

# Norris Electric *News*

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

## Norris Electric Cooperative

8543 N St Hwy 130  
Newton, IL 62448

**Phone:** 618-783-8765  
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

Justin Parcel..... Clark

### Secretary/Treasurer

Dean Dietrich..... Richland

### Directors

Gary Buser.....Crawford

Kurt Holscher .....Crawford

Gilbert Garbe ..... Effingham

Ted Helmink ..... Cumberland

Scott Weiss.....Lawrence

Dan Strine ..... Wabash

Dave Sheppard.....Jasper

Ron Viehman.....Lawrence

### General Manager

Tamara Phillips



## 2022 Annual Meeting of Members

Norris Electric Cooperative held its 84th Annual Meeting of Members on Sat., Feb. 26 at Newton Community High School.

Board President Gordon McClure welcomed members and thanked them for their understanding and patience for the challenges Norris Electric faces with

members install solar. “We are one co-op made of many members, and the decisions we make regarding renewables must benefit the overall interest of our entire membership,” she said.

Capital credits of \$1.4 million were also approved by the board, and Phillips requested the help of attendees to find



COVID-19. McClure discussed the co-op’s current state of its 10-year work plan to replace and rebuild the distribution system. The increasing cost of materials and supply side issues have made it difficult to stay on schedule.

Norris Electric Manager Tamara Phillips reported that 68.4 miles of line rebuild was completed, which contributed to a 60 percent drop in outage numbers. A new service to inform members of planned maintenance outages was also implemented. Members receive automated calls to make them aware of the date, length of time and nature of the planned outage.

Renewable energy is beneficial for the environment, and Phillips said the board is evaluating its power portfolio as more

previous members that have outstanding credits. She said the board has put a priority on returning allocated patronage each year, which is what sets a co-op apart from other utilities.

President McClure explained the election process for the board of directors. This year, four petitions were submitted from the four incumbents. Since there were no contested seats for the positions on the board, the cooperative did not send ballots to the members.

The four directors to be seated this year are Dave Sheppard, Jasper County; Ted Helmink, Cumberland County; Kurt Holscher, Crawford County; and Justin Parcel, Clark County. McClure introduced the rest of the board: Dan Strine,

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Wabash County; Ron Viehman, Lawrence County; Scott Weis, Lawrence County; Gilbert Garbe, Effingham County; Gary Buser, Crawford County; Dean Dietrich, Richland County; and Gordon McClure, Jasper County. Aaron



Leonard, general counsel for Norris Electric was also introduced.

During the meeting, a drawing was held for four \$500 scholarships for high school seniors. Winners were Paige Webster, Clark County; Emily Wirth, Lawrence County; Layni

Andrews, Lawrence County; and Adam Keeney, Clark County.

Prizes were awarded and a delicious meal was served by Niemerg's of Effingham.

**PLEASE MOVE OVER FOR EMERGENCY AND UTILITY CREWS**

If you see police, firefighters, utility crews or other emergency personnel on the side of the road, please slow down and move over when possible.

**Together, we can keep our crews safe.**



**New employee**

Norris Electric would like to introduce Corey Rauch. Corey started his career with Norris on Feb. 1 as a line clearance apprentice. Corey is a family man and likes to mill his own lumber in his spare time. We welcome Corey to the co-op family!



## Gift of Energy

Gifting doesn't just have to be at Christmas.  If you know of someone in need let's not wait for Christmas. Give the gift of energy today.

Gift Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_ From: \_\_\_\_\_

Member name (s) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Member address \_\_\_\_\_  Keep Anonymous

Member Phone \_\_\_\_\_




**SUBMIT CHECK TO:**  
**NORRIS ELECTRIC COOP**

8543 N State Hwy 130 | Newton IL 62448 | 1-877-783-8765

# The power behind your power

*Lineworker Appreciation Day is April 11.*

You've likely noticed Norris Electric'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, we'd like to 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 six 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 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 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 or work.

Despite the many challenges, Norris Electric'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.



## LINWORKER APPRECIATION DAY

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

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 at Norris Electric, we have 23 lineworkers that are responsible for keeping power flowing 24/7, 365 days a year. To do this, they maintain 4,125 miles of power lines across eight 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 essential to the life of 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.

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 as we recognize them on April 11 and follow "#ThankALineworker" on social media to see how others are recognizing lineworkers.

# Plan to call before you dig

Digging without locating underground utilities could leave neighborhoods in the dark, cause thousands of dollars in damages, or cause severe electrical shock. This is true regardless of how much area your project will cover or whether you consider the job to be large or small. To help stay safe, make use of the national underground utility locating service for free by calling 811.

The 811 “Call Before You Dig” number will route you to your local utility locating service. Make sure to tell the operator where and when you plan to dig and what type of work you will be doing. From there, it takes a few business days for a professional to come mark your public utilities with flags or spray paint.

There are different colors of paint and flags that mark the underground utilities, and each color is universal to what utility is buried.

- Red – Electric
- Orange – Communications, telephone/ CATV
- Blue – Potable water
- Green – Sewer/drainage
- Yellow – Gas/petroleum pipeline
- Purple – Reclaimed water
- White – Premark site of intended excavation

Even if you previously had utilities located by calling 811, it is best to call before every digging project. Underground utilities can shift, and it is important to be certain of where they are before ever putting a shovel in the ground.

Please understand that 811 locators do not locate privately installed facilities. If you have any private utilities, you will need to hire a private utility locator. Examples of private utilities include underground sprinkler system, invisible fences, data communication systems, private water systems or gas piping to a garage.

Once all your underground utilities have been located, it is time to start digging, but be sure to wear all the proper protective gear before putting the shovel into the earth.

For more information about 811 and digging safety, visit [Call811.com](http://Call811.com) and [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

## 5 STEPS FOR SAFE DIGGING

Working on an outdoor project? Careless digging poses a threat to people, pipelines and underground facilities. Always call 8-1-1 first. Here are five easy steps for safe digging:



### 1. NOTIFY

Call 8-1-1 or make a request online two to three days before your work begins. The operator will notify the utilities affected by your project.

### 2. WAIT

Wait two to three days for affected utilities to respond to your request. They will send a locator to mark any underground utility lines.



### 3. CONFIRM

Confirm that all affected utilities have responded to your request by comparing the marks to the list of utilities the 8-1-1 call center notified.



### 4. RESPECT

Respect the markers provided by the affected utilities. The markers are your guide for the duration of your project.



### 5. DIG CAREFULLY

If you can't avoid digging near the markers (within 18-24 inches on all sides, depending on state laws), consider moving your project location.



Source: [call811.com](http://call811.com)