

CIRCUITS

NEWS FOR DAKOTA ELECTRIC MEMBERS

Rescue exercise generates serious fun for lineworkers

Dakota Electric apprentice lineworker Shane Thompson, 25, just shimmied down from the top of a 35-foot pole after rescuing a 150-pound dummy. Why? "Because we're simulating a pole-top rescue," said Thompson.

Lineworkers climb poles to perform service work on the electrical lines, and a contact accident or medical emergency can result in an unconscious lineworker trapped at the top of the pole. "For those of us on site," said Thompson, "it's our job to call a Mayday, rescue our co-worker from the top of the pole and give CPR until emergency help arrives."

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, electrical lineworker ranks among the top 10 most dangerous jobs in the United States. Working around



A lineworker climbs down after lowering the dummy to a partner on the ground, who will perform CPR until emergency help arrives.



Apprentice lineworker Shane Thompson prepares to lower the dummy to the ground after cutting it loose from its safety harness. Watch a YouTube video of the training exercise at bit.ly/21kh4yB.

energized lines and equipment requires lineworkers to be trained in various rescue techniques and emergency procedures. OSHA regulations stipulate annual refresher training in pole-top rescue, among other skills.

Dakota Electric's pole-top rescue exercise takes place each spring in the pole yard behind the Farmington headquarters. On this day, lineworkers gather for a somewhat friendly competition in what is otherwise very serious business.

"Some years we time each other to see who wins bragging rights,

but this year we're using new safety harnesses while climbing, so we're just training," said Thompson. "Even so, it gets pretty competitive."

And although no one is keeping time this day, there is obviously some good-natured encouragement going on. But make no mistake, these lineworkers recognize the very real dangers inherent in their work.

"Someone's life could depend on getting him down quickly and following proper emergency procedures," said Thompson. "So we have to train."

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Upcoming events

Office closed: Happy 4th!	July 4
Board Meeting	July 28, 8:30 a.m.
Member appreciation	July 28, 4-8 p.m.

July 2016



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

FREE FUN at Member Appreciation Event

Thurs., July 28 | 4-8 p.m. | Minnesota Zoo



MINNESOTA ZOO

- >> FREE Minnesota Zoo admission and parking
- >> Special deals on IMAX® Theater tickets
- >> Dinosaur exhibit: \$5 charge per person
- >> McAndrews Road (County Road 38) is under construction. Please plan accordingly.

Featured attractions

In addition to your favorite exhibits, see the robotic dinosaurs (\$5 per person charge). Additional free entertainment includes the Wings Financial World of Birds show (weather permitting), a strolling magician and music by the Blue Ox Jazz Babies.

Tickets and admission

Bills received between June 14 and July 7 include member tickets. One ticket admits your entire family. We also accept a recent electric bill. The event is held rain or shine. Sorry, no rain checks. The tickets have no resale value and cannot be sold.

Food shelf donation

Please consider making a donation to our local food shelves by bringing non-perishable food items.

Other details

To drop off disabled or senior guests, follow the school bus signs to the bus station near the south entrance. Motorized carts are available for rent at \$10 per hour — maximum \$40. Wheelchairs are also available at no charge. Both are on a first-come, first-served basis. Stroller rental is available for \$5 and \$8.

For more information, contact Dakota Electric member services at 651-463-6212. For questions regarding rentals or zoo amenities, please call the Minnesota Zoo at 952-431-9500.

What part of your electric service do you own?

Did you know you own certain parts of your electric service? When the power goes out, most people may assume the utility is responsible for the cost and repair. But if you own the equipment or cable delivering electricity to your home, it is your responsibility to have it fixed.

But how do you know who owns what?

"It's important for members to know they have private facilities and are aware of their responsibilities," said Betty Jo Kiesow, system design manager at Dakota Electric. "Private facilities are the electrical lines and equipment owned by our members."

In suburban areas, the utility generally owns everything up to a connect point. For underground service, that is either a transformer, pedestal or underground connection point. For overhead lines, the connect point is usually the mast on the home.

Rural areas can be different, depending on where the meter is located. On a rural site, Dakota Electric would generally own the facilities up to the meter.

Typically the member owns the electric facilities from the house to the connect point. But in all cases, Dakota Electric owns the meter and the member owns the meter socket.

"Another really important thing for members to know is that Dakota Electric doesn't own anything after the meter, such as electric service lines to outbuildings, security lighting and hot tubs or pools," said Kiesow. "The property owner is responsible for locating private underground facilities or hiring someone to do that."

Members can call Dakota Electric at 651-463-6247 with questions about what part of their service they own. Visit www.gopherstateonecall.org/contract-locators-directory for information on companies that locate private facilities.

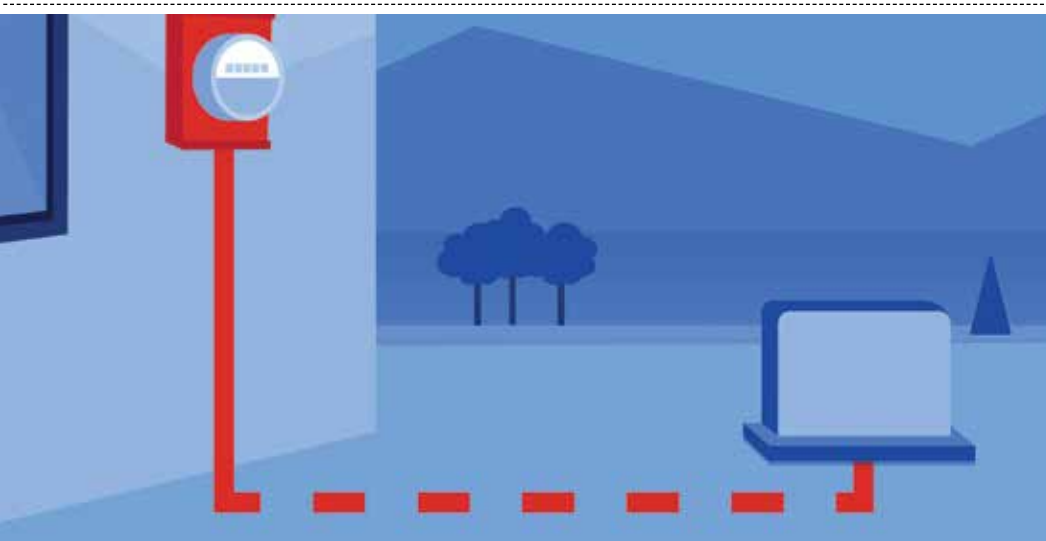


Dakota Electric awards \$160,000 in scholarships

One-hundred area high school students received scholarships this spring for their post-secondary education from Dakota Electric Association. Others receiving part of the \$160,000 in unclaimed capital credits this year are students at Inver Hills Community College and Dakota County Technical College, who will receive their scholarships in the fall.

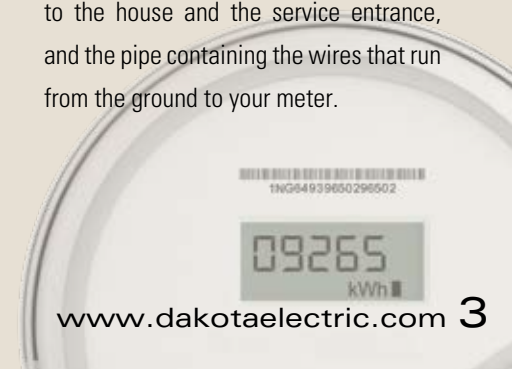
Dakota Electric has donated almost \$1.2 million since 1990 to help local students reach their goals through post-secondary education. "We are happy to reach this donation milestone while helping local students," said Jim Sheldon, Dakota Electric's board chair.

Students from the following high schools received scholarships: Apple Valley, Burnsville, Cannon Falls, Eagan, Eastview, Farmington, Hastings, Henry Sibley, Lakeville North, Lakeville South, Northfield, Randolph, Red Wing, Rosemount and Simley.



Member repair responsibilities

- Members are responsible for their home's mast, the pipe containing the wires that run from overhead lines to your meter. If a member's mast is damaged or torn loose from the home, an electrician must repair it before Dakota Electric can restore power.
- Members with underground service are responsible for repairs to the underground service wires from the lot corner to the house and the service entrance, and the pipe containing the wires that run from the ground to your meter.





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Drawing to take place in September.

ENERGY WISE  **MN**






Due to the presence of mercury, CFLs must be recycled. In Minnesota, it is illegal to place them directly in the garbage.

Best bets for home lighting

CHOOSE THE RIGHT BULB FOR THE RIGHT JOB

There are three primary types of lighting: ambient (general lighting), task lighting and accent lighting. As lighting technologies continue to advance, consumers should be open to trying new shapes and types of bulbs. The check marks below indicate appropriate locations for different types of bulbs on the market. Happy shopping!

BEST BETS FOR HOME LIGHTING

Common Bulb Types	Ambient Lighting			Accent Lighting			Task Lighting
	Pendant Fixture	Ceiling Fixture	Recessed Cans	Ceiling Fan	Wall Sconce	Spot Light	Table or Floor Lamp
 Spiral	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
 Globe	✓				✓		
 A-Shape	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
 Candle	✓	✓		✓	✓		
 Reflector	✓		✓			✓	

Source: energy.gov

Cooperatives measure Minnesota's solar potential

Annual performance under 15 percent not a surprise

Andy Bergrud, senior engineering project manager at Great River Energy, notes that one of the main findings at their Maple Grove solar array is that its average annual performance is representative of solar projects at member cooperative sites.

"The statewide average is very similar to Maple Grove's output," Bergrud said. "As expected, southern arrays perform slightly better than northern arrays, but the difference from the Maple Grove site has only been about half a percent."

Overall, Bergrud said, the average annual output for each of the arrays is slightly lower than the 15 percent capacity factor expectation they had going into the projects, but it represents "one of the realities of solar in Minnesota."

Great River Energy, Dakota Electric's wholesale power supplier, has been collecting output data and other information from its Maple Grove and 19 member cooperative solar installations since May 2014, providing Great River Energy's generation engineers with a better idea of solar production capabilities in the Land of 10,000 Lakes.

Great River Energy's 250-kilowatt (kW) research and demonstration array at its Maple Grove headquarters tests the performance of three types of panels, while the 19 arrays across Greater Minnesota have a generating capacity of 20 kW each and provide statewide distributed generation information. All of the projects help Great River Energy and its member cooperatives evaluate the impact of solar energy while providing up to 450,000 kilowatt-hours of renewable energy annually – equivalent to powering about 38 homes.

The most data collected is from the Maple Grove array, since it was the first project completed in May 2014. Member projects wrapped up in late 2015 with arrays installed in cities as far north as Lutsen and as far south as Worthington. Dakota Electric's array in Farmington was completed in August 2014.



"Dakota Electric's 20-kilowatt solar array in Farmington has a similar annual capacity factor to Great River Energy's system-wide projects," said Mike Fosse, Dakota Electric's vice president of energy and member services. "Today's solar panels average an annual output of about 15 percent."

The Maple Grove array's annual capacity factor average is 13.6 percent, which falls in between installations in Two Harbors, Minn. and Zumbrota, Minn. Annual capacity factor indicates how much energy output panels produce throughout the year, on average, compared to its full nameplate capacity.

One of the biggest takeaways is how much of an effect frequent, rapid power swings have on the output – due to Minnesota's tendency to have more cloudy days over pure sunny days. An understanding of the sudden shifts in power output caused by cloud interference is an important lesson learned, and will require utilities to find ways to properly manage the grid as more solar and other renewable energy resources are interconnected to the electric system.

"We see value in incorporating energy storage for these projects to see if that gives us the ability to minimize impacts from power swings due to weather, or to use the energy that is produced from the array at a time that better coincides with our members' peak load," Bergrud said. "We will complete a storage project later this spring at our headquarters array, and it will be interesting to see what we learn about battery storage as a resource paired with solar."

Rebate offers incentive for residential solar projects

Dakota Electric's solar performance program offers a rebate of \$0.50 per watt for installed residential solar capacity, not to exceed \$4,000. Payment of the rebate is based on the kilowatt-hour (kWh) production of the photovoltaic system, as recorded by Dakota Electric's production meter. The rebate is credited on your electric bill monthly at \$0.08 per kWh produced up to the rebate amount or 10 years, whichever occurs first. When you install solar panels through our solar production program, you can:

- Meet some or all of your energy needs with your renewable system
- Receive a monthly production-based credit

For more information, contact the Energy Experts® at 651-463-6243 or energyservices@dakotaelectric.com

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HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY HOLIDAY!

Dakota Electric's offices will be closed for the July 4th holiday.

However, our system control center is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week and crews are ready to respond to outages and emergencies.

Even on holidays.



DAKOTA ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION
 Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

WE APPRECIATE YOUR FEEDBACK

As part of our on-going effort to provide the best service possible, Dakota Electric is conducting a residential member satisfaction survey in late July and early August. Should you receive a call from NRECA Market Research Services asking for your opinions, we would sincerely appreciate your feedback.

We know your time is valuable, so rest assured, we will use the results to make decisions on matters important to the future of your co-op.

Thank you in advance for your time.



DAKOTA ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION
 Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Circuits Quick Clips

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.



Your Electricity 2016 brochure available

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 to have a copy of the brochure mailed to them by calling 651-463-6212.



Visit us at the Dakota County Fair

August 8-14, 2016 | Red Commercial Building

Members can stop by Dakota Electric's booth to learn more about energy-saving tips, programs, rebates and special promotions. More fair details at www.dakotacountyfair.org.



811 Run Raising awareness

The 811 Run returns to Minnesota on Saturday, Aug. 13 to promote calling 811 before any digging project. All proceeds from the 811 Run will go to Twin Cities Operation Warm, an organization that provides warm winter coats to children in need.

Event Details

- The 5K run/walk will take place around Lake Calhoun at 8:11 a.m., followed by a free kids fun run.
- After the race, winners will be announced during a free safety fair.
- Whether you're a runner, walker or supporter of this great cause, stop out and enjoy the day.

For more information and to register, visit <http://www.andersonraces.com/new-events/2016/8/13/811-run-and-walk>.



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

Many of Dakota Electric's power lines are buried underground. State law requires anyone planning to dig to contact 811. Doing so protects you and your property. For more information, visit www.gopherstateonecall.org.

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Pole inspections to take place this summer: Contractors may work in your yard



Mi-Tech Services, a pole inspection contractor hired by Dakota Electric Association, is conducting annual pole inspections in our service territory. Areas included are the cities of Rosemount, Hastings and Coates; Nininger and Credit River townships and surrounding areas. The pole inspector will be identified as a Mi-Tech Services employee, contracted by Dakota Electric to gather pole data as it relates to the above-ground distribution system.

The inspector will attempt to contact each member before performing inspections. The inspector will walk through backyards and private properties as well as use an

ATV to access certain pole locations. Please contact Dakota Electric at 651-463-6262 if you have questions or concerns about the pole inspection process in these areas.

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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Program information and offers in this newsletter
are subject to change without notice.