

Practice Electrical Safety



Dean Nelson
Operations Manager

With spring activities in full swing, one must keep in mind electrical safety. Even though electricity is one of the most widely used and safest forms of energy, it must be respected. Each year serious accidents occur due to lack of understanding or respect for electrical lines and equipment.

To help better understand electricity, consider it a force that always seeks a path or route to earth (or ground). The wires used in your home and buildings have an insulating jacket applied to them to prevent the “electrical force” from finding a path to ground. This is

not the case for the wires you see on the many miles of electrical lines throughout the co-op. If a conducting material such as machinery, water, a tree branch or even a person provides that path to ground, a lethal flow of electrical current will occur. Even items one might consider insulators, such as plastic pipe, rope, dry wood or even hay, will conduct electricity from a high voltage source.

Of course the best advice is to avoid getting near power lines, but with today’s taller and larger farm equipment, such as sweeps, combines (remember the antennae) grain augers and hay movers, there’s a greater chance than ever of coming in contact with overhead lines.

Please keep these safety practices in mind:

- Know the height of your equipment and lower it to its lowest position when passing near or beneath power lines.
- Have a person “spot” for you when moving equipment or items.
- Never attempt to raise or move a power line yourself.
- Be alert to where poles and lines are. Today’s large equipment can easily break a pole, dropping the wires near or on the ground.
- Use care when moving buildings, grain bins and tanks. Choose your route carefully.

In case of an accident:

- Call for help immediately. Give your emergency operator all information requested.
- Assume the power line involved is still hot, even though it may be on the ground. Call West Central Electric at 1-800-242-9232. Help will be dispatched 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- If you are in a vehicle or piece of equipment that is in contact with a power line, the very best place for you is to remain inside and wait for help.
- If circumstances dictate that you must leave the equipment, “jump out and away” so that no part of your body touches the equipment and ground at the same time.
- Do not touch a vehicle, any equipment or move someone in contact with a power line.

Spring time is a busy time for everyone. By keeping yourself, family and co-workers familiar with situations which can cause an electrical accident, it can be a safe summer as well.

From the Mailbag

Thanks to all who worked Wednesday night to restore our power.

Colleen Brashear, Fort Pierre

Thank you for sending men and equipment to help us restore service during the recent storm job. The men you sent, Marvin Moor, James Gyles, Jim Jones and Greg Glaze did a great job and are a real credit to West Central. Thanks again and rest assured, if you ever need help we’ll be there.

Bart J. Birkeland, General Manager, Rosebud Electric Cooperative, Gregory

Thank you so much for the Cove heaters for our remodeling project. They are wonderful! Also thank you for the rebate on our electric heat pump. Our house is now heated and cooled by electricity. It has been so efficient.

Nicole & Wesley Nelson, Midland

Thank you very much for your generous donation to our Prom and after Prom activities. We very much appreciate your gift!

Philip Senior Class of 2008

Thank you so much for the scholarship. It is greatly appreciated and will be very useful this fall. Thanks again.

Sarah Dowling, Draper

Thank you for choosing me to be a recipient for the scholarship. It is greatly appreciated.

Shandi Feddersen, Murdo

I would like to thank you for the \$500 scholarship. This will help a lot when I attend Mitchell Tech this fall. Thank you again.

Bryer Jones, Midland

Co-op Statistics

KWH Purchased:

	MARCH	YTD
2008	11,275,554	38,274,731
2007	10,042,455	36,067,242

**Hours worked without a loss-time accident:
13,843 through April**

Speech Contest Winners Announced

Three South Dakota teens won a total of \$2,300 in scholarships as part of the 47th annual Resource Conservation Speech Contest, sponsored in part by the state's Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives.

South Dakota high school students first participated in a local contest sponsored by each conservation district. Two students from each district were then eligible to participate in an area contest. From there, the top two winners from each of the designated areas were eligible to advance to the state finals in Pierre.

Winning first place and a \$1,100 scholarship was Diana Schroeder. Schroeder is a senior at Hanson High School and is the daughter of Dan and Nancy Schroeder of Alexandria, S.D.

Receiving second place and a \$750 scholarship was Amber Knutson, a junior at Kadoka Area High School. She is the daughter of Brandy and Dayle Knutson of Kadoka, S.D.

Talya LaBarr was the third place winner and received a \$450 scholarship. She is a junior at Henry High School. She is the daughter of Kevin and Laurie Beaner of Henry, S.D.

Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives of South Dakota provided scholarships totaling \$2,300 to the winning contestants. The contest is co-sponsored by the South Dakota Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the South Dakota Association of Conservation Districts.

The theme for next year's contest is "Clean Green Alternative Energy." For more information, contact your local conservation district office or the South Dakota Department of Agriculture at 1-800-228-5254.

The winning speech and contestant pictures can be found at the following Web site: <http://www.state.sd.us/doa/forestry/current-news/Speech/2008Speech-contest-winner.htm>

Basin Electric Among Leading Utility Green Power Programs

The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) has released its annual ranking of leading utility green power programs. Basin Electric Power Cooperative, Bismarck, N.D., ranked among the "Top 10" in two categories: total sales of renewable energy to program participants and green power sales as a percentage of total retail electricity sales.

Using information provided by utilities, NREL develops "Top 10" rankings of utility programs in a total of five categories. The others include: total number of customer participants, customer participation rate and the lowest price premium charged for a green power program using new renewable resources.

Ranked by renewable energy sales, the green power program of Austin (Texas) Energy is first in the nation, followed by Portland General Electric, PacifiCorp, Florida Power & Light and Xcel Energy. Basin Electric ranked eighth with its wind resources.

"The market for green tags is rising rapidly and increasing the value of these assets. The revenue from these sales provides significant support for the development of our green resources," said Ron Rebenitsch, Basin Electric's manager of alternative technologies.

In the category of green power sales as a percentage of total retail electricity sales, Basin Electric ranked seventh with the cooperative's PrairieWinds program. The top three utilities in that category include: Edmund Electric with its program, Pure & Simple; Austin Energy with GreenChoice; and the City of Palo Alto Utilities with PaloAltoGreen.

NREL is funded by DOE's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy and is the DOE's primary national laboratory for renewable energy and energy efficiency research and development. It performs analyses of green power market trends.

Visit NREL online at www.nrel.gov. View all category rankings at <http://www.eere.energy.gov/greenpower/resources/tables/topten.shtml>.

Co-op Scholarships Awarded

Basin Electric is awarding student scholarships for the 2008-2009 school year to children of member cooperative consumers, member cooperative employees and Basin Electric and subsidiary employees. More than 160 \$1,000 scholarships were awarded. Now in its 18th year, the scholarship program recognizes and encourages academic and community achievements of students in the region.

Megan Dibbern, Black Hills Electric
Kristen Neth and Cassi Konopasek,
Bon Homme Yankton Electric
Kaitlyn Hemmingson, Butte Electric
Christina Quiett, Cam Wal Electric
Elizabeth Bosworth, Central Electric
Joshua Kuipers, Charles Mix Electric
Samantha Bryant, Cherry-Todd Elec.
Adrian Reese, City of Elk Point
Garrett Jepsen, Clay Union Electric
Jordana Lamb, Codington-Clark Elec.
Jessica Wedel, Dakota Energy
Amber Vanderley, Douglas Electric
Christopher Piehl, East River Electric
Megan Braun, FEM Electric
Travis Davis and Cole Elshere,

Grand Electric
Not yet available, H-D Electric
Stacy Olson, Kingsbury Electric
Ida Clarke, Lacreek Electric
Erin Sass, Lake Region Electric
Stacie Nielsen, Lyon-Lincoln Electric
Joshua Crance, Moreau-Grand Electric
Kalli Dinger, Northern Electric
Olfert Corica, Oahe Electric
Katherine Zenk, Renville-Sibley
Alexa Duling, Rosebud Electric
Carly Rudolf and Jonathan Ellwein,
Rushmore Electric
Taylor Rish, Sioux Valley Energy
Kellen Mastick, Southeastern Electric
Philip Ragan, Traverse Electric

Sierra Goeden, Union County Electric
Taylor Michalek, West Central Electric
Stephen Kilber, West River Electric
Emily Miller, Whetstone Valley Electric
Seven South Dakota students received one of 20 scholarships awarded to children of member co-op employees.
Myles Larsen, City of Elk Point
Stacy Bottolfson, Clay Union Electric
Alison Slepikas, Dakota Energy
Lisa Biegler, Moreau-Grand Electric
Kevin Oliver, Northern Electric
Carri Lucas, Rushmore Electric
Andrew Gassman, Sioux Valley Energy