

Connections

 **South Central Electric** 
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative


South Central Electric Association
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

December 2025

Attention Students and Parents! Sophomores and Juniors Win a FREE Trip to Washington D.C.

MAKE YOUR MARK!
Youth Tour 2026

Area sophomores and juniors have an opportunity to win an all-expenses paid trip to Washington D.C. Students will travel with others from around Minnesota and the country as they visit the sites in and around our nation's capital. Over 1,500 delegates from electric cooperatives around the country visited Washington D.C. in 2025. The students visited with their congressional representatives, toured famous museums and made memories and friends that will last a lifetime.

Don't miss this opportunity to make lifetime memories.

1. To enter the contest the student must live within the South Central Electric service area or attend one of the following schools: Butterfield/Odin, Comfrey, Madelia, Martin County West, Mt. Lake Public or Christian, Red Rock Central, St. James, Truman, Windom Area or Westbrook.
2. Each contestant must submit a contest application form and an essay on the following topic: *"How do you and your family benefit from electricity?"*
3. Applications are due at our St. James office by February 23, 2026 and the applicant must complete a personal interview on March 4, 2026. Interview times are between 3:30pm and 5:00pm.

Prizes

1st All-expense paid trip to Washington D.C. June 15-20, 2026

(No substitute prize if unable to make the trip.)

- 2nd \$150 cash award and will serve as first alternate.**
- 3rd \$100 cash award and will serve as second alternate.**

Contest rules and application forms are available at our St. James office, on our website (www.southcentralelectric.com) or by calling 507-375-3164.

Learn more at the national Youth Tour website: youthtour.coop or check out the Minnesota Youth Tour Facebook page *Minnesota Rural Electric Association Washington D.C. Youth Tour.*

SCHOLARSHIPS

Seniors and College Students
(2) \$1,250 Scholarships Available
to SCEA Member Dependents

APPLICATION DEADLINE
FEBRUARY 13, 2026

South Central Electric is honored to partner with Basin Electric to award a \$1,250 scholarship to two dependents of South Central Electric members. The scholarship is available to high school seniors and college students enrolled full-time in an accredited two or four year college, university or vocational/technical school working on an undergraduate or master's degree. **These applicants are also eligible for scholarships through South Central Electric's Operation Round Up® program.**

The scholarship deadline is February 13, 2026. Applications can be obtained at our St. James office, on our website (www.southcentralelectric.com) or by calling 507-375-3164.



Holiday Hours: Our office will close at 11:00 a.m. on December 24th, and will remain closed all day on December 25th and January 1st.

Help us find missing members.

We've lost contact with some former co-op members who have moved and didn't leave a forwarding address. Their capital credit checks were returned to us. If you know how to reach any of these members, please ask them to contact us with their updated address.

ACCESS MARKETING INCTRUMAN, MN
 RICHARD ALLENAPACHE JUNCTION,AZ
 ROBERT ALTENBURGLAMBERTON, MN
 AMERICAN
 TELECASTING INC MANKATO, MN
 CORY ANDERSEN MADELIA, MN
 ARVID F. ANDERSONSAINT JAMES, MN
 ARVID ANDERSON SONS MT. LAKE, MN
 ROSALINDA
 BARRAGAN WESTBROOK, MN
 VIRGIL H. BARTEL.....NEW YORK, NY
 NORMA BARTSCH..... WINDOM, MN
 BASTIAN FARMS INC..... MAGNOLIA, AR
 NICOLE BAUMANNFAIRMONT, MN
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 JOHN BERGMAN REVERE, MN
 ORVILLE BERKNESS..... SANBORN, MN
 BRIAN BLEESS HASTINGS, MN
 KATHRYN BLOOMQUIST BAUDETTE, MN
 DEWAYNE BRAKE VERDIGRE, NE
 ANN BREHMER..... LONG GROVE, IA
 DARWIN E. BRIDGESMONTICELLO, IL
 JODI BURNS WESTBROOK, MN
 MARREL W. BUSH.....MT ZION, IL
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 GERALD O. CARRST JAMES, MN
 JACK CARSTENS SAINT PAUL, MN
 CELLULAR ONE WELCOME, MN
 KEVIN CHRISTENSONFAIRMONT, MN
 CITIZENS/FRONTIER ROSEMOUNT, MN
 COUNTRY WAY
 FARMS INC.....LAKE CRYSTAL, MN
 COUNTY LINE
 CONTRACTORS.....FAIRMONT, MN
 GARY COWELL..... OSAGE, MN
 RANDY CRISS COMFREY, MN
 EARL D. CROWELL..... MADELIA, MN
 GLENN DECLERK.....ST JAMES, MN
 DESMOINES RIVER
 TELEMEDIA.....DEERWOOD, MN
 DERRY DETTMERCHARLES CITY, IA
 DAVID DICKHASLETT, MI
 PAT DOTSON.....DUNNELL, MN

JEFFREY DOUGHERTYTRUMAN, MN
 BRADLEY J. DOUGHERTY SR.. MADELIA, MN
 DRIFTWOOD INC.WINDOM, MN
 BRIAN DUNKELBERGER.....SHERBURN, MN
 MONICA EASTERDAY HANSKA, MN
 ECO-CRETE INC.....SAINT JAMES, MN
 BARBARA EIGENBERG MADELIA, MN
 LORI EIKE..... COTTONWOOD, AZ
 RUSSEL W. EMERSONLAKE CRYSTAL, MN
 STEVEN ENGELBY.....GRANADA, MN
 ENGLISH STONESLEEPY EYE, MN
 JANICE FIELDS WINDOM, MN
 JAMES W. FISCHER..... NEENAH, WI
 WALTER FOTHSURPRISE, AZ
 ROBERT FOWLER.....LEESBURG, FL
 MARLOWE
 FREDERICKSONSAINT JAMES, MN
 TIM FREDERICKSON..... SEMINOLE, FL
 ALFREDO GARZA FRESNO, CA
 GERONIMO LLP.....PENNOCK, MN
 JIM GIESER.....WINDOM, MN
 STEVEN K. GIESER CARTER LAKE, IA
 GILLESPIE MARGARET
 ESTATSAINT JAMES, MN
 RICK GOEMANCRYSTAL, MN
 PAUL GOIN MANKATO, MN
 LINDA GRAVES.....WINDOM, MN
 TIM GRUNEWALD.....MADISON, SD
 DOROTHY HAGEN JACKSON, MN
 MICHAEL HAMILTON FLORENCE, AZ
 KENNETH HAMPLE.....PERHAM, MN
 ROLAND HANSEN..... PRIOR LAKE, MN
 DUANE G. HANSON ALEXANDRIA, MN
 JOAN H. HANSONMICHIGAN CITY, IN
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 HARDER ROYAL BREEDERSLEESBURG, FL
 RACHEL HARRISON JEFFERS, MN
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 DAN HEIDL..... HANSKA, MN
 MURIEL HENDERSON NORTHFIELD, MN
 STEVEN HENDERSON OLATHE, KS
 DORIS A . HERVIG MURFREESBORO, AR
 LEONARD
 HILBRANDNORTH MANKATO, MN
 GRACE HILDRETH..... LAKEFIELD, MN
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 & TRUCK SALV GENESEO, IL
 DAVID R. HOFFMAN.....NEW RICHLAND, MN
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 ANNETTE LUGO WINDOM, MN
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 TIMOTHY MALONE..... MANKATO, MN
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HEATHER ROBERTS....	REDWOOD FALLS, MN	SWINETECH			
ROGER ROIGER.....	RED WING, MN	PRODUCTION			
		GRP.....	REDWOOD FALLS, MN		



SCEA WATER HEATER PROGRAM

SCEA's peak shave water heater program provides members with a Marathon water heater at a discounted price for participating in the load management program.

The cost for water heaters is **\$750**. This is a great value for members. SCEA pays the cost of the electrician to wire the water heater and radio control. The member would pay any costs incurred by a plumber.





Energy Costs are Rising

Jim Haler, General Manager

As we look at what's coming in 2026, it's clear that wholesale energy costs from our power providers will be higher. Like you, South Central Electric gets monthly electric bills from our power suppliers based on our monthly purchases. The amount South Central Electric is billed depends on how much energy the cooperative (that's all our members) used and when it was used. These costs are directly passed on to members on their monthly bills.

We also purchase the excess energy from our members with wind or solar generation. Net metering rules in Minnesota require us to purchase power from these systems (under 40kW capacity) at the average retail rate for that rate class. These rules put added pressure on rates. In 2024, we purchased over 1,300,000 kWhs of excess member generation at higher costs than from our power suppliers.

What can members expect in 2026? We see wholesale power costs increasing by approximately 10% in 2026. These costs are passed directly onto members through the wholesale energy rates on your monthly bill. It's the amount South Central Electric was billed for the energy members used.

It is important to note that your cooperative does everything it can to mitigate wholesale power purchases through load management programs like the peak shave water heater program and other programs. We are constantly monitoring our system and implementing demand response programs to help lower your bills.

As we move into 2026, South Central Electric remains committed to transparency and efficiency. While rising wholesale energy costs are a challenge, we continue working hard to manage expenses and explore innovative solutions to keep your energy bills as low as possible. By participating in load management programs and staying informed, members can play a vital role in helping us reduce wholesale power costs.

What to do when you lose power

Power outages can strike without warning, whether caused by severe weather, equipment failure or scheduled maintenance. In those first few moments, knowing what to do can help you stay safe and avoid unnecessary stress.

Before calling South Central Electric, the very first thing you should do is check your breaker box. A tripped breaker is one of the most common reasons for losing power in just part of your home or apartment.

To check, open the panel door and look for any switches that are out of alignment — either fully off or stuck between on and off. Flip the switch completely off, then back on. This simple reset can often restore power immediately.

In single-family homes, breaker boxes are usually in the basement, garage or utility room, or sometimes mounted on an exterior wall. If you're unsure where yours is, your building manager or maintenance team can help you locate it.

If your breaker box looks fine and power is still out, it's time to check with your neighbors to see if they're affected. If they are, report the outage to South Central Electric. While waiting for updates, unplug sensitive electronics to protect them from power surges when electricity returns. Use flashlights instead of candles to reduce fire risk. Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed to preserve food.

Being prepared for outages is just as important as knowing what to do when they happen. Keep a flashlight, extra batteries and a portable phone charger in an easy-to-reach spot. A battery-powered radio can help you stay informed during extended outages, and having your electric cooperative's contact information or app handy will make reporting issues faster and easier.



Official monthly newsletter

South Central Electric

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St. James, MN 56081-0150
(507) 375-3164

Outages: (888) 805-7232

E-mail address:

sce@southcentralelectric.com

Web:

www.southcentralelectric.com

Office hours:

7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Jim Haler, General Manager

Board of Directors

President, Ron Jorgenson

Vice President, Michael Miest

Secretary, Brad Asendorf

Treasurer, Matt Peters

Mark Sandberg, Director

Steve Sell, Director

Bill Kunz, Director

The Board meets the fourth Tuesday of the month at South Central Electric's building at 71176 Tiell Dr., St. James, MN.

Please see our website for a summary of the board meetings.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

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