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Fredonia, KS 66736

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Emporia, KS 66801

**4 RIVERS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.**

# CURRENTS

# 4 RIVERS

## Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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## The Power Behind Your Power

### Lineworker Appreciation Day is April 11



**Mark Doebele**

You have likely noticed 4 River Electric's crews out and about, working on power lines and other electrical equipment in our community. It's no secret that a lineworker's job is tough — but it's a job that's essential and often must be done in challenging conditions. This month, as we celebrate Lineworker Appreciation Day on April 11, I want to share some interesting facts about electric lineworkers with you.

The work can be heavy, in more ways than one. Did you know the equipment and tools that a lineworker carries while climbing a utility pole can weigh up to 50 pounds? That's the same as carrying 6 gallons of water. Lineworkers must climb utility poles ranging from 30 to 120 feet tall. Needless to say, if you have a fear of heights, this likely isn't the career path for you.

Lineworkers must be committed to their career — because it's not just a job, it's a lifestyle. Long hours and ever-present danger can take a toll. In fact, being a lineworker is listed in the top 10 most dangerous jobs in the U.S.

Lineworkers often work non-traditional hours outdoors in difficult condi-

tions. While the job does not require a college degree, it does require technical skills, years of training and hands-on learning. Did you know becoming a journeyman lineworker can take more than 7,000 hours of training (or about four years)? That's because working with high-voltage equipment requires specialized skills, experience and an ongoing mental toughness. Shortcuts are not an option, and there is no room for error in this line of work.

Despite the many challenges, 4 River Electric's lineworkers are committed to

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### LINWORKER APPRECIATION DAY



**APRIL 11, 2022**

We thank lineworkers for their courage and commitment to powering our community.

PHOTO ABOVE "AUTUMNAL EQUINOX SUNSET" WAS TAKEN BY MEMBER MICHAEL HOAG OF WAVERLY. THE PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS THE BEAUTY OF OUR COOPERATIVE TERRITORY.

## The Power Behind Your Power

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powering our local community. During severe weather events that bring major power outages, lineworkers are among the first ones called. They must be ready to leave the comfort of their home and families unexpectedly, and they don't return until the job is done, often days later. That's why the lineworker's family is also dedicated to service. They understand the importance of the job to the community.

Nationwide, there are approximately 120,000 electric lineworkers. Here at 4 Rivers, we have 21 lineworkers responsible for keeping power flowing 24/7, 365 days a year. To do this, they maintain the equipment and lines delivering power to around 12,500 service locations across 16 counties. In addition to the highly visible tasks lineworkers perform, their job today goes far beyond climbing utility poles to repair wire. Today's lineworkers are information experts who pinpoint power outages from miles away. Line crews use laptops, tablets, drones and other technology to map outages, survey damage and troubleshoot problems.

Being a lineworker may not seem glamorous, but it is essential to life in our community. Without the exceptional dedication and commitment of these hardworking people, we would not have the reliable electricity that we need for everyday life.

When you see a lineworker, please thank them for the work they do to keep power flowing at all times and in all weather conditions. After all, lineworkers are the power behind your power. Please join us as we recognize them Monday, April 11, and follow "#ThankALineworker" on social media to see how others are recognizing lineworkers.

## Notice of Rate Hearing

### Changes in Misc. Fees and the Net Metering and Parallel Generation Riders

The Board of Trustees of 4 Rivers Electric will hold a hearing open to the public, on modifications to be discussed and voted on relating to three tariffs: (1) service fees rate schedule, (2) net metering rider, (3) and parallel generation rider for renewable generation. This hearing is in conjunction with the regularly scheduled Board of Trustees meeting on April 18, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. at the 4 Rivers Electric Cooperative at 2731 Milo Terr., Lebo.

The proposed changes to the service fees tariff include changes for metering, collection, disconnection, and reconnection services. The proposed change is from \$50 to \$75 for providing these services during business hours, and from \$160 to \$200 for providing these services after-hours. Changes also include moving the application fees for net metering and parallel generation from the application document to being a part of this tariff and setting the nonrefundable fees to \$650 for small units and \$1,250 for large units, creating

a deposit to recover the actual incurred costs that do not pass the fast-track process, and a deposit for the parallel generation application fee to cover the actual costs incurred.

Proposed changes to the net metering rider are to have no additional monthly fees on the customer charge portion of the monthly bill, capping the size of the units to 15 kw for residential generation, 150 kw for generation at schools, and 100 kw for all other commercial and industrial accounts; defining additional limitations to the size of systems based upon the usage on the account; and modifying the language for disconnect requirements.

The proposed change to the parallel generation rider is to match the updated proposed language in the net metering rider.

Any and all rates are subject to review by the Kansas Corporation Commission upon petition pursuant to state law.

## Welcome New Employees!

**TUCKER HURST** started Feb. 24 in the north district as a first-year lineman apprentice. He completed Pratt Community College's electrical power program at Coffeyville in 2020.

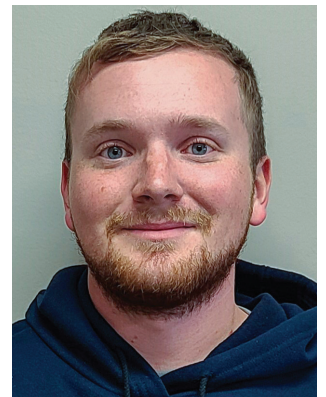
**SHAWN SPURLING** started Feb. 21 in the north district

as a first-year lineman apprentice. He spent 4 years in the U.S. Coast Guard, then completed the electrical lineworker program at Northwest Lineman College.

We welcome Tucker and Shawn to the co-op family!

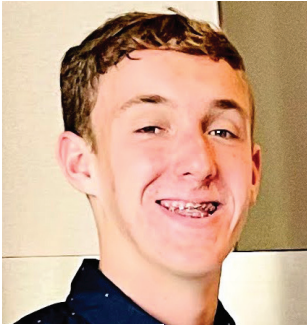


Tucker Hurst



Shawn Spurling

# Congratulations to Youth Leadership Program Winners!



Hayden Sides



Shelby Starbuck



Elizabeth Kelley



Emily Kelley

4 Rivers Electric Cooperative is committed to the communities we serve, which means investing in our youth and providing educational, leadership and team-building opportunities. We continue this tradition of promoting youth leadership by sending four area students on an all-expenses-paid trip to the Kansas Electric Youth (KEY) Leadership Conference and the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp.

The KEY Leadership Conference in Topeka provides leadership learning opportunities, engaging speakers and team-building activities. Student leaders from across the state will tour the Kansas State Capitol, FreeState Electric Cooperative and other local attractions.

The Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp, held at Glen Eden resort near Steamboat Springs, Colorado, provides students with the opportunity to learn about cooperatives, form their own candy cooperative, hear from dynamic

speakers and raft down the Colorado river. High school students from electric cooperative communities in Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma and Wyoming participate in this leadership camp.

We congratulate the four applicants selected to represent 4 Rivers at these events:

- ▶ **HAYDEN SIDES**, a junior at Burlington High School, attending KEY Leadership Conference.
- ▶ **SHELBY STARBUCK**, a junior at Fredonia High School, attending KEY Leadership Conference.
- ▶ **ELIZABETH KELLEY**, a junior at Hartford High School attending Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp.
- ▶ **EMILY KELLEY**, a junior at Hartford High School attending Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp.

4 Rivers is proud to have these local student leaders represent us this summer. Fostering youth leadership skills helps cultivate the strong leaders of tomorrow.



## SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION DEADLINE IS **APRIL 29, 2022**

4 Rivers Electric Cooperative, Inc. may fund up to two Lineman Scholarships annually for tuition, fees, books, tools, and supplies not to exceed \$5,000 for each scholarship for up to one year at an electrical line worker school. Eligible applicants for the scholarship must be high school graduates from any high school or a home school program or have attained their GED within the Cooperative's service territory. Check out our website for further details on this awesome opportunity!



## Sow Seeds of SAFETY This Planting Season

Whether you've been through 30 planting seasons or three, be alert to the dangers of working near overhead power lines. You and anyone working or doing business on your farm should know and follow electrical safety precautions to avoid potential hazards.

When near power lines, poles or other utility equipment:

- ▶ Maintain a 10-foot clearance in all directions; OSHA recommends 20 feet.
- ▶ Realize that electricity can arc ("jump") when equipment is too close.
- ▶ Be aware of increased height when loading and transporting.
- ▶ Designate preplanned routes to avoid potential hazards.
- ▶ Always use a spotter and deploy the flags.
- ▶ Before exiting the cab, look up to ensure proper clearance of all equipment.
- ▶ Lower extension to the lowest setting before moving loads.
- ▶ Never attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path.
- ▶ Contact your local electric utility if you think a pole or a line may have been damaged.

### IF YOUR EQUIPMENT DOES

come in contact with a power line or other utility equipment, do not exit the cab. Instead call 911 and wait until utility workers say it is safe to exit.

### IF YOU ARE IN IMMINENT

**DANGER** (equipment on fire) and need to exit the cab, make a solid, clean jump out of the cab and hop with both feet together as far away as you can.

## Reap What You Sow: Stay Safe During Planting Season

Long hours and fatigue are a constant battle for farmers during planting season. If you farm, remember to take care of yourself by getting as much rest as possible and allowing yourself breaks to clear your head.

Be especially aware of electrical hazards around the farm. Be cautious and think twice before acting dangerously around electricity. Safe Electricity offers farmers the following reminders:

- ▶ If your machinery or vehicle comes in contact with a power line, do not get out. Once contact has been made with a live line (even when your tractor or truck makes contact), you are now a "pathway to ground" and you could get electrocuted if you step out. Instead, stay where you are and call 911 to dispatch the appropriate utility to de-energize the power.
- ▶ If you come across an accident or incident near a downed power line, alert individuals (from a distance) to stay in the tractor or vehicle as long as there is no imminent danger. Do not approach the scene.
- ▶ When using machinery with long extensions or tall antennas and when using ladders, look up to avoid contact with overhead power lines.
- ▶ Even if there is no contact, an electrical current can jump or arc so keep equipment at least 10 feet from surrounding power lines at all

times. (OSHA recommends a distance of 20 feet.)

- ▶ Remember, non-metallic materials (such as tree limbs, ropes and hay) can conduct electricity, depending on dampness and dust/dirt accumulation.
- ▶ Visually inspect overhead lines, which may not meet current height codes due to age or pole damage. If a wire is hanging low or is on the ground, consider it energized and stay at least 50 feet away; call 911 to have the operator dispatch the utility.
- ▶ Every day, map out where equipment will be moved to ensure it will clear power lines.
- ▶ When working in the vicinity of power lines, always use a spotter who has a broad vantage point.
- ▶ Train anyone working with or for you (including seasonal employees) to be aware of power line locations and teach them proper clearance distance. Also design and implement a safety training program that includes a review of electrical hazards and how to safely deal with power lines.
- ▶ According to American Family Insurance, "know your PTO." To stay safe when working with a power take off (PTO), always disengage the PTO, turn off the engine and remove keys before getting off the tractor. Also, never step across a rotating power shaft.

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY Tip of the Month

When streaming content, use the smallest device that makes sense for the number of people watching. Avoid streaming on game consoles, which use 10 times more power than streaming through a tablet or laptop. Streaming content with electronic equipment that has earned the ENERGY STAR® rating will use 25%-30% less energy than standard equipment.

**SOURCE: ENERGY.GOV**

