



July 2023

Local 4-H Chapters Receive \$9,000 in Donations



The Watonwan, Martin and Cottonwood County 4-H organizations each received \$3,000 in donations from South Central Electric Association, Basin Electric Power Cooperative and CoBank. It started as a \$1,000 donation from South Central Electric to each of the county 4-H chapters. South Central Electric applied for and received matching funds from Basin Electric, a South Central Electric power supplier and CoBank, a cooperative bank serving vital industries throughout rural America.

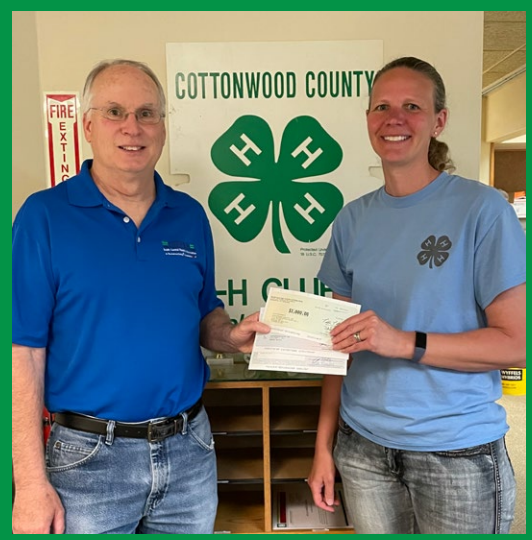
South Central Electric's donation was matched by CoBank through its Sharing Success program. Sharing Success was established in 2012 to celebrate the International Year of the Cooperative. The response from the bank's customers was overwhelmingly positive and the bank has renewed the program each year since. Since the program's inception, CoBank and its customers have together provided over \$76 million in support to charitable organizations across the nation.

Basin Electric Power Cooperative is based in Bismarck, ND. Basin provides electric generation and transmission to electric cooperatives in 9 states. Its Charitable Giving Program offers matching funds for donations member systems give to local organizations.

Supporting the communities they serve is an important part of the cooperative culture. The three cooperatives believe strongly in improving the quality of life in their rural communities.



Mikaela Kellner received \$3,000 in donations for the Watonwan County 4-H.



Jim Haler, SCE Member Services Manager, presented Crystal Reith \$3,000 in donations for the Cottonwood County 4-H.



Hannah Neil, Grace Arthur and Reilley Rode received \$3,000 in donations for the Martin County 4-H.

Providing Your Own Power During an Outage

How to sort the many choices in home generators

By Paul Wesslund, NRECA

If you're wondering whether to buy a home generator in case of a power outage, you're not alone. Backup power sources have gotten so popular that manufacturers now offer a wide range of choices.

Options run from pull-start gasoline models costing a few hundred dollars to permanent outdoor installations for several thousand dollars. That variety makes it easier to get exactly what you want, but harder to choose.

A good first step is to think about what you want a home generator to do. Do you just want to keep your phone charged? Do you want to make sure food doesn't spoil in your refrigerator? Do you want to make sure you have heat and air conditioning through an extended outage? Answering those questions will require you to know the wattage of the appliances you want to run so you know the capacity of the generator you need.

You might also ask if you really need a generator. The average U.S. home is without power about seven hours a year. Is that enough to justify the expense and attention?

Another part of your planning should be contacting your electric co-op to get their expert advice on the best and safest fit for your home.

Here's what to know about the four basic choices in home generators:

Portable generators are small enough that you might even take them on camping trips. The costs for these can vary—from more than \$2,000 to as low as \$400. Most should be able to run a refrigerator or a window air conditioner. Special attention to safety is required. They should never be used indoors, not even in a garage. The carbon monoxide they produce can be deadly in minutes. The Consumer Product Safety Commission reports that 85 people die each year from carbon monoxide poisoning caused by gasoline-powered portable generators. Portable generators should

be operated more than 20 feet from the house and be connected only with outdoor extension cords matched to the wattage being used. Look for models with a carbon monoxide detector and automatic shutoff.

Appliances should be plugged in to the generator—the generator should never be plugged into an outlet or your home's electrical system.

You should also spend the money to have an electrician install a transfer switch. That acts as a mini-circuit breaker to protect your appliances and can be an easier way to connect the house to the generator.

Inverter generators are higher-tech versions of standard portable generators. The power they produce changes to match what the appliances are using, so although they are a little more expensive, they use fuel more efficiently and make less noise. The same safety guidelines apply to both inverter and standard portable generators.

Standby generators can cost \$7,000, plus installation, but they have the benefit of turning on automatically during a power outage and running your whole house. They're typically a permanently-mounted outdoor unit that's connected to your home electrical system and runs on propane or natural gas. It must be installed by a professional electrician.

Power stations, also known as batteries, charge themselves up while the power is on. They're not as powerful as some of the other options, and can be more expensive, but they're quiet, easy to operate, and some are designed to look good hanging on the wall. They can cost between \$400 and \$6,000. One common use of power stations is to pair them with rooftop solar panels so that electricity from the sun can be available even at night.

With the increased intensity of storms and our reliance on electronic devices, power outages can be a bigger concern these days. Technology now gives you many choices for how to react, whether you want to make

sure you're never without power, or you're willing to just light a candle and wait for the lights to come back on.

Paul Wesslund writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56% of the nation's landscape.



Contact SCE
about service
upgrades,
additions or
rebuids

Are you looking at changes to your electrical service this summer? The electric utility industry is not immune to the supply chain issues. If you need to upgrade or change your electrical service with South Central Electric contact us now. This will help us plan to have the materials and equipment we need to complete your project.



Visit us along with other Touchstone Energy Cooperatives, at Farmfest 2023 and enter for a chance to win a grand prize!

FARMFEST 2023

AUGUST 1, 2, 3 • REDWOOD FALLS, MN

Bring this coupon to Booth #2301

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE# _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

You must be a member one of the participating electric cooperatives to be eligible to win.



ALWAYS CALL BEFORE YOU DIG



Protect your home and family with a Briggs & Stratton home standby generator

You can be confident that South Central Electric works hard every day to keep your lights on. For those times when mother nature strikes, we still have you covered with our generator program. You can purchase a whole home Briggs & Stratton Power Protect generator from South Central Electric. If you lose power, the generator automatically takes over. When power is restored, it automatically shuts down. Power when you need it without the hassles of portable or PTO generators.



Estimated Cost of \$8,000 to \$11,500 includes the following:

- Briggs & Stratton® Power Protect DX with industry leading 10-year warranty.
- Minnesota winter ready with battery warmer, oil heater & battery charger.
- Automatic transfer switch.
- Electrician installation.



Generators run on LP or Natural Gas. Estimate does not include costs of gas installation from your gas provider.

Call our office to learn more at
(507) 375-3164

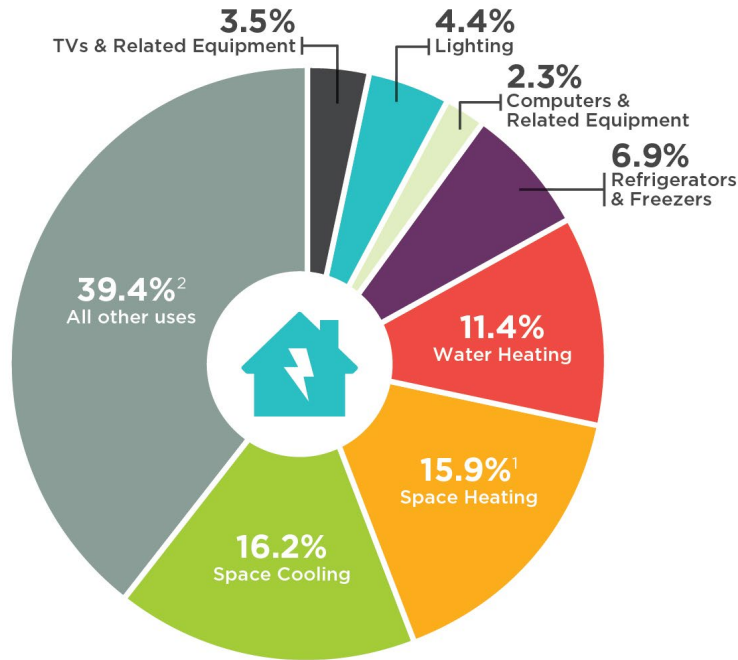
Congratulations Brent Imker



The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Board Leadership Certificate (BLC) recognizes individuals who continue their professional development after becoming a Credentialed Cooperative Director. Brent Imker has attained the BLC having completed 10 credits in advanced, issues-oriented courses.

How Americans Use Electricity

The latest data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration shows the combined use of clothes washers and dryers, dishwashers, small appliances and other electrical equipment (noted as "all other uses" below) accounts for the largest percentage of electricity consumption in American homes.



Source: Energy Information Administration 2022

¹Includes consumption for heat and operating furnace fans and boiler pumps.

²Includes miscellaneous electronics, clothes washers and dryers, cooking equipment, dishwashers, heating elements, and motors.



Official monthly newsletter

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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.

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.



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