




A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative   
 101 Main, P.O. Box 230, Scott City, KS 67871  
 620-872-5885  
 www.weci.net

**WHEATLAND  
 ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

# NEWS

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Great Bend, KS 67530
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Harper, KS 67058
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P.O. Box 490  
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## FROM THE MANAGER

# National Lineworker Appreciation Day, Annual Meeting Postponed

Monday, April 13, is **NATIONAL LINEMAN APPRECIATION DAY**. Wheatland linemen are incredibly talented and dedicated. They risk their lives every day, so we can all enjoy the benefits and conveniences that electricity brings to our daily lives. I want to say thank you to each one of our linemen, thank you for your hard work and dedication to keeping the lights on and it's a pleasure to be able to lead this amazing team.

I am going to keep this month's article short as we are dealing with a pandemic that the world has not seen in very long time. As you will read due to the pandemic, Wheatland is postponing our 72nd Annual meeting that was scheduled for April 22, 2020, in Caldwell, Kansas.

I hope everyone reading this article is


safe and healthy and remains that way. I wanted to let the membership know that Wheatland Electric is doing everything we can to continue to bring you reliable, safe and competitively priced power during these unprecedented times. We have implemented an emergency preparedness plan that will protect both members and employees.

I want to close with asking you to follow the instructions of our public and health care officials in defeating the spread of the pandemic, and that together we will get through this event.






**Bruce W. Mueller**

***Until next time, take care.***



## P O S T P O N E D

Amid growing global concern over the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) and per Governor Kelly's executive order, Wheatland will be postponing our 72nd annual meeting. For more information on the status of the annual meeting and the steps Wheatland is taking to ensure the health and safety of our members and employees visit [WECI.NET](http://WECI.NET) or follow us on social media.



# We Appreciate YOU

## National Lineworker Appreciation Day is April 13

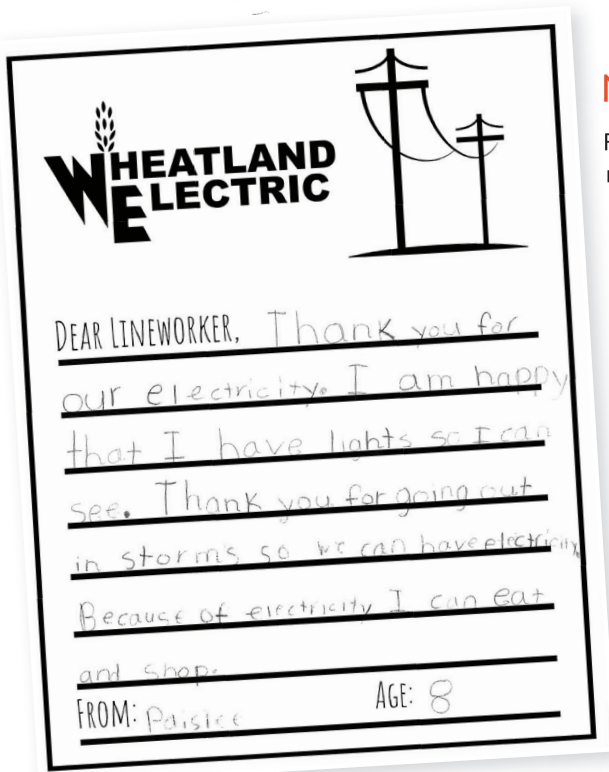
Recently, Manager of Safety and Compliance **QUINTEN WHEELER**, Journeyman Lineman **CODY ELLIS**, and Journeyman Lineman **JORDAN HABIGER** performed a tabletop safety display for students of Scott Community Elementary School.

During the demonstration, Wheeler educated students on the dangers of electricity. After the demonstration, students were able to ask questions and try on some of the safety gear Wheatland linemen use daily. Students wrote thank you letters and drew pictures to show their gratitude for Lineworker Appreciation Day. Wheatland thanks the students who took the time to make this gesture.

In addition, Wheatland would like to proudly recognize our 72 linemen for everything they do. Although we are only taking one day out of the year to formally say "thank you" to our linemen, safely delivering power takes 365 days a year of hard work and sacrifices.

So, the next time you see Wheatland linemen — be sure to thank them for keeping the lights on. But more importantly, thank them for the hard — and often dangerous — work they do.

Use #ThankALineworker or #ThankALineman on your social media posts on April 13 to show support for our Wheatland linemen.



**WHEATLAND ELECTRIC**

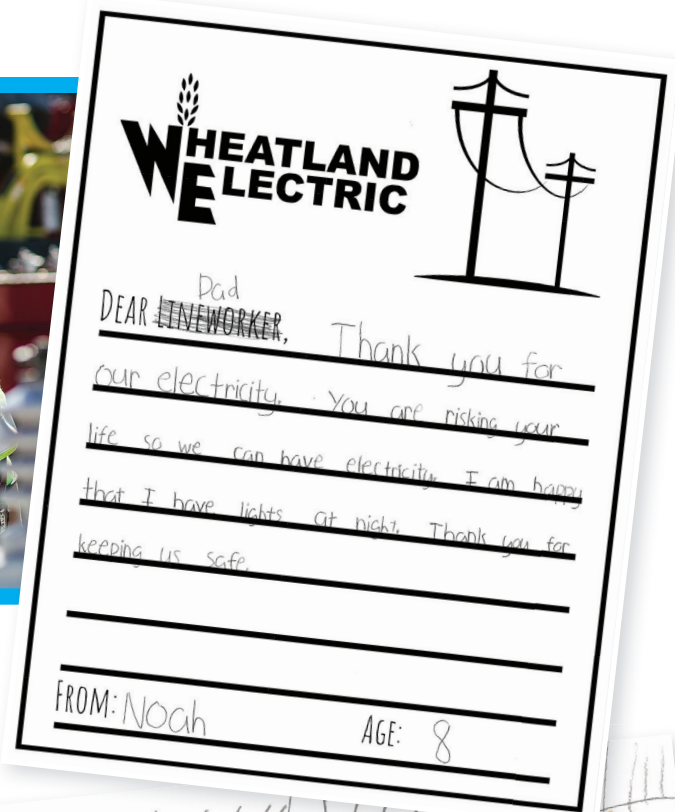


DEAR LINEWORKER, Thank you for our electricity. I am happy that I have lights so I can see. Thank you for going out in storms so we can have electricity. Because of electricity I can eat and shop.

FROM: Paizice

AGE: 8






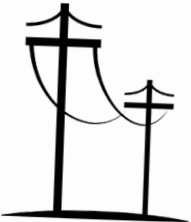


# We Appreciate YOU

National Lineworker Appreciation Day is April 13



**WHEATLAND ELECTRIC**

DEAR LINEWORKER,

Thank you for fixing the electricity. I Learned to not touch the kite that is in the power line. You are helpful.

FROM: Hayden AGE: 7

**WHEATLAND ELECTRIC**




DEAR LINEWORKER, Thank you for going out in the worst wether to help us. I learned to stay in the car if a powerline falls on a car.

FROM: Emme AGE: 7



## SAFETY Tip of the Month

Lawn mowers and gardening tools, like weed whackers, can be dangerous. Children should never be allowed to play anywhere near mowers. Objects hidden in the grass, such as rocks or metal wire fragments, can become dangerous projectiles, striking the body or eye. Wear protective eyewear and turn the mower completely off before clearing grass from the lawn mower.



# LINEWORKER SAFETY GEAR

## A look at the evolution of line equipment

### 1875-1900

#### Electrification begins

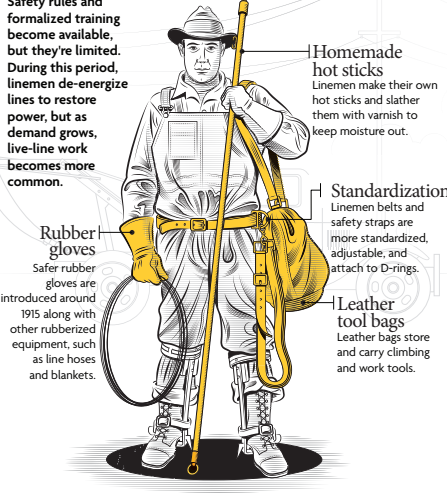
In the early years, linemen learn basic principles and hazards in realtime. Safety standards are non-existent, and most line equipment is handmade.



### 1901-1925

#### Safety beginnings

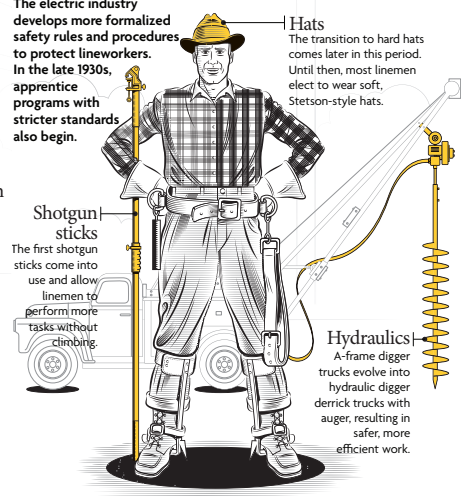
Safety rules and formalized training become available, but they're limited. During this period, linemen de-energize lines to restore power, but as demand grows, live-line work becomes more common.



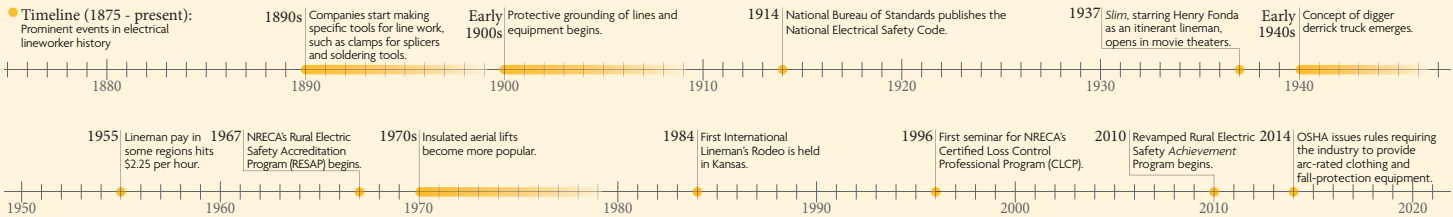
### 1926-1950

#### Safety training improves

The electric industry develops more formalized safety rules and procedures to protect lineworkers. In the late 1930s, apprentice programs with stricter standards also begin.



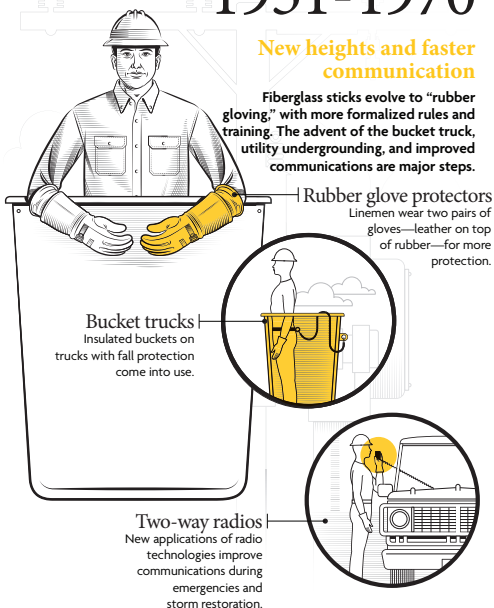
● Timeline (1875 - present): Prominent events in electrical lineworker history



### 1951-1970

#### New heights and faster communication

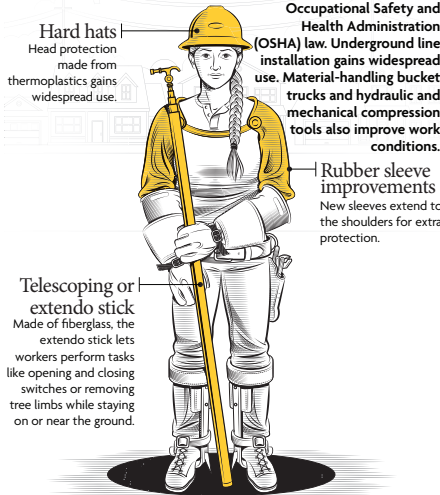
Fiberglass sticks evolve to "rubber gloving" with more formalized rules and training. The advent of the bucket truck, utility undergrounding, and improved communications are major steps.



### 1971-1990

#### New law of the land

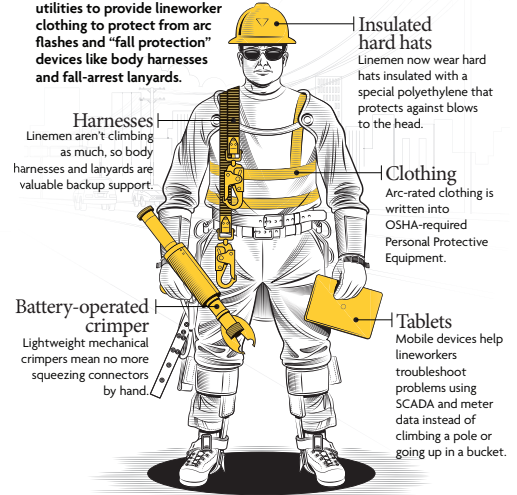
President Nixon signs the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) law. Underground line installation gains widespread use. Material-handling bucket trucks and hydraulic and mechanical compression tools also improve work conditions.



### 1991-present

#### Watching out for workers

OSHA begins requiring utilities to provide lineworker clothing to protect from arc flashes and "fall protection" devices like body harnesses and fall-arrest lanyards.



# Your Wheatland Payment Options

Wheatland Electric has six convenient payment options for our members. All members receive a standard monthly bill for your electrical use. Bills are due and payable upon receipt. We realize one method of payment does not fit every Wheatland Electric member's needs, so we have several payment options available for your convenience.



## 1. Auto Payment/Bank Draft

Wheatland is proud to offer automatic bank draft as a method of bill payment to its members. The account balance (how much you owe for your electric bill) is drafted from your checking account on the fifth of each month. If the fifth falls on a weekend or a holiday, the draft will occur the next business day. Fill out the bank draft application form at <http://www.weci.net/content/bank-draft-application>, attach a voided check and either mail or hand-deliver to any Wheatland office.



## 2. SmartHub/Online Bill Pay

Online bill pay is also available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Click the Pay Bills button located in the top-right corner of Wheatland Electric's website or follow [wheatland.smarthub.coop/login.html](http://wheatland.smarthub.coop/login.html). Members can also download the "Smart Hub" app from the Apple or Android marketplaces on any mobile device.



## 3. Prepay Power

Make payments when you want to, online, by phone, or in person at your local Wheatland office. When your account runs low, you will receive a notice by text or email, letting you know it is time to recharge your account. If funds in your account run out, electrical service will be automatically terminated.



## 4. Pay-by-Phone at 1-844-262-2417

Now you can pay your electric bill at your convenience, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week! Pay-by-Phone is the newest of the many options members have for paying their electric bill. To get started, you'll need your account number, located in the upper right-hand corner of your bill. For security reasons and to comply with Federal Red Flag Rules, Wheatland Electric employees cannot accept payments over the phone. Call 1-844-262-2417 to Pay-by-Phone.



## 5. Mail\*

Wheatland Electric's monthly bill comes complete with a return envelope that you can enclose your bill payment stub and a check or money order in and mail back to your local Wheatland office. \*All payments must be in a Wheatland Electric Office before 5 p.m. on the Delinquent after Date printed on your bill to avoid late payment penalties.



## 6. Drop Boxes

Deposit your payment, including payment stub and check or money order in the payment drop box at any of our office locations or at City Hall, 221 West 5th Street, Scott City.



## 7. Wheatland Electric Offices

You may pay by check, cash, or credit/debit card at any of our offices or authorized pay agents.

Scott City, Leoti, Garden City, Great Bend and Harper offices are open from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. CST Monday-Friday. Our Tribune office is open 8 a.m.-1 p.m. MST. Our Syracuse office is open from 7 a.m.-11:30 a.m. MST and 12:30 p.m.-4 p.m. MST.

Attention all members: Wheatland will continue to closely monitor COVID-19 and make on-going decisions to help ease the concerns of our members and employees. For updates please visit [WECI.net](http://WECI.net) or follow us on social media.





# Johnson Corner Solar Project

Sunflower Electric's Johnson Corner Solar Project will provide 20 megawatts of renewable energy to their member-owners including Wheatland Electric.

Sunny days that will soon be transformed into electricity are also keeping the construction progress of the Johnson Corner Solar Project on schedule. The project is being built in Stanton County near the town of Johnson City.

Construction of the 20-megawatt (MW) solar farm, owned and operated by Lightsource BP, is winding down. Recently, crews completed construction of the 893 tracker rows and finished installing the 75,012 solar panels.

Sunflower will purchase the power from this Lightsource BP project, which upon completion will be the largest solar farm in Kansas. Lightsource BP is one of the largest owners and operators of solar power facilities in the world and the project at Johnson Corner is one of their first projects in North America.

The location of the site in the far southwest corner of Kansas was chosen since the area has the highest level of solar irradiance in the state.



For Johnson Corner Solar Project to generate 20 megawatts crews installed 75,012 solar panels.

Solar irradiance is a measure of the rate at which solar energy falls onto a surface, like a solar panel that absorbs the sun's rays and converts them into electricity.

The location of the solar project will also provide a solution to a transmission issue in the area according to Sunflower's Corey Linville, vice president of power supply and delivery.

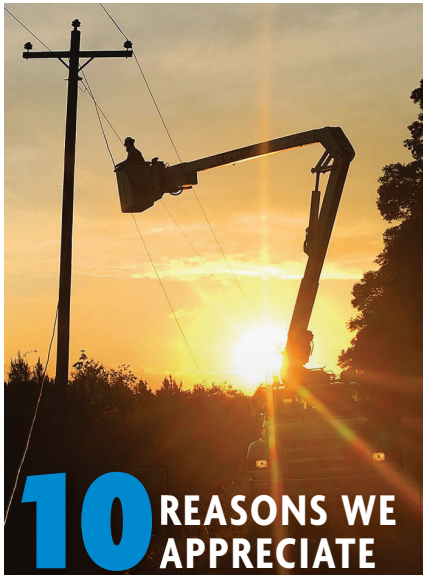
"The Syracuse-Bear Creek 115 kV transmission line just north of Johnson Corner is nearing its facility rating limit and would have been in need of a \$8-12 million upgrade," Linville said. "The injection of energy from JCSP at Johnson Corner will ease loading on this line and defer or eliminate the need for the upgrade."

Wheatland Electric is proud to be one of the six member-owners of Sunflower Electric Power Corporation and thrilled to add solar to our generation portfolio. The project is expected to go into commercial operation at the beginning of April.



Wheatland is proud to be a member-owner of Sunflower Electric and excited to add a renewable project to our generation portfolio.





## 10 REASONS WE APPRECIATE LINEWORKERS

Although we appreciate each and every co-op employee, it takes a special kind of person to be an electric lineworker. Here are the top 10 reasons we appreciate our lineworkers.

- 10 They are specially trained to work on power lines and related equipment.
- 9 They are dedicated to safely and efficiently restoring power following weather or outages.
- 8 They work overtime, many holidays and get up in the middle of the night to help restore power.
- 7 They enjoy serving our communities.
- 6 They aren't afraid of heights.
- 5 They help other electric co-ops with major outages at a moment's notice.
- 4 They lend their talents in many ways, including educating the public about electrical safety.
- 3 They have each other's backs.
- 2 They are trained to work safely on both dead and live power lines.
- 1 We couldn't provide excellent service without them or any of our other dedicated employees.

## Ayers Inducted into Hall of Fame

**CHARLES AYERS**, a retired board member of Wheatland Electric, was recently inducted into the Kansas Cooperative Hall of Fame, sponsored by the Kansas Cooperative Council. The Hall of Fame recognizes the contributions of co-op pioneers and honors those who have gone "above and beyond the call" in advancing the co-op philosophy.

Ayers, along with one other inductee, was honored at a reception and dinner on March 11 in Wichita, and inductees' biographies and photos will be added to the Kansas Cooperative Hall of Fame showcase display at the Kansas State Fairgrounds. This permanent display is housed in the Pride of Kansas building and preserves co-op history including the achievements of Kansas' great co-op leaders.

Ayers served on Wheatland's Board from 1986 to 2017. During that time period, he also served on the boards for Sunflower Electric, Western Fuels Association, ACES Power Marketing, and the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation. He was instrumental in the 2006 Sunflower purchase of the Aquila electric system, played a major role in the restructuring of the Sunflower RUS debt, and helped champion the change to the



Charles Ayers, a retired Wheatland board member, was recently inducted into the Kansas Cooperative Hall of Fame.

Retail Service Act that provided for the equitable protection for electric cooperatives when municipals seek to annex electric cooperative certified service territory.

"As we worked together with legislators and regulators, he never lost his focus on the individual farmer, rancher or businessperson that we were seeking to serve," said Earl Watkins, retired Sunflower President and CEO, who nominated Ayers for the award.

