

# CIRCUITS

NEWS FOR DAKOTA ELECTRIC MEMBERS



## Energy-efficiency investment pays off during harvest season

Harvest season is a busy time for area farmers, and for Joe Meyers and his son, Steve, it is no different. They operate a 1,500-acre farm just outside of New Trier.

"We have four grain bins that store up to 165,000 bushels of corn each year and a dryer that runs continuously from Oct. 1 to Dec. 1," said Steve. "It definitely makes an impact on our electric bill every year."

In 2014, after maxing out on their cur-

rent single-phase electric service, they upgraded to three-phase electric service and joined Dakota Electric's off-peak program.

"Our electric bill was insane while drying our corn," said Steve. "We got the bid on upgrading to three-phase service while adding the dryer to the off-peak program, and it was a no-brainer. You really can't go wrong."

By putting their corn dryer on Dakota Electric's off-peak program, the Mey-



Steve Meyers (left) and his father, Joe, operate a 1,500-acre corn and soybean farm just east of New Trier.

ers' aeration fans are interrupted during times of peak demand. In return, they get a discounted electric rate that is less than 50 percent of the residential and farm electric rate.

In less than a year since joining the program, the Meyers have saved nearly \$2,000 on their electric bill, and \$1,500 of that was saved in just one month during the harvest season.

"I can't say enough about Dakota Electric," said Joe. "I am very pleased with

- continued on page 2

## In This Issue

October is National Coop Month . . . . .	2
Dakota Electric to host open house for Careers in Energy Week . . . . .	4
Fall energy tips . . . . .	5
Apply for 2015 Touchstone Energy Community Award . . . . .	7

### Upcoming events

Careers in Energy Open House . . . . .	Oct. 19
Board Meeting . . . . .	Oct. 29, 8:30 a.m.

October 2015



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

# Dakota Electric Association celebrates National Cooperative Month

October is National Cooperative Month, and Dakota Electric Association — and all co-ops across the U.S. — are celebrating the benefits and values that cooperatives bring to their members and communities.

While co-ops operate in many industries and sectors of the economy, seven cooperative principles set us apart from other businesses: voluntary and open membership; democratic member control; member's economic participation; autonomy and independence; education, training and information; cooperation among cooperatives; and concern for community.

"The co-op business model is unique and rooted in our local communities," says Greg Miller, Dakota Electric's president

and CEO. "Co-ops help us build a more participatory, sustainable and resilient economy."

Dakota Electric is proud to be part of America's cooperative network, which includes more than 47,000 cooperative businesses.

Electric co-ops provide power for many Minnesotans, with 44 electric distribution co-ops serving 1.8 million people throughout the state.

"We appreciate our member-owners, and we will continue to research new technology in the areas of reliability, efficiency and affordability to help us serve you better," said Miller.

## Energy-efficiency (cont.)

how everything turned out. It's still going to take a while to pay for the three-phase service upgrade, but the headaches of equipment failures and replacement are gone. And now we are seeing significant energy savings on our electric bill by going on off-peak. It's definitely been worth it!"

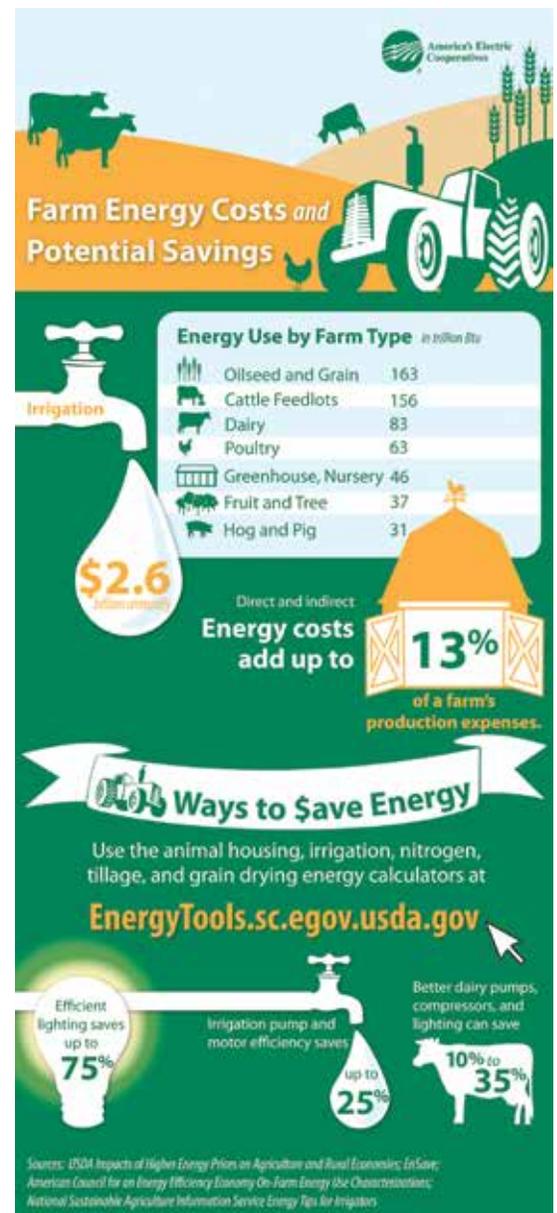
In addition to the grain drying, the Meyers also have five irrigation systems on Dakota Electric's off-peak program.

Dakota Electric provides free farm audits to identify energy-saving opportunities. Rebates and programs help offset energy costs and equipment upgrades including, but not limited to:

- Milking vacuum pump variable frequency drive (VFD)
- Milk transfer pump VFD
- Scroll compressors for bulk tank
- Waste heat exchangers and frame type milk pre-coolers
- Energy-efficient lighting
- Hog-farrowing control systems
- Ventilation
- Premium-efficiency motors

"The least expensive, quickest and easiest way to save money on your farm, and in your home, is by using energy efficiently," said Mike Plutowski, energy services representative at Dakota Electric. "We can help you set up a plan and make recommendations for the best actions to make your farm more energy efficient."

To learn more, call 651-463-6243 or visit [dakotaelectric.com](http://dakotaelectric.com).



## What does it mean to be a member of Dakota Electric?

### What our members are saying...

"Local, reliable and trustworthy utility."

"It is a wonderful feeling to be part of a cooperative and enjoying member benefits, such as the member appreciation event at the Minnesota Zoo each year."

"It means great rates, great customer service and member appreciation!"

"Having reliable, efficient electricity to power our home."

## THE PERFECT DEGREE OF COMFORT

If you depend on, or are interested in, electricity for your home's heating needs, call an Energy Expert® today! The intelligent design of an electric thermal storage (ETS) heater or heat pump system means the ultimate in comfort and efficiency. And you may qualify for an off-peak program that allows you to take advantage of lower-priced electricity for electric heating devices.

**If you heat with LP gas, ask about a FREE in-home audit.**

**REBATES**  
may apply

**FINANCING**  
0% or 2.99% may be available

**TAX CREDITS\***  
for GSHP systems

*Restrictions apply and funds are limited. Rebates are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis and are subject to change or cancellation without notice. Check with Dakota Electric prior to making your purchase to verify program status. \*Consult your tax advisor.*

# Dakota Electric to host open house for Careers in Energy Week Oct. 19-23

Did you know energy companies are projecting 30-50 percent of their workforce will be eligible to retire in the next 10 years?

The Center for Energy Workforce Development and its members created Careers in Energy Week, Oct. 19-23, 2015, to increase public awareness about energy careers through a concerted nationwide effort.

In celebration of the special week, Dakota Electric will host an open house at its headquarters in Farmington on Mon., Oct. 19:

- **9:30-11:30 a.m.** — open to area high school students and teachers
- **5-7 p.m.** — open to the public

The event is geared towards high school students and their parents but is open to anyone interested in energy careers. Guests will have a chance to tour the facility and speak with representatives from various Dakota Electric careers, including:

- technician electrician
- electrical engineer
- IT/software developer
- finance
- energy services
- mechanic
- lineworker
- distribution system operator
- human resources
- marketing/communications

Dakota Electric will have a drawing for two \$250 college scholarships for students that attend the open house. Students must be attending college in 2016 to be eligible. Information about the event can be found on the Event Calendar at [dakotaelectric.com](http://dakotaelectric.com), or watch for updates by following us on Facebook and Twitter.

For more information, visit the Minnesota Energy Consortium's "Get Into Energy" Facebook page at <http://on.fb.me/1uRcw2G>. If you "Like" their page, you will be entered for one of several great prizes. Drawing will be held Oct. 31.



## Avoid disconnection this winter

Members who fall behind on utility bills can avoid disconnection or be eligible for reconnection between Oct. 15 and April 15 by following the steps outlined in Minnesota's Cold Weather Rule.

Members receive a brochure with their September bill statement (mailed between Sept. 10 and Oct. 6) with program details and contact information for agencies that provide utility payment assistance.

The Cold Weather Rule protects members but does not completely forbid shutoffs. Contact Dakota Electric at 651-463-6212 as soon as you anticipate trouble paying a bill, and we can help you create a payment plan to prevent disconnection. By contacting Dakota Electric and avoiding disconnection, you also avoid paying reconnection fees and a deposit. You must keep your payment plan to qualify for protection.



## Low-cost, no-cost energy tips to get your home ready for winter

Fall is here and as much as we don't like to admit it, winter is right around the corner. The following tips will help you minimize energy costs and keep your family comfortable all winter long.

- Replace worn weather stripping around all doors and windows.
- Caulk gaps in windows and door glass.
- Have your heating system inspected by a certified professional.
- Clean vents and other heating system components.
- Replace your furnace filter each month, or per the manufacturer's specifications, throughout the heating season.
- Install a programmable thermostat; it will help you save energy by automatically lowering temperatures at night while you are sleeping or when you are away from your home.
- Have your chimney and fireplace checked and cleaned by a professional.

For those members who heat their home with propane, contact Dakota Electric for a free home energy audit. A home energy audit is a great way to find opportunities to lower your utility bill this winter and all year-round.

For more low-cost, no-cost energy tips, visit the energy efficiency section at [www.dakotaelectric.com](http://www.dakotaelectric.com).

Source: [www.energy.gov](http://www.energy.gov)



## PHANTOM LOAD IS LURKING.

Your energy and money are vanishing.

Most electrical devices in your home never turn off completely. In fact, 75% of the electricity used to power home electronics is consumed while the products are "off". This is phantom load, which is responsible for an average of \$100 of energy waste each year.

Save electricity with our Phantom Load Conservation Kit. With limited kits available, don't let these savings vanish.

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\*Must purchase a qualifying Carrier system. Offer ends October 31, 2015. See Dealer for details.

Offer ends October 31, 2015. See Dealer for details.



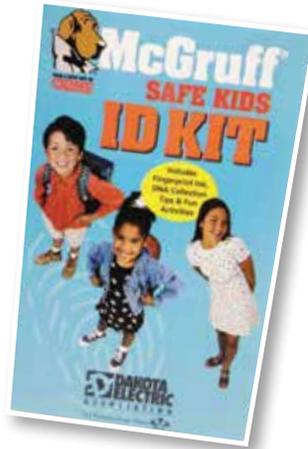
# Circuits Quick Clips

## McGruff Safe Kids Identification Kits

Each year Dakota Electric donates McGruff Safe Kids I.D. Kits for local police departments to use in educating kindergarten classes on staying safe.

Each kit contains safety tips along with a personal identification section and finger-printing kit for parents to use to create an up-to-date file on their child.

For more information about obtaining McGruff Safe Kids I.D. Kits for your school, please contact your local police department.



## Safe at Home Address Confidentiality Program

Safe at Home helps survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and other crimes, and anyone who fears for their safety, by establishing a confidential mailing address and providing a mail forwarding service.

While Dakota Electric needs members' actual addresses to establish and maintain electric service, we use Safe at Home addresses for communicating with members and take special steps to protect Safe at Home participants' addresses.

If you participate in Safe at Home, alert Dakota Electric and provide your Safe at Home mailing address.

To learn more about Safe at Home, contact the Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State at [www.sos.state.mn.us](http://www.sos.state.mn.us) or 1-866-723-3035.

## Apply for the 2015 Touchstone Energy Community Award

The Touchstone Energy Community Award allows Dakota Electric to recognize and support local businesses, non-profit organizations and community needs.

In 2015, Dakota Electric will provide up to three awards to local organizations, earning each winner a \$500 cash prize.

One local award winner will compete for a statewide award of \$1,000.



### How to apply

The application deadline is Oct. 31, 2015. Call Brenda at 651-463-6234 or visit [www.dakotaelectric.com/about\\_us/community](http://www.dakotaelectric.com/about_us/community) for an application and judging criteria.



## Board of Directors

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Greg Miller, President & CEO  
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# OCTOBER IS NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH



## Contact Us

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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  
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Tree trimming & street lights 651-463-6287

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

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independence • education, training and information •  
cooperation among cooperatives • concern for community