

KEM Electric members gather in Linton for 2024 Annual Meeting





KEM Electric Cooperative members participate in annual meeting

KEM Electric Cooperative members gathered in Linton for the cooperative's 2024 annual meeting on June 11. Prior to the meeting starting, members enjoyed a complimentary meal made by Deb Schumacher and received their choice of an appreciation gift. Members were welcomed to visit the operations and safety booth to register for an additional prize and learn about upcoming projects and the safety protocols followed by KEM Electric staff every day.

KEM Electric Chairman Victor J. Wald welcomed and thanked members for attending the annual meeting. The membership voted to fill the board positions with John R. Beck, Linton, in District 1; Carter Vander Wal, Pollock, S.D., in District 2; and Anton "Tony" Schaffner, Zeeland, in the District at Large.

Members listened to cooperative updates from co-managers, Travis Kupper and Jason Bentz as well

as chief financial officer, Alex Craigmile. Chief of staff, Dale Nagel and manager of member relations, Marcy Sanders also addressed the membership. Susan Meidinger, vice chairperson of the Operation Round Up board, highlighted the charitable foundation's 2023 giving.

Students were also recognized for being awarded scholarships and the Youth Tour winner was recognized. KEM Electric awarded luck-of-the-draw scholarships to Morgan Huizenga from Strasburg, Cheyanne Lindgren from Ashley, and Gracyn Holzer from Linton.

The board of directors, co-general managers and staff at KEM Electric thank our members for participating in the annual meeting of the membership and look forward to meeting your electrical needs in the future. ⚡

MANAGER'S MESSAGE:

Overhead and underground lines



Travis Kupper

When it comes to the transmission and distribution of electricity, we often get questions about the two primary methods: overhead power lines and underground power lines. Each method has its own set of advantages and disadvantages, which influence cost, reliability, aesthetics and environmental impact. Let's delve into the differences between overhead and

underground power lines to better understand their respective strengths and limitations.

Overhead power lines

Pros

- **Cost-effectiveness:** One of the most significant advantages of overhead power lines is their lower initial installation cost compared to underground lines. The materials used for overhead lines, such as poles, conductors and insulators, are typically less expensive than those required for underground installation.
- **Accessibility and maintenance:** Overhead power lines are more accessible for maintenance and repairs, as they are visible and easily reachable. This accessibility translates to faster response times and lower maintenance costs, contributing to overall reliability.
- **Scalability:** Overhead power lines offer greater flexibility for expansion and upgrades. Additional wires can be added to existing poles or new poles can be erected without the need for extensive excavation work, making it easier to accommodate growing energy demands.

Cons

- **Susceptibility to weather:** Overhead power lines are exposed to the elements and are susceptible to damage from severe weather events, such as storms, high winds and lightning strikes. This vulnerability can lead to power outages and safety hazards for both utility workers and the public.
- **Height clearance concerns:** Despite their visibility, overhead power lines pose a risk of accidental contact, particularly when moving tall equipment or large machinery. Farmers must remain vigilant and adhere to recommended height clearance

guidelines to avoid striking power lines, which can result in serious injury, equipment damage and power outages.

Underground power lines

Pros

- **Enhanced reliability:** Underground power lines are less susceptible to weather-related outages and external interference, as they are protected from elements, such as wind, ice and falling debris.

Cons

- **Higher initial cost:** The primary drawback of underground power lines is their significantly higher upfront installation cost compared to overhead lines. Excavation, trenching and cable-laying processes are labor-intensive and require specialized equipment, increasing project expenses.
- **Limited accessibility for maintenance:** Underground power lines are more challenging to access for maintenance and repairs, as they are buried beneath the ground. Locating and accessing faults or damaged cables can be time-consuming and costly, leading to longer outage durations and increased operational challenges.
- **Technical challenges:** Underground power lines are subject to technical limitations, such as heat dissipation, cable capacity and voltage regulation. These factors can impact system performance and may require additional engineering considerations during design and installation.

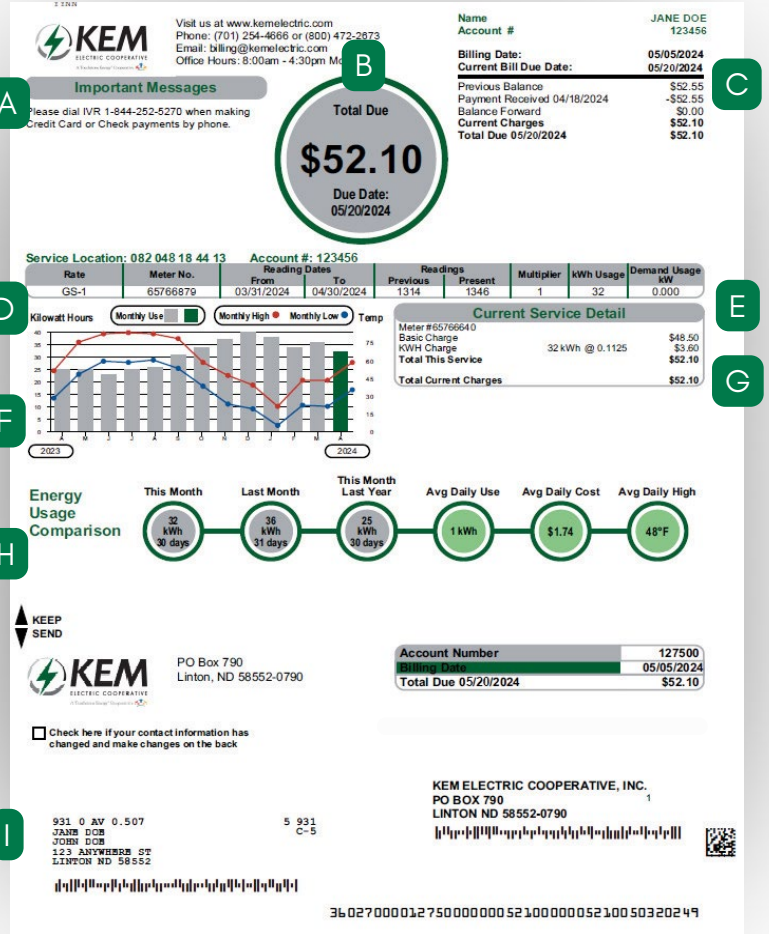
The choice between overhead and underground power lines involves weighing various factors, such as cost and reliability. While overhead lines offer cost-effectiveness and scalability, underground lines provide enhanced reliability, aesthetic improvement and reduced environmental impact.

Ultimately, the selection of the most suitable transmission and distribution method depends on the specific requirements and priorities of each project, community and cooperative. By carefully evaluating these factors and considering long-term implications, stakeholders can make informed decisions to ensure the efficient and sustainable delivery of electricity for generations to come. ⚡



HOW TO READ YOUR NEW BILLING STATEMENT

- A** Informational and account level messaging can be found here. Examples include the message listed in this bill sample, annual meeting dates and other important information.
- B** The total account balance bubble features an account balance as well as the due date, or autopay date.
- C** The bill summary contains the billing date, when the current charges are due, the previous balance, when a payment was received, any past due balance, the current charges for this billing period and the total account balance.
- D** This table details specific meter information, including which rate class the meter is in, the meter number, reading dates, the previous kWh reading, current kWh reading, multiplier and the usage for the billing period.
- E** A demand reading on an electric bill indicates the highest amount of power (kW) used by a member during a specific time, often measured in 15- or 30-minute intervals.
- F** This chart details the past 13 months of usage and the monthly high and low temperatures throughout those months. Usage is represented with the gray and green bars, and temperature is shown as red (high) and blue (low) lines.
- G** Here, you'll discover information about your current billing, including a breakdown of charges.
- H** A new, key feature of the bill is the energy usage timeline that details the kWh usage and the number of days calculated for this month. In the next bubble, members can compare their usage quickly with how much kWh they used last month, and then a yearly comparison with this month last year.
- I** If you're paying by check, tear off and send in this section so a member services representative knows which account to credit.



Important Messages
Please dial IVR 1-844-252-5270 when making Credit Card or Check payments by phone.

Total Due
\$52.10
Due Date: 05/20/2024

Rate	Meter No.	Reading Dates From	To	Readings Previous	Present	Multiplier	kWh Usage	Demand Usage kW
GS-1	65766879	03/31/2024	04/30/2024	1314	1346	1	32	0.000

Current Service Detail

Meter #65766879	Basic Charge	\$48.50
32 kWh @ 0.1125	kWh Charge	\$3.60
	Total This Service	\$52.10
	Total Current Charges	\$52.10

Energy Usage Comparison

- This Month: 32 kWh, 30 days
- Last Month: 36 kWh, 31 days
- This Month Last Year: 25 kWh, 30 days
- Avg Daily Use: 1 kWh
- Avg Daily Cost: \$1.74
- Avg Daily High: 48°F

Account Information

Account Number: 127500
Billing Date: 05/05/2024
Total Due 05/20/2024: \$52.10

KEEP SEND

PO Box 790
Linton, ND 58552-0790

Check here if your contact information has changed and make changes on the back

931 0 AV 0.507
JAMES DOB
JOHN DOB
123 ANYWHERE ST
LINTON ND 58552

5 931
C-5

KEM ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
PO BOX 790
LINTON ND 58552-0790

36 027 0000 12 750 000 000 52 100 000 052 100 503 202 49

The above example bill is subject to minor changes.

SAFETY STARTS WITH ME:

Protecting members against utility scams

In today's interconnected world, millions of Americans face the persistent threat of utility scams, which manifest through various channels, such as phone calls, emails and text messages. Remaining vigilant against these evolving tactics is crucial for safeguarding oneself and one's community from financial harm and identity theft.

"Staying informed and cautious is the best defense against utility scams," says Denise Ketterling, member services representative. Here is how you can be better prepared:

- **Awareness is key:** Stay updated on the latest scam reports from local and national news outlets and utility companies to recognize potential threats.
- **Watch for red flags:** Be wary of common scam tactics, such as overpayment tricks and smishing (SMS phishing) attempts and question any suspicious communications.
- **Take control:** Take time to assess the situation, being suspicious of unusual requests, and verify the legitimacy of any communication with the utility company directly.

"If the request seems strange or urgent, you're likely being targeted by a scammer," Ketterling says. "If someone calls you on behalf of KEM Electric and it sounds like a scam, hang up and call the office immediately."



As we navigate the digital landscape, it's imperative to remain vigilant and proactive in protecting ourselves and our communities from utility scams. By staying informed, exercising caution and reporting suspicious activities, we can collectively work toward a safer environment, shielding our friends and neighbors from falling victim to fraudulent schemes. ⚡

POWERFUL FUTURES:

Touchstone Energy Students of the Month

Last fall, KEM Electric Cooperative kicked off the Touchstone Energy® Student of the Month program. This program aimed to recognize outstanding students in grades K-12 and provide a monetary sponsorship to their school for a project or initiative chosen by the winning student. Throughout the 2023-24 school year, KEM Electric awarded \$100 to each school in its service territory on behalf of eight students. Below is a list of the students who were awarded.

- Ashley Public School – Thomas Haas
- Hazelton-Moffit-Braddock Public School – Emma Weiser
- Kidder County Public School – Alea Kramlich
- Linton Public School – Bailey Huber

- Napoleon Public School – Dawson Erbele
- Strasburg Public School – Malachi Huber
- Wishek Public School – Carson Glaesman
- Zeeland Public School – Dominic Meier

"Thank you to all who nominated students and congratulations to all the students who were nominated and chosen," says manager of member relations Marcy Sanders. "The future of our communities is bright with outstanding students such as these."

Keep an eye on our social media, newsletter and *North Dakota Living* for more information on the future of this program and how you can nominate an outstanding student. ⚡

Message from Basin Electric Power Cooperative

BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND GENERAL MANAGER TODD BRICKHOUSE AND BOARD PRESIDENT WAYNE PELTIER

Editor's note: Basin Electric Power Cooperative supplies much of the power distributed to KEM Electric Cooperative members throughout the tri-county area. We asked Todd Brickhouse and Wayne Peltier to update our members on what is happening at Basin Electric.

In 2023, Basin Electric Power Cooperative continued to provide reliable and affordable power to our members. We understand the quality of life of our members depends on our efforts, and we value the trust our members place in us to provide electric service.

Today's reliability and affordability is the result of careful planning and prudent investments that occurred years and even decades ago. We are striving to continue this tradition of stewardship. Over the next five years, we expect to invest as much as \$4 billion in our utility system. This is in addition to the \$470 million we invested in 2023, which was our highest single year of capital expenditures since 2015.

These investments are required due to the robust growth of Basin Electric's members. In 2023, Basin Electric's megawatt-hour sales to members increased 7.5%, which is on top of 7.8% growth in 2022. We expect strong growth to continue over the next decade, driven by healthy agricultural, petroleum and technology sectors of the economy.

Growth presents both opportunities and risks. The biggest opportunity is for our members to experience higher standards of living from economic growth. With respect to risks, many of these loads can materialize faster than Basin Electric can build generation, which impacts both reliability and affordability. To mitigate some of the risks, we work with our members throughout the year to develop innovative rates for cryptocurrency and large loads.

Our 2023 consolidated margins were consistent with our targeted margin of \$150 million, although we achieved these margins by utilizing a portion of our rate stability fund. Our utility margins were well above what was budgeted. However, results at Dakota Gasification Company, our for-profit subsidiary, were below budget due to weak commodity prices and lower-than-budgeted plant capacity factors.

Dakota Gasification's results will always be impacted by commodity prices, but we made great progress toward de-risking a portion of this volatility in 2023. By the end of the year, construction related to Dakota Gasification's carbon dioxide (CO₂) sequestration project was largely complete, and CO₂ sequestration



Wayne Peltier and Todd Brickhouse

commenced in mid-February 2024.

During 2023, our senior leadership team and board updated Basin Electric's strategic plan. This included a new mission statement: We are a safe, environmentally responsible cooperative that provides reliable, affordable power, products and services to sustain the quality of life for our member-owners across rural America. This mission statement provides us with a unifying sense of purpose and is supported by eight strategic objectives designed to increase the value we provide to our members. While achieving all of our strategic objectives is important, we put particular emphasis on safety, reliability and affordability by making them cooperative-wide goals.

In closing, we offer our thanks to our members and stakeholders for your trust and support. ⚡



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

Wednesday, July 24
10 a.m. - 3 p.m. CT

Drawings for cash & prizes throughout the day

Sponsored by:

- North Dakota Coordinating Council of Cooperatives (NDCCC)
- KX News
- North Dakota State Fair

Discounts available by calling KEM Electric Cooperative:

- \$1 off daily admission
- \$5 off unlimited ride wristband
- \$1 off Ranch Rodeo

Free breakfast 7:30 - 9:30 a.m.
Ice cream social 1:30 - 2:30 p.m.



Mark your calendar for Co-op Day at the State Fair!

Experience KX/Co-op Day at the N.D. State Fair on July 24 in Minot. As a valued member, we are pleased to extend exclusive benefits to enhance your experience.

By attending the North Dakota State Fair on July 24, you gain access to a special offer on gate admission, where you can save \$1 off the regular price. Additionally, maximize the thrills of the carnival rides with a \$5 discount on daily unlimited-ride wristbands and \$1 off admission to the ranch rodeo.

You're also invited to join us for a free pancake breakfast from 7:30 to 9:30 a.m. and ice cream social under the KX/Co-op tent from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.

To secure your tickets and take advantage of these offers, simply reach out to our dedicated team at the office. Give us a call today at 701-254-4666 and allow us to facilitate a memorable experience for you at the N.D. State Fair. ⚡



SAFETY TIP

DON'T STACK HAY BALES UNDER POWER LINES. STAY 10 FEET CLEAR OF POWER LINES.

KEM Electric board meeting highlights

April 30

The meeting of the board of directors of KEM Electric Cooperative was held on April 30 at the KEM Electric office in Linton. The meeting was called to order at 9:33 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, Legal Counsel Tom Bair, Line Superintendent/Chief of Staff Dale Nagel, Member Relations Manager Marcy Sanders, Executive Assistant Connie Hill and Member Support Manager Anne Hansen.

Consent agenda: No additions were made to the agenda. The consent agenda was approved as presented.

Strategic/action: Bentz and Kupper provided the co-general managers' report, which included updates on the Basin Electric Power Cooperative district managers meeting, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Legislative Conference, program and grant applications. Updates on Basin Electric's CEO report, West Dakota Utility Services and 3C Construction were also provided.

Action items: Action items were resolved.

Department reports: Craigmile provided the financial report. Nagel included a department report on outage information, safety statistics and the April safety meeting minutes. Sanders provided a department report, which included an annual meeting update and the May local pages. Chief Information Officer Charlie Dunbar provided a written report for the board. Bair provided a legal counsel report.

Discussion/general information: Hansen presented the board with KEM Electric's 2024 member survey results. Hansen also provided a report on the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. The board discussed details of the upcoming Basin Electric annual meeting.

Executive session: The board entered an executive session.

The meeting concluded with the 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 30 in Wishek. ⚡



EXPLORE IT, ADORE IT AND SAVE: Medora discounts

KEM Electric Cooperative is excited to offer Medora discounts for some unforgettable family summer fun! KEM Electric is able to offer its members a discount by being a Touchstone Energy® member.

Simply call 1-800-MEDORA-1 and give the discount code "TOUCH2024" for a 15% discount on all of the following during any night of the season.

Discounts offered for a Medora vacation include:

- Medora Musical
- Pitchfork steak fondue
- Bully Pulpit Golf Course
- Gospel Brunch tickets
- Old Town Hall Theater shows

Lodging at any of the following:

- Elkhorn Quarters
- Badlands Motel
- Rough Riders Hotel

KEM ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE INC.

DIRECTORS:

Victor Wald, Chairman Napoleon
 John R. Beck, Vice Chairman Linton
 Carter Vander Wal, Sec.-Treas. Pollock
 Dean Dewald, Director Dawson
 Carmen Essig, Director Lehr
 Neil Meidinger, Director Zeeland
 Anton Schaffner, Director Zeeland

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

MANAGEMENT:

Travis Kupper Co-GM/CEO
 Jason Bentz Co-GM/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:

