

Rigors and Rewards



MESSAGE FROM
GENERAL MANAGER ALAN LESLEY

IF YOU WERE TO POLL A RANDOM SAMPLE OF LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL or college students about their career aspirations, not many would have electrical line work at the top of their lists. And truthfully, anyone considering a career in the utility industry would be wise to carefully consider this specific role.

Line work is no picnic. Lineworkers often must battle the elements and work long, irregular hours to restore outages as quickly as possible. They take on many of the challenges of a first responder's dangerous work with perhaps less recognition, and, through it all, they must maintain a friendly and professional demeanor as a customer-facing representative of their employer. But for the right person, the job's rigors are more than offset by its rewards.

Comanche Electric Cooperative's lineworkers have lit up our members' lives since 1938, powering people's dreams and empowering them to achieve their goals. From providing the lamplight that our members study by to the internet connectivity most of us need to move ahead professionally, electricity is the unseen, often unconsidered workhorse humming in the

background. Our linemen are the unsung facilitators of this energy source and form a brotherhood in their daily reckoning with and management of this volatile but crucial resource.

That's why we honor them annually on National Lineman Appreciation Day, April 8 this year.

Since there is no equivalent day of tribute for our equally integral behind-the-scenes staff at the cooperative and other crew members, we ask that you include all our employees in your expressions of gratitude this month. CECA works as a team to keep your lights on. Some of our workers risk life and limb in the aftermath of torrential rain while others weather storms of a different sort. Member services staff often absorb the brunt of members' frustrations, and dispatchers must allocate co-op resources and personnel effectively and efficiently during chaotic weather events, often while juggling other tasks.

Please join us this month in thanking all lineworkers and electric cooperative staff. Their service and pride brighten our community immeasurably.



HAPPY EASTER | APRIL 21

Comanche Electric Cooperative will be closed April 19 for Good Friday.

Last Chance! Win Five Season Passes to Schlitterbahn

One lucky CECA member is guaranteed to win!

AS PART OF TEXAS CO-OP POWER'S 75TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION, WE'RE GIVING away season passes for a family of five to Schlitterbahn—and we'll choose a winner from Comanche EC.

The passes can be used at any Schlitterbahn in Texas. This great prize package is perfect for a summer getaway with family and friends.

Thanks for your help in making our 75th anniversary special!



One lucky CECA member will win 5 season passes!

Get details and enter online at **TexasCoopPower.com/contests.**
Find Schlitterbahn info at schlitterbahn.com.



P.O. Box 729, Comanche, TX 76442

Operating in Brown, Callahan, Comanche, Eastland, Mills, Shackelford and Stephens counties

HEADQUARTERS

201 W. Wrights Ave.
Comanche, TX 76442

EARLY OFFICE

1801 CR 338
Early, TX 76801

EASTLAND OFFICE

1311 W. Main St.
Eastland, TX 76448

OFFICE HOURS

Comanche Office: Monday through Friday 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Early Office: Monday, Wednesday and Friday 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., closed from 1 to 2 p.m.

Eastland Office: Tuesday and Thursday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

General Manager

Alan Lesley

Board of Directors

- Randy Denning, District 1
- Pete McDougal, District 2
- Ruby Solomon, District 3
- Monty Carlisle, District 4
- Troy Stewart, District 5
- Loren Stroebel, District 6
- Phil Taylor, District 7

Report an Outage

CECA crews are available 24/7 in the event of a power quality issue by calling 800-915-2533.

Contact Us

CALL US

1-800-915-2533 toll-free

FIND US ON THE WEB

www.cecacoop



facebook.com/CECA.coop

Heroes on the Line

BY SHIRLEY KIDD DUKES

THEY RISE BEFORE THE BREAK OF DAWN, fill their thermos with coffee, pack their lunch box, and lace up their steel toe boots. Sometimes they get to see their families before they head out, sometimes they don't. It doesn't matter if we are all snowed or iced in—they still find a way to make it to the downed power lines and outages. They work weekends, Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas. They miss out on sleep and important moments with their families. They are the unsung heroes standing at the ready to respond to outages caused by storms, accidents, and anything else that may knock out power.

Why do they do it? Because our linemen are brave, committed, selfless—and most of all—they are critical to the success of CECA. Your power only works when they do. Our linemen do whatever it takes to serve the members. Their dedication is most noticeable during storms & inclement weather. When the storms roll in, CECA linemen roll out of bed and roll out to the outage site to get your power back up and running, doing

whatever it takes to serve the members. Your lines are maintained by some of the most talented lineworkers in the business. Without them, our world would be dark.

According to Paul Mauldin, a writer for T&D World magazine, "Utility line work is in the top 10 of the most dangerous jobs in America. Around 30 to 50 workers in every 100,000 are killed on the job every year. Many others suffer non-fatal loss of limbs from electrical burns and mechanical trauma. That's more than twice the fatality rate of police officers and firemen."

So when your power goes out, when the weather is too cold or too hot, when you are frustrated with the lack of power, think of those dedicated linemen who are out in the field, on top of a pole, in the wind, rain, snow, sleet, or dead heat of summer. Instead of being frustrated, tell them how much you appreciate them.

This year, Lineman Appreciation Day will be celebrated on April 8. Take a moment to recognize your local CECA linemen.

Your Hometown Heroes

Director of Outside Operations
Eddie Strube

District Foreman
Larry Morgan

Working Crew Foremen
Justin Riley
William Works

First Class Linemen
Greg Beaty
Brandon Cook
Tommy Hesbrook
Kendall Keith
Oracio Lopez
Tim Pallette
Bobby Reed
Scott Rutledge
Jake Schwartz

2nd Class Lineman
Dylan Powell

3rd Class linemen
Ryan Harris
Josh Walls

Apprentice Linemen
Austin Baugh
Matthew Majors
Trent Taylor
Nick Zavalas

Power Quality
Keith Steward

Service Lineman
Adam Tally

Meter Technician
Tommy Patterson



Mike Rowe, star of the TV show *Dirty Jobs*, had this to say about linemen:

“Guess what? It’s National Lineman Appreciation Day. Swear to God.

Last year, the Senate passed Resolution 95, which officially designates April 18th as the day in which all sane and thoughtful Americans should pause to recognize both the profession and the individual contributions of linemen.


Of course, the absurd thing about this Resolution, is that it only sets aside one day for said recognition. One day? Seriously? What are they thinking? This should be a month-long event. A week at the very least!

Here’s the deal – if all the linemen (and women) called in sick for just one day, things would get very

cold, very hot, and very dark – very fast. If they all stay home for a week? Pandemonium. Chaos. Dogs and cats, livin’ together.

I did this job for a day in Wyoming, and walked funny all month. These men (and women) are on call around the clock. They are fearless and dedicated and crazy brave. And they are quite possibly the toughest bunch of professionals I’ve had the pleasure to hang out with in a very long time.

So thanks men, (and women) for keeping my shower hot, my beer cold, and my computer humming along in a (mostly) Clean and Well-Lighted Place.”

A low-angle photograph of two linemen working on a utility pole. The linemen are wearing hard hats, safety glasses, and work clothes. They are using long wooden poles and ropes to work on the pole. The background is a clear blue sky. The text "When the lights go out, it's their time to shine." is overlaid on the left side of the image.

When the lights
go out, it's their
time to shine.

Lineman Appreciation Day
Monday, April 8

Comanche
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE



Tools of the Trade

ON MONDAY, APRIL 8, NATIONAL LINEMAN APPRECIATION DAY, COMANCHE ELECTRIC Cooperative honors the employees who keep the lights on. You see them stationed in the sky, in the partial enclosure of a truck's bucket, working diligently to maintain lines and restore power after a storm. What may not be evident from the ground, though, is all the equipment a lineworker needs to do his or her job safely.

A lineman's personal protective equipment includes:

- ▶ Fire-resistant clothing that self-extinguishes, limiting injuries from burns.
- ▶ Insulated rubber gloves, often worn with a pair of leather gloves over them to prevent punctures to the rubber beneath.
- ▶ Insulated hard hats worn at all times for protection from falling objects.
- ▶ Steel-toe boots that prevent gouges.
- ▶ Safety goggles that protect against loose debris and other hazards when working on electric lines and rights-of-way.

Linemen also may wear equipment belts, tool pouches, safety straps and other equipment. Those additional items usually weigh about 50 pounds altogether, a heavy burden while negotiating hazardous conditions 40 feet in the air, surrounded by dangerously high voltage.

A less obvious component of the lineworker's experience is all the time and training that goes into preparing for the job. Classroom training programs last a few months, followed by intensive, yearslong apprenticeships that continue training on the job, ensuring that journeyman linemen are ultimately experts at what they do.

Next time you see a lineworker, be sure to thank him or her for their time and dedication in honing this vital skill, along with their selfless application of it in service to our community. Our lives would be pretty dim without them!



DAVE SHAFER



KALI WINE LLC / ISTOCK.COM

Test Your Power Line Safety Knowledge

TRUE OR FALSE? POWER LINES ARE insulated to allow safe contact.

False. While some power lines may have a covering to protect against weather, they are NOT insulated for contact. Birds can sit on power lines unhurt because they don't represent a path to the ground. You and your ladder do.

TRUE OR FALSE? I should keep myself and any equipment I'm using at least 10 feet away from any power lines.

True. You don't need to contact a power line to be in danger. The best insu-

lator is lots of space. You should keep yourself and any equipment you're using a minimum of 10 feet away from power lines, but far greater distances are recommended.

TRUE OR FALSE? I can be electrocuted by a power line even if I am wearing gloves and rubber boots.

True. Work gloves and rubber boots offer no protection against contact with a power line. Once again, space—and lots of it—is the best insulator.