



# MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Serving Morton, Grant and Sioux counties

## THIS ISSUE:

- Electricity's value
- Safety Starts with ME
- How to report an outage

SEPTEMBER  
2024

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



**Claire Graner**, the daughter of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative members **Kenny** and **Mary Graner**, was named Miss Rodeo North Dakota earlier this year in Medora.



*Claire Graner lends a hand wherever needed on the family ranch south of Mandan.*

## MISS RODEO NORTH DAKOTA 2025: **Claire Graner**

BY SAMANTHA VANGSNESS

On any given day, you will find Claire Graner on her family's ranch near Huff, ND, but come January you will find her promoting the sport of rodeo and the western way of life as Miss Rodeo North Dakota 2025 across the state and nation.

"I have a Hannah Montana style life, ranching one minute and rodeo queening the next," Graner says, referencing the popular Disney show in which a young girl lives a double life as a normal teenager one minute and a superstar the next.

The western way of life has been a cornerstone of Graner's upbringing, from assisting on the family ranch to rodeoing. At home on the ranch, Graner helps rake hay in the summer, rides the pastures checking on the bulls and cows and lends a hand wherever there is work to be done. Graner also helps

manage Gold Buckle Tack, a tack shop southeast of Bismarck.

Horsemanship has also always been close to Graner's heart. She has ridden horses most of her life and began competing in rodeo in the third grade. Like many horsemen, Graner takes a lot of pride in her horses, as she and her family have trained many from a young age and continue to utilize them on the ranch and at rodeos. While rodeoing, Graner competed in goat tying, reined cow horse, pole bending and barrel racing. She also competed in barrel racing while studying at North Dakota State University.

As for rodeo queen pageants, she always had an aspiration for it. "It's always been a passion of mine to be a rodeo queen," says Graner.

Graner has been participating in rodeo queen

pageants since 2018, when she was named Miss North Dakota High School Rodeo Association Queen. Graner says she saw the passion other rodeo queens have for the title and the skills they acquired when they wore that crown and sash, which urged her to compete herself.

Being involved in rodeo queen pageants the past six years has helped Graner develop her own skills that have helped her through life and competitions. Some of these skills include confidence, enhanced public speaking, improved horsemanship and adaptability.

“Wearing a crown has helped boost my confidence,” Graner says when reflecting on the skills rodeo queen competitions have helped her achieve.

Being rodeo queen is more than attending rodeos for Graner. She sees it as an opportunity to reach girls across North Dakota and the nation. When she thinks of a rodeo queen, she thinks of a good horseman and leader in the community, which is what Graner hopes to instill in others during her time as Miss Rodeo North Dakota 2025.

## Becoming Miss Rodeo North Dakota

Earlier this year, three North Dakota cowgirls gathered in Medora for the Miss Rodeo North Dakota pageant. The pageant was three days of varying competitions, including horsemanship, interviews, a written test and speeches.

“My favorite competition is horsemanship,” Graner says. During this time, they are also asked impromptu questions about the horse they are riding, which is lent to them, as well as general horse knowledge.


There are nine categories to the competition, and Graner took home awards in legacy of the cowgirl, speech, appearance, personality and horsemanship. Winning these categories earned her the title of Miss Rodeo North Dakota. Graner will now assume the role of lady-in-waiting until the first of the year.

## Miss Rodeo North Dakota 2025

As Graner awaits the call to start the pickup and hit the road as Miss Rodeo North Dakota 2025, she is busy preparing for the next year. Once January arrives, Graner will be visiting rodeos across the United States, sharing the message about the western way of life and the sport of rodeo.

“I am excited to meet new people and make connections in the places I visit,” Graner says.

Graner says she has a great support system, including her parents, siblings, extended family and friends, and is glad to have their continued support over the next year while she is on the road.

Graner will be active on her personal social media platforms, Facebook and Instagram at "Claire Graner," as well as on the Miss Rodeo North Dakota Facebook and Instagram page starting in January. 



*Claire Graner competes in barrel racing.*



## MANAGER'S MESSAGE:

# Electricity provides powerful value



**Travis Kupper**  
Co-General Manager/  
CEO

If you're like me, certain aspects of your life become a daily routine. I get ready for work, get in my car and sometimes drive to the coffeeshop on the way to the office. Occasionally at lunchtime, I drive to get lunch. Once I finally end the day at home, I stream an episode or two of my favorite show before bed.

As we all look for ways to save money in this age of increasing inflation, I began to think about my daily routine and how much value it provided me compared to the money I spent. A morning latte was costing me about \$6, a burger, fries and a drink were setting me back \$10 and my Netflix subscription is about \$16 in addition to the cost of the Wi-Fi to stream it. All these daily expenses totaled over \$85 a week or about \$340 monthly. And what was the real value? Short-term satisfaction. Even as I started packing my own lunch, my latte was still costing me about \$120 a month. Is this the best value for my money?


The national average daily cost of electricity is about \$4.57. You could power your entire home every day for the price of a medium latte. I could brew my own coffee, cook my own meals, binge a series and run on a treadmill for less than the cost of that drink. Now to me, that's real value.

Electricity provides benefits we often take for granted. It goes well beyond short-term satisfaction by allowing us to charge devices and have cold food and hot water, all in a comfortable indoor climate. Besides the privilege it affords, the cost of

electric service has also remained relatively stable, even amidst rising inflation.

As a member-owned cooperative, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative does everything in our power to ensure your costs stay reasonable and electricity remains a great value for our members. It's not always easy, as several factors beyond inflation impact the price of electricity. Some are within our control, but most are beyond it.

The cost of electricity can fluctuate due to supply and demand, infrastructure investment, maintenance and operational expenses. Weather patterns also contribute, affecting both demand and generation capabilities, with extreme conditions leading to heightened energy use or disruptions. Government policies, such as subsidies for renewable energy or taxes and regulations on emissions, shape electricity costs as well. Your electric co-op considers all these aspects when adjusting rates, and because we're a cooperative, we consider the impact of those costs on our members as well.

As our community continues to rely on electricity for nearly everything in our homes, schools, hospitals and businesses, we need it to be reliable and affordable. You can be assured, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric always puts you top of mind and works each day to ensure your electric service remains the best value for your money. 

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The national average daily cost of electricity is about \$4.57. You could power your entire home every day for the price of a medium latte.

**TRAVIS KUPPER,**  
**CO-GENERAL MANAGER/CEO**



# WAPA remains committed to securing the grid

BY LLOYD LINKE, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT

AND UPPER GREAT PLAINS REGIONAL MANAGER, WESTERN AREA POWER ADMINISTRATION



**Linke**

Each day, tens of thousands of megawatts flow throughout the Upper Great Plains region through transmission lines, many of which are maintained by the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA). From Minnesota to Montana and from the Canadian border into Iowa, the lifeblood of power meets the demands of millions of

Americans every day.

Throughout our numerous communities, most residents will never blink an eye at the incredible feat that takes place daily to ensure their world remains electrified.

These things don't happen by accident. Scattered throughout WAPA's Upper Great Plains region, my teams defend and protect the grid 24 hours a day, seven days a week. We defend our vital power networks from Mother Nature, as the geography of our communities lends itself to severe blizzards and ice storms in the winter, as well as severe weather in the summer that spawns deadly tornadoes. And then there are the invisible threats we can't see with our eyes, such as geomagnetic disturbances from our sun that can disrupt and potentially put our grid offline. With more than 7,800 miles of transmission lines crisscrossing the Upper Great Plains, we always remain vigilant to keep power flowing.

As recently as late May, crews dispatched from Hinton, Iowa, made their way to the Greenfield community, located about 45 minutes west of Des Moines. These crews were responding to downed WAPA lines as the result of a weather system that spawned more than 15 tornadoes, ravaging the local area. These crews did the job expected of them. They responded, assessed and reconstituted our poles and lines, and ensured reliable power flowed through the area once again. What truly showed WAPA's incredible commitment was the fact these crews had just finished being on the road the previous three weeks doing maintenance and upkeep in the field. Believing they would be heading home for the Memorial Day weekend to be with family and friends, they each diverted, ensuring their expertise and commitment made its way to the damaged communities of southwestern Iowa.

The same goes for the dead of winter. Many may recall the strong winter storm that pummeled

North Dakota's I-94 corridor on Christmas Day last year. From Bismarck to Grand Forks, 20,000 residents and businesses lost power from severe ice that befell the region. This resulted in a number of large, 230-kilovolt lines being brought down. To get the system back into service swiftly, crews from three states responded, reconstructing lattice steel towers, broken wood structures and downed static lines. Later, WAPA's helicopter crews performed aerial surveys, ensuring all damage to the grid had been adequately and properly repaired.


While storms on Earth can be tracked and plotted, storms from outer space are more of a challenge. But WAPA has the tools in place to stave off potentially catastrophic outcomes.

In November 2022, our employees at the White Substation in South Dakota energized WAPA's first-ever neutral blocking device. Known as an NBD, the device was installed in a large power transformer that aims to block geomagnetically induced currents, or GICs, generated during a solar storm. This NBD is the first commercially developed NBD installed anywhere in the United States and only the second device of its type to become operational.

This is important for power users to know, because GICs are the result of severe geomagnetic disturbances that can saturate power transformers. This saturation can cause negative impacts, such as reactive power absorption and voltage drops, either decreasing power flow to homes and businesses or stopping it all together.

The NBD program is our version of an "early warning system" that, on average, gives us 45 minutes to an hour alert before we receive updates from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. This provides our dispatchers and maintenance personnel crucial time to prepare to protect the grid and respond more precisely to GIC incidents, which ensures our system is safe from overloads.

As you can see, WAPA is keenly aware of the threats our grid faces from a multitude of situations. Fortunately, those concerned about the power grid and hydroelectric power alike can rest easy as our experts and dedicated staff throughout the Upper Great Plains remain at the ready.

Whether it's storms here or from the expanse of space, or any other crisis that arises, WAPA stands ready to fulfill its core mission of keeping the lights on. 



## SAFETY STARTS WITH ME: National Preparedness Month

As temperatures begin to drop and high winds and winter storms start to creep onto the radar, it is important to be prepared for whatever Mother Nature brings. During a power outage, Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative crews will continue to work as quickly and safely as possible to restore power, but there are a few steps you can do to prepare yourself. Preparation can help reduce stress, anxiety and lessen the impact of an emergency event.

“September is recognized as National Preparedness Month,” says Julie Armijo, chief of staff/member services manager. “Being prepared for all types of situations, including extended outages, can help you feel more calm and ready in such situations.”

Here is what YOU can do to be more prepared:

- Stock your pantry with a three-day supply of nonperishable food, such as canned goods, energy bars, peanut butter, powdered milk, instant coffee and water, and other essentials, such as diapers and toiletries.
- Confirm you have adequate sanitation and hygiene supplies, including towelettes, soap and hand sanitizer.
- Ensure your first-aid kit is stocked with pain relievers, bandages and other medical essentials and make sure your prescriptions are current.
- Set aside basic household items you will need, including flashlights, batteries, a manual can opener and portable, battery-powered radio or TV.
- Organize emergency supplies so they are together in an easily accessible location.



### Power in planning

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.

Listen to local news or a NOAA Weather Radio for storm and emergency information, and check Mor-Gran-Sou Electric's Facebook page and website for power restoration updates. Mor-Gran-Sou Electric cares about your safety. Planning for an emergency today can give you more confidence to deal with severe weather and potential outages in the future. Act now, because there is power in planning.



# REPORT POWER OUTAGES



800-750-8212,  
701-597-3301 or  
701-663-0297

## MESSAGE FROM OPERATIONS: How to report an outage



**Gary Fitterer**  
Manager of Operations

Part of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative's core values and mission are to provide our members with a reliable transmission and distribution system. However, there are times when a power interruption may occur.

Although we cannot control the weather or other factors that may disrupt the power, members can rest assured Mor-Gran-Sou Electric is


ready to serve you quickly and efficiently in the event of a power outage.

When you encounter an outage, we urge you to call as soon as possible, so we can begin assessing the situation and restore power in a timely manner.

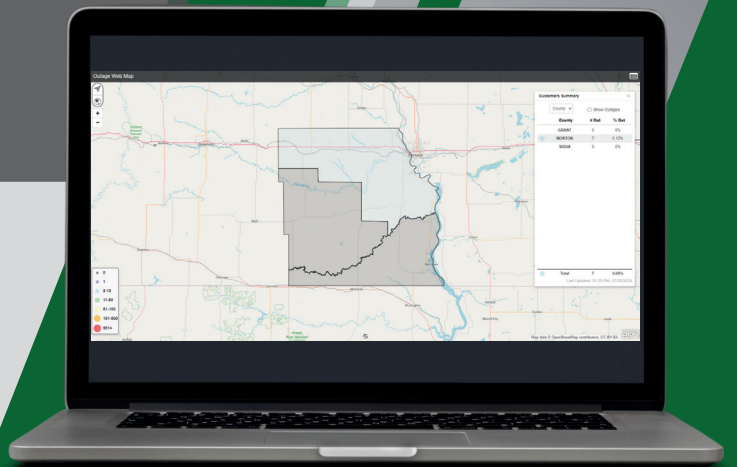
When reporting an outage, please follow these instructions:

- Check your fuses/circuit breakers. If some of your lights work, the trouble may be in your fuse/breaker box located within your electrical panel.
- If you determine the problem is in your own wiring, call an electrician.

- Check the circuit breakers on your yard pole below the meter. In the off position, these breakers disconnect all the wiring you own.
- If all your lights are off, call your neighbor to see if their power is also off.
- If you determine your electrical service is interrupted, call us at 701-663-0297, 701-597-3301 or 800-750-8212.
- Dispatchers will verify your name and physical address.
- Please don't wait for someone else to report the outage, as you may be the only member on your line without power. When you call the office, we can help determine where the problem is on our lines.
- View our outage map on SmartHub or our website at [www.morgransou.com](http://www.morgransou.com).

Taking these steps will help our team at Mor-Gran-Sou Electric continue to provide reliable services to you, our valued members. 

**View Mor-Gran-Sou Electric's  
outage map by visiting  
[morgransou.com](http://morgransou.com).**



Mor-Gran-Sou Electric's outage map can be viewed on SmartHub or by visiting [www.morgransou.com](http://www.morgransou.com).



MOR-GRAN-SOU  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

## MOR-GRAN-SOU ELECTRIC BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS June 26

The board of directors meeting of Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative was held on June 26 at the Mandan Service Center in Mandan. Chair Steve Tomac called the meeting to order at 9:26 a.m. CT. A quorum was present. Also present were Mor-Gran-Sou Electric's co-General Managers/CEOs Travis Kupper and Jason Bentz, Chief Financial Officer Alex Craigmile, Manager of Operations Gary Fitterer, Member Services Manager Julie Armijo, Interim General Counsel Andrew Fergel and Executive Assistant Connie Hill.

**Officer election:** Directors appointed to board positions were Steve Tomac, chair; Chad Harrison, vice chair; and Pam Geiger, secretary/treasurer.

**Consent agenda:** The consent agenda was approved as presented.

**Strategic agenda:** Bentz and Kupper presented the co-general managers' report, which included updates on the Basin Electric Power Cooperative's district meeting in Denver, Colo., a Federal Energy Regulatory Commission ruling, Cooperative Finance Corporation forum and more. Basin Electric's CEO report, West

Dakota Utility Services and 3C Construction updates were available for review.

**Action items:** Action items were resolved.

**Department reports:** Craigmile provided a financial report. Fitterer reviewed the operations report, which included updates on the 2024 construction season. Armijo reviewed her member service report with the board, which included a capital credits update and *North Dakota Living* pages. Chief Information Officer Charlie Dunbar provided a written report for the board. Fergel provided a general counsel report on projects he is working on.

**Discussion/general information:** The board discussed items such as strategic planning.

**Executive session:** The board entered an executive session.

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

**Next meeting date:** The next meeting is 9:30 a.m. CT. Sept. 25 in Mandan.



## BACK-TO-SCHOOL SAFETY TIPS

- Slow down in residential areas and school zones.*
- When red lights flash, stop & stay back 20 ft.*
- Remind students to walk in front of the bus (never behind) when getting on or off the bus.*



MOR-GRAN-SOU  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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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](http://www.morgransou.com)

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