

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

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Factors That Impact Electricity Prices



Dave Page
General Manager

I was recently asked by one of our members about what impacts electricity prices. We talked about how the daily cost of living seems to have increased across the board.

Just as inflation has impacted everything from the price of gasoline to the price of eggs, costs for the fuels required to produce electricity have also risen. This is a timely topic, so I wanted to help explain some of the factors that impact electricity prices (and energy bills) in this month's issue of the Cooperative Connections.

While there is no short answer, there are a few key elements that impact electricity prices and rates. Some of these factors Whetstone Valley Electric Cooperative can manage, some of them you can impact, and other factors are beyond our control. So, let me break it down.

There are three primary parts to your monthly electric bill: a base charge, an energy consumption/kWh charge, and for some, a demand/KW charge. To understand your total energy costs and what impacts your bill, let's unpack one piece at a time.

The first is a fixed monthly base charge, which covers the costs associated with providing electricity to your home. This includes equipment, materials, labor and operating costs necessary to serve each meter in Whetstone Valley's service territory, regardless of the amount of energy used. In order to ensure the reliable service you expect and deserve, we must maintain the local system, including power lines, substations and other necessary equipment. Like many other businesses, we've experienced supply chain issues and steep cost increases for some of our basic equipment such as wire, transformers, metering equipment and switch gear. Because we are a not-for-profit cooperative, some of these expenses must be passed on to our members. I should note that the base charge is the same for everyone with the same type of service and the costs are shared equitably across the membership.

Another component of your monthly bill is the kWh charge, which covers how much energy you consume. You've likely noticed the amount of energy you use can vary from month to month

and is typically impacted by extreme temperatures. When temperatures soar or dip, your cooling and heating equipment run longer, which increases your home energy use. Regardless, energy consumption is an area that you have some control over, and you can lower your monthly bill by actively reducing energy use. Your thermostat is a great place to start, so be sure to keep it close to 78 degrees during summer months. Whetstone Valley Electric Cooperative offers reduced rates for electric heat, and you can receive a bill credit or discount for allowing load control for appliances like water heaters and air conditioners.

The "demand" component of an electric bill refers to the measure of the highest level of electricity consumption by a customer within a specific period, usually 15 to 30 minutes. This component is crucial because it reflects the peak power requirement of a customer, indicating the maximum load they place on the electrical grid. For larger users, Whetstone charges for demand to ensure there is sufficient infrastructure to handle these peak loads, which often require more resources and capacity. For many smaller loads, the cost of demand is included in the kWh energy charge. The demand charge incentivizes customers to reduce peak usage, avoiding sudden spikes that strain the grid and potentially leading to lower overall costs and a more stable electrical supply system.

Wholesale power cost is still our largest single cost by far. Our power suppliers have done well to keep our cost of power stable however, they are faced with rising costs also.

I hope this information sheds light on some of the factors that impact electricity prices. While we can't control the weather or the rising costs of fuels, please know Whetstone Valley Electric Cooperative is doing everything possible to keep internal costs down.

We're here to help you, too. Contact us if you have questions about your energy bill or for advice on how to save energy at home. You can find us at <https://www.whetstone.coop/> online or by phone at 605-432.5331.

COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS

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USPS 018-979)

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WHETSTONE VALLEY COOPERATIVE CONNECTIONS is published monthly by Whetstone Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc., PO Box 512, Milbank, SD 57252, for its members. Families subscribe to Whetstone Valley Cooperative Connections as part of their electric cooperative membership. Whetstone Valley Cooperative Connections' purpose is to provide reliable, helpful information to electric cooperative members on matters pertaining to rural electrification and better rural living.

Subscription information: Electric cooperative members devote 50 cents from their monthly electric payments for a subscription. Nonmember subscriptions are available for \$12 annually. Periodicals Postage Paid at Milbank Post Office, Milbank, S.D. 57252, and at additional mailing offices.

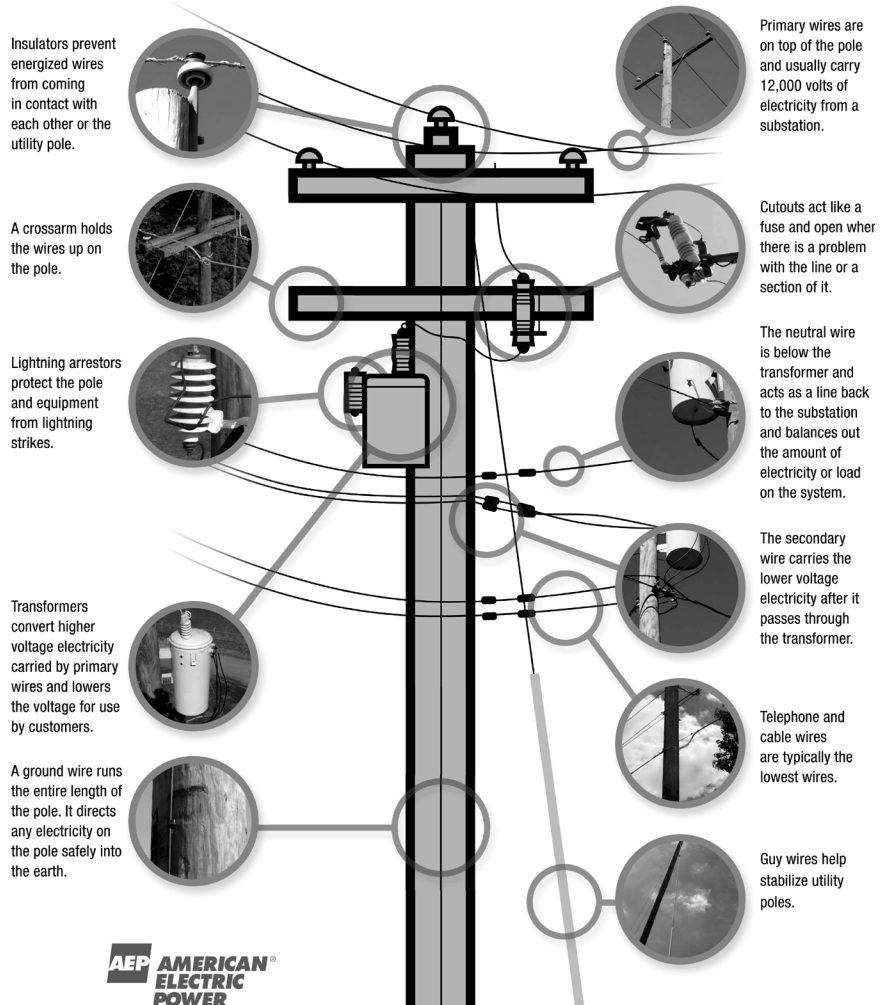
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Whetstone Valley Cooperative Connections, PO Box 512, Milbank, SD 57252; telephone (605) 432-5331; toll-free 1-800-568-6631; fax (605) 432-5951; e-mail energyexperts@whetstone.coop
Office hours: Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

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Design assistance by SDREA.

What's on an Electric Power Pole?

This is an illustration of basic equipment found on a typical distribution pole and can vary by location.



ALWAYS CALL 811
before digging, building, planting or installing at *any* depth.



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Extreme Heat Preparation

Learn How to Stay Hydrated

You need to drink enough water to prevent heat illness. An average person needs to drink about 3/4 of a gallon of water daily. Everyone's needs may vary.

- You can check that you are getting enough water by noting your urine color. Dark yellow may indicate you are not drinking enough.
- Avoid sugary, caffeinated and alcoholic drinks.
- If you are sweating a lot, combine water with snacks or a sports drink to replace the salt and minerals you lose in sweat.
- Talk to your doctor about how to prepare if you have a medical condition or are taking medicines.

Make a Plan to Stay Cool

Do not rely only on electric fans during extreme heat. When temperatures are in the high 90s, fans may not prevent heat-related illness. Taking a cool shower or bath or moving to an air-conditioned place is a much better way to cool off.

- Spending a few hours each day in air conditioning can help prevent heat illness.
 - If you have air conditioning, be sure that it is in working order.
 - If you do not have air conditioning or if there is a power outage, find locations where you can stay cool. For example, a public library, shopping mall or a public cooling center. Plan how you will get there.
 - Additional resources may be available from local government or community groups.
- Make sure you have plenty of lightweight, loose clothing to wear.
- Create a support team of people you may assist and who can assist you. Check in with them often to make sure that everyone is safe.

Learn Emergency Skills

- Learn how to recognize and respond to heat illness.
- Learn First Aid and CPR.
- Be ready to live without power. Utilities may be offline. Be ready to live without power, gas and water. Plan for your electrical needs, including cell phones and medical equipment. Talk to your doctor. Plan for backup power.

Gather Emergency Supplies

- Gather food, water and medicine. Stores might be closed. Organize supplies into a Go-Kit and a Stay-at-Home

Kit. In the event of a power outage, you may lose access to clean drinking water. Set aside at least one gallon of drinking water per person per day. Consider adding drinks with electrolytes. Include sunscreen and wide-brimmed hats.

- Go-Kit: at least three days of supplies that you can carry with you. Include backup batteries and chargers for your devices (cell phone, CPAP, wheelchair, etc.)
- Stay-at-Home Kit: at least two weeks of supplies.
- Have a one-month supply of medication in a child-proof container and medical supplies or equipment.
- Keep personal, financial and medical records safe and easy to access (hard copies or securely backed up)
- Consider keeping a list of your medications and dosages on a small card to carry with you.

Source: American Red Cross



Power Line Safety "Call 911 and Don't Get Out"

Hobie Klein, Age 12

Hobie Klein warns farmers to call 911 and don't get out of the tractor if contact is made with a power line. Hobie's parents are Dean and Karey Klein, members of Sioux Valley Energy.

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.

Summer SALADS

MOM'S VEGETABLE SALAD

Ingredients:

Salad

2 cans diced carrots
1 can green beans
1 can yellow beans
1 small can peas
1 can cut baby corn

Drain all the vegetables

Add

1/2 cup diced green pepper
1 cup diced celery
1 diced medium onion

Dressing

Combine in a saucepan
1/2 cup oil
1 1/3 cup sugar
1/3 cup white vinegar
1/3 cup cider vinegar
2 Tbsp water

Combine in a saucepan and boil until clear

Method

Pour dressing over vegetables and refrigerate for several hours before serving. Keeps for a week.

Debra Clow
Harrisburg, S.D.

FRESH SUMMER SALAD

Ingredients:

3 tbsps. olive oil, divided
1 tbsp. lime juice
1/4 tsp. salt
1 1/5 cups fresh corn or thawed frozen corn
1 1/2 cups cherry tomatoes, halved
1/2 cup cucumber, finely chopped
2 tbsp. fresh basil, minced
1/3 cup crumbled Feta cheese or Parmesan cheese
1 tbsp. balsamic vinegar or Italian salad dressing

Method

Mix 2 tablespoons of oil, lime juice and salt in a small bowl. Cook corn in a skillet with remaining 1 tbsp. oil. Pour corn into bowl, cool slightly. Add tomatoes, cucumber and basil. Refrigerate. Before serving, drizzle with dressing, cheese and balsamic vinegar or Italian dressing.

Barb Selland
Mitchell, S.D.

CHICKEN SALAD

Ingredients:

1/2 cup plain lowfat yogurt
2 tbsps. mayonnaise
1 tsp. parsley flakes
1/2 tsp. seasoned salt
1/4 tsp. ground black pepper
1/2 rotisserie chicken, cut into bite-size chunks (about 2 cups)
1/2 cup thinly sliced celery
1/4 cup chopped red onion

Method

Mix yogurt, mayonnaise, parsley, seasoned salt and pepper in large bowl. Add chicken, celery and onion; toss to coat well. Cover. Refrigerate at least 30 minutes or until ready to serve. Serve in sandwiches or on salad greens.

McCormick.com

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 2024. All entries must include your name, mailing address, phone number and cooperative name.

Types of Heat Pumps



Miranda Boutelle
Efficiency Services
Group

Q: My heating system is 10-plus years old, and I want to switch to a heat pump. Can you help me choose the best option for my home?

A: Heat pumps have been around for decades, and in that time, the technology has come a long way. In my opinion, they could use a rebrand.

The name heat pump does not highlight the benefit of air conditioning that comes with the technology. Heat pumps are highly efficient because they don't use energy to create heat. Instead, they use energy to move heat – into the home in the winter and out of it in the summer. They typically produce about three times more energy than they use.

The most common types of heat pumps are air source and ground source. Air source heat pumps transfer heat from the outside air, even if it isn't particularly warm outside. Ground source, or geothermal heat pumps, transfer heat between your home and the ground. With a lower upfront price tag, air source heat pumps are more common.

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, air source heat pumps can reduce heating use by about 65% compared to an electric furnace. They come in a variety of styles and configurations to fit different homes. Air source heat pump technology has been popular in warmer climates for decades. There are now cold climate versions available, too.

Here's an explanation of how each type operates:

Ducted air source heat pumps are ideal for homes with existing ductwork or homes where ductwork can be feasibly added. Replacing an aging central air conditioning system with a heat pump can significantly reduce heating costs.

Ductless heat pumps, or mini-split heat pumps, also draw heat from the outside air. They are a great solution for homes that do not have existing ductwork.

There are many configurations to suit

different home layouts. New options on the market allow for coupling with gas or propane backup heat, which might be a good fit for your home. Ductless heat pumps can be a great option for homes with wood stoves. This can help home air quality, heat the home without gathering wood and provide air conditioning in warmer months.

Geothermal heat pumps transfer heat from the ground to your home. They are even more efficient than air source heat pumps, reducing energy use by 70% to 80%, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. They can also heat water for use in the home, which saves on water heating costs.

From a user experience perspective, heat pumps are a little different because the heat from the register doesn't feel quite as warm as oil, electric, natural gas or propane heat. That can take a little getting used to, but the efficiency gains and energy savings make the investment worthwhile.

Before buying a heat pump, compare equipment ratings. The higher the rating, the more efficient the equipment. If it is time to replace your heating system, I recommend making the switch to a heat pump to conserve energy and potentially save on your electric bills.

Understanding the Backup Heat Feature

Most heat pump systems are installed with a backup or auxiliary heat for cold weather. This auxiliary heat can be electric coils, gas, propane or oil, which is usually more expensive to operate. This helps keep your home warm on cold days, but you don't want to use it if you don't need it.

For some heat pumps, turning up the thermostat too quickly or too high can trigger the backup heat. Typically, your thermostat will display emergency or auxiliary heat when using this feature. Speak to your HVAC technician to ensure your thermostat is set to maximize efficiency.

Sparking Innovation On The Farm

Tara Miller

Central Electric Cooperative, Manager of Communications

The year was 1950, and a teenager named Robert Moe was living on a farm in northern Hanson County when Intercounty Electric brought power to the prairie. His parents, Chester and Myrl, had three boys and three girls. Robert was the second youngest of the Moe children.

When farms started receiving power, welding manufacturers held demonstrations to sell their products to area farmers. So, Robert's dad and his brother, Roy, purchased a 220-volt Forney brand welder.

"Intercounty Electric started small group welding classes in each county. Hanson County's classes were held at an implement dealer in Alexandria," Robert said.

After several weeks of classes, Intercounty Electric organized a contest in each county to pick the best welder, and Robert emerged as the winner in Hanson County. His skills were further recognized in a four-county contest held at the Intercounty Electric office building, where he was again named the winner.

Robert presented the first-ever 4-H welding demonstration at the South Dakota State Fair.

"Because my welding demonstration required a special electrical connection, Intercounty Electric installed an electric plug on a pole in the middle of an empty lot on the state fairgrounds."

Robert fabricated livestock gates and other farm necessities. In 1953, he also made a metal grille guard for the family's 1952 International pickup. His welding demonstrations would earn him a trip to Chicago to attend the 4-H Club Congress in the electrical division.

At age 21, Robert joined the United States Army and served for two years before returning home to farm. He eventually met his future wife, Norma Northrup, who grew up on a farm served by Intercounty Electric east of Letcher on Highway 37.

Robert and Norma grew crops and raised cattle on the Moe homestead for more than 25 years. They spent 32 winter seasons in south Texas and traveled around in an RV in the summer for 18 years before eventually moving to Mitchell.

Robert remembers, "Having a yard light was a handy new luxury when we first got electricity, but it got even better later when Intercounty offered a free all-night light if wired through the meter."

Norma said, "It's amazing to look at all that's changed with electric appliances. Refrigerators, deep freezers, water heaters, and washing machines."

However, Norma explained, one of the more profound impacts of electricity was how it would shape their children's lives. Their two sons, Kevin and Keith, both have successful careers related to computer technology, a field that would not exist without electricity.

Intercounty Electric merged with Tri-County Electric in 2000 to form Central Electric Cooperative, which today serves mostly rural portions of Aurora, Brule, Buffalo, Davison, Hanson, Jerauld, Miner and Sanborn Counties.

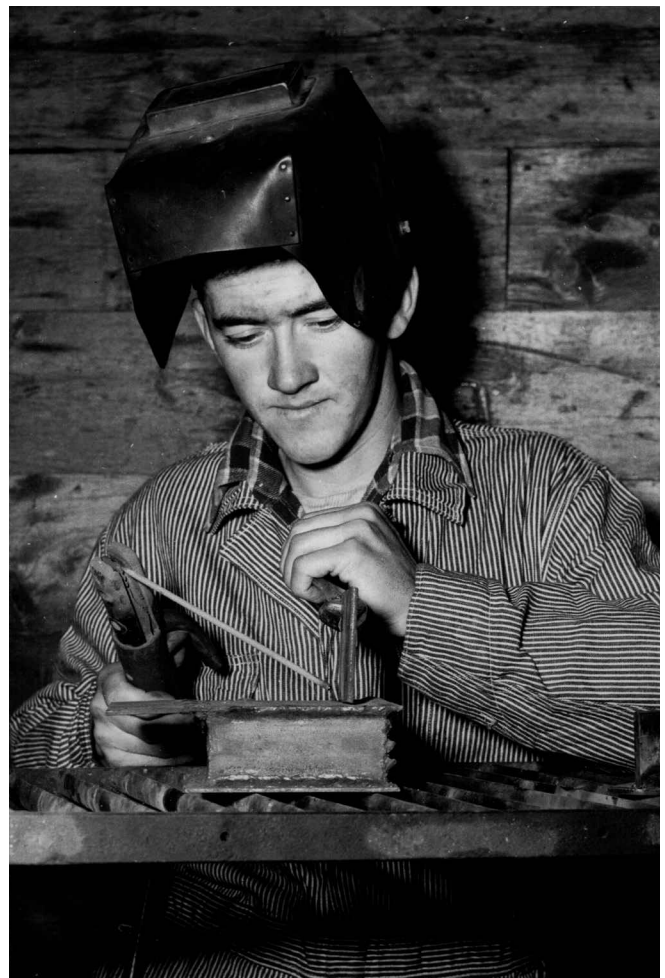




Photo Credit: North Dakota Geological Survey

Mammoth Discovery

Shannon Marvel

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Over Memorial Day of 2023, a coal miner made a historic discovery at the Freedom Mine in North Dakota.

“The shovel operator just happened to take a scoop that had a complete mammoth tusk,” said Jeff Person, a paleontologist with the North Dakota Geological Survey.

“The tusk was about seven-foot-long. That shovel must’ve picked it up just perfectly to not damage or break it. The driver reported the find to his superiors at the Freedom Mine, who then contacted us,” Person said.

The tusk was found in an old streambed. Other fossils



Photo Credit: North Dakota Geological Survey

were found in the streambed, including “more than twenty bones from the skeleton, including ribs, a shoulder blade a tooth and parts of the hips,” according to a news release.

“Most of the mammoth fossils known from North Dakota are isolated bones and teeth,” stated Clint Boyd, Senior Paleontologist for the North Dakota Geological Survey, in the news release. “This specimen is one of the most complete mammoth skeletons discovered in North Dakota, making it an exciting and scientifically important discovery.”

The bones were sent off to the Paleontology Lab at the North Dakota Heritage Center and State Museum in Bismarck to undergo extensive cleaning before being prepped to be dried out, which requires that the bones be

wrapped in plastic.

It could take up to another year for the bones to be dried out enough to be taken out of the plastic wrap, Person said.

At that point, the bones will be the focus of scientific research, he said.

According to the news release, “mammoths lived in North Dakota during the Pleistocene Epoch, commonly called the Ice Age, and went extinct in this area around 10,000 years ago. Several species of mammoth lived in North America, including the Woolly Mammoth and the Columbian Mammoth. They lived alongside other iconic animals like saber-toothed tigers and giant sloths. Once the bones are fully cleaned, paleontologists will be able to identify which species was collected from the mine.”



Photo Credit: North Dakota Geological Survey

Harvest Safety

8 Ways to Reduce Risks on the Farm

Farming takes great planning, forecasting, research and hard work to maximize potential profit. Farmers face many hazards and risks during harvest. Farming safely requires a significant effort to ensure you go home unharmed to your family. As harvest gets underway, think about how to maximize your profit potential and safety. Here are some areas to help reduce risk as you develop your harvest plan.

1. Grain Bins and Silos

Grain bins and silos are confined spaces with hazards that can change in the blink of an eye. Don't work alone; use the buddy system to enter them. Recognize and discuss the dangers before performing the job. Plan for hazards that you know are present, such as:

- Suffocation from engulfment or entrapment
- Explosions due to high amounts of grain dust
- Falls from heights
- Crushing and amputation from grain equipment

2. Equipment

Farm equipment should be harvest-ready several weeks before or during the off-season. Review operation manuals and follow the manufacturer's guidelines.

Pay attention to safety labels because they often bring attention to hidden hazards such as energized areas, moving parts, or pinch points. Do not modify equipment. Are all the machine guarding and shields in place? If not, why not?

Powered take-off (PTO) injuries are common on the farm; according to the National Agricultural Safety Database (NASD), shielding is absent or damaged in 70% of the injuries. Farm workers should wear well-fitted clothing to prevent entanglement in farming equipment.

3. Overhead Power Lines

It can be dangerous when working with tall equipment. Do you and your farm workers know where your overhead power lines are? You should check for changes and sagging that may have occurred during the off-season. You can ask local utility companies to help determine the height of overhead lines on your farm.

Many types of farm equipment have risks of contacting overhead lines, such as tractors with front-end loaders, equipment with antennas and portable grain augers. NASD recommends that if your equipment contacts an overhead line, stay put and call for help.

If an emergency arises, jump as far away from the equipment as possible. Never allow any body part to touch the equipment and the ground simultaneously. Wait to get back on the equipment until the utility company has removed the hazard.

4. Corn Pickers, Combines and Tractors

Corn pickers, combines and tractors are big machines with many moving parts. Do you know what types of equipment can cause severe injuries on your farm? If corn pickers and combines are clogged, train farm workers to turn the equipment off, ensure it's stopped and attempt to free debris.

Inform workers of pinch points where clothing, fingers, and legs can get caught. Always use the handrails to mount and dismount the equipment. Keep the steps free of dirt to avoid slips and falls. Do you have wells, equipment, gates or above-ground pipelines marked to ensure safe turning of your equipment?

Tractor accidents in farming tend to lead to serious, if not fatal, injuries. According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), "An operator's chance of surviving a tractor turnover without a serious injury is good if the tractor has a roll-over protective structure (ROPS) and the operator is wearing a seat belt."

5. Agricultural Equipment on Public Roads

You must know the specific rules you must meet for lighting and marking before using agricultural equipment on public roads. New equipment operated on public roads must meet standards outlined in ANSI/ASAE 279.14 JUL2008 "Lighting and Marking of Agricultural Equipment on Highways."

Some additional things to plan for before getting farm equipment on roads are:

- Can the equipment be moved on public roads during daylight hours to avoid driving in the dark?
- Do you know the towing capacity of your equipment, correct hitches and chaining?
- Weight and towing affect speed. Have you communicated that with all drivers?
- Plan and discuss dual brake pedals, climbing and descending hills, lane usage, etc. Refrain from assuming your workers know how to drive safely on public roads.

6. Feeling Tired

Stop and take a break. If you're not getting enough sleep, it can become a safety hazard. When you're tired, your reaction time is slower, you can have trouble remembering things and you are at

risk of falling asleep on the job. Several studies show that lack of sleep and being tired can be compared to being drunk. NIOSH posted a study that states that being awake for 17 hours is similar to having a blood alcohol content of 0.05%.

7. Hydration and Good Nutrition

It is vital to keep yourself healthy during harvest. Eating small snacks, not skipping meals, and staying hydrated are essential. Implementing these habits during harvest will provide continuous energy to cope with busy, stressful, and long workdays. Remember your sleep!

8. Additional Safety Topics

- Ensure that you have adequate lighting during pre-dawn and after-dusk activities.
- Temperatures still get high during the Fall months. Plan to bring enough water for the day, even though the mornings may be cooler.

- Have a plan for equipment breakdowns and maintenance.
- If you work alone, always be sure someone knows where you will be during the day. Have a plan if you are injured, or equipment breaks down.
- Have personal protective equipment purchased and ready. For example, respirators that meet NIOSH N95 requirements to prevent inhalation of grain dust.
- Be sure to clear debris from roads on your farm. Check your roads for potholes and ruts that can unbalance heavy equipment.
- Make sure there is supervision for children during this busy time.

Stay safe this harvest. You are someone's child, parent, or grandparent. Nothing is more important than your safety and workers' safety during harvest.

Source: Farmers Business Network www.fbn.com

Name: _____ Date: _____

Current Electricity Crossword

Across

4. a protection device which melts to open a circuit and prevent damage

7. a part of an electric circuit which provides energy

8. different metals placed in a liquid electrolyte

11. the voltage drop between two points is directly related to the electric current through a conductor

12. provides a path for electrons

15. measured in ohms

16. the flow of electrons from one atom to another

Down

1. stops, starts, increases or decreases current in a circuit

2. cells connected positive to negative

3. unit used to measure the number of electrons travelling through a circuit per second

5. different metals placed in a paste electrolyte

6. the amount of 'energy' the electrons have in a circuit

9. cells connected positive to positive and negative to negative

10. convert electrical energy to another form

13. electricity flowing in a controlled path

14. 2 or more cells joined together

Create your own puzzle at WordMint.com or print one of our 500,000+ pre-made word searches, crosswords, and more.

(mini) Home Energy Audit

Clip this list and check each area of your home to see if you're using energy efficiently. Every nook and cranny holds potential inefficiencies, so it pays to be thorough! Visit www.energysavers.gov for more information on what's listed below.

INSULATION and DUCTWORK

Attic

- Insulation spread evenly
- Insulation in good condition
- Attic vents are unblocked by insulation
- Attic access doors properly insulated and sealed

Walls and floors

- Minimum R-value of 19 for perimeter walls
- Minimum R-value of 25 for under-floor insulation

Basement

- Ductwork insulated and sealed
- Hot water pipes insulated
- Water heater insulated, if in unconditioned space

HEATING and COOLING

- Air supply vents are unblocked by furniture or curtains
- Return air registers are unblocked by furniture
- Return air handler filters are clean
- HVAC system has had annual maintenance check-up
- Programmable thermostat installed and programmed

AIR INFILTRATION

Windows and Doors

- Windows close and lock properly
- Window gaskets in good condition
- Window trim sealed and painted
- Doors properly weather stripped
- Doors close and latch properly

Exterior Penetrations

Plumbing and wire openings sealed:

- Kitchen cabinets
- Bathroom cabinets
- Utility room

Fireplace damper sealed tightly

APPLIANCES and LIGHTING

- Refrigerator condenser coils clean
- Refrigerator door gasket tight
- Unused refrigerators and freezers unplugged
- Water heater set to 120 degrees or below
- Dishwasher energy-saving feature turned on
- Washing machine loads run with cold water when possible

Well Pump

- Operating properly
- Good pressure
- No leaks

Lighting

- Compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs) used
- Outdoor lighting automatically triggered by motion or dark

Source: National Rural Electric Cooperative Association



A GOLDEN HARVEST

The Buzz Behind Adee Honey Farms

Frank Turner

frank.turner@sdrea.coop

Three generations ago, the Adee family learned that a tumultuous time can lead to significant opportunity. During the 1930s, the Great Depression wreaked havoc on small rural communities and the agricultural industry. The value of crops and livestock plummeted, and the land became arid.

These hard times impacted many in the Midwest, including Vernon Adee, a rural teacher and rancher in Nebraska. Vernon needed a new way to provide for his family, and a letter from his brother held the answer: “I can’t sell chickens or hogs, but I’m doing well with honey. Be advised: Get a beehive.”

Following his brother’s advice, Vernon attended a foreclosure auction and purchased his first beehive. The decision to begin

beekeeping would inspire several more generations of the Adee family to continue in the trade.

Wanting to start their own operation, Vernon’s sons, Richard and Stanley, purchased a retiring beekeeper’s business through a trade magazine advertisement in 1957. Located in Bruce, South Dakota, the business included 1,500 hives and a breeding yard in Woodville, Mississippi. The acquisition marked the beginning of Adee Honey Farms, and what began as a small family farm quickly grew into the largest beekeeping operation in the country. Today, Adee Honey Farms supports more than 80,000 colonies and nearly 70 full-time employees.

“It started with survival and eventually became a family business,” said Bret Adee, Vernon’s grandson and the owner-operator of Adee Honey Farms. “I can remember being four or five years old and being in the field with my dad, holding the smoker and helping where I could. By the time I was in elementary school, I was loading trucks and moving boxes in the warehouse. Like anyone who grew up on a farm, I was involved in the family business by the time I could walk.”

From a young age, Bret has held a deep love and appreciation for the honey bee. The insect’s ability to cooperate and produce golden treasure while benefiting plants, crops, and the ecosystem at large makes them a unique livestock, unlike any other.

“To watch a hive grow and forage, and by the end of the summer make up to 150 pounds of honey – it’s just so exciting,”

said Bret. “It’s the dynamics of the biology that keeps it interesting.”

Right now, Adee Honey Farms is engaged in honey production in the Midwest, with their bees spread across South Dakota and the west edge of Minnesota and the south edge of North Dakota. Around the first week of August, Bret’s business will start the honey harvest, an event that can last until the first frost or even longer. For now, Bret said this year is shaping up to be a good season for honey production.

“It’s early, but I’m optimistic. The years when there is a lot of clover are the years that beekeepers do well,” said Bret. “We had a wet enough fall that enough clover germinated. We can always lose that to a hot dry wind... but we are optimistic right now.”

But bees aren’t just used to make honey; they also have hand in pollinating crops across the country. More than a neat fact, it’s also the second half of the beekeeping industry. The mere presence of honey bees can increase yields for crops such as alfalfa and sunflowers by up to 20 to 30 percent, depending on the variety of crop. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, pollination is responsible for more than \$18 billion in added revenue to crop production in the country.

Once the honey harvest is over, the bees will be loaded onto a truck to tour the country, traveling from the Dakotas to California and later to Texas in search of favorable weather and crops to pollinate. In fact, crop yields from California almond trees and apple trees are almost totally dependent on pollination from bees, enticing farmers from across the country to welcome

bees onto their land. Everyone benefits – even bees.

“It’s a win for the consumer who gets to eat the honey. It’s a win for the landowner who has the bees on his land, and if everything goes right, it’s good for the beekeeper’s family too,” said Bret.



Bret Adee, owner-operator of Adee Honey Farms, is a third-generation beekeeper in the Adee family. Photos courtesy of Adee Honey Farms.





Photos Courtesy of Karli Hinds

Food Trucks

How Karli Hinds Jumped Into the Business

Shannon Marvel
shannon.marvel@sdea.coop

Karli Hinds was working a typical corporate 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. job when she realized she wanted a life where she had the flexibility to travel with her husband.

“So I had actually quit my job and stayed home for six months or so,” Hinds said. “Then I wanted something I could do but still have the flexibility to travel.”

Hinds had a couple ideas, one that had to do with the fact that she’s a “foodie.”

“I started cooking really young. I would say I was making meals by myself when I was in middle school,” she said.

The idea for opening a food truck was at the forefront of her mind, given that she was not interested in having a storefront.

“I didn’t want the hassle and responsibility of it. I wanted a business I could rely on myself and not have to rely on several employees,” Hinds said.



“On my second day in the food truck, I was serving Tex Mex, and I had a crazy line. It was just insane. I wanted to quit right then, but I also was thinking, ‘this is going to work.’ It was a good turnout, and it was only my second day.”

- Karli Hinds

Financially, there are pros and cons to starting up a food truck business.

Hinds said there’s limited finance options for food trucks while at the same time, there’s more cash that you must have on hand to get started.

Finding a food truck or trailer was the next challenge and proved to be fairly difficult for Hinds at first.

“We wanted one that was brand new,” Hinds said. “Most of the manufacturers are out of Mexico, and they don’t always have the best reputations. We really struggled with finding a reputable company to build a trailer with me. Somehow, we found a random post on Facebook from a guy that was selling brand new food trailers somewhere in the middle of nowhere in Iowa.”

Hinds and her husband walked through the trailers and picked out what they liked and didn’t like before finally deciding on the one to get.

Hinds uses the food truck to cook up an array of menu items every week.

“I’m actually a really picky eater, believe it or not,” Hinds said. “I didn’t want to specialize in one thing. People in small towns know we get kind of burnt out from eating the same thing over and over.”

Hinds rotates between eight or so different food themes.

“Once in a while I come

up with something new to add within that theme,” Hinds said. “My best seller is always my smash burgers.”

She’ll find her recipes on the popular social media app, Tik Toc.

On her second day of business, Hinds knew her food truck business would be sustainable.

“On my second day in the food truck, I was serving Tex Mex, and I had a crazy line,” Hinds said. It was just insane. I wanted to quit right then, but I also was thinking, ‘this is going to work.’ It was a good turnout, and it was only my second day.”

Hinds said the job isn’t always fun and is physically demanding.

“The hours are a lot more chaotic,” she said. “The problem-solving aspect is better as I don’t have a chain of command that I need to go through to make things right with the customer.”

During the winter months, Hinds delivers lunches a couple days out of the week.

“It’s just one item and I deliver them in town within Vermillion,” Hinds said. “That’s just something that I do that’s a little bit different than other food trucks.”



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AUG. 22
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AUG. 28 - SEPT. 2
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7 a.m. - 8 p.m.
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AUG. 2-4
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Prairie Fest
Armour, SD

AUG. 3
Bloomin' Quilt Party
12-5 p.m.
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AUG. 6-8
IDEAg's Farmfest
8 a.m.-4 p.m.
Redwood County, MN
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AUG. 7
Ag Appreciation Day
W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds
Sioux Falls, SD

AUG. 10-11
Twin Brooks Threshing Show
Featuring Oliver
Twin Brooks, SD
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AUG. 10
Perseid Meteor Shower
Palisades State Park
Garretson, SD

AUG. 10
Camaro Fun Days
10 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
Pioneer Park
Brookings, SD

AUG. 10-11
Fur Trader Days
Geddes, SD
605-680-2160

SEPT. 8
Homesteader Day
1-4 p.m.
Beaver Creek Nature Area
Valley Springs, SD

SEPT. 14-15
2024 Kuchen & Harvest Festival
Delmont, SD

SEPT. 17
EV Expo
W.H. Lyon Fairgrounds
Sioux Falls, SD

OCT. 17
Co-op Month Celebration
Cherry Rock Farms
Brandon, SD

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