Small Towns Give Unique Twists to Summer Celebrations
Attention Irrigators

Just a friendly reminder in regards to cutting seals on load management receivers.

If you cut the seal for any reason, make sure to call Whetstone Valley Electric and let us know about it. Please give the reason for cutting the seal so we can fix the problem, should one exist.

If any seals are found cut on the receivers and we have not been notified of it, you will be billed the higher demand.

The load management system is designed to shed electric load during peak times in the month, allowing your cooperative to save operating costs and continue to keep your rates as low as possible.

Irrigation Message Alerts

If you would like to receive a notification when your irrigation system is being controlled, contact member services to register for an e-mail or text message via mobile phone. Also for your convenience, a link has been put on our website to help determine if your irrigation system is under control or not. Go to www.whetstone.coop, open the Home and Business tab (top of page) and then click the Load Management (left of page). At the bottom of the load management page click the link East River Daily Load Control.

If you have any questions on how the load management system operates, please call Mark Weber at 605-432-5331 or 800-568-6631. Thank you for your assistance.

Scholarship News

Johnson Awarded Scholarship

Paige Johnson has been awarded a $1,000 Member Cooperative Employee Scholarship.

Johnson, the daughter of Darwin and Audra Johnson, graduated from Milbank High School.

She was student body vice president and active in band (French horn section leader), choir (section leader), varsity track statistician, Teens Against Tobacco Use, National Honor Society, Rachel’s Challenge and Health Occupations Students of America.

Paige works on her family farm and will be interning for R&K Agronomy this summer. In the fall, she will be attending South Dakota State University.
Dig Safely This Summer

Know How to Avoid Hitting an Underground Utility Line in Your Yard

Sometimes, digging a hole is not so simple. Before that first scoop can be taken out, one must go through the process of calling 811 to have underground utility lines located and marked. No one wants to lose power in the middle of a project, put their safety at risk or pay the cost for hitting a power line.

But what if you, the consumer, jumped through all the hoops and the process of having the underground lines marked just to end up hitting another underground line that wasn't marked? It's at this point that a simple outdoor project can become a disaster.

The truth is, not all underground utilities, such as buried gas, water and electric lines, have the same owner. For instance, Whetstone Valley Electric Cooperative owns and maintains the electric lines leading up to the meter. Buried electric lines connected after the meter are owned by the consumer. Examples of this would include wiring to the house, barn, garage, shed, outdoor lights and outlets, pumps and wells. It is the responsibility of the consumer to make sure their underground lines are located prior to any digging that may damage them.

For your benefit, knowing who to call, who is responsible for the underground lines and where they are located are key to avoiding a disastrous situation. Before digging, call 811 for South Dakota One Call. There is no charge for the call or the locating of primary underground cables.

You may also notify Whetstone Valley Electric at 800-568-6631 to locate your privately owned wires for a service fee. They will need to be contacted at least two business days prior to digging.

It's important to understand that even when “South Dakota One Call” is notified, the utility company will not be contacted to locate consumer-owned underground lines. Whetstone Valley Electric will be notified by 811 to locate the primary lines leading up to the consumer's property. The consumer is responsible to have their privately owned electric lines located, which can be accomplished by contacting Whetstone Valley Electric.

To learn more, visit our website at whetstone.coop or SD One Call at sdonecall.com.

Planting trees, installing a mailbox post or fence, designing a garden and other yard activities that require digging are instances when this knowledge may be important. Your safety and success are important to us at Whetstone Valley Electric.

Have a safe and successful summer!
Electrical Safety Tips for the 4th of July

It’s finally summer and in just a few days, the biggest holiday of the season arrives: the 4th of July! As you prepare for backyard BBQs and poolside fun, there are some important things to remember to make sure it’s a safe holiday.

Whether you are hosting or heading over to a neighbor’s or relative’s house to celebrate, we have a few safety tips to share with you so that your friends and family enjoy your time together and avoid accidents:

Summer Holiday Poolside Electrical Safety Tips:
Spending time in and around the pool is a big part of summer and celebration during the warmest months of the year. Regardless of whether you are hosting a get-together at your home or someone else’s, make sure the chances for accidents are minimal by following these simple safety steps:
- Never attempt to touch a downed power line. If there is a minimum of three feet away from the pool or any water source.
- If you are decorating the backyard, string party lights a minimum of three feet away from the pool or any water source.
- Store and activate fireworks as far away from the pool as possible.
- Never use a floatation device to support an electrical appliance (fan, etc.).
- Never cross the pool exit or towel storage area with electrical wires.
- Always use safety caps on electrical outlets near water.
- When possible, use GFCI outlets to protect yourself and your electrical appliances outdoors.

Electrical Power Line Safety Tips:
Power lines run through neighborhoods and can even pass through overgrown trees. They’re often the most dangerous when you don’t even notice they’re there because you either see them all of the time or they are covered by tree canopies. Stay mindful and remember these safety tips when you’re spending time in the backyard or outdoor neighborhoods:
- Never let kids (or adults for that matter) climb trees that are near power lines.
- Make sure your trees are trimmed and out of the way of power lines running through your yard or near your home.
- Never attempt to touch a downed power line. If there is one in your yard, call your local electric cooperative immediately. There can still be current running through the line and an active line is highly dangerous.

Source: www.allstarelectrical.com

Beat the Extreme Heat
During periods of extreme heat, hot weather mixed with outdoor activities can lead to dangerous situations. According to the CDC, people can suffer heat-related illness when their bodies are unable to properly cool themselves. During extreme heat, follow these guidelines to protect yourself and your loved ones.

Stay Informed:
- Check local news for extreme heat alerts.

Stay Cool:
- If you do not have access to an air-conditioned space, visit a shopping mall or public library for a few hours. Call your local health department to locate heat-relief shelters in your area.
- Drink (nonalcoholic) fluids regularly, regardless of your activity level. Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing.

Don’t leave anyone (or pets) in a closed, parked vehicle.

Do check on elderly friends and neighbors.

Heat Stress: Who’s at Risk?
Adults over the age of 65, children under the age of 4, individuals with chronic medical conditions such as heart disease and those without access to air conditioning.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Kids’ Corner Safety Poster
“Never use a fork to get your toast out of the toaster.”

Atoya Howey, 9 years old
Atoya is the daughter of Valerie Howey, Hill City, S.D. She is a member of Black Hills Electric Cooperative, Custer, 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.
Delectable Desserts

Easy Cake Dessert

1 spice cake mix
1 can apple pie filling
3 eggs
6 T. sugar
2 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 cup chopped nuts

Combine spice cake mix, apple pie filling and eggs. Pour half the batter into a 9x13-inch greased pan. Mix together sugar and cinnamon; sprinkle half over batter. Bake at 350°F for 30 to 35 minutes. Top with ice cream or whipped cream.

Carolyn Saugstad, Alcester

Bourbon Peach Cobbler

2-1/4 cups plus 1 T. flour, divided
2/3 cup sugar, divided
2 (16 oz.) bags frozen peaches, 6 cups
8 T. bourbon, divided
1 T. baking powder
12 T. butter
1 T. cinnamon
1/2 cup half-and-half
1 large egg

Butter bottom and sides of 9x13-inch baking dish. Combine 1 T. flour, 2/3 cup sugar, 4 T. bourbon and peaches in a medium bowl. Spread mixture evenly in bottom of baking dish. Whisk together remaining flour, sugar and baking powder. Melt butter in a medium bowl. Mix in half-and-half, egg and remaining bourbon. Stir the butter mixture into the dry mixture (add cinnamon if desired) and whisk until smooth. Drop dollops of batter over peaches evenly. Bake at 375°F for 50 minutes or until top is golden and toothpick inserted into center comes out clean. Serve with ice cream.

Cortney Reedy, Tea

Raspberry Poke Cake

1 white cake mix
1 (3 oz.) pkg. raspberry jello
1 (8 oz.) container whipped topping
1 cup hot water
2 (10 oz.) carton raspberry yogurt
1 large egg
raspberries

Prepare and bake cake according to package directions in a 9x13-inch pan. Remove from oven and poke holes in cake while warm with a wooden spoon handle or knife handle. Mix together jello and water, stirring until jello is dissolved. Pour over holes in cake. Cool. Mix whipped topping and yogurt together until blended; gently fold in raspberries. Spread evenly on cake. Refrigerate.

Barbara Angerhofer, Hendricks, MN

Easy Rhubarb Dessert

1 cake mix (strawberry, white, yellow or lemon)
3 cups sliced rhubarb
1/2 cup chopped walnuts
3/4 cup brown sugar
Prepare cake mix according to package directions. Fold in rhubarb and 1/2 cup chopped walnuts. Pour into a greased 9x13-inch glass pan. Sprinkle top with sugar mixture and nuts. Bake at 325°F for 30 to 40 minutes. Serve with lemon sauce, whipped topping or just plain.

Elaine Rowett, Sturgis

S'mores Pie

Graham Cracker Crust:
1-1/2 cups graham cracker crumbs
2 tsp. McCormick® Ground Cinnamon
1 T. plus 1 tsp. McCormick® Extra Rich Pure Vanilla Extract, divided
1 (7 oz.) jar marshmallow creme
4 oz. (1/2 package) cream cheese, softened
1 (8 oz.) container whipped topping

Filling:
3/4 cup heavy cream
6 oz. semi-sweet chocolate, chopped
1 T. butter
2 tsp. McCormick® Ground Cinnamon
1 T. plus 1 tsp. McCormick® Extra Rich Pure Vanilla Extract, divided

For the crust, mix all ingredients in medium bowl. Press into bottom and up sides of 9-inch pie plate. Set aside. For the filling, bring cream just to boil in small saucepan. Pour over chocolate in medium heatproof bowl. Let stand 1 minute then stir until smooth. Stir in cinnamon and 1 tsp. of the vanilla. Pour into prepared crust. Refrigerate 30 minutes or until chocolate is firm. Spread evenly over chocolate layer in crust. Refrigerate at least 2 hours or until ready to serve. Garnish with chocolate curls or toasted marshmallows, if desired.

Yield: 8 servings

Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 600, Total Fat 36g, Sodium 267mg, Cholesterol 75mg, Carbohydrates 65g, Dietary Fiber 2g, Protein 4g

French Coconut Pie

4 T. butter
2 eggs
1 T. all-purpose flour
3/4 cup sugar
1 cup milk
1 cup or 3-1/2 oz. can shredded coconut
1 9-inch unbaked pie shell

In a large bowl, combine melted butter, eggs, flour, sugar, milk and coconut. Pour into pie shell. Bake at 400°F until firm, about 45 to 60 minutes.

Lynn Holzerland, Waubay

Please send your favorite salad, garden produce or pasta 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 2017. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.
Charging Ahead
Why More Americans Are Driving Electric Vehicles

Dear Jeff:

Your son is not alone. The electric vehicle (EV) market is growing rapidly. There are good reasons why EVs are becoming more popular, but there are also a few potential drawbacks.

Let’s start with the basics: EVs are vehicles that plug into the electric grid for some or all of their power. There are two primary types of EVs. All-electric EVs – such as the Nissan LEAF – are powered entirely with electricity. Plug-in hybrid EVs – such as the Chevrolet Volt – are dual-fuel cars, meaning both the electric motor and the internal combustion engine can propel the car.

A key benefit of EVs is that a driver’s trips to the gas station are either vastly reduced or eliminated altogether. However, in lieu of gas refueling, EVs need to be recharged. At the lowest charging level, called Level 1, an hour of charging typically provides two to five miles of range per hour. Because the average light-duty car is parked for 12 hours per day at a residence, many EV drivers can use Level 1 charging for most of their charging needs. The fastest charging level, called DC Fast-Charging, can provide 60 to 80 miles of range in a 20-minute period.

Charging with electricity is nearly always cheaper than fueling with gasoline. An electric gallon – or “eGallon” – represents the cost of driving an EV the same distance a gasoline-powered vehicle could travel on one gallon of gasoline. On average, an eGallon is about one-third the cost of a gallon of gasoline. Another benefit of charging with electricity is that, throughout many parts of the country, it is a cleaner fuel source than gasoline. Although the exact environmental benefits of driving an EV will vary, one recent study found that two-thirds of Americans live in regions where driving an EV is cleaner than driving a 50 MPG gas-powered car.

Another key reason for the rise in EV ownership is because of recent reductions in the upfront cost of the cars. The batteries used in EVs are the most expensive component of the cars, but thanks to improving production methods, the cost of the batteries has dropped by more than 35 percent since 2010, and costs are expected to keep dropping. Because of these cost reductions and technology improvements, EVs are hitting some major performance and affordability milestones. For example, in late 2016, General Motors released the Chevrolet Bolt – an all-electric EV with an estimated range of 238 miles per charge, costing about $30,000 after rebates.

Although even longer range and more affordable EVs are expected to hit the market soon, one of the key drawbacks of EVs is that most models currently have a range of less than 100 miles per charge. More and more public charging stations are available across the United States, but “range anxiety” is still a concern for many potential buyers. Fortunately, if you are considering an EV, keep in mind that the average American’s daily driving patterns are well-suited for EV use. More than half of all U.S. vehicle trips are between one and 10 miles and even in rural areas, the average daily drive distances for typical errands and commutes are well within the range of most currently available EVs.

EVs are also well-suited for many commercial applications. For example, EVs are now being used as part of ridesharing services like Uber, where average trip distances are between just five and seven miles. Companies like Frito-Lay and FedEx are also introducing EVs into their delivery fleets and a growing number of municipalities are buying electric buses. One of the primary draws of EVs for commercial use is their minimal maintenance requirements.

If you are interested in learning more about EVs, contact a local car dealer to schedule a test drive. Many curious drivers are impressed by the performance of EVs, especially the instant torque provided by the electric motor.

Your electric co-op can also be a great resource. More and more co-ops own EVs as part of their fleets and may offer “ride and drive” events. Dozens of co-ops also offer reduced electricity rates for “off peak” EV charging, which can help you save even more money on fueling.

This column was co-written by Pat Keegan and Christine Grant of Collaborative Efficiency. For more information on how to consider energy efficiency when purchasing electric vehicles, please visit: www.collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips.
Basin Electric Responds to U.S. Withdrawal from Paris Agreement

U.S. President Donald Trump announced June 1 the U.S. will withdraw from the Paris Agreement, a global initiative that aims to strengthen the world’s response to the threat of climate change.

The central goal of the agreement is to “keep a global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.”

Basin Electric CEO and General Manager Paul Sukut said in a statement that he doesn’t foresee Trump’s announcement immediately altering the cooperative’s path toward continued operation in a carbon-constrained future.

“We are actively seeking solutions that reduce our carbon footprint while keeping coal as part of our energy portfolio, preserving both the reliability and cost competitiveness of our members’ energy supply,” Sukut said. “Our focus has always been on fair, reasonable regulations that support a national energy policy where we have certainty for developing and operating our members’ resources, without risk of stranding them.

“In addition to our wind and natural gas investments, we are actively working to advance clean coal technology. Examples include hosting the Integrated Test Center at our Dry Fork Station, Gillette, Wyo., and our investments in research, most recently in the development of a high-efficiency power generation technology that generates high quality carbon dioxide (CO2) as a product stream, along with participation in DOE’s (U.S. Department of Energy) CarbonSAFE program to further the science of CO2 sequestration in saline aquifers” Sukut continued.

“Over the last decade, Basin Electric and our membership have taken a leadership role in the development of renewable generation. We’ve added more than 1,500 megawatts of wind generation to our system (which represents approximately 23 percent of our generation capacity), invested more than $1 billion in natural gas generation resources and have invested more than $1.6 billion in emissions control technology to make our already clean generation fleet even cleaner.

“Even more, our Dakota Gasification Company’s Great Plains Synfuels Plant is home to North America’s largest carbon capture and sequestration project.

Arlington, Va. — On June 1, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association issued the following statement regarding President Trump’s decision to leave the Paris accord.

“Electric co-ops are committed to a healthy environment and vibrant rural communities. We can, and should, have both,” said NRECA CEO Jim Matheson. “Co-ops are taking aggressive steps to reduce our carbon footprint while protecting the diverse energy portfolio that’s needed to preserve the reliability and affordability of the co-op power supply. That’s why co-ops have invested billions of dollars in renewable technology and energy efficiency advances and millions of dollars in XPRIZE carbon capture research.

“American consumers, including co-op members, are asking for more from their electricity providers. As member-owned, not-for-profit organizations, electric cooperatives are driven by a desire to meet and exceed their members’ expectations. That’s why co-ops are implementing energy efficiency programs to lower costs, deploying smart meters to give members better insight into their usage and bringing more renewable technology online every month.

“Co-ops remain focused on putting the needs of their members first. We look forward to continuing to work with the president and other stakeholders on solutions that protect our environment and the diversity of our electric generating portfolio while also bolstering the rural American economy.”

Since 2010, co-op renewable energy capacity has more than doubled from 4 gigawatts to 8.5 gigawatts — a 112 percent increase. Co-ops purchase another 10 gigawatts of hydropower from the federal power marketing administrations.

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association is the national service organization that represents the nation’s more than 900 private, not-for-profit, consumer-owned electric cooperatives, which provide service to 42 million people in 47 states.
Unique Celebrations

Summer brings a variety hometown celebrations to many Main Streets in South Dakota and western Minnesota.

Some celebrate heritage and culture such as wacips in many western South Dakota communities to those celebrating ethnic groups such as Czech Days (Tabor, S.D.), Danish Days (Viborg, S.D.) and Æbleskiver Days (Tyler, Minn.)

And then there’s the celebrations that just seem truly unique.

In South Central South Dakota, the community of Burke opens its streets for a cattle drive of long-horned bovines as it kicks off its annual Burke Stampede and Rodeo July 14-16. In addition to rodeo performances, the celebration features a trail ride and cowboy cookout. Find out more at http://www.burkestampederodeo.com/home.html

The town of Custer in western South Dakota taps into its historical roots when it hosts Gold Discovery Days each July.

The 2017 Gold Discovery Days, set for July 21 to 23 includes a Gold Nugget hunt for kids, the area’s annual bed races and also daily balloon rallies. For more information, go to www.visitcuster.com/chamber/events/custergolddiscoverydays/

Head north and east of Custer a few hours on July 23 and you’ll encounter the 41st running of the Rev Taylor Races.

The races featuring the hard shell contestants bring dozens of people to the unincorporated town
in eastern Harding County.

Be sure to check the event’s Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/Reva-Turtle-Races-124003867629956/ for more information.

In western Minnesota, the town of Tyler, Minn., proudly boosts its Danish heritage with Æbleskiver Days.

The town celebrates the little sphere-shaped Danish pancakes with three shifts of volunteers cooking up the treats throughout the event. The celebration will also include a kickball tournament on July 22 and also a Cruise-In Car Show during Æbleskiver Days from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at the fairgrounds in Tyler.

A new addition to the town celebration this year is Rainbow Country Trolley. The 30-foot long trolley will be pulled by two Belgian draft horses. The owner/driver Gerry Buse will entertain with singing and music during the ride. The trolley will be available to ride from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The pick up and drop off sites are: the fairgrounds, the band shell, and Danebod. It will take roughly 30 minutes to go from the Fairgrounds to the Danebod, so please plan accordingly.

To learn more about the event, go to https://www.facebook.com/Æbleskiverdays

The revving of lawn mower engines can be heard at celebrations across south central South Dakota as drivers in the Pukwana Mower Races make appearances at events in South Dakota from April through October.

Find out more about the schedule at http://www.pukwanamowerracing.com/race-schedule.html

According to the Clark Potato Days site, “the potato is king in Clark, S.D., where local farmers grow bushels of the tasty tuber. That’s why, each year, the town throws a party in honor of its favorite over-used, under-appreciated starch.”

The site goes on to promote the eastern South Dakota’s annual event by pointing out, “Mr. Potato Head is proud of Clark’s celebration, and will be making an appearance at this year’s festivities. The locals vie for top honors in a Best Decorated Potato Contest. Past winners included an astronaut, farmer, race cars, and tooth. The Potato Dish Cooking Contests always bring out the best cooks in the county.

“Besides all the potato stuff, the event features those small-town festival activities that keep families and regular folks coming back year after year,” the site continues.

Among the events during the celebration is Mashed Potato Wrestling, which starts this year at 11:30 a.m. on Aug. 17.

On Sept. 9-10, the community of Delmont, S.D., will host its Kuchen Festival and the Twin Rivers Old Iron Festival. The German dessert festival, which was first held in 1997, will be held Sept. 9 while the farm equipment festival is both days.

Find out more http://www.delmontsd.org/kuchen_festival_and_twin_rivers.htm

Be sure to check out other happenings in communities near you on the back page of this magazine.
Budget Billing Settle-Up Month

Settle-up month for budget billing will be on the July 1 statement for accounts that are set up under budget billing. Budget billing accounts will be reviewed and notices will be sent to consumers who need to have their account paid in full. Accounts will be adjusted up or down according to the electricity usage of the previous year.

Budget billing lets you pay the same amount every month, eliminating the worry of big increases and reductions in your electric bills caused by fluctuations in the weather or other household usage patterns. Your monthly budget amount is determined by the average of your past twelve months’ electric bills. This amount is reviewed every six months and adjusted, when necessary, to reflect changes in your energy use or the cost of electricity. (Please note: you are always responsible for the actual balance on your electric bill).

Please contact the office if interested in budget billing or have any other questions.

SPECIAL NEEDS CONSUMERS NOTICE

At this time, WVEC is updating our list of consumers that require electrical service in case of a power outage. It is important for us to know what kind of backup you have and how long it will last in the event of an outage. Please contact our office as soon as possible at 605-432-5331 or 800-568-6631 so WVEC can continue to provide the best service to consumers with special needs and in order for us to maintain accurate records.

Outage Information

Whetstone Valley Electric is working to provide safe and reliable electric service to all co-op members throughout the year. We appreciate your help in making this goal possible. Reliability of service is foremost in our minds. We strive to provide 100 percent, uninterrupted service. However, with approximately 1,500 miles of distribution lines, and thousands of devices exposed to South Dakota weather, wildlife, trees, etc., that lofty goal is unattainable.

If Your Power Does Go Off

- Check the fuses and breakers in your home or building in which you do not have power.
- Check your breakers below your meter on the yard pole. Some residential members may not have breakers.
- If you still do not have power, call your neighbor to check if their electricity is also off.
- Call immediately; do not wait for your neighbor to call in the outage.
- Call Whetstone Valley Electric Cooperative at 605-432-5331 or 1-800-568-6631. Use your name how it appears on your energy bill or account number.

Remember! Never go near downed power lines. Treat every electrical line as if it were energized.

NEW ELECTRICITY HUMOR

4-H EXHIBITS

Always call before you dig

Whetstone Valley Electric will be closed Tuesday, July 4, in observance of the 4th of July.

Please have a safe and happy holiday.
Let the sun work for you! Consider solar lights for outdoor lighting. Solar cells convert sunlight into electricity that can be stored in a battery and tapped at night to make light. Check manufacturers’ instructions to make sure your solar lights are situated to receive sufficient sunlight to recharge during the day.

Source: U.S Department of Energy

Appreciating Electricity a Penny at a Time

Electricity is about the only thing you can buy and still get value for just a penny’s worth

I’m old enough to remember when penny candy actually cost a penny. For a nickel, you could buy enough candy to rot your teeth out, as my mother used to say.

But what does a penny buy these days? Not much. The government can’t even make a penny for a penny anymore. According to the U.S. Mint, it now costs 1.5 cents to produce one.

About the only thing of value you can still get for a penny is electricity. You might call it “penny electricity.”

No, I’m not kidding. Think about it.

To make the math easier, let’s say the average rate for a kilowatt-hour of electricity is 10 cents. That is 60 minutes of 1,000 watts of electricity for a dime, so a penny of electricity equates to 100 watts. It’s enough to power a 9-watt LED light bulb – the equivalent of a 60-watt incandescent bulb – for 11 hours, all for only a penny.

Where else can you get that kind of value?

How many eggs will a penny buy? How much milk, bread, coffee, medicine or gasoline?

Gas has come down from its stratospheric levels of several years ago, but there is still no comparison to the value of electricity. For example, if a gallon of gas costs $2.50 and your car gets 25 miles to the gallon, you can drive 176 yards – about two blocks – on a penny’s worth of gas.

I will take 11 hours of lighting for a penny over a two-block drive any day.

The value is just as evident when powering things other than lighting. Take, for instance, your smartphone. Using the same 10 cents per kWh price, penny electricity allows you to fully charge your iPhone more than 18 times for a penny. You can charge it once every day of the year for about 20 cents total.

Not impressed? Well, how about these other examples of what you can do with just a penny’s worth of electricity: power a 1,000-watt microwave on high for 6 minutes; run a 200-watt desktop computer for 30 minutes; watch 2.5 hours of your favorite shows on a 40-watt, 32-inch, LED television or 1.3 hours on a 75-watt, 75-inch mega TV.

The examples are endless.

We are fortunate electricity is such an excellent value because we have a huge appetite for it. We tend to forget that.

Electricity is not expensive. It’s that we use it for so many different things: lighting, heating, cooking, cooling, refrigeration, cleaning, washing, pumping, entertainment, communications – even transportation these days.

Few corners of our lives are left untouched by electricity. Unfortunately, we don’t always appreciate it. When our monthly electric bill comes, we open it and may complain about the cost. It’s a knee-jerk reaction ingrained in us as consumers. We don’t stop to think about the value we received for the money.

Early in my career, I had the pleasure to interview an elderly woman who vividly remembered the day electricity came to her farm. Her name escapes me, but I do remember she proudly showed me the worn, dog-eared membership certificate the co-op issued to her husband.

“You young people will never know what it was like to have electricity for the very first time,” she said. “It was glorious. Nowadays, you take it for granted.”

Her farm was energized in 1940. She said the price of electricity at the time was slightly less than a penny a kilowatt-hour – true penny electricity.

A lot has changed since then. Wages and the cost of living today are a far cry from 1940, when the average annual wage was less than $150 a month and the average cost of a house was $3,920.

But one thing that hasn’t changed is the value of electricity. In 77 years, its price has risen much slower than the rate of inflation.

A penny in 1940 had as much buying power as 17 cents today, which means the residential price of electricity – which now averages 12 cents a kWh nationally and less than 10 cents in the Pacific Northwest – is actually a better deal today than it was in 1940.

So to my way of thinking, the value of electricity is like the bygone days of penny candy, and it’s OK to indulge yourself a little. But, unlike penny candy, penny electricity won’t rot your teeth out.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Let the sun work for you! Consider solar lights for outdoor lighting. Solar cells convert sunlight into electricity that can be stored in a battery and tapped at night to make light. Check manufacturers’ instructions to make sure your solar lights are situated to receive sufficient sunlight to recharge during the day.

Source: U.S Department of Energy
There aren’t many people left who remember what life was like in rural South Dakota in the late 1940s when the countryside was first electrified by cooperatives. However, Jim Duvall, who turned 100 years old on May 29, 2017, is the exception.

“I was one of the pioneers out there,” Duvall recalled during a phone conversation in May from his Virginia home just days before his 100th birthday.

Duvall grew up in McIntosh, S.D., but moved away for college and later a job with the Signal Corps in Chicago, Ill., inspecting radar equipment for bombers during World War II.

After the war was over, Duvall started working as an engineer for the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Rural Electrification Administration. The centenarian knows the exact day he started his job with REA; he reported to the St. Louis, Mo., office on Nov. 19, 1945.

After spending a few months in St. Louis, Duvall was moved to Washington, D.C., and in 1947 he requested a transfer to South Dakota. He spent 13 years stationed in Aberdeen as a REA field engineer where he inspected new co-op lines that were being constructed and energized for the very first time following the war.

“The transformers and wire and everything became available and lines could be staked out and construction could start again (after the war),” Duvall said. “Everything is flat (on the Great Plains) and there aren’t a lot of obstructions and a contractor could get a
Duvall oversaw electric and telephone line construction loans and building projects in North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Illinois, Iowa, and Wisconsin. He very likely inspected Northern Electric Cooperative lines as the first poles, wires, and meters were energized starting in 1945 with construction continuing through the late 1940s and into the 1950s.

"A big part of my job was to make the final inspection and to make any modifications before the lines were energized and before the contractors got paid," Duvall said.

Following his work in South Dakota, Duvall was transferred back to Washington, D.C. where he became the REA Chief Engineer for the southwest and western regions. In 1959, he was given a Meritorious Service Award for his 13 years of service in Aberdeen. Duvall was also honored in 1958 and 1959 as 'Engineer of the Year' for the REA.

This spring, South Dakota Gov. Dennis Daugaard also honored Duvall for his role in electrifying rural America when he issued an Executive Proclamation proclaiming that May 29, 2017, Duvall’s 100th birthday, be known as Jim Duvall Day in the state of South Dakota.

“I said, 'wow, this is a super surprise — I’m amazed you would pick up the phone and call me,'” Don Duvall said.

“The Governor was very pleased to help celebrate Jim's milestone in this way,” Gov. Daugaard's Chief of Staff Tony VenHuizen said. “As the proclamation said, South Dakota is a strong state today because of the contributions of people like Jim Duvall. It’s hard to understated the transformative impact that rural electrification had on South Dakota.”

Don Duvall said his dad enjoyed working for REA and took pride in overseeing early line construction for electric and telephone co-ops in rural South Dakota. Duvall said his dad would even point out his work during family vacations.

“Whenever we were in a rural area, he would pull over and say that’s a REA line over there,” Don Duvall said.

Jim Duvall retired from the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 1976 as a REA regional manager stationed in Washington, D.C., but he says his greatest memories and accomplishments came during his time as a field engineer in South Dakota.

“My best days were actually in the field. I felt like I was doing something. I had my hands on,” Duvall said.

And, as Duvall celebrates his 100th birthday at his home in Virginia, that is what he will remember about a career that helped electrify and connect the countryside.

“It was interesting work and I enjoyed it.”
Keeping the lights on isn’t a cakewalk. Electricity, unlike other commodities, must be consumed on the spot – technology that will store it for future use, especially on any large scale, is still largely under development. And if the electricity being produced can’t keep up with what’s needed in real-time, brownouts or blackouts will follow.

Many electric utilities work to avoid such problems through energy efficiency initiatives most often called load management or demand response. These programs allow the utility to reduce power consumption—and keep the lid on wholesale generation costs—by controlling when electricity gets used.

On the residential side, utilities can interrupt electric service to water heaters, air conditioners, electric thermal storage units, and other specialized appliances in the homes of volunteer consumers. On the commercial and industrial side, service gets cut off to irrigation pumps, manufacturing equipment, and even entire businesses, some of whom

**WATER HEATER DEMAND RESPONSE**

_**HOW IT WORKS...**_

1. Controllable, high-efficiency electric water heaters are installed in homes.

2. During times of high demand, co-op cuts power to water heaters.

3. When demand drops, water heaters are turned back on to run during the night and provide warm water for the next day.

**BENEFITS:**
- Co-ops avoid peak pricing.
- Members use power when it’s cheaper.
- Helps avert need for new power plants.

**FUN FACTS**

Water-heater-control programs let co-ops take full advantage of wind generation, which is most active at night.

About 250 co-ops in 35 states currently have load management programs that include water-heater control.
have installed backup generation.

In most cases, control takes place for a brief period (typically just a few hours) during times of peak demand – the electric utility industry’s equivalent of rush-hour traffic. It’s then that demand is at its highest, and power costs skyrocket because natural gas and other pricey standby generators are used.

“Nationally, electric co-ops are leaders in demand response,” says Ed Torrero, executive director of the Cooperative Research Network, a division of Arlington, Va.-based National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. “Roughly 37 percent of all co-op systems can direct-control appliances, chiefly electric water heaters and air conditioners. Overall, co-ops can control 6 percent of their peak load; some can control more than 25 percent.”

An industrial consumer of Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative, Inc., based in central Texas, recently signed up to be a part of a demand response program called “Load Acting as Resource.”

In short, if more power is needed system-wide, the participating consumer will go without for the greater good.

The participant – an oil field owner – foots a massive 25 MW power bill to keep pumps productive. When the amount of available electricity dips into the danger zone, Bluebonnet gets a call from its wholesale power supplier to free up megawatts, and word trickles down from there.

“We give the participating consumer a courtesy call, and just say we’re shutting down,” explains Eric Kocian, Bluebonnet manager of engineering. “From the time of the order, there’s 10 minutes before we actually trip the breaker that serves them.”

As technology moves forward, more finesse can be employed in trimming consumer loads. Advanced, or “smart,” meters may make it possible to offer lower electric rates when power is abundant, such as later in the evening. With incentives like this, consumers could shift electricity use in simple ways to cut their monthly bill, such as washing clothes before bed instead of after work.

In conjunction with smart meters, “smart” appliances could detect when the electric grid becomes stressed and reduce energy use – a clothes dryer could shut off its heater while continuing to tumble, for example.

Cooperatives in eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota have had a load management program for decades which has saved members more than $188 million dollars.

The website, www.easyenergywins.com explains the benefit of the program:

“Think supply and demand: When demand for a product is high, prices rise. The same is true for electricity. On hot sum-

mer afternoons or cold winter nights, your home is using a lot of electricity. When everyone’s air conditioners or furnaces are on at the same time, demand for electricity is high. Your electric cooperative purchases wholesale power based on how high that demand is,” the site reads.

Load management helps keep rates affordable by shifting select electricity usage from peak times to lower-demand times.

Load management is a means of controlling the amount of electricity being used during times of peak demand. Peak demand is the greatest amount of electricity used at one time by an electric system, normally when a large number of customers are using appliances at the same time. These peaks determine how much we must pay for power. When periods of peak demand occur, load management reduces the demand and lowers the cost to all members.

Load management program has saved co-op members more than $188 million in avoided wholesale power costs since it launched in 1985. More than 75,500 electric loads in homes, farms and businesses of member consumers throughout eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota currently participate in the program. These loads include electric water heaters, air conditioners, irrigation systems and other big energy users.

Special switches are attached to the loads when a member enters into the program. Our dispatch center sends a radio signal to the switching units and shuts off power to the connected units for short periods during our peak demand. Typically, this happens on hot summer and cold winter days. The co-ops cycle off appliances in such a way that reduces the chance of inconveniencing the participating members.

Contact your local Touchstone Energy® Cooperative to find out if they have a load control or demand response program and which electric equipment or appliances (“loads”) you can enroll. At home, that could mean water heaters and air conditioners. On the farm or at work, that could mean larger systems like irrigation units, bin fans and other industrial processes.

After you enroll, the electricity to the equipment will be remotely managed by your co-op to make efficient use of electricity during peak times to keep costs low.

Load control typically happens on hot summer days and cold winter days. Loads are cycled off in such a way that reduces inconveniences.

More than 70,000 member homes, farms and businesses are already enrolled in the program and are saving money and energy right now. The more members who sign up, the more everyone saves.
Regional Dateline

June 21
First-ever Crystal Springs Rodeo Xtreme Bulls Clear Lake SD

June 22-24
Crystal Springs Rodeo Clear Lake, SD www.crystalspringsrodeo.com

June 23
148th Annual Midsummer Festival, Dalesburg Lutheran Church, Vermillion, SD 605-253-2575

June 23-24
Senior Games, Mitchell, SD Contact Howard Bich at 605-275-6891

June 23-25
Badlands Astronomy Festival Interior, SD, 605-433-5243

June 23-25
Black Hills Bluegrass Festival Sturgis, SD, 605-348-1198

June 24
Growing Berries and Growing Hops, Wagner and Armour SD, 605-254-5640

June 24-25
Kite & Bike Festival Brookings, SD

June 30
Naja Shrine Circus Bowman, ND, 605-342-3402

June 30-July 2
Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate 150th Annual Wacipi Agency Village, SD 605-698-8284

July 1
Naja Shrine Circus Deadwood, SD, 605-342-3402

July 1-2
Prairie Village Railroad Days Madison, SD, 605-256-3644

July 2
Naja Shrine Circus Phillip, SD, 605-342-3402

July 3
Naja Shrine Circus Lemmon, SD, 605-342-3402

July 6-9
22nd Annual Hot Harley Nights, Sioux Falls, SD 605-334-2721

July 7-8
Senior Games, Madison, SD Bernie Schuurmans at 605-270-3327

July 7-9, 14-16, 21-23
Laura Ingalls Wilder Pageant, "Little Town on the Prairie” De Smet, SD, 605-203-0216

July 7-9
Summer Arts Festival Brookings, SD, 605-692-2787

July 8-9
Cruiser Car Show & Street Fair Rapid City, SD, 605-716-7979

July 9-11
3-Wheeler Rally Deadwood, SD, 605-717-7174

July 10-12
Badlands Corvette Classic Spearfish, SD

July 14-15
Senior Games, Aberdeen, SD 605-216-2822

July 15
Growing in Greenhouses and Selling in Boxes, Midland, SD 605-254-5640

July 21-22
Senior Games, Brookings, SD Contact Traci Saugstad at 605-692-4492

July 22
Lake Farley Country Concert Craig Morgan and Dirt Road Dixie, Milbank, SD 605-432-6656

July 22
Holy Smoke Car Show O’Gorman High School Sioux Falls, SD www.holysmokecarshow.org

August 10
Meat Goats and Growing Tomatoes in a Greenhouse Custer, SD, 605-254-5640 www.sdspecialtyproducers.org

August 11-12
Senior Games, Huron, SD Contact LaRon Clock at 605-353-8533 or Howard Bich at 605-275-6891

Events of Special Note

June 30-July 4
98th Annual Black Hills Round-up, Belle Fourche, SD 605-723-2010

July 1
Edward Fellowship, Belle Fourche, SD, 605-723-8500

July 2
Naja Shrine Circus Deadwood, SD, 605-342-3402

July 7-9
Laura Ingalls Wilder Pageant, "Little Town on the Prairie” De Smet, SD, 605-203-0216

July 8-9
Summer Arts Festival Brookings, SD, 605-692-2787

July 9
Cruiser Car Show & Street Fair Rapid City, SD, 605-716-7979

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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.