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East River Electric Presented Governor's Safety Award

The South Dakota Safety Council has awarded a Governor's Safety Award to East River Electric Power Cooperative for excellence in workplace safety and health.

East River is one of 41 employers who were recognized at the Governor's Safety Awards luncheon at the Sioux Falls Arena and Convention Center on September 28.

"At East River, employees commit themselves to the culture of safety," said East River Electric General Manager Jeff Nelson. "We appreciate this recognition and will seek to improve upon our already successful safety program."

Since 1993, the annual Governor's Safety Awards have spotlighted South Dakota employers with above average safety records. Participants submit injury information which is compared with state and national data, as well as the entrant's past performance. Ongoing safety programs and activities are also considered.

East River received a Meritorious Achievement Award, which is defined as "Better than average performance in incident rates, dependent on type of industry."

The Governor's Safety Awards luncheon was part of the 19th South Dakota Safety & Health Conference, coordinated by the South Dakota Safety Council. The conference is the largest gathering of workplace safety and health professionals in the region. The South Dakota Safety Council, founded in 1949, is a non-governmental, not-for-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life in South Dakota by preventing unintentional injuries ("accidents").

"An effective safety program reduces injuries and costs, maximizes productivity and builds morale," said Cary Swenson, executive director of the South Dakota Safety Council. "Employers like East River understand that safety is good business, now more than ever."

East River Electric Power Cooperative, based in Madison, S.D., is a wholesale electric power supply cooperative serving 24 rural electric cooperatives and one municipally-owned electric system, which in turn serve more than 92,000 homes and businesses and over 250,000 consumers.

The 41,000 square mile service area covers the rural areas of 41 counties in eastern South Dakota and nine counties in western Minnesota.

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