

Line Crews Keep the Lights On



MESSAGE FROM
GENERAL MANAGER ALAN LESLEY

ELECTRICITY TRAVELS ALONG AN INTRICATE NETWORK OF wires and poles to power our homes and businesses. Most of the time, it's a seamless journey, but occasionally, the path of electricity is disrupted by obstacles like fallen tree branches, animals or car accidents. When that happens, CECA's lineworkers are ready to restore that connection no matter the weather or time of day.

We couldn't carry out our mission without the daily dedication of our line crews. It's a demanding job on the front line of our co-op that often requires working around the clock in challenging conditions to serve our members and communities. They are first responders who get us through some of our darkest hours. We count on them to power our lives, day in and day out.

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association officially acknowledged the tireless efforts of this talented group with this 2014 resolution:

Whereas linemen leave their families and put their lives on the line every day to keep the power on;

Whereas linemen work 365 days a year under dangerous conditions to build, maintain and repair the electric infrastructure;

Whereas linemen are the first responders of the electric cooperative family, getting power back on and making things safe for all after storms and accidents; and

Whereas there would be no electric cooperatives without the brave men and women who comprise our corps of linemen;

Therefore be it resolved that NRECA recognize the second Monday of April of each year as National Lineman Appreciation Day and make available to electric cooperatives materials and support to recognize the contributions of these valuable men and women to America's electric cooperatives.

We proudly join with NRECA and cooperatives across the

country to honor lineworkers and show our appreciation and respect for the service they provide for our members.

CECA's lineworkers, as well as those from across the nation, truly deserve this special day of recognition. We invite our members to take a moment to thank a lineworker for the work they do. Leave a message for them on our Facebook page and use the hashtag #ThankALineworker to show your support for the men and women who light our lives.



Celebrate Earth Day

TO CELEBRATE EARTH DAY, APRIL 22, here are a few green strategies to explore at your home.

Rainwater harvesting is the capture, diversion and storage of rainwater for daily use. It leverages a free resource, courtesy of nature—reducing your reliance on municipal or well water—and the collected water is ideal for container plants and your home's landscape or garden. The simplest way to begin harvesting rainwater is to use a rain barrel, annually exempt from tax in Texas during the Memorial Day weekend energy- and water-efficient products sales tax holiday, May 23–25 this year.

Another water-saving technique is xeriscaping—the practice of planning and designing landscapes to reduce the need for irrigation. One quick and easy way to incorporate xeriscape principles into your garden is to mulch. A thick layer of mulch around your plants helps maintain consistent soil moisture by minimizing evaporation.

When you have enough time to prepare a meal in a slow cooker but want to forgo electricity, try a solar oven. Lightweight, flameless and relatively portable, solar ovens harness abundant sunlight to bake fish and chicken, steam vegetables, and cook rice, beans and pasta. Tote one along on your next camping trip.



GLENN SPECHT | ISTOCK.COM



Happy Easter

CECA will be closed April 10
in observance of Good Friday.



P.O. Box 729, Comanche, TX 76442

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

HEADQUARTERS

349 Industrial Blvd.
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–Friday,
7:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.,

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

Eastland Office: Tuesday and
Thursday, 8 a.m.–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 1-800-915-2533.

Contact Us

CALL US

1-800-915-2533 toll-free

FIND US ON THE WEB

www.cecacoop



facebook.com/CECA.coop

A Day in the Life of a Lineworker

GARY'S TYPICAL DAY AS AN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

lineworker actually started the night before. He was getting ready for bed when a member reported her power was out. It was Gary's weekly night to be on call, so the co-op truck was already in his driveway. He drove it to the woman's house, identified a problem in the base of the meter, installed a temporary fix until an electrician could get out the next day and returned home two hours later. He would report for work at the co-op office by 7 the next morning.

Gary and his fellow lineworkers like hunting down problems because they know the members depend on them.

Gary is like a lot of electric utility lineworkers. The job takes specific skills, intestinal fortitude and a "get it done" personality.

Following Procedure

Gary starts his day in a room with the rest of the lineworkers, leafing through stacks of paper—checklists, maps, work orders—planning the day's work. They compare notes and find out who is familiar with the area where they're headed.

In addition to taking time to coordinate the plans and paperwork, the lineworkers need to keep track of a lot of equipment. Neatly organized shelves in the warehouse hold saws, drills, climbing hooks, insulated work poles, trash cans and binoculars. They always wear safety gear or have it close at hand—hard hats, safety glasses, fire-retardant uniforms, steel-toe shoes, regular work gloves and hot-line safety gloves.

One more task keeps the crews from driving off to their first jobs, and it's probably the most important of all: the weekly safety meeting.

While catastrophic contact with electric current is always the top concern, training is also provided on a variety of safety topics. Gary doesn't see his job as dangerous. He knows it is hazardous and unforgiving, but it doesn't have to be dangerous if he follows the right procedures. Lineworkers have the tools, the rules and the knowledge to keep their work from being dangerous.

We Don't Say 'Hurry Up'

When the caravan arrives at the work site, the three lineworkers gather near the front of one of the trucks for what a lot of co-ops call a "tailgate meeting." They read through forms, noting the address, cross street, job and account number. All three men sign the form.

They break their huddle and de-energize the lines they're working on, complete the task at hand and re-energize the line.



Back at the co-op, they check the paperwork for the next day's jobs and then stock the trucks with the equipment they will need for an early start. Gary will be heading to a local school to help elementary students understand the importance of being safe around electricity.

To an outsider, taking time to follow all the procedures of a lineworker's workday may seem tedious or even unnecessary, but Gary and his fellow lineworkers disagree. They know how the work should be done and do it—never rushing through or skipping steps. They look out for each other and the co-op's members. It's the co-op way.



**SOME HEROES
WEAR HARD HATS**

**NATIONAL
LINEMAN
APPRECIATION
DAY | APRIL 13**





YINYANG | ISTOCK.COM

Choose the Right Mower for You

GAS LAWN MOWERS HAVE LONG BEEN THE STANDARD FOR CUTTING GRASS. BUT NOW, electric mowers are giving them a run for their money.

Until recently, corded and cordless electric mowers tended to be underpowered. For cordless mowers, this fact was made worse by their subpar battery life. But today, with those problems largely solved, the best electric mowers have the power and battery life to keep pace with a gas mower, depending on the size of your lawn.

A cordless, electric mower with a large 56-volt battery can run for about one hour. Plug-in electric mowers don't have this limitation, but using a long electrical cord can be challenging.

Quality electric mowers, especially the cordless, rechargeable ones, tend to cost twice as much as a new equivalent gas model. But you can recoup some of the expense with cheaper operating costs, since electricity is a less expensive fuel than gas, and electric engines generally require less maintenance than gas engines, making electric versions a bit more dependable.

Electric mowers are also quieter than gas mowers, and they start instantly. Another important cost consideration is that rechargeable batteries typically need to be replaced after three to five years.

You can save a significant amount of money on purchase price with a corded mower, if you don't mind the hassle of navigating around the cord.

If you are looking to buy new, have a small to midsize lot, prioritize environmental concerns and don't mind navigating a cord or recharging batteries, an electric mower could be the right choice for you.

If you don't mind the noise, maintenance and other hassles of a gas mower, have a large lot and prefer not to invest in the upfront purchase price, a gas mower may be a better option.

There's also a third choice. If your goals are to save money and hassle while protecting the environment and you don't mind breaking a sweat, consider a manual reel mower. They are surprisingly effective, far less expensive and require little maintenance and storage space.

The most dramatic step you could take is replacing your lawn completely, perhaps with water-efficient landscaping, a rock or vegetable garden, or even an artificial lawn. This could dramatically cut your water bill and the environmental impact of maintaining a traditional lawn.

Outdoor Outlet Safety Check

OUTDOOR ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

provide convenient power access to light your yard, operate power tools and use entertainment devices. Failure to properly protect these outlets, however, can do more than damage your equipment. It could also be extremely dangerous to the safety of your family and home.

You can ensure safe use of outdoor outlets with the help of a few measures.

Select the right kind of outdoor outlet.

The National Electrical Code requires the use of ground-fault circuit interrupters on outdoor outlets. You can identify these outlets by their "TEST" and "RESET" buttons and by the letters "WR" embossed on the outlet, indicating it is weather resistant. Only this type of outlet is safe for outdoor use.

Add a weatherproof cover. The flip up tabs that cover your outdoor electrical outlets are only enough to protect the outlet when it's not in use. The addition of a properly connected weatherproof cover allows use of the plug while safeguarding it against moisture. Typically clear or smoke-colored, they come in a variety of configurations and are designed with a deep lid and grooves, allowing for device and extension cords to run out of the bottom.

Don't assume safety. Outlets already installed prior to the purchase of your home? Don't assume they are the right kind. Have them checked and upgraded if needed by an electrician.

Safe outdoor outlets have GFCIs and covers.



TRAINMAN11 | ISTOCK.COM



Always Call Before You Dig

One free, easy call gets your utility lines marked and helps protect you from injury and expense.

Safe digging is no accident.
Know what's below.
Always call 811 before you dig.
Visit **call811.com**
for more information.



5 STEPS FOR SAFE DIGGING

Working on an outdoor project? Careless digging poses a threat to people, pipelines and underground facilities. Always call 811 first. Here are five easy steps for safe digging:



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

1. NOTIFY

Call 811 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.

2-3

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



Join CECA and Air Evac Lifeteam in Saving Lives

**Your membership in Air Evac Lifeteam
makes it possible for us to provide
emergency air ambulance service in your community.**

Air Evac Lifeteam is saving lives in your community. Our mission is to make it possible for people living in rural areas to get the lifesaving emergency care they need, when they need it. In a life-threatening medical emergency, successful patient recovery often depends on how much time it takes to deliver that patient to the emergency room.

If you live, work or travel in rural areas, you need Air Evac Lifeteam. By buying a membership, you make it possible for us to be there for you, your family and your community. Air Evac Lifeteam gets you and your loved ones to the right care fast.

Why is Air Evac membership important to you? Your membership means that in a medical emergency, you

will have access to the appropriate medical facility—fast. Our crews of highly trained pilots, nurses and paramedics are ready to go at a moment's notice, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

As a member of CECA, you are eligible for a discounted Air Evac Lifeteam membership that not only gives you access to lifesaving care but also precludes you from any financial responsibility for the flight.

Air Evac Lifeteam cares about you and your loved ones. Our mission to make emergency medical service accessible to rural residents reflects that. Thanks to the support of our members, Air Evac Lifeteam can provide this vital service to your communities—providing peace of mind for you and your family.





BECAUSE THERE'S NO PROTECTION YOU'D DENY THEM



In a medical emergency every second counts, especially when transporting patients who are far away from appropriate medical treatment. AirMedCare Network (AMCN) providers respond to scene calls and provide hospital-to-hospital transports—carrying seriously ill or injured patients to the nearest appropriate medical facility.

Air Evac Lifeteam is an AirMedCare Network participating provider—America's largest air medical membership network providing coverage across 320 locations in 38 states.

Expenses for emergency air medical transport can put stress on your finances. With an AMCN membership, you will have no out-of-pocket expenses if flown by Air Evac Lifeteam or any AMCN provider. Best of all, membership starts at just \$85 per year through AirMed, or \$60 per year at \$5 per month for CECA members, and covers the entire household.

Secure financial peace of mind for you and your family today!

TO LEARN MORE OR ENROLL:

CARLTON FULTON

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Callahan, Eastland, Shackelford, and Stephens Counties

Visit www.ceca.coop to fill out an online application. For a paper copy or more information, contact the Member Services department at 800-915-2533.



A Global Medical Response Solution