



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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FLINT HILLS
RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

**FLINT HILLS RURAL
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

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FROM THE MANAGER

The Power Behind Your Power

Lineworker Appreciation Day is April 11



Chuck Goeckel

You've likely noticed Flint Hill REC'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 thought I'd share some interesting facts about electric lineworkers with you.

The work can be heavy, in more ways than one. Did you know the equipment and tools that a lineworker carries while climbing a utility pole can weigh up to 50 pounds? That's the same as carrying 6 gallons of water. Speaking of utility

poles, lineworkers are required to climb poles ranging anywhere 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.

Lineworkers must be committed to their career — because it's not just a job, it's a lifestyle. The long hours and ever-present danger can truly take a toll. In fact, being a lineworker is listed in the top 10 most dangerous jobs in the U.S.

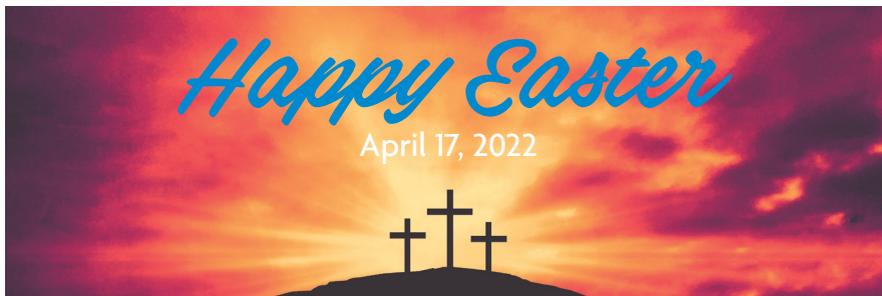
Lineworkers often work non-traditional hours, outdoors in difficult conditions. While the job does not require a college degree, it does require technical skills, years of training and hands-on learning. Did you know that to become a journeyman lineworker can take more than 7,000 hours of training (or about four years)? That's because working with high-voltage

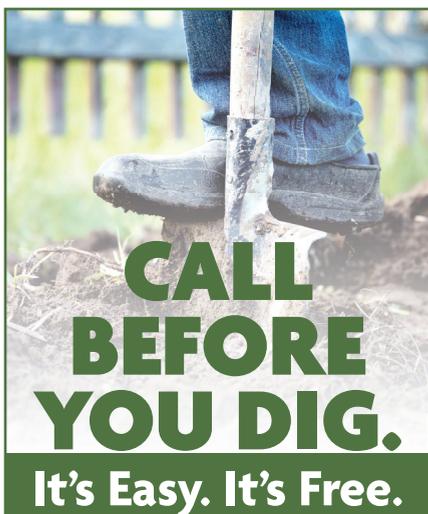
Continued on page 12C ▶

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- ▶ Viasat Internet Services
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PLANNING A DIGGING PROJECT ON YOUR PROPERTY?

If you dig without knowing what is located below, you could damage an underground line.

Not only could you be seriously injured, but you will be responsible for the cost of repairs. To avoid hassles and fines, **CALL 811**, the Call Before You Dig number, at least two business days prior to breaking ground.

NOTE 811 locators do not mark privately owned underground lines, such as service to outbuildings, sprinkler systems or invisible fences.

AN UNEVENTFUL DIGGING PROJECT IS THE BEST KIND TO HAVE.

Take Control of a Controlled Burn

Properly controlled burns can have many benefits for agricultural land. However, if these burns are not managed safely, they can result in property damage, power outages, injury and even death. Flint Hills REC urges you to make safety a priority and take special considerations when burning near electric utility lines.

First, make yourself aware of laws and regulations. Burns should only be conducted by those who are experienced with fire and burn paths. Avoid burning near public roads or airports as this can create a potentially dangerous visibility hazard. Alert all those who may be potentially affected by the burn — including neighbors, the local fire department, and law enforcement. Ensure that you have the proper clothing, equipment, and tools. For personal safety, all those near the flames should wear clothing made of natural fibers or approved for firefighting.

Take special note of electric utility poles and lines. Burning a pole could result in a widespread power outage and be costly for those responsible for the fire. The cost to replace just one utility pole can range from \$1,500 to \$2,500. Remove grass and weeds around the utility pole prior to burning and water down the area near the poles as to not encourage fires to encroach. While controlling the fire keep water away from electric lines.

If a pole catches on fire, call the fire department and alert your electric utility to handle the possible electrical dangers. Even if you think you have been able to extinguish the fire yourself, alert your electric utility to the fact that it caught fire. The preservative on the inside could still be burning the pole from the inside out. In addition,



Before you begin your controlled burn, take note of where electric utility poles and lines are located. Take special caution to prevent damage to electrical infrastructure.

if the pole catches on fire, it could create shock or electrocution hazards to those who may be nearby or spark fires in unintended directions from the downed lines.

Carbon particles in smoke can conduct electricity. It is also possible for smoke produced during the burning to conduct electricity and cause an electrical discharge from the line. To reduce this risk, the fire should not cross under electric lines.

Keep environmental factors such as temperature, humidity and wind direction and speed in mind. The wind speed in the area should be low and in a steady direction as to not let the fire get out of control. As environmental factors are subject to change, check forecasts as well as actual conditions before you begin the burn.

Local resources, through conservation offices, are available to develop a plan and assist in training for a controlled burn. Depending on local regulations, you may need to obtain a burn permit. Preparation and timely planning will ensure a safe, controlled burn for you and all involved.

The Power Behind Your Power Continued from page 12A

equipment requires specialized skills, experience and an ongoing mental toughness. Shortcuts are not an option, and there is no room for error in this line of work.

Despite the many challenges, Flint Hills REC's lineworkers are committed to powering our local community. 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, often days later. That's why the lineworker's family is also dedicated to service. They understand the importance of the job to the community.

Nationwide, there are approximately 120,000 electric lineworkers. Here in Flint Hills REC's territory, we have 12 lineworkers that are responsible for keeping power flowing 24/7, 365 days a year. To do this, they maintain over 2,500 miles of power lines across parts of 10 counties. In addition to the highly visible tasks lineworkers perform, their job today goes far beyond climbing utility poles to repair a wire. Today's lineworkers are information experts who can pinpoint power outages from miles away. Line crews now use laptops,

tablets, drones and other technologies to map outages, survey damage and troubleshoot problems.

Being a lineworker may not seem like 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 electricity that we need for everyday life.

So, the next time you see a lineworker, please thank them for the 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 join us this year by saying thank you to our lineworkers on

Monday April 11th. You can do this by sending them a card or letter to Flint Hills REC, P.O. Box B, Council Grove, KS 66846 or email us your message at mail@flintheillsrec.com and follow "#ThankALineworker" on social media to see how others are recognizing lineworkers across the country.

LINWORKER APPRECIATION DAY



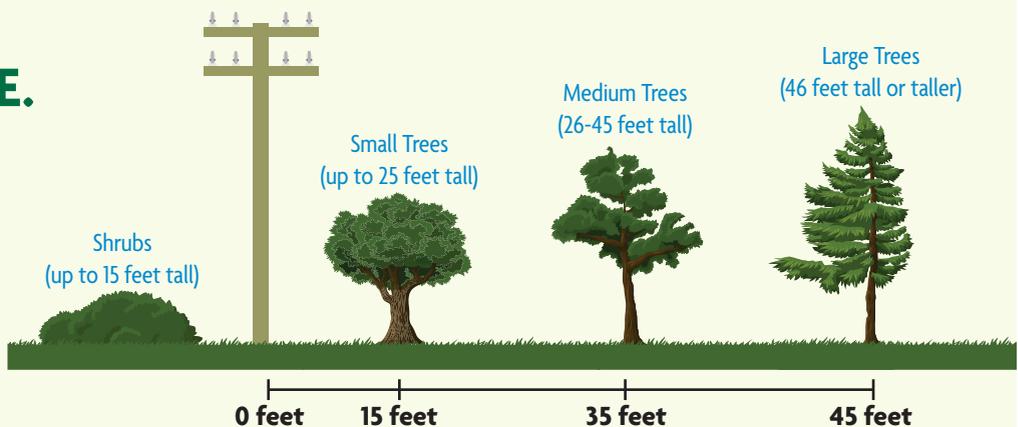
APRIL 11, 2022

We thank lineworkers for their courage and commitment to powering our community.

Plant the RIGHT TREE in the RIGHT PLACE.

The larger the tree, the farther it should be planted from a power line. Avoid planting beneath power lines, near poles or close to electrical equipment.

Remember, know what's below by calling 811 before you dig.



THANK YOU

FOR KEEPING THE POWER ON



Safe
Electricity.org®