



MOR-GRAN-SOU
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Serving Morton, Grant and Sioux counties

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Call before you dig
- Member appreciation events
- Planting safety tips

APRIL
2026

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Celebrating National Lineworker Appreciation Day

Ask any lineworker why they do what they do, and you'll hear a mix of pride, purpose and a sense of responsibility that stretches far beyond the infrastructure itself. For a cooperative lineworker, dedication is woven into every part of the day. From the early morning safety checks to the late-night outage calls, each moment is driven by a commitment to serve the Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative members.

As we recognize Lineworker Appreciation Day April 13, we highlight our lineworkers who work diligently to bring a reliable flow of electricity to homes and businesses throughout our communities.

Get to know our dedicated lineworkers:



"Lineworkers are hardworking"

LANCE BROWN OTTER, journeyman lineworker, 19 years

What interested you in becoming a lineworker? Working outdoors

What do you value about your crew members? Their experience and dependability

What do you appreciate about Mor-Gran-Sou Electric's membership? As a member, we have a vote

What's the most memorable outage? One of the windstorms or ice storms

What do you enjoy outside of work? Shooting pool



"Lineworkers are resilient"

WAYDE ECKROTH, journeyman lineworker, 14 years

What interested you in becoming a lineworker? It is a good-paying career and being able to work outside

What is the most memorable outage? The summer 2025 tornados

What do you enjoy outside of work? Hunting and fishing



"Lineworkers are resilient"

BRETT FLECK, journeyman lineworker, 8 years

What interested you in becoming a lineworker? The 2010 ice storm

What do you value about your crew members? The camaraderie

What do you appreciate about Mor-Gran-Sou Electric's membership? The community involvement

What's the most memorable outage? Providing mutual aid for storm restoration

What do you enjoy outside of work? Spending time with friends and family

continued on next page



continued from previous page



"Lineworkers are diligent"

CODY GRAETZ, lead lineworker, 15 years

What interested you in becoming a lineworker? The variety of work

What do you value about your crew members? Everyone knows what needs to be done when it matters

What do you appreciate about Mor-Gran-Sou Electric's membership? Their willingness to help us out

What's the most memorable outage? My first outage, I had to repair a damaged cable in a thunderstorm

What do you enjoy outside of work? Hunting, fishing and spending time with family



"Lineworkers are adaptable"

JASON JAHNER, area foreman, 19 years

What interested you in becoming a lineworker? The variety of jobs and being able to provide an essential service

What do you value about your crew members? The ability of crews to work together to complete a job

What do you appreciate about Mor-Gran-Sou Electric's membership? The willingness of members to give a helping hand if needed

What's the most memorable outage? Outages we responded to during the Missouri River flood

What do you enjoy outside of work? Attending sporting events, spending time with family and relaxing



"Lineworkers are conscientious"

LAYTON KASPER, journeyman lineworker, 4 years

What interested you in becoming a lineworker? Working hands-on and outside

What do you value about your crew members? We work compatibly

What do you appreciate about Mor-Gran-Sou Electric's membership? They are reliable

What's the most memorable outage? Mutual aid to other co-ops

What do you enjoy outside of work? Spending time outdoors



"Being a lineworker is thrilling"

TROY KUBALL, apprentice lineworker, 3 years

What interested you in becoming a lineworker? My dad is a lineworker at Capital Electric Cooperative

What do you value about your crew members? There is never a dull moment, and we share a lot of jokes

What do you appreciate about Mor-Gran-Sou Electric's membership? Meeting new members and building a relationship with them

What's the most memorable outage? Burnt down an inductor from a hot line clamp and the phase ran through all the ties. The bucket truck got stuck and we had to climb all the poles to re-tie

What do you enjoy outside of work? Playing softball and hiking with my dogs



"Lineworkers are dedicated"

CHANCE MAGILKE, journeyman lineworker, 5 years

What interested you in becoming a lineworker? Working outdoors

What do you value about your crew members? We are all hardworking and determined to deliver and restore power to members

What do you appreciate about Mor-Gran-Sou Electric's membership? As a member, you have a voice

What's the most memorable outage? Climbing three-phase poles during a blizzard and replacing broken ties

What do you enjoy outside of work? Fishing, hunting and camping



**"Lineworkers
are
resilient"**

CODY MAHER, area foreman, 23 years

What interested you in becoming a lineworker? Working outdoors

What do you value about your crew members? Their commitment to safety

What do you appreciate about Mor-Gran-Sou Electric's membership? Their appreciation for us

What do you enjoy outside of work? Attending rodeos



**"Being a
lineworker is
rewarding"**

KALE OHLHAUSER, lead lineworker, 8 years

What interested you in becoming a lineworker? Being able to work outside daily

What do you value about your crew members? Their willingness to get a job done, whatever the obstacles

What do you appreciate about Mor-Gran-Sou Electric's membership? Always wanting to help in any way they possibly can

What do you enjoy outside of work? Hunting



**"Lineworkers
are
determined"**

C.J. PESICKA, journeyman lineworker, 7 years

What interested you in becoming a lineworker? Great career with many opportunities

What do you value about your crew members? The camaraderie

What's the most memorable outage? Working on Christmas

What do you enjoy outside of work? Hunting and fishing



**"Being a
lineworker is
rewarding"**

DOUG ROETHLISBERGER, journeyman lineworker, 1 year

What interested you in becoming a lineworker? My father was a lineworker

What do you value about your crew members? Their knowledge, experience and willingness to watch out for each other

What do you appreciate about Mor-Gran-Sou Electric's membership? Members have a voice in the cooperative

What's the most memorable outage? The June 2025 windstorms

What do you enjoy outside of work? Spending time with family



**JUNIORS, SOPHOMORES AND FRESHMEN
ARE INVITED TO APPLY FOR THE YOUTH
CAREER TOUR!**

EXPLORE NORTH DAKOTA'S ENERGY SECTOR WITH US

Limited spots available. Learn more by visiting:

www.morgransou.com.

Application deadline is May 1.



MANAGER'S MESSAGE: Call before you dig



Jason Bentz

Co-General Manager/CEO

Spring is just around the corner, and there's never been a better time to get outside and enjoy the fresh air. Perhaps you're making plans for a new shop or a yard makeover. Wherever your spring projects take you, remember to keep safety in mind for all projects, especially those requiring digging.

Most of us never think about the electric, gas, water and other infrastructure buried below the ground, but hitting one of these

lines while digging is not the reminder you'll want. Trust us! Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative reminds all members who are planning a digging project to call 811 at least three business days before you start. Or you can submit a request online by visiting ndonecall.com.

Here's how the process works:

- **After you call 811 or submit your request online, all affected utility companies will be notified of your intent to dig.** It may take the utility

companies a few days to get to your request, so please be patient.

- **The affected utility companies will send someone to mark the buried lines with paint or flags.**
- **Before you break ground, confirm all the utility companies have responded to your request.** If you placed your request by phone, use the process explained by your 811 call center representative. If you submitted your request online, refer to your 811 center ticket to confirm everything.

Please keep in mind only public utilities will be marked. As a homeowner, you are responsible for locating private utility lines.

By taking this important step before you break ground on your project, you can help protect not only yourself, but our community. Disrupting an underground utility line can interrupt service, cause injuries and cost money to repair, so remember to call 811 first and know what's below.



Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Vice Chairman **Chad Harrison**, left, is presented with an NRECA Director Gold certificate by Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Chairman **Steve Tomac**.

Harrison earns Director Gold Credential

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative is pleased to announce that Chad Harrison, who represents Sioux County, has earned the Director Gold Credential from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

This credential is the highest level in NRECA's director education program. This is a special recognition for directors who continue learning and growing in their role so they can better serve our members.

To earn the credential, directors complete NRECA's earlier training programs and then choose to go even further by taking additional courses that strengthen their leadership and understanding of cooperative work. It's a sign of dedication and a commitment to doing the job well for the members they represent.

MESSAGE FROM MEMBER SERVICES: Member appreciation events




Julie Armijo

Chief of Staff/Member
Services Manager

We are excited to share we will be hosting member appreciation events this month! Join us for a fun-filled evening dedicated to celebrating the heart of our service area – our valued members. At our upcoming events, enjoy mouthwatering fry bread tacos and friendly competition with rounds of bingo.

There will also be the opportunity to visit with our dedicated directors, CEOs and staff. As we prepare for our

annual meeting on June 11 in Mandan, we will also have further information regarding candidates. As stewards of our cooperative principles, your active participation and support fuel our mission to provide reliable energy services, while fostering a strong sense of community within our cooperative. 

April 8

Lake Tschida Welcome Center, Lake Tschida
5-7 p.m. (MT)
Bingo at 6 p.m. (MT)

April 14

Branded Bar & Grill, Flasher
5-7 p.m. (CT)
Bingo at 6 p.m. (CT)

April 22

AJ Agard Center, Fort Yates
5-7 p.m. (CT)
Bingo at 6 p.m. (CT)

We kindly ask you to RSVP by scanning the QR code with your smartphone camera, visiting our website or calling the office at 701-597-3301, 800-750-8212 or 701-663-0297. We look forward to seeing you at one of our events!



MESSAGE FROM OPERATIONS: Strengthening employee safety and functionality



Gary Fitterer

Manager of Operations

Safety is a top priority at Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative, where each cooperative employee takes safety to heart and plays an important role. From daily "tailgates" or safety briefings before each job to monthly safety committee meetings and yearly safety audits, cooperative employees continue to embrace safety practices.


Each year, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric participates in a safety audit through N.D. Workforce Safety and Insurance (WSI). WSI

offers a safety management program that benefits the whole cooperative, from operations to member services personnel. The program aims to help reduce workplace injuries and improve ergonomics and safety technology. Mor-Gran-Sou Electric uses the ergonomic grants toward equipment to reduce employee fatigue and help eliminate injuries.

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric has taken part in WSI's safety incentive program for 13 years, saving the cooperative over \$33,000. In addition, workplaces are eligible for up to a 25% discount on insurance by adhering to WSI's safety management program.

To be eligible for these discounts, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric reviews and meets annual goals set by the Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Safety Committee. The Safety Committee, which includes employees from each department at the cooperative, meets every month.

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric also participates in the safety management program, Safety Committee program, drug-free workplace program and certified safety management systems. Yearly safety goals vary from performing a 360-degree check before moving trucks, being aware of surroundings when driving and using the proper tool for the task at hand.

The WSI program helps our cooperative employees continue to keep safety top of mind to deliver safe, reliable electric services to our communities, while also saving costs for our membership. 



SAFETY STARTS WITH ME: Planting safety tips



Brett Fleck

Journeyman Lineworker

As spring approaches and fieldwork begins, our rural communities gear up for another busy planting season. Farm machinery has become larger over the years, increasing the risk for contact with electrical equipment. During this busy time of year, staying aware, working carefully and understanding potential risks can make all the difference in keeping everyone safe.

“Planting season moves fast,” says Brett Fleck, journeyman

lineworker. “Even when you know the area like the back of your hand, it’s crucial to slow down, stay alert and pay attention to what’s around you.”

To help ensure a safe planting season, here are a few tips to keep in mind while in the field and traveling on road:

- **Use spotters when operating large machinery near power lines.** Ensure the spotters do not touch the machinery while it is moving near power lines. An 18-foot clearance is recommended under power lines.
- **Be aware of the clearance of equipment extensions and materials you are hauling before**

moving or transporting. Do not raise equipment, such as ladders, poles or rods, into power lines. Remember nonmetallic materials, such as lumber, tree limbs, ropes and hay, can conduct electricity, especially when damp, dusty or dirty.

- **Never attempt to raise or move power lines to clear a path.** Doing so could result in electric shock or death. If you need power lines to be raised or moved to help with moving large machinery this season, give our office a call at 701-597-3301, 701-663-0297 or 800-750-8212, so we can safely assist you.

Remember if your equipment comes into contact with an energized or downed power line, call 911 immediately. Stay inside until the power line is de-energized. If there is smoke or fire, exit by jumping clear of the cab without touching the equipment and hop away to safety. We also urge you to contact your electric cooperative for additional assistance.

We know accidents happen, so please do not hesitate to call us if you come into contact or damage Mor-Gran-Sou Electric infrastructure. The quicker we become aware of the issue, the sooner we can send a crew out to assess and repair the damage. Our top priority is safety, for members, employees and the communities we serve.

On behalf of all of us at Mor-Gran-Sou Electric, we wish you all a safe and prosperous planting season. 

THE OPERATION ROUND UP APPLICATION DEADLINE IS APPROACHING!

Do you know of an organization or individual seeking grant funds? They may be eligible for operation round-up funds! Visit morgansou.com for more information and to apply.

The deadline to apply is May 8!

JOIN US AT OUR 2026 ANNUAL MEETING



JUNE 11



**MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC'S
MANDAN SERVICE CENTER**

*Additional information
and details will be mailed
to members in May.*

Schmidt selected as Youth Tour representative



Alexis Schmidt

Each June, students are immersed in a one-of-a-kind experience in Washington, D.C., through the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. Mor-Gran-Sou Electric chose one local applicant to represent the cooperative on the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. Applicants are asked to answer the essay question, "As member-owned organizations, electric cooperatives are always seeking

new ways to engage their members. What are some ways electric cooperatives can better communicate and connect, especially with students and young adults?"

Mor-Gran-Sou Electric is proud to announce Alexis Schmidt, daughter of Kip and Lynn Schmidt, will be

representing Mor-Gran-Sou Electric on the exciting week-long trip. Alexis is a junior at Mandan High School and is active in Spanish Club, National Honor Society, Art Club, helps with theater technology, is a track athlete, plays in concert band and other activities that keep her busy.

"My English teacher saw it," Alexis says. Alexis's mom and English teacher urged her to write the essay and submit it for a chance to win the all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C.

"My brother just got back from D.C.," Alexis says. "He talked about all the Smithsonian buildings."

She says she thinks she will like exploring those as well since she enjoys history and large-scale crafts.

Alexis and other North Dakota electric cooperative representatives will take off in June. You can follow Alexis's journey on Mor-Gran-Sou Electric's Facebook and Instagram pages.

Alexis's winning essay

Opening the doors of electric cooperatives provides students and young adults with unique personal experiences that bring the concepts of community involvement from the pages of a textbook to the heart of a neighborhood. Through various acts, electric cooperatives can move beyond being simple service providers. Adding local perspectives into operations allows cooperatives to become trusted members of society. This enables the cooperatives to be responsive to their community and develop cherished members from within. Electric cooperatives can better communicate and connect with students and young adults through various community acts, such as tours, social media and publicizing their support for charities or nonprofits. These acts offer not just a light into homes, but also a place within a community.

In modern society, social connection and real-world experience are of utmost importance to the young adult and student demographics. Tours give each student and young adult a firsthand look at facility operations, while offering insight into what community involvement might look like. Electric cooperatives can offer these tours, providing immersive, hands-on learning that can shift world views, further fostering better morals in the community. These tours would show onlookers how electricity is generated, transmitted and distributed, while also learning the roles of the organization. The tour can also help students meet staff members in person, which, through meaningful conversation,

can humanize cooperation. Overall, tours could spark interaction and interest in electric cooperatives, further providing better communication and connection with students and young adults.

In today's culture, social media is at the heart. From young students to grown adults, each generation is creating virtual communities that reflect their interests and beliefs. Through social media platforms, cooperatives can share news and updates on upcoming events, providing an insight on activities to get the community involved. This allows for a direct line of communication between the community and the cooperative, allowing students to provide questions and to be responded to with policies or initiatives. This back-and-forth provides cooperatives with a better understanding of young people, in turn tailoring their outreach to the community. Furthermore, creating a social media presence can create a more humanized look for the community. An online personality can make the cooperative feel more in touch, allowing it to be more approachable. This can be accomplished by sharing the staff members' stories or allowing them to have a more personal approach to communicating with their followers. A social media presence is vital in terms of creating a bond with today's young adults and students.


Supporting charities that align with cooperative social values allows the organization to build trust and foster relationships that resonate with young adults and students. This funding can further promote moral

continued on next page



continued from previous page

values amongst the younger generations and, in turn, create a connection. Not only can the cooperative send donations, but it can also offer grants or sponsorships to those within the organization, enabling them to carry out an impactful project. The support these nonprofits receive can demonstrate an alignment with the social values that are important to young people. This alignment can establish the organization as not only a service provider but also as a responsible and caring member of society.

In conclusion, electric cooperatives have an opportunity to connect with students and young adults through genuine outreach, whether it is through putting real support behind a charity or showcasing their work online. Each effort adds up, allowing them to connect and grow with their community. When cooperatives become vulnerable and cultivate bonds with their community, they not only power homes, they power relationships, and in today's world, that type of custom is hard to beat. 

MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS Jan. 28

The board of directors meeting of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative was held on Jan. 28 at the Mandan Service Center. Chair Steve Tomac called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. CT. A quorum was present. Also present were Mor-Gran-Sou Electric's co-General Managers/CEOs Jason Bentz and Travis Kupper, Chief Financial Officer Alex Craigmile, Manager of Operations Gary Fitterer, Chief of Staff/Member Services Manager Julie Armijo, Interim General Counsel Andrew Fergel and Executive Assistant Connie Hill. Tyler Richter with Brady Martz and Katie Wirt attended as guests.

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

Strategic items: Bentz and Kupper presented the co-general managers' report, which included updates on an internal cybersecurity handbook, renewable energy credits, Basin Electric Power Cooperative's district managers meeting, safety awards and housekeeping items. Basin Electric, Western Area Power Administration and other updates were also discussed. Additionally, Richter conducted a pre-audit discussion with the board.

Executive session: The board entered into an executive session.

Department reports: Craigmile provided a financial report, which included a balance sheet and income statement. He also reviewed a physical inventory


adjustment record with the board. Fitterer reviewed the operations report, which detailed the projects currently being handled by line crews, equipment testing, recent outage events, inventory and other items. Armijo provided a member services report on 2026 member appreciation events and the 2026 annual meeting. She also reviewed Nominating Committee, Operation Round Up and youth program updates. Chief Information Officer Charlie Dunbar provided the board with a written report. Fergel provided a general counsel report on legal topics and projects, such as regulatory matters, service rules and regulations along with other items.

Discussion/general information: The board discussed bylaw considerations and the exposure control plan.

Action items: Action items such as a mutual aid agreement and strategic plan were discussed and resolved. Additionally, the board appointed National Rural Electric Cooperative Association annual meeting voting delegates.

Executive session: The board entered into an executive session.

The meeting concluded with adjournment. Secretary-Treasurer Pam Geiger certified the accuracy of the minutes.

Next meeting date: The next meeting is at 11 a.m. CT on April 22 in Fort Yates. 



MOR-GRAN-SOU
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

202 6th Ave. W. - PO Box 297
Flasher, ND 58535-0297
Phone: 701- 597-3301 Flasher
701- 663-0297 Mandan
Toll-free: 800-750-8212 Fax: 701-597-3915
Email us: info@morgransou.com
UNDERGROUND LINE LOCATES
800-795-0555 OR 811

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Chair..... Steve Tomac
Vice Chair..... Chad Harrison
Secretary-Treasurer..... Pam Geiger
Directors..... Mark Doll, Rodney Froelich,
Bob J. Leingang, Ryan Petrick,
Kathy Tokach, Casey Wells

MANAGEMENT

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

www.morgransou.com

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

