

# West River Electric

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative



## Cooperative Connections

AUGUST 2010 VOL. 46 NO. 8

### TO BURY OR NOT TO BURY

Co-ops Weigh the Pros and Cons PG 8

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# Substation Update



**Dick Johnson**  
West River Electric Association  
CEO/General Manager

**I thought I would** provide an update on the Rushmore Substation re-construction. You will probably recall that we have had several pictures and articles over the last year or so on progress of the rebuilding. The substation is located on Radar Hill Road in Box Elder. After 35 years, the substation had reached the limits of the transformer and circuit capacity. The 115-69 kV transformation had become inadequate. Voltage

regulation was needed with the loads that continue to grow in the area around Box Elder and Rapid City. Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) had also requested that we replace antiquated switches. A third high voltage bay was needed to connect the Rushmore substation to the recently built Airport sub. We also needed to upgrade our 20 year old communications technology to better communicate with the substation for readings and other automated information as we moved forward with our automated meter reading and demand response projects. We began planning several years ago and awarded the bid for construction in October 2007 to Besler Inc. of Rapid City, SD. Probably the biggest hurdle to overcome was the purchase of the transformer. We estimated it would take approximately 18 months for construction of the transformer and have it shipped to Box Elder. We were fortunate that the company we chose was able to get it built in about 1 year. The shipping weight of the transformer was approximately 80 ton with a weight of approximately 130 ton when filled with oil. The truck we used was 185 feet long and had over 50 tires. The only place we could find a crane big enough to off load the transformer was in Casper



WY. The transformer was delivered in June 2009. With some preliminary field work done, and after the delivery of the transformer, Besler's began the task of the rebuild. The old transformer was moved out and a mobile substation from WAPA was installed to provide power for the substation. During the period we had the mobile substation installed, we could no longer complete electronic switching of our feeds but instead had to complete them manually. This did cause some increased outage time for our consumers in the Box Elder and Rapid Valley areas. In the spring of 2010, we finally began testing the substation with a minimal amount of load. It took weeks of testing by our engineering firm, the relaying manufacturer, and WAPA to be certain everything would work correctly. We were finally able to put a full load on the substation in May 2010. The cost of the substation re-construction of \$3.4 million will be financed by Rural Utilities Services utilizing a long term guaranteed loan. This rebuilt substation should help us meet the growing demands in the Box Elder and Rapid Valley areas for years to come. Until next time...



# West River Electric Cooperative Connections

(USPS No. 675-840)

## Our Mission

To inform you about your cooperative and its efforts to serve your energy needs; about how to use electricity safely and efficiently; and about the people who define and enhance the quality of life in communities served by electric co-ops.

## President

Jerry Hammerquist, Caputa, S.D.

## Vice President

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## CEO/General Manager

Dick Johnson

## Editor

Veronica Kusser

West River Electric Cooperative Connections is the monthly publication for the members of West River Electric Association. Members subscribe to Cooperative Connections as part of their electric cooperative membership for \$6.00 a year. West River Electric Cooperative Connections purpose is to provide reliable, helpful information to electric cooperative members on matters pertaining to rural electrification and better living. Nonmember subscriptions are available for \$12.00 per year. Periodicals Postage Paid at Wall, S.D., and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to West River Electric Cooperative Connections, PO Box 412, Wall, SD 57790-0412.

Other correspondence to: West River Electric Cooperative Connections, PO Box 3486, Rapid City, SD 57709; telephone (605)393-1500, Exts. 6617, 6631 or 6619; fax (605)393-0275; e-mail vkusser@westriver.com

Design assistance by:

TDG Communications, Inc. Deadwood, S.D.



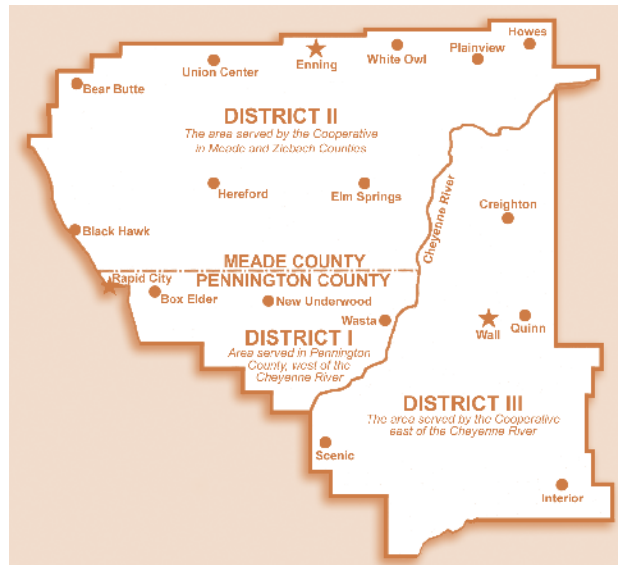
## Call before you dig:

All underground cable location requests for the entire state of South Dakota are made through the South Dakota One-Call System. The number is toll free, 1-800-

781-7474 (dial 811 instate). You are required to provide this one-call center with information regarding the location where you will be digging, along with a description of the type of work you will be doing. You are required to give at least a 48-hour notice before you dig. The one-call center will then notify all utilities with underground facilities in the area where you will be digging.

## Co-op News

# Nominating Petitions Available Petition Deadline August 30, 2010



**West River Electric** members interested in running for the board of directors may pick-up a petition at any of our offices. Petitions must be filed no later than 5:00 p.m. August 30, 2010.

In accordance with the bylaws of West River Electric a nominating committee met in Wall on May 26, 2010 to nominate

candidates for three district director seats which open this year.

## Three incumbent directors were nominated for District #1, District #2 and District #3. They are as follows:

- For District #1, Marion Wilson was nominated.
- For District #2, Marcia Arneson was nominated.
- For District #3, Bill Bielmaier was nominated.

Members who would like to run for a director position must submit a petition signed by no less than 15 members by 5:00 p.m. August 30, 2010. Petitions must be turned in no later than 40 days prior to the Annual Meeting, which is scheduled for October 9, 2010 this year. The petition may be requested and returned to any of our offices including Wall, Rapid City or Enning. Members elected as directors will serve a three-year term on the board. The directors you elect are responsible for establishing direction and policies, assuring member needs and concerns are given fair and timely treatment, and for overseeing the overall financial stability of the cooperative.

Voting will take place October 9, 2010, at the Wall Community Center. In order to vote, members must be present at the Annual Membership meeting. The notice will be mailed to members prior to the meeting.

**WREA WILL BE CLOSED  
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2010  
IN OBSERVANCE OF LABOR DAY**

## The Three Cs of Online Safety

**The best way** to protect your kids online? Talk to them.

These days socializing and communicating online is getting easier and easier.

When it comes to kids and the Internet, it's not often easy to talk to them about being safe online.

A good place to start is the three "Cs" – Conduct, Content and Contact.

Inappropriate conduct can take place when kids think they are immune to being held accountable for their actions online.

Pornography, violence, hate speech and other forms of inappropriate content are easy to find and just as easy to stumble upon.

Every day we hear stories in the news about cyber bullies, scammers, predators and others trying to inappropriately contact us and our children.

Filtering and blocking are only a few of the tools available to us as parents to help keep harmful content from reaching our kids. By communicating your values to your kids and creating an open and honest environment, the more likely it will be that they will act appropriately and make decisions you can be proud of when they face the challenges that await them in this online world.

We've created a link at [www.techradio.us](http://www.techradio.us) that will help get the ball rolling on these important topics. Look for the article titled "Net Cetera."

While there, visit our guide for keeping your data safe, too – click on the link in the menu bar that reminds you of a simple way to do it right.



Send us your questions and comments – our e-mail address is [midday@sdpb.org](mailto:midday@sdpb.org) and our mailing address is PO Box 5000, Vermillion, SD 57069. TechRadio featuring the Computer Guys is heard online at [sdpb.org](http://sdpb.org) and over-the-air on your local South Dakota Public Broadcasting radio frequency twice a month on the first and third Friday's. More information about the topics covered in this newsletter can be found at [www.techradio.us](http://www.techradio.us). Kent Osborne is Director of Online Services for SDPB.

## Lightning Hazards

**The Electrical Safety** Foundation International (ESFI) urges increased awareness of lightning hazards. Data from the National Weather Service shows that lightning strikes are fatal in approximately 10 percent of strike victims. Another 70 percent of survivors suffer serious long-term effects.

Outdoors is the most dangerous place to be during a lightning storm. Because lightning can travel sideways for up to 10 miles, blue skies are not a sign of safety.

If you hear thunder, take cover.

For protection in homes and buildings, consider installing a lightning protection system to intercept lightning strikes and guide the current harmlessly to the ground.

**ESFI recommends following these guidelines to stay safe during electrical storms:**

- If possible, go indoors.
- Once indoors, stay away from windows and doors.
- Do not use corded telephones except for emergencies.
- Unplug electronic equipment before the storm arrives and avoid contact with electrical equipment or cords during storms.
- Avoid contact with plumbing, including sinks, baths and faucets.
- If outdoors, go to a low point. Lightning hits the tallest object. Get down if you are in an exposed area.
- Stay away from trees.
- Avoid metal. Don't hold metal items, including bats, golf clubs, fishing rods, tennis rackets or tools. Avoid metal sheds, clotheslines, poles and fences.
- If you feel a tingling sensation or your hair stands on end, lightning may be about to strike. Crouch down and cover your ears.
- Stay away from water. This includes pools, lakes, puddles and anything damp, such as wet poles or grass.
- Don't stand close to other people. Spread out.
- Don't forget pets during thunderstorms. Doghouses are not lightning-safe. Dogs that are chained can easily fall victim to a lightning strike.
- Victims of lightning strikes should be given CPR if necessary, and seek medical attention.

Source: [esfi.org](http://esfi.org)

### Kids' Corner Safety Poster

**Never climb a tree near a power line.**



#### Lane Kramme, 8 years old

Lane is the son of Shane and Dawn Kramme, Fort Pierre, S.D. They are members of West Central Electric Cooperative, Murdo, S.D.

Kids, send your drawing with an electrical safety tip to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). If your poster is published, you'll receive a prize. All entries must include your name, age, mailing address and the names of your parents.

# Succulent Salads



## Oreo Salad

1 small pkg. instant cheesecake or white chocolate pudding  
1-1/2 cups milk

1 (8 oz.) container Cool Whip  
10 to 15 Oreos, chopped up

Mix together pudding and milk; fold in Cool Whip. Add Oreos. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

**Rebecca Walz, Tripp**  
**Cooperative Connections**

## Pretzel Salad

**Crust:**  
2 cups crushed pretzels  
3/4 cup melted butter  
4 T. sugar

**Filling:**  
1 cup sugar

1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, softened  
1 small container Cool Whip  
1 (6 oz.) pkg. strawberry gelatin  
10 oz. frozen strawberries

Combine crust ingredients; pat into a 9x13-inch pan. Bake at 400°F. for 8 minutes. Cool. Cream together sugar and cream cheese. Fold in Cool Whip. Spread over cooled pretzel mixture. Prepare gelatin using 1-3/4 cups boiling water. Stir frozen strawberries into gelatin mixture. Pour over cream layer. Refrigerate until firm. Raspberry gelatin and frozen raspberries may also be used.

**Carolyn Woods, Sturgis**  
**Cooperative Connections**

## Snowy Cheese Salad Mold

1 pkg. lemon gelatin  
1-1/2 cups hot water  
1/2 cup diced celery  
1/4 cup chopped green pepper  
1/4 cup finely chopped onion

1 (12 oz.) carton large curd, cream-style cottage cheese  
1/2 cup heavy cream, whipped  
1/2 cup salad dressing

Dissolve gelatin in hot water; chill until partially set. Stir in celery, pepper, onion and cheese. Fold whipped cream into salad dressing and then fold into salad. Pour into a 5-1/2-cup ring mold. Chill until firm; unfold on salad greens.

**Darlene Price, Prairie City**  
**Cooperative Connections**

## Spring Salad

1 box macaroni rings, cooked and drained  
1/2 cup diced celery  
1/2 cup diced onion  
1/2 cup grated or thin-sliced carrots

1/2 cup sliced, unpeeled cucumbers  
2 T. vinegar  
3/4 cup sugar  
3/4 cup mayonnaise

Combine first 5 ingredients. Whisk together vinegar, sugar and mayonnaise. Add to pasta/vegetable mixture. Chill.

**Mary Swenson, Brandon**  
**Cooperative Connections**

## Oriental Ramen Salad

2 T. butter or margarine  
1 (3 oz.) pkg. dry oriental-flavor ramen noodle soup, noodles crumbled and seasoning packet reserved  
1/2 cup sliced almonds  
2/3 cup (5 fluid-ounce can) Nestlé Carnation Evaporated Fat Free Milk  
2/3 cup vegetable oil

3 T. white vinegar  
2 T. granulated sugar  
2 (10 oz. each) pkgs. romaine-radichio salad greens  
4 green onions, sliced diagonally

Melt butter in large skillet. Add crumbled ramen noodles and nuts; cook, stirring constantly, until noodles are golden. Remove from pan; cool. Place evaporated milk, oil, ramen seasoning packet, vinegar and sugar in blender; cover. Blend until smooth. Combine salad greens, noodle mixture, green onions and dressing in large bowl; toss to coat well. Serve immediately. (Makes 8 servings)

*Nutrition Information per serving: 300 calories; 210 calories from fat; 25 g total fat; 4.5 g saturated fat; 10 mg cholesterol; 115 mg sodium; 18 g carbohydrate; 3 g fiber; 8 g sugars; 4 g protein; 6% calcium*

**Pictured, Cooperative Connections**

## Calico Salad

2 cups fresh broccoli florets  
2 cups fresh cauliflowerets  
1 cup cherry tomatoes  
1/2 cup chopped red onion  
1/2 cup chopped celery  
1/4 cup chopped sweet red pepper

1/4 cup chopped green pepper  
1/2 cup fat-free sour cream  
2 T. milk  
1 T. ranch salad dressing mix  
1/4 cup sunflower seeds  
3 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled

In a large bowl, combine first 7 ingredients. In separate bowl, combine sour cream, milk and salad dressing mix. Pour over vegetables; toss to coat. Refrigerate. When ready to serve, stir in sunflower seeds and bacon.

**Deloris Bachman, Rapid City**  
**Cooperative Connections**

## One-cup Fruit Salad

1 cup mandarin oranges, drained  
1 cup miniature marshmallows

1 cup flaked coconut  
1 cup chunk pineapple, drained  
1 cup sour cream

Combine all ingredients. Cover and chill 8 hours before serving.

**Elsie Heutinck, Olivia, MN**  
**Cooperative Connections**

*Please send your favorite garden produce and pasta recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2010. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.*

# Slide Into Energy Savings By Replacing A Window With A Door



**Jim Dulley**  
www.dulley.com

**Dear Jim:** In my dining room I have an old, wide window in a brick veneer wall. I'd like to replace it with a sliding glass door. Does this make energy sense? If so, how do I make this improvement? – Mike M.

**Dear Mike:** Your home improvement plan does make energy sense, but only if you select an efficient sliding glass door and install it properly. I made this improvement to my own kitchen last year. The overall efficiency of an airtight sliding glass door can be better than an insulated partial wall with a large inefficient window above it. My double horizontal slider window had double-pane glass, but the gap seal failed on one panel and all the weather-stripping was worn out, creating air leaks.

Although homes are constructed differently, you'll generally find a lot of reinforcing lumber framing around window openings. This is great for structural strength, but leads to inefficient thermal bridges and leaves little room for insulation. Once I removed the drywall, I found the sill plate had not been sealed properly and air was leaking in at the bottom of the wall. Seal as much of the sill as possible to the foundation.

I selected a super-high-efficiency sliding glass door made by Thermal Industries ([www.thermalindustries.com](http://www.thermalindustries.com)). It uses a steel-reinforced vinyl frame and triple-pane glass panels. Two of the glass panes have a low-emissivity coating and dense krypton inert gas between them. This provides a high insulation level and cuts down on noise. Always select a door which is ENERGY STAR® qualified and meets federal energy tax credit requirements.

Another option is double-swinging French patio doors. If you have clearance in your dining room for swinging doors, these are more efficient. Swinging doors close on compression weather-stripping, so they seal better over the long term than a seal on sliding glass doors. Also, when you open both swinging doors, there is more open area for natural ventilation.

Thermal Industries sent along an expert to help me with my installation. Here are some of the tips he taught me.

*Have a question for Jim? Send inquiries to: James Dulley, Cooperative Connections, 6906 Royalgreen Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45244 or visit [www.dulley.com](http://www.dulley.com).*

Spend a few extra dollars and rent a large masonry saw to cut through the brick wall in one pass from outdoors. I bought a cheap masonry blade for my circular saw. It cut through the brick, but I had to make both outdoor and indoor cuts to get through the full width of the wall. This led to an uneven cut and an unbelievable amount of dust indoors. Wear a good N95 breathing mask whenever you cut masonry.

With a brick veneer wall, the width of the brick and the total wall framing thickness will be about twice the width of the sliding glass door frame. The installer recommended positioning the door out on the brick to create a more stable door base. Indoors, this also recesses the door, making it easier to install tight thermal drapes during winter. The Warm Company makes good thermal drapes for this application.

For the simplest installation, cut straight down from the existing window opening. You will have to build out the interior opening with studs to the same width as the brick, but this is still easier than resizing the entire opening. This will leave a gap between the new studs and the brick which must be insulated.

**Always select a door which is ENERGY STAR® qualified and meets federal energy tax credit requirements.**

I used Great Stuff low-expansion foam, but fiberglass is also effective. Once the foam is sprayed in and expands, the insulation was covered with three-quarter-inch pressure-treated plywood. Thermal Industries had custom-sized the door to fit in this final opening size with about one-half inch overall clearance. Make sure to use shims for all screws and don't over tighten them. The framing on a large door can easily be pulled out of balance during installation without supportive shims.

My door frame was placed over pressure-treated lumber trimmed with aluminum flashing to raise it because I mistakenly cut the brick too low. Whether you're installing a door over lumber, brick or a precast sill, liberally apply silicone caulk between the bottom of the door frame and the base to prevent leaks. There are weep vents in the door track to prevent water collection.

# Improving Your Air Conditioner's Efficiency Can Save You Energy Dollars This Summer



**Air conditioners use** a lot of electricity, consuming the most in a summertime heat wave. Without regular service to your air conditioner, its efficiency can fall by as much as half, especially when it works overtime in the summer heat. However, proper maintenance and repair on your air conditioner will save you money and can extend the life of the unit by approximately 15 years.

It is best to hire an air-conditioning technician. An annual tune-up can reduce your cooling costs by 5 percent or more. Air conditioners are complicated and require specialized tools and training to service them.

**Here are some maintenance tips that should be performed by a professional:**

- Inspect the ductwork for loose joints and other leaks. Air leaks waste energy and should be sealed with duct mastic, not duct tape.
- Make sure the condensation tube is draining freely, check hose connections for leaks.
- Be sure the blower is kept clean, so that it can move air more efficiently.
- Oil the motors, and check the belts for tightness and wear.
- Improper airflow can affect efficiency, verify the airflow by measurement.
- Clean the indoor evaporator and outdoor condenser coil.
- Check the refrigerant charge and adjust if needed.
- Straighten any bent films on the condenser and evaporator coils.
- Inspect the electric terminals.
- Make sure to clean and tighten the connections.
- Inspect the thermostat to ensure that it provides a reliable reading.
- Be sure to change the filters on the your unit.

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## Advertising on Utility Poles Is Dangerous to Linemen

**Summer is the time** to advertise a rummage sale or a lawn care service, but there are safer places to advertise these services than on our Utility Poles. Posting signs and other types of announcements on utility poles not only presents DANGER to West River Electric linemen, but is also against law.

Utility poles may seem to be the perfect "bulletin board" in the perfect location for advertising services for hire. However, the nails, staples, and tacks used to affix these advertisements to the pole can deflect a lineman's climbing hooks and cause him to fall. Also, these devices can damage the equipment a lineman wears to protect him from electric shock.

For those reasons, West River Electric is once again asking you to show concern for our lineman's safety and respect for the law by not placing signs and posters or any other type of advertisements on utility poles. In addition, if you see announcements affixed to a pole, please feel free to remove these items and remember to pry the nails, staples or tacks out of the pole.

Thank You from your West River Electric Linemen.



# Why keep lines in harm's way?

by Megan McKoy-Noe

**H**IGH WINDS AND ICY CONDITIONS CAN CAUSE tree limbs to fall on power lines, triggering outages. Although electric cooperative lineworkers are on call around the clock and respond quickly to problems, some folks ask a simple question: Why keep power lines in harm's way?

There are two ways electricity can be delivered to a home: through overhead or underground power lines. Although underground lines may seem attractive during storms since the lines are not exposed to extreme weather, the technology doesn't always make sense for electric cooperatives focused on affordability.

In Georgia, for example, installing power lines underground costs double the amount per foot compared to overhead. In Iowa, building

**Cooperatives in the state average about 2.3 consumers per mile of line on average, compared to a national density of nearly triple that amount.**

underground lines averages between \$85,000 to \$100,000 per mile while overhead line construction runs about \$60,000 per mile. In mountainous or rocky areas, where linemen sometimes resort to using dynamite to install utility poles, the price tag may be even higher.



South Dakota's more sparsely populated areas compound the question of affordability. Cooperatives in the state average about 2.3 consumers per mile of line on average, compared to a national density of nearly triple that amount.

Most underground lines nationally are found in subdivisions where developers request and pay for the option for aesthetic reasons or to comply with local statutes. A high concentration of homes in these areas helps spread out the expense. According to Hi-Line Engineering, a Georgia-based utility consulting firm, nine out of 10 new subdivisions are served by underground cable.

But the bulk of the nation's cooperative energy (including that provided to subdivisions) continues to be delivered via overhead lines – 16 percent of the 2.5 million miles of distribution lines owned and maintained by electric co-ops across the nation are found underground (although the amount grows by approximately 1 percent annually). South Dakota is slightly ahead of that curve, with nearly 20 percent of the state's 63,000 miles of distribution lines buried. Electric cooperatives are not-for-profit, selecting distribution methods with two goals in mind: keeping electricity affordable and reliable for consumers.

There are pros and cons to both forms of power distribution. For instance, underground facilities are more reliable during storms and generally require less right-of-way maintenance because there are no trees, brush and other vegetation to clear away.

However, faults in underground power lines are not easy to track down and fix and flooding can create its own set of issues. A North Carolina study found that outage restoration times averaged 92 minutes for overhead lines versus 145 minutes for underground lines. In 2005, Hi-Line Engineering compared the increased cost of underground lines against their benefits in Virginia. The results: underground savings did not outweigh the heavy initial cost of installation.

"If a tree falls on a line, you can normally drive down the line, see the problem and get to work restoring power," explained Dave Zwetzig, operations manager at Butte Electric Cooperative in Newell, S.D. The cooperative serves portions of the northern Black Hills as well as ranches on the prairie north of the Hills. The cooperative has about one fourth of its lines buried. "The stuff that's visible to the naked eye – crossarms, blown lightning arrestors – are easier to spot on the overhead."

But, terrain and other factors also play a role in making decisions to go with the more costly underground.

Zwetzig said on U.S. Forest Service land the power lines typically must be buried. And, power lines within a few miles of certain municipalities must also be buried.

"But in areas where it's 15 miles of line to serve one consumer, then it's cheaper to build a single-phase overhead

line rather than an underground line," said Zwetzig.

Zwetzig noted that some overhead issues aren't always visible to the naked eye and may take longer to locate, which is also a drawback to underground lines.

"Underground lines are tough to troubleshoot. You can't find a problem with your eyes – you have to search harder for it, tracking it down based on where the power flow stops. Then a line crew has to dig a hole to reach the spot before repairs can be made."

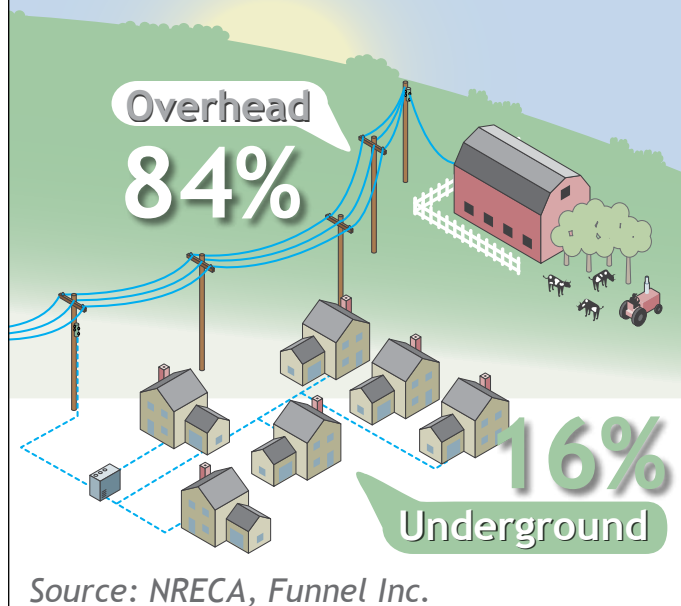
For most electric cooperative consumers, affordable overhead lines will remain the norm, at least for now.

*Source: NRECA, Hi-Line Engineering, Flint Energies, Maquoketa Valley Rural Electric Cooperative*

*Megan McKoy-Noe writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.*

## How is your power delivered?

Electric cooperatives own and maintain 2.5 million miles of distribution lines across America. The majority are overhead lines, while 16 percent are underground.



*Source: NRECA, Funnel Inc.*

**Cover & Opposite:** About 20 percent of South Dakota's 63,000 miles of distribution line owned by the state's electric cooperatives are buried underground.

## Update on Construction of Rapid City Branch Office



The contractors are busy putting up sheetrock on the walls, getting the electricity and water lines run. The overhangs above the doors are up and the glass has been installed in the windows and doors. The office part of the building is fully enclosed.

Just a reminder to you, our members, we have lost a lot of our parking at the Branch Office due to the construction of the new building. Please be careful when coming in to conduct business as parking is limited.

## Interactive Voice Response System

**Making Payments, Bill Inquiries** and Outages Notices is now easier with the recently installed Interactive Voice Response system better known as an “IVR”. The IVR system allows our members to inquire on their account balance and make payments 24 hours a day, 7 days per week via credit card or e-check. Our phones will still be answered during business hours by a friendly WREA live voice. This system does allow members to privately transact services without having to visit with a customer service representative (CSR) on the phone. You can make payments over the phone using this system; to set up a pin number you will be required to enter the last 4 digits of your social security number, the system will then prompt you to enter your own pin number. You will need to use this pin number whenever you make a payment on your account. This system will also be used during business hours should we have a large outage and our call volume will not allow us to answer your calls personally. We will also be using this system to do call backs in the case of outages, calls prior to planned outages, and for reminders of past due balances.

Federal regulations have tightened requirements on us to make certain your private information is not compromised. This system will help to make sure that member’s credit card and banking information is as secure as possible. To access the system, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, dial 605-791-6555. With this number you will now be able to access the WREA IVR to make payments and balance inquiries at any time. Or during regular business hours you can call 605-393-1500 or 888-393-1500 for the Rapid City area or 605-279-2135 or 888-279-2135 for the Wall area. You will hear the announcement that your call will be recorded and then have the option to go into the IVR by choosing the voice prompt and you can stay on the line for a CSR to assist you.

Our after hours procedures for answering outage calls will not change with our call center handling those calls. Please don’t hesitate to contact us at 279-2135 or 393-1500 should you have any questions or concerns on the IVR system.

## Sign Up

Fill out and send to:  
**West River Electric Assoc.  
 Cooperative Connections,  
 PO Box 3486,  
 Rapid City, SD 57709**  
 Or drop it in with  
 your payment.

### Sign up for:

- Operation Roundup
- Budget Billing
- Pay By Bank
- Automatic Credit  
Card Payment
- Blocks Wind Energy

### I am interested in more information on:

- Marathon Water Heater
- Radiant Cove Heat
- Meco Grills
- Special Electric Heat Rate
- Geothermal & Air to Air  
Heat Pumps
- Rebates
- Radiant Floor Heating

Be sure to include your name and address if you mail this coupon  
**E mail: vkusser@westriver.com**

### Tina Hudson Wins \$10.00 Credit

Tina Hudson of White Owl is our latest winner of the survey drawing. These surveys are available at both offices for any member who would like to give us their comments. In return, you’ll have a chance to save \$10.00 on your electric bill.

### Call SD One Call Before You Dig at 811

#### STATS

May 2010 - # of Meters 15,104  
 KWH 16,561,469

May 2009 - # of Meters 14,846  
 KWH 15,814,130

# Your Meter Doesn't Go on Vacation When You Go On Vacation!

**You have packed** the car, loaded up the kids, mapped out your trip and made your reservations. You are ready to enjoy your vacation and since your house will be vacant your utility bill should be lower, right? Not true!

You may be on vacation, but your home is still hard at work. Your appliances such as refrigerators, deep freezers, water heaters, televisions, and VCR's consume power even when you're not around. This passive load has an active appetite for energy dollars.

You can pull the plug on your passive load, but it takes extra work. For instance your water heater is designed to maintain the tank temperature when you are not using water. Turn the temperature down or shut the power off to the heater completely to eliminate wasted energy, but keep in mind you may not have warm water when you return.

The same rule goes for your refrigerator or freezer. You can empty and unplug them during your vacation to save energy dollars.

Computers, televisions, VCR's, DVD's, clocks, microwave ovens, and appliances with electronic read out or memory consume energy while they are not being used. You can unplug individual appliances or shut off the entire house, you can turn off the power to the main breaker or individual breakers.

If you shut off the main breaker your refrigerator and freezers will defrost causing the contents to spoil and the contents of your water heater will cool to room temperature. Keep in mind this will eliminate the automatic timer features on your lights and VCR's.

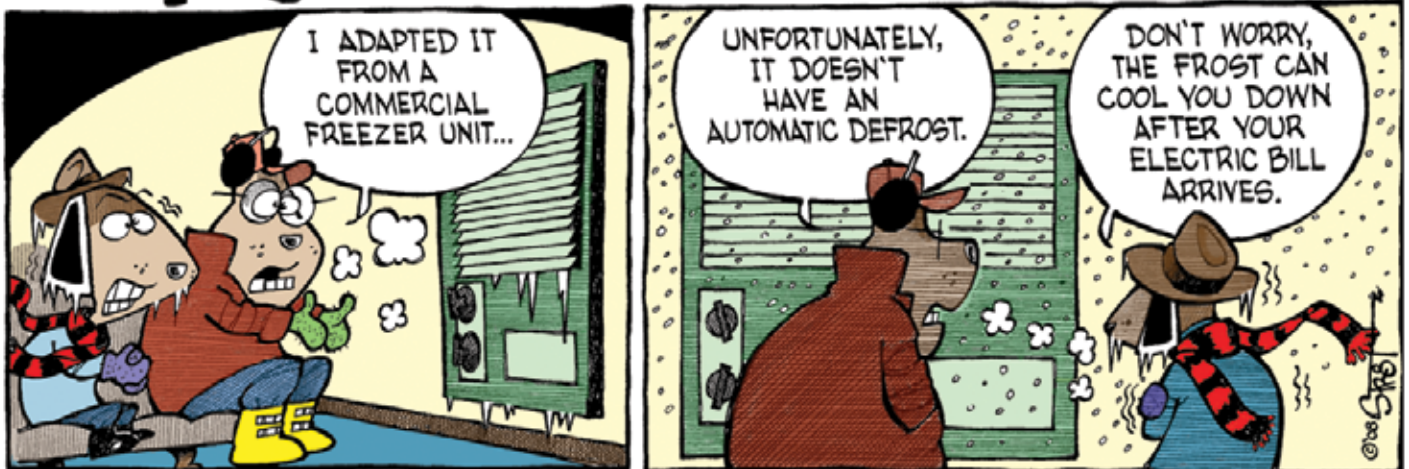


If you choose to leave your appliances connected and the power on, vacation is the perfect time to determine how much of your energy dollar goes to your passive load. Read your meter before you leave, then take a reading again when you return. Although the amount of your bill that goes to passive load will vary from season to season, you will get a general idea how much energy your home consumes to maintain itself and what your appliances consume just to maintain themselves.

You may want to let a neighbor know you're leaving, if a storm leaves your area without power, they can let us know that your home is unattended and our linemen can verify that service has been restored to your meter.

Now go and enjoy your vacation!

## Murphy



# ENERGY STAR® Challenge

By Brenda  
Kleinjan

With an  
ENERGY  
STAR®  
qualified  
refrigerator,  
home-  
owners can  
maximize  
their energy  
and dollar  
savings  
without  
sacrificing  
the features  
they want.

**H**OME OWNERS — AND JUST ABOUT EVERYONE ELSE — are looking for ways to keep more of their hard-earned money in their own pockets.

One home improvement television program shows people how to find vintage, antique and collectible finds in their own homes and storage spaces and then auction the item off — often for profits that are then put to the purchase of some other item. While the carefully edited program keeps viewers in suspense about how much a hideous pair of candlesticks might fetch at auction, more tangible savings may be as close by as that morning glass of milk.

One of the simplest “finds” may be located in millions of kitchens in America: the refrigerator.

While not as exciting as carting the object off for auction, simply replacing an old, outdated refrigerator model may cut hundreds of dollars off a homeowner’s energy bill. In fact, if that staple of the kitchen is of the avocado green vintage, unplugging it and carting it away may save the homeowner \$1,000 to \$1,200 in the next five years when replaced with an

updated ENERGY STAR® model.

Thanks to recent improvements in insulation and compressors, today’s refrigerators use much less energy than older models. With an ENERGY STAR qualified refrigerator, homeowners can maximize their energy and dollar savings without sacrificing the features they want.

ENERGY STAR qualified refrigerators are required by the U.S. Department of Energy to use 20



percent less energy than models not labeled with the ENERGY STAR logo. Choose a new qualified model rather than a non-qualified model and cut your energy bills by \$165 during the lifetime of your fridge.

The appliance savings calculator located at [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov) provides the following calculations for replacing an out-dated refrigerator with a new ENERGY STAR model. (Note: In the charts below, the calculator's default rate of \$0.111 per kilowatt hour was the price for electricity used to figure the savings. The calculations were run based on two sizes of refrigerators: a medium-sized 19.0 to 21.4 cubic foot example and a large, 24.5 cubic feet or larger model. The following assumptions were modeled for a common refrigerator/freezer configuration that has the freezer on top with the refrigeration portion on the bottom.)

### Refrigerator Retirement Savings Calculator

Year	Size (cubic feet)	Annual Cost to Operate	KWH Used Annually	Cost Savings Over Five Years
Before 1980	19.0-21.4	\$246	2,215	\$1,005
1980-1989	19.0-21.4	\$190	1,709	\$725
1990-1992	19.0-21.4	143	1,285	\$490
1993-2000	19.0-21.4	\$95	857	\$250
2001-2008	19.0-21.4	\$60	537	\$75

An ENERGY STAR® qualified model of this size will cost \$45 a year to operate.

Year	Size (cubic feet)	Annual Cost to Operate	KWH Used Annually	Cost Savings Over Five Years
Before 1980	24.5	\$294	2,675	\$1,205
1980-1989	24.5	\$227.00	2,042	\$870
1990-1992	24.5	170	1,535	\$585
1993-2000	24.5	\$113	1016	\$300
2001-2008	24.5	\$69	626	80

An ENERGY STAR® qualified model of this size will cost \$53 a year to operate.

Source: <http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=refrig.calculator>

The average home spends about \$2,200 on energy bills every year. Change to appliances that have earned the ENERGY STAR, and you can save in energy costs, while saving the environment.

ENERGY STAR qualified appliances incorporate advanced technologies that use 10 percent to 50 percent less energy and water than standard models. Look for the ENERGY STAR Label that may appear on the appliance, the packaging or the EnergyGuide label.

Many homeowners, when updating their refrigerator, figure that it's cost-conscious to keep the old unit around to use in the basement or garage to store bulky beverages. However, they might be getting more than they bargained for. If you've kept a pre-1980-vintage refrigerator for such a use, consider the following costs associated with that decision:

### Calculator for a pre-1980 fridge

Costs associated with keeping a pre-1980 refrigerator around as a spare...	Size (Cubic Feet)	KWH Used Annually	Annual Cost to Operate	Cost Savings Over Five Years
	Below 16.5	1831	203	\$1,015
	16.5-18.9	2,060	\$229	\$1,145
	19.0-21.4	2,215 kwh	\$246	\$1,230
	21.5-24.4	2347 kwh	\$261	\$1,305
	24.5+	2647	\$294	\$1,470

**Opposite:** Terry Bright, a sales associate at Karl's TV, Audio and Appliances in Pierre, S.D., points to the yellow EnergyGuide label located inside an ENERGY STAR® refrigerator. Replacing an out-dated model refrigerator with an ENERGY STAR one can save hundreds of dollars on a home's annual energy bill.



## Fridge Facts

The average refrigerator sold today uses less energy than a 60-watt lightbulb left on for 24 hours a day.

Every year refrigerator efficiency improves. An average 2008 fridge consumes 3 percent less energy than one made in 2007.

44 percent of fridges that could be retired or recycled are used as second fridges, sold, or given away.

26 percent of all U.S. households maintain a second refrigerator.

Only three out of every 10 refrigerators sold are Energy Star-qualified.

27 million inefficient fridge models made before 1993 are still in American homes.

Source: Energy Star, Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers.  
Image: GE Consumer Products

# Operation Round-Up Funds Presented



The **Operation Round-Up Board** met in April to distribute funds which were collected through voluntary contributions by our members. West River Electric members participating in this worthwhile program have again helped local charities through their voluntary contributions of \$8400 for the past year.



**Pennington County Search & Rescue** received \$2000 from Operation Round-up to be used to help with the purchase of high angle

rescue equipment allowing Search and Rescue to safely and efficiently respond to emergency situations.



**The New Underwood Youth Organization** was awarded \$250.00 from Operation Round-up to be used for the purchase of equipment

for the New Underwood Youth baseball players.



**St Thomas More Theatre** received \$500 from Operation Round-up to be used to help with the purchase of a lighting system.



**Rural Meade Tumbling** received \$250.00 from Operation Round-up to be used to help with the purchase of mats, a balance beam, vault or mini tramp.



**Plainview Community Hall** received \$400.00 from Operation Round-up to be used to help with updating the present heating system and general maintenance.



**Rural Meade Ambulance Services** received \$500.00 from Operation Round-up to be used to help with the purchase of new shocks and air bags for the ambulance.



**The Country Cupboard of Wall** was awarded \$1000.00 from Operation Round-Up for the start-up costs of the emergency food pantry.



**The Wall Home Health** was awarded \$2000.00 from Operation Round-Up for the purchase of needed supplies and wages for the nurse involved

with the Home Health care.

You can participate in this member contribution option. Members volunteering for the Round-Up option agree to have their monthly bill rounded up to the nearest dollar with the extra pennies going to the program.

The average donation will amount to about \$6 during the course of a year and is tax deductible. Imagine, if 50 percent of West River Electric's nearly 12,000 members signed up for the Round-Up program, the fund would have \$36,000 to be used to help local charities and civic organizations.

Operation Round-Up is voluntary! If you are not signed up already, please do so by contacting either office at 393-1500 or 279-2135, email your request to [info@westriver.com](mailto:info@westriver.com) or fill out the form below and send it to West River Electric, PO Box 3486, Rapid City, SD 57709.

**Yes I want to participate in Operation Round Up**

**Please send me more information**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Acct # \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to donate an additional amount over and above the normal roundup amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_ per month, please apply this amount to my bill each month.

**Please return with your bill or fill out and mail to:  
West River Electric, PO Box 412, Wall, SD 57790.**

## News Briefs

### Safety Demonstration for Employees of ASI



**Willy Nohr** presented Electrical Safety to the families of the ASI employees for their safety day.

The safety demonstration is available for children and adults to learn about safe practices of electricity. Contact West River Electric if you are interested in having the demonstration done at your office or at a special event. Call 393-1500 and ask for Robert or Willy.

### Line Rebuild in the Sturgis Area

**WREA will be** rebuilding a three phase line from south of the Buffalo Chip Campground to Pleasant Valley road. Willson's Tree Service Inc. will be clearing the existing right of way and Kainz Construction will be rebuilding the line. Members in the immediate area will be affected by occasional planned outages. We will do our best to notify everyone of the outages and try to keep the outage times to a minimum. If you have any questions please contact Koozie Johnson or Mike Letcher at the Rapid City office at 393-1500 or 1-800-393-1500.

### July 4 ATV Accident Causes Outage

**An outage affecting** approximately 8 consumers, on July 4 was caused by an ATV accident. The operator was distracted and ran into the transformer causing it to tip off its pad. Fortunately there were no injuries and power was restored in about an hour.



## Regional Dateline

**July 16-18**  
Hills Alive  
Music Festival  
Memorial Park  
Rapid City, SD  
605-342-6822

**July 16-18**  
Festival In The Park  
Spearfish, SD  
605-642-7973

**July 18**  
Family Fun Day  
Dry, Dusty Deserts  
Rapid City, SD  
605-394-4103

**July 26-27**  
Meade County Fair  
Sturgis, SD  
605-347-2556

**July 23**  
2nd Annual  
Box Elder Bash  
The Villa  
Box Elder, SD  
605-923-5991

**July 27-31**  
Day of '76  
Deadwood, SD  
800-999-1876

**August 20-22**  
Steam & Gas  
Threshing Bee  
Sturgis, SD  
605-347-0635



PHOTO COURTESY OF SD TOURISM

To have your event listed on this page, send complete information, including date, event, place and contact to your local electric cooperative. Include your name, address and daytime telephone number. Information must be submitted at least eight weeks prior to your event.

## Events of Special Note

**August 9-15**  
70th Annual  
Sturgis Motorcycle Rally  
Sturgis, SD  
605-347-2556

**August 19**  
Annual Artist Ride  
Art Show  
Wall, SD  
605-279-2665

**August 20-29**  
Central States Fair  
Central States Fairgrounds  
Rapid City, SD  
605-355-3861

**August 26-29**  
Kool Deadwood Nites  
Deadwood, SD  
605-578-1876

**September 2-6**  
South Dakota State Fair  
Huron, SD  
605-353-7340

**September 2-6**  
Sturgis Mustang Rally  
Sturgis, SD  
605-347-3662

**September 3-6**  
Black Hills UTV Rally  
Rapid City, SD  
605-737-4200

**September 5-7**  
Labor Day Weekend  
Open House  
Crazy Horse  
Custer, SD  
605-673-4681

**September 10-11**  
Dakota Polka Festival  
Rapid City, SD  
605-787-5584

**September 11-18**  
Black Hills  
Road Bicycle Tour  
Rapid City, SD  
800-755-2453

**September 17-18**  
Deadwood Jam  
Deadwood, SD  
800-999-1876

**September 17-19**  
Black Hills  
Photo Shootout  
Rapid City, SD  
605-773-3301

**September 18**  
Black Hills Model  
Engineering Show  
Rapid City, SD  
605-716-4647

**September 18-19**  
Wine Express  
In The West  
Hill City, SD  
605-574-2222