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4 RIVERS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

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4 RIVERS

Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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4 Rivers Electric Cooperative, Inc. is an equal opportunity employer and provider.



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FROM THE MANAGER

Spring Safety Preparations



Dennis Svanes

Spring is here and with it comes the season of growth and planting. I want to take this time to share a few safety needs and concerns.

At 4 Rivers, our line crews

have tailgate meetings in which they discuss each individual's responsibilities, operational issues and safety concerns about the particular job and location. Each location has its own challenges. I encourage our members to use a similar process.

Before starting a job, take time to

review the dangers and hazards of the job and location. This may be starting a field to seed, spraying, harvesting, burning a pasture or in the hay field mowing, raking or baling.

- ▶ Locate the electric poles and determine how to work around them.
- ▶ Look for guy wires and make sure to keep clear of them. If a guy wire has a missing guard, please call us, so we can install a new guard.
- ▶ Check for clearance under and near power lines to ensure that no part of the equipment, load line or load (including rigging and lifting accessories), gets closer than 20 feet to the power line and other wires.

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Board Passes New Tariffs at February Rate Hearing

In conjunction with their regularly scheduled meeting, the 4 Rivers Board of Trustees held a rate hearing Feb. 20 regarding proposed tariff changes. The board reviewed a summary of the cooperative's cost-of-service study, usage data by rate class, and the proposed tariffs individually.

After a lengthy discussion and responding to all questions posed by trustees and the public in attendance, the board approved the proposed tariffs, effective April 1, 2023.

For the majority of cooperative members, the May billing for April usage will be the first bill to reflect the new rates. For more information about the new rates, please visit www.4riverselectric.com.

Youth Leadership Program Winners Announced

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. Our cooperative continues this strong tradition of promoting youth leadership by sending four high school juniors on an all-expenses-paid leadership experience of a lifetime! Two students will attend the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour and two students will attend the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp.

During the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, June 15-22, students will travel to Washington, D.C., explore monuments and museums, meet with members of Congress, and make lifelong friends with students from across the country. This trip of a lifetime provides leadership lessons from our nation's history and the cooperative spirit that built our nation.

The Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp is July 14-20, near Steamboat Springs, Colorado. High school students from electric cooperative communities in Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma and Wyoming participate in this leadership camp. Together, they will create a candy cooperative, hear from dynamic speakers, and raft down the Colorado River.



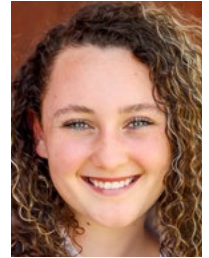
Elizabeth Galloway



Allannah Harris



Riley Petitjean



Shelby Smith

We had such an awesome group of applicants this year and are so proud to see such engagement and commitment to community by the young leaders in our cooperative. We congratulate the four students selected to represent 4 Rivers at these events:

- ▶ **SHELBY SMITH**, Fredonia, Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp
- ▶ **ELIZABETH GALLOWAY**, Allen, Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp
- ▶ **RILEY PETITJEAN**, Osage City, Electric Cooperative Youth Tour
- ▶ **ALLANAH HARRIS**, Burlington, Electric Cooperative Youth Tour

4 Rivers is proud to have such a great group of student leaders represent us this summer. Fostering youth leadership skills helps cultivate the strong leaders of tomorrow.

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION DEADLINE IS **APRIL 24, 2023**

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 lineworker 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!

5 Healthy Habits for Your Home

If you're like most Americans, health is an important aspect of your resolutions when each new year rolls around. While factors like diet and exercise are keys to healthy living, so are the ways you care for your home and belongings.

Your home living environment plays a major role in your health and comfort, so incorporating some new habits like these from the cleaning experts at Swash Laundry Detergent can help you establish a healthier lifestyle.



Sheets should be washed once a week to remove body oils and cells and elements you may carry into your home.

but let the sunlight bring good cheer to your living spaces during the day.

Switch Bedding on Schedule

While you sleep, your body sheds oils, cells and elements you carry into your home like pollen. Sheets should be washed once a week on the hottest water setting your fabric will tolerate (check tags for laundering directions on your sheets before washing). If your schedule makes weekly washing, drying and remaking the bed unrealistic, consider having a couple sets you can rotate so you always have fresh, clean sheets waiting to remake your bed on laundry day.

Work Up (and Wash Out) a Sweat

The materials that keep you feeling cool and fresh by wicking away sweat can quickly get stinky, but over-washing can make them lose their shape and fade. Even so, washing after every use is a must. Washing workout clothes inside out exposes the surfaces that have absorbed sweat and body oil to detergent and agitation. Be sure to close zippers, buttons, clasps and other fasteners to prevent snags. Pre-soaking with equal parts vinegar and cold water can also help eliminate odors, and washing in a gentle, cold-water cycle and drying on low heat can help protect the fabric's elasticity and wicking properties.

Start your year off right with more advice for healthy habits around the home at www.swash.com.

Control Air Quality

Especially during the winter months when your home tends to be closed tight, air can grow stale. Do your best to keep air quality strong by opening windows on mild days to circulate fresh air, using an air purifier to remove irritants and pollutants, frequently vacuuming and sweeping to keep floor dust and debris under control, and regularly cleaning textiles that can trap allergens and other particles.

Scale Back Detergent Use

Using too much laundry detergent isn't just risking buildup and unnecessary wear on your washer and dryer; it can also increase the residue and buildup in your clothes, which can lead to skin irritation and damage fabric faster. Using only what you need helps protect your belongings and your skin. A single bottle of an ultra-concentrated detergent washes up to 83 loads while taking up less space than traditional, bulky detergent bottles.

Make Use of Natural Light

When winter brings day after day of dark, dreary weather, it can take a toll on your mood. Brightening your living space with natural light can positively influence your emotional state while helping with your electric bill. If you're concerned about privacy, use window treatments at night,

Spring Safety Preparations

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▶ Do not stack hay bales, materials or equipment under or near power lines or wires. It increases the risk of getting into the wires with loaders, trucks, etc. Equipment has gotten very large and can easily catch a pole or wire.

▶ When burning, check for problem areas. Remove vegetation around electric poles and other items down to the dirt with a weed eater or other tool. Ensure nothing is combustible for 5 feet or more around the pole — even further if the terrain warrants. The individual doing the burning is responsible for any property that burns unintentionally.

Every year, we have poles damaged, wires broken and guy guards torn. This can cause outages and be costly to the cooperative and the person responsible for the damage. Most concerning though is the safety risks involved. Negligence around high voltage power lines can result in serious damage and kill both people and livestock. Our goal is to provide safe and reliable power and part of that is for the public to understand how to mitigate the risks when working with equipment. Growing up on a farm, I understand the need to hustle during spring's work, haying season and harvest. Safety and situational awareness take a small amount of time, which could save your or someone else's life or livelihood.

Safety is not a "one and done." It needs to be part of your lifestyle and culture in both work and leisure.

Lineworker Appreciation Day is April 10

Electric lineworkers provide an essential service: They install and maintain overhead and underground power lines that keep electricity flowing. These specialized workers are on call 24/7 in case severe storms or other circumstances cause the power to go out.

Lineworkers work with high-voltage electricity, often at great heights, in all kinds of weather conditions. Maintaining the power grid is physically demanding. To become proficient, most lineworkers go through a technical training program and first learn on the job as apprentices under the careful eye of seasoned lineworkers who have earned journeyman status.

Electric power line installers and repairers held approximately 126,600 jobs in 2021, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Nearly half of these employees worked for electric power generation, transmission and distribution utilities.

Safety Comes First

Lineworkers spend numerous hours in safety training each year and must understand and apply crucial safety regulations.

Protective clothing is required to shield lineworkers since they work around high voltages. Collectively, gear components can weigh up to 45 pounds.

According to the U.S. BLS, electric power line installers and repairers typically:

- ▶ Install, maintain or repair the power lines that move electricity.
- ▶ Identify defective devices, voltage regulators, transformers and switches.
- ▶ Inspect and test power lines and auxiliary equipment.
- ▶ String (install) power lines between poles, towers and buildings.
- ▶ Climb poles and transmission towers and use truck-mounted buckets to access equipment.
- ▶ Operate power equipment when installing and repairing poles, towers and lines.
- ▶ Know and implement safety standards and procedures.

When a problem is reported, lineworkers must identify the cause and fix it. This usually involves diagnostic testing using specialized equipment and repair work. To work on poles, they usually use bucket trucks to raise themselves to the top of the structure, although all lineworkers must be adept at climbing poles and towers when necessary. Workers use specialized safety equipment to keep them from falling when climbing utility poles and towers.

Storms and other natural disasters can cause extensive damage to power lines. When power is lost, line repairers must work safely and efficiently to restore service. We salute our lineworkers who work around the clock to keep the power on. Their safety, as well as yours, is our top priority.

