



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



SOUTHEASTERN ELECTRIC

SEPTEMBER 2026 VOL. 27 NO. 5

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Pristine Prairie

**Tellus & Lori Waddell Grow,
Harvest Native Plants**

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Drive Out to a Drive-In!

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RATE PRESSURES CONTINUE INTO 2027



Chad Kinsley
CEO/General
Manager

Southeastern
Electric
Cooperative
and Union
County Electric
Cooperative

As summer draws to a close and another school year begins, our leadership team is also beginning work on Southeastern's 2027 budget. As a not-for-profit electric cooperative, we take that responsibility seriously. Our goal is to operate efficiently while continuing to provide the safe, reliable, and community-focused service you expect from your cooperative.

As I've shared previously, wholesale power costs are rising across the country as electric demand grows faster than new generation and transmission can be built. In response, our focus is to plan carefully, advocate for prudent investments, and help ensure the energy system can keep up with demand so you can count on having the power you need, whenever and wherever you need it.

Recently, Basin Electric Power Cooperative, our primary wholesale power supplier, informed member cooperatives that its wholesale power rates will likely increase approximately 8% in January 2027. A key reason is Basin's need to invest nearly \$8 billion over the next ten years in new generation and transmission resources to meet growing residential and commercial demand. These investments do not include the costs of serving extremely large loads, such as data centers. Under Basin's Large Load program, those large loads are expected to fund the facilities needed to meet their energy requirements.

At Southeastern, higher wholesale power costs will require the Board of Directors to consider a retail rate adjustment in January 2027. Wholesale power purchases represent 68% of our operating costs, so changes from our wholesale suppliers have a direct impact on Southeastern's budget. We do not take this responsibility lightly. We understand any

change affects household, farm, and business budgets, and we will continue to manage costs carefully on behalf of our members.

We are also working to limit the impact of these higher wholesale costs. For example, we have asked Basin to explore options to phase in the rate change over multiple years while protecting its A credit rating, which helps reduce borrowing costs. At Southeastern and Union County, we are looking for efficiencies through a possible merger and more strategic material sourcing. Every decision is guided by the same purpose: protecting reliability, controlling costs, and providing the best possible value for you, our member-owners.

Wholesale power purchases represent 68% of our operating costs, so changes from our wholesale suppliers have a direct impact on Southeastern's budget.

For more information about how our three-tiered cooperative system works, please see the article on pages 6 and 7. Southeastern works closely with our generation and transmission partners to share costs, improve efficiency, and secure the reliable power supply our members depend on every day.

I want to assure you that Southeastern remains committed to transparency, responsible cost management, and decisions made with our members' best interests in mind. Thank you for your continued trust and support as we work together to meet your energy needs safely, reliably, and affordably.

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

SOUTHEASTERN ELECTRIC

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JULY BOARD SUMMARY

The Board of Directors of Southeastern Electric Cooperative met in Sioux Falls on Monday, July 27, 2026, with all directors present. Also, present were CEO Chad Kinsley, Attorney Lane Haskell, and staff members Audri Carlson, Erica Fitzhugh, Todd Nelson, and Jon Wunder.

CFO Jon Wunder reviewed his written report, including the preliminary financial report, cost of service study, capital credit retirements, renewable energy credits, hiring and staffing, compensation study results, benefit rates and the employee outing.

VP of Operations and Engineering John Euchner was absent. CEO Kinsley reviewed the operations written report, close calls, safety meetings, SD One Call notification rule, projects, large loads, substation work, wildfire mitigation plan, and facilities.

VP of Technology Todd Nelson reviewed his written report, load control receiver update, technology roadmap update, distributed resource portal, cybersecurity, and other IT projects.

VP of Member Services Audri Carlson reviewed her written report, recent impersonation of SEC scams, outage management, phone software upgrades, accounts receivable, disconnects, past due accounts, call volumes, and other projects.

Communications Manager Erica Fitzhugh reviewed her written report, member communications, advertising, bus tour, Parkston member appreciation event, member survey, internal communications, social media, and future summer events.

CEO Kinsley reviewed his report and commented on the following topics: Basin financials, East River financials, Basin By-law Committee, Basin Summer Manager Meeting, WAPA rates, SD PUC Candidates, recent SD PUC hearings, Joint Board Meeting with Union County, Sioux Falls land inquiry, and Basin rate cases.

Attorney Haskell generally discussed co-op related legal matters.

THE BOARD ACTED ON THE FOLLOWING MOTIONS:

- A motion was duly made and seconded to authorize all directors to attend the Union County Annual meeting and approved per diem and mileage reimbursement. Motion carried.
- A motion was made and seconded to approve the Wildfire Mitigation Plan. Motion carried.
- A motion was made and seconded to adopt Board Resolution #2026-03 approving a \$2,500,000 capital credit retirement to retire 100% of 2006 and a percentage of the remaining outstanding capital credits for years 2007 through 2025. Motion carried.
- A motion was made and seconded to support the REED loan application and forward the application to the REED board for action. Motion carried.
- A motion was made and seconded to approve the following amended policies: 106 Electing Officers and Representatives of the Board, 613 Avoided Cost Rate, and 711 Distributed Energy Resources Policy. Motion carried.
- A motion was made and seconded to enter executive session. Motion carried.
- A motion was made and seconded to approve Kost to attend the SDREA Board Leadership Summit. Motion carried.
- A motion was made and seconded to set the October board meeting for Thursday, October 22, 2026 beginning at 8:30 AM. Motion carried.

The next regular monthly meeting will be held on Thursday, August 18, 2026, at the Sioux Falls office.

STAYING PREPARED IN RURAL S.D.

As most South Dakotans know, weather on the Great Plains can be frightfully unpredictable. In fact, South Dakota holds the record for the fastest temperature rise ever recorded. On Jan. 22, 1943, the temperature in Spearfish climbed from 4 degrees below zero to 45 degrees above zero in only two minutes.

Winter storms also offer reminders of how quickly severe weather can reshape daily life. The Blizzard of 1966 brought wind gusts of 70 mph and snowdrifts reaching more than 30 feet. Roads remained blocked for days, and massive livestock losses made it one of the most severe blizzards in state history.

Winter Storm Atlas, another devastating blizzard in October 2013, dropped several feet of snow over the Black Hills. Heavy snow and strong winds toppled trees and power lines, and devastated livestock operations, leaving some residents without electricity for a week or longer.

Although not every storm will make the record books, severe weather can still disrupt a household. A little preparation on an ordinary day can make a difficult day much easier.

Make A Plan

Emergency preparedness begins with a plan. FEMA recommends that households develop a plan for alerts, appropriate shelter, evacuation and communication if family members become separated.

Start by identifying the types of emergencies most likely to affect your area. For rural South Dakotans, that may include anything from blizzards and tornadoes to severe thunderstorms and wildfires. A good safety plan starts by choosing a safe place inside the home for high winds and tornadoes, generally a basement or small interior room, away from windows.

Next, consider who in your household may need extra help during an emergency, including infants, older adults and pets. Make sure everyone knows where to go and what to do, then walk through the plan together.

Build A Practical Supply Kit

Once the plan is in place, start collecting and organizing supplies your household could rely on if the power goes out or travel becomes difficult. FEMA recommends keeping enough food and water for at least several days, with one gallon of water per person for each day. For example, a

family of four preparing for three days would need at least 12 gallons of water.

Choose nonperishable foods your household already eats and that can be prepared without electricity. Then add the basics needed to get through an outage, including flashlights, extra batteries, a first-aid kit and a way to recharge cellphones. A NOAA Weather Radio can also provide important updates even when cellphone service is unavailable.

Next, tailor the kit to your household. Set aside medications and other essentials.

There is no need to build the entire supply kit at once. Start with what is already in the house, then add supplies during regular shopping trips. Check the kit a few times each year to replace expired food, medications or batteries.

Preparedness cannot stop a storm, reopen a highway or restore electricity, but it can provide time and options when conditions begin to change.

For more information, visit Ready.gov for additional tips on making an emergency plan, building a supply kit and staying prepared.



"Don't plant trees near power lines."

Owen Williams, age 7

Owen reminds members to not plant trees near power lines. That is great advice, Owen! Thank you!

Owen's parents are Bruce and Jing Williams from Wakonda 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. Colored drawings are encouraged.

FALL DESSERTS

GOLDEN GRAHAM/ SMORES BARS

Ingredients:

7 cups Golden Graham cereal
16 oz. mini marshmallows
1/2 cup butter
6 full size Hershey bars

Method

Unwrap Hershey bars and break apart on lines and then each piece again in half. Set aside. Melt the butter and 6 cups of the marshmallows. Stir in the Golden Grahams cereal. Cool for one minute. Stir in remaining marshmallows and Hershey pieces. Press lightly into a greased 9x13 pan with slightly wet hands. Cool and serve.

Valerie Marso
Oahe Electric

THE BEST APPLE CRISP

Ingredients:

6 cups sliced apples
1 1/2 cups white sugar
1 tsp. cinnamon
6 tbsp. flour

Topping

(makes enough for two pans)

2 cups flour
2 cups soft butter
1 tsp. baking powder

Method

Mix ingredients in a bowl and place in a 9x12 glass baking dish. Mix topping ingredients together until crumbly and sprinkle over apple mixture. Don't pack. Bake at 350 F for 1 hour or until apples are done.

Ginny Jensen
Sioux Valley Energy

VERY GOOD PEACH DESSERT

Ingredients:

First layer:

1 cup flour
1/2 cup nuts
1 stick margarine
Mix together and press in 9x13 pan. Bake at 350 F for 10 minutes.

Second layer:

1 (8 oz.) package cream cheese
1 cup powdered sugar
Cream together and add 1 cup Cool Whip. Spread on top of cooled crust.

Third layer:

1 cup sugar
2 tbsp. white corn syrup
3 tbsp. cornstarch
1 cup water
Combine ingredients, cook until thickened, then remove from heat. Add 3 tbsp. of peach-flavored gelatin and 1/4 tsp. almond flavoring. Cool. Peel and slice fresh peaches, then combine with the cooled mixture. Spread on top of cheese filling. Top with a layer of whipped topping and chill.

Ginny Jensen
Sioux Valley Energy

Please send your favorite 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 2026. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

WORKING TOGETHER IS POWERFUL



Understanding the Three-Tier Co-op Structure

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

What Is an Electric Cooperative? (Tier 1: Distribution Co-ops)

An electric cooperative is a non-profit, member-owned utility governed by a member-elected board of directors. Co-ops are different from a typical utility because they don't report to shareholders; a co-op's responsibility is solely to the people it serves.

Member-ownership keeps the co-op focused on serving the interests of the community and maintaining low costs to members. Co-ops employ democratic principles; each member has one vote, which keeps control local and shields the co-op and members from outside interests.

Your local electric cooperative owns and maintains distribution power lines to serve members throughout its territory. While electric cooperatives' territories cover almost all of South Dakota, most of the state's population lives in cities and small towns and purchase electricity from a city-owned municipal power system or a for-profit investor-owned utility.

Most of the electric distribution cooperatives in South Dakota were organized by members beginning in the 1930s and 1940s to serve the rural areas that investor-owned utilities determined would not be profitable enough to be worth serving.

Rural residents formed co-ops, going

door-to-door collecting \$5 sign-on fees – a lot of money at the time – from their neighbors to kickstart the fledgling co-ops. They applied for loans from the Rural Electrification Administration to begin construction, and by the early 1950s, most rural South Dakotans were enjoying amenities made possible by electricity.

Who Supplies My Co-op's Power? (Tier 2: Regional G&Ts)

East River Electric Power Cooperative in Madison and Rushmore Electric Power Cooperative in Rapid City are generation and transmission (G&T) cooperatives that sell electricity to a total of 27 distribution systems in South Dakota.

East River sells electricity to 19 member systems located in eastern South Dakota and six member systems in western Minnesota, while Rushmore sells electricity to eight member systems: seven located in western South Dakota and Cam Wal Electric Cooperative serving Campbell and Walworth counties in eastern South Dakota.

Both East River and Rushmore are governed by a board of directors comprised of directors from the distribution co-ops. Therefore, each distribution co-op receives one vote on its respective G&T's board.

Beyond selling electricity, East River and Rushmore assist their member systems in other areas; East River builds and maintains transmission systems to serve its member systems and offers support for information technology, marketing, public relations and economic development. Rushmore also offers marketing, PR and IT support, along with engineering services.

Two co-op systems in South Dakota are affiliated with neither East River nor Rushmore. Rosebud Electric Cooperative, based in Gregory, and Grand Electric, based in Bison, are part of District 9 – a collection of other distribution cooperative systems in Minnesota and North Dakota that purchase their energy from multiple sources rather than from a single supplier.

Who generates my electricity? (Tier 3: Basin Electric)

Rushmore Electric, East River Electric, and District 9 systems including Rosebud Electric and Grand Electric purchase energy from Basin Electric Power Cooperative, a G&T cooperative based in Bismarck, North Dakota.

Just like the regional G&Ts it serves, Basin is governed by a board of directors representing its member systems. There are 11 directors on Basin's board, and they know the energy industry inside and out – after all, to serve on the Basin board, the directors must also serve on their local co-op's board as well as the regional G&T's board, and are elected by their colleagues to represent the co-op, board, and its members.

Currently, Mike McQuiston of the Fort Pierre area represents his local co-op, West Central Electric Cooperative, on Rushmore's board, and represents Rushmore on Basin's board.

Kermit Pearson of the Lake City area represents his local co-op, Lake Region Electric Association, on East River's board, and represents East River on Basin's board.

The cooperative systems that comprise District 9 also elect a director from

a District 9-affiliated co-op to represent them on Basin's board. Wayne Peltier from Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative in Montevideo, Minn., represents Rosebud, Grand and the other District 9 co-ops on Basin's board.

Basin Electric was formed in 1961 by electric co-ops in the upper Midwest to generate and transmit electricity exclusively for cooperative systems to purchase. The system has grown to serve North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Minnesota, Iowa, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, and New Mexico.

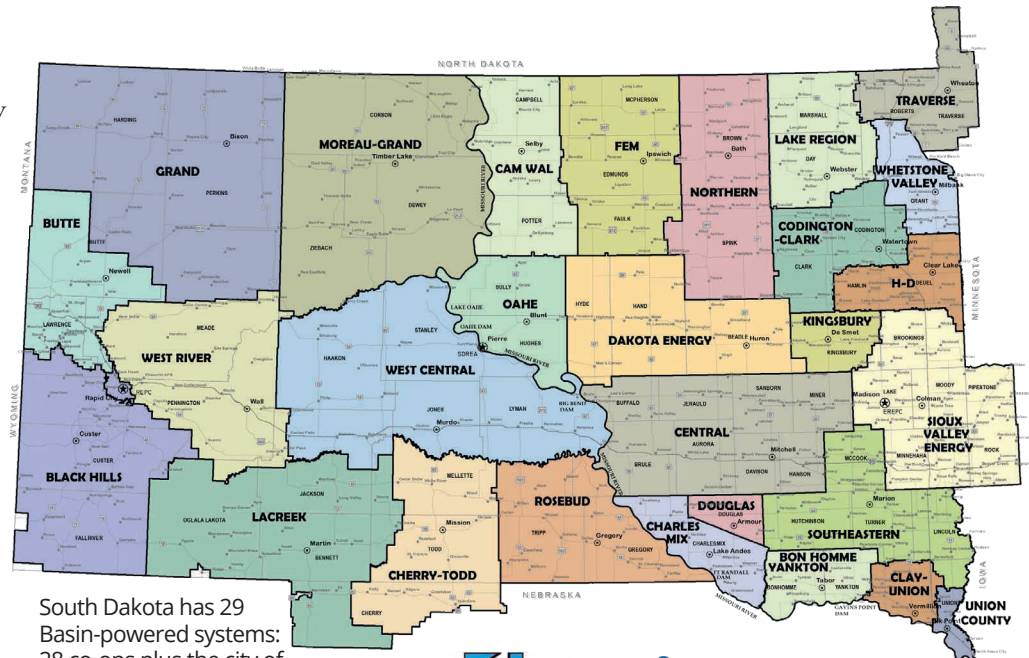
Basin Electric generates electricity using its owned and leased generation assets, which include coal, natural gas, solar, wind, oil and waste heat, with a maximum generating capacity of about 8,500 megawatts.

Other Generation: Western Area Power Administration

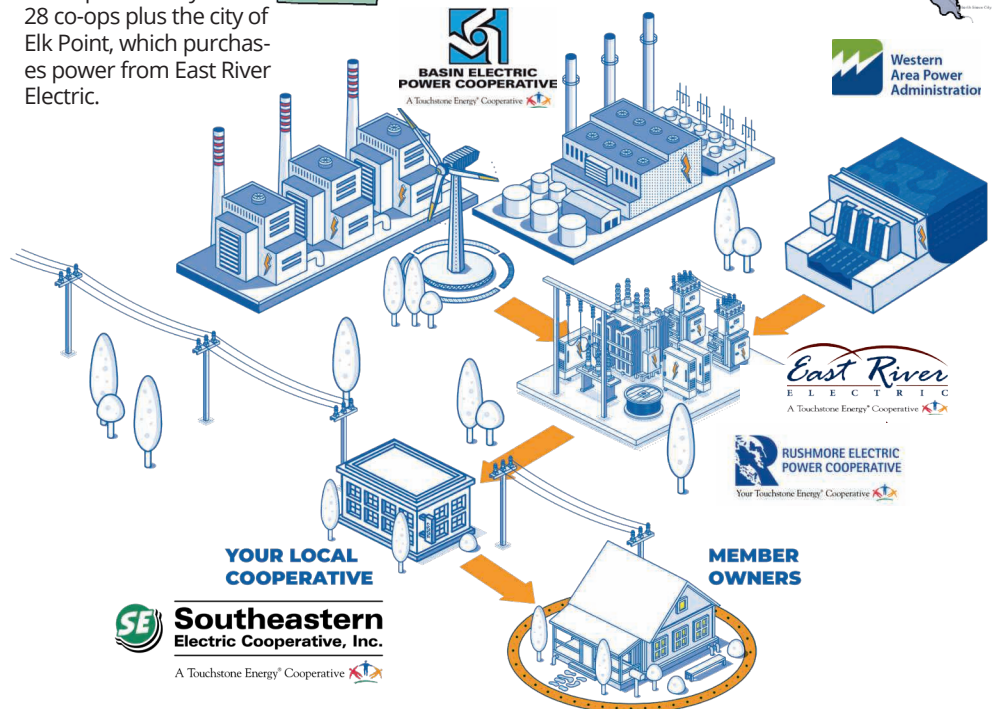
East River, Rushmore and the District 9 systems also purchase an allocated amount of electricity from the Western Area Power Administration. WAPA is the power marketing administration under the U.S. Department of Energy that markets and transmits power from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-operated Missouri River dams and other generators in the western U.S.

WAPA purchases make up about 18% of East River Electric and 12% of Rushmore Electric's purchases, respectively. District 9 systems also purchase some of their electricity directly from WAPA.

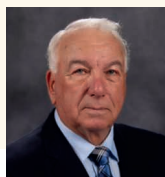
Each year, WAPA transmits about 25,000 gigawatt hours of electricity across its 17,000-circuit mile transmission system. WAPA serves a 15-state region that includes North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, Wyoming, Montana, Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado, Utah, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada and California.



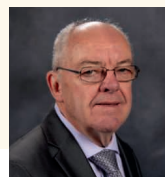
South Dakota has 29 Basin-powered systems: 28 co-ops plus the city of Elk Point, which purchases power from East River Electric.



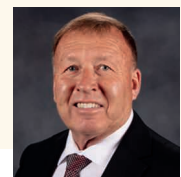
Basin Electric Directors Representing South Dakota



Kermit Pearson
East River, Lake Region
Submitted Photo



Wayne Peltier
District 9, Minnesota Valley
Submitted Photo



Dwight Rossow
Rushmore, Cam Wal
Submitted Photo

A photograph of a man and a woman, Tellus and Lori Waddell, sitting in the back of a tractor. They are both smiling at the camera. The background is a lush green field with some purple wildflowers. The tractor's frame and controls are visible in the foreground.

WONDROUS WILDFLOWERS & PRAIRIE PRESERVATION

Tellus and Lori Waddell.
Photo by Jacob Boyko

Waddell Native Seeds Turns Rural Acreage into Prairie Paradise

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

Journeying east on U.S. Hwy. 12 toward Milbank, as you make a steep descent into Whetstone Valley, you'll pass the usual South Dakota crops – corn, soybeans, some wheat here and there.

But for Whetstone Valley Electric Cooperative members Tellus and Lori Waddell of Marvin, the most fascinating – and lucrative – harvest is one most of us would overlook, growing tall in roadside ditches and uncut fields.

For more than 30 years, the Waddells have allowed their Grant County acreage to run wild as they grow, harvest and sell the seeds of dozens of native wildflowers and grasses.

"We started noticing wildflowers up in the pasture, and at that time [the internet was] coming out so we could do some research on what they were," Lori recalled. "Tellus started calling nurseries asking them if they wanted this or that ... and that's how we built into this – and there are not a lot of people that do this."

When Lori says "this," she's referring to more than just collecting seeds. She means getting up early before the weather

is too hot, rolling up her sleeves and driving around the property in a side-by-side scanning the ground for patches of whichever wildflower type is ready to be harvested – by hand – for seeds.

"It's very, very labor-intensive," Tellus added. "It's not like picking flowers – because we don't pick a flower. You have to let [the seeds] develop. Right now, we're picking things that blossomed about six weeks ago."

With dozens of plants and just as many harvest schedules, the Waddells have a steady amount of work to do from mid-spring all the way into fall.

Traversing the lightly traveled trails over their expansive, glacially carved property, (this reporter was joined by two labs in the back seat of the side-by-side) Tellus and Lori are quick to point out distant patches of coneflowers, blazing star, wild turnips, vervain and their personal favorite flora they cultivate, milkweed.

"It's for the butterflies," Tellus explained as he pulled the vehicle up to the family's newest experiment: milkweed planted as a row crop.

"It's the first time we've ever done that," Tellus said, proudly explaining his youngest son, Levi Waddell, is heading up the initiative.

Tellus added, "As every generation takes over, you'll get different things."

Most outbuildings on the Waddells' land double as drying rooms for at least one harvest during the season.

That includes their three-stall garage – a more accurate description may be the seed processing facility – where the Waddells dry the seeds, separate them from the chaff and package them for shipment to area greenhouses and other customers.

Demand has grown to the point where the Waddells have hired about a dozen part-time summer workers to help harvest seeds.

Their harvesting efforts don't stop at the

The Waddells are row cropping milkweed for the first time. Monarch butterflies lay their eggs on milkweed, making it an important resource for conservation efforts.

Photo by Jacob Boyko





Lori Waddell enjoys photographing native flowers on the acreage.
 Top row: prairie lily, pasque flower (S.D. state flower), wild turnip.
 Bottom row: blazing star, scarlet gaura, coneflower.
Photos by Lori Waddell

fence line – Tellus is known to park his car, knock on the doors and ask to collect seeds if a patch of prairie catches his eye.

"We have picking rights [agreements with property owners] from here to Pierre down to Grand Island, Nebraska," Tellus said, recounting an especially vibrant purple field of vervain near Forestburg.

This led Tellus to a more solemn conversation. Piece by piece, he and Lori have bought surrounding acreage in an effort to isolate their native plants from the effects of drifting pesticides. Tellus said that when mixed into a slight breeze, the chemicals are potent enough to wipe out their native broadleaf plants for years at a time – even if the spraying takes place miles away.

Tellus and Lori's observation is that biodiversity is shrinking throughout the region for this same reason – diverse fields of native flowers and grasses are becoming more difficult to find, and the wildlife that relies on native plants for food are becoming increasingly scarce.

"You talk to people in their 80s, and they'll talk about walking through a field of lilies," Tellus said. "And then they just sit there for a bit and try to think of the last time they've seen that. Sometimes 40 or 50 years ago."

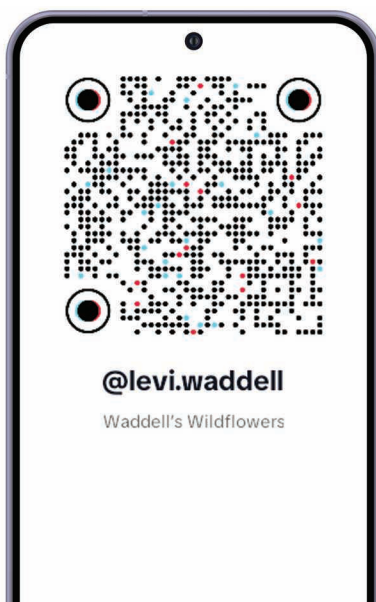
He continued, "that's when people realize the prairie is pretty much gone."

Levi Waddell uses social media to spread awareness about native plants, conservation and his family's operation.

His TikTok page, Waddell's Wildflowers, has more than 1,000 followers and 19,000 likes and chronologizes the day-by-day life of a native plant harvester.

The Waddells hope to share their story to educate others on the importance of conservation and inspire them to preserve the native prairie for generations to come.

"God gave us this beautiful earth and we're ruining it," Lori said. "If we can at least preserve and protect our little corner, I feel like we've done our job."



PROCESSING NATIVE SEEDS



The harvested seeds are spread indoors to dry for several weeks.



The dried seed heads are broken apart to loosen the seeds from the surrounding plant material.



The seeds are fed into a hammer mill to break apart remaining plant material from the seeds.



The cleaned seeds are sifted one final time to remove any extra material. The separated chaff is spread where the seeds were harvested so any unseparated seeds can germinate.



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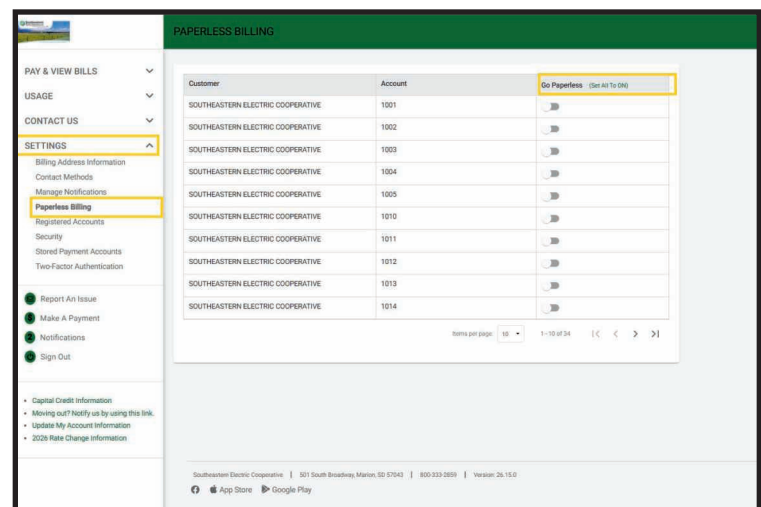
You will need to have created a Smarthub account with your email address and your account number. Your account number can be located on your monthly bill.

HOW TO ACTIVATE PAPERLESS BILLING:

Step 1: Log in to your SmartHub Account

If you haven't registered yet, download the app or visit our web portal to get started. You can find the SmartHub Log-In button on our home page at southeasternelectric.com.

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Electric co-ops at the State Fair

Family fun for all





DRIVE OUT TO A DRIVE-IN

Outdoor Movie Theaters Offer Old-Time Fun

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

It's one of the defining cultural behemoths of the 20th century. Load the family into the station wagon – or someone you fancy in a borrowed hot rod – and head over to the drive-in theater. You pick up popcorn and soda pop, tune your car stereo to the transmitter, and settle in for an unforgettable experience.

It all started in 1933, when Richard Hollingshead of Camden, New Jersey, began developing an accessible and comfortable way to bypass the confining indoor theater seats and allow moviegoers a way to enjoy a show from the comfort of their own vehicle.

The Smithsonian Magazine reports a peak of more than 4,000 American drive-in theaters in 1958. But with cities continuously expanding and the price of property increasing, most of them have closed in the time since. Today, it's estimated that fewer than 300 drive-in theaters remain.

But don't fret! If you're reading this magazine, there are still some nearby drive-in movie theater options for you and your family (or your date) to enjoy!

Midway Drive In – Miller, S.D.

In Miller, mid-May through Labor Day weekend is drive-in movie season. Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights are illuminated by the distant glow of the local drive-in movie theater.

Sarah Resel is one of the owners of the Midway Drive-In. Growing up in Miller, the drive-in was her weekend hangout and the site of so many cherished memories. Years later, that's still the case – just under slightly different circumstances.

A show is about to start at the Midway Drive In near Miller.
Photo submitted by Midway Drive In

"We pretty much don't have weekends during the summer," Resel said. "We're committed to being here with the theater. We all have full-time jobs; we always call this our community service."

Despite the hefty commitment, Resel says seeing people turnout from all over the country for an authentic drive-in experience makes it worthwhile.

"I think with us in our Miller community, we take it for granted that it's just here," Resel said. "It's crazy the support we get from other towns coming to our community."

Pheasant Drive-In – Mobridge, S.D.

Cam Wal Electric Cooperative members Jon and Jill Olson of Mobridge have experience with both indoor and outdoor theaters.

"The day-to-day prep is a little bit different," Jill said, explaining



The Pheasant Drive-In sits on the Missouri River hills near Mobridge.
Photo submitted by Pheasant Drive-In

the maintenance needed for the property and screen, along with weather surprises.

"I think weather is probably the number one issue," she continued. "We had a windstorm that came through Sunday [July 19] and caused some damage for us."

Even with the unexpected challenges, Jill said owning the drive-in theater is a positive experience, and on summer nights as people from near and far gather for a showing, she's reminded why she does it.

"It's a completely different vibe than sitting inside a dark theater," Jill said. "Parents do such a good job making it a fun experience, like bringing a pickup, backing it in and letting the kids sit in the back end. The other weekend, we had a family bring a bunch of blow-up air mattresses. The kids can talk and run back and forth – it just isn't your typical thing."

Hilltop Drive Inn Theater – Gregory, S.D.

"It's awesome," Rosebud Electric Cooperative member Dawn Boyer said when asked about running a drive-in movie theater.

"It's like owning a piece of the past while being in the present – and hopefully the future."

When Dawn was a kid, her mom worked at the ticket counter, sometimes taking Dawn along too. When she learned in 2018 the theater was looking for a new owner, it just seemed right.

"Two weeks later, I was running a theater I knew nothing about," Dawn laughed.

The drive-in is an 80-year-old landmark in Gregory County, and the oldest operating drive-in theater in the state. The age is catching up with it, Boyer said, explaining the heavy maintenance schedules necessary to keep the theater running.

Though the theater is becoming harder to operate, Boyer says the smiles on visitors' faces make it all worth it.

"The people who come through that have never seen a drive-in before – that's who we do it for," Boyer continued. "The expression on somebody's face when that big screen lights up at night is awesome."

Pheasant City Drive-In Theatre – Redfield, S.D.

Redfield's drive-in theater has been open continuously since 1953, and thanks to Dave and Stacey Marlow, it will continue for many years.

"We bought it at the time the industry was changing over to digital projectors," Stacey said, recalling the 2014 sale. "And [the previous owner] wasn't going to do it, so we went to him and asked if he'd like to sell it."

Since taking over, they've upgraded the display system again, installing a brighter, higher-contrast laser projector that allows shows to begin earlier and helps future-proof the theater.

While modern, the theater retains its original elements: the speaker poles are functional (Dave spends hours wiring each spring) and the propane popcorn maker satisfies hungry moviegoers.

"People tell us all the time, 'We are so glad you took this and have kept it going,'" Stacey said. "This is a part of our town we didn't want to lose, so we decided we were the ones to step up and save it."

Winner Drive In Theater – Winner, S.D.

In 2022, Rosebud Electric Cooperative members Austin and Jill Moser were looking for more space for their family. They finally found the perfect house on a nice chunk of land – with a catch.

"The movie theater was included," Jill said. "We thought, 'Why not?'"

The Mosers say running the drive-in theater with their three kids has been a good experience for the family and has given the kids an opportunity to work concessions.

During the Mosers' second season in operation, a windstorm damaged the screen, necessitating a lengthy rebuild. Luckily, the theater was able to reopen for the 2025 season.

"It's really great to see how many people still support drive-in movie theaters," Jill said. "There's not that many left in the country. We meet people from all over – we've had people from France come to the theater."

Verne Drive In – Luverne, Minn.

Half an hour east of Sioux Falls, the Verne Drive In welcomes hundreds of I-90 travelers Wednesday through Sunday each summer.

Owner and operator Doug Rozeboom said his goal is to provide an experience that is affordable, fun and unique for both locals and travelers.

"I don't want to say drive-in theaters are a thing of the past, but they're becoming it," Rozeboom said. "It's a unique experience because you can't just go anywhere to watch a movie outdoors on a big screen."

He continued, "Kids are able to run around and throw a football, so they can blow off some steam."

Rozeboom described the enthusiasm of moviegoers, recounting creative truck-bed setups, typically with lawn chairs, sofas or mattresses.

"For the Toy Story 5 premiere, someone had a tree-trimming truck, so they had the boom arm out," he laughed. "I was like, 'Huh, that's interesting.'"

Making the perfect setup is part of the drive-in movie theater experience!
Photo submitted by Verne Drive In



Winner's drive-in features a curved screen.
Photo by Kim Boyko



Watch for a Credit on your Electric Bill



Jon Wunder
CFO

We are pleased to report that your Board of Directors authorized a \$2,500,000 general refund of patronage capital credits for 2026. If you are eligible, your portion of the refund will appear as a credit on your August electric bill due in September.

If you would like more information to help you understand patronage capital credits and cooperative principles and philosophy, go to

our website under the About tab and select Member Benefits.

On behalf of your Board of Directors and the employees, thank you for your patronage and your support of Southeastern.

As always, if you have any questions please let us know. 1-800-333-2859.

OFFICES CLOSED FOR LABOR DAY HOLIDAY

All Southeastern Electric office locations are closed on Monday, September 7 in observance of the Labor Day holiday. In case of an outage, call our 24/7 outage phone number: 1-800-333-2859. Bills can be paid online through SmartHub, through the SmartHub cell phone app or by calling 844-961-2524. Have a safe and happy holiday!



Are you Power Line Ready?

Always be aware of your surroundings when moving farm equipment and know what to do in case your equipment contacts a power line. Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative has tips and resources available to keep you safe this season.



to learn more about
power line safety visit
YourCoopPower.com



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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Photo Credit: SDREA

YOUTH EXCURSION 2026

SEC Student, Zander Diede, Travels to North Dakota

What does it take to keep the lights on? Sixteen students representing six electric cooperatives from across South Dakota embarked on a three-day trip to Bismarck, N.D., in July to go behind the scenes and learn about electricity generation. Sponsored by their local electric cooperatives, students toured the energy infrastructure that generates and transmits electricity into residential homes and commercial buildings, learning firsthand from industry experts. Zander Diede, a sophomore at Harrisburg High School, represented Southeastern Electric on the trip.

The group kicked off the tour by visiting the Coteau Properties Co. Freedom Mine, where they saw large equipment in action and coal

being mined in real time. The group followed the coal to the one-of-a-kind Great Plains Synfuels Plant, where natural gas, liquid carbon dioxide, fertilizers and fuels are produced from coal. The group then toured Antelope Valley Station, a coal-fired power plant, to learn how coal is burned to generate energy. The group concluded their tour at Basin Electric Headquarters, where energy generation across the system is facilitated and managed.

Brodie Melichar of Tabor, a member of Bon Homme Yankton Electric Association, said the trip provided a new perspective on how power is generated. Melichar said he plans to be an electrician once he enters the workforce.

"It was a great experience,"

Melichar said. "What stuck with me was the impressively large scale of the mining operation and facilities. I went on this trip with a few of my friends, and by the end of it, I got to meet some more."

Youth Excursion is organized by the statewide South Dakota Rural Electric Association in Pierre, S.D., and paid for by the students' electric cooperatives as part of the industry's ongoing support of the fifth cooperative principle: education, training and information.

As cooperatives, we value our communities and our youth. If you are interested in learning more about youth activities and opportunities, reach out to your local electric cooperative.

REGISTER TO WIN!

Bring this coupon and mailing label to the Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives booth at Dakotafest or the South Dakota State Fair to win a prize!

Your Phone Number: _____ Dakotafest – Find us in the Touchstone Energy Building!
Your Email Address: _____ S.D. State Fair – Find us in the Horticulture Park!



SEPT. 3 (ONE DAY EVENT)
Touchstone Energy Cooperatives
at the South Dakota State Fair
Horticulture Park, State Fairgrounds
Huron, SD

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. Please call ahead to confirm date, time and location of event.

AUG. 27-30
Steam Threshing Jamboree
Prairie Village
Madison, SD

SEPT. 1-6
20th Annual Sturgis Mustang Rally
Sturgis, SD
SturgisMustangRally.com

SEPT. 6
Studebaker Car Show
10 a.m.-2 p.m.
South 6th St.
Custer, SD

SEPT. 9
BFest Concert Series & Farmers Market
Matt Gauger Performing
Museum Park
Bruce, SD
605-627-5671

SEPT. 12-13
Harvest & Kuchen Festival
Delmont, SD
605-505-0535

SEPT. 12-20
Rustic Designs & More Fall Country Show
9 a.m.-6 p.m.
41450 264th St.
Ethan, SD
605-770-2411

SEPT. 13
Antique Car & Tractor Parade
Registration 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m.
Parade 1 p.m.
Farmer, SD
605-641-5498

SEPT. 18-19
34th Annual Granite Threshermen's Swap Meet & Antique Classic Car Show
Free Admission
Granite, IA
Contact: Darrel Hansen
605-261-9720

SEPT. 19
Veterans Stand Down
8:30-11:30 a.m.
1600 W. Russell St.
Sioux Falls, SD

SEPT. 25-OCT. 4
Masquerade (LightsUp)
Orpheum Theatre
Sioux Falls, SD
Box Office: 605-367-6000
MasqueradeMusical.com

SEPT. 26
Harvest Pumpkin Fest
3-7 p.m.
Eureka City Park North Shelter
Eureka, SD
605-230-1777

SEPT. 26
Harvest Festival Supper
West Nidaros Lutheran Church
25403 471st Ave.
Crooks, SD
605-212-5730

OCT. 3
9th Annual 437th Flea Market
9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Salem, SD
605-421-4190

OCT. 3-4
The Black Market
Sat. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.,
Sun. 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds Expo Bldg.
Sioux Falls, SD
605-332-6004

OCT. 3
Pumpkin Train/ SoDak Vendor Showcase
Prairie Village
Madison, SD

Note: We publish contact information as provided. If no phone number is given, none will be listed. Please call ahead to verify the event is still being held.