




A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Mike Lynch, Manager of Cooperative Communications

Company Name: East River Electric Power Cooperative

Telephone Number: 605-256-8016

Fax Number: 605-256-8057

Email Address: mlynch@eastriver.coop

Madison, SD- Sept. 5, 2011

East River Electric Power Cooperative to Hold Annual Meeting

East River Electric Power Cooperative's 61st Annual Meeting titled "Investing Today for a Smarter Tomorrow" will take place Wednesday, Sept. 7, 2011 beginning at 9:45 a.m. at the Best Western Ramkota Inn in Sioux Falls, S.D.

A focus of the meeting will be the value applied to East River Electric and its member systems by investing in ways to continue to offer reliable service by creating a smarter tomorrow. A primary example of this is capitalizing upon proven investments in technology to advance a smarter grid initiative.

"Smart grid" technology, a new concept for many utilities, is far from new for East River and its member systems, having implemented what are now viewed as smart grid technologies beginning in the late 1970's with the development of a sophisticated telecommunications network.

In the early 1980's, East River incorporated Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition, or SCADA. In 1985, the load management system was launched. Today, nearly 57,000 member consumers have volunteered to install load management devices on water heaters, irrigation pumps, air conditioners and customer-owned standby generators. Since 1985, over \$130 million has been saved in wholesale power costs. During the late 1990's, shared Information Technology applications were developed and East River members began installing first generation smart meters.

East River and its member systems have also been a front runner for use of Automated Meter Infrastructure, or AMI technology. The data smart meters

contribute to improved power quality, reduced outage times and are an increasingly important tool for East River members to help member consumers to better analyze energy use for improved efficiency.

Initiated in April 2010, East River and its members deployed a smarter grid roadmap initiative. Five smarter grid committees were formed to develop short and long term implementation. "The goals for this initiative were designed to maximize access to information, improve the reliability and efficiency and set priorities to minimize costs and maximize value," said East River General Manager Jeff Nelson.

The meeting will also include a review of the East River 2011-2014 Construction Work Plan and Long Range Engineering Plan, including completed and upcoming work on the 69 kV to 115 kV conversion around Sioux Falls, S.D., work being done to accommodate system-wide load growth, as well as the System Replacement Initiative and Reliability Improvement Projects.

During the afternoon session, East River management will facilitate a panel discussion focusing on issues related to the Missouri River featuring representatives from the Western Area Power Administration, Mid-West Electric Consumers Association, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Western States Power.

East River's Eminent Service award, the cooperative's highest honor, will be presented to former U.S. Congresswoman Stephanie Herseth Sandlin during lunch at 12:30 p.m. This annual award honors individuals or organizations who have shown superior commitment toward cooperative values.

To conclude the day's events, the Business Meeting will be held beginning at 3:15 p.m. with elections as well as the adoption of this year's resolutions.

"With our member owners counting on us to provide safe, reliable and affordable electricity, we will continue to meet this directive," Nelson said.

East River Electric Power Cooperative is a wholesale electric power supply cooperative distributing power to 25 member systems throughout eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota. As members of Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives, East River members serve more than 92,000 homes and businesses affecting 250,000 consumers over a 41,000 square mile service area.

###