

Manager's message: The power behind your power



As April arrives, it brings with it the showers that produce spring flowers. It also heralds the beginning of

a potentially stormy season that can inherently include power outages. While KEM Electric strives to provide reliable electricity to our members, there are times when Mother Nature has other plans. Most of us can ride out a storm from the comfort and convenience of our homes. However, there is a group of professionals that spring into action when the weather takes a turn for the worst – co-op lineworkers.

One of the most dangerous jobs

Braving stormy weather and other challenging conditions, lineworkers often must climb 40 or more feet in the air, carrying heavy equipment to restore power. Listed as one of the 10 most dangerous jobs in the U.S., lineworkers must perform detailed tasks next to high voltage power lines. To help keep them safe, lineworkers wear specialized protective clothing and equipment at all times when on the job. This includes special fire-resistant clothing that will

self-extinguish, limiting potential injuries from burns and sparks. Insulated and rubber gloves are worn in tandem to protect them from electrical shock. While the gear performs a critical function, it also adds additional weight and bulk, making the job more complex.

In addition to the highly visible tasks lineworkers perform, their job today goes far beyond climbing to the top of a pole to repair a wire. They are also information experts that can pinpoint an outage from miles away and restore power remotely. Line crews use their laptops and cell phones to map outages, take pictures of the work they have done and troubleshoot problems. In our community, KEM Electric lineworkers are responsible for keeping over 2,700 miles of lines across four of counties working, in order to bring power to your home and our local community 24/7, regardless of the weather, holidays or personal considerations.

While lineworkers may be the most visible employees at KEM Electric, it's important to note that there is a team of highly skilled professionals working behind the scenes. Engineers provide ongoing expertise and guidance on the operations side of the co-op. Member service representatives are always standing by to take your calls and answer your questions. Our

information technology experts are continuously monitoring our system to help safeguard sensitive data. And these are just a few of the folks who work together to ensure we can deliver the service and reliability you expect and deserve. Without them, our lineworkers wouldn't be able to "bring the light" to our community.

Our dedicated lineworkers are proud to represent KEM Electric, and they deserve all the appreciation and accolades that come their way on Lineworker Appreciation Day.

On April 11, and any time you see a lineworker, I hope you'll join me in thanking them for their exceptional service. I also hope you'll remember that you have a dedicated team of professionals working behind the scenes at the co-op whose commitment to service runs just as deep. ⚡

Travis Kupper

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Jason Bentz

Safety starts with ME: Marty Messer



Spring is upon us and as the weather gets warmer and days get longer, we can't help but think of the landscaping projects we've been dreaming about during the cold, winter months. "If any of your spring projects require digging—such as planting trees or shrubs, or setting posts—remember to dial 811 first," said Martin Messer, KEM Electric's Steele area foreman.

From gas lines to water and electric, one wrong plow, harrow, or thrust into the ground can lead to disaster and set your project timeline back significantly. Here are the steps to take when dialing 811:

Call- Upon dialing 811, you will be routed to a local "one call" center.

Provide information- Tell the operator where you're planning to dig and what type of project you are working on. By doing this, the affected local utilities will be notified

of this information.

Wait- Within a few days after the initial call, a locator will come to the site and inform you of any underground lines, pipes and cables. This designated person will mark these areas with flags or paint.

Time to dig- After this process is complete, you may start your digging to achieve your landscaping dreams!

"Do-it-yourself projects are great and fun as long as you do-it-right," noted Messer. "Many homeowners are aware of the significance in 'call before you dig' however, do not take advantage of it."

A national survey showed that only 50 percent of homeowners called to have their lines marked before starting digging projects, according to the Common Ground Alliance (CGA). CGA data also shows that an underground utility line is damaged every six minutes in the U.S.

The simplest of tasks can cause damage to underground lines, and in return cause outages, damage utility lines, harm diggers and may even result in repair costs and fines, which is why it is so important to play it safe and dial 811 beforehand.

Here at KEM Electric we want to not only keep underground utilities safe, but most importantly, you. ⚡

Thank you lineworkers!

National studies consistently rank power lineworkers among the most dangerous jobs in the country, and for good reason. Laboring high in the air, wearing heavy equipment and working directly with high voltage creates the perfect storm of a dangerous and unforgiving profession. But electric lineworkers are up to the task. These brave people are committed to safety, and the challenges of the job. KEM Electric Cooperative's lineworkers are responsible for keeping power flowing day and night, regardless of national holidays, vacations, birthdays or other important family milestones. Beyond the years of specialized training and apprenticeships, it takes internal fortitude and a mission-oriented outlook to be a good lineworker. In fact, this service-oriented mentality is a hallmark characteristic of lineworkers. The job requires lineworkers to set aside their personal priorities to better serve their local community.

Get to know our dedicated lineworkers in this month's North Dakota Living magazine. ⚡

Co-op members addresses needed

KEM Electric Cooperative needs new addresses to mail members their capital credit allocation statements and/or capital credit check written last year. The following list of KEM members and their current address on file (last known address) were mailed allocation statements and/or checks that were returned from the post office, because it was "not a deliverable address," "unable to forward" or "attempted not known." If you know of a current address, please call the KEM Electric Cooperative office at 701-254-4666 or 800-472-2673. Persons who wish to claim checks from the published list should be prepared to provide proper identification.

See our unclaimed capital credits list in this month's North Living magazine. ⚡