



MARCH
2024

ELECTRIFYING THE FUTURE:

Slope Electric powers into 2024 and beyond

Slope Electric Cooperative is continuously looking for ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the infrastructure and communications to best serve you, our members. The team at Slope Electric has been planning 2024 projects well in advance and crews will now be making updates and completing projects. This will ensure Slope Electric can deliver efficient and reliable power to our members.

Along with infrastructure upgrades, the Slope Electric staff is working to meet members around the service area through local events.

Ensuring reliable power

The operations department has been working with the Innovative Energy Alliance (IEA) Cooperative to update substation equipment to become more compatible with the latest technology, notes Chief of Staff/Operations Manager Dean Volk. IEA is a professional service cooperative owned by four electric distribution cooperatives in North Dakota, including Slope Electric.

Volk explains Slope Electric plans to continue the general maintenance of infrastructure, which consists of pole testing and changes, as well as overhead conductor replacement and tree trimming. Throughout the year, crews will also be converting overhead lines to underground.

“One of our greatest challenges right now is getting equipment and materials when we need them,” Volk says.

As the year progresses, Slope Electric anticipates some growth

in its system and is ready to handle any expansion smoothly. The cooperative also plans to implement new technologies to improve the system and workflow. This includes sectionalizing technologies to reduce outages and the use of a drone to help crews with substation and transmission inspection.

“We’re excited to utilize this technology within our service area, propelling us forward in delivering reliable power to our valued members,” Volk says.

Connecting with members

The member services department is planning various ways to connect with members throughout the service territory this year. So far this year, Slope Electric has held member appreciation events in Amidon and Regent. These new events brought members and Slope Electric board directors, CEOs and staff together for an opportunity to visit about various topics and answer questions.

“We thank everyone who attended our member appreciation events and cannot wait to see members again at our upcoming annual meeting,” Manager of Member Relations Brooke Waltner says.

The next opportunity for members is the Slope Electric annual meeting June 6 in New England. Members can also expect to see sponsored events, including popcorn at high school sporting events and a drawing for Cooperative Month in October, Waltner says.

Slope Electric Cooperative Inc.

OUTLOOK

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- The cooperative way
- Surge protection 101
- Update contact information



“Members can keep up-to-date on events by following our Facebook and Instagram accounts, as well as by reading Slope Electric’s local pages found in *North Dakota Living*,” Waltner says.

Supporting the service area

Slope Electric also offers a handful of grant and scholarship opportunities throughout the year. Some of these programs include Operation Round Up, which is a voluntary contribution through rounding up electric bills to the next dollar. Funds will be disbursed in the general service area of Slope Electric solely for medical, educational, charitable, safety and scientific purposes by a designated Operation Round Up board. Members can apply for grant funds and find out more about Operation Round Up at www.slopeelectric.coop. The next deadline for applications is May 22.

Slope Electric also believes in supporting youth and provides opportunities for scholarships. Slope Electric provides a handful of scholarships to area high school students at the beginning of the new year. In addition, members can expect more luck-of-the-draw scholarships during this year’s annual meeting. Members and their dependents are eligible for three \$1,000 scholarships for full-time students and two \$500 scholarships for part-time students.

Serving you in 2024

The cooperative also reminds members to contact the office with any address and/or contact information changes, so Slope Electric can keep you up-to-date. When updating addresses, please provide our office with 911 addresses, so the cooperative can best serve our members and emergency services. Slope Electric looks forward to serving you in 2024! ■

MANAGER'S MESSAGE: The cooperative way



Travis Kupper

In the dynamic landscape of energy, our electric cooperative stands as a testament to the power of progress. I am thrilled to share insights into what makes us more than just an energy provider. We are a cooperative, shaped by the collective efforts and aspirations of each member.

Have you ever wondered about the origins of electric cooperatives?

The cooperative movement emerged in response to the need for rural electrification during the early to mid-20th century. Communities, often overlooked by traditional utilities, came together, pooled resources and formed cooperatives to bring electricity to their homes. This grassroots movement laid the foundation for our cooperative principles, emphasizing community, equality and shared prosperity.

Cooperative 101: The core principles

- **Member ownership:** In our cooperative, you're not just a consumer. You're a member and a vital part of our success story. Your membership means ownership, and every member, regardless of the size of his or her contribution, has a say in the decisions that shape our cooperative's path.

- **Democracy in action:** Our cooperative operates on democratic principles, ensuring your voice matters. Through the election of representatives, we guarantee your interests are at the forefront of our decision-making processes. You will be able to exercise that voice at the upcoming annual meeting on June 6.
- **Local control:** No two counties are alike, which we understand. That's why our cooperative believes in local control. Decisions are made by those who understand the unique needs and challenges of our local area, ensuring tailor-made solutions for you.
- **Local commitment:** We're not just about delivering electricity; we're committed to enhancing the overall well-being of our service area. Our initiatives extend beyond kilowatts, encompassing programs like scholarships, Operation Round Up and other grant opportunities.

As we stand on the shoulders of this cooperative history, remember you are not just a member; you are an essential participant in a movement that's been shaping the future for decades. ■

GOING THE EXTRA MILE

Did you know electric co-ops power fewer consumers per mile of line compared to other utilities?

SLOPE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
Serve less than 1 member per mile of line



OTHER ELECTRIC UTILITIES Serve 32 consumers per mile of line

SAFETY STARTS WITH ME: Surge protection 101

Behind the walls of your home is a network of wires that ensures the seamless journey of electricity from the power line to your outlet. Sometimes, the unexpected occurs, and an increase in voltage can happen. These are known as power surges.

“Power surges can be caused by lightning, electrical overload, faulty wiring, power outages or other reasons,” says Mark Frank, a line technician.

Regardless of the cause, power surges can majorly damage electronic devices and equipment in your home.

“Members can take precautions to prevent the impact surges can have on their electronics,” Frank says.

Lightning

Lightning is one of the most common causes of power surges. Most of us have experienced this during a severe thunderstorm. When lightning strikes an electrical system, the excess current must be channeled somewhere. Unfortunately, it’s sometimes sent through a home. Your best bet is to unplug all unused devices and electronics during severe thunderstorms.

Electronic overload

Electronic overload is another common cause of power surges. This happens when devices or appliances are plugged into an outlet that can’t handle the required amount of voltage or if multiple devices are plugged into one outlet through an extension cord. If you’re experiencing power surges due to electrical overload, it’s time to call a qualified electrician to evaluate your home’s circuits and electrical needs.

Power outages

Surges can also occur after a power outage. Sometimes, when electricity is being restored and reconnected, it’s common to experience a quick surge in current. It’s best to unplug sensitive electronics during an outage. Then, wait to plug them back in after power is fully restored.

How to prepare for surges

Although Slope Electric Cooperative does its best to provide members with steady, reliable energy, surges can occur.

“Aside from unplugging devices when you suspect a power surge, there are two ways members can take



additional precautions to protect electronics in their homes,” Frank says.

Devices like power strips can protect electronics during most surges.

“Not all power strips include surge protection, so it is important to read the packaging label carefully before you buy, and don’t overload the power strip with too many devices,” Frank says. You can also install specialized electrical outlets that offer additional surge protection.

“Another option is a whole-home surge protector, which can help protect your home from larger, more powerful surges,” Frank suggests. In most cases, whole-home suppressors are connected to your home’s service panel and include features like thermal fuses and notification capabilities that indicate when a device has been impacted by a surge.

Safety Starts with ME (& YOU)!

Safety is the highest priority at Slope Electric not only for employees, but also for members in their homes.

“We hope these tips help familiarize members with what is in their home and make changes if needed to their power outlets,” Frank says. “While occasional power surges are inevitable, simply unplugging devices when you think a surge may occur and using additional levels of protection will ensure a safeguard to your electronics and devices. Remember to check if your home has surge-protecting devices, such as power strips or whole-home suppressors, to create a safety barrier when surges occur.” ■



Brad Schmitt, center, graduated from the apprentice line technician program.



Slope Electric Cooperative employees accept a safety award on behalf of the cooperative.

POWERED TOGETHER: Schmitt and Slope Electric recognized at safety conference

The North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives Apprenticeship, Training and Safety Conference was held in January. During the conference, cooperatives and employees are recognized for their achievements. Brad Schmitt graduated from the apprentice line technician program and received his journeyman certificate. Slope Electric Cooperative was also recognized with

a Certificate of Safety Achievement, a national safety program encouraging cooperatives to achieve and maintain high safety standards.

“These certificates and awards attained by Slope Electric and its employees are a testament to the relentless hard work and unwavering dedication exhibited by our team every single day,” co-General Manager/CEO Jason Bentz says. ■



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU.

Participate in our member satisfaction survey and play a vital role in shaping the future of our services. Scan the QR code with your phone for more information and to complete the survey.

As a gesture of appreciation for your valuable input, participants who choose to provide their contact information will also be entered into a giveaway for a chance to win a set of high-quality jumper cables.

SAVE THE DATE

Slope Electric Annual Meeting

June 6, New England

More information about the event will be available in the coming months. We hope to see you there!



EMPOWERING TOMORROW: Slope Electric seeks board nominations

Slope Electric Cooperative's 79th annual meeting will be held Thursday, June 6, in New England. The upcoming 2024 annual meeting will feature the election of two board seats, specifically for directors representing Slope County.

The bylaws of Slope Electric Cooperative state in Article IV, Section 4, directors can be nominated one of two ways:

1. By Nominating Committee: The committee's first meeting was held Jan. 16 to review procedures, responsibilities and qualifications for directorship. The second meeting was held Feb. 29 to nominate candidates and to approve resolutions.

2. By filing a petition: Members can also be nominated by filing a petition with 15 signatures. Filing must be done 90 days prior to the annual meeting on

June 6 and posted at the office of Slope Electric.

Please reach out to a current director, the Nominating/Resolution Committee or the Slope Electric office with any questions. ■

Nominating/Resolution Committee

Brad Derschan, Lemmon, 701-928-0795
Jaxson Fischer, Rhame, 701-440-1150
Shelby Hewson, Amidon, 701-590-0868
Randy Holden, Hettinger, 701-928-1670
Lynn Homelvig, Amidon, 701-579-6385
Lenny Kaufman, Regent, 701-290-5969
Shannon Minerich, Marmarth, 218-929-1190
Brad Steiner, Mott, 701-824-2108
Gary Symanowski, Scranton, 701-523-2286

SIGN UP AND SAVE:

Slope Electric makes saving money easy!



Slope Electric Cooperative is now making it even easier to save on your electric bill with SmartHub! All members who receive paperless statements only will receive a \$1 credit for each month enrolled. In addition, members who sign up for an automatic withdrawal through their bank account will also receive a \$1 credit for each month enrolled. The savings will show up once a year on your bill. To learn more about the benefits of SmartHub, visit www.slopeelectric.coop/ways-pay. ■

STAYING CONNECTED:

Update your contact information with Slope Electric

In our interconnected world, staying informed about important updates, outage notifications and other essential information is crucial. Slope Electric Cooperative strives to provide seamless service to our valued members, and we need your help in keeping your contact information up-to-date.

Life gets busy and changes happen, whether it's a new phone number, email address or a shift in your mailing address. To ensure you receive timely and relevant communications from us, we kindly request all members to take a moment to check your contact information and make updates if applicable.

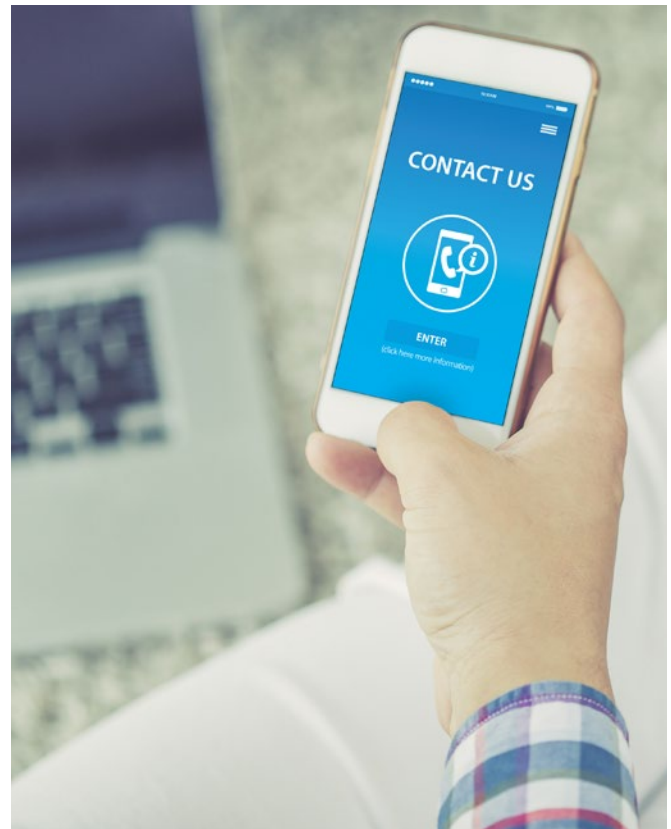
Updating your contact information

Updating your information is simple! You can update your information in a couple of different ways.

- Visit our website at www.slopeelectric.coop and navigate to SmartHub in the top right corner (or use the app).
- Call our office at 800-559-4191.
- Visit our office in person.

By simply updating your contact information, you contribute to the efficiency of our communication channels and help us serve you better. It's a collective effort that ensures we can continue to provide you with the best service possible.

You can also stay up-to-date with Slope Electric by following us on Facebook or Instagram. ■



EMPOWERING FUTURES:

Slope Electric announces scholarships

Slope Electric Cooperative is proud to announce there will be scholarships for full- and part-time students available at the annual meeting on June 6. Known as luck-of-the-draw scholarships, three \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded to full-time students and two \$500 scholarships to part-time students. As a commitment to fostering education

within our community, these scholarships are a testament to our dedication to supporting the academic pursuits of talented individuals.

"We believe in investing in the future, and these financial aids are a reflection of our commitment to empowering the next generation of leaders," says Manager of Member Relations Brooke Waltner. ■

Slope Electric board meeting highlights: Dec. 21, 2023

The December meeting of the board of directors of Slope Electric Cooperative was held on Dec. 21, 2023, at the cooperative's headquarters in New England. President Steven Wegner called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. Slope Electric's Legal Counsel Jennifer Grosz was designated as the meeting recorder. A board quorum was met. Also present were Slope Electric co-General Managers/CEOs Travis Kupper and Jason Bentz, Chief Financial Officer Alex Craigmile, Operations Manager Dean Volk and Executive Assistant and Board Liaison Connie Hill. The meeting commenced with a review of the mission statement, followed by an invocation.

Consent agenda: An addition was proposed to the consent agenda. The consent agenda was approved as amended.

Strategic/action: Bentz and Kupper presented the co-general managers' report, which included updates from various meetings from the month. A West Dakota Utility Services, 3C Construction and Basin Electric Power Cooperative CEO report were also provided for the board to review.

Department reports: Craigmile provided a report on the November financials. Volk provided a report, with details on substation and line maintenance and new service requests. Waltner provided a written report, which included an update on local events and member appreciation events. Dunbar provided a written report and discussed training. Grosz gave a legal counsel report, which included projects on which she is working.

Action items: Craigmile reviewed the proposed 2024 budget with the board. The board discussed a 2024 forecast, Nominating Committee names and other end-of-year information.

Discussion/general information: A donation request and an update on strategic planning were discussed.

Executive session: The board entered into an executive session. The meeting concluded with the adjournment and Secretary Angela Carlson certified the accuracy of the minutes.

Next meeting date: The next meeting date is set for Jan. 25 at the cooperative's headquarters in New England. ■



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800-795-0555 or 811

SLOPE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Steven Wegner, President
Anthony Larson, Vice President
Angela Carlson, Secretary
Henry "Chip" Fischer, Treasurer
Jerome Caron, Director
Dale Hande, Director
Lauren Klewin, Director
Charlotte Meier, Director

MANAGEMENT

Jason Bentz
CO-GM/CEO

Travis Kupper
CO-GM/CEO

www.slopeelectric.coop



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*Slope Electric Cooperative Inc.
is an equal opportunity provider.*



Members,
remember to
cash your 2023
capital credit
retirement check
by March 12. Call
the office with
any questions
at 800-559-4191.