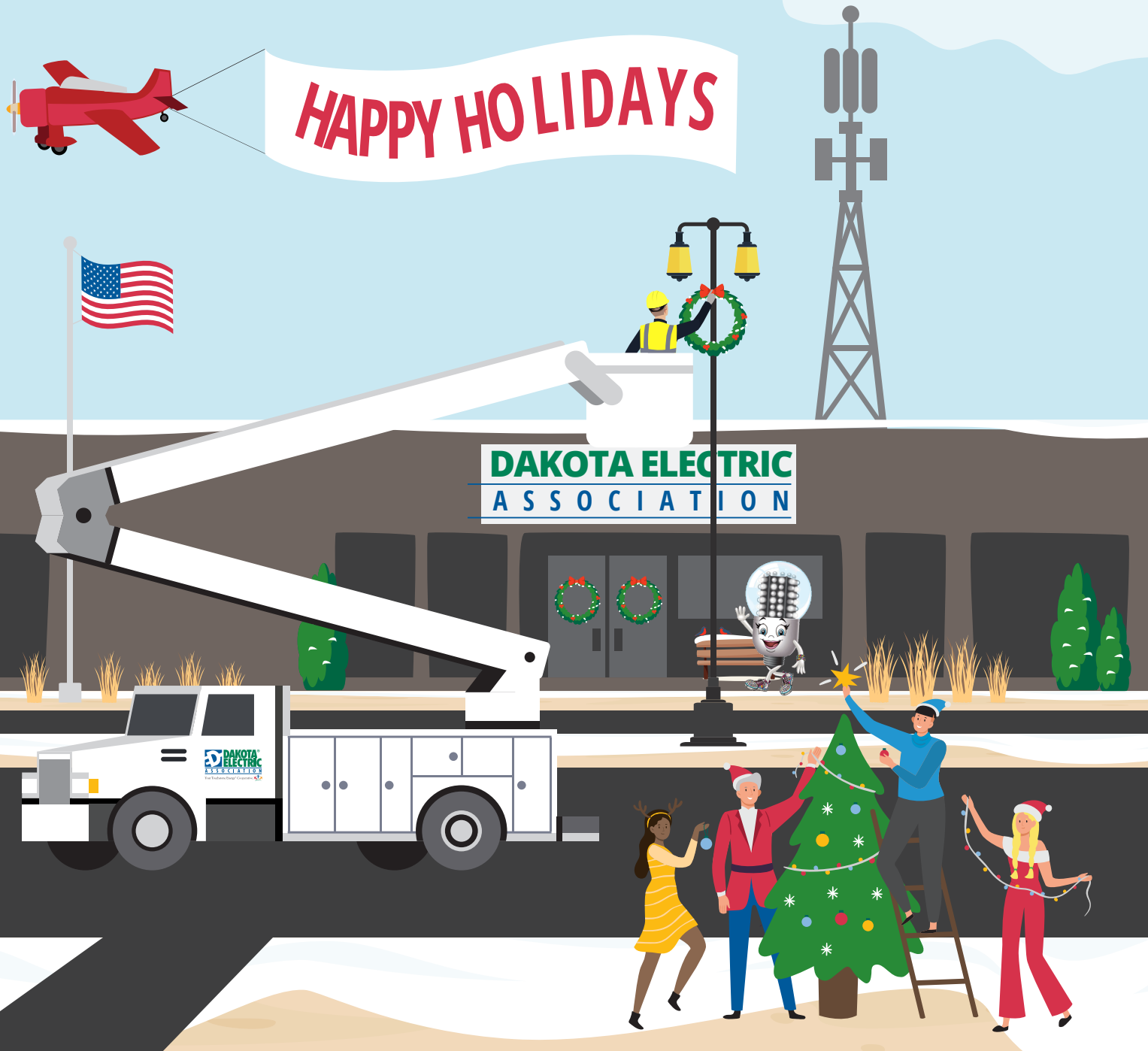


December 2024

Circuits

For Dakota Electric members



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 | DECEMBER 2024



A message from the CEO

As we close out another year, I'm excited to share how Dakota Electric is serving our membership.

Safety

The safety of our team and our communities is our utmost priority. In 2024, we completed two major safety initiatives in which outside organizations assessed our safety culture and practices. The results showed a very healthy safety culture and provided constructive ways for us to continue setting the bar higher.

Resiliency

Dakota Electric remains committed to delivering the reliable service you expect. In 2024, we invested around \$14 million in our distribution grid. This includes energizing the new Lakeville substation and advanced construction on the Eidswold substation. We also continued planned investments in vegetation management. These investments have a direct impact on our ability to provide safe, reliable and affordable service.

Member value

We seek to deliver value to you in several ways. In 2024, we bolstered cybersecurity, upgraded technology, and began implementing a new customer information system to give you greater insight into your energy usage. Additionally, we launched a virtual EV charging rate and a behind-the-meter storage option to enhance service for our members.

The average member's bill decreased by \$3.25 per month in 2024 compared to 2023, due to a decrease in the RTA rate. Although we've been able to maintain rate stability and have not changed our base rate since 2019, we will likely

need to make a rate adjustment to offset the rising cost of supplies, materials, power cost and labor. We want all our members to understand why these changes are needed and how they contribute to our cooperative's long-term health and service reliability. Look for more details in upcoming editions of *Circuits* as we discuss the co-op's future rate adjustment.

As a not-for-profit member-owned cooperative, organizational profits are returned to you over time. Later this month, we will be returning approximately \$5.5 million to you, our member-owners.

Dakota Electric's mission reaches beyond safe, reliable, and affordable electricity. By supporting local charities, providing youth scholarships, and promoting educational outreach, we continue to invest in our community and champion initiatives that empower future generations.

Investing in the future

The Board of Directors recently approved a land purchase at 225th Street and Cedar Avenue to support Dakota Electric's future facility needs, reinforcing our commitment to reliable service and long-term resilience. For more information, visit our Energy Center website at <https://energycenter.dakotaelectric.com>.

Thank you

On behalf of the team at Dakota Electric, we are grateful for the opportunity to serve you. Thank you for your partnership and for being a valued Dakota Electric member-owner. I look forward to a bright and impactful 2025 together.

Capital credits

This year, the Board of Directors approved the retirement of \$5.5 million in capital credits to be paid back to members. If you lived on Dakota Electric's lines for the years of 2002-2006, you will be mailed a check in mid-December for your share of ownership in the cooperative.

Capital credits in a cooperative like Dakota Electric represent members' ownership and are derived from annual profits. These credits are allocated based on electricity usage and reinvested to reduce borrowing, keeping rates low. Please keep us informed of your current address by calling 651-463-6212. Questions? Email capitalcredits@dakotaelectric.com and include your check number.

To learn more about capital credits, visit www.dakotaelectric.com/about-us/capital-credits.

Watch for your check arriving soon!



Interested Director candidates

In adherence with Dakota Electric bylaws and policies, an annual election is held each year for those seats up for election. There are twelve three-year term Director seats on the Dakota Electric Board. Each year, one seat in each of the four districts is up for election. Any eligible member may seek election in the district in which they reside.

Members interested in seeking election for a Director seat should visit www.dakotaelectric.com/about-us/annual-meeting-election for more information. All interested candidates must apply via the application link on the webpage.

The application link will be available on January 3, 2025. Completed applications **must** be received by 5:00 p.m. on January 21, 2025. To be eligible for the ballot, all candidates are **required** to interview with the Nominating Committee on January 29 or 30, 2025. These interviews may take place early afternoon through early evening.

Seats up for election

DISTRICT	TERM	INCUMBENT
1	3-year	David Jones
2	3-year	Terry Donnelly
3	3-year	Cyndee Fields
4	3-year	Stacy Miller

Nominating Committee

Dakota Electric is **seeking interested members** to volunteer to help be part of our annual election process by serving on the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee serves as an integral part of our annual election process by interviewing Director candidate applicants and helping to determine those qualified to be placed on the election ballot for 2025.

Members interested in serving should visit www.dakotaelectric.com/about-us/annual-meeting-election for more information. All interested volunteers must submit their request to serve via the application link on the webpage. The application link will be available on January 3, 2025. All requests to serve must be received by 5:00 p.m. on January 21, 2025. All volunteers **must** be available to interview director candidate applicants on January 29 & 30, 2025. These interviews may take place early afternoon through early evening, and all serving Committee members are **required** to be available for all candidate interviews.

Committee appointments are selected at random. Two Committee members and one alternate Committee member will be appointed to represent each district. Member volunteers will be notified of the outcome following the Board meeting held on January 23, 2025. Those who serve on the Nominating Committee will receive a stipend for their time.

For election related questions, please contact boardelection@dakotaelectric.com or 651-463-6337.

When disaster strikes, **cooperatives stand together** — Dakota Electric's response to Hurricane Milton



When Hurricane Milton struck Dade City, Florida, Dakota Electric Association quickly answered the call for support. Six lineworkers traveled south with two bucket trucks, a digger derrick and a mission to help restore power through Withlacoochee River Electric Cooperative (WREC).

Planning for this effort started before the storm even hit, as WREC coordinated with electric cooperatives in nearby states to ensure a fast and efficient response. Dakota Electric was one of many cooperatives ready to mobilize, thanks to the work of the Minnesota Rural Electric Association (MREA), which collaborated with WREC and Dakota Electric's Utility Services team. Dakota Electric mechanics worked diligently to ensure the trucks and equipment could make the long trip south, while Kandiyohi Power Cooperative from Spicer, Minnesota, also joined in, sending additional crews, trucks and materials to support recovery.

Dakota Electric's President and CEO, Ryan Hentges, highlighted the response as a prime example of core Cooperative Principles in action. "By working together, we can respond more effectively to meet community needs," Hentges said. "Our thoughts are with all those affected by the storm."

The impact of these cooperative values was reflected in the actions of Dakota Electric's team, including volunteers Luke, Kyle, Clay, Tim, Wyatt and Bryce, who left behind their daily routines to help those in need. Their dedication, along with that of hundreds of lineworkers across the country, exemplifies the strength of the cooperative network.

"It's times like these, when communities are in need, that the cooperative difference really shines," Hentges added. As lineworkers packed bags, loaded trucks and bid their families goodbye, they demonstrated that in the face of adversity, these co-ops are united by more than just electricity — they're connected by a commitment to serving communities wherever the need arises.

Helping Neighbors®

Dakota Electric members who contribute to the Helping Neighbors Trust help local families pay utility bills when facing unexpected financial struggles.

Dakota Electric distributes Helping Neighbors funds to the local CAP Agency, Salvation Army and 360 Communities, each of which provide utility assistance to families experiencing hardship. Please consider making a donation. Monthly donations can be added to your electric bill or you can make a one-time contribution.

To learn more about Helping Neighbors, call 651-463-6212 or sign up online by visiting www.dakotaelectric.com/community/helping-neighbors-sign-up.

Dakota Electric **awards \$50,000** to Districts 191 and 200

Dakota Electric proudly supports local school districts through a four-year rotating grant program, designed to reach each district within our service area. This year, we awarded \$50,000 in unclaimed capital credits to districts 191 (Burnsville-Eagan-Savage) and 200 (Hastings). This funding will enable each district to enhance student learning and advance district goals through innovative programs.

In District 191, the funds will go toward Burnsville High School's new Associate of Arts Pathway. This program, unique to the district, allows students to earn an associate degree on-site, providing a seamless path to post-secondary success without leaving their high school campus.

District 200 will use the funds to implement the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program at Hastings Middle School. AVID, a respected college-readiness program, equips students with essential academic skills, especially benefiting underrepresented students. The funding will also support staff in attending the AVID Summer Institute for specialized training.

Through these grants, Dakota Electric is proud to support educational initiatives that foster academic growth and open new pathways for students in the local community.

Holiday lighting **tips**



LEDs are efficient, use 90% less energy than incandescents, last much longer and give off virtually no heat, making them safer.



All outdoor electrical decorations should be plugged into a ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI), and always used with extension cords rated for outdoor use.



Inspect all electrical decorations before you use them. Damaged sockets and loose or exposed wires can cause a serious shock or start a fire.



Never mount or support light strings using nails, metal hooks or tacks as they might damage the cord's insulation.



Recycle old lights at any Dakota County collection site until Jan. 31, 2025. To find your nearest drop-off, visit www.co.dakota.mn.us/Environment/RecyclingDisposalGuide.





Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

4300 220th Street West
Farmington, MN 55024

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Board Meeting**
Dec. 12, 8:30 a.m.
- **Office Closed**
Dec. 24 & 25

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
DAKOTA ELECTRIC
ASSOCIATION

CONNECT WITH US!



HOLIDAY LIGHTS COMPETITION

Get Ready To Light Up the Season With Dakota Electric's Holiday Glow-Off!

THREE CATEGORIES

Apartment

(PRIZE: Robot Vacuum)

House

(PRIZE: Electric Snowblower)

Small Business

(PRIZE: Feature in *Circuits*)

HOW TO ENTER:

- Snap a photo of your holiday lights display.
- Share it on Twitter/X, Instagram or Facebook and indicate which category you are in.
- You **MUST** tag Dakota Electric **AND** include **#holidayglowoff** in your caption.
- You must be a Dakota Electric member.
- One entry per account.
- Most liked photo wins for each category.
- Winners will be shared on our social channels!

RUNS
NOV.1
TO
DEC. 15