

# JAMMUP

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## The power behind your power *National Lineman Appreciation Day is April 18.*

**Y**ou've likely noticed Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative's (SIEC) crews out and about, working on power lines and other electrical equipment in our community. It's no secret that a lineworker's job is tough—but it's a job that's essential and must be done, often in challenging conditions. This month, as we celebrate National Lineman Appreciation Day on April 18, and I thought I'd share some interesting facts about electric lineworkers with you.

The work can be heavy, in many ways. Did you know the equipment and tools that a lineworker carries while climbing a utility pole can weigh up to 50 pounds? That's the same as carrying six gallons of water. Speaking of utility poles, lineworkers are required to climb poles ranging anywhere from 30 to 120 feet tall. Needless to say, if you have a fear of heights, this likely is not the career path for you.

Lineworkers must be committed to their career—because it's not just a job, it's a lifestyle. The long hours and ever-present danger can truly take a toll. In fact, being a lineworker is listed in the top 10 most dangerous jobs in the U.S. **John E. Wilson**

Lineworkers often work non-traditional hours, outdoors in difficult conditions. While the job does not require a college degree, it does require technical skills, years of training and hands-on learning. Did you know that



**David Johnston**  
General Manager

to become a journeyman lineworker can take more than 6,000 hours of training (or about four years)? That's because working with high-voltage equipment requires specialized skills, experience and an ongoing mental toughness. Shortcuts are not an option, and there is no room for error in this line or work.

Despite the many challenges, SIEC's lineworkers are committed to powering our local community. During severe weather events that bring major power outages, lineworkers are among the first ones called. They must be ready to leave the comfort of their home and families unexpectedly, and they don't return until the job is done, often days later. That's why the lineworker's family is also dedicated to service. They understand the importance of the job to the community.

Nationwide, there are approximately 120,000 electric lineworkers. Here at SIEC, we have 19 lineworkers who are responsible for keeping power flowing 24/7, 365 days a year. To do this, they maintain 2,098 miles of energized lines across eight counties. In addition to the highly visible tasks lineworkers perform, their job today goes far beyond climbing utility poles to repair a wire. Today's lineworkers are information experts who can pinpoint power outages from miles away. Line crews now use laptops, tablets, drones and other technologies to map outages, survey damage and troubleshoot problems.

Being a lineworker may not seem like a glamorous job, but it is absolutely essential to the life of our community. Without the exceptional dedication and commitment of these hardworking men and women, we simply would not have the reliable electricity that we need for everyday life.

So, the next time you see a lineworker, please thank them for the work they do to keep power flowing, regardless of the time of day or weather conditions. After all, lineworkers are the power behind your power. Please join us as we recognize them on April 18 and follow "#ThankALineworker" on social media to see how others are recognizing lineworkers.

**Source: Straight Talk, NRECA**



### National Lineman Appreciation Day

We thank lineworkers for their courage and commitment to powering our community.

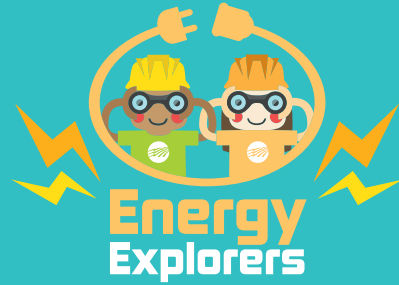
# DO YOU KNOW ABOUT LINEWORKERS?

Every April, we celebrate lineworkers and the hard work they do to make sure we have electricity to power our lives.

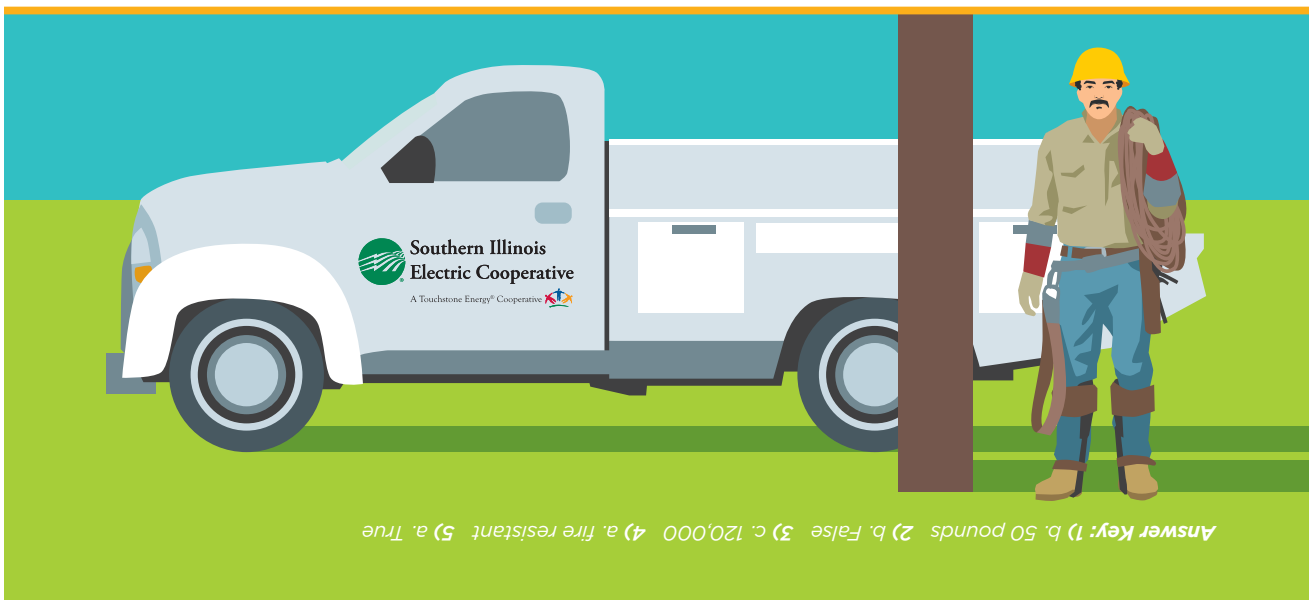
**How much do you know about lineworkers?**

**Take the quiz below to find out!**

(Use the answer key to check your work.)



1. Lineworkers have to wear a lot of gear to do their jobs. A lineworker's gear can weigh up to \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. 15 pounds
  - b. 50 pounds
  - c. 80 pounds
2. Lineworkers maintain and repair electrical lines, but they do not install them.
  - a. True (no installation)
  - b. False (They maintain, repair *and* install lines.)
3. There are approximately \_\_\_\_\_ lineworkers in the United States.
  - a. 50,000
  - b. 90,000
  - c. 120,000
4. Lineworkers must wear \_\_\_\_\_ clothing to protect them from a possible electric arc while working.
  - a. fire resistant
  - b. extra thick
  - c. leather or rubber
5. Lineworkers must wear special conductive boots when climbing a steel structure.
  - a. True
  - b. False



Answer Key: 1) b. 50 pounds 2) b. False 3) c. 120,000 4) a. fire resistant 5) a. True

## SIEC electric lineworkers keep the power moving

When people flip a light switch, they may not give much thought to why or how the light comes on.

Electric lineworkers provide an essential service: They work hard to install and maintain overhead and underground power lines that keep electricity flowing. These specialized workers are on call 24/7 in case severe storms or other circumstances cause the power to go out.

Lineworkers work with high-voltage electricity, often at great heights, in all kinds of weather conditions, such as snow, wind, rain, ice and extreme heat and cold. The work required to maintain the power grid is physically demanding. To become proficient, most lineworkers go through a technical training program and first learn on the job as apprentices under the careful eye of seasoned lineworkers who have earned journeyman status.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, electric power line installers and repairers typically:

- Install, maintain or repair the power lines that move electricity.
- Identify defective devices, voltage regulators, transformers and switches. *Gary W. Hill Sr.*
- Inspect and test power lines and auxiliary equipment.
- String (install) power lines between poles, towers and buildings. *Mary G. Schneider*
- Climb poles and transmission towers and use truck-mounted buckets to get to equipment.
- Operate power equipment when installing and repairing poles, towers and lines.
- Drive work vehicles to job sites.
- Know and implement safety standards and procedures.

When a problem is reported, lineworkers must identify the cause and fix it. This usually involves diagnostic testing using specialized equipment and repair work. To work on poles, they usually use bucket trucks to raise themselves to the top of the structure, although all lineworkers must be adept at climbing poles and towers when necessary. Workers use specialized safety equipment to keep them from falling when climbing utility poles and towers.

Storms and other natural disasters can cause extensive damage to power lines. When power is lost, line repairers must work quickly to restore service to customers.

Everyone at Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative works hard to provide reliable service, we not only salute our lineworkers, but also all our employees who work around the clock to keep the power on.

### PLEASE MOVE OVER FOR EMERGENCY AND UTILITY CREWS

If you see police, firefighters, utility crews or other emergency personnel on the side of the road, please slow down and move over when possible.

Together, we can keep our crews safe.



## Member prize

In this issue of the JAMUP, we printed the names of three SIEC members who are eligible to receive a \$10 credit toward their utility bill. If you find your name printed in this center section and it's not part of the story, call Brent with your account number at **800-762-1400** to claim your prize.

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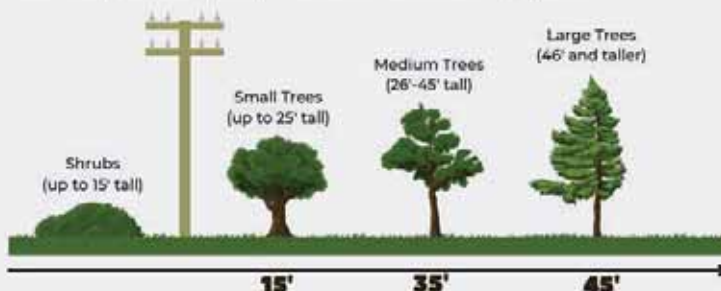
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**HAPPY  
ARBOR  
DAY!**

*from*  
**Southern Illinois  
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## Plant the RIGHT TREE in the RIGHT PLACE

The larger the tree, the farther it should be from a power line. Avoid planting beneath power lines, near poles or close to electrical equipment.



Remember, know what's below by calling 8-1-1 before you dig.

Learn more at: **Safe  
Electricity.org®**