

October 2024

Circuits

For Dakota Electric members



Celebrating National
CO-OP
Month

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.*

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

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

www.dakotaelectric.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DISTRICT 1

John (Jack) DeYoe | *MREA Director*
David Jones | *Treasurer*
Gerald F. Pittman | *Vice Chair*

DISTRICT 2

Bill Middlecamp | *GRE Director*
Clay Van De Bogart
Terry Donnelly | *Secretary*

DISTRICT 3

Kenneth H. Danner
Cyndee Fields
Margaret D. Schreiner | *GRE Director*

DISTRICT 4

Paul Bakken | *Chair*
Stacy Miller
Jenny Hoeft

CIRCUITS | OCTOBER 2024

Celebrating **National Co-op Month**: Powering our communities

Every October, National Co-op Month shines a light on the vital role cooperatives play in our economy and communities. For over 85 years, electric co-ops like Dakota Electric have empowered rural areas by providing reliable electricity to regions underserved by investor-owned utilities.

Cooperative principles — the foundation of success

At the heart of Dakota Electric's operations are the seven cooperative principles, which guide every decision we make and action:

1. Voluntary & Open Membership
2. Democratic Member Control
3. Members' Economic Participation
4. Autonomy and Independence
5. Education, Training & Information
6. Cooperation Among Cooperatives
7. Concern for Community

These principles are more than just words — they are the bedrock of a business model that prioritizes people over profits. By embracing these values, Dakota Electric and other cooperatives across the nation continue to empower their members, support local economies and contribute to the overall well-being of our community.

The member advantage

At Dakota Electric, you're not a customer — you're a member and part-owner. This means you have a direct say in how the co-op operates, as members vote in the annual election for the board of directors, ensuring that a democratically elected board represents your interests. As a not-for profit, Dakota

Electric does not prioritize profits but instead focuses on serving its members by offering affordable energy and returning savings through capital credits.

Dakota Electric also goes beyond electricity by offering programs and rebates that help members save energy and lower costs. To learn more visit www.dakotaelectric.com/member-services/programs-rebates or call 651-463-6243 to speak to one of our Energy Experts®.

Engaging with your cooperative — opportunities for involvement

Dakota Electric values member involvement. At the annual meeting, members can learn about the co-op's growth, finances and programs, while sharing ideas and connecting with others.

In addition to delivering electricity, Dakota Electric supports local communities through volunteer work and sponsorships, helping foster a brighter, more sustainable future for all.

Join the celebration

As we celebrate National Co-op Month this October, let's take a moment to appreciate the unique role that cooperatives play in our lives. Whether you're a member of Dakota Electric or another co-op, you are part of a movement that values collaboration, community and shared success. Together, we can continue to build a more resilient and sustainable future for generations to come.

Empowering the communities we serve

Community at the core

At Dakota Electric, community is at the core of our mission. We go beyond delivering electricity to actively enriching the lives of those we serve. Through a range of initiatives and programs, we strive to make a meaningful impact in our communities. From supporting local students with scholarships to promoting environmental sustainability and engaging in educational outreach, Dakota Electric is dedicated to building a sustainable future and enhancing quality of life.

Our employees play a vital role in this mission through their active participation in community events and their contributions to initiatives that create positive change.

Community support

Dakota Electric is deeply committed to supporting the community through a variety of initiatives aimed at fostering education, environmental responsibility, and overall well-being. Each year, we provide scholarships to students at local high schools, recognize nonprofits and businesses with the Touchstone Energy Award, and promote environmental stewardship through Arbor Day celebrations and programs like Tree Trust and Adopt-A-Highway. Our Helping Neighbors® trust assists families in need with utility bills during tough times, and we contribute to child safety by donating McGruff Safe Kids Kits. Additionally, we encourage youth engagement in sports through the Twins Youth Clinic and offer local high school students the chance to explore leadership and government on the NRECA Youth Tour to Washington, D.C.

Employee engagement

Dakota Electric employees are actively involved in the community, contributing roughly \$30,000 annually to local organizations through Dakota Cares activities such as pork chop feeds and silent auctions. Our employees also volunteer for community programs like Veterans Dinners and Meals on Wheels, demonstrating a strong commitment to enriching the lives of local residents. We collaborate with schools to support STEM education, career exploration, and safety awareness, while our Employee Network focuses on fostering collaboration and engagement among staff to enhance our collective impact on the community.

Careers in energy

Join us in our commitment to empowering communities and discover how you can be part of a co-op that values community impact. Explore careers in energy and learn about job openings at www.dakotaelectric.com/careers, or find national opportunities at www.touchstoneenergy.jobs.



FOOD DONATIONS

We donated **3,339lbs** of food and **\$3,065** to local food shelves through our food drives.



MEMBER EVENTS

We held **32** member events! All of which, were free for our members to attend.



DAKOTA CARES

Dakota Electric employees held a variety of fundraising events and a pledge drive raising **\$28,147** for local charities.



TREE SEEDLINGS

3,000 tree seedlings were donated to local schools and community events.



HELPING NEIGHBORS

Through a trust created by Dakota Electric, members donated **\$26,625**.

Numbers shown are from 2023.

Our co-op history

1937

Dakota County Electric Cooperative was founded by a group of farmers with the help of the REA.



1949

The last unserved farms within the service area were connected to the co-op's lines.



1961

The co-op purchased its first bucket truck.



1962

The member newsletter, *Circuits*, was created.

1938

The first lights were turned on.

1950

The co-op had 2,286 members and 15 full-time employees.

1964

The board approved the first payout of capital credits to members.



1969

The co-op changed its name to Dakota Electric Association.



1978

The co-op moved to its current headquarters location.



1968

First year the co-op sent a student to the NRECA Youth Tour in D.C.



1970

The co-op had 12,712 members and 73 full-time employees.



1980

Members voted for the co-op to be regulated by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC), and it has been ever since.

1987

The co-op was now serving 50,000 members.



1995

The co-op created the Helping Neighbors® trust to help struggling families pay their electric bills.



2017

The co-op embarked on an advanced meter project.



1988

The co-op began its Cycled Air Conditioning® program and purchased the geographical information system (GIS) that digitized maps.



2007

The co-op added its first hybrid vehicle to its fleet.



2024

The co-op has 115,000+ members and 200+ employees.

Dakota County 4-H auction winners

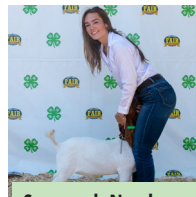
As part of Dakota Electric's ongoing commitment to supporting the local community, we proudly participate each year in the Dakota County Fair 4-H livestock auction. At this year's auction we recognized the hard work of five outstanding 4-H members (shown below) awarding them for their dedication and achievements. Funds raised in Dakota County through our participation are directed towards 4-H scholarship awards for graduating high school seniors, covering state fair exhibitor trip and chaperone expenses, donor recognition, the Purple Ribbon Club, and various educational 4-H programs. By supporting 4-H, we help foster growth and development for the next



Liliana Beyer



Avery Malecha



Savannah Newberg



Lucy Nordling



Wyatt Wagner

Safe at home

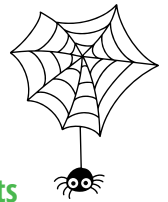
Address confidentiality program

Safe at Home helps survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and other crimes, and anyone who fears for their safety, by establishing a confidential mailing address and providing a mail forwarding service.

While Dakota Electric needs members' actual addresses to establish and maintain electric service, we use Safe at Home addresses for communicating with members and take special steps to protect Safe at Home participants' addresses. If you participate in Safe at Home, alert Dakota Electric and provide your Safe at Home mailing address.

To learn more, contact the office of the Minnesota Secretary of State by calling 1-866-723-3035 or visit www.sos.state.mn.us/safe-at-home.

Spooky energy savings



Conjur savings with smart thermostats

Harness the power of smart thermostats to automatically adjust temperatures based on your schedule, helping you save money while keeping your home comfortable.

Slay energy vampires

Don't let energy vampires drain your wallet! Unplug devices in standby mode or use smart power strips to slay energy waste and keep your bill in check.

Eliminate ghostly drafts

Drafts can haunt your home, letting cold air in and warm air out. Seal windows, doors and other gaps to banish those ghostly chills. Weatherstripping, caulking and insulation are your best defenses against these eerie energy losses.

Illuminate your lair with LEDs

Light up your home this Halloween season with energy-efficient LEDs. These bulbs use less electricity and last longer than traditional ones, keeping your lair brightly lit while saving you money.

Uncover hidden energy gremlins

Schedule a fall energy audit with the Home Energy Squad to reveal hidden inefficiencies draining your home's energy. Their expert eyes will spot the tricks, so you can enjoy all the treats of energy savings this winter.

Avoid a furnace fright

Check your furnace filter before winter creeps in. A clogged filter can turn your system into an energy-guzzling monster. Replacing it ensures your furnace runs smoothly, keeping your home warm and your energy bill from turning into a horror story.

Rate case filing

Dakota Electric plans to file a rate case later this year to ensure continued reliable service and infrastructure improvements. This process will help align costs with the investments necessary to meet the energy needs of our members. More information on the filing and its impact will be shared in the coming months.



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

4300 220th Street West
Farmington, MN 55024

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Board Meeting**
Thursday, Oct. 24
8:30 a.m.

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
DAKOTA ELECTRIC
ASSOCIATION

CONNECT WITH US!



Are you local nonprofit looking for a chance to win up to **\$2,500?!**

Dakota Electric is now accepting applications for the Touchstone Energy Community Award, which recognizes nonprofit groups and community organizations that have shown a strong commitment to the community.

Applicants are evaluated on project scope, use of resources and the impact or value to the community. Three winners will receive \$500 with one having a chance for another \$2,000 in the statewide competition. To receive judging criteria, and an application for the award, go to www.dakotaelectric.com/community/touchstone-energy-community-award or scan the QR code. **The deadline for applications is November 1.**

