

# Norris Electric *News*

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

## Norris Electric Cooperative

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or **Toll-Free:**  
1-877-783-8765

**Report an Outage:**  
1-877-783-3221

**Office Hours:**  
Monday – Thursday  
7 a.m. – 5 p.m.

**Chairman**  
Gordon McClure .....Jasper

**Vice Chairman**  
Ron Viehman.....Lawrence

**Secretary/Treasurer**  
Dan Strine ..... Wabash

**Directors**  
Ava Lemmon .....Crawford  
Brandon Graves ..... Richland  
Kurt Holscher .....Crawford  
Dave Thoele ..... Effingham  
Scott Weiss.....Lawrence  
Justin Parcel..... Clark  
Dave Sheppard.....Jasper  
Ted Helmink ..... Cumberland

**General Manager**  
Tamara Phillips



*Natalie O'Dell*



*Ethan Dhom*



*Hadley Hagler*



*Braden Magelitz*

## 2024 scholarships awarded

Norris Electric Cooperative offers three \$1,000 scholarships every year to high school seniors to further their education. Applications were available at all area high schools and on the co-op website. A panel of judges reviewed the applications and with much difficulty narrowed down the list to three students.

The 2024 recipients are: Natalie O'Dell, daughter of John and Shawna O'Dell, Neoga High School; Ethan Dhom, son of Chris and Laura Dhom, Oblong High School; and Hadley Hagler, daughter of Andrea Hagler, Beecher City High School.

In addition, the Denise A. Pless Creative Arts Scholarship was established in memory of Denise, who dedicated 14 years of service to NEC as the administrative assistant/communication coordinator. This year, Braden Magelitz, son of Erica and Terry Magelitz, Altamont High School, was awarded the \$1,000 scholarship.

Tamara Phillips, co-op manager, said, "The employees and board members of Norris Electric Cooperative have always been involved in our local schools and communities. We live here, too, and like our members, have a vested interest in the future of our children. These scholarships are just a small way we can help make a difference for students like Natalie, Ethan, Hadley and Braden."

Congratulations to all area graduates!

# Exploring the power behind the lines

Electric cooperatives play a crucial role in delivering reliable electricity to rural communities. Beyond powering homes and businesses, these cooperatives also serve as valuable educational resources. One such initiative is job shadowing, where students gain hands-on experience and insights into potential careers.

Ian Fehrenbacher recently had the chance to participate in a job shadowing program at Norris Electric Cooperative. Ian is the son of Josh and Danielle Fehrenbacher of Jasper County. He graduated high school this May and plans to attend the lineman program at Frontier Community College this fall. This opportunity was designed to provide students with real-world experience and a better understanding of the vital work linemen do every day.

Ian arrived early at the cooperative's headquarters, eager to start his day at 6 a.m. He was greeted by Ed

Hannaman, a seasoned lineman with over 20 years of experience. After a brief orientation and a meeting to discuss the tasks for the day, Ed and Ian hit the road. Throughout the day, Ian learned that safety is the lineman's top priority. Ian shadowed our construction team and observed the process of changing out poles and revamping single-phase service to three-phase service. By the end of the 10-hour day, Ian experienced the crucial work that linemen perform. Ian witnessed the physical labor, technical knowledge and quick thinking required for the job, while gaining very valuable insights into the daily operations of our cooperative.

Job shadowing at an electric cooperative offers students a unique opportunity to explore potential careers and understand the importance of reliable electricity in our communities. For Ian Fehrenbacher, shadowing a lineman was not only an educational



experience, but also an inspiring one. It showcased the dedication, skill and teamwork that goes into keeping the power on and illuminated the pathway to a potential future career. If you or someone you know is interested in job shadowing opportunities, please get in touch with the HR department at NEC. We love sharing our passion for the industry with the next generation!

## COMMON CAUSES OF POWER OUTAGES

There is never a good time for the power to go out, but if it happens on a sunny day, you might be left wondering why. Here are the most common causes of a power outage.

### WEATHER

High winds, snow and ice can cause tree limbs to fall on power lines. Other weather effects, like wildfires and lightning strikes, can cause major damage to equipment.

### CRITTERS

Squirrels, birds, snakes and other animals can inadvertently contact power lines, causing short circuits and disruptions to electrical supply.

### ACCIDENTS

Vehicles can crash into utility poles, bringing down power lines. Construction and excavation work can also result in disruptions to underground lines.

### Scheduled MAINTENANCE

Occasionally, we plan outages to perform upgrades or repairs to parts of the local grid.



## 10 things you might not know about power restoration

Have you ever watched a video or TV show where a person is cooking a meal, then suddenly, they snap their fingers, and the meal is plated and ready to eat? That's called a jump cut.

While we wish we could "jump cut" from a power outage to power restoration, it can often take a lot more effort and people to make it happen.

This month, we would like to shed light on our restoration process to help our members understand what may be happening behind the scenes. Here are 10 things you might not know about restoration:

- 1. We need you.** When your power goes out, it might be just at your home or a small section of a neighborhood. There is a chance we may not know about it, and no one has reported it. We rely on you to let us know if your power is out. You can report outages by calling 1-877-783-3221 or through the Norris App.
- 2. Our employees might be affected, too.** Because Norris Electric Cooperative is a local electric cooperative owned by the members we serve, our employees are local, too. They are your neighbors, friends and familiar community volunteers. When you're without power, our people might be, too.
- 3. It's a team effort.** Every one of Norris Electric Cooperative's employees are working to get your power restored as soon as possible. Our member services representatives are taking your calls, engineers and field staff are surveying damage, our

vegetation management team is clearing hazards, dispatchers are organizing crews, and communicators are keeping everyone informed of progress or potential dangers. When your power goes out, we all work together as quickly and safely as possible to get you back to normal.

- 4. We assess the situation first.** Every outage is different, and we don't know how dangerous it is or what equipment might need to be replaced. When responding to outages, we first need to see what happened, then figure out what materials we need and a plan for how to fix the problem(s) without compromising electric flow for the rest of our members.
- 5. Restoration is normally prioritized by the largest number of members we can get back on in the shortest amount of time.** Our crews focus on responding first to public safety issues and critical services like hospitals. Then we complete work that impacts the largest number of people first.
- 6. Our employees face many dangers.** Besides working around high voltage electricity, our crews are on alert for wild animals, weather elements, falling trees and fast-moving cars. (If you ever drive past one of our vehicles, please do so slowly.)
- 7. Flickering lights are a good thing.** Some folks mistake flickering lights for outages, but these "blinks" are important, because they indicate our equipment

worked and prevented a possible outage likely caused by wayward animals or stray tree limbs on the lines.

- 8. You need a backup plan.** We do our best to help those who need it, but if you depend on electricity for life support purposes, you must have a back-up plan — remember, we don't always know how long restoration efforts will take.
- 9. Our employees have to plan — and eat.** If you ever see our trucks in a restaurant parking lot while your power is out, know that sometimes our employees huddle in a safe, common area to map out their plan for getting your power back on. Also, our crews work long, hard hours during outages and need to take time for meals just like everyone else.
- 10. Sometimes it's a waiting game.** Our portion of the power grid is connected to other electric utilities, and we maintain positive relationships with power providers interconnected to our system. If our outage is due to an issue from their feed into our system, we must let them do their repairs and be mindful of what they're going through to fix it.

We do our best to avoid power disruptions, but they are inevitable from time to time. If the lights go out, know that your co-op team is working as quickly and safely as possible to restore power. If you experience an outage, please let us know by reporting it through our mobile app or by calling 1-877-783-3221.

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Electricity used to operate major appliances accounts for a significant portion of your home energy use.

Here's an easy way to lighten the load on your clothes dryer. Before you dry a load of damp clothing, toss in a clean, dry towel. The towel will absorb excess water, shortening the drying time. If your dryer does not include an autosense feature to determine drying time, remember to reduce the timer to about half of what you normally would. Remove the towel about 15 minutes after the cycle begins. Shorter drying times will extend the life of your dryer and save energy.

Source:  
[homesandgardens.com](http://homesandgardens.com)



Norris Electric would like to welcome Luke Tyner as our summer intern! Luke is attending Eastern Illinois University and is majoring in electrical engineering. He will be working in our engineering department, and we're excited to have him join our team!



# WELCOME TO THE TEAM!

## Luke Tyner

## Safety Tip

All thunderstorms contain lightning. If a thunderstorm approaches when you are swimming or near water, get out of the water and stay away from the beach. If you are golfing, put down your clubs, get away from metal golf carts, take off your golf shoes and get inside as quickly as possible.



Safe Electricity.org®

