



SPEARFISH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

# BUSINESS NEWSLETTER



Volume 8, Issue 3 | March 2023

## SEDC Attends The Fly Fishing Show



*Photos courtesy of Tenkara Talk and The Fly Fishing Show*

As part of our ongoing efforts to attract additional outdoor product businesses to the Spearfish area, SEDC recently attended The 2023 Fly Fishing Show in Denver. Outdoor recreation is an economic powerhouse in the United States, producing millions of jobs and billions of dollars in consumer spending each year. Spearfish's outdoor attractions and active lifestyle appeal have been recognized by numerous organizations and publications and have already helped to attract a handful of outdoor-centric companies to the community. SEDC is working hard to encourage more companies of this nature to relocate or expand to the area as they create the type of clean industry and good-paying jobs our community desires.

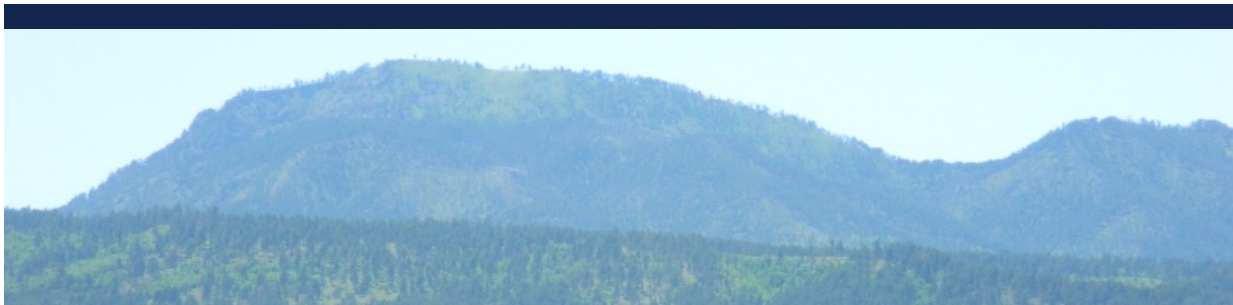




### REMINDER:

*The 2023 SEDC Membership Investment Campaign is coming to a close. If you have not already renewed your membership, we would encourage you to do so soon so that you can continue to receive the SEDC newsletter, economic development updates, and other investor benefits.*

[Investor Form](#)



SPEARFISH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

**BUSINESS  
SPOTLIGHT** 

**Butte Electric Cooperative**



"Your partners in power since 1940"  
3540 Old Belle Rd  
Spearfish, SD  
<https://www.butteelectric.com/>  
Facebook: [@butteelectriccoop](#)



As late as the mid-1930s, nine out of ten rural homes were without electric service. Farmers and ranchers in the area milked cows by hand in the dim light of a kerosene lantern, and families relied on the wood range and washboard for cooking and cleaning. The unavailability of electricity kept these rural economies entirely and exclusively dependent on agriculture. In 1937, the REA drafted the Electric Cooperative Corporation Act, a model law that states could adopt to enable the formation and operation of not-for-profit, consumer-owned electric cooperatives. A few years later, a group of ranchers around the Newell area came together to form Butte Electric Association, Inc., constructing 400 miles of electric transmission and distribution lines, bringing electricity to townships in Butte, Lawrence, and Meade counties, including Spearfish. Today Butte Electric serves over 5,400 members and service 1,361 miles of transmission and distribution line.

With headquarters located in Newell, SD, Butte Electric Cooperative opened their Member Services Center in Spearfish to better serve members in this rapidly growing area. Now, approximately 50% of their membership resides in the Spearfish area.



As a cooperative, Butte Electric is member-owned, member-governed and operates for the benefit of their membership, thus allowing them to operate at cost and to allocate and retire any excess revenues to their members.

In 2021, Butte Electric ranked 74th out of 812 nationwide cooperatives in annual growth. Because of the area's unprecedented growth, Butte Electric has been able to retire \$1,429,936 in capital credits since 2020. This is the cooperative difference!

The energy market is not without its struggles, though, as it faces competing pressures between the increasing reliance on renewable energy sources and excess pressure on the grid due to frequent and intense severe weather events and rising electricity demand. While solar and wind energy benefit the environment, they are intermittent power sources because the sun does not always shine, and the wind



does not always blow. Since Butte Electricity's primary responsibility is to provide electricity 24/7, reliable sources of power that will meet the peaks and valleys of on-demand energy in our connected world are needed. As the nation increasingly depends on electricity to power the economy, Butte Electric is working hard to anticipate, plan, and respond to market trends and policy shifts.

There are opportunities ahead for Butte Electric with most automobile manufacturers transitioning many of all of their new vehicles to electric-only models over the next 10 years. This means that electric utilities are planning now to ensure they have the necessary infrastructure in place to meet future EV charging needs - without jeopardizing the ability to keep reliable power flowing to local homes and businesses.

In addition to their member-owned and governed operational structure, Butte Electric also plays a large role in community involvement throughout Spearfish. This includes their employee donation program, RUS loans, various organization and event sponsorships, and youth involvement through scholarships and youth tours. Thus furthering their mission to continually improve customer services; provide safe, reliable and competitively priced electricity; and continue to lead in developing it's communities for the benefit of their members.



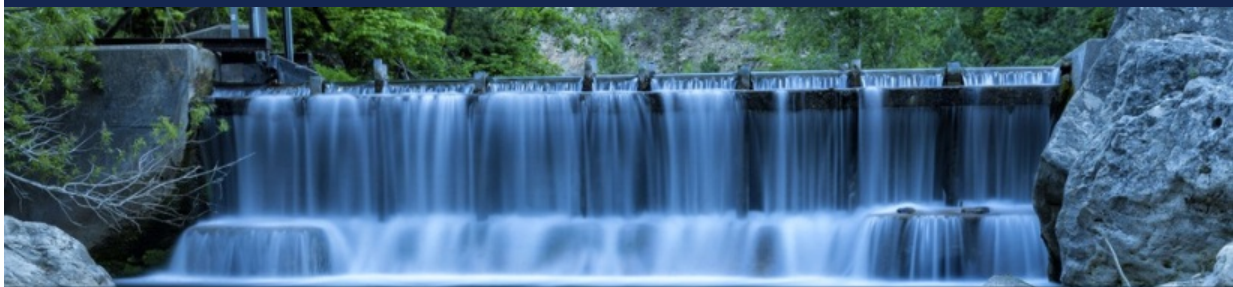
*Butte Electric's Spearfish line crew volunteering at the Spearfish Corn Maze & Pumpkin Patch. They are installing the zip line to ensure a safe, fun ride for everyone!*

---

## ***Do you want to be featured in the Business Spotlight?***

Simply fill out the short form below! Your business must be an SEDC member to be selected. If chosen as the Business Spotlight of the Month, you will be asked to answer a questionnaire and provide a photo to be used in an upcoming newsletter and on our Facebook page.

**Business Spotlight Interest Form**



**SPEARFISH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

**THE MORE  
YOU KNOW** 

## **8 Tips for Better Communication Skills**

Harvard Division of Continuing Education | February 6, 2023

Mary Sharp Emerson

Every workplace interaction—be it written, virtual, or in-person—involves communication. In fact, we communicate so frequently, we rarely even think about it. Yet the ability to communicate effectively might be your most critical skill as a leader.

Effective communication is challenging, however. Do you worry that you don't always convey your message effectively? Do you tend to avoid talking about challenging topics? Do you find yourself caught up in endless rounds of unintended arguments? Powerful communication skills can help address these common leadership issues.

The good news is that better communication skills can be learned and even mastered.

You can start by approaching all your communications mindfully—always paying close attention to what you are saying, and how. Observe how others around you communicate, and the reactions—both positive and negative—that they elicit.

And if careful and mindful observation aren't enough, you may even want to consider professional instruction. Good communication is so central to successful leadership, many leadership training courses or professional development programs incorporate communication skills into the curriculum.

As you think about your workplace interactions, these eight tips can help improve your communication skills.



### 1. Be clear and concise

Communication is primarily about word choice. The key to powerful and persuasive communication—whether written or spoken—is clarity and, when possible, brevity.

Define your goals and your audience before engaging in any form of communication.

Outlining carefully and explicitly what you want to convey, and why, will help ensure that you include all necessary information. It will also help you eliminate irrelevant details.

Avoid unnecessary words and overly flowery language, which can distract from your message.

And while repetition may be necessary in some cases, be sure to use it carefully and sparingly. Repeating your message can ensure that your audience receives it, but too much repetition can cause them to tune you out entirely.

### 2. Prepare ahead of time

Know what you are going to say and how you are going to say it before you begin any type of communication.

However, being prepared means more than just practicing a presentation.

Preparation involves thinking about the entirety of the communication, from start to finish. Research the information you may need to support your message. Consider how you will respond to questions and criticisms. Try to anticipate the unexpected. Knowing how to effectively prepare takes practice, and maybe even outside guidance.

For example, think through how you might prepare in these two common communication scenarios:

(1) You have to give a performance evaluation to an employee: You'll want to be sure that you come prepared with a list of concrete examples of your employee's behavior to support your evaluation.

(2) You want to negotiate for a better salary or a promotion: Be ready to discuss ranges and potential compromises; know what you are willing to accept and what you aren't. Be prepared to offer specific details to support your case, such as relevant salaries for your position and your location. Research publicly available information, so you don't rely on company gossip or anecdotal evidence.

Before entering into any conversation, brainstorm potential questions, requests for additional information or clarification, and possible points of disagreement so you are ready to address them calmly and clearly.

### 3. Be mindful of nonverbal communication

Our facial expressions, gestures, and body language can, and often do, say more than our words.

According to research, nonverbal cues can have between 65 and 93 percent more impact than the spoken word.

And we are more likely to believe the nonverbal signals over spoken words if the two are in disagreement.

Leaders must be especially adept at reading nonverbal cues. Your employees' nonverbal cues can tell you a lot.



For instance, team members who may be unwilling to voice disagreements or concerns may show their discomfort through crossed arms or an unwillingness to make eye contact.

At the same time, you have to control your own nonverbal communications to ensure that they support your message. At best, conflicting verbal and nonverbal communication can cause confusion. At worst, it can undermine your message and your team's confidence in you, your organization, and even in themselves.

#### 4. Watch your tone

How you say something can be just as important as what you say. As with other nonverbal cues, your tone can add power and emphasis to your message, or it can undermine it entirely. Tone can be an especially important factor in workplace disagreements and conflict. A well-chosen word with a positive connotation creates good will and trust. A poorly chosen word with unclear or negative connotations can quickly lead to misunderstanding.

When speaking, tone includes volume, projection, and intonation as well as word choice. In real time, it can be challenging to control tone to ensure that it matches your intent. But being mindful of your tone will enable you to alter it appropriately if a communication seems to be going in the wrong direction.



Tone can be easier to control when writing. Be sure to read your communication once, even twice, while thinking about tone as well as message. You may even want to read it out loud or ask a trusted colleague to read it over, if doing so does not breach confidentiality.

And when engaging in a heated dialogue over email or other written medium, don't be too hasty in your replies. If at all possible, write out your response but then wait for a day or two to send it. In many cases, re-reading your message after your emotions have cooled allows you to moderate your tone in a way that is less likely to escalate the conflict.

#### 5. Practice active listening

When it comes to communicating successfully, listening is just as important as speaking. But active listening is far more challenging than we realize.

In [Mastering the Basics of Communication](#), Marjorie North, communication expert and instructor at Harvard Professional Development Programs, notes that we only hear about half of what the other person says during any given conversation.

The goal of active listening is to ensure that you hear not just the words the person is saying, but the entire message. Some tips for active listening include:

- Give the speaker your full and undivided attention
- Clear your mind of distractions, judgements, and counter-arguments
- Avoid the temptation to interrupt with your own thoughts
- Show open, positive body language to keep your mind focused and to show the speaker that you are really listening
- Rephrase or paraphrase what you've heard when making your reply
- Ask open ended questions designed to elicit additional information

#### 6. Build your emotional intelligence

Communication is built upon a foundation of emotional intelligence. Simply put, you cannot communicate effectively with others until you can assess your own feelings and understand theirs.

"If you're aware of your own emotions and the behaviors they trigger, you can begin to manage these emotions and behaviors," says Margaret Andrews, Harvard Professional Development Programs instructor, in [How to Improve Your Emotional Intelligence](#).

Leaders with a high level of emotional intelligence will naturally find it easier to engage in active listening, maintain appropriate tone, and use positive body language. They will also find it easier to empathize with their employees and team members. Emotional intelligence—like good communication skills—may not come naturally to all leaders. Luckily, this too is a leadership skill that can be learned and mastered.

Do you find it difficult to start or engage in conversations you know will be difficult? Improving your emotional

intelligence can help.

You may still have to deliver bad news, but (actively) listening to your employee's perspective and showing that you understand their feelings can go a long way toward smoothing hurt feelings or avoiding misunderstandings.



### **7. Develop a workplace communication strategy**

Today's workplace is a constant flow of information across a wide variety of formats. Every single communication must be understood in the context of that larger flow of information.

Even the most effective communicator may find it difficult to get their message across without a workplace communication strategy.

A communication strategy is the framework within which your business conveys and receives information. It can—and should—outline how and what you communicate to customers and clients, stakeholders, and managers and employees.

At the broadest level, your strategy should incorporate who gets what message and when. This ensures that everyone receives the correct information at the right time.

From there, your strategy can detail how you communicate, including defining the type of tools you use for which information. For example, you may define when it's appropriate to use a group chat for the entire team or organization or when a meeting should have been summarized in an email instead.

Creating basic communication guidelines can streamline the flow of information. It will help ensure that everyone gets the details they need and that important knowledge isn't overwhelmed by extraneous minutia.

### **8. Create a positive organizational culture**

The corporate culture in which you are communicating also plays a vital role in effective communication.

In a positive work environment—one founded on transparency, trust, empathy, and open dialogue—communication in general will be easier and more effective.

Employees will be more receptive to hearing their manager's message if they trust that manager. And managers will find it easier to create buy-in and even offer constructive criticism if they encourage their employees to speak up, offer suggestions, and even offer constructive criticisms of their own.

As Lorne Rubis, organizational cultural expert and Harvard Professional Development Programs instructor, notes in [Six Tips for Building a Better Workplace Culture](#), "The most dangerous organization is a silent one."

Communication, in both directions, can only be effective in a culture that is built on trust and a foundation of psychological safety.

Authoritative managers who refuse to share information, aren't open to suggestions, and refuse to admit mistakes and accept criticism are likely to find their suggestions and criticisms met with defensiveness or even ignored altogether.

Without that foundation of trust and transparency, even the smallest communication can be misconstrued and lead to misunderstandings and unnecessary conflict.

Communicating with co-workers and employees is always going to present challenges. There will always be misunderstandings and miscommunications that must be resolved and unfortunately, corporate messages aren't always what we want to hear, especially during difficult times.

But building and mastering effective communication skills will make your job easier as a leader. Taking the time to develop these skills through careful self-study and ongoing professional education will certainly be time well-spent.





## STATEWIDE CHILD CARE BUSINESS COLLABORATIVE MEETING

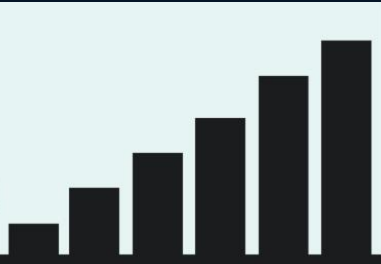
March 15th | 2:00 - 3:30 PM MT

Please join the discussion on current solutions and future sustainable solutions to childcare issues relative to South Dakota businesses via Zoom.

Follow the link below to RSVP for the event and receive the Zoom link.

[RSVP For Zoom Meeting](#)

# BY THE NUMBERS



## Spearfish City Reports:

BUILDING PERMITS	2023	2022	YTD 2023	YTD 2022
New Residential	2	7	7	10
New Commercial	1	0	2	0
Total Permits	12	25	37	38
Total Dollars	\$1,487,409	\$5,224,174	\$5,296,089	\$7,042,424

SALES TAX	2023	2022	YTD 2023	YTD 2022
2nd Cent Sales Tax	\$440,752	\$332,352	\$920,938	\$863,420
Hospitality Tax	\$48,902	\$53,729	\$100,832	\$117,485

BUILDING PERMITS AND SALES TAX ARE BASED ON THE MOST RECENT CITY OF SPEARFISH REPORTS FROM FEBRUARY OF 2023

## SD Dept. of Labor Reports:

### Labor Force 2023 2022

#### CITY OF SPEARFISH

Total Labor Force	6,438	6,353
Total Employed	6,336	6,229
Total Unemployed	102	124
% Unemployed	1.6%	2.0%

#### LAWRENCE COUNTY

Total Labor Force	13,792	13,625
Total Employed	13,551	13,321
Total Unemployed	241	304
% Unemployed	1.7%	2.2%

#### NORTHERN HILLS

(BUTTE, LAWRENCE, MEADE, & PENNINGTON COUNTIES)

Total Labor Force	91,764	90,157
Total Employed	90,050	87,883
Total Unemployed	1,714	2,274
% Unemployed	1.9%	2.5%

LABOR FORCE DATA IS BASED ON THE MOST RECENT SD DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & REGULATION REPORT FROM JANUARY OF 2023



# Legislative News Updates

Legislature Approves \$13M for SURF

Thune Urges White House to Prioritize E15



### Expansion

Senate Bill 35 which grants emergency funding to the lab that will pay for excavation efforts, passed the Senate on Monday with an overwhelming majority of 29-4, and the House of Representatives on Wednesday with a vote of 55-13. The bill now awaits Gov. Kristi Noem's signature before it will be finalized.

[Read More](#)

### South Dakota Business Community Greet New Law to Recognize Out-of-State Licenses

Governor Kristi Noem signed the bill into law Wednesday at Midwestern Mechanical. She said the Legislation will help tackle South Dakota's worker shortage by making it easier for employers to hire people from other states.

[Read More](#)

### Fuel, Utilize American Agriculture

"Taking early action on E15 will send timely and necessary signals across the energy supply chain so that fuel producers and retailers will have the certainty they need to ensure affordable, reliable, and cleaner fuel options for American consumers throughout the year," the senators wrote.

[Read More](#)

### Rounds: Integrity Restored to "Product of USA" Label

"For years we've called on the USDA to take action to stop foreign beef from receiving the 'Product of USA' label. Our work is finally paying off," said Rounds.

[Read More](#)



## Local Development News

[Looking to buy in a stable real estate market? Check out Spearfish.](#)

[USDA to ship California timber to Wyoming mill](#)

[BHSU A BIG WINNER AT AAF-BLACK HILLS ADVERTISING AWARDS](#)

[New floodplain maps available online](#)

[Veterans center opens center in Spearfish](#)

[Excavation of Massive Underground Caverns for DUNE Halfway Complete](#)



# Get Involved In The Community!

## Black Hills National Wrestling

March 17th & 18th  
Don Young Center BHSU  
Spearfish  
[Learn More Here](#)

## Black Hills Defense & Industry Symposium

Lacroix Hall  
The Monument Rapid City  
April 12th & 13th  
[Learn More Here](#)

## Monument Health Hospice Ball

Spearfish Holiday Inn & Convention  
Center  
April 1st | 5 PM  
[Learn More Here](#)

---

## Share The News!

Did you know that our monthly electronic SEDC Business Newsletter is  
**ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY, COST-EFFECTIVE,  
AND EASY TO SHARE?**

Keep your employees informed on local business happenings  
by sharing this email with them!

Past SEDC Business Newsletters can also always be found  
on the SEDC Website under the News tab.

[SEDC Newsletter Archives](#)



[Become an SEDC Member Today!](#)

Spearfish Economic Development Corporation | 605-642-3832  
[office@spearfishdevelopment.com](mailto:office@spearfishdevelopment.com) | [www.SpearfishDevelopment.com](http://www.SpearfishDevelopment.com)





Spearfish Economic Development Corporation | 106 W Kansas St., Spearfish, SD 57783

[Unsubscribe office@spearfishdevelopment.com](mailto:office@spearfishdevelopment.com)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by office@spearfishdevelopment.com powered by



Try email marketing for free today!