

ROUGH RIDER NEWS

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

APRIL 2023



The power of friendship

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Addison Leidholm, when she was 4 years old, visits with the lineworkers.

The power of friendship

BY RACHEL NEFF

Along the highways and roads in North Dakota stand poles and power lines that stretch for miles upon miles. For the majority of people driving by them, they simply are part of the North Dakota landscape, often not thought about.

For Addison Leidholm, the daughter of Roughrider Electric Cooperative members Doug and Nikki Leidholm, the power lines are a reminder of the hard work and dedication of her longtime friends.

Her admiration for lineworkers began when Addison was 4 years old. Her grandma, Jackie Tschaekofske, provided cleaning services for Roughrider Electric, and would often bring Addison and her contagious smile into the office.

The admiration was mutual, as lineworkers would take photos with her and give her a ride in the bucket truck, sparking a friendship between the Roughrider Electric lineworkers and Addison.

Years of appreciation

The impact of those rides in a bucket truck has lasted for years.

"I remember I was too short to see over the bucket, so Russell Walters put me on his knee to see better," Addison, now 11 years old, recalls.

Ever since, she has made a point to continue to foster her friendship with each lineworker, ensuring they feel appreciated with various acts throughout the years.

"Our friendship really means a lot to me," Addison says. "When I was 6, I got them a Christmas tree with ornaments to put in the office. It got so big, my grandma had to transplant it into a bigger pot!"

Addison's grandma, who has since retired, worked in the evenings and Addison would often give her grandma treats to leave for the lineworkers when they came to work in the morning.

"She is truly a giver," Nikki says. "She brightens everyone's day wherever she goes."

"During COVID-19, I made the lineworkers a bunch of posters with sayings on them and hung them all over their office," Addison recalls.

Her friendship with Roughrider Electric's lineworkers is far from a one-way street, however.

"It was during COVID that Addison was unable to have a party with the friends in her class," Nikki recalls. "But after work that day, each lineworker drove a bucket truck down our street in parade style, and Wayne Schmaltz sang 'Happy Birthday' as well as gave Addison a birthday gift."

"It was so cool!" Addison exclaims. "Jim Block and I still exchange birthday cards and treats, even though he is retired."

Never letting a thank you go unsaid

Roughrider Electric's lineworkers hold a special place in Addison's heart, not only because of their deep-rooted friendship, but also their line of work.

A common saying amongst all the letters Addison has written throughout the years is: "Thank you for keeping my lights on."

Addison does not take the little things for granted.

"When you flip on a switch, you are flipping on someone's hard work. Their job is very demanding and no matter the conditions, lineworkers are out making sure our lights work," she says.

This rang true, especially this past December with multiple storms causing outages across Roughrider Electric's service territory.

"They are awesome and do a lot for everyone. Plus, it's not dark all the time because of them," Addison says. "Make sure the next time you see a lineworker, thank them!" ■

Manager's message: The power behind your power



Travis Kupper

As April arrives, it brings the showers that produce spring flowers. It also heralds the beginning of a potentially stormy season that can inherently include power outages. While Roughrider Electric Cooperative strives to provide reliable electricity to our members, there are times when Mother

Nature has other plans. Most of us can ride out a storm from the comfort and convenience of our homes. However, there is a group of professionals who spring into action when the weather takes a turn for the worst – co-op lineworkers.

A dangerous job

Braving stormy weather and other challenging conditions, lineworkers often must climb 40 or more feet into the air, carrying heavy equipment, to restore power. Listed as one of the 10 most dangerous jobs in the United States, lineworkers must perform detailed tasks next to high-voltage power lines. To help keep them safe, lineworkers wear specialized protective clothing and equipment at all times when on the job. This includes special fire-resistant clothing that will self-extinguish, limiting potential injuries from burns and sparks. Insulated and rubber gloves are worn in tandem to protect them from electrical shock. While the gear performs a critical function, it also adds additional weight and bulk, making the job more complex.

In addition to the highly visible tasks lineworkers perform, their job today goes far beyond climbing to the top of a pole to repair a wire. They are also information experts who can pinpoint an outage from miles away and restore power remotely. Line crews use their laptops and cellphones to map outages, take photos of the

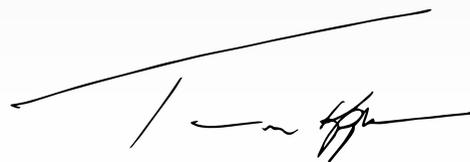
work they have done and troubleshoot problems.

In our community, Roughrider Electric lineworkers are responsible for keeping 5,261 miles of line across five counties working, in order to bring power to your home and our local community 24/7, regardless of the weather, holidays or personal considerations.

While lineworkers may be the most visible employees at Roughrider Electric, 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 lineworkers are proud to represent Roughrider Electric, and they deserve all the appreciation and accolades that come their way on Lineworker Appreciation Day.

On April 10, 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. ■



Safety Starts with ME: Dion Gefre

Spring is upon us. As the weather gets warmer and days get longer, we can't help but think of the landscaping projects we've been dreaming about during the cold, winter months.

"If any of your spring projects require digging, such as planting trees or shrubs or setting posts, remember to dial 811 first," said Dion Gefre, a journeyman lineworker for Roughrider Electric Cooperative.

From gas lines to water and electric lines, one wrong plow, harrow or shovel into the ground can lead to disaster and set your project timeline back significantly. Here are the steps to take when dialing 811:

Call – Upon dialing 811, you will be routed to a local "one call" center.

Provide information – Tell the operator where you're planning to dig and what type of project you are working on. By doing this, the affected local utilities will be notified of this information.

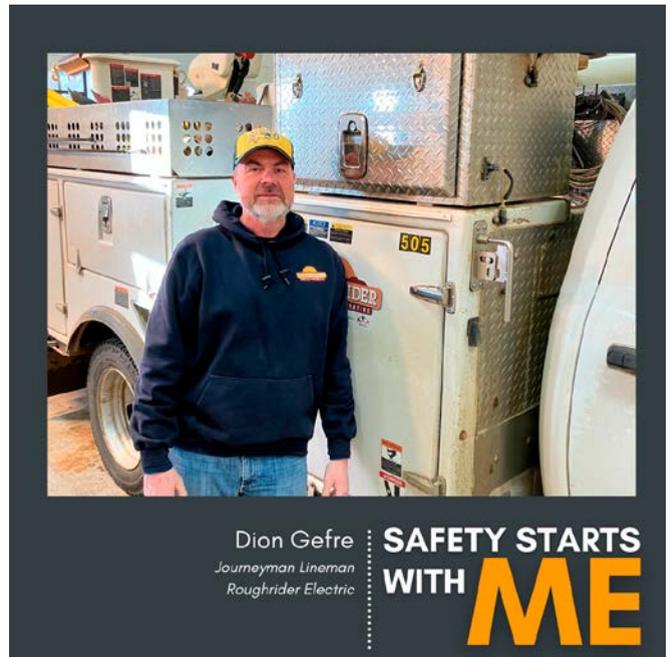
Wait – Within a few days after the initial call, a locator will come to the site and mark any underground lines, pipes and cables. This designated person will mark these areas with flags or paint.

Time to dig – After this process is complete, you may start your digging to achieve your landscaping dreams!

"Do-it-yourself projects are great and fun, as long as you do it right," Gefre said. "Many homeowners are aware of the significance in calling before you dig. However, many do not take advantage of it."

A national survey showed that only 50% of homeowners called to have their lines marked before starting digging projects, according to the Common Ground Alliance (CGA). CGA data also shows that an underground utility line is damaged every six minutes in the United States.

The simplest of tasks can damage underground lines, causing outages, damaging utility lines, harming diggers and possibly resulting in repair costs and fines. This is why it is so important to play it safe and dial



811 beforehand.

Roughrider Electric wants to not only keep underground utilities safe, but most importantly, keep you safe, too. ■

Call before you dig!



Go online at www.ndonecall.com or call
800-795-0555 or 811.
It's free, it's simple and it's the law.

Thank you, lineworkers!

National studies consistently rank power 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. ■

Get to know our dedicated lineworkers

Jordan Braun, journeyman lineworker, 9 years



His words to characterize a lineworker: Hardworking, committed, enjoy the outdoors
What I like most about working for Roughrider: Consumers are willing to help us as much as they possibly can
Hobbies: Spending time with family, racing at Southwest Speedway and snowmobiling

"I like working outdoors and doing something different every day, and the opportunity to serve the community."

Kaden Ficek, journeyman lineworker, 9 years



His words to characterize a lineworker: Hardworking, merciless, insatiable
What I like most about working for Roughrider: Likes the family atmosphere and working with the members
Hobbies: Hunting, working out, spending time with family

"I like being able to be outdoors and do something different every day."

Dion Gefre, journeyman lineworker, 18 years



His words to characterize a lineworker: Honest, loyal, hardworking
What I like most about working for Roughrider: Likes the family atmosphere and the members who are appreciative and willing to help in any way
Hobbies: Spending time with family and friends

"I like seeing the consumer happy when we restore power after a storm."

Cody Hintz, journeyman lineworker, 10 years



His words to characterize a lineworker: Hardworking, loyal
What I like most about working for Roughrider: There's always something different and new to be done or learned
Hobbies: Hunting, fishing and spending time with family and friends

"I like having the opportunity to serve our members, and their willingness to help us out during storms and our time of need."

Kyle Irwin, journeyman lineworker, 13 years



His words to characterize a lineworker: Selfless, ambitious, hardworking
What I like most about working for Roughrider: There is something new every day; appreciates the membership's patience when problems arise
Hobbies: Coaching youth sports, hunting and the outdoors

"Being home every night and being a part of the community is my favorite part."

Mitch Krebs, journeyman lineworker, 9 years



His words to characterize a lineworker: Dedicated, challenging, determined
What I like most about working for Roughrider: Likes restoring power to consumers and their willingness to help
Hobbies: Hunting, fishing, golfing, spending time with family and friends

"I like the opportunity to serve our members."

Conner Kuntz, apprentice lineworker, 1 year



His words to characterize a lineworker: Smart, dedicated, respectful
What I like most about working for Roughrider: Learning something new every day and it's always something different
Hobbies: Spending time with family and friends, hunting, fishing

"I enjoy working all over the community and meeting new people."

Scott Leintz, journeyman lineworker, 27 years



His words to characterize a lineworker: Hardworking, dedicated, trusting
What I like most about working for Roughrider: Appreciates the members' willingness to help when working in their area to restore power
Hobbies: Spending time with family, fishing, boating and coaching baseball

"I like working outdoors with guys who enjoy the same things."

Brad Martell, journeyman lineworker, 12 years



His words to characterize a lineworker: Committed, determined, adaptable
What I like most about working for Roughrider: Likes the variety of work and the variety of challenges the days bring
Hobbies: Hunting, fishing, spending time with family

"The membership is very helpful during storms."

Tyler Phelps, general foreman, 13 years



His words to characterize a lineworker: Hardworking, loyal, selfless
What I like most about working for Roughrider: Likes the family atmosphere, working outside and working with our members
Hobbies: Fishing, hunting and spending time with family

"I appreciate members are willing to always help during the bad weather conditions."

Michael Steier, journeyman lineworker, 14 years



His words to characterize a lineworker: Hearty, tough, selfless
What I like most about working for Roughrider: Appreciates belonging to something that keeps members involved, and the cooperative's willingness to provide reliable power at a competitive rate
Hobbies: Spending time with family, hunting, camping

"I like serving the cooperative members and providing a service that some don't want to provide."

Brock Swensrud, working foreman, 18 years



His words to characterize a lineworker: Dedicated, rewarding, challenging
What I like most about working for Roughrider: Likes working outdoors and doing different jobs every day
Hobbies: Spending time with family, hunting and fishing

"I'm glad members are willing to help during storm restoration."

Colton Walters, apprentice lineworker, 1 year



His words to characterize a lineworker: Devoted, creative, hardworking
What I like most about working for Roughrider: Appreciates the willingness of members to help in a time of need
Hobbies: Woodworking and 3D printing

"I like getting to meet new people and learn new things."

Russell Walters, journeyman lineworker, 28 years



His words to characterize a lineworker: Fun, exciting, hardworking
What I like most about working for Roughrider: Enjoys the members and making friends
Hobbies: Spending time with family and camping

"I enjoy the friendship of the members."

Aaron Yantzer, journeyman lineworker, 9 months



His words to characterize a lineworker: Resourceful, reliable, dedicated
What I like most about working for Roughrider: Appreciates the good relationships
Hobbies: Woodworking and fishing

"I like having the opportunity to meet with the members, solve their power issues and make sure they are getting the best service possible."

Life can be measured in feet

Overhead power lines are necessary to deliver electricity to hardworking farmers and ranchers, but those same power lines can also be deadly if not treated with respect. While you need to focus on the field and your machinery, Roughrider Electric Cooperative urges you to also watch for electrical hazards around the farm or ranch.

Be aware

Farmers and their equipment should always be 10 feet away from power lines on all sides. Field cultivators and sprayers can often reach as high as 12 feet in the air. Practice extreme caution and use a spotter to make sure you stay far away from power lines when you use tall equipment.

If you have purchased new equipment, be aware of antennas or other attachments that may pose new hazards. A newer, bigger piece of equipment may no longer clear a line. In addition, shifting soil may also affect whether or not machinery avoids power lines from year to year.

Power lines also may sag over the years. If power lines on your property are sagging, contact Roughrider Electric Cooperative to repair the lines. Never try to move a power line on your own.

Overhead power lines are not the only electric hazard on the farm. Pole guy wires, used to stabilize utility poles, are grounded. However,



when one of the guy wires is broken, it can become charged with electricity. If you break a guy wire, call the cooperative to fix it. Don't do it yourself. ■

SAVE THE DATE

JOIN ROUGHRIDER ELECTRIC FOR YOUR
ANNUAL MEETING ON
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7, 2023
DICKINSON, NORTH DAKOTA

MORE INFORMATION WILL FOLLOW.



POWER
FOR GENERATIONS

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

This planting season, include energy efficiency in your landscaping plans. Adding shade trees around your home can reduce surrounding air temperatures as much as 6 degrees. To block heat from the sun, plant deciduous trees around the south side of your home. Deciduous trees provide excellent shade during the summer and lose their leaves in the fall and winter months, allowing sunlight to warm your home.

Source: energy.gov



www.roughriderelectric.com

HAZEN OFFICE

701-748-2293 or 800-748-5533
800 Highway Dr., Hazen, ND 58545
7:00 a.m. - 3:30 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 800-748-5533
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

Greg Steckler, President; Dunn Center..... 548-8122
Roger Kudrna, Vice President; Dickinson..... 483-8377
Troy Sailer, Secretary; Golden Valley..... 948-2427
Bruce Darcy, Treasurer; Golden Valley 983-4222
Jesse Flath, Hazen 880-0386
Darell Herman; Beulah 873-4371
Arnold Kainz; Dickinson 483-8207
Dan Price; Hensler..... 794-3779
Callen Schoch; New England..... 290-3836

MANAGEMENT

Travis Kupper Co-GM/CEO
Jason Bentz Co-GM/CEO



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HAPPY EASTER!

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

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

Board meeting highlights

When, where and who: The board of directors of Roughrider Electric Cooperative met at Roughrider's Hazen office on Feb. 17.

Minutes of the previous meeting: The board reviewed and approved the minutes of the Jan. 27 meeting and the Jan. 5 special board meeting.

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

West Dakota Utility Services (WDUS)/3C updates: A January report was presented to the board from WDUS and subsidiaries.

Board member reports: Attendees at the meetings over the past month

reported to the board.

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

Operations report: Jason Bentz provided the board with additional information on his written report.

Member services/key account report: Leonard Hibl provided the board with an update on his written report.

Legal report: Jennifer Grosz provided the board with an update on the status of projects addressed in her written report. ■