

OCTOBER 2020

CIRCUITS

FOR DAKOTA ELECTRIC MEMBERS



October is
National Co-op
Month!

(Pages 2 and 3)

**DAKOTA[®]
ELECTRIC
ASSOCIATION**
Your Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperative 

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ENERGY TRENDS
Battery-powered
farming equipment.

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DIY
Home weatherization
ideas to tackle this fall.

6
DONATIONS
Dakota Electric and CoBank
donate \$20,000 to local
organizations.

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 Temporarily Closed

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*

Dakotaelectric.com

customerservice@dakotaelectric.com

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

*All programs and rebates are subject to change
without notice. Funds are limited and available
on a first-come, first-served basis.*

Dakota Electric Association

BOARD of Directors

DISTRICT 1

John (Jack) DeYoe

David Jones

Gerald F. Pittman | *Chair*

DISTRICT 2

Bill Middlecamp

Jim Sheldon | *Treasurer*

Clay Van De Bogart | *GRE Director*

DISTRICT 3

Kenneth H. Danner | *Secretary*

William F. Holton

Margaret D. Schreiner | *GRE Director*

DISTRICT 4

Paul Bakken | *Vice Chair*

Judy H. Kimmes

Stacy Miller | *MREA Director*



You are more than just a customer. You are a member-owner of Dakota Electric. Because we are not-for-profit, we are focused on your street — not Wall Street. Our employees and board members are devoted to this cooperative, our communities and to you. To me, this is the essential DNA of Dakota Electric, and it sets us apart from other electric utilities. It's the cooperative difference.

October is National Co-op Month, and this year we are highlighting the many ways we “Power On.” Keeping this theme in mind, I recognize the essential role we play in serving our Minnesota communities.

Who would have thought in March, that the COVID-19 virus would amount to a test of our community, nation and world? The changing circumstances due to the pandemic have created both challenges and opportunities. Over the past several months, we've all been challenged to operate differently. Dakota Electric has stepped up to help our members and strengthen the safety net for our more vulnerable neighbors (page 6). As a critical service, and to ensure the reliability of your power supply, we continue to work in modified operations to safeguard the health and safety of the public and our employees.

Power On

National Co-op Month

For our members impacted by COVID-19 who need help with their electric bills, we've waived late fees and worked with those hardest hit to make special payment arrangements. We also directed members in need to local energy assistance programs (page 7). We kindly ask any member facing financial hardship to please contact member services. Our employees will work with you. Call **651-463-6212** or email **customerservice@dakotaelectric.com**.

Additionally, we've seen others rise to meet similar challenges during this time, because that's what communities do. Greater Twin Cities United Way and the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency have resources available for those who are behind on their rent, mortgage or utility payments. For more information, call **2-1-1**, visit **<http://211unitedway.org>**, or text **“MNRENT”** or **“MNHOMES”** to **898-211** to learn more.

While the challenges caused by COVID-19 have been daunting, I'm heartened to see how everyone is pulling together. This co-op month I am proud of our cooperative and appreciative of the hardworking and dedicated employees who got us here — Power On.

— GREG MILLER

Dakota Electric Association, President & CEO

October

National Co-op Month



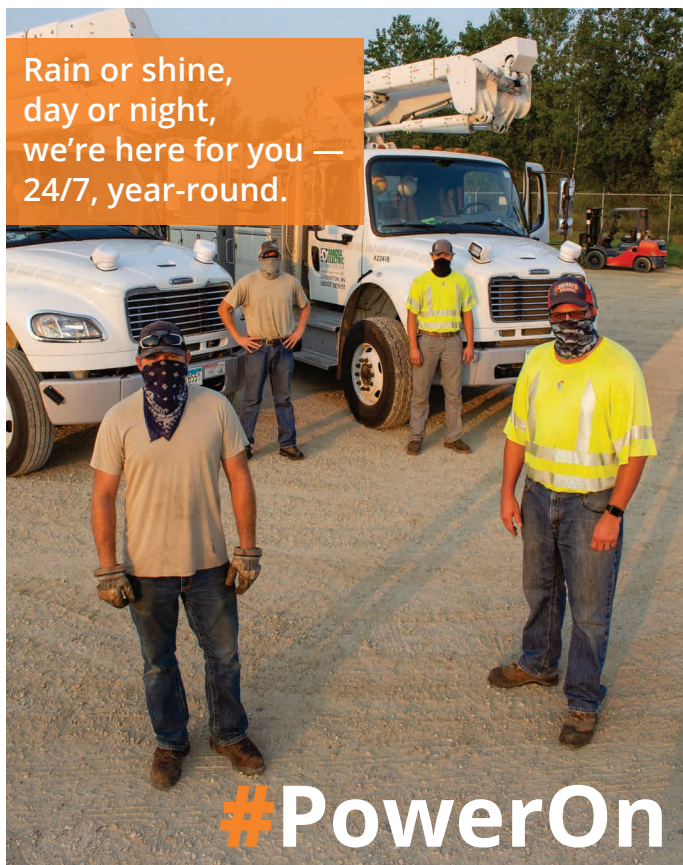
CO-OP MONTH FACT:

Co-ops are businesses owned and run by and for their members. Members control how it operates and share in the profits of the business.



You are more than just a customer. You are a member-owner of Dakota Electric.

Rain or shine,
day or night,
we're here for you —
24/7, year-round.



#PowerOn

CO-OP MONTH FACT:

Co-op Month has been a nationally recognized celebration since 1964, when U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Orville Freeman, a former Minnesota governor, proclaimed October Co-op Month.

CO-OP MONTH FACT:

Electric co-ops make up 42% of the nation's electric distribution lines and cover 75% of our land mass.





ENERGY TRENDS

Electric Farming Equipment and Harvest Safety

The 21st century has brought about major advances in agricultural technology including real-time crop monitoring by drones, robotic milking and weeding machines and autonomous tractors.

Now we are seeing a new trend for farming equipment develop as more farmers switch from fossil-fuel-powered equipment to battery-powered equipment. Built on the idea of beneficial electrification, switching to an electric end-use technology can save users money over time, benefit the environment, improve consumer quality of life, and foster a more robust electric grid.

Replacing diesel motors with electric motors provides many benefits. High-efficient electric motors can operate at 90% efficiency, which helps to provide cost savings over time, compared to inefficient diesel motors that only operate at 30% to 40% efficiency. Farmers can simply plug in the electric equipment without needing to refill a diesel tank. One of the greatest benefits of electric motors is they do not emit fumes like diesel motors, which means farmers will breathe in cleaner air around them. Overall, electric motors are cleaner, quieter and easier to maintain.

John Deere showcased the first, fully battery-powered tractor in 2017 at SIMA, an international agribusiness tradeshow in Paris. The emissions-free tractor runs at a lower noise level than other traditional tractors and operates using two independent electric motors. Electrifying the tractor simplifies the moving parts and reduces the need for maintenance. Additionally, other major manufacturers, including Deutz and AGCO, have

invested substantial resources into electric tractor development, each perfecting their own model.

Harvest Safety

It's important to remember that farm machinery, regardless of how it's powered, is vulnerable to hitting power lines because of its large size, height and extensions. One critical part of safety around electricity is awareness.

Putting safety first requires alertness, focus and knowledge of potential hazards and safety steps. Farmers should stay focused on the location of farming equipment and be ready to take action if necessary. Using a spotter and deployed flags to maintain a 10-foot clearance around power lines — and other electrical equipment — can reduce potential hazards. **Additionally, if the equipment makes contact with an energized or downed power line, farmers should contact Dakota Electric immediately at 651-463-6201 and remain inside the vehicle until the power line is de-energized.**

Our nation's farmers have worked for generations in fields across the country. They have seen how farming equipment has improved over the decades to increase efficiency, as well as the electrical hazards associated with field operations. As we move toward a more electrified agricultural landscape in the coming years, let's not forget our commitment to electric safety.



In 2017, John Deere showcased the first, fully battery-powered tractor. Nicknamed SESAM, for Sustainable Energy Supply for Agricultural Machinery, this all-electric tractor is modeled after John Deere's 6r series tractors.



DIY

Home Weatherization

'Tis the season for sweaters, apple orchards and pumpkin-spice everything. It's also the right time to start weatherizing your home for the heating season because those cold temperatures tend to sneak up on us when we least expect it. Assessing your home for energy-saving measures helps pinpoint where your

house is losing energy and what you can do to save money. Have hard-to-heat areas? Contact the Energy Experts® at [651-463-6243](tel:651-463-6243) or email energyexperts@dakotaelectric.com to learn more about our off-peak electric heating solutions.



Air Sealing

Problem: Air infiltration and drafts

Solution: Eliminate holes and pathways between the inside of your house and the outside. Check for major air leakage issues in places like chimney bypasses, recessed lighting and HVAC ducts. Use interior-grade caulk on trim and baseboard edges, and spray foam around dryer and heating- and cooling-system vents. Install foam gaskets on electrical outlets. Weatherstrip where necessary.



Windows/Doors

Problem: Condensation or frost on windows and doors

Solution: Consider weather-stripping windows and doors by using polyurethane, mylar, neoprene or EPDM rubber since they remain flexible under extreme temperatures.



Attic

Problem: Attic heat loss

Solution: Ensure attic leaks are sealed and increase your attic's insulation. Minnesota's minimum R-value is R-49.



Electric Water Heater

Problem: Not enough hot water

Solution: Check the thermostat — usually hidden behind an access panel on the side of the tank and under a layer of insulation. Check for a faulty thermostat, element or loose wiring. Refer to your owner's manual for assistance.



Furnace

Problem: Furnace running overtime

Solution: Replace furnace filter. A clogged furnace filter reduces the airflow through the system, making the furnace work harder and longer to deliver heat throughout the house. Schedule annual tuneups to keep the system running properly.

Join us for our first Virtual Energy Audit Workshop on Oct. 8.

Dakota Electric and Minnesota Energy Resources have partnered to offer their consumers a comprehensive electric and gas residential energy audit. To kick off our partnership, we are offering a FREE virtual energy workshop! During the workshop you will have an opportunity to sign up for an in-home energy-saving audit. This service is valued at over \$300, but you pay only \$50. Dakota Electric and Minnesota Energy Resources pay the rest.

Thursday, Oct. 8, 2020 | 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Reserve your spot by contacting Stacy Boots Camp at [888-734-6365](tel:888-734-6365) or emailing sbootscamp@mncee.org. Once registered, you will receive an email link to the virtual event.

To be eligible for a joint natural gas and electric residential audit, participants must be a natural gas customer of Minnesota Energy Resources and a member of Dakota Electric. This service is for single-family and townhome residents. Can't make the workshop? Schedule an audit by phone at 800-376-0517, or online at www.minnesotaenergyresources.com/audits.



DONATIONS

360 Communities, ProAct and Beyond the Yellow Ribbon

Dakota Electric Association, along with CoBank, one of its lenders, recently donated \$20,000 to three community organizations. Dakota Electric's \$5,000 donation to 360 Communities, \$2,500 donation to ProAct and \$2,500 donation to Dakota County's Beyond the Yellow Ribbon were matched by CoBank through the company's Sharing Success grant program.

The donation to 360 Communities will aid in providing assistance to more than 16,000 individuals each year through holistic programming, which includes violence prevention and intervention, school success support and community resources.

The donation to ProAct will help serve people with disabilities and other barriers to access employment opportunities and gain community inclusion. ProAct provides a wide range of client services, which enhance employment skills and self-sufficiency capabilities. The organization serves the Twin Cities, western Wisconsin and southern Minnesota with quality workplace employees.

The donation to Beyond the Yellow Ribbon will aid in creating awareness and connecting service members and their families with community support, training, services and resources. The Minnesota cities involved in the program provide assistance to local military personnel and their families.

"These are great organizations to support," said Cliff Bolstad of CoBank. "We are glad that Dakota Electric participates in our Sharing Success program."

"We're happy to have the opportunity to double our donations through CoBank's grant," said Dakota Electric's President and CEO Greg Miller. "Due to the impact of COVID-19, CoBank's increased matching grant will make our donations go even further."



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



ProAct received \$5,000 from Dakota Electric and CoBank.



Beyond the Yellow Ribbon received \$5,000 from Dakota Electric and CoBank.

Apply for the 2020 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 2020, 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.



2019 award recipients: winner, Rogue Robotics; runners up, Military Family Support Group; BrainPower in a Backpack and Caring Hearts in Action.



TO OBTAIN AN APPLICATION OR SEE JUDGING CRITERIA, CALL BRENDA AT [651-463-6234](tel:651-463-6234) OR GO TO DAKOTAELECTRIC.COM/COMMUNITY. APPLICATION DEADLINE IS NOV. 2, 2020.

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 BY CALLING [1-866-723-3035](tel:1-866-723-3035) OR GO TO WWW.SOS.STATE.MN.US.

We'll Work With You

The past few months have been difficult for many of our commercial and residential members. We recognize that Dakota Electric Association is a critical service and that we play an important role as we keep the lights on for you, our members. We also recognize that many of our members may be experiencing financial difficulties during these unusual times.

It is important that you reach out to us if you are unable to pay your bill. We will work with you to establish a payment plan for your account. Our member services staff are available Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. at [651-463-6212](tel:651-463-6212) or [1-800-874-3409](tel:1-800-874-3409), or email customerservice@dakotaelectric.com.

Energy Assistance Resources Available

Scott-Carver-Dakota CAP Agency

[651-322-3500](tel:651-322-3500) | 2496 145th St. W., Rosemount, MN 55068

360 Communities | [952-985-5300](tel:952-985-5300)

501 East Highway 13, Suite 112, Burnsville, MN 55337

Dakota County Economic Assistance

[651-554-5611](tel:651-554-5611) | 1 Mendota Road W., Suite 100, West St. Paul, MN 55118

Goodhue County Health & Human Services

[651-385-3200](tel:651-385-3200) | 426 West Ave., Red Wing, MN 55066

Three Rivers Community Action, Inc.

[507-316-0610](tel:507-316-0610) | 1414 North Star Dr., Zumbrota, MN 55992

Rice County Social Services

[507-332-6115](tel:507-332-6115) | 320 3rd St. NW., Faribault, MN 55021

Scott County Human Services

[952-445-7751](tel:952-445-7751) | 200 4th Ave. W., Shakopee, MN 55379



Your Touchstone Energy®
Cooperative

4300 220th Street West
Farmington, MN 55024

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Board Meeting**
Oct. 29, 8:30 a.m.
Board meetings are
being held virtually.
- **All other upcoming
events are canceled
until further notice.**

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DAKOTA ELECTRIC
ASSOCIATION

CONNECT WITH US!



dakotaelectric.com/event-calendar

DAKOTAELECTRIC.COM

Did you know?

Dakota Electric is installing new meters to serve you better.



The new meters will notify Dakota Electric of power outages automatically, allowing us to troubleshoot problems and respond to outages even if you are not home.



Advanced meters do not transmit any personal information — just voltage, current and kilowatt hours used. Like the previous meters, the new meters can only collect energy use data.



The new meters will provide more readings to ensure accurate billing. If you are concerned about a high bill, we can review your electricity use and suggest ways to reduce your bill.

Installation began in the summer of 2020 and is projected to be completed by the end of 2021.
For questions, please call 651-460-7499 or email meters@dakotaelectric.com. Thank you.

inside CIRCUITS

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