



An Equal Opportunity Provider & Employer

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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WESTERN COOPERATIVE ELECTRIC

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FROM THE MANAGER

The Power Behind Your Power

Lineworker Appreciation Day is April 11



Tom Ruth

You've likely noticed Western's crews out and about, working on power lines and other electrical equipment in our community. It's no secret that a lineworker's job is tough — but it's a job that's essential and must be done, often in challenging conditions. This month, as we celebrate Lineworker Appreciation Day on April 11, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on the individuals who make modern life possible.

There are some things in this world that cannot be purchased, cannot be given nor inherited, they must be earned. Once you have it, no one can ever take it away from you. Being a lineworker is one of those things you get the hard way, you earn it. Lineworkers often work non-traditional hours outdoors under challenging conditions. The job requires technical skills, years of training, and hands-on learning. To become a journeyman lineworker requires more than 8,000 hours of training. That's because working with 13,200 and 34,500-volt equipment requires specialized skills, experience, and ongoing

mental toughness. The work can be heavy, in more ways than one. The equipment and tools that a lineworker carries while climbing a utility pole can weigh up to 50 pounds. Lineworkers must also be capable of climbing poles ranging from 30 to 120 feet tall. Needless to say, if you have a fear of heights, this likely isn't the career path for you.

The work can be physically demanding. The equipment and tools that a lineworker carries while climbing a utility pole can weigh up to 50 pounds. Lineworkers must also be capable of climbing poles ranging from 30 to 120 feet tall. Needless to say, if you have a fear of heights, this likely isn't the career path for you.

Despite the many challenges, Western's lineworkers are committed to powering our local communities. During severe weather events that bring major power outages, lineworkers are among the first ones called. They must be ready to leave the comfort of their home and families unexpectedly, and they don't return until the job is done. That's why the lineworker's family is also committed to the service of our members. They understand the importance of the job to the community.

Nationwide, there are approximately

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77th ANNUAL MEETING

Wednesday, May 11

Lunch at Noon | Meeting at 1 p.m.

**Western Office in WaKeeney
635 S. 13th Street | WaKeeney, Kansas 67672**

JOIN US FOR:

- Door Prizes
- Cooperative Updates
- Trustee Election Results
- Bylaw Vote
- Learn More About the Advantages of Being a Member

MOVING FORWARD

The Power Behind Your Power

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120,000 electric lineworkers. Western has 36 lineworkers who are responsible for keeping power flowing 24/7, 365 days a year. To do this, they maintain 4,010 miles of power lines across 13 Kansas counties. In addition to the highly visible tasks lineworkers perform, their job today goes far beyond climbing utility poles and repairing wires. Today's lineworkers are information experts who can pinpoint power outages from miles away. Line crews now use laptops, tablets, and other technologies to map outages, survey damage, and troubleshoot problems.

Being a lineworker is not a glamorous job, but it is absolutely essential to life in our community. Without the exceptional dedication and commitment of these hardworking men and women, we simply would not have the reliable energy we need for industry and everyday life.

So, the next time you see a lineworker, please thank them for the work they do to keep power flowing,



Visit Western's social media pages to leave a comment on Monday, April 11 as we recognize our Western lineworkers for National Lineworker Appreciation Day.

regardless of the time of day or weather conditions. After all, lineworkers are the power behind your power. Please join us as we recognize them on Monday, April 11.

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work they do to keep power flowing, regardless of the time of day or weather conditions. After all, lineworkers are the power behind your power. Please visit Western's social media pages to leave a comment as we recognize them on Monday, April 11.

Let Your Voice Be Heard

As a member of Western Cooperative Electric, you can play a significant role in deciding what happens at your cooperative. All cooperatives operate according to the same Seven Cooperative Principles. These principles guide our decisions and ensure we are putting the needs of our members first.

The Second Cooperative Principle is Democratic Member Control.

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. Representatives (trustees) are elected among the membership and are accountable to them. In primary cooperatives, members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote); cooperatives at other levels are organized in a democratic manner.

Soon you will be receiving a ballot in the mail. Please take



It is important we receive your ballot on time. Your vote will not be counted if it is not received at the cooperative office **BY MAY 1, 2022.**

the time to vote for the trustee nominees who you believe would best represent you as a member. Ballots must be received by May 1, and must be filled out according to the instructions to be valid.

Participation is the lifeblood of democracy. This principle is often abbreviated "one member, one vote," an important way to differentiate co-ops from other business models where voting rights are tied to the amount of stock an investor owns.

The Second Cooperative Principle, Democratic Member Control, is an example of democracy put into practice when people take time out of their busy lives to actively participate in the local electric cooperative's governance.

Sharing Success Grant Cycle begins April 1

With the help of our partner bank, Cobank, Western Cooperative Electric started the Sharing Success program in 2013. Each year, Western's funds are matched by Cobank to make grants available for nonprofit organizations and community projects.

"Our Sharing Success Program exists to make a positive difference in the communities Western Cooperative serves," Nolan Numrich, Western member service manager, said. "Charitable, educational and nonprofit organizations can apply for Sharing Success Grants."

In 2021-2022, Western Cooperative awarded 12 grants. Those recipients were Trego County Saddle Club, City of Palco, City of Dorrance, Boy Scout Troop No. 101, City of Collyer, DSNWK, Ellsworth County EMS, St. Anthony's Scheonchen, and disaster relief funds for Trego, Ellis, Rooks, and Russell counties.

Each one of these recipients demonstrated how the grant would benefit or improve their community.

Visit WWW.WESTERNCOOP.COM/SHARING-SUCCESS-COMMUNITY-GRANTS to learn more or apply.

