

News & Views

Our mission: To provide reliable, competitively priced utility services to our customers and the community.

July/August 2017

Annual Meeting Recap

Our Annual Meeting of the Membership was held on April 22, 2017, at Franklin Community High School. The theme of our annual meeting this year is "Our Challenges, The Opportunities, Your Value." We are entering an era of rapid change within the electric utility industry and recognize that there are challenges ahead that will impact the way we do business. But this also opens the door for new opportunities for both the cooperative – and for our members.

Members enjoyed a hot breakfast, entertainment by Marty Raybon and Full Circle, a unique gift, wonderful prizes, and fun activities for the kids. During the meeting, the Johnson County REMC membership elected two Board Directors: District 1: Glenn McAlpin, and District 4: James Meredith.

Visit www.facebook.com/jcremc to view a photo album of meeting highlights and <http://jcremc.com/community-outreach/multimedia> to view the video presented during the meeting.



Scholarship winners announced



Left to right: Johnson County REMC CEO Chet Aubin, Garret Coner Jr., Brandon Barger, and Board of Directors President Glenn McAlpin (R).

Two local high school students recently were awarded scholarships from Johnson County REMC. Indian Creek High School senior Brandon Barger and Franklin Community High School senior Garret Coner Jr., are the 2017 recipients of individual \$2,000 academic scholarships.

Scholarships are awarded by academic and personal achievement, and with the submission of an essay covering a relevant electric industry topic.

Barger plans to study multimedia broadcasting at Franklin College, and Coner plans to study chemical engineering at Purdue University.

Why Johnson County REMC replaces utility poles

You may not pay much attention to the utility poles found throughout Johnson County REMC's service territory, but did you know these tall structures are the backbone of our distribution network? A standard wooden distribution pole is expected to last many years, and proper inspection is key in determining pole life expectancy.

Strong, sturdy utility poles ensure a reliable electric system, which is why every year we inspect around 2,000 or 10% of the approximately 20,000 poles on the Johnson County REMC system. All in all, it takes about ten years to complete one rotational cycle of pole inspections. Every year crews test poles for decay caused by exposure to the elements over time. The inspection process is not only a search for the decay which occurs at or just below ground level but also a visual inspection of the entire pole and its components.

Occasionally, poles need to be replaced for other reasons besides decay and old age. Severe weather events, power line relocation and automobile accidents are potential causes for immediate pole replacement. In 2016 Johnson County REMC replaced 516 poles, all of them

were replaced as system improvements.

When possible, we communicate when and where pole replacements will take place so you may stay informed of where crews will be working.

Here is a quick breakdown of how crews replace a utility pole:

When a pole needs to be replaced, crews typically start the process by digging a hole next to the pole being replaced. The depth of the hole is determined by the total length of the pole. Per engineering standard, the depth is 10% of pole length plus two feet. Next, the new pole is fitted with cross arms, insulators, ground wires and arm braces – all of the necessary parts for delivering safe and reliable electricity. Crews then detach the power lines from the old pole. The new pole is raised, guided carefully into position, and power lines are attached.

So, the next time you come across a Johnson County REMC crew replacing a pole, use caution and know that this process ensures a more reliable electric distribution system for you.

Attaching objects to poles puts lives at risk

Yard sale signs, basketball hoops, deer stands, and birdhouses are often found illegally attached to utility poles. But this isn't only a crime of inconvenience. A small nail partially driven into a pole can pierce a lineworker's glove, stripping away critical protection from high-voltage electricity. The safety issues caused by unapproved pole attachments place the lives of lineworkers and the public in peril.

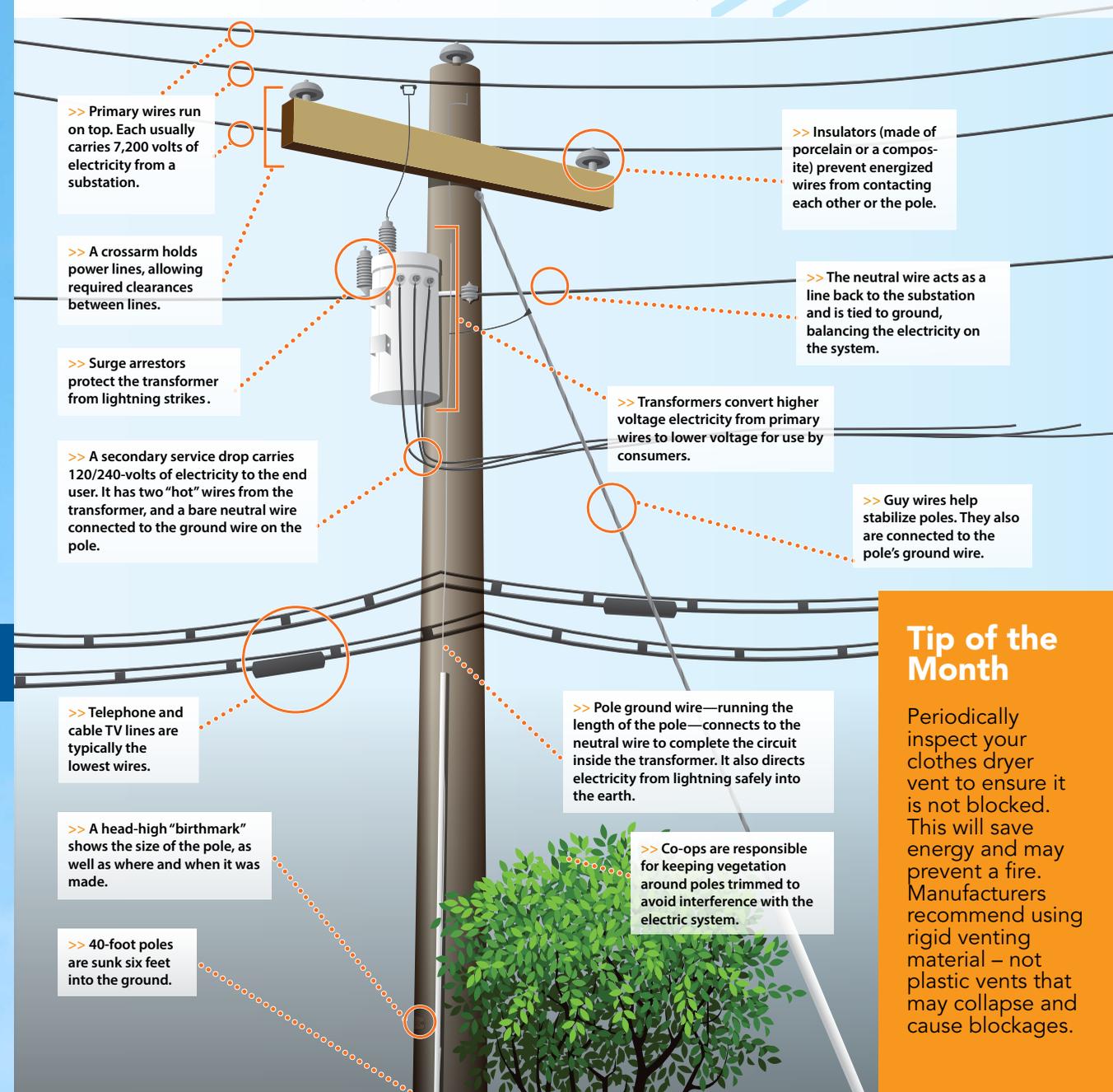
Johnson County REMC line crews climb utility poles at all hours, day and night, and in the worst of conditions," explains Chris Thompson, Regulatory Compliance / Safety and Training

Coordinator for Johnson County REMC. "Anything attached to utility poles can create serious hazards for our line personnel. Sharp objects like nails, tacks, staples, or barbed wire can puncture rubber gloves and other safety equipment, making line personnel vulnerable to electric shock."

Unauthorized pole attachments violate the National Electric Safety Code. These unauthorized attachments on poles also put line crews and anyone placing these items at risk. When someone puts unauthorized attachments on poles, they can come dangerously close to energized power lines with thousands of volts of electricity overhead.

>> What's on that pole?

This illustration shows basic equipment found on electric power distribution poles. Not all poles have all this equipment on them. They vary according to location and the service they provide.



Tip of the Month

Periodically inspect your clothes dryer vent to ensure it is not blocked. This will save energy and may prevent a fire. Manufacturers recommend using rigid venting material – not plastic vents that may collapse and cause blockages.

The REMC Lineworker

They wake before the sun, sometimes drinking steaming cups of coffee, as they wave goodbye to their families. After meeting at the REMC to review the day's job plans, 11 men climb into their trucks and head out for another day of performing an extremely important job. Our lineworkers form a solid team with a singular goal: deliver safe and reliable electricity. It's also important to know that line work can change at a moment's notice due to harsh weather, accidents and equipment failures.

We often take electricity service for granted, so let's take a moment and stand in a lineworker's boots. Lineworkers have to work safely, efficiently and smart. On a typical day, our lineworkers are responsible for maintaining over 1,600 miles of electrical distribution lines and helping to build new electrical service to homes and businesses throughout the Johnson County REMC service territory. They have a lot on their plates, but when our dispatch center reports an electrical outage, everything else takes a back seat.

Electrical power restoration takes precedence on a lineworker's to-do list. These brave workers are always on call ready to help restore power and crews are standing by to serve you 24 hours a day, seven days a week, in the middle of the night or wee hours of the morning.

Lineworkers focus on safety as the first priority. Every day the lives of these lineworkers are "on the line" and there can be no slip-ups or careless actions. That's one of the reasons linemen form a type of brotherhood. When you put your life in the hands of co-workers every day, they become more than just colleagues.

To be ready to respond no matter the situation or weather conditions, lineworkers are highly

trained. At Johnson County REMC line personnel are required to complete 8,000 hours of on the job training over a span of four years before they can attain "Journeyman" status. They also complete a long list of annual safety training including substation, pole top and bucket truck rescue. This required training ensures line personnel can work safely in various situations with various kinds of equipment. The vitally important equipment these workers utilize is tested regularly to make certain it is in good condition and working properly.

The lineworkers cooperative sense extends to electric co-ops across the nation. One of our guiding principles as an electric co-op is cooperation among other cooperatives. We help other co-ops in their time of need, and they in turn extend that service to us. It's reassuring to know if a severe storm strikes and creates large power outages, a national team of cooperative lineworkers stand ready to answer the call for help.

When you see a Johnson County REMC lineworker performing their job, remember that these highly skilled personnel help keep electricity flowing to our homes and businesses every day. They endure harsh weather, long hours, and potentially dangerous conditions all to make our lives better.

Help needed

During our Annual Meeting held at Franklin Community High School on April 22, 2017, a member lost her wedding and engagement ring. The rings are fused together as one. If you have found them, please contact our office at: **317-736-6174**.



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