coal ash in other applications and complete its part in a study with the U.S. Department of Agriculture that reinforces that coal ash can be used safely and economically as a soil amendment as it has been for years."

Coal ash, a byproduct of coal-based electric generation, provides a cheaper alternative to virgin resources while reducing greenhouse gas emissions and the cost of storing the material in landfills, EPA said in a recent analysis.

U.S. House Bill Authorizes State Permit Programs

Since 2011, the U.S. House of Representatives has also weighed in on this issue voting three times in favor of a bill that would prevent the EPA from designating coal ash as a hazardous waste material.

This bill, as structured, would also authorize states to adopt and implement CCR permit programs. On two of the votes, the bill received bipartisan support from eight of the nine members of the U.S. House from Indiana. The third time the bill was considered, it was consolidated in the "Stop the War on Coal Act of 2012" that passed in late September and was supported by seven of the nine.

Rule Date Depends on Final Classification of CCRs

The effective date of this rule will hinge on which option is ultimately selected. If CCRs are classified as nonhazardous wastes, the compliance date would probably be around 2018. If the decision is to classify CCRs as hazardous waste materials, compliance will most likely be pushed out a couple years to about 2020. There has been no date set for issuance of a final ruling from EPA at this point in time.

Next month we'll delve into the Cooling Water Intake Rule. If you have any questions or comments, feel free to send me an email and I will respond as quickly as I can.

Editor's Note: This month addresses the fourth part of a five-part series that will examine various federal regulatory proposals that affect you and your cooperative. This series focuses 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 Four of a
Five-Part Series

Community at Our Core

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES, AT THEIR HEART, ARE about community. When they were formed 75 years ago, it was because organizers knew that bringing electricity to rural areas would empower local communities and bring a better way of life.

This commitment goes beyond providing electricity. Electric cooperatives also bring resources through skilled employees, ongoing training and often through the co-op's actual buildings.

Dozens of cooperatives throughout South Dakota and western Minnesota have community rooms and meeting facilities that are made available to local groups.

"We allow the community club and 4-H groups to use our meeting room for their meetings," said Angie Alexander at Butte Electric Cooperative in Newell.

Similar stories can be told across the region from Bison, S.D., to Sioux Falls, S.D., and places in between.

At Northern Electric Cooperative in Bath, S.D., the co-op's auditorium has been a mainstay in local community life. Whether it be as a meeting place for non-profit groups including 4-H clubs, women's scrapbooking groups, Brown County 4-H Shooting sports or as a place for residents to do their basic civic duty of voting when the space serves as an official polling place for elections.

Community rooms at Central Electric Coop-





Left: Oahe Electric Cooperative employees pose outside of the Feeding South Dakota Pierre, S.D., facility after the Blunt, S.D.,-based cooperative employee group spent two hours boxing 1,000 boxes of food for the elderly as part of Feeding South Dakota's Senior Box Program on March 6.

erative in Mitchell, S.D., and Sioux Valley Energy in Colman, S.D., Brandon, S.D., and Pipestone, Minn., are also used by co-op members seeking space for larger gatherings.

For other cooperatives, community involvement takes a more hands-on approach.

Lake Region Electric Association in Webster, S.D., has long partnered with local 4-H clubs to assist with basic electrical wiring projects. Each summer, the co-op hosts dozens of 4-Hers looking to hone their electrical skills.

The co-op, like several others in the region, also got involved in food drive for its local food pantry this past holiday season. LREA employees were able to deliver more than 230 pounds of donated food to the food pantry in Webster.

LREA isn't alone in that endeavor. To the east, Whetstone Valley Electric Cooperative in Milbank has supported its local food pantry for the last



Left: Northern Electric Cooperative employees Steve Beck and Lance Dennert pose with a portion of the food collected at a toy and food drive at the cooperative last Christmas. Several other cooperatives, including Rosebud Electric Cooperative in Gregory, S.D., and Whetstone Valley Electric Cooperative in Milbank also conduct holiday food drives.

several years. And, to the west, Northern Electric combines a toy and food drive at Christmas.

The human resources — the more than 1,200 employees who work at the region's electric cooperatives — can also be a valuable, and sometimes essential part, of the community's fabric.

Scores of employees serve on local volunteer ambulance crews, local fire departments, community clubs and organizations, coach youth basketball, softball, baseball and wrestling teams, volunteer in the classrooms through Junior Achievement and are involved in many other aspects of local communities. Recent economic impact studies indicate that collectively, co-op employees volunteer more than 60,000 hours annually.

Oahe Electric Cooperative in Blunt, S.D., put a slightly different twist on helping out. Each month the cooperative holds employee or safety training meetings. In March 2014, the co-op expanded its monthly meeting's scope a bit to lend a hand, or rather several hands, to Feeding South Dakota.

One Thursday a month, Feeding South Dakota's Pierre location seeks groups to come in and help pack a box of commodities for low income seniors in the central portion of South Dakota. Groups that volunteer are told to figure three hours. Oahe Electric employees joined other volunteers and packed 1,000 boxes in two hours.



Above: Members of Marshall County, Dakota Kids 4-H Club of Langford Area work with Lake Region Electric Association, Webster, S.D., employees to make their own extension cords and droplights as part of a 4-H electrical project in July 2013. **Left:** LREA employees take the final bags/boxes of food out of a truck with help from a local volunteer for the food pantry in Webster, S.D. The employees participated in a food drive and donated more than 231 pounds of nonperishable food to the pantry.

Regional Dateline

March 22

South Dakota State
Taxidermy Competition
Watertown, SD, 605-460-2133

March 22-23

Farm Toy & Collectables Show
Aberdeen, SD, 605-225-4841

March 22-23

Curt Carter Memorial Gun
Show Watertown, SD
605-793-2347

March 29

Farm, Home & Sports Show
Platte, SD, 888-297-8175
www.plattedsd.org

March 29

Boys of Summer
(Eagles Tribute) in Concert
Deadwood, SD, 605-559-1187

April 5-6

Big Boy Toy Show
Aberdeen, SD, 605-229-3632
www.hubcityradio.com

April 7 and 9

2014 Campaign Academy by
America's Electric Cooperatives
April 7 in Sioux Falls
April 9 in Rapid City
Advanced Registration
Required, Pierre, SD
605-224-8823

April 8-9

Disney's Beauty and the Beast
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-6000

April 10

Taste of Home Cooking School
Deadwood, SD, 605-559-1187
deadwoodmountaingrand.com



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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

April 17-19

Yelduz Shrine Circus
Aberdeen, SD, 605-225-4851

April 25-26

Black Hills Fiber Arts Fair
Rapid City, SD, 605-791-0711
www.blackhillsfiberartsfair.org

April 11-12

Bull Riding Classic
Aberdeen, SD, 701-663-4973
www.npra.com

April 12-13

Quilting in the Country
Quilt Show, Brookings, SD
605-997-2834

April 26

RiverRat Marathon and
Bike Ride, Yankton, SD
www.riverratmarathon.com

April 12

Tri-Valley Barbershop Chorus
Annual Show, 7 p.m.
School Auditorium
Centerville, SD, 605-563-2746

April 23

Red Green "How To Do
Everything" Tour
Mitchell, SD, 605-995-8430
www.cornpalace.org

April 28-30

Shrine Circus, Corn Palace
Mitchell, SD, 605-995-8430

April 30-May 4

Black Hills Film Festival
Hill City, SD, 605-574-9454

May 2-4

Naja Shrine Circus, Civic Center
Rapid City, SD, 605-343-4076

May 17

James Valley Model
Railroad Open House
Aberdeen, SD, 605-226-2139

June 6-8

Wheel Jam, SD State
Fairgrounds, Huron, SD
605-353-7340
www.wheeljam.com

April 12

Spring Fling Home &
Garden Show
Hot Springs, SD, 605-745-4140
www.hotsprings-sd.com

April 24

Chicago in Concert
Deadwood, SD, 605-559-1187
deadwoodmountaingrand.com

April 12

Winefest Renaissance 2014
Aberdeen, SD, 605-225-8714

April 24-25

All Dakota High School
Fine Arts Exhibition Works
Groton, SD, 605-626-7117

April 12

Hairball in Concert
Mitchell, SD, 800-289-7469

April 24-27

El Riad Shrine Circus
Sioux Falls, SD, 605-336-1117

April 12

Lunafest Film Festival
Custer, SD, 605-673-8108

April 25

Country Gold Tour in Concert
Deadwood, SD, 605-559-1187