

- How capital credits work
- Upcoming projects
- Annual meeting June 9
- Grants, scholarships available



As **Dean** and **Robin Dewald** gather with family, Dean has announced his retirement as a director for KEM Electric Cooperative.

WORKING FOR THE MEMBERS: **Dewald retires after 24 years of service**

Serving as a director of an electric cooperative requires commitment, passion and understanding. Director Dean Dewald has dedicated 24 years to KEM Electric Cooperative as a humble guiding voice.

After the Annual Meeting on June 9, Dewald will retire from the KEM Electric Board of Directors. Dewald spent his years on the board ensuring members' voices were heard and they understood the work being done at the cooperative to establish longevity.

Representation

KEM Electric has a long tradition of powering our communities, and our employees and directors take that responsibility seriously.

As a member since 1979, Dewald shares that same passion and commitment to ensure the cooperative's long-term success. His desire to promote equal representation and give all members a voice inspired Dewald to seek a seat on the board of directors.

"Our district, our area and our members needed someone," Dewald says. "Someone needed to stand up for the district."

Dewald heard the prior District 5 director was not seeking reelection, and he thought he would run.

At the time, Dewald was ranching and working as a crop insurance adjuster. Along with community commitments, he was raising his family with his wife, Robin. But he knew representation was important, and that dedication earned him a spot on the board,

continued on next page

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being elected to the District 5 director position in June 2002.

Dedication

Being on a cooperative board requires time, knowledge and understanding. Dean was fortunate to have a few guiding hands to help him learn the ropes the first few years. These are mentors he calls “statesmen.”

“I was fortunate to have mentors. They took me under their wing,” Dean says.

His mentors ranged from local KEM Electric directors Milton Brandner and Adolph Feyereisen to those across the river, including Slope Electric directors Jim Kerzman and John Lee Njos.

“These four guys, I call them statesmen. They were good to me and helpful to me. They were a world of knowledge,” Dean says.

He says it takes about three years to fully understand the scope of the work being done at the cooperative, so it is important to have people to lean on and ask questions.

“You need to lean on people when you’re new to understand what’s been done in the past and needs to be done in the future,” Dean says.

Another important skill Dean emphasizes as a director is the willingness to listen.

“You have to listen and learn to try to be like those mentors,” he says.

Connection to community

Dean is active in the Dawson community, which helped him succeed as a director. He has established relationships with many of the people in the area, so he’s approachable.

Dean, who also ranches, has worked as a crop insurance adjuster and currently is an area claims manager, managing two adjusters. He has served on his church board, the Kidder County Sportsman Association board and served as tax director for five years. Along with his involvement with his family and their activities, Dean is well known throughout the community, which made his top priority easy to accomplish, because he is working for people he knew.

“I’m working for the members,” he says.

While on the board, he worked with his fellow directors to keep rates affordable, enhance reliability and ensure a strong system for the present and the future. If he hears questions or concerns from KEM Electric’s membership, he takes the time to visit with the members, listen and update them on what the cooperative is doing.

Through the years, Dean has worked toward keeping reliability and costs affordable.



Dean Dewald looks forward to spending time with his grandchildren.

Times have changed in the electric industry since 2002, and Dean says the speed of change, driven by our more instantaneous world, is one of the biggest differences he’s seen during his years on the board.

“Everything in our world is instant,” Dean says. “Now things happen instantly and it impacts our world.”

Dean encourages new directors to listen and learn as much as they can during their first years on the board to gain an understanding of the board and industry. He also encourages them to find a mentor to be a helping guide, like he was for some fellow directors.

“When a position came up for my district 12 years ago, I called Dean to see what a director job was all about,” says Victor Wald, the KEM Electric Board Chairman. “He encouraged me to run, and he has been my mentor ever since.”

Wald says they have carpooled to hundreds of meetings and have had conversations about board matters, but also farming, family and life. Dean will be missed in the boardroom by all at KEM Electric.

Dean’s commitment to the members makes him an irreplaceable asset to KEM Electric. Dean will officially retire from the board after the KEM Electric Annual Meeting on June 9 in Napoleon. He looks forward to time with his family, looking after cattle, and watching college basketball and cheering on his Duke team.

KEM Electric would like to wish him well and thank him for his time, knowledge and guidance to the board, employees and membership. ⚡

MANAGER'S MESSAGE:

Understanding your capital credit allocation



Jason Bentz

Co-General Manager/CEO

As a not-for-profit electric cooperative, KEM Electric Cooperative operates differently than investor-owned utilities. Instead of generating profits for shareholders, we return the margins to you, our members, through capital credits. It's one of the many ways your ownership in KEM Electric truly matters.

Each time you use electricity and pay your bill, you're helping to cover the cost of providing reliable electric services. After

the cooperative pays all operating expenses, any remaining margins are allocated to members based on how much electricity they use during the year. This allocation is your share of the co-op's financial success.

This month, we'll be making capital credit allocations, and we want to highlight what that means. Allocations are not immediate cash payments,

but rather a record of your equity in the cooperative. These funds are reinvested into our system to support the maintenance, upgrades and expansion of the infrastructure that keeps your lights on.

When financial conditions are strong, and the board of directors determines it's appropriate, a portion of those capital credits are retired, meaning they're paid to members in the form of checks or bill credits.

This process allows us to maintain a strong financial foundation while returning value directly to you.

If you have any questions about how capital credits work or what your allocation means, our team is here to help.

Thank you for your continued trust and partnership. We're proud to serve you. ⚡



HOW CAPITAL CREDIT ALLOCATION WORKS



Co-op Earns a Margin (Profit)

At the end of a fiscal year, the co-op calculates its revenues minus expenses. If there's a surplus, it's not called a "profit," but a margin.



Board Approves Allocation

The board of directors decides how much of the margin to allocate back to members as capital credits, and how much to retain for operating reserves.



Credits Are Allocated

Allocated capital credits are recorded in the member's name, but not immediately paid out. Typically this occurs annually, mid-year.



Credits Are Retired Over Time

Over time (usually a 20 + year cycle), the co-op retires (pays out) these credits to members, typically delivered by check.

MESSAGE FROM OPERATIONS:

Projects to continue reliability



Dale Nagel

Chief of Staff/
Line Superintendent

Summer is a busy time for your cooperative, as projects across the service area progress. Each year, KEM Electric Cooperative's operations department works with a team of engineers at Innovative Energy Alliance Cooperative to diligently plan construction projects for the year.

Planning these projects allows KEM Electric to obtain easements, gather materials and allot the appropriate amount of time to complete the projects. You may have seen crews in your area

conducting pole testing, changing poles or installing new equipment on a power line near you. These are all part of the projects scheduled for the summer.

Pole testing

Pole testing is a preventative measure KEM Electric conducts each year. With the use of specialized tools as well as a visual inspection of a utility pole, contractors check for internal and external decay, rot or damage that may minimize the lifespan of the pole.

This year, KEM Electric plans to test around 6,500 utility poles across the service area. With help from contractors, failed utility poles will be changed out after they are identified.

Updating technology

KEM Electric has been actively upgrading technology across the service area. Crews have been installing regulators throughout the system. Regulators help ensure a constant, stable flow of electric services to members, regardless of load changes or fluctuation.

TripSaver reclosures, which is fault detection technology, continue to be installed throughout the service area, replacing aged oil-circuit reclosures (OCR). Unlike OCRs, TripSaver reclosures do not have oil and do not require scheduled maintenance, saving the cooperative thousands of dollars every year.

Supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) is compatible technology to be installed in additional substations. SCADA allows us to have real-time data at our fingertips, which will assist in more efficient system loading, switching and outage restoration.

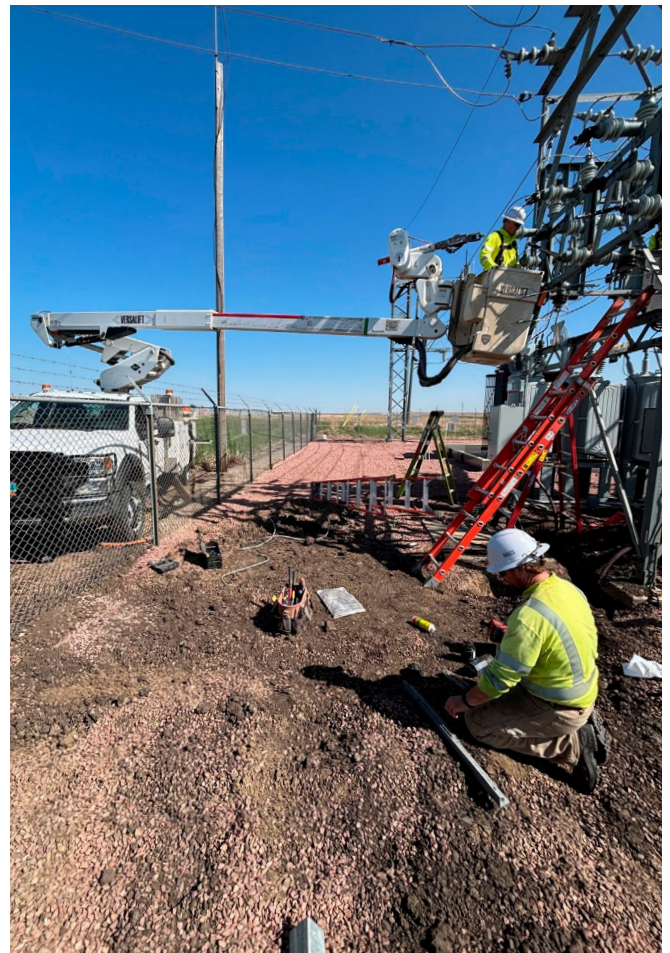
Upgrades and new services

At members' request, crews will continue to replace overhead power lines with underground cable,

install new services and retire services which are no longer needed.

This summer, crews will install 6 miles of three-phase underground cable from the Midway Substation and will retire the aged overhead line. Installation of underground cable helps add reliability to the system by reducing exposure of power lines to weather conditions, animals and other factors that may cause electric service disruptions.

While our crews remain busy, we know our members are hard at work as well. We'd like to remind members to be aware of power lines and electrical equipment. Whether you are baling and stacking hay, spraying fields or enjoying time in your yard, take a moment to look around and stay aware of your surroundings to help prevent accidents. Safety remains our priority for you, our members. ⚡



MESSAGE FROM MEMBER RELATIONS:

Join us at your Annual Meeting



Marcy Sanders

Manager
of Member Relations

We look forward to seeing you at your Annual Meeting on June 9 in Napoleon at the Barry-Hoof American Legion. Registration for the meeting will be from 4-4:45 p.m., with the business meeting starting promptly at 5 p.m. A meal provided by KEM Electric Cooperative will be served upon adjournment of the business meeting. Whether you've attended in the past or are considering joining us for the first time, here is what you should know.

The Annual Meeting is a special time for co-op members to gather, hear from co-op leadership and, perhaps most importantly, vote to elect your new directors and consider bylaw changes.

This year, members will elect directors for District 4, 5 and At-Large. Additionally, members have the opportunity to review and vote on various bylaw amendments. We encourage you to attend and exercise some of the many rights you have as a member of an electric cooperative.

There will be various booths to visit, such as our

safety booth, where members can visit with our operations department. And register for some great prizes, such as a Milwaukee wet/dry vacuum, at our safety booth.

Not only will you gain a better understanding of what is happening at your cooperative (and maybe win a prize!), but you will feel good knowing you had a voice in important decisions that impact one of our most vital resources, electricity.

More information about the director candidates and proposed bylaw amendments can be found in the Annual Report, which you received in the mail and by email in May. Further information about this year's director candidates can be found on the Annual Meeting page on our website by scanning the QR code below. ⚡

Join us at your Annual Meeting

**June 9, Barry-Hoof American Legion
69 Broadway St., Napoleon**

Registration opens at 4 p.m. with refreshments. The business meeting begins at 5 p.m. with a meal to follow.



For Annual Meeting details and to learn about the Board of Director candidates visit the Annual Meeting page on our website or scan the QR code.



Members will have the chance to win a Milwaukee wet/dry vacuum. Register for the prize at the safety booth before the meeting.

Luck-of-the-Draw Scholarships available

As our Annual Meeting approaches on June 9 in Napoleon, KEM Electric Cooperative is excited to share additional scholarship opportunities.

This year, we will have eight \$500 Luck-of-the-Draw Scholarships to be given to graduating high school seniors.

Each year, KEM Electric offers this additional opportunity to students who have not been previously awarded a cooperative scholarship. This year, KEM Electric's board of directors approved six additional scholarships to be awarded because the cooperative did not receive scholarship applicants from all area high schools. We are excited to have these scholarship opportunities available to the future of our communities! ⚡



Who is eligible?

Graduating high school seniors (Class of 2026) who are dependents of KEM Electric Cooperative members.

How do I sign up?

Join us at our Annual Meeting on June 9 in Napoleon, along with a parent/guardian who is a KEM Electric member. Students must register at the Annual Meeting by 4:45 p.m. for their name to be added to the scholarship drawing.

Do I have to be present to sign up and receive a scholarship?

Yes, you must be present at the Annual Meeting on June 9 to register and qualify for the Luck-of-the-Draw Scholarship.

If you have any further questions, call Marcy at 701-254-4666.

RDFC announces 2026 grant funds

The Rural Development Finance Corporation (RDFC) has approved a 2026 grant allotment of \$2,000 to KEM Electric Cooperative to be used to support community-owned entities, nonprofits and community-based projects.

Eligible projects include:

- Community-owned businesses (café, grocery store, motel, other)
- Community facilities (ambulance services, fire districts, recreation, hospital/clinic, community center, other)
- Workforce development or community-based

projects (school/youth projects) that benefit rural areas and lead to community betterment.

- Community-based projects (school/youth projects) that benefit rural areas and lead to community betterment.

Please note RDFC does not provide funds for medical fundraisers or general operating costs. Matching funds include \$4 of other funds to every \$1 of RDFC funds.

Applications may be found at kemelectric.com or by calling the office. Please return applications to KEM Electric Cooperative, Attn: Marcy Sanders. ⚡

SAFETY STARTS WITH ME:

Protect yourself against utility scams



Charlie Dunbar

Chief Information
Officer

As your electric cooperative, KEM Electric Cooperative knows the importance of communicating with you. KEM Electric's priority is ensuring you receive timely information from us through various channels, such as social media, our e-newsletter, text messages and phone calls. But with the increase in scams targeting utility companies, everyone needs to be aware and take extra precautions when sharing information online and over the phone. We

are committed to the safety of the cooperative and member information, and encourage you to do the same.

Scammers are developing new tactics every day, and they are targeting everyone.

The "past due" scam is unfortunately a familiar occurrence that goes something like this: A customer gets a call from an 800-number that looks like a valid utility company phone number. Widely available spoofing software allows scammers to display what appears to be an official number on caller IDs. The scammer threatens to cut off power if the customer doesn't pay.

But here's the giveaway: The scammers will demand payment via a prepaid debit card or money order.

In addition, they will ask for it within a specified timeframe, often in an hour or less.

Scammers might direct the customer to a specific store nearby that sells the prepaid cards and instruct the customer to put money on the card and provide the card number to the scammer.

But here's the reality about KEM Electric. We will never ask for immediate payment over the phone or in the form of prepaid or gift cards. We offer safe and secure ways for members to pay their energy bill online, over the phone or in person.

If something sounds or looks like a scam, it probably is. Refrain from clicking links in emails or text messages that look unusual or unexpected. If you receive a call from a number posing to be KEM Electric and it sounds suspicious, hang up and call us at 701-254-4666.

We value your trust and work hard to ensure your information stays safe with us, but everyone has a responsibility when it comes to staying vigilant about scams. ⚡

**KEM Electric Cooperative
will never ask for immediate
payment over the phone or in
the form of prepaid or gift cards.**



Join us at Emmons County Ag Day

Friday, June 12, in Linton

We will be located in the Co-op Corner from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.! Visit our booth for a chance to win prizes that will be sure to add some fun to your summer.

Visit the Linton Chamber of Commerce Facebook page for additional details.

KEM ELECTRIC BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS: MARCH 24

The meeting of the board of directors of KEM Electric Cooperative was held March 24 in Linton. The meeting was called to order at 9:34 a.m. by President Victor Wald. A quorum was present. Also present were co-General Managers/CEOs Travis Kupper and Jason Bentz, Chief Financial Officer Alex Craigmile, Chief of Staff/Line Superintendent Dale Nagel, Manager of Member Relations Marcy Sanders, Legal Counsel Jennifer Grosz and Board Liaison Connie Hill. Lance Rambousek from Brady Martz attended a portion of the meeting.

Consent agenda: The consent agenda was approved as presented.

Strategic items: Bentz and Kupper presented the co-general managers' report, which included updates on a N.D. Public Service Commission meeting, National Information Solutions Cooperative call to order applications, a North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives manager meeting and other items. Several additional Basin Electric Power Cooperative reports and board documents were available for review.

Department reports: Craigmile provided a financial report that included a review of the February financials, covering operating revenue and key ratios. Nagel provided a department report,

which included employee updates and training. Nagel also reviewed operational projects, such as line patrol, pole testing, supervisory control and data acquisition planning, and other items. Sanders provided a department report on the scholarship program and annual meeting information. Chief Information Officer Charlie Dunbar provided a written report for the board, which included technology updates. Grosz provided an update on projects, such as policy review and reviewing local regulations.

Action items: Rambousek from Brady Martz presented the annual 2025 audit report to the board, which was accepted as presented. The board discussed and resolved a proxy ballot for CoBank's 2026 bylaw amendments.

Discussion/general information: The board discussed the cooperative property.

Executive session: The board entered an executive session during the meeting.

The meeting concluded with adjournment. Secretary-Treasurer Carter Vander Wal certified the accuracy of the minutes.

Next meeting date: The next meeting is at 9:30 a.m. July 28 in Linton. ⚡

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KEM ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE INC.

DIRECTORS:

Victor Wald, Chairman, District 4..... Napoleon
John R. Beck, Vice Chairman, District 1..... Linton
Carter Vander Wal, Sec.-Treas., District 2..... Pollock
Dean Dewald, Director, District 5..... Dawson
Neil Meidinger, Director, District 3..... Zeeland
Carmen Essig, Director-at-Large..... Lehr
Todd Schnabel, Director-at-Large..... Lehr

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

MANAGEMENT:

Travis Kupper..... Co-General Manager/CEO
Jason Bentz..... Co-General Manager/CEO

Report outages to the following toll-free number: 800-472-2673

Hazleton, Linton and Strasburg exchanges' phone number: 701-254-4666

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday through Friday,
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Website: kemelectric.com

Email address: info@kemelectric.com

FIND US ON:

