

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Wall Meats Expansion

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Empowering our Community



Chris Larson,
General Manager

Recap of the Open House and Annual Meeting

It is with much appreciation; I would like to reflect on the success of our recent Open House and Annual Meeting. It's an occasion where we come together as a united force, celebrating our achievements, sharing our vision for the future, and strengthening the bonds that make our cooperative truly exceptional.

Celebrating Milestones:

This year marked some significant milestones for our cooperative. From completing our new head-quarters complex to emphasizing the importance of a balanced energy portfolio which ensures the reliability of our future energy supply, each step forward has been a testament to our collective dedication to progress. During the Annual Meeting, we showcased these achievements, allowing members to witness first-hand the positive impact of their support and participation.

Community Connections:

Beyond the business aspects, the Open House and Annual Meeting reinforced the sense of community that defines us. It was heartening to see neighbors coming together, forging new connections, and reaffirming their commitment to the shared prosperity of our cooperative. Our cooperative is not just about delivering electricity; it's about nurturing a sense

of belonging and mutual support among all members.

Looking Ahead:

As we look to the future, we do so with optimism and determination. We remain steadfast in our commitment to innovation, sustainability, and accountability. Together, we will explore new opportunities, adapt to evolving technologies, and ensure that our cooperative continues to thrive for generations to come.

Gratitude:

Lastly, we extend our deepest gratitude to all who contributed to the success of the



Pictured L to R: VCDC President Jim Peterson, Clay-Union Electric Board Secretary Jim Ryken and Vice President Chris Kinney, GM Chris Larson, Board President Tom Larsen and Treasurer Mike Slattery, Clay County Commissioner Betty Smith

Open House and Annual Meeting. From our dedicated staff and community members to each member who took the time to attend, your involvement is what makes our cooperative special. Your support fuels our mission, and we are honored to be part of this community.

In closing, let us carry the spirit of unity and progress that defines our cooperative into the days ahead. Together, there is no limit to what we can achieve.

Thank you again, for allowing us to provide your electric service needs.

Chris Larson
General Manager
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COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

CLAY-UNION ELECTRIC SPARKS

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88TH ANNUAL MEETING HELD APRIL 2ND

Jackie Williams

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On April 2nd we hosted a ribbon cutting for our new facility followed by an open house with the public invited and an annual meeting for the members of Clay-Union Electric. The event was a tremendous success, with a fantastic turnout and meaningful engagement from our members and the community.

By combining the three events it was a comprehensive approach that effectively showcased the new facility, allowed for community interaction, and facilitated important discussions with the members.

It was an excellent opportunity for attendees to explore the new facility, learn about the cooperative while engaging with the employees and fellow neighbors.

Serving over 350 meals during the open house is a testament to the level of interest and support from the community, and having

152 members registered for the annual meeting demonstrates the commitment of our membership base to stay informed and involved in the cooperative's affairs. Annual meetings are crucial for transparency, accountability, and engagement with our members, allowing them to stay informed about the organization's performance, future plans, and decision-making processes.

The Board of Directors and staff extends a heartfelt thank you to everyone who attended and participated demonstrating your appreciation for your support and involvement. Events like these are essential for building and maintaining strong connections within the community and ensuring the continued success and sustainability of Clay-Union Electric.

More annual meeting photos and scholarship information on page 7.

Your Safety Matters

Prevent home electrical fires

Eight out of 10 fire-related deaths occur at home – the place that embodies comfort and security. That's why it's important to take steps to keep everyone safe.

Faulty or deteriorating electrical cords are a top cause of fires at home. Cords that become frayed or cracked can send sparks to flammable surfaces. Check your cords to ensure that they are in good shape, and replace any that are worn.

In addition, make sure you are not overloading circuits. If you've been in your home for more than 10 years, have your circuit breaker box inspected by a licensed electrician to tighten loose connections and check for overloaded circuits.



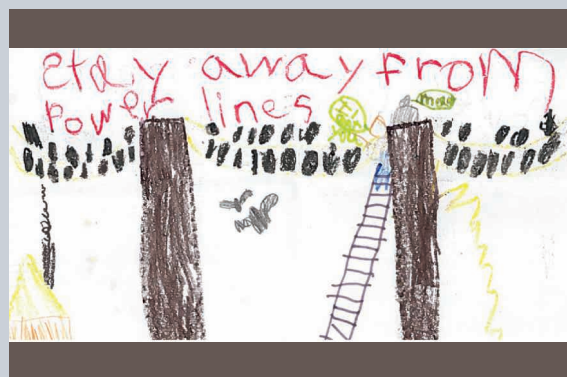
Homes with copper wiring need to be inspected every 20 years, and homes with aluminum wiring should be inspected every five years.

Check all Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) outlets several times each year by pushing the test/reset button to be sure they are working properly.

If breakers are continually tripping or if fuses are blowing frequently, that's a sign of potential trouble. The cause could be old wiring unable to handle the load demand of today's modern appliances. If needed, ask a licensed electrician to install additional circuits for safety.

Use surge protectors and power bars to help prevent overloading an electrical outlet, plugging no more than three cords into the strip.

May is National Electrical Safety Month. We urge you to take the time and steps needed to lower the risks of electrical fires. Keep your family safe.



Stay Away from Power Lines

Weston Koistinen, Age 6

Weston Koistinen warns readers to be safe by staying away from power lines. Weston's parents are Dion and Stephanie Koistinen, members of H-D Electric Cooperative.

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.

SUMMER CASSEROLES

BREAKFAST CASSEROLE

Ingredients:

1 5 oz. package croutons,
any flavor
2 cup sharp Cheddar cheese,
shredded
1 lb. sausage, fried and
drained
9 eggs
1 can evaporated milk
1 tbsp. mustard

Method

Spray 9x13 pan with vegetable oil. Arrange croutons on bottom. Sprinkle cheese over croutons and put sausage over cheese. Combine eggs, milk and mustard. Beat to blend and pour into pan. Bake covered at 350 degrees for 45 minutes.

Janet Ochsner
Box Elder, S.D.

CHICKEN CASSEROLE

Ingredients:

1 package Chicken Stove Top
Stuffing mix
3 cups cooked cut up
chicken
1 can cream of mushroom
soup
2/3 cup milk
1 can cream of chicken soup
2 eggs, beaten
2 cups chicken broth

Method

Grease a 9x13 pan and put 1/2 of the stuffing mix in the pan. Cover with chicken. Combine soups and milk and spoon over chicken. Spread other 1/2 of stuffing over the top. Pour 2 cups of chicken broth over all and spread with beaten eggs. Bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour.

Gail Lee
Brookings, S.D.

TACO CASSEROLE

Ingredients:

1 1/2 lbs. ground beef
1 package taco seasoning
mix
1 can (16 oz.) pinto beans,
drained and rinsed
1 can (15 oz.) tomato sauce
1 can (11 oz.) whole kernel
corn, drained
1 cup shredded Cheddar
cheese
1 cup coarsely crushed
tortilla chips

Method

Preheat oven to 400°F. Brown meat in large skillet on medium-high heat. Drain fat. Stir in seasoning mix, beans, tomato sauce and corn. Bring to boil. Reduce heat to low; simmer 5 minutes. Spoon into 2-quart baking dish. Sprinkle with cheese and tortilla chips. Bake 5 to 10 minutes or until cheese is melted. Serve with assorted toppings, if desired.

McCormick

Please send your favorite recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2024. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

Why Solar is Not Free



Miranda Boutelle
Efficiency Services
Group

Q: I often hear claims you'll never pay an electric bill again if you go solar. Is that true?

A: The ability to generate your own renewable energy at home is an amazing thing. It's pretty cool that the technology is accessible to home and property owners across the country. The concept of free energy from the sun is appealing, but solar power isn't actually free. There are costs associated with capturing that energy for use in your home.

Installing a residential solar system doesn't equate to \$0 energy bills. Prices for the solar system and installation vary, but adding solar typically comes with a five-figure price tag. Solar systems only provide power when the sun is shining. You still rely on your electric utility for power at night and when the skies are cloudy. Most electric utility rate structures include a set monthly service fee. Unless you plan to disconnect from local electric service completely, you will still have a monthly electric bill.

Solar might be a good investment for you, or it might not. Several factors impact how well the investment pencils out, including where you live, home orientation and shading, electric bill rate structure and cost, available incentives and tax credits, your budget and credit rating.

If you are considering solar on your home, I suggest taking these three steps:

First, make your home as energy efficient as possible. It wouldn't make sense to put a new motor on a boat with holes in it, so why would you put a solar system on an energy-wasting home? Invest in reducing wasted energy before investing in creating new energy. The efficiency updates I recommend before installing solar include insulating and air sealing your home and upgrading to efficient appliances – especially the heating, ventilation and air conditioning system.

If your HVAC system is older than 10 years or malfunctioning, make sure replacing it is in the budget. Remember, energy efficiency upgrades might have a better return on investment than installing solar.

A more efficient home means a smaller – and lower-cost – solar energy system. Solar systems are typically designed to produce the amount of energy a home uses in a year, so if you complete energy efficiency improvements before installing a solar system, make sure the solar contractor accounts for those energy savings.

Second, check with your electric utility about the requirements to install solar and how it will impact your bill. If you decide to install solar panels, working with your utility will be essential, as you will need to take important steps, such as signing an interconnection agreement to ensure the system is properly connected to the electric grid.

Third, get at least three quotes to compare each contractor's recommended system design, equipment and cost. It's a significant investment, so you want to know your options.

There are several ways to pay for a solar system and installation. It can be bought outright with cash or financed by a loan. This allows you to own the system immediately or at the end of the loan term. State and federal tax incentives can help offset the costs.

There is also the option to install a solar system through a lease or power purchase agreement. In this structure, a third party – usually the solar installer – owns the system. They install the system on your property and then sell you the energy produced at a predetermined rate. They are responsible for maintaining the system and own it at the end of the agreement term.

Loans, leases and power purchase agreements can impact the sale of a home. Although a solar system may increase the value of your home, some buyers – or their lenders – are not interested in taking on leases or power purchase agreements.

Investing in solar is one way to support the transition to renewable energy. Before you make the leap, improve your home's energy efficiency and empower yourself by thoroughly weighing the costs and benefits.



Bayleigh Peterson, USD student and formally of Alcester High School won the Basin Electric Scholarship. →

Addison Oyen, VHS won a \$500 Clay-Union Scholarship from the Basin entries and also a random draw Clay-Union \$500 scholarship and plans to attend USD. →



↑ Bob Sahr, East River Electric CEO, gave an informative presentation for the East River operations.

← Maxwell and Julia Kinney played the National Anthem for the Annual Meeting.

BASIN ELECTRIC SCHOLARSHIPS, CLAY-UNION ELECTRIC SCHOLARSHIPS, FOUR RANDOM DRAW SCHOLARSHIPS, AND THE GRAND PRIZE WERE WINNER ANNOUNCED

William Anderson, VHS, winner of the \$500 Koble Family Random Draw Scholarship in honor of John and Gundy Koble will attend UNL. →



Dylan Springer, VHS, winner of the \$300 Koble Family Random Draw Scholarship in honor of John and Gundy Koble and plans to attend DSU. →



Tayden Wells, VHS was presented with the Gilbertson Family Random Draw Scholarship of \$500 in honor of Milo Gilbertson and will attend Mitchell Tech for Lineman Technician. ←



Grant Sorenson was the winner of the Grand Prize of \$200 and when asked what his plans were "I'll be turning on more lights." ←

Thank you!



Patsy Besson helps package fresh cuts of meat at the Wall Meat Processing plant.
Photo Credit: Shannon Marvel

Wall Meats Revives Local Meatcutting in South Dakota Through New Underwood Expansion

Shannon Marvel

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A local meat processing plant is expanding its footprint in Pennington County in a way that will put more locally produced protein on dinner tables and bolster the local meat processing workforce throughout South Dakota.

The man behind this plan is local business owner Ken Charfauros, who owns Wall Meat Processing, which has locations in Wall and Rapid City.

Charfauros is currently raising funds through a capital drive campaign to finance the construction of a 30,000 square foot meat processing facility in New Underwood. The new facility will help train the next generation of meat processors through a partnership with Western Dakota Tech in Rapid City.

“We are at \$2.8 million in our drive. We also have the \$3.3 million USDA Rural Development grant, which is a meat and poultry expansion plan grant. We are about \$200,000 short of our goal,” Charfauros said.

He added that the New Underwood processing plant will also use funding from the Meat and Poultry Intermediary Lending Program (MPILP), which according to the USDA’s website “provides grant funding to intermediary lenders who finance – or plan to finance – the start-up, expansion, or operation of slaughter, or other processing of meat and poultry. The objective of the MPILP is to strengthen the financing capacity for independent meat processors, and to create a more resilient, diverse, and secure U.S. food supply chain.”

Charfauros said he’s still meeting with potential investors and has a financial team focused on creating relationships with local ag producers.

“After we get our capital drive, the plan itself will be about \$21 million,” he added. “And then we start the project. The groundbreaking is going to happen in about a year and the facility will begin operations six months after that.”

Charfauros said he expects to purchase the property to site the new plant this spring.

Returning to a Passion

Wall Meats Processing opened for business 57 years ago, but

Charfauros took ownership over the facility in 2017. His passion for meat cutting began when he was a teenager while working for a local meat plant in Delaware.

“It was my high school job and I loved it. After I graduated high school, I felt that my country needed me, so I joined the Air Force and did 30 years. But I always missed that part of my life,” Charfauros recalled.

“A guy that taught me how to cut was like my second dad, and I always wanted to come back to it. My son had just graduated from South Dakota State University, and I had retired from the Air Force. That’s when we decided to buy a plant.”

His son manages the store in Rapid City while Ken’s three nephews help run the family’s businesses in Wall, which include Wall Meats and the Red Rock restaurant.

Supporting Local Producers

Building the new facility has been a challenging venture that’s been years in the making.

“We started building this plan about four years ago, then COVID hit and got in our way. Then, we were lucky enough to get those grant awards last year, and ever since we have been working diligently to get the format right,” Charfauros said.

“I have drawings. I have an equipment list all put together — everything is ready to go except for this capital drive that we are undergoing.”

Charfauros said he has been meeting with both potential and locked-in investors daily over the last year to produce the required financing.

“We have met with over 600 people with 99 percent of those people being producers, because this is all for them. This plant offers them premium pricing above the market rates,” Charfauros said.

While the cattle market is high now, Charfauros remains realistic that the market can change for the worse.

While he hopes the market remains high enough for producers to survive, his partnership with producers will serve as

added security. That means the partnership must be tightknit.

He knows he cannot do it alone.

Reviving a Dying Art

“Meat cutting is a dying art, and we teach meat processing at our store in Rapid City to bring that art back. We’re trying to fight for that industry as it is,” he said.

Three meat processing students are currently being taught at the Rapid City facility through a partnership with Western Dakota Tech, which recently began offering the two-year program.

Pam Stillman-Rokusek, director of communications and marketing at Western Dakota Tech, said three students are currently enrolled in the Meat Processing program. Of those three, two will graduate in May.

But the college is still working on more outreach.

“Enrollment has been a bit low in the program, so the plan is for a hiatus this fall. They’ll revamp the curriculum. Then, we will certainly do additional outreach. We have done advertising, gone to the schools. We have reached out to 4-H

groups and done some traveling, but we need to turn it up a notch to produce more students in the program. That is our goal,” Stillman-Rokusek said.

Despite the Meat Processing program being put on hiatus, the school will still ensure that the remaining student completes the program while actively working on developing the program and outreach methods.

“There’s such a high need for meat processors and we’re looking at different ways to fill that gap. It’s something we’re committed to doing,” she added.

The goal is to enroll at least five students in the following school years when the program restarts.

The learning center that will be built within the New Underwood facility will also teach producers, in addition to students, the art of meat cutting.

“We are trying to bring that industry back to what it should be—regionally processed protein,” Charfauros said.

“That means we must build the environment to spark that passion. In anything you do, you need to learn how to do it the right way.”



Wall Meat Processing plant, established in 1957. Photo Credit: Shannon Marvel

Best Practices for Distributed Energy Resources

Distributed energy resources are small-scale systems that typically generate or store energy – the connecting factor for these systems is the ability to interconnect to the electric grid.

Distributed energy resources, also known as DER, span a variety of technologies, like rooftop solar panels, battery storage systems, electric vehicles, smart thermostats and grid-connected HVAC systems.

These technologies provide a range of benefits, including cost savings and improved power reliability. But to maximize the benefits of DER, it's important to follow best practices for installation, operation and maintenance. Because DER refers to an array of technologies, this article will focus specifically on best practices for rooftop solar systems – an increasingly popular DER choice for many homes and businesses.

Conduct a Site Assessment

Before installing solar panels, it's important to conduct a site assessment to determine the project's feasibility. A site assessment should include an evaluation of the solar panels' potential, shading and orientation, as well as an analysis of the site's energy use patterns. This information can be used to determine the optimal size and placement of the solar array. Additionally, you should consider the age, condition and materials of your roof.



Work with a Qualified Installer

To ensure that any DER system (like solar panels) is installed correctly and safely, you should work with a qualified installer who has the knowledge and experience to install the system. A qualified installer can provide guidance on equipment options and system design. When choosing a solar provider, research the company's history, bankability and references. Solar systems typically have a 25-year lifespan, so you need a reliable energy partner throughout your investment. You can research installers via the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners' list at www.directories.nabcep.org.

Choose High-Quality Equipment

When selecting equipment for solar systems, choose high-quality products that are designed to last. Quality equipment such as panels, inverters and racking may be more expensive upfront but will provide enhanced performance, efficiency and reliability over the years.

Monitor Performance

To ensure solar systems are operating as expected, be sure to regularly monitor their performance. Keeping track of performance can help identify issues before they become major problems. Performance monitoring can be conducted using a variety of tools, including applications, energy management systems and smart meters.

Maintain Regularly

Regular maintenance is essential for ensuring the long-term performance and reliability of DER systems. If you manage a solar system yourself, maintenance tasks will include cleaning the solar panels, replacing inverters and inspecting equipment for signs of wear and tear. Regular maintenance can help prevent breakdowns and extend the life of your equipment.

Contact Your Electric Cooperative

The best practices noted above apply to a variety of DER systems. Before getting started, contact your local electric cooperative. They can provide information about system installation, operation and maintenance. Some co-ops may even offer special rates and incentives for solar panels and other DER systems.

With so many considerations for DER, it's important to find a partner you can rely on to make informed decisions. Your electric co-op is ready to help you throughout the process.

Backup Power: Is a Battery-Powered Option Right for My Home?

Scott Flood

We depend on reliable electricity more than ever before, which is why even the briefest service interruption can be incredibly frustrating. It's no wonder many homeowners are taking a closer look at the latest battery-powered systems as backups during an outage.

Battery technology has advanced significantly in recent years, with batteries able to hold more electricity even as they shrink in size and cost. The same innovations that boosted the performance of electric vehicles (EVs) are being engineered into today's battery-powered backup systems.

As their name implies, battery backup systems like Tesla's Powerwall are essentially high-capacity batteries that store a set amount of electricity, which you can then use to power your home in the event of an outage. Some are constantly charged by the power grid, while others rely on solar panels for recharging.

Traditional standby generators use small internal combustion engines fueled by natural gas, propane or diesel. They can be connected to your home's electrical panel and kick on automatically whenever the flow of electricity stops. Assuming you keep them refueled, most can operate for days at a time. However, some standby generators can be noisy, and nearly all produce smelly exhaust containing deadly carbon monoxide gas, so they can't be operated indoors. Large standby generators are typically installed outdoors on a concrete pad, which may

detract from your home's curb appeal.

Most home battery backups are smaller than comparable generators. Because they don't use combustion to generate electricity, there's no danger of carbon monoxide exposure. That makes them safer and more environmentally-friendly than generators. Most can be installed in a small space indoors. Battery backups are also significantly quieter.

When a power outage occurs, battery backups start instantaneously, unlike generators that may take a few moments to spool up and reach operating speed. Battery backups also don't need regular maintenance like oil changes or spark plug replacement, and there's no need to store fuel.

Of course, battery-powered generators do present some disadvantages. The amount of power they deliver is limited by the capacity of their batteries. When they're out of electricity, they may need hours of recharging before being used again, so they're not as well-suited for lengthy outages. Energy-hungry appliances such as air conditioners and water heaters may drain the batteries' capacity more quickly, so you may have to disconnect them during an outage. Fortunately, some battery backups are modular, allowing you to add capacity as needed. If you only need a few devices powered during an outage, consider a portable battery-powered system. These small, quiet backups can be used indoors to power smaller appliances, like your laptop, TV or microwave.

Generally, batteries require long

charging times, so if an initial outage is quickly followed by another, they may not be able to respond. There are fast-charging systems on the market, but they carry substantially higher price tags. In fact, the upfront cost of a battery backup is more than a standby generator – in some cases, twice as much for comparable performance.

Like the one in your mobile phone, batteries in these systems can degrade over time. In five or 10 years, they may need to be swapped out with new batteries, adding to the overall cost. Being able to recharge battery backups with solar panels appeals to many homeowners, but the performance will depend upon the amount and angle of sunlight falling upon your roof.

So, is a battery-powered backup system right for your home? The answer is different for every homeowner, but whether you're considering a battery system or a traditional standby generator, start by calculating the amount of power you need to keep your home's systems and conveniences operating efficiently. Once you know that, you can determine which models are up to the task and calculate how long the device you're considering can power your home. (If you have a family member whose health depends upon devices such as a CPAP machine or supplemental oxygen, be sure to factor that into your decision.)

Finally, whether you choose a battery backup or a traditional standby generator, make sure it's designed to protect your home and all your electronics from power surges and other issues that may damage your TVs, computers and other sensitive electronics. That way, you won't have to worry about remaining without them long after an outage has ended.



CYBERSECURITY ON THE GRID

Frank Turner

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Imagine sitting at your desk on a typical Monday morning. You have logged into your computer with coffee in hand, ready to tackle the day. But as you begin, your computer displays an ominous message: “Your files have been encrypted. Pay a ransom to regain access.” It’s not just your computer; your co-workers have received the same message. Overnight, the entire office has fallen victim

to a ransomware attack that has locked away critical data. Your office computers will remain unusable until a payment is made.

This scenario, among others, has become a primary concern for workplaces everywhere, including electric cooperatives. As a result, local co-ops are taking action in the cybersecurity space to prevent bad actors from disrupting the critical goal of delivering power that is safe, affordable and reliable to their members. Electric co-ops are focused

on enhancing cybersecurity resilience and readiness to defend against potential cyber threats.

Co-ops are routinely monitoring and managing cyber risks, working with federal and local law enforcement agencies and the North American Electric Reliability Corp. to protect critical infrastructure. By working as a network, co-ops are enhancing grid resilience, ensuring reliable electricity for their members.

According to an FBI Internet Crime Report, the U.S. reported more than \$12.5 billion in annual losses in 2023 due to cyberattacks like the one described. A significant number of these attacks target the elderly and vulnerable. When breaking down the losses by age group, individuals aged

20 to 29 accounted for \$360.7 million of the total losses, while those 60 and older incurred losses of \$3.4 billion in 2023 alone.

And it's not just about the money. These attacks also have the potential to undermine the stability of entire systems, including the electrical grid. This year, directors of the FBI, NSA, and CISA testified before Congress about Chinese Communist Party hacking groups that had gained access to the electric grid and other critical infrastructure to "wreak havoc and cause real-world harm to American citizens and communities."

"Many cyberattacks are conducted by criminals trying to steal money or collect a ransom," explains Chief Security and Compliance Officer Daniel Graham of Basin Electric Power Cooperative. "Nation-states

target electric utilities for different reasons. Some nation-states want to steal intellectual property. Others want to be able to disrupt our electric grid."

So how is it done? To execute their schemes, bad actors employ a long list of complex strategies and techniques, such as phishing, data breaches and malware to adversely impact their targets. Business email compromise, one of the most common techniques, occurs when an impostor poses as a legitimate business contact, seeking to steal sensitive information such as credit card numbers, bank account information or login credentials.

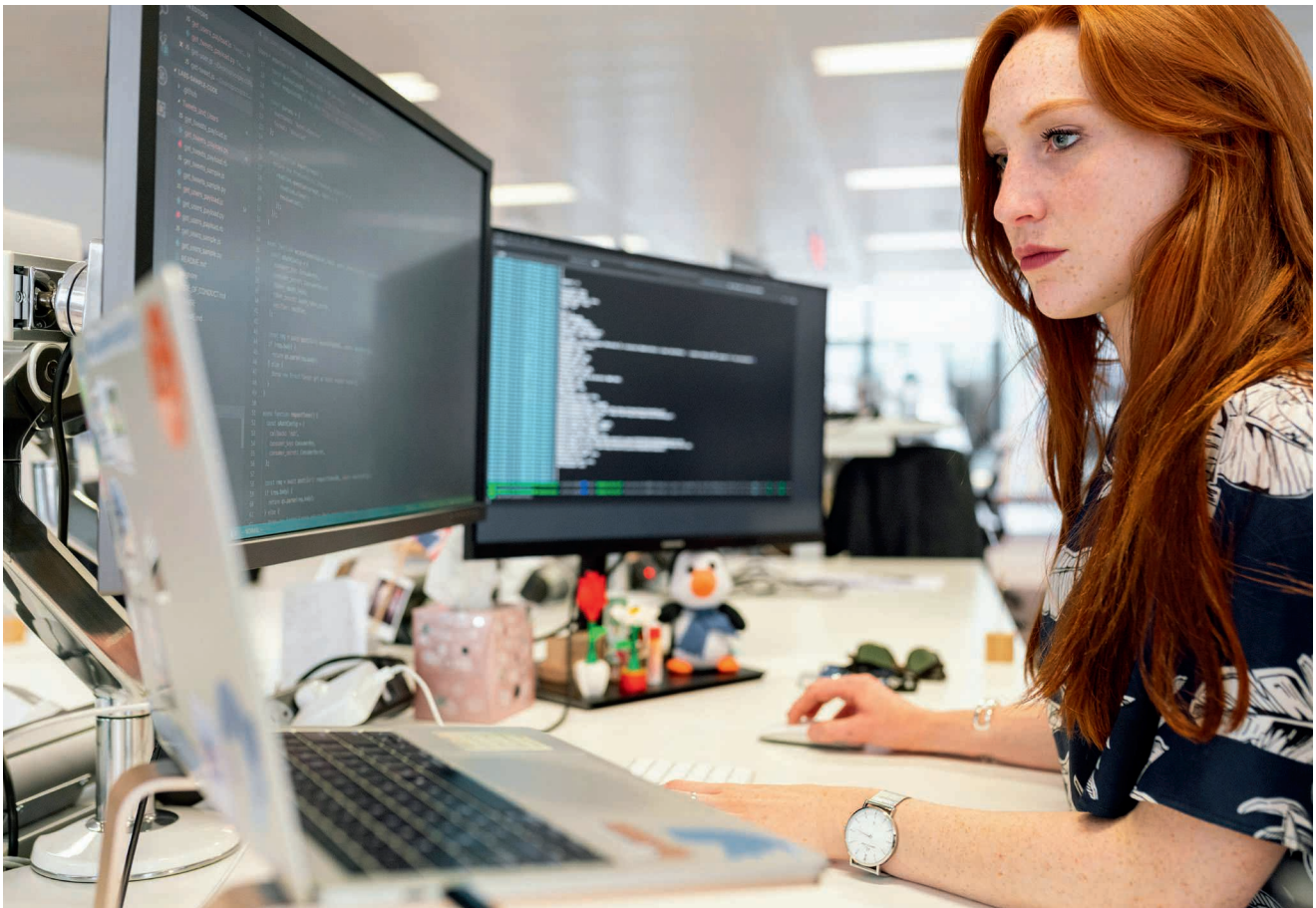
Luckily, co-ops are implementing a variety of tools, policies and training to help mitigate attacks and secure the grid. Programs like NRECA's Co-op Cyber Goals Program help co-ops build fundamental cybersecurity

measures, such as employee training, developing cyber incident response plans, and regular self-assessment. These strategies help co-ops reduce the risk of a successful cyberattack in the ongoing battle against cybercrime.

"Additionally, co-ops can conduct cybersecurity exercises to determine the effectiveness of current defenses and practice responses," Graham says.

Despite these efforts, the threat of a successful cyberattack persists, making vigilance an essential component of effective cybersecurity.

"If you see something suspicious, report it to your cooperative," explains Graham. "Electric co-ops are an essential part of our country's critical infrastructure. We can best protect our electric grid by working with each other."



BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

Clay-Union Electric Corporation Board Meeting Summary

FEBRUARY 23, 2024 • VERMILLION, SOUTH DAKOTA

The board meeting was called to order on February 23, 2024, at 8:30 a.m. by board President Tom Larsen. The meeting was held in the conference room at the Clay-Union Electric Headquarters.

In attendance were Tom Larsen, Jim Ryken, Chris Kinney, and Gary Glover. Attending staff members included Chris Larson, Beth Bottolfson, and Jackie Williams. Mike Slattery was absent.

Agenda (ACTION ITEM) – A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the agenda with minor adjustments and additions to the manager's report.

Visitors to Be Heard – None

Approval of Minutes from the January Board Meeting (ACTION ITEM) – A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the 1/25/24 board minutes.

Check List & Electronic Funds Transfer – The board reviewed the EFT/ACH payments and the monthly check list as presented.

New Members and Refunds (ACTION ITEM) – A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve new members, refunds and credit deposits as presented.

Early Retirement of Capital Credits (ACTION ITEM) – A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the Early Retirement of Capital Credits as presented.

Contracts (ACTION ITEM) – A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the following contracts as presented.

- Boring Contract
- Electric Service Contract

Policy Review – None

Work Order and Special Equipment Summary – None

Management Reports:

A. Manager's Report - Manager Larson provided reports on the monthly activities:

February Board Meeting - The date of March 22, 2024 was set as the next regular board meeting to begin at 8:30 a.m.

East River REED/MAC - The REED/MAC meeting was held on Jan 30th at East River in Madison.

Basin Member Managers - The Basin Member Managers met February 21st and 22nd in Sioux Falls, SD.

New Building – Manager Larson reported on the various activities related to the new building and the preparation to sell the Cherry St. building.

2024 Annual Meeting Date - The dates of April 2nd with a

backup of April 9th are the dates for the Annual Meeting and Open House.

City of Vermillion Annexation – Manager Larson reported that the City of Vermillion has called to discuss the cutover of the service at the Heikes location.

NRECA Annual Meeting – The NRECA Annual meeting is March 3rd to the 6th in San Antonio. Chris Kinney has been named the delegate.

Energize Forum - The East River Energize forum was held at the Sioux Falls Convention Center, in Sioux Falls, South Dakota on Thursday, February 1, and Friday, February 2.

SE Managers – Manager Larson hosted the SE Managers on February 16th and gave them a tour of the new headquarters.

Communications & Marketing Committee - The committee met on February 14th via an online video app.

Legislative Update – Manager Larson reported on the legislative process and the SDREA weekly updates.

VCDC - On March 26th, the VCDC will be using the Cherry St. location for a drive thru job fair.

RUS – Minor Construction – Manager Larson participated in a video call with the RUS Administrator and his staff on Minor Construction project funding on January 31st.

SDREA Managers – The SDREA Managers met in Pierre on February 6th – 7th at Ramkota.

Economic Development – Manager Larson led the conversation on economic development activities in the CUE service territory.

NRECA Legislative Conference - The Annual Conference will be held April 21st to the 24th in Washington, DC.

B. Administrative Report – Finance and Administration Manager Bottolfson reviewed the following reports with the board:

- Billing Activity
- January 2024 Financials
- City of Vermillion Municipal Tax for 2023
- Property Taxes
- Annual kWh Tax for 2023

All reports were posted to the website earlier for board review.

C. Operations Report – Manager Larson discussed the operations report that was provided earlier:

- Monthly department work summary
- Wiring Crew
- New Services
- Service Upgrades
- Outage Report for January

All reports were posted to the website earlier for board review.

Financial Report – Finance and Administration Manager Bottolfson reviewed the following reports with the board:

- Balance Sheet
- Interest Income

- kWh Sales Report
- Large Power
- Line Loss
- Operating Statement
- Power Bill
- Summary of Purchased Power

All financials were posted to the website earlier for board review.

Legal Report – None

Strategic Planning – None

Safety Meeting Minutes – The January and February Safety Meeting reports were posted to the website for the board to review and were discussed during the meeting.

Cyber Security – The January Cyber Security report from East River IT was posted to the website for the board to review and was discussed during the meeting.

Video and/or Meeting Reports –

- East River Report
- East River Financials
- Basin Reports

Executive Session – The board went into Executive Session at 2:00 p.m., Executive Session was adjourned at 3:10 p.m. There was no action taken.

Calendar – The board reviewed the March 2024 calendar.

Adjournment – There being no further business, a motion was made, seconded, and carried, to adjourn the meeting at 3:11 p.m.

Thomas Larsen, President

James Ryken, Secretary

Outage Reports

Date	Time	Township	Members	Cause
2/1	3:15 a.m.	Gayville	6	Unknown
2/3	7:00 p.m.	Volin	161	Equipment Failure
2/8	9:35 a.m.	Vermillion	1	Unknown
2/10	10:15 a.m.	Bethal	8	Animal

YEAR-TO-DATE FINANCIALS

	Feb. 2024	Year To Date
Number of Consumers	3,537	3,538 Avg.
Total Revenue	\$731,700	\$1,602,783
Total Cost of Service	\$860,280	\$1,817,902
Operating Margins	\$(128,580)	\$(215,119)
Other Margins	\$8,497	\$15,100
Total Net Margins	\$(120,083)	\$(200,019)
kWh Purchased	7,672,217	17,360,420
Cost of Power	\$453,082	\$1,014,229
kWh Sales	7,755,273	16,535,057
Residential Average Usage	1,412	1,687
Residential Average Monthly Bill	\$162	\$183

Office Hours and Due Dates

Our office hours are Monday – Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Please remember your PAYMENT DUE DATE is the 20TH OF EACH MONTH. Your payment must ARRIVE in our office on the 20th to avoid any penalties. Please allow mailing time as we go by the received date, NOT the postmark. If the 20th falls on a weekend or holiday, payment is due the following business day. If payment is still not received within 10 days by 8 a.m., a \$25 collection fee will be applied and a final disconnect notice will be mailed. If disconnection for nonpayment occurs, all past and current energy charges, a reconnect fee and sufficient credit deposit will be required before the meter can be reinstalled.

FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE, WE ALSO ACCEPT THESE PAYMENT OPTIONS.



Bank Draft – Have your payment automatically deducted from your checking or savings account. No fees apply for this service.

Recurring Debit/Credit Card

– You may call in your credit/debit card payment and ask for recurring, it will then bill to that card every month on the 20th (or next business day) of each month until you call to cancel. No fees apply for this service.

Pay by Phone – You may call in your credit/debit card payment each month. No fees apply for this service.

By Mail – Send check or money order with your payment slip. Please be sure to mail early so we receive it by the 20th, we do not go by postage date.

In Office – We accept cash, check and money order or we can take your credit/debit card in our office. No fees apply for this service.

On Line Billing – Pay your bill on line at www.clayunionelectric.coop No fees apply for this service.

Collection Fee	\$25
Standard Reconnect Fee	\$50
Reconnect Fee for Non-Payment.....	\$100
After Hours Reconnect Fee.....	\$150
Insufficient Funds Check Fee	\$30

Delinquent Accounts (gross rate)
10 percent on the first \$200 plus 2 percent on the balance.



MAY 11, 2024
Cinco de Mayo Fiesta
 Falls Park
 Sioux Falls, SD

To have your event listed on this page, send complete information, including date, event, place and contact to your local electric cooperative. Include your name, address and daytime telephone number. Information must be submitted at least eight weeks prior to your event. Please call ahead to confirm date, time and location of event.

MAY 4
Groton City Wide Rummage Sale
 Groton, SD

MAY 12
A Mother's Day Music Extravaganza
 2 p.m.
 Gayville Hall
 Gayville, SD
 605-267-2859

MAY 18-28
Free Amish Carriage & Buggy Rides
 10 a.m.-4 p.m. every Saturday
 Buggy & Ag Museums
 Stockholm, SD

MAY 18
Prairie Partners Master Gardeners Plant Sale
 9 a.m.
 Brown County Fairgrounds
 Aberdeen, SD

MAY 27
Memorial Day Services
 12 p.m.
 Groton Union Cemetery with lunch at Legion Post #391
 Groton, SD

JUNE 1
Blessed Sacrament Pastorate-Wide Celebration
 3:30 p.m.
 Aberdeen Civic Center
 Aberdeen, SD

JUNE 1
The Hay Country Jamboree
 7 p.m.
 Gayville Hall
 Gayville, SD
 605-267-2859

JUNE 8
Grace's Gas-Guzzlers Car Show, Carnival & Silent Auction
 Grace Lutheran Church
 Watertown, SD

JUNE 9
Brookings Car Show
 11:30 a.m.-3 p.m.
 Pioneer Park
 Brookings, SD

JUNE 12-13
Rangeland & Soil Days Contest
 Codington County Extension Building
 Watertown, SD

JUNE 20
Prairie Partners Master Gardeners Garden Walk
 Aberdeen, SD

JUNE 22-23
"Our Place: 15 Years of Onaka" Photography Exhibit
 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Sat.
 12-4p.m. Sunday
 Onaka Community Hall
 Onaka, SD

JUNE 26-29
Crystal Springs Rodeo
 Clear Lake, SD
 605-874-2996

JULY 13
9th Annual Auto Value Car Show
 11 a.m.-4 p.m.
 Hav-A-Rest Campground
 Redfield, SD

JULY 14
Lion's Club Summer Fest/ Car Show
 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
 Groton City Park
 Groton, SD

JULY 20
21st Annual "On the Road to Wishes" Poker Run for Make a Wish
 10:30 a.m.
 Bieglers Motors/CNS Motor Sports
 Aberdeen, SD

JULY 25
Groton Summer Downtown Sip & Shop
 5-8 p.m.
 Groton, SD

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