

Northern District
2731 Milo Terr.
Lebo, KS 66856

Southern District
9346 Jewell Rd.
Fredonia, KS 66736

Payment Center
2501 W. 18th Ave., Ste. B
Emporia, KS 66801

4 RIVERS

Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

4 RIVERS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

CURRENTS

4 Rivers Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Board of Trustees

Michael Springer
President

Robert Converse
Vice-President

Gene Huston
Secretary

David Engelman
Treasurer

Tom Ayers
Trustee

Randal Bunnel
Trustee

Larry Felts
Trustee

Nick Frankenbery
Trustee

Robert Harkrader
Trustee

Stacy Heins
Trustee

David Kunkel
Trustee

Warren Schmidt
Trustee

Sandy Smith
Trustee

Carol Wehmeyer
Trustee

Staff

Dennis Svanes
General Manager/CEO

Mark Doebele
Assistant General Manager/COO

Dennis Duft
Manager of Operations

Roger Cole
CFO

Ken Caudell
Manager of Member and Corporate Services

FROM THE MANAGER

Projects on the Horizon in 2021



Dennis Svanes

As we near Veterans Day, I want to take this moment to thank all of you who have served or are currently serving in our armed forces. I appreciate the sacrifices

made by our men and women in this country who put their lives on the line to protect our freedoms.

My thoughts have been looking forward into 2021. We plan to hold our annual meeting and are checking into dates and sites. The board would like to hold the meeting at an outdoor venue to allow for social distancing while conducting necessary business.

We will also hold an election of trustees in 2021 with the winners announced at the annual meeting. Under the new bylaws to be ratified by the consumer-members at the annual meeting, any member qualified to run may obtain a petition and collect 20 signatures from consumer-members in their district to be placed on the ballot. The board of 4 Rivers has made it easier for a consumer-member to get on the ballot with this process. The notice of elections and petitions will be available after the date of the annual meeting is determined.

Our new solar facilities will be in-

stalled and generating in 2021. 4 Rivers is one of several Kansas electric cooperatives working with Today's Power, Inc., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Arkansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. to install, own and operate the solar farms. 4 Rivers will not own the facilities, as we are unable to utilize the tax benefits because of our not-for-profit status.

We are working on our first construction work plan since the consolidation, which will be completed in early 2021. The plan lays out cooperative projects for the next four years to improve our system reliability and power quality. We are working with an engineering firm to develop the necessary construction improvements to better serve our consumer-members. The work plan is the first step in our loan process for construction projects. Our construction debt is set up for 30 years to spread the costs over the life of those assets and to share the costs across our member system.

In future articles, I will be covering these and many more projects in greater detail. If you have any questions or concerns, I encourage you to reach out.

Later this month, we will be celebrating Thanksgiving. I am very thankful for all the blessings in my life including being able to work with a great team at 4 Rivers. Please have a safe and wonderful Thanksgiving!

Small Investment and Opportunity to Harvest Clean Energy

4 Rivers Electric Cooperative looks to solar for future cost saving measures, increased reliability, a reduced carbon footprint and an added unique opportunity through a partnership to construct two 1-megawatt solar farms in 2021 in 4 Rivers Electric territory.

We are taking advantage of a unique opportunity while practicing the sixth cooperative principle — cooperation among cooperatives. A group of Kansas electric cooperatives is collaborating on a progressive project that directly benefits consumer-members and makes fiscal sense for the cooperative.

The innovative project will give 4 Rivers Electric the ability to take on a leadership role when it comes to renewable energy and set an example for working together for the benefit of many.

“When KEPCo (Kansas Electric Power Cooperative, Inc.) allowed us to increase our renewable energy by 5%, we were provided with an opportunity to benefit the members,” said 4 Rivers General Manager/CEO Dennis Svanes.

Svanes added that multiple Kansas cooperatives will be working together with vendor Today’s Power Inc. (TPI), to construct solar farms across the state with low upfront costs that will reap huge rewards. By working together, all cooperatives will be able to save with a lower energy cost.

“I’m excited about working with TPI to provide a clean energy source with little investment from the cooperative to supplement what we purchase from KEPCo,” added Svanes. “It’s a win-win situation. 4 Rivers’ costs are associated with land acquisition, not the construction or infrastructure investment of constructing two 1 MW solar farms.”

One site, a little over 13 acres, just north of 4 Rivers’ Americus substation in Lyon County will house one of the solar farms. Another 20 acres southwest of the Studebaker substation and adjacent to 4 Rivers’ South District office in Wilson



County will be home to another solar facility. The farms will then be connected to the 4 Rivers Electric distribution system.

“The facilities’ interconnection to our system adds reliability with the additional generation of power,” explained Svanes.

TPI will be installing and operating the solar farms and contract with 4 Rivers to sell the power produced by each solar farm as a purchased power agreement (PPA). The PPA is slated for an initial 25 years followed by additional five-year options.

“With the solar farms, there is very little investment and great return by being able to purchase power from these farms at a rate that is competitive,” Svanes said. “That savings is passed directly to our consumer-members.”

TPI will be constructing, maintaining, and selling power generated from these two solar farms. TPI is a for-profit subsidiary of Arkansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. (AECI) with a rich history in working with cooperatives. They also are experts in renewable energy.

“We are looking forward to working with TPI on this project; their record of experience is outstanding,” said Svanes. “We are excited to make the project a reality and pass the benefits to our

consumer-members knowing that this is not just good for 4 Rivers, but for cooperative consumer-members across Kansas.”

Offices Closed for Thanksgiving

Our offices will be closed Thursday, Nov. 26, and Friday, Nov. 27, in observance of the holiday. From our co-op family to yours, Happy Thanksgiving!



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Getting to Know Your Co-op Team

From lineworkers to member service representatives to managers, your 4 Rivers team is dedicated to providing safe, reliable, cost-effective electric service to our membership. Meet three co-op team members who go above and beyond to serve you.



Colby Crippen

COLBY CRIPPEN is a journeyman lineman who started working for Lyon-Coffey nearly five years ago. He is a serviceman for 4 Rivers, working outages, making repairs, performing system maintenance and assisting the construction crew when needed. As a serviceman, his daily routine varies and each day's schedule is a little different. Before joining the cooperative team, Crippen traveled as a lineworker. Over the years, he has

learned a lot about how a distribution co-op works versus serving as a line contractor.

He enjoys working outside and helping assist the consumer-members with problems. He grew up in rural Council Grove and resides in that area now. He likes to travel and looks forward to doing more of that. Some of his favorite travels include vacations to Montana and Colorado to snowboard.

Thanks to Colby for his hard work serving the cooperative!



Becky Schwatken

BECKY SCHWATKEN began working for Radiant Electric eight years ago as a billing clerk. She takes calls and helps with consumer-member concerns. Schwatken enjoys working with consumer-members and resolving any issues they may have.

She grew up in rural Fredonia and lives with her four Laboradors, Sarge, Maggie, Lily, and Bella, in the house her grandfather built.

She is a fifth-generation farmer/rancher and her entire family still lives within 25 miles of each other. Schwatken is inspired by her parents who work hard and put their trust and faith in God.

One of her proudest accomplishments is her work with Fredonia Pound Pals, a volunteer group that finds homes for animals in the Fredonia Pound, where they have rescued nearly 800 animals over the years. She is active in the community, serving as President of the Fredonia Business Women organization and as a member of the Elk City Church of the Nazarene.

Thank you to Becky for her continued service to our consumer-members!



Mike Tweedy

MIKE TWEEDY is a longtime co-op employee who went to work for Coffey County Rural Electric Association in 1981, which later became Lyon-Coffey Electric. As a part of the member service team, he

enjoys working with the consumer-members daily and helping them solve problems.

Tweedy lives in Burlington with his wife, Terri. He enjoys fishing, playing golf, the grandkids' sports and anything that involves the outdoors. His proudest accomplishments are his children, Jennifer and Courtney, and their families.

With 39 years of service, Tweedy has seen a lot of changes, from having private band radios to now onboard computer screens and cell phones. He is inspired by our members who refer to him as "Mike with REA."

"We've been there for members, but they've been there for us too. Helping us by pulling trucks out with their tractors, offering coffee in a storm, offering a meal — most anything we have needed," he said.

He wants consumer-members to know our staff appreciates their membership. In this fast-paced world, new consumer-members or even longtime consumer-members can forget that they are owners of their cooperative. They have an opinion, a vote, an opportunity to elect board members. The decisions made today affect their cooperative in the future. He encourages you to know your elected board members to better the future of your cooperative.

Thanks to Mike for his many years of service and dedication to the cooperative membership!

5 Electrical Safety Features to Be Thankful For

Most days, we go about our lives without thinking too much about the many electronic gadgets and electrical safety features that allow us to perform simple tasks at work and home without a second thought. This Thanksgiving, let's take a moment to be thankful for some of the devices that help make our daily tasks safer and more convenient.

For Your Safety: Built-In Devices

GFCIS: Ground fault circuit interrupters are inexpensive electrical devices that can either be installed in your electrical system or built into a power cord to protect you from severe electrical shocks. GFCIs are generally installed where electrical circuits may accidentally come into contact with water, such as kitchens, bath and laundry rooms, outdoors or in the garage. Be sure to test GFCIs monthly to make sure they are working properly.

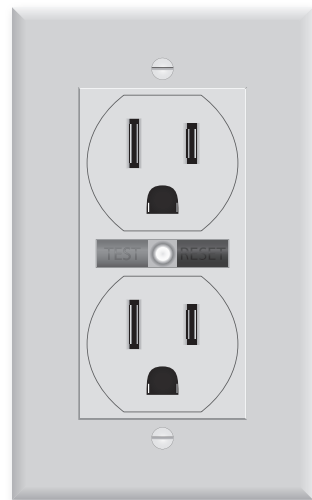
AFCIS: Arc fault circuit interrupters could potentially prevent more than 50% of electrical fires that occur every year, according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission. These safety devices are typically found within your electrical panel or receptacles in the wall. An arc fault is a dangerous electrical problem caused by damaged, overheated or stressed electrical wiring or devices.

CIRCUIT BREAKERS: Usually found in a garage, basement or laundry room, circuit breaker boxes are an essential safety feature in your home, preventing electrical injuries and fires. Each box is filled with individual circuit breakers designed to 'trip,' or shut itself off when necessary to stop the flow of electricity. Circuits trip for several reasons, including overloaded circuits, drawing too much power from one circuit, ground faults, abnormal flow in a circuit, and short circuits when current travels along an unintended path.

Use Them Safely: Convenience Items

DEVICE CHARGERS: Whether for work or personal use, most of us can't go a day without accessing our favorite cell phone, tablet, laptop or other portable essentials. While we rely on our chargers to keep these items running, be sure to treat charging components with care and use them correctly. Here are some safety tips:

- ▶ Personal electronic devices should NOT be placed under pillows or used on or underneath bedding.
 - ▶ Do not leave cords plugged in when not in use because little ones or pets who put them in their mouths can get burned or shocked.
 - ▶ Do not leave them around when not in use because toddlers might try to insert the wrong end into an electrical outlet and get shocked or burned. Remember to childproof your outlets as well if they are not the tamper-resistant versions.
 - ▶ Don't use charging devices near water or in damp conditions.
 - ▶ Replace original charging components with the same brand and type whenever possible. Using off-brand or generic versions can be dangerous if they are faulty.
- EXTENSION CORDS AND MULTI-OUTLET POWER STRIPS:** Extension cords and multi-outlet power strips or devices, while incredibly handy, should always be inspected for damage prior to use. Use them as a temporary fix, not a long-term solution, and use them safely:
- ▶ Plug them directly into an outlet, and not into another extension cord or power strip.
 - ▶ If you are using a strip or extension cord outside, make sure it is rated for outdoor use.
 - ▶ Never use an item that feels hot or is damaged in any way.
 - ▶ Make sure these convenience items (cords and strips) are approved by a reputable independent testing laboratory like UL.
 - ▶ When using an extension cord, make sure the wattage rating of the cord and the appliance match.
- These are just a few electrical safety items to be thankful for this year.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Keep cold air out to save energy. Seal air leaks around pipes and any gaps around chimneys and unfinished spaces behind cupboards and closets. Source: energystar.gov

