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4 RIVERS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

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FROM THE MANAGER

Supporting Youth and Community



Dennis Svanes

The height of summer brings out youth activities including 4-H projects and county fairs, which are underway as I write this article. 4 Rivers encourages all

of you to support youth organizations in our community. I was active in both 4-H and FFA and still benefit from the lessons learned while being a part of those groups.

4-H teaches life skills related to communication, problem solving, teamwork and decision making. The hands-on educational opportunities include agriculture, science, health,

and citizenship. It also teaches about connecting with our community. Concern for Community is one of the Seven Cooperative Principles and may be why I have been drawn to a career in the electric cooperative community. I hope all of you can experience some county fairs; enjoy the sights, sounds, and food; and support the youth as they compete in the numerous competitions.

4 Rivers sent two students to Washington, D.C., this summer as part of the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour and two students to Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp near Steamboat Springs, Colorado. If you have a junior in high school in 2023-2024, make sure they know about these awesome

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2022 Capital Credits Allocated

You may have noticed a message about your 2022 capital credit allocation amount on your July electric bill. As a not-for-profit, member-owned cooperative, margins are allocated annually to members based on that member's kWh usage for that particular year.

The capital credits allocated to a member reflect their equity in 4 Rivers Electric Cooperative. When the board of trustees approves a general retirement of capital credits for certain years, those allocated funds are distributed back to those who were members during the time frame being retired.

Active members typically receive their retirement as a credit on their electric bill, while former members will receive a check in the mail. For this reason, it is important to keep your mailing address current even if you move and are no longer a cooperative member. Please let us know if you have any questions.



Got
Electric
Fencing?

INSPECT IT REGULARLY



MAKE SURE FENCING IS VISIBLE.

Use electric fence tape, warning signs or other methods.

INSPECT FENCING REGULARLY.

Ensure everything is tight, secure and free from frays.



MAKE SURE FENCE IS TIGHT AND WELL-SUPPORTED.

A lack of support can cause it to sag.

CAP POSTS, ESPECIALLY METAL T-POSTS.

This prevents an animal (or human) from being impaled.



CHECK FOR A LOOSE OR SAGGING FENCE.

Not only can animals escape, but wires can fall out of insulators.

SOURCE: SAFE ELECTRICITY

Stay Safe During Harvest — Get Proper Rest

For many farmers, fall requires long days in the field and little rest. The pressure to harvest as much as possible, combined with fatigue and looming deadlines, increases the risk of injury. In fact, most injuries occur during the spring and fall when stress and fatigue are often at their highest.

The safety and health of workers, including making time for sleep, should be a priority when considering a farm's productivity, according to Josie Rudolphi, University of Illinois Extension associate research scientist.

"Rushing and cutting corners can lead to injury, which no one has time for, especially during the harvest," Rudolphi says.

Rudolphi grew up on a farm and understands the pressures of harvest season. She says that getting proper rest can make a huge difference in staying safe, but during the time crunch of harvest season, farmers sacrifice sleep to work late into the night.

"Sleep deficiency has been associated with increased injury, reduced reaction time and reduced concentration," Rudolphi says. "All of which could impact health and safety, as well as productivity."

The demands of harvest are stressful, and a lack of sleep can intensify that and lead to errors in the fields or even on the roads.

To improve sleep, Rudolphi advises farmers to go to bed and wake up at regular times when possible. They can use rainy days to catch up on sleep.

Other sleep health tips include:

- ▶ Create a bedroom environment that encourages sleep; keep it quiet, dark and cool.
- ▶ Limit electronic device use.
- ▶ Avoid large meals, caffeine and alcohol before bedtime.

In addition to improving sleep, managing stress is an important component to injury prevention, health and safety, according to Rudolphi.

"By using the 'Four A' Method of avoid (planning ahead), adapt (changing expectations), alter (changing the situation when you can) and accept (acknowledging that a situation is what it is), farmers can successfully manage the stress of long hours and unpredictability," she adds.

For information about safety around electricity, including farm and ranch safety, visit www.SafeElectricity.org.

July Correction

Last month, we misspelled Trent Engelman's last name. Sorry for the error, Trent! We are happy to have you aboard.

Welcome to the Team!

TRENT ENGELMAN joined the 4 Rivers team May 22 as a journeyman lineman. He grew up in the Buffalo area where he currently resides with his wife, Sloan, and children Cole and Luke. Engelman attended Pratt Community College's lineman program at Coffeyville and worked for an area municipal utility for the past 11 years before joining the 4 Rivers team. Welcome to the co-op family, Trent!



Trent Engelman

4 Rivers Sends Harris and Petitjean to Tour Nation's Capital

ALLANAH HARRIS and **RILEY PETITJEAN** were among 27 Kansas student delegates to attend the 2023 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., held June 15-22. Both high school seniors this fall, Harris from Burlington High School and Petitjean from Osage City High School were selected to represent 4 Rivers Electric Cooperative at this exclusive opportunity to experience the country's history and government firsthand. While exploring Washington, D.C., students learned more about America's electric cooperatives and developed valuable leadership skills. Harris and Petitjean were selected to join 1,531 students from 44 states after completing an application and interview.

The 2023 Youth Tour began in Topeka with a get-acquainted dinner for the students, followed by a night tour of the Kansas State Capitol led by State Treasurer Steven Johnson and Kansas Representative Kyle Hoffman, both alumni of the Kansas electric cooperative youth programs. Before departing for Washington, D.C., students visited with linemen at FreeState Electric Cooperative where they learned about the co-op's commitment to safety, linemen safety gear, and had the opportunity to ride in a bucket truck.

The seven-day trip to D.C. included a tour of the U.S. Capitol, the White House, the Smithsonian museums, the Holocaust Memorial Museum, Arlington National Cemetery and Mount Vernon. The students helped raise the garrison flag at Fort McHenry, and they sang "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" alongside Screech, the mascot of the Washington Nationals, during the seventh inning stretch of a Major League Ballgame. Students experienced an elevator ride to the top of the Washington Monument, a dinner cruise on the Potomac, and a driving simulation at the Law Enforcement Museum. They also enjoyed a performance of *The Enigmatist* at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, a visit to the Na-



Allannah Harris (left) and Riley Petitjean pose in front of the U.S. Capitol during the 2023 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour to Washington, D.C.

tional Aquarium, and an interactive language experience at the Planet Word Museum.

Kansas delegates joined youth from other states to attend a day of inspirational programming at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) National Youth Day on June 17. Paralympic Gold Medalist Mike Schlappi addressed the students and motivated them for success as future leaders. Other speakers included Mat Kilgore, a lineman from Iowa Lakes Electric Co-op, who shared stories from his time in Guatemala with NRECA International, and Rukaya Alrubaye, the NRECA Youth Leadership Council spokesperson, sponsored by Ozarks Electric in Arkansas, who encouraged the students to dream big.

The Kansas student delegates witnessed government in action by engaging with United States Senators Jerry Moran and Roger Marshall. The Kansas legislators answered questions from the students ranging in topics from the farm bill, crop insurance, labor shortages, the impact of a flat tax, and how students can succeed in future internships.

For Harris and Petitjean, attending the youth tour as a representative of 4 Rivers was an inspirational experience.

"Seeing history outside the classroom impacted me," Petitjean said. "I've learned all about our capital, wars, and presidents, but to be in D.C. and to see the memorials and to walk where famous leaders have been is truly empowering. I now feel more connected with our country's history and American pride."

"I can definitely tell that the knowledge I've gained and the people I've met on this trip will help me in my career, personal life, and future," Harris said.



The 2023 delegation included 27 students from Kansas and four from Hawaii.

Support for Youth, Community

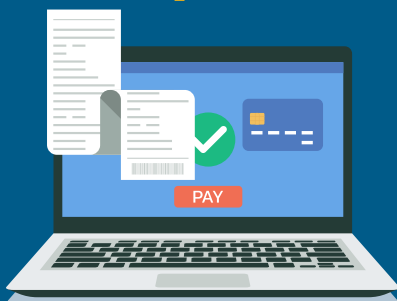
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programs and encourage them to participate when the application period opens this winter. These programs are great opportunities to learn leadership skills while making lifelong friends and enjoying our nation's capital or the beautiful Rocky Mountains.

Later this month, the big, yellow buses will be running again. Our youth will be on the roads heading to and from school and school activities. Make sure to keep their safety as a top priority.

4 Rivers plans to sponsor a couple of pre-football game tailgating events again this fall in conjunction with October's National Cooperative Month. Keep an eye on our website and Facebook page for more information as we make plans for these events.

Go Paperless!



Too much paper clutter? Enroll in paperless billing!

With postage costs on the rise, you can help reduce cooperative costs and eliminate excess paper clutter in your mailbox in **ONE STEP!** Opt out of receiving a paper bill through your SmartHub app, online or by calling us at 620-364-2116.

EV Charging Safety Tips

Charging is a crucial concern among new electric vehicle (EV) owners, whether plug-in hybrid or full electric. Fear of inconvenience is one of the biggest barriers to widespread adoption of electric vehicles. You might be concerned that there aren't enough public charging stations in the area — and even if there are public charging stations nearby, do you really want to rely on them any time you need to refuel?

An EV charging station at home can solve this challenge of inconvenience. But are EV charging systems at home safe? Absolutely — as long as they're installed correctly.

The first thing EV owners should consider is how they will charge their vehicles. A licensed electrician can evaluate your home's EV charging situation, as well as:

- ▶ The vehicle's charging capabilities and requirements, which vary depending on the make, model and type.
- ▶ The potential location of the panel and vehicle, including the distance from the panel to the garage, the degree of difficulty and whether the garage is attached or detached.
- ▶ The capacity and overall condition of your home electrical system to identify any concerns or additional work.

There are two common types of home charging options. Level 1 charging is a straightforward plug-in of the EV into any standard 120V electrical outlet. This requires no electrical modification, and it normally takes around 14 to 20 hours to fully charge the EV.

Some EV manufacturers and sellers provide inaccurate information on charging, and some will suggest that a standard 120-volt outlet is all you need. Unfortunately, this degree of charging may not always match the driver's daily travel needs.

Level 2 charging units are sold separately from the vehicle. These units must be installed by a licensed electrician, because they plug into a 240V outlet and charge much more quickly, typically four to eight hours.

Here are a few safety tips to keep in mind when charging your EV at home:

- ▶ Select charging equipment that is certified to meet safety standards. Plug Level 1 EV chargers directly into an outlet designed to handle the amperage of the charging device. Never use a multi-plug adapter or extension cord. Charging cables are a tripping hazard, so be aware of the cable's location. Purchase a Level 2 charging device that is certified by a nationally recognized testing laboratory. This means the device has gone through rigorous testing and certification by a third-party company with extensive knowledge and pedigree in certifying EV technologies.
 - ▶ Check with 4 Rivers and a licensed electrician before modifying your electrical system or installing a charging station. An electrician will need to make sure your home's wiring complies with local, state and national codes, and may need to obtain a permit before installation.
 - ▶ Place all charging components out of reach of children when not in use.
 - ▶ Maintain the components of your charging station according to the manufacturer's maintenance guidelines.
 - ▶ Cover the EV charging station outlet to prevent water exposure. Check the manufacturer's guidelines to make sure it is safe to charge your EV in wet conditions.
 - ▶ Most charging stations are equipped with safety devices such as GFCIs, which will identify electrical shorts and stop power to the charger to minimize risks. There is a low risk of electric shock, but safeguards are automatically built into the equipment. EV chargers are thought to be extremely safe, but we recommend following these fundamental guidelines to reduce potential hazards.
- Contact 4 Rivers before installation with any questions. We can provide information about your service capacity and EV charging compatibility.