

CIRCUITS

NEWS FOR DAKOTA ELECTRIC MEMBERS



Solar component added to Wellspring Program

If you've ever wanted to power your home with solar energy, but don't want to install panels on your roof or dedicate space to an array in your yard, then a new renewable energy offering from Dakota Electric can help.

In coordination with our wholesale power provider, Great River Energy, the Wellspring Renewable Energy® program has for years given member-owners the option to purchase 100 kWh blocks of wind energy to offset your conventional energy use. Now we're adding solar to the mix.

The new solar component of Wellspring works the same as the original

wind-energy option, which is designed to offer member-owners who want to support renewable energy the opportunity to do so without having to build or install anything on their property.

The addition of solar to this program will take advantage of the new solar resources Great River Energy has installed at its headquarters in Maple Grove as well as the smaller demonstration arrays at 18 of its member cooperatives across greater Minnesota.

"Including solar with the Wellspring program was a natural progression as Great River Energy and our member cooperatives move to implement more

renewable sources into our portfolio," said Tara Collins, senior marketing specialist at Great River Energy. "Wellspring originated from member requests to make renewable energy options available, and the same can be said for why we developed the solar portion of the program."

Since the electricity generated by Great River Energy's solar and wind resources cannot be directly delivered to your home or business due to how it's fed into the region's electric system – or "the grid" – those who participate in Wellspring are actually purchasing renewable energy credits (RECs). For every 1,000 kilowatt-hours (kWh) of

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Upcoming events

New Year's Day - office closed	Jan. 1
Board Meeting	Jan. 28, 8:30 a.m.

January 2016

2016 construction plans

Dakota Electric's board of directors recently approved the 2016 construction budget and work plan. This year's plan is similar to years past with the majority of time and money being spent on mainline construction, new member construction and underground cable replacement.

Mainline construction

There are three significant projects taking place this year which require the cooperative to move or rebuild existing mainline cable. The projects include replacing aging cable along Judicial Road in Lakeville, moving mainline at the intersection of County Road 86 and Highway 52 near Cannon Falls for a new overpass, and a mainline extension along Lexington Avenue in Eagan to help balance existing electrical load and provide additional capacity for future load growth.

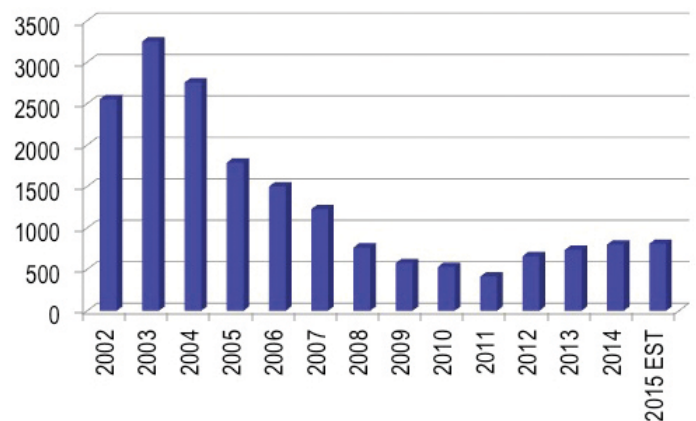
New member construction

While new member construction continues to be well below levels prior to the economic downturn, Dakota Electric sees a gradual increase that is expected to continue over the next few years. In 2016, the cooperative estimates construction of new lines and connection of service to over 900 new accounts, which is approximately 100 more than last year.

Underground cable replacement

The need to replace older, failing underground cable continues to be important in maintaining strong system reliability. Cable installed in the 1960s and 1970s has reached the end of its useful life. By replacing old underground cable, Dakota Electric has seen a steady reduction in the number of primary cable failures — from about 100 failures per year to 60 or fewer in the last two years. Mild summer weather and fewer storms have also contributed to lower primary cable failures.

New Service Connections



Applications being accepted for the 2016 Youth Tour

Dakota Electric will send five local high school juniors or seniors to Washington, D.C. as part of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) Youth Tour.

This year's trip will take place June 11-16 and is sure to be an experience of a lifetime.

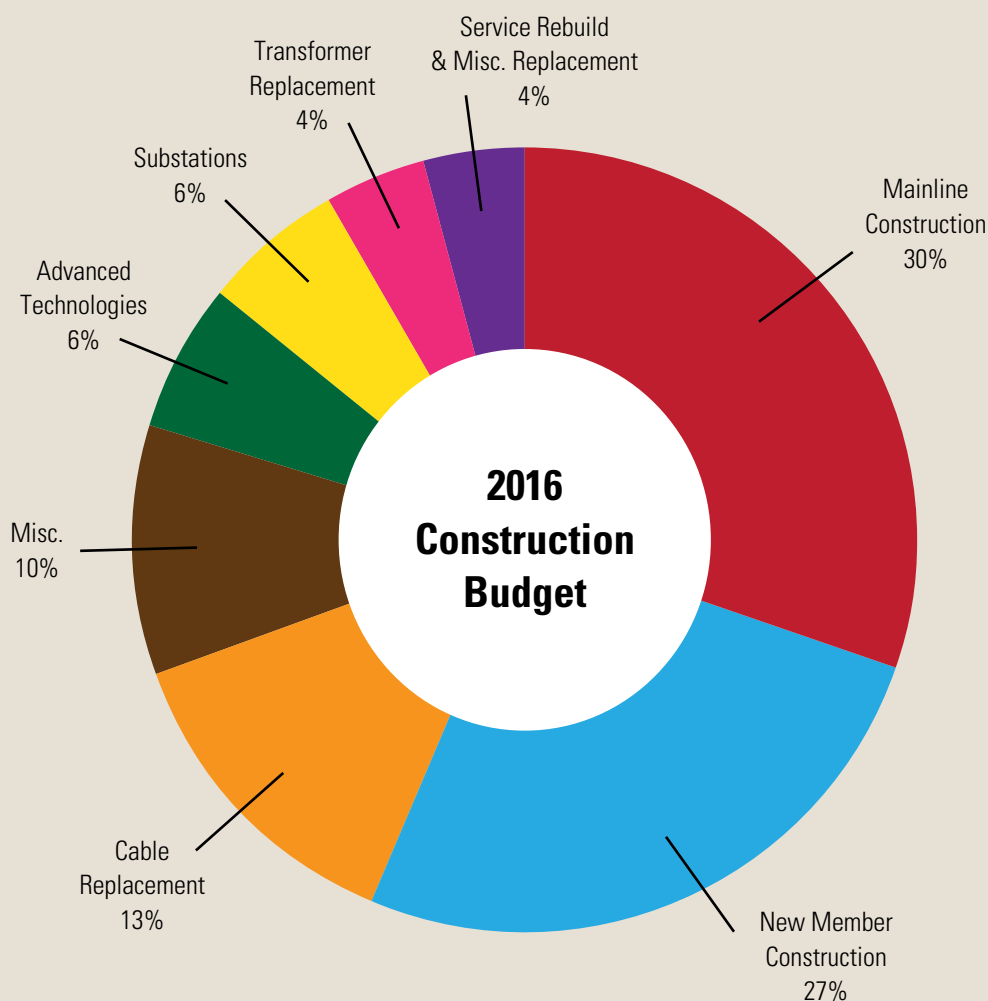
- Join hundreds of young people from across the country.
- Visit historic monuments and museums.
- Meet with your U.S. representatives and senators.

How to apply

Visit www.dakotaelectric.com and click on Safety and Education > Teachers and Kids > Washington, D.C. Youth Tour to download an informational brochure and print an application, or ask your high school guidance counselor for an application.

Application deadline is Feb. 24. Students must be available for an in-person interview in mid-March. Applicants must be members of Dakota Electric Association.





How much energy are you really using?

Now that the holidays are behind us, are you curious to know how much energy your new appliances and electronics may be using? There's an easy way to find out!

Dakota Electric provides 27 Kill A Watt™ meters through Dakota County's library system. Members may check out a meter to measure power consumption of appliances and electronics to determine the actual cost of power consumed.

Simply plug the meter into a regular 120-volt outlet and plug an appliance into the meter. The unit will project the cost of continued use of an appliance in time periods of hour, day, week, month and year.

For more information:

- Visit the Energy Efficiency section at www.dakotaelectric.com.
- Library locations and hours available at www.co.dakota.mn.us/library.



wellspring (cont.)

clean, renewable electricity generation, a REC is created. A REC embodies all of the environmental benefits of that energy and can be tracked separately from the underlying electricity.

"This process ensures that the renewable power you purchase replaces electricity that would have been generated by conventional fossil fuels," Collins said. "And you can also be assured that the renewable energy is being generated from our sources right here in Minnesota."

To enroll in Wellspring, contact Dakota Electric at 651-463-6212 or customerservice@dakotaelectric.com.

Wellspring Renewable Energy®

How does it work?

Wellspring is sold in 100 kWh blocks, and members can purchase a fixed number of blocks each month or enough to power their monthly electricity use. You have two options:

OPTION 1: Choose a fixed number of 100 kWh blocks to purchase each month. You can purchase just wind energy, just solar energy, or a combination of both. You cannot purchase more than your minimum monthly use over the past 12 months.

OPTION 2: Let the number of blocks you purchase each month fluctuate based on the amount of energy you use. You must choose either wind energy or solar energy with this variable option.

Each 100 kWh block of wind energy costs an extra \$0.40* per month.

Each 100 kWh block of solar energy costs an extra \$2* per month.

*Price and program subject to change without notice.

2016 Energy Efficiency Rebates

Members can view complete rebate details and print a rebate application by visiting either the Residential or Business tab at www.dakotaelectric.com, then choosing Programs & Rebates. Funds are limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis and are subject to change without notice. For more information, call the Energy Experts® at 651-463-6243. Watch for your residential rebate booklet or commercial program guide arriving in the mail soon!



Heating & Cooling

Heat Pump Systems	Tune-up	\$25
	Ductless air-source heat pump	\$300
	Air-source heat pump SEER 13-16+	Up to \$630
	Ground-source heat pump	\$400 / ton
Central Air Conditioner	Tune-up	\$25
	Central air conditioner SEER 13-16+	Up to \$330
Cycled Air Conditioning®	Monthly bill credit for participating heat pump systems and central air conditioners	\$13 ea. June, July and August
Electric Thermal Storage Heating System	Installed on Energy Wise® storage program	\$50 / kw
ECM Furnace Motor	Purchase new furnace with ECM motor or add it to existing furnace	\$100

Appliances

Dehumidifier	Must be ENERGY STAR® rated	\$25
Refrigerator	Must be ENERGY STAR rated. Requires recycling of the replaced unit	\$75
Freezer	Must be ENERGY STAR rated. Requires recycling of the replaced unit	\$75
Working Refrigerator/Freezer Harvest <i>(recycling only)</i>	Does not require purchase of a new ENERGY STAR appliance; must be in working order.	\$75

Water Heaters

Heat Pump Water Heater	Must be ENERGY STAR rated	\$500
Electric Water Heater	New construction installation: high-efficient, large capacity electric water heater controlled on Energy Wise off-peak program.	\$400
	Replacement of non-controlled electric water heater with high-efficient, large capacity electric water heater controlled on Energy Wise off-peak program.	\$400
Interruptible Electric Water Heating	Installed on Energy Wise interruptible program	\$100

Lighting

LEDs	ENERGY STAR rated (encouraged)	Up to \$3 / bulb
CFLs	ENERGY STAR rated	Up to \$1 / bulb
LED Yard Light <i>(member-owned)</i>	LED light fixture	\$30

Misc.

Pool Pump Variable Speed Motor	Must be ENERGY STAR rated	\$200
Heat Pump Pool Heater	Coefficient of Performance (COP) of 5.0	\$400
Electric Vehicle Charger Installation	Level 1 and Level 2 chargers qualify	Up to \$500
Solar Installation	Monthly payment based on kilowatt-hour (kWh) production as recorded by Dakota Electric's production meter.	\$0.50/watt of installed solar, not to exceed \$4K.
ENERGY STAR New Home Construction	Consultation services on building an energy-efficient new home & available rebates	\$500

Commercial & Agricultural Rebates

Custom EnergyGrant® <i>For unique, industry-specific projects not covered by other rebates, such as:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Energy management systems (EMS) Energy recovery ventilators Process improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data center efficiency improvements Window film
Lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New construction lighting Retrofit lighting upgrade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Induction or LED projects LED traffic lights
Motors and Drives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variable frequency drives (VFD) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Premium efficiency motors
Heating, Cooling and Ventilation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tune-ups Ground-source heat pumps Air-source heat pumps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central air conditioners Cooling equipment, i.e. chillers, cooling towers, etc.
Agricultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Milking vacuum pump VFD Milk transfer pump VFD Energy-efficient lighting Scroll compressors for bulk tank 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Microzone control systems Waste heat exchangers and frame-type milk pre-coolers VFD for irrigation systems

DataBank secures rebate check for more than \$108,000 from Dakota Electric

Dakota Electric Association recently presented DataBank with a rebate check for \$108,566 for installing high-efficiency air conditioning, a computer room cooling system, building automation and LED lighting in its new data center facility in Eagan.

“This energy-efficient technology will save DataBank about \$40,000 per year over traditional systems,” said Tim Doherty, business account executive for Dakota Electric. “Overall, we have determined that all the efficient technologies used by DataBank will save the company at least \$90,000 per year on its electric bill.”

Commercial and industrial users can save electricity and money by making smart choices on the equipment they purchase. By offering rebates and grants to encourage businesses to save energy, Dakota Electric helps reduce wholesale power costs and demand charges, which keep energy costs lower for all members.

For more information, contact Dakota Electric's Energy Experts® at 651-463-6243 or visit www.dakotaelectric.com.



Dakota Electric Business Account Executive Tim Doherty presents a large rebate check to Kris Edinger, general manager of DataBank in Eagan, for the company's installation of energy-efficient cooling equipment and lighting.

360 Communities receives \$10,000 from Dakota Electric and CoBank

Dakota Electric Association, along with CoBank, one of its lenders, recently donated \$10,000 to 360 Communities. Dakota Electric's \$5,000 donation was matched by CoBank through the company's "Sharing Success" grant program.

At the November board meeting, Dakota Electric's Board of Directors and CoBank's Cliff Bolstad and Rachel Hanson presented the check to Sal Mondelli, president and CEO of 360 Communities, and Laurie Bolin, development director.

Mondelli thanked the board for the donation and Dakota Electric's support over the years. This is the third year that Dakota Electric's donation was doubled through CoBank's grant program.



Dakota Electric Association and CoBank presented Sal Mondelli (second from left) and Laurie Bolin (fourth from left) of 360 Communities with a \$10,000 donation. Representatives from Dakota Electric's Board of Directors and CoBank are pictured (L-R): Jim Sheldon, David Jones, Cliff Bolstad (CoBank), Rachel Hanson (CoBank), Paul Trapp and Bill Holton.

360 Communities provides assistance to more than 17,000 individuals each year with a variety of programs throughout the area, including domestic violence shelters, resource centers, food shelves and more.

“We are happy to have the opportunity to once again double our donation through CoBank's grant and help a worthwhile community organization like 360 Communities,” said Dakota Electric's Board Chair Jim Sheldon.

Dakota Electric employees raise more than \$24,000 for local charities

During the 2015 Dakota Cares Campaign, Dakota Electric employees exceeded their fundraising goal by raising more than \$24,000. Organizations donated to include the Greater Twin Cities United Way®, Community Health Charities® of Minnesota and the Fallen Linemen Organization.

The Dakota Cares committee plans several employee events and activities throughout the year to help raise funds for local organizations. Some of the activities in 2015 included a pork chop feed, fajita feed, silent auction, sporting-clays fun shoot and other activities. Employees also have the option to contribute through payroll deductions each year.

"Because of our employees' generous donations, we have been able to raise thousands of dollars each year for worthy causes in our community and it is very much appreciated," said Julie Simonsen, community affairs assistant and Dakota Cares committee chair. "We could not have done this without the hard work of the committee and the generous and caring people of Dakota Electric."



Dakota Cares committee members (L-R): Julie Simonsen, Jackie Bauer, Jodi Schilling, Susan Strong, Mel Belschner, Cherry Jordan, Dave Reinke, Tom Riste and Bernie Kolnberger. Not pictured: Corey Willert.



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Circuits Quick Clips

Your Electricity 2015 brochure available

As a cooperative business, one of Dakota Electric's founding principles is to provide members with information about their cooperative.

The most recent information on how the electric generation, transmission and distribution systems work, plus the sources, costs and emissions of fuels used in meeting the needs of Dakota Electric's members, is available by visiting www.dakotaelectric.com > Safety and Education > Electricity 101.

Members may also request a copy of the brochure be mailed to them by calling 651-463-6212.



Notice to cogenerators

In compliance with Minnesota Rules Relating to Cogeneration and Small Power Production, Chapter 7835, Dakota Electric Association is required to interconnect with and purchase electricity from cogenerators and small power producers that satisfy the conditions of a qualifying facility.

Dakota Electric will provide free information to all interested members regarding rates and interconnection requirements. An interconnection application is required and subject to approval from the cooperative before a qualifying facility interconnects and operates in parallel with the cooperative's distribution system.

Any disputes over interconnections, sales and purchases are subject to resolution by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission.

[For more details](#)

Visit www.dakotaelectric.com or call Mike Plutowski at 651-463-6180.

Beware of utility scams

Any call from someone claiming to be from Dakota Electric and requesting bank account or credit card information to avoid disconnection of service is a scam. These people are not associated with Dakota Electric.

Members should never provide personal or financial information unless they initiate the call. If there's any doubt about the authenticity of a caller, hang up and call Dakota Electric directly to verify your billing and payment status.



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Jim Sheldon, Chair

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Energy Director

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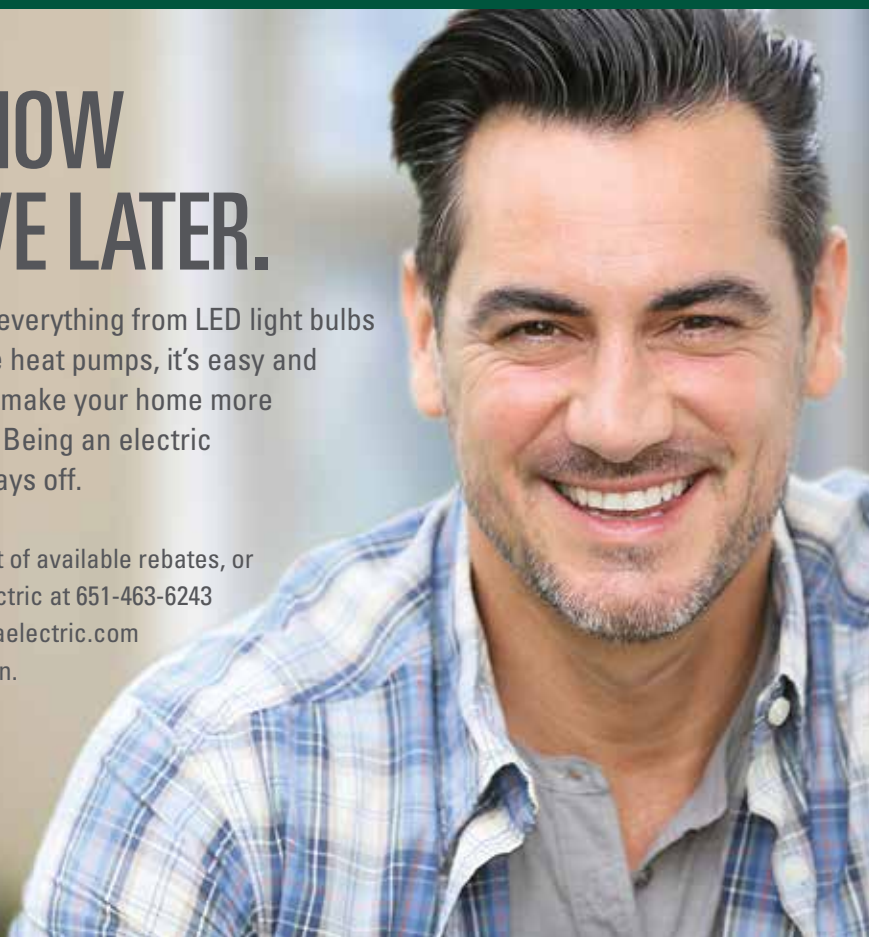
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See page 4 for a list of available rebates, or contact Dakota Electric at 651-463-6243 or visit www.dakotaelectric.com for more information.



Contact Us

Member service & drive-up window

7 a.m. – 7 p.m. Monday - Friday

651-463-6212 or 1-800-874-3409

Minnesota Relay Service 711

Lobby 7 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Monday - Friday

4300 220th Street West, Farmington, MN 55024

24-hour outage & emergency service

651-463-6201 or 1-800-430-9722

Underground cable locations

Gopher State One Call 811 or 651-454-0002 or

1-800-252-1166

Tree trimming & street lights 651-463-6287

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