

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS



Rural Electrification

**West Central - The Last
Co-op to Incorporate**
Pages 8-9

Generational Farmers
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Rural Electrification served even
the most rural communities.

Looking Ahead At 2026 Power Costs



Chris Larson,
General Manager

At Clay-Union Electric, our mission is simple: to serve our members' best interests. It's our duty to deliver safe, reliable electricity at the lowest possible cost to our members. However, this task is becoming increasingly complex due to shifts in the power market, growing energy demand, and evolving regional regulations.

Power supply makes up over 55% of our costs and represents the largest part of our uncontrollable expenses. These costs are based on the amount and timing of power needed by our members, which is largely influenced by weather conditions and member usage patterns.

Weather plays a significant role in electricity demand. Extreme temperatures increase the need for heating and cooling, while wet or dry conditions affect the use of sump pumps, dehumidifiers/humidifiers, irrigators and crop dryers.

These variables are taken into account each year by your electric cooperative when we determine how we will set our purchase power cost and sales budget. This information is shared with East River Electric (East River). East River uses this information to determine how much power is needed by their members and shares it with Basin Electric (Basin). Basin supplies 86% of the power needed for the 25 members of East River and for another 114 members across 9 states. Basin uses the information to create a yearly 10-year financial forecast that looks at costs to build and maintain their transmission and generation system. This information is used to develop rates or estimate rates for future years.

Last year, Basin decided that it would implement a two-year rate increase that would allow them to phase in the necessary rate increase over a two-year period. We appreciated this effort. As a quick reminder, Basin costs were increasing due to member load growth, investments in reliability, decreased sales to non-members, inflation and supply chain issues, and power market volatility.

These drivers haven't changed much as Basin continues to see member growth across the system and the need to invest in its transmission system. Last year, I mentioned

that the forecast had \$8B in capital investments. This year's forecast has increased that number to nearly \$13B with the addition of the Bison Generation Station. The Bison Generation Station will be a natural gas generating plant located in North Dakota. The other change was in the cost of commodity prices, which has a large effect on the sales out of their subsidiary, Dakota Gasification Company.

All these variables have caused a shift in their financial forecast. The forecast from last year identified a need for a 2.7% increase and this year's forecast identified a 18.7% increase. This would have an additional \$1M impact on our local power costs. We are also going to see an increase in hydropower costs from the Western Area Power Administration for the second straight year. Increased prices are hitting all utility sectors. We will continue to work with East River and Basin Electric to identify ways to reduce this impact, but we will need to do something with rates in 2026 to meet our financial

requirements.

We recognize how concerning any increase in electric rates can be for the families, farms, and businesses we serve. That's why Clay-Union Electric's board and staff will be working diligently on our 2026 budget to control internal expenses and limit any additional financial burden on members.

Even so, because power supply costs make up such a large portion of our total expenses, some increase in rates will be necessary.

Our commitment is to provide open, transparent communication about what to expect and when. We anticipate sharing more specific information in the coming months, once power cost projections and budget planning are complete.

Thank you for your continued support and trust in Clay-Union Electric. Together, we will navigate these challenges while staying focused on reliability, affordability, and service to our membership. We encourage members to begin preparing now for the expected rate adjustments.

Chris Larson
General Manager
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COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

CLAY-UNION ELECTRIC SPARKS

(USPS 116-800)

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Monday through Friday
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Are you Power Line Ready?

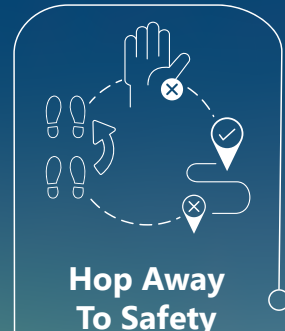
The best way to stay safe this season when moving large farm equipment is to ALWAYS be aware of your surroundings. **Look up, look out and use extra caution when backing up. If your equipment contacts a power line, be sure to do the following:**



Call emergency response and your local power cooperative, remaining in the cab until authorities confirm it is safe to exit.



If you must leave the cab due to fire or other safety concerns, jump as far away from the equipment as possible.



NEVER touch your equipment and the ground simultaneously; hop with both feet until you are at least 40 feet away.

For more power line safety tips and resources visit
YourCoopPower.com



YEAR-TO-DATE FINANCIALS

	July 2025	Year To Date
Number of consumers BILLED	3,921	3,925
Electric & Other Revenue	\$909,620	\$5,860,451
Cost of Service	\$854,771	\$6,075,653
Operating Margins	\$54,849	\$(215,202)
Other Margins	\$4,367	\$74,097
Net Margins	\$59,216	\$(141,105)
KWH Purchased	6,244,797	49,121,202
Cost of Power	\$469,475	\$3,338,343
KWH Sales	5,724,047	46,787,471
Average kWhs used (residential)	1,350	1,337
Average Amount of Bill (residential)	\$183	\$179

Go Above and Beyond for a Safe Harvest

Anne Prince
NRECA

Modern farming often relies on data and equipment with GPS and auto-guidance systems. However, even with these modern conveniences, farm workers must remain vigilant. That's because farming is considered one of the most dangerous jobs.

Massive machinery is indispensable to farming, but the same impressive size, height and extensions make them particularly vulnerable to contacting power lines. That's why staying alert, focused and knowledgeable about potential hazards and safety procedures is crucial.

During a busy harvest season, the familiar sights around the farm can easily fade into the background, and farm workers can overlook the power lines overhead. However, failing to notice them can lead to deadly accidents.

360 Awareness

Awareness of your surroundings, around, above and below, and planning safe equipment routes can significantly reduce the risk of accidents. Even with GPS and auto-steering, it's imperative that farm workers keep a close eye on the equipment's location and are ready to take action if necessary.

Exposed underground powerlines, defective wiring in farm buildings and extension cords are also hazards. Grain bins can pose a potential danger as well. The National Electrical Safety Code requires power lines to be at least 18 feet above the highest point on any grain bin with which portable augers or other portable filling equipment are used.

Smart Harvest Safety Tips

To ensure a safer harvest season, SafeElectricity.org recommends the following tips to avoid electrical accidents on the farm:

- Exercise caution near power lines. Be careful when raising augers or the bed of grain trucks around power lines.
- Use spotters when operating large machinery near power lines. Ensure the spotters do not touch the machinery while it is moving near power lines.

- Lower equipment extensions, portable augers or elevators before moving or transporting equipment. Do not raise equipment, such as ladders, poles or rods into power lines. Remember that non-metallic materials like lumber, tree limbs, ropes and hay can conduct electricity, especially when damp, dusty or dirty.
- Never attempt to raise or move power lines to clear a path. Doing so could result in electric shock or death.
- Avoid using metal poles inside bins. Don't use metal poles to break up bridged grain inside or around bins.
- Hire qualified electricians. Ensure that qualified electricians handle work on drying equipment and other farm electrical systems.

While rare, the only reason to exit equipment that has come into contact with overhead lines is if the equipment is on fire. However, if it happens, jump off the equipment with your feet together and without touching the machinery and the ground at the same time. Then, still keeping your feet together, hop to safety as you leave the area.



"Don't play with outlets!"

Kinzlee Klomp, Age 12

Kinzlee warns readers not to play with power outlets. Great advice, Kinzlee! Kinzlee's parents are Kaitlin and Austin Klomp from Box Elder, 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.

Fresh BREADS

ZUCCHINI BREAD

Ingredients:

3 eggs
2 cups sugar
1 cup oil
2 tsps. vanilla
3 cups flour
1 tsp. baking soda
1/2 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. cinnamon
3 cups zucchini (shredded)

Method

Cream together eggs, sugar and oil. Then add the vanilla. Mix together the flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt, cinnamon and add to the egg mixture. Stir in zucchini. Pour into two loaf pans. Bake at 325°F for approximately one hour.

Kimberly Grimm
Southeastern Electric

GLUTEN FREE OATMEAL PANCAKES

Ingredients:

2 1/2 cups oats
1 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 tsp. salt
2 eggs
1/2 cup milk
3/4 cup applesauce
3 tsps. maple syrup
2 tsps. apple cider vinegar
2 tsps. vanilla

Method

Grind 2 1/2 cups oats in blender until turned into flour. In large bowl, whisk together oats, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon and salt. Form a bowl in center, add eggs and whisk them. Then, add milk, applesauce, maple syrup, apple cider vinegar and vanilla. Stir to combine. Wait five minutes to thicken batter. Cook in oiled pan.

Jean Beauchamp
Southeastern Electric

KUNSI' FRY BREAD

Ingredients:

1 tbsp. yeast (quick rise)
2 tsps. sugar
1 qt. warm water
1 tbsp. oil/melted butter
1/2 tsp. salt
6 cups all-purpose flour
2 tsps. powdered dry milk
4 cups oil for frying

Method

Mix yeast, sugar, salt, warm water, oil/melted butter and let proof for 15 minutes. Mix flour and powdered dry milk. Make a well in the flour mixture and add yeast mixture. Gradually add warm water until dough comes together and is no longer sticky. Cover and let rise until doubled in size. Heat oil to fry dough. Separate dough into 10 to 12 baseball-size dough balls (or smaller if you want smaller pieces). Stretch dough balls and shape into oval discs or round discs approximately 1/4 inch thick. Test the oil to see if it's hot enough by dropping a small pea size piece of the dough in the oil. If it floats it's ready. Flatten the disc between your hands and stretch it again. Fry the bread until both sides are golden brown. Transfer to paper towel lined plate to drain. Continue until all the dough is fried. Enjoy with soup or a Spam and egg sandwich or taco toppings.

Sheila Ironheart
Whetstone Valley Electric

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 2025. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.



It's the perfect time to Thank You - the members who make it all possible!

The month of October, electric cooperatives across the country take time to celebrate National Co-op Month and reflect on the unique advantages of being part of a cooperative. It's also the perfect time to thank you—the members who make it all possible. For us, it's not just a celebration. It's a chance to reaffirm the values that guide everything we do.

As the GM of Clay-Union, I see purpose in action every single day. Unlike investor-owned utilities, our co-op doesn't exist to make profits for distant shareholders. We exist to serve you—our members, our neighbors and our communities. That purpose is what sets us apart. It's why we were founded, and it's what continues to drive every decision we make.

At its core, being a cooperative means we are member-owned and locally controlled. That's not just a tagline; it's the very heart of our business model. Members have a voice in how our co-op operates.

You elect board members who live right here in our service area and understand the unique challenges and opportunities our communities face. Decisions aren't made in corporate boardrooms hundreds of miles away; they're made here at home, by people who care about the same things you do.

This local accountability means we can stay focused on what matters most: delivering reliable, electricity and providing real value to the people we serve.

We do that by investing in essential infrastructure upgrades and technologies that strengthen our local grid and improve electric service. And when storms hit or outages occur, Clay-Union's crews are here and ready to respond quickly, because we live here too. But our commitment doesn't end at the power lines.

Co-ops were built to meet community needs, and that purpose extends well beyond delivering electricity. Whether we're supporting local schools, sponsoring

youth programs, or partnering with volunteer organizations, we are always looking for ways to improve the quality of life in the places we serve. Community support isn't an afterthought—it's part of our mission.

We're also planning for the future. As electricity demand grows due to new technologies and economic development, electric co-ops are working to ensure we continue to meet those needs with a balanced, reliable energy mix. We know our members care about affordability and dependability, and we're committed to delivering both.

That's the power of the cooperative difference. That's what it means to be powered by purpose.

This National Co-op Month, I encourage you to take pride in your cooperative membership. You're not just a customer—you're an owner, a stakeholder, and a vital part of a larger effort to keep our community strong, connected and energized.

Thank you for the trust you place in us. We're proud to be your local electric cooperative.

CLAY-UNION ELECTRIC AT THE CLAY COUNTY FAIR



Clay-Union Electric was proud to serve as a Sponsor of the Day at the Clay County Fair on August 8th. We partnered with the concession stand for our Member & Community Appreciation Day, handing out more than 500 - \$5 vouchers to fairgoers. These vouchers could be redeemed at the concession stand on Friday or Saturday, with all proceeds going back to support their hard work.

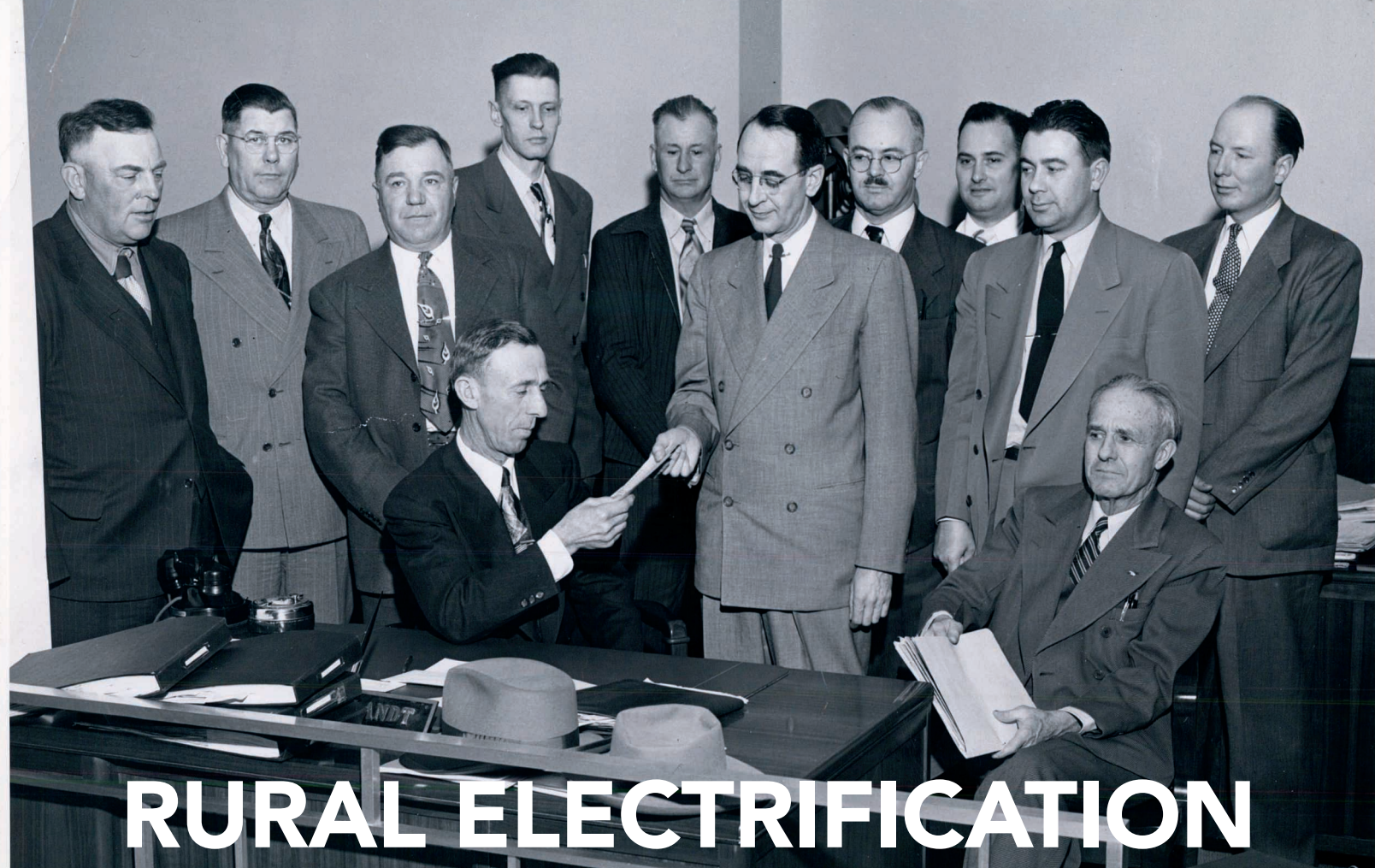
Visitors to our booth enjoyed a variety of activities, including bucket truck rides, dart throwing for prizes, door prize drawings, and a dunk tank featuring our linemen—with proceeds benefiting local 4-H



groups.

The day also featured an Ag Safety and Education Day hosted by the fair board. Our high-voltage safety trailer was on display to demonstrate the dangers of downed power lines, the importance of staying clear of green transformer boxes, and how electricity always seeks the easiest path to the ground. These demonstrations drive home how dangerous electricity can be when it passes through the human body.

Our linemen, trained experts in their field, performed these demonstrations using proper protective equipment. Please remember—never go near a downed power line and to always report a problem or downed line immediately.



RURAL ELECTRIFICATION

WEST CENTRAL

Last to Incorporate, Lasting in Impact

Frank Turner

frank.turner@sdrea.coop

Before rural electrification, South Dakota's farmsteads ended the day in silence. There was no music from the radio playing in the living room or hum of an electric refrigerator in the kitchen. Over decades of work, power lines would stretch across the prairie through President Franklin Roosevelt's vision of rural electrification, carrying not only electricity but also a new way of life.

In 1935, President Roosevelt created the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) as part of his New Deal policies to revive a nation struggling through the Great Depression and bring electricity to

America's rural communities, something that private and investor-owned utilities refused to do.

Clay-Union Electric was the first rural community in South Dakota to adopt the cooperative model in 1937, and West Central was the last in 1949. But as former West Central Electric CEO Steve Reed can attest, being the last to adopt the cooperative way didn't hinder their success. Once the path to forming a cooperative was established, the members of West Central benefitted from electricity's transformation from a luxury into a necessity with the rest of rural South Dakota.

"We couldn't rely on the power

West Central Electric board directors present a check to a representative of Central Electric and Gas in 1951, finalizing the cooperative's purchase of the private utility system. *Photo submitted by West Central Electric.*

companies to come out to serve rural South Dakota," said Reed, a 42-year cooperative veteran who joined West Central Electric as a lineman and worked his way up to CEO. "They were never going to do it at price that was affordable, so rural electric has been great for not only the members of West Central but the entire country."

So why was West Central the last to form a cooperative? According to Reed, the rural communities that organized West Central Electric in 1949 had several hurdles to clear. The first was overcoming the sheer remoteness of the territory, which then had a system that averaged 1.5 members per mile of line constructed, even including towns and

cities. Because members were few and far between, the REA needed the towns in the proposed West Central territory to become members: from Philip to Hayes and Murdo to Kennebec, where West Central Electric was incorporated.

That led to the next problem: the towns and cities in the proposed West Central Electric's service territory were already being served by Central Electric and Gas, a private company based out of Philadelphia. This obstacle didn't stop the people who had a vision of what rural electrification could accomplish. Following lengthy discussion in 1951, West Central Electric purchased systems from Central Electric and Gas for \$850,000 using low-interest REA federal funds.

Former West Central Electric Attorney John Larson outlined the discussions in his 50th Annual Meeting Speech: "There was no choice but to buy out the private supplier, Central Electric and Gas, and that was accomplished... (Former South Dakota Governor M. Q. Sharpe, who served as West Central Electric's attorney), showed up for the meeting that morning unshaven and unkempt, with a threadbare shirt and suit. For the entire morning, he listened with his head down and eyes shut to the Philadelphia lawyer types who represented the power company. After the dinner break, however, he showed up in a new suit, shaved, and took over the meeting by dictating exactly what West Central would do and what we would pay. During an afternoon break, one of the Philadelphia types was heard to mutter, 'You want to watch that old guy. When he's got his head down and eyes shut, he's not sleeping!'"

West Central Electric's 1951 purchase included all the electrical infrastructure within the town boundaries, as well as the diesel generation system extending west from Chamberlain. Shortly after, the evolution of West Central Electric progressed with the construction of distribution systems to farms and reconstructing the systems of various

towns, including the installation of street lights.

Since that iconic moment, West Central has continued to grow with its membership, meeting more demand for electrical energy than had been previously thought possible, a reflection of just how integral electricity has

become in day-to-day living for business owners, ag producers, and rural folk alike.

"That moment modernized us," said Reed. "It just did so much for everything – and without it, where would we be?"



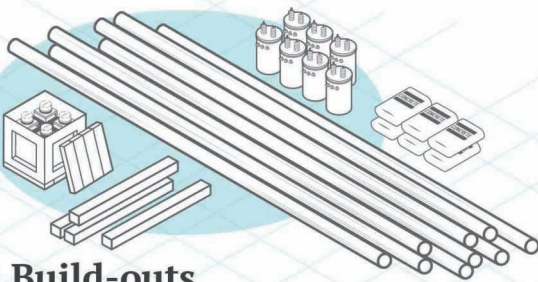
(Top) A West Central Electric Annual Meeting.
(Bottom) A West Central Electric Board Meeting with the REA.
Photos submitted by West Central Electric

Cost Increases

The past five years have been a period of exploding costs for the electric utility industry and for broadband providers, pushed by soaring demand, supply chain challenges, raw materials shortages, increased labor costs and tariffs. The impact has been rapid increases in the cost of producing power, longer and more unpredictable project timelines and the need for more financing, all of which have driven electric rates up for residences, businesses and other end-users. Here's a look at what's contributing to the trend. **Percent increase since 2020:**

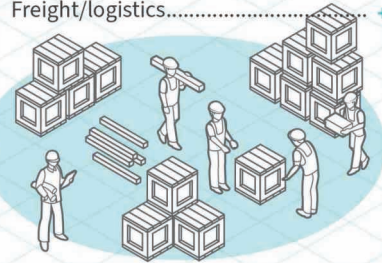
Infrastructure

Utility poles (wood, steel, composite)	+25-40%
Crossarms & braces (steel/wood)	+20-35%
Conductor wire (aluminum/copper)	+30-50%
Transformers	+70-100%
Grain-oriented electrical steel	+80-100%
Oil/dielectric fluids	+25-40%
Copper wiring	+50%
Concrete	+25-35%
Smart meters	+20-35%
Pad-mounted switchgear	+25-40%
Circuit breakers/reclosers	+20-35%



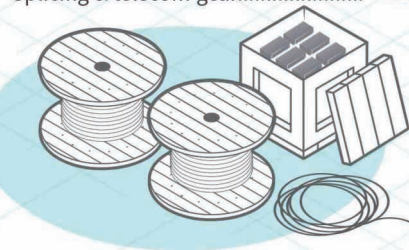
Build-outs

Utility construction labor	+20-40%
Freight/logistics	+30-60%



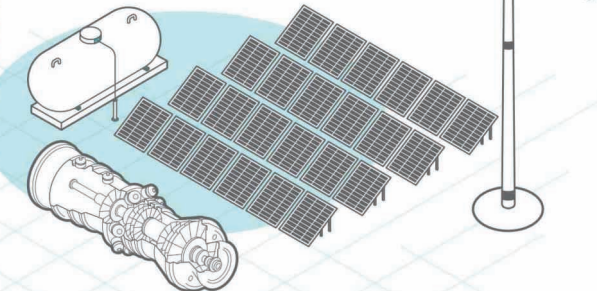
Broadband

Fiber-optic cable	+25-40%
Splicing & telecom gear	+20-30%



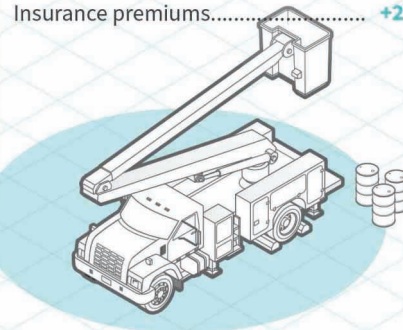
Generation

Diesel gensets	+20-40%
Gas turbines	+20-30%
Solar PV systems	+25-35%
Wind turbines	+25-35%
Hydropower components	+20-30%
Battery storage	+25-40%
SCADA/EMS systems	+20-30%
Inverters	+20-30%
Relays & switchgear	+25-40%
Natural Gas	+20-120%
Coal	+30-60%
Diesel/fuel oil	+40-70%



Fleets

Light trucks	+25-40%
Bucket trucks, digger derricks	+20-50%
Fuel costs (especially diesel)	+20-30%
Maintenance	+15-25%
Insurance premiums	+20%



Design: Kevin Kepple

Sources: BLS; energynews.com; Reuters; Wood Mackenzie; NREL; IEA

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

TIP OF THE MONTH

Take advantage of “shoulder months,” which refer to the transitional periods between peak heating and cooling seasons. During the fall, these milder weeks typically occur between September and November. Shoulder months offer a great opportunity to reduce home energy consumption as the need for extensive heating or cooling is reduced. Look for simple ways to boost indoor comfort without running your heating and cooling system. Use ceiling fans and open windows on breezy days to ventilate your home. On cooler days, add a layer of clothing and avoid running the heat.



Be aware of electrical equipment while hunting.

Keep yourself and others safe while enjoying the great outdoors.

Outage Reports

Date	Time	Township	Members	Cause
7/7	9:30 a.m.	Volin	2	Animal
7/7	7:30 p.m.	Spirit Mound	4	Tree
7/8	10:40 a.m.	Spink	25	Contractor
7/8	5:50 p.m.	Mission Hill	76	Animal
7/8	7:30 p.m.	Fairview	28	Tree
7/9	9:30 a.m.	Norway	210	Contractor
7/15	8:30 p.m.	Vermillion	1	Contractor
7/18	10:30 a.m.	Vermillion	3	Contractor
7/23	3:30 p.m.	Mission Hill	26	Tree
7/27	12 Noon	Marindahl	1	Animal
7/28	9:30 p.m.	Star	22	Trees/High Winds
7/28	9:30 p.m.	Riverside	3	Trees/High Winds
7/29	12:30 a.m.	Gayville	1	Trees/High Winds
7/29	3:00 a.m.	Spink	3	Trees/High Winds
7/29	3:30 a.m.	Riverside/Star	21	Trees/High Winds
7/29	5:30 a.m.	Garfield	20	Trees/High Winds
7/29	9:00 p.m.	Riverside	3	Trees/High Winds
7/29	9:00 p.m.	Garfield	170	Trees/High Winds
7/29	9:15 p.m.	Star	40	Trees/High Winds
7/29	9:30 p.m.	Bethel	9	Trees/High Winds
7/29	9:30 p.m.	Meckling	77	Trees/High Winds
7/29	9:30 p.m.	Mission Hill	37	Trees/High Winds
7/29	10:00 p.m.	Pleasant Valley/Garfield	11	Trees/Broken Pole
7/30	1:15 a.m.	Prairie Center	17	Trees/High Winds
7/30	1:30 a.m.	Prairie Center	5	Trees/High Winds
7/31	1:00 a.m.	Garfield	67	Trees/High Winds
7/31	5:30 a.m.	Garfield	2	Lightning
7/31	9:30 p.m.	Riverside	1	Trees/High Winds
7/31	9:30 p.m.	Volin	143	Trees/High Winds
7/31	10:00 p.m.	Emmet	12	Trees/High Winds
7/31	10:00 p.m.	Riverside	1	Trees/High Winds
7/31	10:00 p.m.	Emmet	19	Trees/High Winds

Can You Dig It?



An underground utility line is **damaged once every 9 minutes** because someone didn't call 811.



Call 811, the “Call Before You Dig Number,” at least **2 business days** prior to digging.



811 locators **do not detect** underground sprinkler systems, invisible fences, data communication systems, private water systems, or gas piping to a garage.



Even if you have previously had underground utilities marked, **utilities can shift**, so it's best to call before starting a new project.



Once **all of your utilities** have been located, then you can start your digging project!

Learn more at

 **Safe Electricity.org**



Photo submitted by JT and Luann Weber.

GENERATIONAL FARMERS

Four Generations of Lyon-Lincoln Electric Members Ranch on Lake Benton-Area Land

Jacob Boyko

jacob.boyko@sdrea.coop

Nestled amongst the rolling green pastures of western Minnesota, there's a generations-old farm worked by one family for over three quarters of a century.

From their Lincoln County property, the Weber family watched rural electrification improve the prairie, connect neighbors and bring reliability to farmsteads. Now they watch precision agriculture guide planting, bovine genetics strengthen herds, and social media and the internet connect their business to the wider world.

It all started in 1947, when John and Marie Weber moved into the old three-bedroom farmhouse from nearby

Elkton, S.D. Luckily, the move came six years after Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative energized lines in the area, so the Weber home enjoyed many of the modern amenities brought on by rural electrification, including electric lights, kitchen appliances and a washing machine.

"I know I had the best mom and dad in the world," said JT, one of John and Marie's eight children, who today helps run the ranch with his wife, Luann, their three sons and their families. "Dad was very community-oriented. He was on the school board, the elevator board and the rural water board. In fact, he was instrumental in starting rural water. He went from place to place, talking people

into getting rural water."

JT was born on the farm in 1957 during a blizzard that left his parents unable to reach the hospital in town. As a boy, he remembers collecting rainwater in a cistern and using it for cooking, cleaning and baths. Even as rural electrification began to transform the countryside, life on the farm remained far different – and often harder – than life in town.

"When I grew up, back in the 60s and 70s, if you milked 40 cows that was quite a few," JT said. "We were milking about 100 cows – we were kind of ahead of our time. But we had a big family, and us boys, we got right in there."

He continued, "We were hauling silage, hauling manure, milking cows and doing chores. But Dad never told us to do anything. He always asked us if we wanted to, and there's a difference. You wanted to work for him. He made you want to work for him, and it was never a burden."

That was a quality JT kept in mind with his own seven children on that same

ranch where he grew up. Today, JT and Luann's sons Jake, Garret, and Matt all stay involved in the ranch, now Weber Bros. Cattle.

"Growing up, I kind of always had that bug to get in the tractor, chase cows, put up fence, and do what needs to be done," explained Jake, the oldest son.

Today, they specialize in raising purebred Angus bulls and Simmental-Angus crosses, while also producing corn silage and alfalfa to help sustain the operation. While the operation may be old, it's not at all low-tech.

"Our main thing is our bull program," Jake said. "We sell about 50 registered Angus and Simmental bulls by private treaty every spring, and we also develop 50 replacement and bred heifers, and market a portion of them. We do a lot of artificial insemination and embryo transfer. Some of the more elite donor cows we can get our hands on by buying females and buying embryos. We're just trying to make good cows."

Jake, like his dad, graduated from South Dakota State University with an animal science degree, and was excited to return to the ranch to incorporate some of his new skills into the operation.

"When I got back from school, we really amped up our embryo transfer program with different ideas and stuff I learned about genetics from contacts and producers we've met over the years," Jake continued. "We went from selling 10 bulls per year to selling close to 50 bulls."

Jake's younger brother and fellow SDSU animal science graduate, Garret, keeps involved on the family's ranch as well. Though he works full time as swine genetic company Hypor's US Sales Manager, he helps out with the operation and finds the time to run Weber Bros. Cattle's social media pages, which he says has successfully expanded their presence in the market.

"Whether it's Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat or our company website, we're able to hit such a broad spectrum of people, and it's a great way to tell the story of our operation, what we're doing year-in and year-out and advertise the



genetics of the cattle that we're showing and selling," Garret explained. "We're able to have a much greater touch point of individuals that we can reach out to and market our livestock."

JT, Jake and Garret all credit their spouses and families for supporting them as they work to grow the operation.

"It took a long time and a lot of support for us to get established and get to where we are today," JT said.

Looking toward the future – and the next generation, their goals are to make an already successful operation even better.

"We'll keep working with the cow herd, continue to make improvements and make better genetics every year," Jake said. "I want this opportunity to be available to my kids, so that if they want to be able to do this, they'll have the same chance we did."

Garret added, "It's something that I hope my sons can do someday if we're able to continue to grow the operation. I hope it's something they're going to be able to share and cherish with their own kids, because those are the memories that stick with you forever."

JT and Luann Weber with their adult children, Jake, Garret, Matt and Sara Weber, Liz Mergen, and Maria Opheim, and families.

Back, from left: Garret Weber, Levi Weber, Kailey Weber, Jake Weber, Amanda Weber, Sara Weber, Cade Opheim, Maria Opheim, Tawnee Opheim, JT Weber, Luann Weber, Brent Mergen, Liz Mergen, Davie Fiedler, Matt Weber, Racheal Krog.
Front, from left: Adam Weber, Chisum Weber, Abeline Weber, Vidalia Fiedler.
Not pictured: Talon Weber



Photo submitted by JT and Luanne Weber.



A purebred Angus Heifer.
Photo by Garret Weber

Clay-Union Electric Corporation

Board Meeting Summary

JULY 18, 2025 • VERMILLION, SOUTH DAKOTA

The board meeting was called to order on July 18, 2025, at 8:30 a.m. by board President Tom Larsen. The meeting was held in the conference room at the Clay-Union Electric Headquarters.

In attendance were Tom Larsen, Sara Schulte, Chris Kinney, and Mike Slattery. The board seat for District #5 is vacant. Attending staff members included Chris Larson, Beth Bottolfson, Alan Gauer and Jackie Williams.

Agenda (ACTION ITEM) – A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the agenda as presented.

Visitors to be Heard – None

Approval of Minutes from the June Board Meeting (ACTION ITEM) – A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the June board minutes held on 6/24/25.

Approval of Minutes from the June Executive Session (ACTION ITEM) – A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the June executive session minutes held on 6/24/25.

Check List & Electronic Funds Transfer – The board reviewed the EFT/ACH payments, and the monthly check list as presented.

New Members and Refunds (ACTION ITEM) – A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the new members, refunds and credit deposits as presented.

Early Retirement of Capital Credits (ACTION ITEM) – A motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the Early Retirement of Capital Credits as presented.

Contracts (NONE) –

Policy Review –

- Policy No. 308 – Charges for Property Damage, Structure Moves and Meter Tampering - a motion was made, seconded, and carried to mark the policy as reviewed with only a minor clerical fix.

- Policy No. 313 – Terms of Service Work - a motion was made, seconded, and carried to mark the policy as reviewed with no changes.

- Policy No. 316 – Accident Investigation - after reviewing, a motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the policy as presented.

- Policy No. 501 – Community Watch Program, a motion was made, seconded, and carried to rescind the policy.

Work Order and Special Equipment Summary – None

REED Loan – None

Management Reports:

A. Manager's Report - Manager Larson provided reports on the monthly activities:

August Board Meeting – The date of August 29th, 2025, was set as the next regular board meeting to begin at 8:30 a.m.

East River REED/MAC - The REED Board met on July 9th for the monthly meeting followed by the Managers Advisory Committee.

SD Line Patrol - Virtual meetings have started in planning the SD Line Patrol poker run scheduled for September 2025. B-Y, Union and Clay-Union will host the event.

Distributed Generation - All four sites are up and running with approved settings as checked by our engineers. The Nova portal is live on our website for future member projects.

Joint Services Discussion - Joey, Electrician Foreman, has been overseeing two projects for Union County.

NRECA Region 6 meeting - The NRECA Region 6 meeting is September 23-25 in Madison, Wisconsin. Manager Larson will be the delegate.

Gayville-Volin School - A match from CoBank for \$1,500 was paired with a contribution of \$1,500 for a total commitment to the school project of \$3,000.

East River Annual Meeting - The East River Annual Meeting is on September 3rd at the Best Western Ramkota Hotel in Sioux Falls. Mike Slattery is the delegate and Tom Larsen is the alternate.

Basin Electric Annual Meeting (Action) - A motion was made, seconded, and approved to revise Chris Larson as the alternate as director Schulte is unable to attend.

- The Basin Electric Annual Meeting will be August 12th, 13th, and 14th in Bismarck, ND. Mike Slattery is the delegate and Chris Larson is the alternate.

Rhoden Appointment to the Senate - Governor Rhoden appointed Brandon Wipf to replace David Wheeler as the Senator in District 22.

Irrigation Meeting – Staff will be in attendance for an irrigator meeting for the Centerville, Irene, and Viborg area irrigators.

Clay County Fair - Our member/community appreciation event will be August 8th as part of the Clay County Fair.

B. Administrative Report – Manager of Finance and Administration Bottolfson reviewed the following reports with the board:

- Billing Activity
- June 2025 Financials

Office Hours and Due Dates

Our office hours are Monday – Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Please remember your **PAYMENT DUE DATE is the 20th of EACH MONTH**. Your payment must ARRIVE in our office on the 20th to avoid any penalties. Please allow mailing time as we go by the received date, **NOT the postmark**. If the 20th falls on a weekend or holiday, payment is due the following business day. If payment is still not received by the first of the following month, a \$30 collection fee will be applied and a disconnect notice will be mailed. If disconnection for nonpayment occurs, all past and current energy charges, a reconnect fee and sufficient credit deposit will be required before the meter can be reinstalled.

FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE, WE ALSO ACCEPT THESE PAYMENT OPTIONS:

Online Billing:

www.clayunionelectric.coop
Set up your user profile to manage your account, pay your bill and receive billing notification emails.

Bank Draft: Have your payment automatically deducted from your checking or savings account on the due date.

Recurring Credit/Debit Card: Have your payment automatically deducted from your card on the due date.

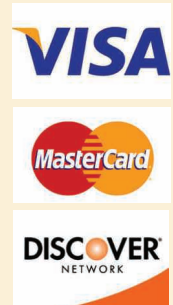
By Phone: Call in your credit/debit card payment.

In Office: We accept cash, check, money order or credit/debit card.

By Mail: Send check or money order with your payment slip.

Drop Box: Located on the right side of our main entrance at 31321 SD Hwy 19.

There are no additional fees to use any of the above payment methods.



Collection Fee	\$30
Trip Charge-Reconnect Fee	
During Business Hours.....	\$75
Dishonored Payment	\$40

Delinquent Accounts (gross rate)
10 percent on the first \$200 plus 2 percent on the balance.

- Milsoft iXp Update

All reports were posted to the website earlier for board review.

C **Operations Report** – Operations Manager Gauer reviewed the following reports with the board:

- Monthly department work summary
- New Service
- Retired Service
- June Outage Report
- Damage to Clay-Unions System
- Service Upgrades
- Wiring

All reports were posted to the website earlier for board review.

Financial Report – Manager of Finance and Administration Bottolfson reviewed the following reports with the board:

- Actual to Budget
- Balance Sheet
- Interest Income
- Irrigation Sales 2020-2025
- kWh Sales Report
- Large Power
- Line Loss
- Operating Statement
- Operating Statement – Second Quarter Comparison
- Power Bill
- Summary of Purchased Power
- Wiring Income & Expense

All reports were posted to the website earlier for board review.

Legal Report – None

Strategic Planning – None

Safety Meeting Minutes – None

Cyber Security – The June Cyber Security report from East River IT was posted to the website for the board to review and was discussed during the meeting.

Video and/or Meeting Reports –

- East River Report
- East River Financials
- Basin Reports

Calendar – The board reviewed the August 2025 calendar.

Executive Session – The board went into Executive Session at 11:10 a.m., Executive Session was adjourned at 11:44 a.m. There was no action taken.

Adjournment – There being no further business, a motion was made, seconded, and carried, to adjourn the meeting at 11:45 a.m.

Thomas Larsen, President

Sara Schulte, Secretary



OCT. 10-12
Black Hills Powwow
 Rapid City, SD
 605-341-0925

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.

UNTIL OCT. 31
Wallace Dow, Prairie Architect
Traveling Exhibit
 Lake County Museum
 Madison, SD
 605-256-5308

OCT. 3
DSU Architecture Walking Tour
 3-4 p.m.
 Lake County Museum
 Madison, SD

OCT. 3-5
Black Hills Film Festival
 Journey Museum
 Rapid City, SD
 605-574-9454

OCT. 4
Pumpkin Train, Vendor
Showcase
 Prairie Village
 Madison, SD

OCT. 4-5
Sioux Falls Quilt Guild
 Sat. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
 Sun. 11 a.m.-4 p.m.
 Sioux Falls Convention Center
 Sioux Falls, SD
 605-951-2034

OCT. 10-11
Holman Acres Pumpkin Fest
& Vendor Show
 Fri. 12 p.m.-6 p.m.
 Sat. 10 a.m.-6 p.m.,
 Philip, SD
 605-441-1060

OCT. 11
A Celebration of Classic Hits
 7 p.m.
 Gayville Music Hall
 Gayville, SD
 605-760-5799

OCT. 11
Howard Fall Festival
 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
 Miner County 4-H Grounds
 Howard, SD

OCT. 18
Arts & Crafts Festival
 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
 Faulkton, SD

OCT. 18
Northern Prairie Arts
Barn Quilt Class
 Highland Conference Center
 Register by Oct. 6
 Watertown, SD
 605-882-1780

OCT. 18-19
Heartland Quilting Stars Show
 Highland Conference Center
 Mitchell, SD
 605-770-1551

OCT. 19
Helping With Horsepower
Year-End Horse Show
 10 a.m.
 Reclamation Ranch
 Mitchell, SD

OCT. 24
Humor for Heroes
Comedy Night Fundraiser
 Comedians, Silent Auction
 Tickets \$15, two for \$25
 1600 W. Russell St.
 Sioux Falls, SD
 605-336-3470

OCT. 25
The Greats of Country
 7 p.m.
 Gayville Music Hall
 Gayville, SD
 605-760-5799

OCT. 31-NOV. 2
Haunted Trail at
Reclamation Ranch
 7-10 p.m.
 Reclamation Ranch
 Mitchell, SD

NOV. 1
Reliance Christmas Carousel
 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
 Reliance, SD
 605-730-1462

NOV. 1
Fall Fling Craft/Vendor Show
 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
 Dakota Christian School
 Corsica, SD
 605-366-7940

NOV. 1
Black Hills Meat Fest
 2-4 p.m.
 Nerdy Nuts Expo Hall
 Rapid City, 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.