

- Cybersecurity tips
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- Annual meeting held
- Protect against scams



KEM Electric Cooperative celebrates Student of the Month program

KEM Electric Cooperative recently concluded our third annual Touchstone Energy® Student of the Month program, a year-long initiative recognizing outstanding students across the cooperative's service area.

Throughout the school year, area schools and community members were invited to nominate students whom they find to be outstanding. Each month, one student was randomly drawn to receive monetary sponsorship, thanks to a partnership between KEM Electric and Touchstone Energy Cooperatives. The students then utilized the sponsorship money to help benefit their schools, whether through classroom resources, extracurricular programs or other student-focused initiatives.

"We're proud to celebrate these outstanding students and to support their schools in a way that reflects our cooperative values," says Manager of Member Relations Marcy Sanders. "There are so many impactful students who live in our communities, and we're excited to celebrate them."

This year, KEM Electric received many outstanding nominations for students who are leading in school, through extracurricular activities and in the community.

"It has been an impactful opportunity getting to highlight these students and learn more about each of their interests, skills and how they are helping

make their community and school a brighter place," Sanders says.

KEM Electric recognizes all students who were chosen throughout the 2025-26 school year for Touchstone Energy Student of the Month:

- **Claire Bader**, a senior at Wishek Public School, was recognized for being kind and demonstrating sportsmanship. Bader's nominator says she demonstrates true sportsmanship on and off the court.
- **James Ebel**, a freshman at Zeeland Public School, was recognized for embodying the values of hard work, leadership and dedication in and out of the classroom. Ebel's nominator says his positive attitude, kindness and willingness to go the extra mile make him a role model for his classmates.
- **Sawyer Hendrickson**, a junior at Hazelton-Moffit-Braddock Public School, was recognized for always helping classmates, peers, teachers or staff members when needed. Hendrickson's nominator says she walks the halls with respect for others.
- **Bryce Larson**, a senior at Kidder County Public School, was recognized for treating others with kindness and respect. Larson's nominator says he sets an example others naturally follow.
- **Bridger Rivinius**, a senior at Gackle-Streeter Public School, was recognized for his involvement in school, community and church. Rivinius's

nominator says he is humble, kind and is always trying to do the right thing.

- **Emma Sanders**, a senior at Linton Public School, was recognized for demonstrating compassion and care for those around her. Sanders's nominator says she has a genuine passion for supporting younger children and enjoys visiting and assisting her elderly neighbors.
- **Kendall Sperle**, a senior at Napoleon Public School, pours time and energy into her community. Sperle's nominator says she is the type of student who leads by example and always does the right thing, even when no one is watching.
- **Tucker Vander Vorst**, a senior at Strasburg Public School, was recognized for demonstrating

leadership, character and service. Vander Vorst's nominator says he shows leadership skills not only while working with elementary students, but in sports as well.

- **Parker Zimmerman**, a senior from Ashley Public School, was recognized for being kind and helpful. Zimmerman's nominator says he is kind and willingly helps when needed.

Congratulations to all who were nominated. KEM Electric looks forward to further supporting youth through programs in the future. If you would like to learn more about youth programs through our cooperative, visit kemelectric.com or visit with Marcy by calling 701-254-4666. ⚡



Claire Bader



James Ebel



Sawyer Hendrickson



Bryce Larson



Bridger Rivinius



Emma Sanders



Kendall Sperle



Tucker Vander Vorst



Parker Zimmerman

MANAGER'S MESSAGE:

Cybersecurity tips for safer digital world

**Travis Kupper**

Co-General Manager/CEO

Did you know the average household with internet access owns about 17 connected devices? That figure covers a wide range of electronics, including smartphones, computers, streaming devices, smart speakers, home assistants and more. Given our increasing reliance on internet-connected technologies, the likelihood of new cyber threats is ever-present.

KEM Electric Cooperative is deeply committed to

ensuring our local system is safe and secure. We routinely monitor and manage cyber risks, and we work together with other co-ops to share the latest advancements in cybersecurity measures that make us stronger. But you can help, too.

When we all work together to stay safe online, we lower the risk of cyber threats to our systems, online accounts and sensitive data.

Learn how to spot and report phishing attempts.

Phishing occurs when criminals use phony emails, direct messages or other types of digital communications that lure you to click an unsafe link or download a malicious attachment. If you receive a suspicious email or message that includes

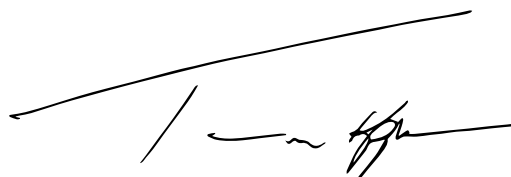
urgent language, offers that seem too good to be true, generic greetings, poor grammar or an unusual sender address, it could be a phishing attempt. If you spot one, report it as soon as possible, and don't forget to block the sender.

Create strong, unique passwords. When it comes to passwords, remember length trumps complexity. Strong passwords contain at least 12 characters and include a mix of letters, numbers and symbols.

Enable multi-factor authentication when available. Multi-factor authentication (also known as two-factor authentication) adds an extra layer of security to your online accounts. These extra security steps can include facial recognition, fingerprint access or one-time codes sent to your email or phone.

Update software regularly. Software and internet-connected devices, including personal computers, smartphones and tablets, should always be current on updates to reduce the risk of infection from ransomware and malware.

Let's all do our part to stay cyber smart and create a safer digital world for all. ⚡



BE CYBER SAFE

**VERIFY THE SOURCE****RED FLAGS****RECOGNIZE SCAM TACTICS****REPORT ANY SCAMS****STAY INFORMED**

MESSAGE FROM OPERATIONS: **Summer storm safety**



Dale Nagel

Chief of Staff/
Line Superintendent

Now that summer is in full swing, many of us find ourselves outdoors, enjoying the warmer weather. Summertime brings activities such as grilling with family and friends, afternoons on the water and simply slowing down a bit to enjoy life.

But summer months also create conditions for dangerous storms, especially warmer temperatures and high winds causing tornadoes across the state. These potential weather events can cause destruction

to our electric system, but KEM Electric Cooperative crews are ready to respond should power outages occur in our area.

When major storms knock out power, our line crews take all necessary precautions before they start working on any downed lines. Members can also take steps to practice safety and preparedness during major storms and extended outages.

- Stock your pantry with a supply of nonperishable food, such as canned goods, energy bars, peanut butter, powdered milk, instant coffee, water and other essentials, such as toiletries.
- Have adequate hygiene supplies, including towelettes, soap and hand sanitizer.
- Ensure your first-aid kit is stocked with pain relievers, bandages and other medical essentials.
- Set aside basic household items you will need, including chargers, flashlights, batteries and a battery-powered radio or TV.
- Stay away from downed power lines. Always assume all wires on the ground are electrically charged. Call us to report the downed power line immediately.
- Organize emergency supplies so they are easily accessible in one location.

In the event of power interruptions or power outages, turn off major appliances, TVs, computers and other sensitive electronics. This will help reduce damage from a power surge and will also help prevent overloading the circuits during power restoration. It is helpful to leave one light on, so you will know when power is restored. If you plan to use a generator, make sure it's rated to handle the amount of power you will need, and wired to state and national electrical codes. Always review the manufacturer's instructions to operate it safely.

Listen to local news or a NOAA Weather Radio

for storm and emergency information. Check KEM Electric's Facebook page for power restoration updates and visit kemelectric.com to view the outage map. Outages can be reported by calling 800-472-2673 or by using the SmartHub app. If you have updated your notifications in SmartHub by allowing texting and have one meter on your account, you can report an outage by texting OUT to 844-955-2714.

Advance planning for severe storms or other emergencies can reduce stress and anxiety caused by the weather event and can lessen the impact of the storm's effects.

We hope we don't experience severe storms this summer, but we can never predict Mother Nature's plans. There is power in planning. We hope you have a safe and enjoyable summer. ⚡



If you are a SmartHub user, you can report outages by text message. If your account includes only one electric meter or service location – such as a home or business – you can report an outage by texting **OUT** to **844-955-2714**.

SAFETY STARTS WITH ME:

Tips to reduce wildfire risks



Austin Ohlhauser

Journeyman
Lineworker

While much-needed rainfall has brought relief to many of our drought-impacted areas and has reduced the immediate risk of wildfires, KEM Electric Cooperative remains committed to fire mitigation. Weather conditions can change quickly, and we prioritize taking precautions to ensure safety for our employees, members and communities.

As KEM Electric employees work across the service territory, everyone is equipped with fire mitigation knowledge and equipment. Equipment includes a water tank and fire extinguisher on each co-op vehicle.

Cooperative employees are also briefed with the fire mitigation plan to ensure they can respond accurately to an emergency while working in the field. Through regular vegetation management and grid maintenance and hardening practices, KEM Electric is proactively working to reduce risks and improve the

reliability of our local system.

As a member of KEM Electric, there are steps you can take to prevent wildfires as well.

- **Follow local fire regulations.** Always check for burn bans or restrictions in your area before burning anything or using open flames outdoors.
- **Don't burn on windy days.** Avoid outdoor burning when it's windy or dry, as embers can easily spread and ignite surrounding areas.
- **Use equipment safely.** Tools like lawnmowers or chainsaws can spark fires. Use them during cooler times of the day and keep them in good working condition.
- **Clear vegetation and debris.** Maintain a defensible space around your home by removing dry leaves, dead branches and other flammable materials.
- **Properly extinguish campfires.** Always douse your campfire with water, stir the ashes and ensure everything is cool to the touch before leaving the area.

Let's all work together to make this summer memorable and do what we can to ensure safety across our service area. ⚡





Members visited the safety table to register for a door prize.



Member service representative **Erica Umber** welcomes and registers members.

Members gather for Annual Meeting

KEM Electric Cooperative members gathered in Linton for the Annual Meeting on June 9. Upon arriving, members were welcomed and received an appreciation gift. Before the meeting began, members enjoyed refreshments and visited the operations and safety booth to register for prizes and learn about upcoming projects and the safety protocols our staff takes every day.

KEM Electric Chairman Victor J. Wald welcomed and thanked members for attending the 2026 Annual Meeting. The membership voted to fill the board positions in three districts. In District 4, Victor Wald from Napoleon was reelected. In District 5, Brent Stroh from Tappen was elected. In the District At-

Large, Carmen Essig from Lehr was reelected by the membership. Additionally, the membership voted to approve the 2025 Annual Meeting minutes and various bylaw amendments.

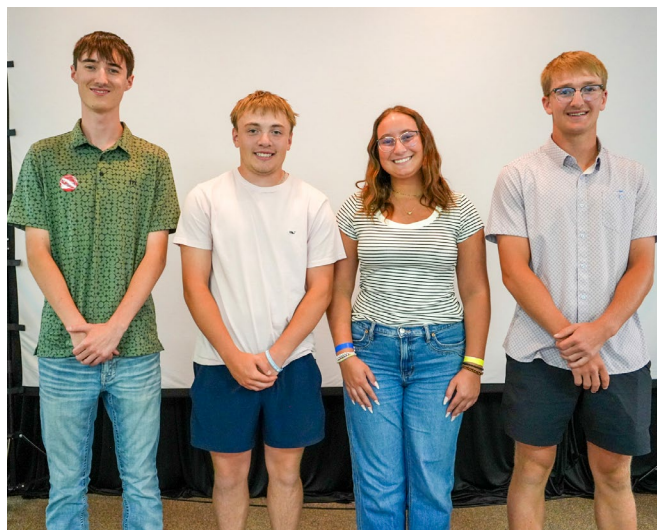
Members listened to cooperative updates from co-General Managers/CEOs Travis Kupper and Jason Bentz and Chief Financial Officer Alex Craigmile. Department and program updates were also provided by Chief of Staff/Line Superintendent Dale Nagel and Manager of Member Relations Marcy Sanders. Susan Wald, secretary/treasurer of the Operation Round Up board, highlighted the charitable foundation's 2025 giving.

KEM Electric youth programs like Touchstone

Energy Student of the Month, Youth Tour and high school scholarships were highlighted. KEM Electric awarded additional scholarships to the Class of 2026. Ben Huber from Linton High School; Peyton Masset from Linton High School; Tucker Vander Vorst from Strasburg High School and Eva Weigel from Napoleon High School were chosen for Luck-of-the-Draw Scholarships.

After the Annual Meeting, members enjoyed a complimentary meal made by Karri Stroh and were awarded door prizes.

The Board of Directors, co-general managers and staff at KEM Electric wish to thank our members for participating in the Annual Meeting of the membership and look forward to meeting your electric service needs in the future. ⚡



The recipients of the Luck-of-the-Draw Scholarships were **Tucker Vander Vorst** from Strasburg High School (left); **Ben Huber** from Linton High School; **Eva Weigel** from Napoleon High School and **Peyton Masset** from Linton High School.



Board of Director **Carmen Essig** visits with members and guests.



Members visited information booths before the business meeting to visit with employees.

MEET YOUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBER!



Brent Stroh, District 5

Board members' commitment to fostering collaboration and driving innovation is critical. Brent Stroh from Tappen was elected June 2026 and brings additional perspectives that enhance our decision-making processes and helps us serve our members.

"I've been a member of KEM district for 40 years. I understand the working of cooperatives. As a farmer/rancher I realize the importance of KEM Electric and what they do for us to maintain power," says Stroh.

KEM ELECTRIC BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS: APRIL 21

The meeting of the board of directors of KEM Electric Cooperative was held April 21 in Linton. The meeting was called to order at 9:36 a.m. by Chairman 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. Innovative Energy Alliance (IEA) Manager of Member Support Anne Hansen attended a portion of the meeting.

Consent agenda: Additions were proposed to the consent agenda. The consent agenda was approved as amended.

Strategic items: Bentz and Kupper presented the co-general managers' report, which included updates on a N.D. Public Service Commission meeting, this month's North Dakota managers meeting and a Basin Electric Power Cooperative District 9 meeting. Several additional Basin Electric reports and board documents were available for review.

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

included employee updates and projects. Nagel also reviewed an operations report, including pole testing, supervisory control and data acquisition planning, service inquiries and other items. Sanders provided a member relations department report on youth programs, Operation Round Up and other communications. Sanders also outlined various details related to the 2026 annual meeting. Chief Information Officer Charlie Dunbar provided a written report for the board, which included technology updates. Grosz provided an update on projects such as updating the easement process.

Action items: The board reviewed and approved the emergency response plan/crisis communication plan, director questionnaires and other items. The board also appointed a board representative for the IEA and Maintenance Solutions Cooperative boards.

Discussion/general information:

Hansen provided a review of the member satisfaction survey.

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. on July 28 in Linton. ⚡

KX/Co-op Day at the North Dakota State Fair

Wednesday, July 22 / 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. CT

Stop by for free breakfast, prizes, cash drawings and an ice cream social. Stop by our office for coupons to save on gate and rodeo admission, rides and more!



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
Brent Stroh, Director, District 5..... Tappen
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:

