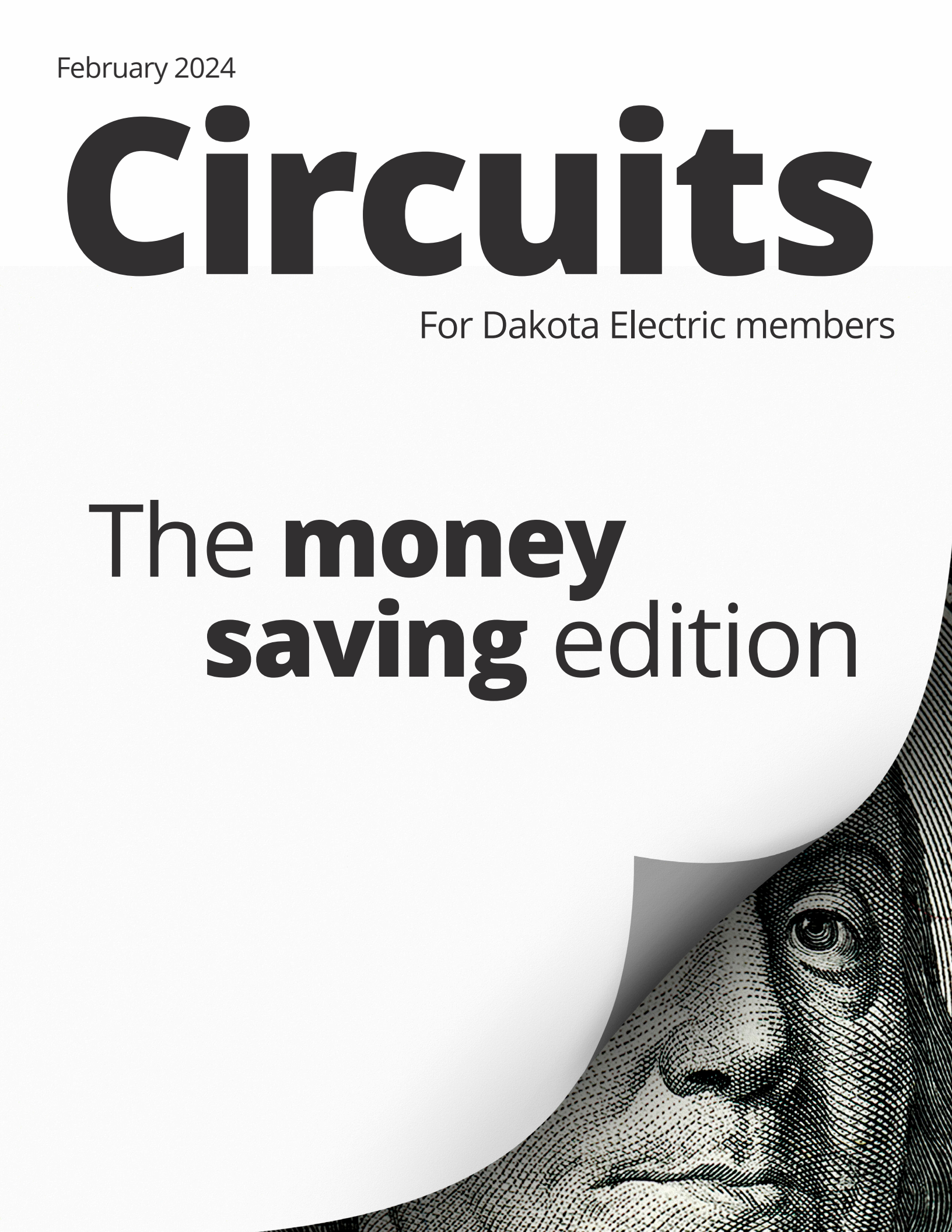
February 2024

Circuits

For Dakota Electric members

The **money saving** edition



CAREERS

BE A PART OF OUR ENERGY
www.dakotaelectric.com/careers
HResources@dakotaelectric.com
651-463-6301

CONTACT US

Member Service & Drive-Up Window
7 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. Monday – Friday
651-463-6212 or 1-800-874-3409
Minnesota Relay Service 711
customerservice@dakotaelectric.com

Lobby - 7 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Monday - Friday
4300 220th Street West
Farmington, MN 55024

24-Hour Outage & Emergency Service
651-463-6201 or 1-800-430-9722

Underground Cable Locations
Gopher State One Call 811 or
651-454-0002 or 1-800-252-1166
www.gopherstateonecall.org

New & Existing Services
651-460-7500

Dakota Electric is an equal opportunity/ affirmative action employer.

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

www.dakotaelectric.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Virtual power plant **explained**

Imagine a virtual power plant (VPP) as a high-tech, interconnected system that doesn't exist in a single physical location but operates as if it were one. It's like having a bunch of power sources, like solar panels, wind turbines and batteries, spread out in different places but working together seamlessly.

Below is a breakdown of how it works:

Distributed Energy Resources

Instead of having one big power plant, a virtual power plant relies on many smaller, decentralized sources of energy called distributed energy resources (DER). These could include solar panels on rooftops, wind turbines in various locations and even batteries storing excess energy.

Smart Technology

The key is in the smart technology that links all these energy sources. These devices communicate with each other, constantly sharing information about how much energy they're producing or storing. This communication is what makes the system "virtual."

Optimization

With all this data, the virtual power plant can optimize how it uses and distributes energy. For example, if one area is experiencing peak energy demand, the virtual power plant can redirect energy from other sources to meet that demand efficiently.

Flexibility

The virtual power plant can adapt to changes in weather conditions or fluctuations in energy demand. If there's a lot of sunshine and the DERs are producing more energy than needed, the excess can be stored in batteries or sent to areas that need more power.

Grid Support

It can also provide support to the traditional power grid. During times of high demand or when there's a sudden drop in power from a conventional power plant, the virtual power plant can step in to help stabilize the grid.

In essence, a virtual power plant is like a network of smart, interconnected energy sources working together to provide reliable, flexible and sustainable power. It's a modern approach to energy management that leverages technology to create a more resilient and efficient power system.

VPP and Dakota Electric

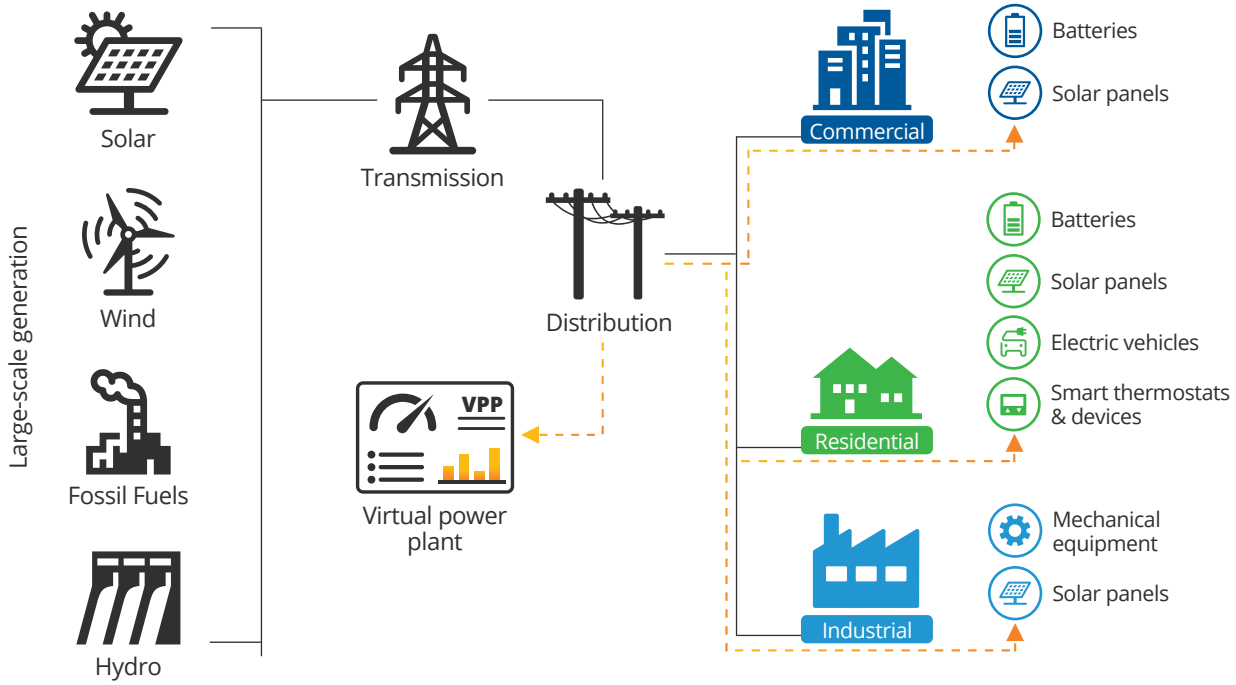
Dakota Electric is leading the way with its load management programs, in which members actively participate. In 2023, these programs yielded substantial savings, with participants helping save $15.5 million. This success underscores the effectiveness of Dakota Electric's initiatives in optimizing energy consumption and promoting cost efficiency among its members.

How **virtual power plants** work

During periods of high demand, especially on extremely hot or cold days, the grid relies on short-term energy generation solutions like natural gas and hydro plants also called "peaker" power plants to meet additional power needs, which are significantly more expensive and inefficient to operate.

Virtual power plant resources have the capability to mitigate reliance on peaker plants through the following key actions:

- Anticipate and activate devices, such as smart thermostats and electric water heaters, ahead of peak grid demand periods.
- Strategically cycle devices like smart thermostats, EV chargers and industrial equipment temporarily in response to peak demand, a practice known as **load management**.
- Temporarily engage energy storage devices to address surges in power demand.



Load management programs

Participate in one or more of the following load management (also known as off-peak) programs and **receive electricity at nearly half the regular rate**! Learn more at www.dakotaelectric.com/member-services/programs-rebates/for-your-home. To enroll, contact the Energy Experts® at 651-463-6243 or energyexperts@dakotaelectric.com.

Storage Programs

Available for electric water heaters, electric thermal storage heaters and slab storage floor heating systems.

Interruptible Programs

Available for electric water heaters, electric heaters, heat pumps, swimming pools and hot tubs.

Cycled Air Conditioning®

Available only for central air conditioners.

ChargeWise Electric Vehicle (EV) Programs

Dakota Electric offers two voluntary options for charging your EV at home.

Join our **Wellspring** Renewable Energy Program

Elevate your energy impact with Wellspring Renewable Energy® — a program that propels you into the forefront of sustainable change!

By joining this voluntary program, Dakota Electric members not only champion the growth of wind and solar power in Minnesota but also actively reduce our reliance on non-renewable energy sources.

Sign up today by visiting: www.dakotaelectric.com/renewable-energy/wellspring-renewable-energy.

2024 Energy Wise® **rebates**

Check out this year's Energy Wise rebates for your home. For more information and for rebate forms, please visit www.dakotaelectric.com/programs-rebates.

HEATING & COOLING

Heat pump systems	Tune up	$25
	Ductless air-source heat pump 7.5-8.1+ HSPF2* (based on tonnage)	$150-$1,000
	Air-source heat pump 7.5-8.1+ HSPF2*	$750-$1,000
	Ground-source heat pump	$400/ton
Central air conditioner	Tune up	$25
	Central air conditioner 15.2 SEER2+*	$350
Cycled air conditioning*	Summer season bill credit for participating central air conditioners	$39
Electric thermal storage heating system	Installed on Energy Wise® storage program	$50/kW

**These rebate applications are available only through registered contractors. Visit https://hvacree.net/gre/public_search.cfm to find a contractor.*

APPLIANCES

Dehumidifier	Must be ENERGY STAR® rated	$25
Refrigerator or freezer recycling	Recycle a working refrigerator or freezer with or without the purchase of a new one	$75
ENERGY STAR electric dryer	Must be ENERGY STAR rated	$25

LIGHTING

LED bulbs	ENERGY STAR rated encouraged	Up to $2/bulb
LED yard light (member-owned)	LED light fixture	$30

WATER HEATERS

Heat pump water heater	Must be ENERGY STAR rated	$500
Electric Thermal Storage (ETS) water heating	New construction installation: high-efficient, large capacity electric water heater controlled on Energy Wise off-peak program	$400
	Replacement of non-controlled electric water heater with high-efficiency, large capacity electric water heater controlled on Energy Wise off-peak program	$400
Interruptible electric water heating	First-time enrollment on Energy Wise interruptible program	$100

MISCELLANEOUS

Pool pump variable speed motor	Must be ENERGY STAR rated	$200
Heat pump pool heater	Coefficient of Performance (COP) of 5.0	$400
Electric vehicle charger installation	Level two chargers must meet installation requirements	$500
Battery-powered yard tools	Leaf blower, chainsaw, lawn mower, snow blower, trimmer or weed whip	$25-$50
Solar installation	One-time payment per premise upon installation and commission of solar photovoltaic (PV) array	$500

Touchstone Energy Community Award **winners**

Dakota Electric named The Drawer, Eagan, as the local 2023 Touchstone Energy Community Award winner. Kaitlyn's Kloset, Eagan, and DARTS, West St. Paul, were named runners-up. Each organization received an award along with $500, and The Drawer advances to the statewide competition for a chance to win $2,000.

The Drawer

The Drawer addresses the urgent need for clean socks and underwear among the homeless and underprivileged by collaborating with community organizations, individuals and partners to collect donations and provide these essential items.

Kaitlyn's Kloset

Kaitlyn's Kloset is dedicated to supporting families by offering a stigma-free resource center where they can access essential items for their children at no cost.

DARTS

DARTS is a nonprofit organization that has provided personalized and professional services for older adults and caregivers in and around Dakota County for 50 years and counting!

RTA charge and **advanced meter recovery** fee

There will be a decrease to residential members' bills in 2024 due to the resource & tax adjustment (RTA) charge and advanced meter recovery fee.

How Much is the Decrease?

For residential members, the 2024 RTA will be -$0.0018 credit per kilowatt-hour, which is $0.0045 lower than 2023. The 2024 advanced meter recovery fee will be 66 cents per residential meter, which is 15 cents lower than December 2023. Together, the fees will decrease the average residential member's bill a total of about $3.25 per month. Commercial accounts should contact an account representative to discuss the RTA charge for their rate class.

We want your **feedback!**

Let Us Know How We Are Doing!

Scan the QR code to take a short survey, or visit, www.surveymonkey.com/r/DakotaElectric.

Save the **date!**

Crops Day!

WED. MARCH 13
9 AM - 1 PM

DAKOTA ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

4300 220th Street West
Farmington, MN 55024

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
DAKOTA ELECTRIC
ASSOCIATION

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Board Meeting**
  Feb. 29, 10:30 a.m.

CONNECT WITH US!

PLEASE RECYCLE ME!