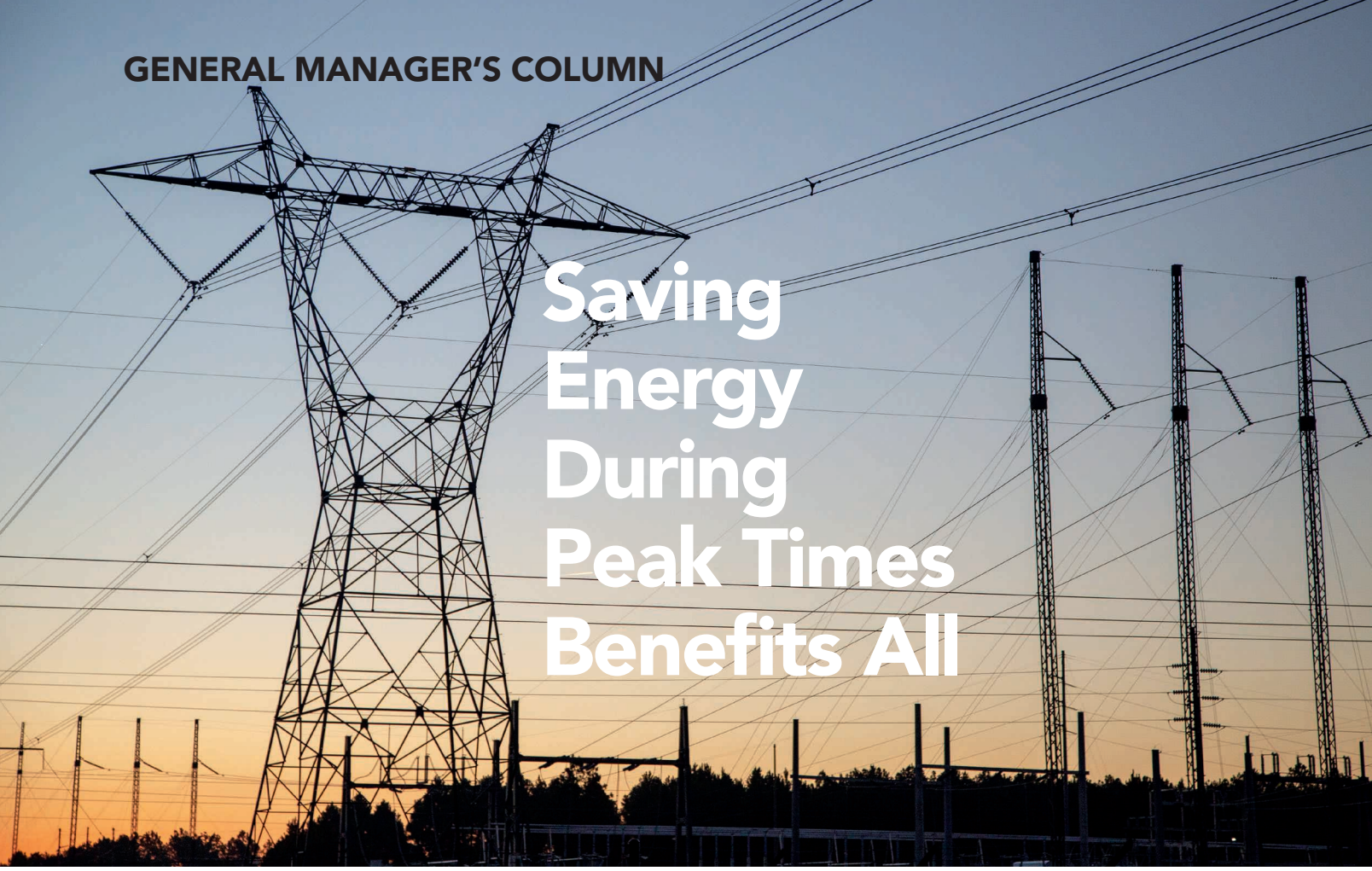
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

CLAY-UNION ELECTRIC SPARKS
SEPTEMBER 2025 VOL. 65 NO. 8

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

Antler Shed Hunting

Photo submitted by Kelly O'Bryan



Saving Energy During Peak Times Benefits All

Chris Larson, General Manager

Conserving electricity during peak energy use times not only lowers your monthly bill—it can benefit our entire community.

"Peak times" refer to periods of the day when the demand for electricity is highest. Think early mornings when people are getting ready for work or school and evenings when families return home, cook dinner and unwind with electronics. When everyone uses energy at once, it adds pressure on the electric grid.

Clay-UnionElectric works around the clock to ensure that electricity flows to your home whenever you need it. Behind the scenes, an enormous and intricate system is at work—one of the most complex machines in the world: the U.S. power grid. The grid is made up of three major interconnections that span the country, each managing supply and demand through regional authorities to keep the lights on and our economy running smoothly.

Electricity comes from a diverse mix of sources—hydropower, natural gas, coal, solar, wind and more. Some power plants can respond quickly to spikes in demand, while others are less flexible. Once energy is generated, it travels through high-voltage transmission lines to local utilities, like Clay-Union, which then delivers it to your home or business through distribution power lines.

When electricity demand surges during peak times, it's more expensive to generate or purchase power. If supply can't keep up, the risk of outages increases. That's why using less energy during peak hours is more important than ever. It not only eases strain on the grid but also helps you save money.

So how can you "beat the peak"? Start by adjusting your thermostat a few degrees during peak hours. Smart thermostats can automate this for you. Delay using energy-hungry appliances like ovens, clothes washers and dishwashers until later in the evening. Charging your electric vehicle overnight instead of right after you get home can also help.

Small actions taken by many households can lead to big results. When we all work together to reduce energy use during peak times, we protect our power grid, help control costs and ensure reliable electricity for our communities.

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

Chris Larson
General Manager
clarson@clayunionelectric.coop

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

CLAY-UNION ELECTRIC SPARKS

(USPS 116-800)

Office Hours
Monday through Friday
7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
31321 SD Hwy. 19, Vermillion, S.D.

POWER FAILURE – 24-hour service
In case of Power Failure Call:
1-800-696-2832 or 624-2673

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Clay-Union Electric
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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Clay-Union Electric, Basin Electric and East River Electric pay kWh taxes to our local schools each year. These taxes are in addition to the property and payroll taxes paid by the cooperative and are figured by the number of Clay-Union Electric members in that school district. Despite being a non-profit organization, your cooperative has many tax obligations.

School	Amount
Alcester	$741.58
Beresford	$27,866.83
Centerville	$6,959.48
Elk Point	$995.88
Gayville/Volin	$35,409.17
Irene/Wakonda	$39,459.55
Vermillion	$120,471.30
Viborg	$373.14
Yankton	$19,010.04
Total	**$251,286.96**

YEAR-TO-DATE FINANCIALS

	June 2025	Year To Date
Number of consumers BILLED	3,924	3,922
Electric & Other Revenue	$897,234	$4,950,832
Cost of Service	$836,820	$5,220,882
Operating Margins	$60,414	$(270,050)
Other Margins	$6,578	$69,730
Net Margins	$66,992	$(200,320)
KWH Purchased	5,464,589	42,876,405
Cost of Power	$453,345	$2,868,869
KWH Sales	5,209,834	41,063,424
Average kWhs used (residential)	1,171	1,335
Average Amount of Bill (residential)	$166	$179

Emergency Preparedness: Are You Ready for a Disaster?

Source: National Safety Council

National Preparedness Month, sponsored by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and held annually in September, is a good reminder that natural and man-made disasters can strike at any time. It's important to have a planned response when you're at work, on vacation or on the road.

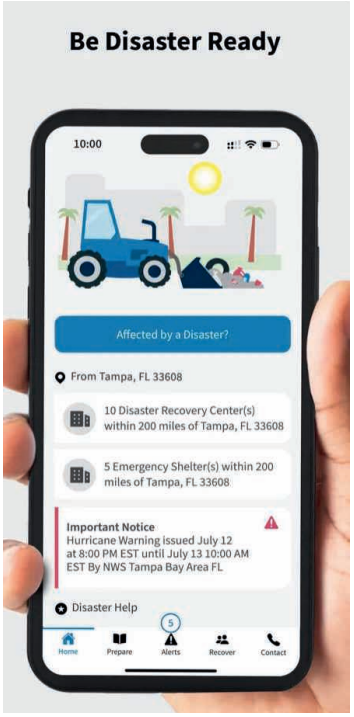
In 2022, 69,473 weather-related events resulted in 813 deaths and 1,718 injuries. Winter weather, heat, floods and hurricanes resulted in the most deaths that year, according to Injury Facts.

The National Safety Council offers safety tips specific on preparing for earthquakes, floods, hurricanes and tornadoes, and how to minimize fire risks.

Federal agencies, like Ready.gov and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration also are valuable resources for emergency preparedness. When you face a natural or man-made emergency, try to stay informed through radio, TV or the Internet. In some cases, however, cable, electric and cell phone service will be disabled, making communication nearly impossible. The National Safety Council recommends the following general precautions that apply to many disaster situations:

- Make sure at least one family member knows first aid and CPR.
- Download the FEMA app for resources, weather alerts and safety tips.
- Have a family communication plan in place; all members of the family should review and practice the plan.
- Have all family members' and other important phone numbers written down or memorized.
- Have an emergency kit in your car and at least three days of food and water at home.
- Be sure to store all important documents – birth certificates, insurance policies, etc. – in a fire-proof safe or safety deposit box.
- Know how to shut off utilities.

The official FEMA mobile app offers critical resources and real-time alerts to help you prepare for emergencies, stay safe during disasters, and navigate recovery afterward. With features like customizable emergency checklists, shelter locations, disaster recovery centers, and direct access to emergency alerts, the app is a comprehensive tool for personal and family safety planning.



"Don't drive tractors into power lines."

Darcy Welsh, Age 9

Darcy cautions readers while driving tractors near power lines. Great picture, Darcy! Darcy's parents are Ryan and Rachel Welsh from Oral, 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.

Fruit SPECIALS

FROZEN FRUIT FIESTA

Ingredients:

1 6-oz. frozen orange juice concentrate
2 10-oz. frozen strawberries
2 cans pineapple with juice (1 tidbits, 1 crushed)
3-4 bananas, sliced
1/4 cup lemon juice
1 cup sugar
1 1/2 cup cold water

Method

Mix all together in a large bowl.

Freeze in individual cups. Set out at room temperature for 1-2 hours before serving.

Optional: pour sour or 7-Up on top before serving.

Ginny Jensen
Sioux Valley Energy

PEACH RHUBARB CRISP

Filling:

3/4 cup sugar
3 tbsps. flour
1/2 tsp. nutmeg
1/8 tsp. salt
3 cups rhubarb (sliced, fresh or frozen)
2 1/2 cups chopped fresh or frozen unsweetened peaches

Topping:

1/2 cup flour
1/2 cup oatmeal
1/2 cup brown sugar
3/4 tsp. cinnamon
1/8 tsp. salt
5 tbsps. butter (cold)

Method

Combine the filling ingredients and fruit. Transfer to a greased 11"x7" baking dish. In a small bowl, combine the topping ingredients; cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Sprinkle over fruit. Bake at 375°F for 30 to 35 minutes until bubbly and browned.

*Recipe can be cut in half and bake in 8" x 8" pan.

Sally Florey
Charles Mix Electric

CHERRY ICE CREAM DESSERT

Ingredients:

1 1/2 cup Rice Krispies, crushed
1/4 cup brown sugar
1/4 cup melted butter
1 cup grated coconut
1/4 cup chopped nuts
1-quart vanilla ice cream
1 cup cherry pie mix

Method

1. Melt butter in frying pan. Add coconut and toast, stirring constantly as it burns easily. Cool
2. Add nuts, brown sugar and crushed rice Krispies. Mix together.
3. Press 2/3 of crumb mixture into a buttered 9x9 inch pan.
4. Soften ice cream and spread over crumb mixture then top remaining crumbs.
5. Freeze well. Cut in squares and top with cherry pie mix.
6. Can be served with any other toppings. Serves 6-8.

Rowena A. Wipf
Northern Electric

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 2025. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

Kobe Culver Joins Clay-Union Electric as Newest Lineman

Kobe Culver, a Vermillion local, joined Clay-Union as a Lineman on Monday, August 4th.

Kobe graduated in 2021 from Mitchell Tech and has been studying to receive his Journeyman Certificate the past 3 years.

In his spare time Kobe likes to hunt, fish and run his dogs, Taz and Diesel.

Welcome to the co-op Kobe!

ENERGY EFFICIENCY
TIP OF THE MONTH

Take advantage of "shoulder months," which refer to the transitional periods between peak heating and cooling seasons. During the fall, these milder weeks typically occur between September and November. Shoulder months offer a great opportunity to reduce home energy consumption as the need for extensive heating or cooling is reduced. Look for simple ways to boost indoor comfort without running your heating and cooling system. Use ceiling fans and open windows on breezy days to ventilate your home. On cooler days, add a layer of clothing and avoid running the heat.

Photo by Mary Howell

SOUTH DAKOTA SUNFLOWERS

Wild Dutchman Seeds a Nationwide Snack

Jacob Boyko
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If you're driving across central South Dakota in the summertime and you pass by a field of tall, bright sunflowers swaying in the breeze, there's a good chance you're a witness to the first step in those seeds' journey to being roasted, seasoned and packed into a bag of Wild Dutchman sunflower seeds.

One sunflower seed grower is Dakota Energy member Greg Bich, who's involved in just about every step from the farm-to-bag process for the iconic South Dakota brand.

Greg is a part owner of Southern Sun, the Huron-based company that processes, roasts and markets Wild Dutchman sunflower seeds for a nationwide audience of sweet-and-salty snackers.

Years ago, as a favor to his friend, local farmer and sunflower processor Danny Dale, Greg hauled loads of sunflower seeds up to Mound City for an up-and-coming operation known as "Wild Dutchman."

During these visits, Greg got to know the company's founders: father and son duo Wayne and Toby Vanderlaan.

"If you ever talk to the older farmers in this area, a lot of them have nicknames, and that's kind of what they went by," Greg explained. "Wayne Vanderlaan's neighbor was called 'The Crazy Norwegian', while the neighbor called him 'The Wild Dutchman.'"

What started as a part-time snack-making hobby for the Wild Dutchman and Toby had boomed into substantial business – one that was quickly outgrowing their batch-by-batch roasting set-up.

"They had all of these distributors calling them, and they couldn't really get production done, and he just really wanted some help," Greg explained. "I came back, and I talked to my sunflower seed processing plant partner, Danny Dale, and I told him I'd like to invest in this company, and we felt a need for an additional roasting plant and built it."

The rest is history; Greg and Danny took over some of the roasting and helped out Toby and his daughter, Shelby, with new packaging designs, highlighting the Vanderlanns' Dutch heritage with the iconic orange packaging.

With the additional processing capacity, the company continued to expand its growing footprint throughout the Midwest and beyond.

"It's hard for a little two-family-owned company to be competitive in the market, but since we have the seeds from start to finish, it kind of gives us an advantage over everyone else," Greg said.

Starting in December 2024, Greg and Danny took over full production of Wild Dutchman seeds in Huron.

"From that first load that we hauled up there to Mound City to the time we built the roasting plant was probably three years of building a friendship," Greg said. "Small town South Dakota is very different, and we honestly went into wild Dutchman with no contractual agreement besides a shake of a hand and a 'hey, we're in this together.'"

Today, as the Wild Dutchman brand continues its remarkable streak of success, Greg is elated seeing how a little small-town friendship, hard work, and faith can achieve so much.

"One of the greatest feelings I've had is being in a faraway place and seeing an empty bag of Wild Dutchman seeds blowing across the baseball field," Greg laughed. "It's those little things that are more satisfying than having a positive balance sheet or a huge profit."

Kelly O'Bryan of Winner shows off his impressive collection of deer and elk sheds alongside his shed-hunting Labrador, Skye.
Photos submitted by Kelly O'Bryan

SHED HUNTING

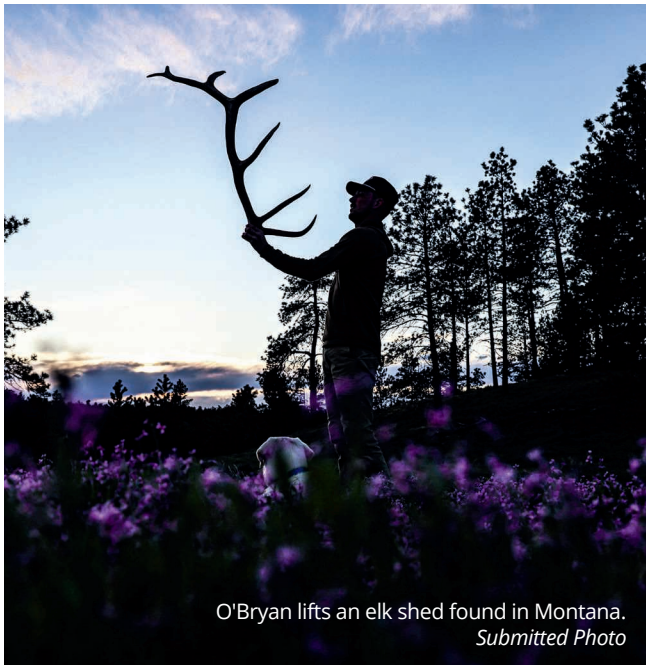
Prairie Miles and Antler Piles

Frank Turner
frank.turner@sdrea.coop

Rosebud Electric member Kelly O'Bryan of Winner regularly hikes mile after mile of open prairie in search of the perfect shed. But he isn't looking for a place to store his garden tools or lawnmower – instead, he's after antlers. Each spring, deer and elk naturally shed their antlers, leaving behind prized treasures for shed hunters like O'Bryan to find.

O'Bryan jumped into the shed hunting hobby in 2020, during the social distancing months of the pandemic, after a friend invited him on a shed hunt in Montana. When O'Bryan found his first deer shed, he uncovered more than just a pair of antlers – he discovered a new passion.

"It was during the time when you couldn't go out and do anything, so you just had to make your own fun and find stuff to do," he laughed. "I just fell in love with covering as many miles as I possibly could each season, trying to pinpoint sheds. It's just like an Easter egg hunt."



O'Bryan lifts an elk shed found in Montana.
Submitted Photo

Shortly after, O'Bryan fully committed to the hobby and added the ultimate scavenger to his team: a white lab named Skye. According to O'Bryan, it didn't take long for the dog to become an invaluable shed-hunting partner.

"I got Skye as a puppy, and I knew as soon as I got her, I

would train her to be a shed dog," he said. "I taught her to sit and stay while I hid sheds all around the house. When she found one, I would give her lots of positive reinforcement. She figured it out just like that."

Since then, O'Bryan and Skye have become seasoned shed hunters. In 2024 alone, the pair found 152 whitetail sheds, 25 mule deer sheds, nine elk sheds and 16 complete skulls – called "dead heads" – which resemble an English-style mount. Many of their best finds come from long days spent in remote country, often covering 10 to 15 miles in a single outing.

O'Bryan's collection of sheds has grown into an impressive heap of bone and tines that continues to grow each season. Like many in the shed hunting community, he has found creative ways to showcase his finds with his most festive being an antler-adorned
Christmas tree.

Others in the shed hunting community use their collection for art projects, crafting everything from knife handles to chandeliers. Some even trade or sell antlers to crafters, collectors, or pet product makers, giving shed hunting both recreational and economic appeal. Although O'Bryan does not sell his finds, he does cut up broken and damaged antlers for dog chews, gifting them to friends, family and his own favorite shed-hunting friend.

O'Bryan also has a few tips for beginners, drawn from miles of experience.

He says spring is the best time to search – antlers are freshly shed, and the grass is still short enough to give hunters a clear view. A good pair of binoculars is another must-have, helping spot antlers from a distance when the terrain allows for a higher vantage point.

And once you've found one shed, don't assume the hunt is over. Whitetail deer are often in groups and antlers are often dropped in pairs so it's worth taking the time to thoroughly scan the surroundings.

"You aren't going to be finding many sheds unless you are willing to put on the miles," he said. "The more you hike, the more you are likely to find sheds."

More photos of O'Bryan's collection and other hunting trophies can be found on his Instagram page: @db_huntin.

(Above) O'Bryan praises Skye for a lifetime of discovering antlers. (Below) O'Bryan and Skye show their white tail antler finds from a winter shed hunt. *Submitted Photo*

Basin Youth Excursion 2025

James Larsen, Wakonda, Clay-Union Electric Member, was a participating student.

Frank Turner
frank.turner@sdrea.coop

What does it take to keep the lights on? Sixteen students representing 10 electric cooperatives from across South Dakota embarked on a three-day trip to Bismarck, N.D., in July to go behind the scenes and learn about electricity generation. Sponsored by their local electric cooperatives, students toured the energy infrastructure that generates and transmits electricity into residential homes and commercial buildings, learning firsthand from industry experts.

The group kicked off the tour by visiting the Coteau Properties Co. Freedom Mine, where they watched large equipment in action and coal being mined in real time. The group followed the coal to Antelope Valley Station, a coal-fired power plant, where the coal is burned to create energy. In addition to generation, the group learned about coal byproducts, touring the one-of-a-kind Great Plains Synfuels Plant where natural gas, liquid carbon dioxide, fertilizers and fuels are produced from coal. Lastly, the group concluded their tour at Basin Electric Headquarters where most of the energy generation is facilitated and managed.

Owen Sperry, who lives within Northern Electric's service territory, said the trip provided a new perspective on how power is generated. Sperry, a sophomore at Groton Area High School, expressed interest in becoming a lineman someday.

"My uncle used to be a lineman, so I've always had a passion for it," Sperry said. "And getting to go through the shop of the Freedom Coal Mine was my favorite part of the trip. The scale of everything was just incredible."

The trip is organized by the statewide South Dakota Rural Electric Association in Pierre, S.D., and paid for by the students' electric cooperatives as part of the industry's ongoing support of the fifth cooperative principle: education, training, and information.

As cooperatives, we value our communities and our youth. If you are interested in learning more about youth activities and opportunities, reach out to your local cooperative to learn more.

WHAT SETS CO-OPS APART FROM OTHER POWER PROVIDERS

Scott Flood
NRECA

Travel anywhere in the United States, and you'll be able to find a place to plug in your phone charger. Whether you're on the East Coast, in the Pacific Northwest or in a town in the Sonoran Desert, you'll encounter the same wall socket used to access electricity. But while the power charging your phone may be identical, the organizations delivering it through the wires probably are not.

Throughout the U.S., electricity is delivered through three types of power providers: investor-owned utility companies (IOUs), public power systems and electric power cooperatives. Two-thirds of American homes and businesses receive their electricity through an IOU. Public power companies serve 15% and co-ops deliver power to 13% of the nation's consumers.

When business and homeowners talk about their electric service, most simply credit the "power company" that issues the monthly bill for the kilowatt-hours they've used. Although the three types share many characteristics, how they operate – and how that affects the users of the power they deliver – is strikingly different.

The biggest single difference is the profit motive. Public power systems and electric co-ops are not-for-profit organizations. That means their primary motive isn't to make a profit, but to deliver electricity to the homes and businesses they serve at the most reasonable cost. In other words, their first objective is service.

Compare that to investor-owned utilities. As the name implies, IOUs are owned by investors. Those investors hold shares of stock in the utility – each owning some percentage of the utility's assets. The goal of the IOU is to earn profits to raise the value of the stock and provide income to the shareholders in the form of dividends. No matter how much effort an IOU puts into being a good power provider for its customers, its ultimate goal is to make as much money as possible for its owners.

Public power systems are owned by municipalities and other forms of government, which means they're technically owned by – and accountable to – the taxpayers they serve. The people who run these government units want to keep the taxpayers happy, so their goal is to keep rates as low as possible. Similarly, co-ops are owned by the members they serve, and their primary motivation is to keep the cost of electricity as low as possible.

Decision-making is another differentiator. Investor-owned utilities are large corporations that may be headquartered hundreds of miles away from the folks who pay the bills. If one of those customers has a concern, they'll likely have a difficult time getting the utility's management to listen.

For public power, the same officials elected or hired to manage things like streets and parks oversee operations. A customer can reach out to their government representative if they're unhappy with the service they receive.

Once again, co-ops are different. Their operations are managed by a volunteer board of directors made up of members. Those directors represent their neighbors and have an obligation to consider other members' concerns and preferences. A co-op member who has questions about their rates or concerns about their service can turn to their local director for answers.

Infrastructure needs represent another key difference. Public power providers and IOUs tend to serve areas like cities, suburbs and larger towns that have higher population densities. Most co-op service areas are in more rural areas and smaller communities, where members are more widespread. As a result, co-ops average just 7.98 members for each mile of power lines, compared to 32.4 customers per mile for the other types of power providers. Co-ops earn an average of $2,390 in annual revenue from members, compared to $2,585 for the other types. That means co-ops have to manage significantly more infrastructure for the number of homes and businesses they serve, although they receive less money than the other types of power providers.

Because co-ops are inherently focused on the needs of their members, they center their planning and operations around the places they operate. Unlike IOUs that usually offer the same services everywhere they do business, co-ops can quickly adapt to changing community needs. They also play active roles in building the economic strength of the places they serve through community support, economic development initiatives, by employing more than 73,000 Americans, and by paying $1.5 billion in state and local taxes annually.

IOUs generally have little direct competition in the areas they serve, but they compete with other public companies and IOUs for attention from investors and Wall Street, making them less eager to share ideas and innovations. In comparison, electric cooperatives work closely with neighboring co-ops and their counterparts across the U.S. That's because they're committed to the seven cooperative principles, one of which calls for cooperation among co-ops. Whether that involves a joint investment in generation assets like solar farms, sharing resources to eliminate duplication, or being co-owners of a generation and transmission cooperative, these close relationships improve all co-ops' ability to serve their members.

Finally, while the three types of power providers are structured and do business in different ways, it's important to remember that all are highly regulated by multiple state and federal agencies. Unlike other industries in which companies can raise prices or build facilities whenever they want, power companies normally have to earn regulators' permission before they can take actions that will affect the services they provide and what they charge.

HARNESSING AI

Electric Cooperatives Explore What's Next for AI

Frank Turner
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Artificial intelligence (AI) is becoming an increasingly popular tool for many industries and even in our daily lives. It has the potential to bring many opportunities, and a few challenges, to electric cooperatives. But machine learning takes time, and cooperatives are still in the process of determining how AI can be effectively used.

Like any new technology, AI brings with it a mix of potential and uncertainty. It's a hot topic — sometimes exciting, sometimes a little intimidating. But for electric cooperatives, the focus isn't on the buzz. It's on the basics: What problems can it solve? What efficiencies can it create? And how do cooperatives make sure they are using it safely?

That measured, practical approach is what's guiding East River Electric Power Cooperative, a wholesale power supply cooperative which serves 25-member distribution systems in eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota, as it explores how AI might support the operations of its member cooperatives now and into the future.

Right now, most electric cooperatives in South Dakota have not yet integrated artificial intelligence into their operations or systems. But that doesn't mean the technology is being ignored. Across the state, many co-ops are watching AI developments closely, asking questions, and exploring how these tools might be used in the future. The focus remains on learning first — before implementing anything that could affect system reliability or member service.

At East River Electric Power Cooperative, that learning process is already well underway. According to Jeff May, chief information officer with East River Electric, the co-op has spent the past several years researching what AI has to offer. Their approach has been to identify practical, secure applications that could help improve efficiency, support employees in their day-to-day work, and ultimately benefit members.

"With the explosion of AI applications and models for both personal and professional uses, we've been exploring ways that East River Electric and our members can harness the power of AI while making sure that our data is secure from a cybersecurity perspective," said May.

Because AI technology has the potential to interact with both internal systems and external networks, cybersecurity is a top priority. As South Dakota rural electric cooperatives look to adopt tools powered by AI and other tech, they will ensure their systems are safe from potential cyber threats. Strong digital defenses are essential for the safe use of any new technology.

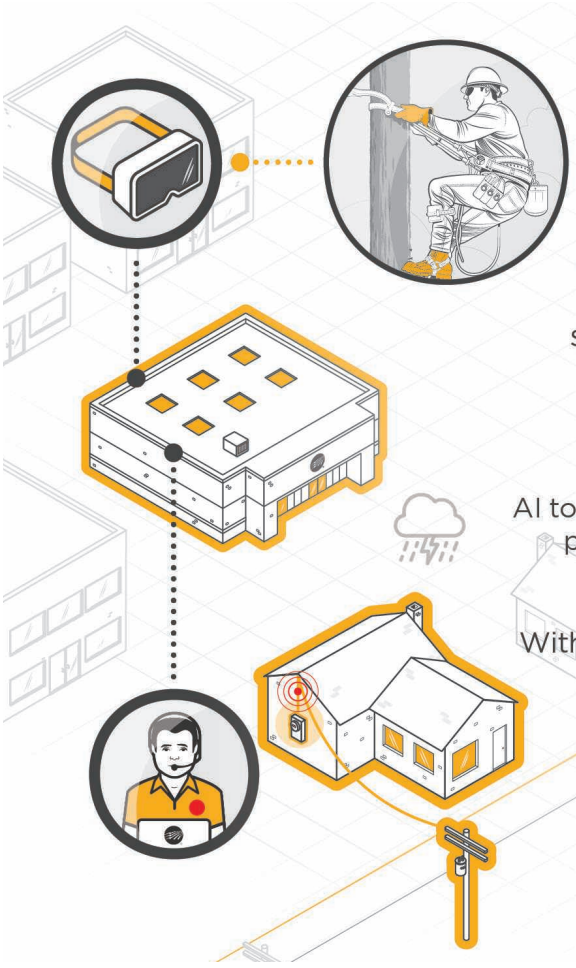
With safety in mind, May said East River Electric is actively partnering with Dakota State University graduate students to see how AI can be safely utilized by electric cooperatives. Together, East River Electric is working with the school to build an AI model that can predict electricity usage based on weather conditions and other factors to support the cooperative's load forecasting and rate forecasting capabilities. Although the technology is still in its infancy, May said he expects that someday AI will play a significant role in an electric cooperative's daily operations, including load forecasting, outage response and maintenance planning.

"It's difficult to predict how AI can be used for different types of jobs, but it will certainly become common throughout the organization as we learn all of the things AI can do," he said. "If it can be used to make our employees more productive and have a positive impact on the organization and our members, we will consider it. In some areas it could become commonplace within the next year, but throughout the cooperative it could take 3 to 5 years or more to be fully integrated in a safe and secure way."

Beyond grid operations, East River Electric is also trying out Microsoft CoPilot, an AI-powered assistant built into programs like Word, Excel, Outlook and Teams. A few employees are currently testing it to see how it might improve productivity and workflow, especially in communications and marketing departments.

Ultimately, if AI can streamline a process, predict an issue or improve service for electric cooperative members, May said it's worth considering. AI can be another tool in the cooperative tool belt that can make energy more reliable, services faster and operations more efficient.

"Over the next 5 to 10 years, AI's role in electric cooperatives is poised to grow significantly, driven by the need for efficiency, grid reliability and sustainability amid rising energy demands and technological advancements," said May. "Just the advancements that have been made in the last three years have been astounding to watch, and as more and more data centers and large language models are built in the coming years, it will become something that cooperatives likely use on a daily basis."



AI PUT INTO ACTION

Electric cooperatives are already using artificial intelligence (AI) and augmented reality (AR) for key tasks and activities. Looking ahead, co-ops see great potential for AI and AR as helpful tools for improving grid reliability and the services they provide to consumer-members.

SERVICES FOR MEMBERS

AI tools like chatbots can enhance member interactions and provide a tailored experience based on energy use data.

WEATHER FORECASTING

With the help of AI, weather forecasts will become more accurate, pinpointing areas to station utility crews.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Through augmented reality, or AR, lineworkers can experience interactive, lifelike trainings, rather than watching a video or webinar.

Clay-Union Electric Corporation

Board Meeting Summary

JUNE 24, 2025 • VERMILLION, SOUTH DAKOTA

The board meeting was called to order on June 24, 2025, 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, Sara Schulte, Chris Kinney, and Mike Slattery. The board seat for District #5 is vacant. Attending staff members included Chris Larson, Beth Bottolfson, and Alan Gauer.

Agenda (ACTION ITEM) – A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the agenda with an addition to consider authorization for attendance and delegate selection to the Basin Electric Annual Meeting.
Visitors to Be Heard – None
Approval of Minutes from the May Board Meeting (ACTION ITEM) – A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the May board minutes held on 5/23/25.
Approval of Minutes from the May Executive Session (ACTION ITEM) – A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the May executive session minutes held on 5/23/25.
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 the 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 two electric service contracts as presented.
Policy Review –
• Policy No. 303 – New Line and Service Extensions, management reviewed the requested additional language that was approved the previous month.
• Policy No. 312 – Idle Services, after reviewing, a motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the policy as presented.
• Policy No. 601 – Load Management, after reviewing, a motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the policy as presented.
• Policy No. 602 – Energy Efficiency Incentives, after reviewing, a motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the policy as presented.
• Policy No. 602 – Addendum A, after reviewing, a motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve Addendum A to Policy 602 as presented.
• Policy No. 603 – Sub-Metered Electric Load, after reviewing, a motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the policy as presented.
Work Order and Special Equipment Summary – None
Management Reports:
A. **Manager's Report** - Manager Larson provided reports on the monthly activities:
July Board Meeting – The date of July 18, 2025, was set as the next regular board meeting to begin at 8:30 a.m.
East River REED/MAC - The REED Board met on June 3rd for the monthly meeting. The MAC met immediately after the REED meeting.
SD Line Patrol - Virtual meetings have started in planning the SD Line Patrol poker run scheduled for September 2025. B-Y, Union and Clay-Union will host the event.
Distributed Generation – Manager Larson gave an update on current applications and the process for getting the NOVA portal up and running.
Joint Services Discussion – Manager Larson discussed how we are sharing our Electrician Contractor with Union to finish two projects that they had bid before losing their Contractor. A meeting was held on a new generation of AMR in which Manager Klein from Union County participated.
SE Managers - The SE Managers met at the Union County headquarters on May 30th.
SDREA Managers - The SDREA Managers met in Rapid City on June 10th and 11th.
Communications & Marketing Committee - The committee met via the Teams app on May 21st.
NRECA Region 6 meeting (Action) - A motion was made, seconded, and carried to appoint Manager Larson as the delegate for the NRECA Region 6 meeting on September 23-25 in Madison, Wisconsin.
Gayville-Volin School (Action) - A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve a donation towards an Outdoor Classroom project.
East River Annual Meeting (Action) - A motion was made, seconded, and carried to authorize attendance to the East River Annual Meeting on September 3rd and nominate Mike Slattery as the delegate and Tom Larsen as the alternate.
East River Board Member (Action) - A motion was made, seconded, and carried to select Chris Kinney as the nominee for our seat on the ER Board.
Federated Rural Electric Directors - Jaime Lewis, director, from Wall, is not eligible to run for another term and Tim O'Leary, manager, from Lyon-Lincoln is eligible to run for another term. We will select delegates at a future meeting.
Basin Electric Annual Meeting (Action) – A motion was made, seconded, and carried to authorize attendance with Mike Slattery as the delegate and Sara Schulte as the alternate.
Clay County Fair/Clay-Union Community/Member Appreciation – Our event will be on August 8th this year.
B. **Administrative Report** – Manager of Finance and Administration Bottolfson reviewed the following reports with the board:

- Billing Activity
- May 2025 Financials
- Milsoft Users Group Conference

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

Operations Report – Operations Manager Gauer reviewed the following reports with the board:

- Monthly department work summary
- New Service
- Retired Service
- May Outage Report
- Service Upgrades
- Wiring

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

Financial Report – Manager of Finance and Administration 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
- Wiring Income & Expense

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

Legal Report – None

Strategic Planning – None

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

Cyber Security – The May 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

Calendar – The board reviewed the July 2025 calendar.

Executive Session – The board went into Executive Session at 10:57 a.m., Executive Session was adjourned at 11:13 a.m. There was no action taken.

Adjournment – There being no further business, a motion was made, seconded, and carried, to adjourn the meeting at 11:14 a.m.

Thomas Larsen, President **Sara Schulte, Secretary**

Outage Reports

Date	Time	Township	Members	Cause
6/30	10:00 a.m.	Prairie Center	2	Lightning
7/7	9:30 a.m.	Volin	2	Animal
7/7	7:30 p.m.	Spirit Mound	4	Tree
7/8	10:40 a.m.	Spink	25	Contractor
7/8	7:30 p.m.	Fairview	28	Tree
7/8	5:50 p.m.	Mission Hill	76	Animal
7/9	9:30 a.m.	Norway	210	Contractor
7/23	3:30 p.m.	Mission Hill	26	Tree
7/27	12 Noon	Marindahl	1	Animal

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 by the first of the following month, a $30 collection fee will be applied and a 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:

Online Billing: www.clayunionelectric.coop Set up your user profile to manage your account, pay your bill and receive billing notification emails.

Bank Draft: Have your payment automatically deducted from your checking or savings account on the due date.

Recurring Credit/Debit Card: Have your payment automatically deducted from your card on the due date.

By Phone: Call in your credit/debit card payment.

In Office: We accept cash, check, money order or credit/debit card.

By Mail: Send check or money order with your payment slip.

Drop Box: Located on the right side of our main entrance at 31321 SD Hwy 19.

There are no additional fees to use any of the above payment methods.

Collection Fee $30
Trip Charge-Reconnect Fee During Business Hours..... $75
Dishonored Payment..... $40

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

REGISTER TO WIN!
Bring this coupon and mailing label to the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives booth at Dakotafest or the South Dakota State Fair to win a prize!

Your Phone Number:_____
Your E-mail Address:_____

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.

UNTIL OCT. 31
Wallace Dow, Prairie Architect Traveling Exhibit
Lake County Museum
Madison, SD
605-256-5308

SEPT. 2, OCT. 4
Davis Indoor/Outdoor Flea Market & Vendor Fair
9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Davis American Legion
Davis, SD
605-351-3074

SEPT. 5-7
James Valley Threshing Show & Tractor Club
Threshermen's Park
Andover, SD
www.jamesvalleythreshers.com

SEPT. 7
Farmer Tractor Parade
1 p.m.
Tractors, Cars & Food
Farmer, SD

SEPT. 7
Homesteader Day Celebration
Pioneer Demonstrations
1-4 p.m.
Beaver Creek Nature Area
Valley Springs, SD

SEPT. 13-14
Harvest & Kuchen Festival
Delmont, SD
www.twinriversoldiron.org

SEPT. 13-14
SD Senior Softball Tournament
Huron, SD
605-295-2039

SEPT. 14
Pleasant Valley Lutheran Church 150th Anniversary
Vermillion, SD
605-670-2772

SEPT. 19
Veterans Stand Down
SD Military Alliance
8:30-11:30 a.m.
1600 W. Russell St.
Sioux Falls, SD

SEPT. 19-20
Holiday Arts Fall Craft Show
Davison Cty Fairgrounds
Mitchell, SD
605-770-8136

SEPT. 19-20
SiouxperCon Annual Convention
Benefits Make-A-Wish, REACH Literacy, JY6 Foundation
Sioux Falls Convention Center
Sioux Falls, SD

SEPT. 26-28
Coal Springs Threshing Bee Featuring Horse-Drawn Equipment
Meadow, SD
605-788-2229

SEPT. 27
Your Race, Your Pace
9:30 a.m.
Wylie Park
Aberdeen, SD

SEPT. 27
Wheelin' To Wall Cycling Event
Wall, SD
www.wheelintowall.com

OCT. 3
DSU Architecture Walking Tour
3-4 p.m.
Lake County Museum
Madison, SD

OCT. 4
Pumpkin Train, Vendor Showcase
Prairie Village
Madison, SD

OCT. 10-11
Holman Acres Pumpkin Fest & Vendor Show
Sat. 12-6 p.m., Sun. 10 a.m.-6 p.m.
Philip, SD
605-441-1060

Note: We publish contact information as provided. If no phone number is given, none will be listed. Please call ahead to verify the event is still being held.