

# ROUGH RIDER NEWS

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

APRIL 2022



Thank a  
**lineworker**  
April 11

## What's inside:

- Manager's message: Thank a lineworker
- Call before you dig!
- Safety starts with ME

# The power behind your power

BY ANNE HANSEN

National studies consistently rank lineworkers among the most dangerous jobs in the country, and for good reason. Laboring high in the air, wearing heavy equipment and working directly with high voltage creates the perfect storm of a dangerous and unforgiving profession. But electric lineworkers are up to the task. These brave people are committed to safety, and the challenges of the job.

Roughrider Electric Cooperative's lineworkers are responsible for keeping power flowing day and night, regardless of national holidays, vacations, birthdays or other important family milestones. Beyond the years of specialized training and apprenticeships, it takes internal fortitude and a mission-oriented outlook to be a good lineworker. In fact, this service-oriented mentality is a hallmark characteristic of lineworkers. The job requires lineworkers to set aside their personal priorities to better serve their local community. ■



## Meet our dedicated lineworkers:



**BRYAN BRAUN**  
general foreman

**31 years**

The best part of my job is helping members reach their goals they are trying to achieve, while working in the outdoors.

When I'm not at work, I can be found having fun in the outdoors.



**RUSSELL WALTERS**  
journeyman lineworker

**27 years**

The best part of my job is getting our members' power back on during outages.

When I'm not at work, I can be found farming, riding horse, snowmobiling and spending time with family.



**SCOTT LEINTZ**  
journeyman lineworker

**26 years**

The best part of my job is working outdoors and the variety of duties.

When I'm not at work, I can be found spending time with family, at the baseball field or on the lake fishing.



**BROCK SWENSRUD**  
journeyman lineworker

**20 years**

The best part of my job is working on overhead lines.

When I'm not at work, I can be found fishing and hunting.



**BILLY KUMMER**  
working foreman

**20 years**

The best part of my job is doing a variety of different jobs.

When I'm not at work, I can be found hunting and fishing.



**DION GEFRE**  
journeyman lineworker

**18 years**

The best part of my job is returning power to members who were experiencing outages, and their appreciation.

When I'm not at work, I can be found spending time with family and riding motorcycle.



**MICHAEL STEIER**  
journeyman lineworker

**13 years**

The best part of my job is working with the community.

When I'm not at work, I can be found being with my family, hunting, camping or working in my garage.



**TYLER PHELPS**  
journeyman lineworker

**12 years**

The best part of my job is working in the outdoors.

When I'm not at work, I can be found fishing or riding dirt bike with friends.



**SHAWN OLSON**  
working foreman

**11 years**

The best part of my job is interacting with cooperative members and getting the chance to work outdoors every day.

When not working, I can be found spending time with family and friends, hunting and fishing.



**KYLE IRWIN**  
journeyman lineworker

**11 years**

The best part of my job is there is something new every day.

When I'm not at work, I can be found hunting and coaching my kids' sports teams.



**BRAD MARTELL**  
journeyman lineworker

**11 years**

The best part of my job is the variety of tasks we get to perform as a lineworker. I really enjoy talking with the member-owners.

When I'm not at work, I can be found usually fishing or hunting with my family. I enjoy downhill skiing and watching baseball.



**TANNER GOETZ**  
working foreman

**10 years**

The best part of my job is getting out and meeting with members and helping them with their needs.

When I'm not at work, I can be found fishing, hunting and spending time with my family. I occasionally enjoy getting out driving and seeing new country.



**CODY HINTZ**  
journeyman lineworker

**10 years**

The best part of my job is that no two jobs are the same. They all have their own challenges and different ways of being overcome.

When I'm not at work, I can be found hunting and fishing or spending time with friends and family.



**KADEN FICEK**  
journeyman lineworker

**8 years**

The best part of my job is the variety of our job, since every day is something different, and my co-workers.

Outside of work, you'd see me lifting weights, hunting or watching football.



**JORDAN BRAUN**  
journeyman lineworker

**8 years**

The best part of my job is getting to be outside and working in a new place almost every day.

When I'm not at work, I can be found with my family or at the racetrack.



**MITCH KREBS**  
journeyman lineworker

**7 years**

The best part of my job is seeing how happy our members are after their power is restored from an outage.

In my free time, I can be found on the golf course, fishing, hunting and spending time with family.

## Safety Starts with ME: **Bryan Braun**

BY ANNE HANSEN

**B**ryan Braun, a journeyman lineworker, grew up on a ranch and always enjoyed nature and the great outdoors.

“As a member of the local community, and a lineworker at Roughrider, we strive to balance maintaining our natural surroundings and ensuring a reliable power supply by keeping power lines clear in rights of way,” Braun said.

Overgrown vegetation and trees pose a risk to power lines, and that is why Roughrider Electric Cooperative lineworkers take note of overgrown vegetation and trim to ensure reliability.

“One of the biggest benefits of a smart vegetation management program is reliability,” Braun said. “Strategic tree trimming reduces the frequency of downed lines causing power outages.”

A proactive approach also diminishes the chances of fallen branches or trees during severe weather that make it more complicated and dangerous for lineworkers to restore power.

More so, vegetation management also helps keep our members safe. For example, if trees are touching power lines in our members' yards, they can pose grave danger to families. If children can access those trees, they can potentially

climb into a danger zone. Electricity can arc, or jump, from a power line to a nearby conductor like a tree.

“We care about our members and put their safety and that of my co-workers and lineworkers above all else,” Braun said.

- Braun noted that members can help by:
- Planting new trees and vegetation away from the power lines and pad-mounted transformer to avoiding future issues.
  - Call the co-op if you notice that you have vegetation growing near the power lines. ■



*Safety Starts with ME is a monthly column showing what our employees do help keep members, co-workers and themselves safe.*

Manager's message:

# Thank a lineworker April 11



**Travis Kupper**

If you were asked to associate an image or a person with Roughrider Electric Cooperative, I bet you would picture a lineworker. One of the most visible employees of the co-op, lineworkers work tirelessly to ensure our members receive uninterrupted power 24/7.

“Lineworker” is listed as one of the top 10 most dangerous jobs in the United States. This is

understandable, as they perform detailed tasks near high-voltage power lines. Regardless of the time of day, having to brave stormy weather and other challenging conditions, lineworkers must climb high in the air, often carrying heavy equipment to get the job done.

Being a lineworker is not a glamorous or easy profession. It takes years of specialized training, ongoing education, dedication, and equally important, a sense of service and commitment. How else can you explain the willingness to leave the comfort of their home to tackle a challenging job in difficult conditions, when most are sheltering comfortably at home?

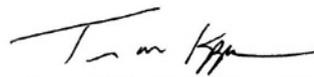
This dedication and sense of service to the community is truly what sets them apart. That's why

we set aside the second Monday in April to celebrate and recognize those who work around the clock to keep the lights on.

While lineworkers may be the most visible employees at Roughrider Electric Cooperative, it's important to note there is a team of highly skilled professionals working behind the scenes. Engineers provide ongoing expertise and guidance on the operations side of the co-op. Member service representatives are always standing by to take your calls and answer your questions. Our information technology experts are continuously monitoring our system to help safeguard sensitive data. And these are just a few of the folks who work together to ensure we can deliver the service and reliability you expect and deserve. Without them, our lineworkers wouldn't be able to “bring the light” to our community.

Our dedicated and beloved lineworkers are proud to represent Roughrider Electric Cooperative, and they deserve all the appreciation and accolades that come their way on Lineworker Appreciation Day.

On April 11, and any time you see a lineworker, I hope you'll join me in thanking them for their exceptional service. I also hope you'll remember you have a dedicated team of professionals working behind the scenes at the co-op, whose commitment to service runs just as deep. ■



**POWER**  
FOR GENERATIONS

**SAVE THE DATE: JUNE 1, 2022**  
ROUGH RIDER ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ANNUAL MEETING  
HAZEN, NORTH DAKOTA

# Call before you dig!

**Planting a tree?** Planning construction work? Remember to contact North Dakota One Call first! The first step to any project is safety, and damaging an underground facility while you dig can cause injury or even death.

Numerous utility lines may be buried on your property, ranging from electric and telephone lines to water and sewer lines, but North Dakota One Call will help you locate these lines before your project begins.

Contact North Dakota One Call and utility line owners will locate and mark their lines. These locates do not include any lines you may have installed to your private facilities, such as detached garages, wells or yard lights.

Go online at [www.ndonecall.com](http://www.ndonecall.com) or call **800-795-0555** or **811**.

It's free, it's simple and it's the law.

## The 811 process:

### 1. NOTIFY

Notify the North Dakota One Call center by calling 811 or making an online request at least two full business days before work begins, excluding weekends and holidays. You'll give the operator information about how to contact you, where you are planning to dig and what type of work you will be doing, or go online to [www.ndonecall.com](http://www.ndonecall.com) to enter this information. Utility companies who have potential facilities in the area of your dig site will be notified about your intent to dig.

### 2. WAIT

Wait the required amount of time for affected utility operators to respond to your request.

### 3. CONFIRM

Confirm that all affected utility operators have responded to your request and marked underground utilities. Compare the marks to the list of utilities the One Call center notified. You can also view your ticket online and see each utility's response for your dig site.

### 4. RESPECT

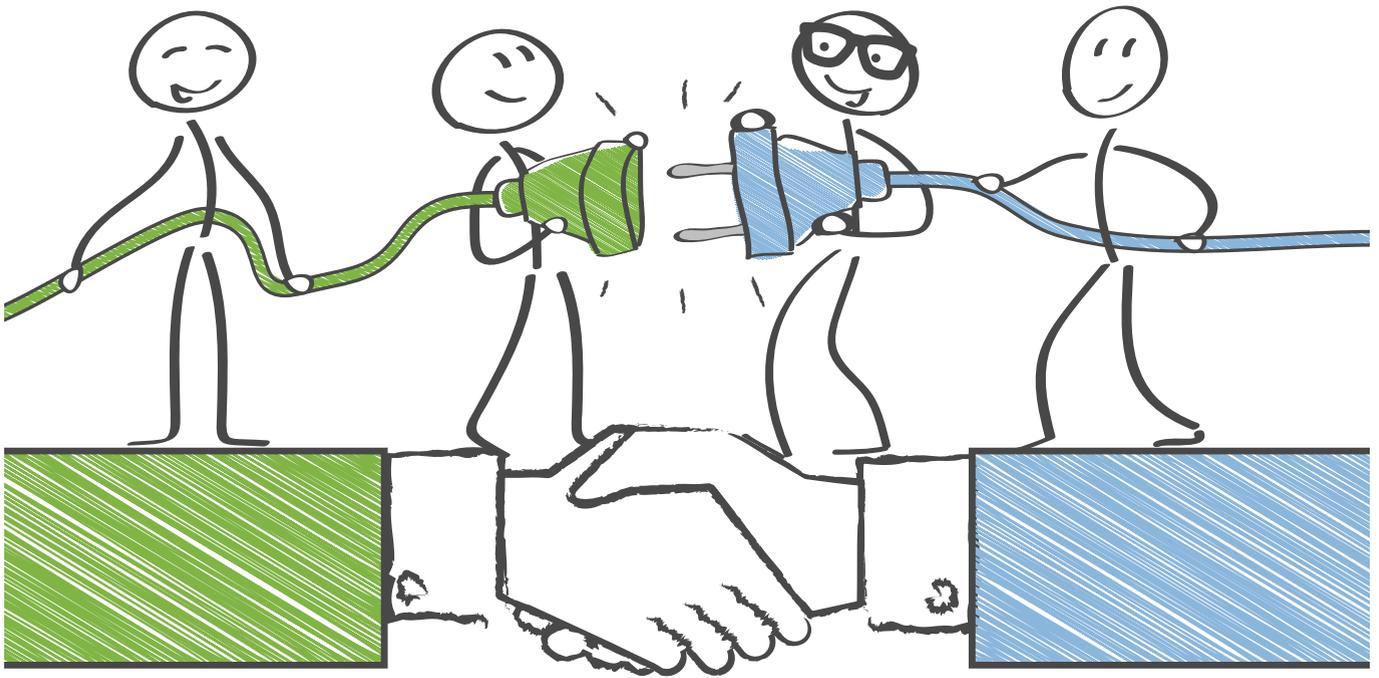
Respect the marks. The marks provided by the affected utilities are your guide for the duration of the project. The marks are valid for 21 calendar days.

If you are unable to maintain the marks during your project, or the project will continue past your request's expiration date, please call 811 or go online to file a RESPOT request.

### 5. DIG CAREFULLY

Dig carefully around the marks. No mechanical excavating can take place within 24 inches on either side of the marked location of the underground facility. If you plan on digging within that 4-foot-wide area, hand digging is allowed, but please dig carefully and cautiously.





## CO-OP 101:

# Co-ops need member involvement!

### The most important part of an electric cooperative is YOU!

Electric cooperatives exist to meet the needs of their members. And members are the owners, too!

Electric cooperatives are owned and democratically controlled by their members – the people who use the electricity.

### Use your voice!

By attending your cooperative's annual meeting, you learn more about your electric cooperative's financial standing, its past accomplishments and future plans. An informed member can be a valuable asset. And members also elect their representatives to the board of directors.

Cooperatives operate on the principle of "one member, one vote." So, each member of a cooperative has the same voting power. And as

a member, you have a voice in how your co-op operates, by electing directors to represent you.

### Get involved!

Those directors are your representatives on the board. Without their involvement, your electric cooperative would not be able to operate!

Members who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions are vital to a cooperative. They help decide how active an electric cooperative will be in the community, such as providing scholarships or sponsoring other activities to develop young leaders in our communities.

We encourage you to become involved in your cooperative. Attend your annual meeting, cast a ballot for directors and consider serving on the board of directors. **YOU are the electric cooperative!** ■

# Report from THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS FEB. 25

**When, where and who:** The board of directors of Roughrider Electric Cooperative met at the Stark County Veterans Pavilion on Feb. 25.

**Minutes of the previous meeting:** The board reviewed and approved the minutes of the Jan. 28 meeting.

**Capital credit estate retirements:** A list of capital credit estate retirements was provided to the board.

**Co-general managers' report:** Travis Kupper presented the co-general managers' report.

**CFO report:** Alex Craigmile presented the board with a summary of financial reports, which were accepted by the board.

**Board member reports:** Attendees at meetings over the past month reported to

the board.

**Operations report:** The board was directed to Jason Bentz's written report. He updated the board on maintenance underway on transmission lines, pole changes and an outage report.

**Upcoming meetings:** The next board meeting was set for 9 a.m. MT on March 25 at the Stark County Veterans Pavilion in Dickinson. April's board meeting is scheduled for April 29 at 9 a.m. MT/10 a.m. CT at the Hazen headquarters.

**Adjournment:** There being no other business, upon motion made, seconded, and unanimously carried, the meeting adjourned

# HAPPY EASTER!

In observance of the Easter holiday, Roughrider Electric Cooperative will be closed on Friday, April 15.

*Line crews will be available in case of an emergency outage.*



[www.roughriderelectric.com](http://www.roughriderelectric.com)

**HAZEN OFFICE**

701-748-2293 or 800-748-5533  
800 Highway Dr., Hazen, ND 58545  
7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. CT Monday-Friday

Payments may be deposited in the deposit box by Roughrider Electric's main office entrance or in the drop boxes located at Krause's Super Valu in Hazen or Bronson's Super Valu in Beulah.

**DICKINSON OFFICE**

701-483-5111 or 800-627-8470  
P.O. Box 1038, 2156 4th Ave. E.  
Dickinson, ND 58602  
7 a.m. - 4 p.m. MT Monday-Friday

Payments may be deposited in the deposit box west of Roughrider Electric's main office entrance or in the drop boxes located at Dickinson City Hall, or the west and south locations of Family Fare supermarkets.

**OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS**

Roger Kudrna, President; Dickinson..... 483-8377  
Darell Herman, Vice President; Beulah ..... 873-4371  
Troy Sailer, Secretary; Golden Valley..... 948-2427  
Bruce Darcy, Treasurer; Golden Valley ..... 983-4222  
William Retterath; Center ..... 794-8729  
Arnold Kainz; Dickinson ..... 483-8207  
Dan Price; Hensler ..... 794-3779  
Greg Steckler; Dunn Center ..... 548-8122  
Callen Schoch; New England ..... 290-3836

**MANAGEMENT**

Don Franklund ..... Co-GM/CEO  
Travis Kupper ..... Co-GM/CEO



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