

CIRCUITS

NEWS FOR DAKOTA ELECTRIC® MEMBERS



Jake Toledo named Dakota Electric's Spirit of Excellence Award winner

When Randolph-Hampton Fire Chief Kevin Whitson speaks about Captain Jake Toledo, he does so with high praise.

"Jake is very committed to his volunteer work with the fire department and has been for the last 10 years," said Whitson. "He is a very dedicated fireman — hard working, trustworthy and talented. I'm very proud to have him as part of this department."

That praise was on display last month when Toledo accepted this year's

Spirit of Excellence Award at a special ceremony at the fire station.

The award is presented by Dakota Electric Association in recognition of first responders and the brave work they do. The award highlights a first responder who demonstrates leadership, dedication to serving others, teamwork, integrity and other attributes.

"Jake is passionate about being a fire fighter, he continues to further his education in all phases of the industry and is committed to serving

his community," said Dakota Electric's President and CEO Greg Miller.

Toledo was appreciative of the recognition and thanked the rest of the department and Dakota Electric for the award.

In addition to the award for Toledo, Dakota Electric provided a check for \$5,000 to the fire department. Chief Whitson says the donation will be used to purchase personal protective gear of full coveralls for the entire department.

- continued on page 3

In This Issue

A message from our CEO	2
Dakota Electric returning \$3.3 million to members	2
Six ways to save this holiday season	5
Langer wins Township Leader Award	6
Johnson receives Above & Beyond Award	7

Upcoming events

Board Meeting	Dec. 20, 8:30 a.m.
Christmas Eve - office closed	Dec. 24
Christmas Day - office closed	Dec. 25
New Years Day - office closed	Jan. 1

Dakota Electric Association® and Dakota Electric® are registered service marks of the cooperative.

December 2018





Greg Miller
President & CEO

We're thankful for your membership

In the spirit of the season, I'd like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for your membership in our electric cooperative. Because of your connection to Dakota Electric Association, we are able to make our community a better place.

I generally use this space to provide updates on new projects and developments, and report on the progress of ongoing initiatives. We share these updates so that all of our members have a window into our priorities, progress and challenges. However, during this season of giving thanks, I think it's equally important to let you and other members of Dakota Electric know just what an impact you have on our co-op and the greater community, likely in ways you may not even realize.

As part of the cooperative business model, one of our core principles is "Concern for

Community." While our priority is always to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy, we view our role in the community as a catalyst for good.

We partner with, and give back to, local organizations such as the food shelves, 360 Communities, Yellow Ribbon Network, the Fallen Linemen Organization and others to provide support for those in need. We are purposeful in recognizing individuals who make a difference in our cities and townships by awarding the Touchstone Energy Community Award, Township Leader Award and the Spirit of Excellence Award.

We work closely with our local schools to provide safety demonstrations, award college scholarships, and give monetary donations for needed equipment and educational programming. Dakota Electric also participates

Dakota Electric returning \$3.3 million to members

Did you know one of the benefits of being a member of Dakota Electric means you get a portion of the cooperative's profit margins? We belong to the communities we serve, so any excess revenues are returned to you, our members, in the form of capital credits.

This year, the board of directors approved the retirement of \$3.3 million in capital credits to be paid back to the membership. Dakota Electric is retiring the remainder of capital credits allocation from 1990 and 65 percent of the allocation from 1991.

Members who purchased electricity in 1990-91, and who are receiving \$5 or more in capital credits, will be mailed a check this month. The amount of each allocation and retirement is based on how much individual members were billed for electric service during that period.

Watch for your check arriving soon. To learn more about capital credits, visit dakotaelectric.com/about-us/capital-credits.

HOW DO CAPITAL CREDITS WORK?

- 1 Dakota Electric tracks how much electricity you buy and how much you pay for it during the year.
- 2 At the end of the year, Dakota Electric calculates whether there are excess margins. This is the amount by which revenue exceeds expenses.
- 3 Dakota Electric allocates the margins to members as capital credits based upon their annual electric bill.
- 4 When the co-op's financial condition permits, the board of directors decides to retire, or pay, the capital credits.
- 5 Dakota Electric notifies you of how and when you will receive your capital credit retirement.

in an annual Youth Tour where we send some of our community's brightest young people to Washington, D.C. for a week-long immersion to experience democracy in action. The trip is inspirational for many students, and we are both humbled and honored to be a part of this leadership development journey.

Ultimately, the larger community benefits from these programs because of you! You empower the co-op through your membership and through your participation in and support of these programs.

When you attend co-op events, alert us to problems, provide suggestions online or to our employees, you help us improve operations and thereby better serve the larger co-op membership.

On a more personal note, we appreciate the countless acts of kindness our lineworkers and other employees receive when they are working in severe weather and dangerous conditions. Our employees are thankful for your patience and consideration when we are trying to restore power during challenging situations and prolonged periods.

Dakota Electric was established 81 years ago to bring electricity to our area when no one else would. The cooperative is a reflection of our local community and its evolving needs. Together, let's continue making our corner of the world a better place. We can't do it without you, and for that, we're thankful for your membership.

Have a safe and happy holiday season!



2019 RTA change

At this time, Dakota Electric anticipates a Resource and Tax Adjustment (RTA) change in 2019. The final RTA change will be reported in the February issue of *Circuits*.

What is the RTA?

Each month your bill includes an RTA line. The RTA allows Dakota Electric to recover cost increases related to:

- Purchasing electricity from Great River Energy, which generates electricity for members of 28 Minnesota cooperatives;
- energy conservation programs;
- property and real estate taxes.

The RTA is a direct pass-through of costs, and the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission reviews these costs every year.



Spirit of Excellence (cont.)

The Randolph-Hampton Fire District is comprised of 32 volunteer firefighters providing fire and rescue services to the cities of Hampton and Randolph, as well as parts of seven rural townships covering over 65 square miles.

A video of the event can be found on Dakota Electric's YouTube page: <https://youtu.be/6aVtvBkdDt4>



Pictured (L-R): Dakota Electric board members Jim Sheldon, Paul Trapp, Bill Holton, Judy Kimmes; Captain Tom Gergen; Dakota Electric President and CEO Greg Miller; Captain Arne Ravoula; Dakota Electric board chair David Jones; Chief Kevin Whitson; Assistant Chief Paul Gergen; Captain Jake Toledo; TJ Nordling and Captain Dale Hallcock.

'Tis the season for giving

Helping Neighbors® helps those in need

Layoffs, medical emergencies, unexpected repairs – all things that could happen to anyone and all things that can leave families struggling to make ends meet. Dakota Electric members who contribute to the Helping Neighbors® trust help local families pay utility bills when facing unexpected financial struggles.

Dakota Electric distributes Helping Neighbors funds to the local CAP Agency, Salvation Army and 360 Communities,

which provide utility assistance to families experiencing hardship.

Please consider making a donation. Monthly donations can be added to your electric bill or you can make a one-time contribution.

To learn more, contact Member Services at 651-463-6212 or sign up at dakotaelectric.com/community.



Please shovel a path to your meter

Reading meters can be dangerous work. An icy and snowy surface can cause life-changing slips, trips and falls.

As the snow flies this winter, please remember to shovel a clear path to your electric meter and make sure your meter is not blocked by snow or ice.

A blocked meter can result in injury to Dakota Electric staff, or an estimated bill if the meter reader cannot access your meter to read it.



Attention high school juniors and seniors!

Get ready to apply for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) 2019 Youth Tour to Washington, D.C.

Dakota Electric will send five juniors or seniors on an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C. as part of NRECA's Youth Tour June 15-20.

The educational and inspirational trip includes meetings with elected officials, visits to museums, memorials and monuments, and memories to last a lifetime!



Six ways to save this holiday season!

The holidays are a great time for having fun with friends and family, but the extra energy costs can cause a real post-season letdown. With these easy money-saving tips, you can enjoy lower energy bills this holiday season and into the new year.



ENERGY STAR® certified LED decorative light strings use 75 percent less energy than standard incandescent lights and last up to 10 times longer. While you're at it, change out those old bulbs around your house to high-efficiency LEDs as well!



Make sure to turn off your dazzling light display late at night or when you're not at home. It's safer and you'll avoid wasting energy. Add convenience by installing a timer to automatically turn lights on at dusk and off at any time you set.



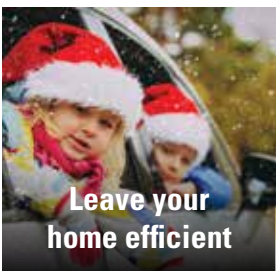
With a little creativity, you can reduce or eliminate the need for energy-using decorative lights. Reflective bulbs and tinsel add extra shine to your tree without using energy. Make handmade decorations, such as a wreath for your door. It's a great way to get your entire family involved and save on energy costs.



Bake several dishes at once; it takes the same amount of energy to operate a full oven as it does a nearly empty one. Keep lids on pots; food cooks faster and uses less energy. Also, use your energy-efficient microwave for small holiday cooking tasks whenever possible. After cleanup, run the dishwasher only when you have a full load.



Turn down the temperature when holiday guests arrive. Extra bodies in the house mean extra heat at no cost to you. Save energy all year long by installing (and using) a programmable thermostat. Smart thermostat models include advanced features, such as self-programming and remote control.



Traveling for the holidays? Turn off all lights before you leave. Set that timer if you still want to show off your outdoor lighting display at night. Adjust the thermostat to a lower temperature to save energy. If you have a programmable unit, set it to 'vacation' mode. Also, lower the temperature setting on your water heater tank to reduce standby heat loss.



The best gifts do great things...

This holiday season, when you choose ENERGY STAR® electronics, appliances and other products, your gift will have the latest features, save energy and money and also protect the environment. Learn more at energystar.gov/products/holiday.

You can also visit energywisemnstore.com for energy-saving products, such as smart thermostats, advanced power strips and more, with instant rebates for Dakota Electric members.

Greg Langer wins Dakota Electric's Township Leader Award

Dakota Electric Association recently awarded Greg Langer, Greenvale Township, the Outstanding Leader of the Year Award. Each year, Dakota Electric seeks to recognize outstanding leadership with the award, and Dakota Electric Directors Judy Kimmes and Jerry Pittman attended the Dakota County Township Officers Association meeting to present the award to Langer.

"It's truly an honor to be recognized by your community members and other township officers," Langer said of the award.

Langer has been a Greenvale Township Supervisor since 2010 and also serves as chair. He has supported the local community in many ways, including serving on the North Cannon River Watershed Management Organization and the Defeat of Jesse James Days committee. He also helped organize and serves on the Road Improvement Committee and the Township Planning Commission.

"Greg has served on the town board in different capacities

over many years," Anthony Rowan, a Greenvale Township supervisor, said. "He can often be found volunteering picking up litter in the ditches. He helps in many ways to keep our community looking great."

Langer was awarded \$250 to donate to a charity of his choice, which he designated to Dakota County 4H.



Holiday Savings for You!

Trust a company that has served over 100,000 South Metro homeowners since 1977!

SAVE up to
\$1,040* on new high efficiency Trane Furnaces!

PLUS

Enjoy a *Holiday Bonus* ...
FREE Wi-Fi Thermostat

*Combination of Controlled Air discount and utility rebates on select Trane furnaces.



WHY HAVE AN ANNUAL FURNACE TUNE-UP?


- Protect your family with a carbon monoxide leak test.
- Extend the life of your furnace.
- Lower utility costs by having your furnace operating at peak efficiency.
- Discover and repair minor issues before they become serious.

Furnace Tune-Up
\$89
(plus parts)



Call for details.
Offer ends 12/31/18.



Contact us today to schedule your Furnace Tune-Up or a FREE in-home estimate!



We Control Mother Nature
651-460-6022 • ControlledAir.net





The South Metro's Trane dealer for 41 years!


SAFE DÉCOR FOR A HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON

It's almost time to deck those halls! Statistics show that home fires and electrical accidents typically increase during winter months, so keep these holiday lighting tips in mind for a safe holiday season.


Carefully inspect all electrical decorations before you use them. Cracked or damaged sockets and/or loose or exposed wires can cause serious shock or start a fire.




Consider purchasing LED lights, which use less energy and run cooler than traditional incandescent lights.



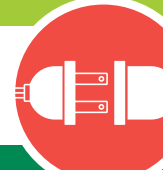
Never mount or support light strings in a way that might damage the cord's insulation.




Make sure that cords are not pinched in doors, windows or under heavy furniture, which could damage the cord's insulation.




Always unplug electrical decorations before replacing bulbs or fuses.



Turn off all indoor and outdoor electrical decorations before leaving home or going to sleep.



Source: Electrical Safety Foundation International





Circuits Quick Clips

Dakota Electric's Peggy Johnson receives Above and Beyond Award

Congratulations to one of our own — Peggy Johnson, Dakota Electric's community relations director — who recently received the Above and Beyond Award from the Dakota County Regional Chamber of Commerce.

The award recognizes exemplary service in the community and those who go above and beyond to foster an environment of community improvement and support.

For 22 years, Johnson has been doing community outreach on behalf of Dakota Electric. She works with businesses, school districts and nonprofits throughout Dakota County, and has served in various roles on several organizational and chamber of commerce boards.



"Peggy is a wonderful representative of Dakota Electric in our community," said Mike Fosse, vice president of energy and member services. "Anybody who has been involved or attended community events has likely seen her representing the cooperative. She embodies the community spirit and has a passion for serving. This award is well-deserved!"



Circuits Newsletter is getting a new look!

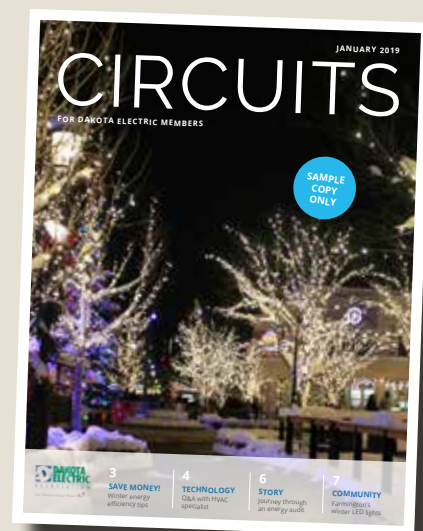
Our monthly member newsletter is getting a facelift.

The new magazine-style design will feature a cover photo, feature spreads on community members and organizations, energy-efficiency tips, technology, co-op news and education, electric safety and human interest stories.

Watch for the new issue to hit mailboxes in January!

We have also created a new emailed version that will hit inboxes in January.

For those that wish to receive it electronically, you can subscribe online at dakotaelectric.com.



Board of Directors

District 1

John (Jack) DeYoe
David Jones, Chair
Gerald F. Pittman

District 2

Janet L. Lekson, MREA Director
Jim Sheldon, Treasurer
Clay Van De Bogart, Great River
Energy Director

District 3

Kenneth H. Danner
William F. Holton
Margaret D. Schreiner, Great River
Energy Director

District 4

Paul Bakken, Vice Chair
Judy H. Kimmes
Paul A. Trapp, Secretary



Circuits is printed on recycled paper with soy ink.
Please read and recycle.

Greg Miller, President & CEO

Tanya Wolfs, Editor



4300 220th Street West
Farmington, MN 55024
651-463-6212
www.dakotaelectric.com

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
DAKOTA ELECTRIC
ASSOCIATION

Happy Holidays!

Our office will be closed on Monday, Dec. 24,
Tuesday, Dec. 25 and Tuesday, Jan. 1.

*Our system control center is staffed 24/7
and is ready to respond to outages and emergencies.*

See inside
for six ways
to save energy
this holiday
season!

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

Dakota Electric is an equal opportunity/
affirmative action employer

www.dakotaelectric.com
customerservice@dakotaelectric.com



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