



CURRENT NEWS



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**KEM
Electric Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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John Beck
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Dean Hummel
Neil Meidinger

Co-General Managers/CEOs:

Donald A. Franklund
Travis M. Kupper

www.kemelectric.com

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KEM Electric Cooperative is dedicated to providing affordable, reliable energy and services that support and unite our member-owners.

We also aspire to meet the Touchstone Energy® Cooperative core values of integrity, innovation, accountability and commitment to community.

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

TOGETHERWESAVE.COM

It's a scam!

Fraudulent callers targeting electric consumers

Efforts to rip off cooperative consumers have been ramping up across the state and nation. From making claims of incorrect meter readings and citing invalid checks to forcing people to pay by cash or face an immediate power disconnect, the message for KEM members is to be aware and careful.

In Bismarck, Capital Electric Cooperative reported that someone was trying to coerce members into paying an outstanding balance.

"This particular scam attempted to convince people they were two months overdue on their bill and they must pay on the phone," says Wes Engbrecht, director of communications and public relations. "We asked our members to be aware of this scam, and do not pay a bill until they've contacted our office."

In David City, Nebraska, Butler Public Power District warned members of calls threatening disconnection unless payment was made immediately by cash. The Butler County Sheriff's Office posted on its Facebook page in caps, "DO NOT GIVE ANY INFORMATION TO ANYONE OVER THE PHONE."

That's sound advice, says Tim Dockter, KEM's manager of member services. "If you receive a suspicious call about your utility bill, don't give them any personal or financial information. Hang up and call us right away," he says.

Don't put safety on autopilot

Global Positioning System (GPS) technology provides farmers with real-time, accurate location data about a field. While GPS can help the driver plant straight rows and maximize potential, it can give a false sense of security. KEM Electric reminds our members not to put safety on autopilot.

When the GPS is set, drivers still need to be aware of navigation issues and human error.

Farming equipment is vulnerable to hitting power lines because of its large size, height and extensions. Depending on the type of GPS system used, it might not have the ability to autonomously avoid utility poles.

Members, evaluate your fields regularly, looking for low-hanging lines when entering a field, turning in end rows, leaving the field and driving back to the farm. Also, be aware of shifting ground conditions.

Your safety matters. Working together helps ensure the safety of all!





OPERATION ROUND UP

Doing good things for friends, neighbors, communities

Operation Round Up is a voluntary program in which electric cooperative members round up their monthly utility bills to the nearest dollar and donate their change to local individuals, groups or charities with a specific need. The money pools and accumulates, and an elected board of co-op members reviews the grant applications that have been submitted and determines grant worthiness.

On July 18, the board met to review and award grants to the following recipients:

- Bio Girls Emmons County
- Linton Chamber of Commerce for Day of Caring
- City of Zeeland for repair of Zeeland Arch

The next deadline to submit a grant for consideration is Sept. 30.

Any person or group in the KEM Electric Cooperative service area may apply to receive an Operation Round Up grant. To request an application, call KEM at 701-254-4666 or 800-472-2673, or download the form at www.kemelectric.com (click "Your Community" and "Operation Round Up").

Also in the August North Dakota Living local pages ...

- Annual meeting recap
- True events inspire tall tale
- Medora Touchstone Energy® discount ... and more

HOLIDAY CLOSING: SEPT. 3

In observance of Labor Day, KEM Electric Cooperative will be closed on Monday, Sept. 3. Line crews will be available in case of an emergency electrical outage.



The week of July 16 to 20, **Tyler Jacob** (right), apprentice lineman for KEM Electric, attended Hotline School at the Bismarck State College training facility in Mandan. Hosted by the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives, Hotline School gives linemen across the state an opportunity to learn from seasoned instructors who are using new tools and updated techniques to work on simulated energized power lines. Safety is the culture of your local Touchstone Energy® Cooperative!

Tyler Jacob benefits cooperative and community

Linton native Tyler Jacob is KEM Electric Cooperative's newest full-time employee. Hired in March, he is an apprentice lineman who helps build and maintain KEM's electric distribution system.

The son of KEM members Brian and Patti Jacob, Tyler grew up in town, and his parents farmed and were served by KEM Electric. Prior to graduating from Linton Public School, Tyler says he had an understanding of how his local cooperative brought power to rural areas. Now as an employee, he also understands the business model of serving the member-owner.

Tyler studied business for one year before deciding to enroll in the lineworker program at Bismarck State College (BSC). Influenced by an uncle, who works as a lineman for Montana-Dakota Utilities in Bismarck, and a cousin who works as a lead man for Mor-Gran-Sou Electric Cooperative in Mandan, Tyler says he liked how they got to work outdoors and how their jobs varied from day to day.

During his apprenticeship, Tyler worked as seasonal help for MDU for several months before moving to Baker, Mont., to continue his training. He stayed a year and a half, before returning to MDU in Bismarck, where he worked for another year and a half. When an opportunity with his hometown cooperative opened in Linton, he applied and was hired.

Tyler has finished his course work with BSC and is logging hours with KEM line crews to fulfill the time and experience needed to become a journeyman lineman. In June 2019, he plans to meet those requirements.

Tyler's wife, Allison (Vetter) Jacob, is also from Linton. She grew up on a dairy farm, and Tyler says she likes the small-town feel of Linton. Their decision to return home is a great addition to this community. Allison works for First International Bank, and the couple has one daughter, Addison.

KEM Electric Cooperative is proud to offer local jobs with competitive pay and benefits. Thank you, Tyler, for choosing a challenging profession that is needed in our community and beyond, and for bringing your family home to Linton.