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4 RIVERS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

CURRENTS

4 RIVERS

Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative



4 Rivers Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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FROM THE ASSISTANT MANAGER

Line Maintenance — Continuous Effort for Safety & Reliability

4 Rivers owns and operates over 3,930 miles of 7,200-volt overhead and underground distribution lines. We continuously inspect, repair and replace when needed to keep co-op facilities operational and provide safe, reliable service to our member-owners' homes and businesses.

One of our greatest challenges is vegetation management in rights-of way (ROW). We agree that trees are beautiful, but a tree in the wrong location can be dangerous and disruptive. Limbs above power lines can become entangled during strong winds or sag down into the lines during a heavy snow or ice event. 4 Rivers currently contracts with Poor Boy Tree

Service and Justin King Fencing for the clearing of trees from our lines. Mechanically trimming and cutting is time-consuming and costly. To receive the most bang for our buck, we follow-up with herbicide spraying for a couple of growing seasons. 4 Rivers vegetation management plan includes inspection and clearing 100% of our ROW over a seven-year cycle. Currently, contract crews are working in the Welda, Coyville and Cherryvale areas.

Pole maintenance is another continuous undertaking, as 4 Rivers owns over 87,000 poles. We have poles that have been in service for over 70 years, but most poles need to be replaced decades earlier. Because pole replacement is dependent more on environmental factors and less on a set time schedule, we must continuously



Mark Doebele
Assistant General Manager/COO



4 Rivers crews improved system reliability recently by upgrading conductor and replacing 19 poles on Brooks substation's east circuit near Morehead.

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PHOTO ABOVE, "CO-OP SUNSET," WAS TAKEN BY MEMBER BRENDAN COULTER OF FALL RIVER. THE PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS THE BEAUTY OF OUR COOPERATIVE TERRITORY.

4 Rivers Holds 3rd Annual Meeting of the Members

The 3rd Annual Meeting of the Members of 4 Rivers Electric Cooperative was held March 27, 2023, at the Lyon County Fairgrounds' Anderson Building in Emporia. There were nearly 250 attendees including 120 registered members and guests. A meal catered by Olpe Chicken House was served to members by local FFA student volunteers. Four rounds of prizes were given away to members during the meeting, and each member received a 4 Rivers tape measure.



Lineman Jeff Reed (left) uses the tabletop safety display to provide a power line safety demonstration to co-op member Randy Smith.



Board President Michael Springer (right) recognizes Sandy Smith (center) and Robert Harkrader for their years of service on the board.

Board President Michael Springer opened the 7 p.m. meeting by welcoming members. Trustee Loren Dickens led the invocation followed by the National Anthem. Trustee Robert Converse led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The agenda and 2022 minutes were approved, and the treasurer's report was given. President Springer spoke on the importance of youth in the communities we serve, and opportunities for leadership, education, and team building at the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp near Steamboat Springs, Colorado, and Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., as well as the 4 Rivers Electrical Lineworker Scholarship. President Springer recognized **ELIZABETH GALLOWAY** and **SHELBY SMITH** as 4 Rivers' representatives to Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp in July, and **RILEY PETITJEAN** and **ALLANAH HARRIS** as representatives to Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in June.

General Manager Dennis Svanes spoke on supply chain issues and challenges. He noted the importance of working with suppliers and other electric cooperatives.

Keynote speakers were Suzanne Lane, executive vice president & CEO of Kansas Electric Power Cooperative, and Cleve Reasoner, chief nuclear officer of Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation.



Board President Michael Springer addresses the membership.

President Springer called on Tim Larson, 4 Rivers attorney, to announce the election results: In District 1, **ROBERT CONVERSE** was unopposed and declared the winner. In District 2, **RANDY BUNNEL** was unopposed and declared the winner. In District 3, Sandy Smith received 142 votes, and Tom Ayers received 243 votes. **TOM AYERS** was declared the winner in District 3. Mr. Larson noted that petitions for nominations are now used for anyone wishing to enter the elections, instead of a nominating committee, and the board of trustees is now down to 11 members. Next year, the board of trustees will be reduced to the final goal of nine trustees.

President Springer recognized Sandy Smith and Robert Harkrader for their years of service on the board.

President Springer called for any new business from the members, of which there was none. A motion was made, seconded and carried to adjourn the 2023 annual meeting.



Approximately 250 members and guests were in attendance at the meeting.

Efficiency Upgrades to Help You Save This Summer

Spring and summer are opportune times for home upgrades and DIY projects. If you're planning to make improvements to your home, consider upgrades that promote better efficiency. Here are a few projects that can help you save energy and money — and increase the comfort of your home.

Installing a smart thermostat is one of the simplest ways to manage home energy use and keep summer bills in check. Smart thermostats are easy to install and allow you to control your heating and cooling system from your phone. You can purchase an Energy Star®-certified smart thermostat for as low as \$100, which can save you 8% on annual heating and cooling costs, about \$50 per year. This upgrade will quickly pay for itself, and you'll gain insight into better ways to heat and cool your home.

Speaking of smart, additional devices like smart LED bulbs also offer convenient control and help boost energy savings at home. With smart lighting, you can set a schedule for when and how your lights should be turned on or off. And the next time you head out to run errands and realize you left the lights on, all you have to do is turn them off through your phone. Smart lights come in a variety of shapes, colors and brightness levels — and you can purchase bulbs for indoor or outdoor use. Schedule outdoor smart lights to illuminate your home at night and when you're out of town for better security.

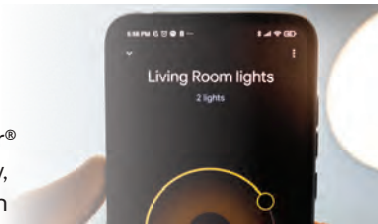
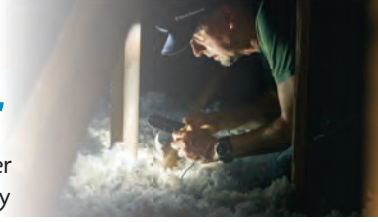
While it's not as trendy as incorporating smart technologies, sealing air leaks around your home is a simple, effective way to save energy and lower

your bills. Applying new (or replacing old) weather stripping around doors and windows can instantly make your home more comfortable and reduce energy waste. Applying caulk to fill gaps can also improve the seal of your home. Caulk can be applied to a variety of areas, including windows, doors, bathtubs and sinks.

If your home feels too warm during summer (and too chilly during winter) even after you've sealed with weather stripping and caulk, your home may need additional insulation. Insulation is considered a more expensive efficiency upgrade; however, if your home is under-insulated, additional insulation can make a big impact on reducing energy use and costs. The cost of new insulation depends on a variety of factors like materials, size of the home and whether you use a contractor. Typically, the project costs can be recouped in a few years and your home will immediately feel more comfortable.

Of course, there are additional efficiency upgrades that can make a big impact on energy use, like replacing old appliances with Energy Star® models or replacing old, leaky windows with new, energy efficient windows. But these upgrades can be a bit pricey.

If you're wanting to make your home more energy efficient but you're not sure where to start, your best bet is to enlist the help of an expert to conduct an energy audit of your home. An energy audit can easily identify areas to boost efficiency, and then you can determine the projects you want to tackle first based on your budget and needs.



Consolidated Rates Begin With May Billing

New rate tariffs approved by the 4 Rivers Board of Trustees in February are effective beginning with usage in April. For most members, that means the bills received in May will be their first under the newly consolidated rate tariffs. Our cooperative no longer has separate rates for members based on where they are located — formerly Lyon-Coffey or Radiant territories. Going forward, services in Eskridge to Coffeyville will be subject to the same rates and fees, whether the service is residential, general service small, general service large or otherwise, depending on which rate tariff qualifies and best fits the member's needs.

One notable change for many members will be a \$1/kVa capacity charge for services larger than a 15 kVa transformer. The kVa capacity charge allows the cooperative to collect revenue for costs associated with larger capacity needs, primarily higher demand charges, but also including line loss and maintenance. For example, members who have a 25 kVa transformer serving their home will have a \$10 kVa

capacity charge as a part of their minimum charges.

Changes made to the rate tariffs more accurately reflect the cooperative's cost to serve each rate class, as we align our rates to a single set of tariffs. The objective is, and always will be, to collect revenue fairly and equitably, so we can provide safe, reliable electricity to our members.

The new rate tariffs can be found at www.4riverselectric.com. If you have any questions about the consolidated rate tariffs or your 4 Rivers bill, please call our consumer-member team at 620-364-2116.

3 MOST COMMON RATE TARIFFS

- ▶ **NON-COMMERCIAL SERVICE:** Single-phase farms, residential consumers, water wells, churches, schools, community halls and other public buildings.
- ▶ **GENERAL SERVICE SMALL:** Commercial, small industrial, three-phase farm and others.
- ▶ **GENERAL SERVICE LARGE:** Commercial and industrial customers where kilowatt (kW) demand is 50 kW or greater.

Line Maintenance — Continuous Effort for Safety & Reliability *Continued from page 12A ▶*

inspect the poles across our system. 4 Rivers contracts with Osmose Utilities Services for pole inspections. The inspection process includes a series of tests above and below ground level. If a pole passes inspection, a treatment is applied to the pole to help preserve it, so we can be confident that the pole will last at least another 15 years until the next inspection and treatment. 4 Rivers plans to examine 100% of the cooperative's poles over a 15-year cycle, replacing over 500 poles each year due to inspection failure. Currently, Osmose has several crews inspecting poles in the Americus, Coyville and Hartford areas.

Some 4 Rivers facilities are located underground. To keep our members and the public safe, we inspect our pad-mounted transformers, risers and junction boxes annually. We often find unwanted “guests” inside these facilities: pack rats, squirrels or other such critters. Our goal is to evict the little squatters before they cause costly equipment damage and outages for our members. 4 Rivers linemen currently perform the inspection of these facilities.

4 Rivers has a robust cooperative work plan. We use this four-year plan to build redundancy in our electric grid, voltage support and conversion

projects. We have over 50 miles of new build or rebuild projects within our current work plan. In the first half of 2023, we are working on projects east of Neodesha and west of Williamsburg. During the second part of this year, we are upgrading conductor line in the Coyville and Homewood areas.

As you know, supply chain issues have presented some challenges, but we continue to evaluate and prioritize projects in our work plan. This continued proactive approach to system maintenance ensures that we can provide our member-owners with safe, reliable and cost-effective electric service.

Sustaining a Reliable Electric System

We've all heard the phrase, “Don't put all your eggs in one basket.” This popular adage is often used in conversation or a story when someone is about to do something foolish or risky. If they heed this advice, it means they did not commit to “one basket,” but instead hedged their bets with multiple options.

This strategy is how we describe 4 Rivers' common sense approach to the current energy transition. We know that consumer interest in renewable energy continues to grow. We have seen this trend here in Kansas.

Recent innovations and advances in renewable energy technologies have led to decreases in costs, making renewables more feasible, accessible and scalable. Nationally, there is increasing reliance on renewable energy sources at the same time that we are seeing fossil fuel plants taken offline, often ahead of schedule. Additionally, there is more pressure on the electric grid due to the increasing frequency and intensity of severe weather events and rising electricity demand.

Competing Pressures

So how do we reconcile these challenges of grid pressure and a changing fuel mix? Solar and wind energy are certainly beneficial for the environment, but they are limited resources because the sun does not always shine, and the wind does not always blow. Our primary responsibility is to provide electricity 24/7 to you and our community. To do this, we need reliable sources of power that will meet all the peaks and valleys of on-demand energy in our connected world.

So where are we netting out? That's where our familiar adage comes into play. While use of renewables is increasing, we still need to incorporate other forms of energy in the mix to ensure reliable service. Remember, solar and wind are intermittent power sources. This fact coupled with the growing demand for renewables creates its own challenges.

That's why we spread our eggs into multiple baskets. There is great value in maintaining a diverse mix of fuel sources — fossil fuels and renewables work together to ensure reliability and resiliency and meet the growing demand for electricity.

Reliability also means repairing and replacing utility equipment to prevent wear-and-tear, ensuring our equipment can withstand severe weather. We are laser-focused on providing our 4 Rivers' members with reliable, affordable energy. That's why fuel diversity — or placing our eggs in multiple baskets — is essential to reliability.

The Bottom Line

Lowering the overall carbon footprint in this country means we're going to electrify more and more of our economy. Solar and wind power are an important part of a broader energy portfolio, but they are not available 24/7. In today's ever-connected world, people need power around the clock.

As our nation increasingly depends on electricity to power the economy, 4 Rivers is working to anticipate, plan and respond to market trends and policy shifts. That's how we can power your home and our economy, while continuing to serve as your local energy provider.