

POWERLINE

NEWSLETTER FOR CO-OP MEMBERS OF CORN BELT ENERGY



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Whatever it Takes: Powering Life, from a Lineworker's Perspective

Lineworkers work every day in all weather conditions to make sure our community has the power to live their lives. They love their job. It's hard work, but it's very rewarding. Hopefully this will give you a better look into what they face and more importantly, why they do it.

The Danger

A lot of people know linework is dangerous because they work near high-voltage electricity. Move just the wrong way or lose focus for a split second, and it could be deadly. They have to be aware of their surroundings and the safety of the person next to them. They often work on energized power lines, and they can't always tell they are energized by just looking at them. They're working with an element of danger that requires concentration, and there is no margin for error. The environment compounds the pressure, because when you need power most is usually when the weather is worst. They're often working in storms with rain, wind, extreme heat and cold, in the dark, or on the side of the road next to fast-moving traffic. Yes, it's dangerous, but that's what they're trained to do.



Lineworkers are ranked as one of the 10 most dangerous jobs in the country. The lineworkers at Corn Belt Energy work rain or shine, in often challenging conditions to ensure you have reliable electricity. We're celebrating Lineworker Appreciation Day on April 8, 2024.

Many may not realize it, but they undergo years of training before they can officially be called a lineworker. They typically start as a groundperson, helping crews with tools and keeping job sites safe, then they transition to apprentice status, which typically spans four years. After an apprenticeship, with more than 7,000 hours of training under

their belts, they transition to journeyman lineworker status—that's when they're considered officially trained in their field. But the education is ongoing. Lineworkers continuously receive training to stay mindful of safety requirements and up to date on the latest equipment and procedures.

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The Physical Demand

The daily expectations of a lineworker are physically demanding, but you won't hear any of them complain about that. They know what they signed up for—loading heavy materials, climbing poles and in and out of buckets. A lot of times, they go places the trucks can't, so they might be hiking through the woods loaded down with 40 pounds of personal protective equipment. But that's the job. Most of them are just glad to be outside.

The Sacrifices

There are some sacrifices to being a lineworker. They're often first on the scene of an emergency, seeing things that are devastating like car accidents, structure fires and damage from severe storms. They don't know what type of situation

they're going to face or when they're going to face it. They get calls all hours and in the middle of the night. They've missed a lot of sporting games and family dinners, but their family is very supportive, and it pays off in the end. They make sure there is nothing standing in the way of helping our friends and neighbors get back to normal life.

It's Worth It

One thing that makes the job worthwhile is the camaraderie. Our co-op is like a second family, and the line crews are a brotherhood (and sisterhood). In this work, they have to depend on the person beside them in life-or-death circumstances. It's a culture of trust, teamwork and service. It's all about keeping the teammate beside you safe and the lights on for everybody else. They have a lot of pride their

work. Even when it's cold and wet, they know they're working to keep people warm. There's a lot of satisfaction in hearing someone yell "Thank you" from the window after the lights come back on or seeing people flipping the light switches on their porches after an outage is restored. No matter how tired they are or how long they've been working, that feeling always makes it worth it.

Corn Belt Energy and its employees are members of this community. We live in the same neighborhoods. We shop at the same stores. Our kids go to the same schools. If your lights are off, there is a good chance ours are off too. So, you can trust that we are doing our best to get the lights back on as quickly and safely as possible—so you can get back to normal life.



Know what's below for safe digging

Spring is here and there's never been a better time to get outside and enjoy the fresh air. Perhaps you're making plans for a new garden or a lawn makeover.

However you're planning to revamp your backyard oasis, remember to keep safety in mind for all projects—especially those that require digging near underground utility lines.

Most of us never think about the electric, gas, water and other utility lines buried below the ground, but hitting one of these lines while digging is not the reminder you'll want—trust us! Corn Belt Energy reminds all members who are planning a digging project to call

811 at least three business days before you start. Or you can submit a request online by visiting <https://newtina.julie1call.com/erequest/>. Here's how the process works:

After you call 811 or submit your request online, all affected utilities will be notified of your intent to dig. It may take the utilities a few days to get to your request, so please be patient. The affected utilities will send someone out to mark the buried lines with paint or flags. Before you break ground, confirm that all the utilities have responded to your request. If you placed your request by phone, use the process explained by your 811 call center representative. If you submitted your request online, refer



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

to your 811 center ticket to confirm everything.

By taking this important step before you break ground on your project, you can help protect not only yourself but our community. Disrupting an underground utility line can interrupt service, cause injuries and cost money to repair, so remember to call 811 first and know what's below.

Electrical Safety this Planting Season

As farmers return to their fields this spring, Corn Belt Energy and Safe Electricity urges all workers to be alert to the dangers of working near overhead power lines. Follow these safety tips:

- Determine power line locations before going out into the fields, and designate preplanned routes that avoid hazardous areas.
- Be aware of increased height when loading and transporting tractors on trailer beds. Be cognizant of tall antennas.
- Avoid raising the arms of planters or cultivators or raising truck beds near power lines.
- Do not attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path.
- Coming too close to a power line while working can be just as dangerous as contacting one since electricity can arc or "jump" to conducting material or objects.
- Non-metallic materials, such as

lumber, tree limbs, tires, ropes and hay, will conduct electricity depending on dampness, dust and dirt contamination.

- When grounded wires that stabilize poles, known as guy wires, are broken, they become hazardous. If you hit a guy wire and break it, call the utility to fix it. Do not do it yourself.
- When it comes to dealing with electrical poles and wires, always call the electric utility.
- If your equipment contacts a power line, stay in the cab and call 9-1-1 or the utility for help. Warn others who may be nearby to stay away and wait until the electric utility arrives.
- If leaving the cab is necessary, as in the case of fire, the proper action is to jump — not step — with both feet hitting the ground at the same time. Hop away from the area as far as you can, keeping both feet together as you hop. If you are unable to hop, then shuffle

with the insides of your feet touching. Do return to the equipment until the power has been deenergized.

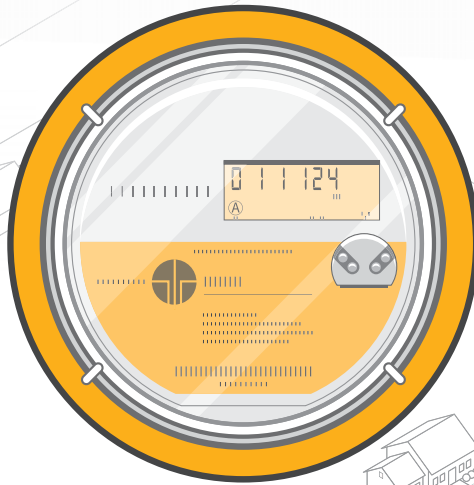
Managers and owners should make sure family members and staff, including seasonal workers, are educated on these safety precautions. Dangerous areas need to be thoroughly identified and labeled.

Start each day with a safety meeting to alert everyone to potential hazards and how to avoid them.



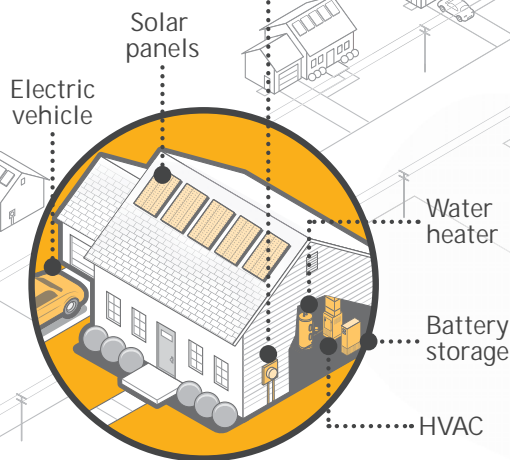
AMI 2.0

Advanced metering infrastructure or AMI has been the state of the art for utilities for the past 20 years, and electric cooperatives have been among its earliest and most aggressive adopters. Now, as those first-generation meters begin to age out, highly advanced AMI 2.0 systems are set to revolutionize the industry, with new edge-computing and data collection and analysis capabilities that promise to enable multiple new applications and improve the reliability and flexibility of the grid. Here are some of the benefits of AMI 2.0.



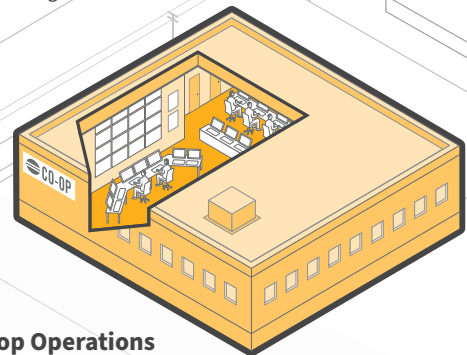
Meter Features

- Faster, more accurate readings.
- More frequent transmissions.
- Enable greater control of energy-producing and consuming devices.
- Sample voltage and amperages on demand.
- Independently detect anomalous conditions.
- Applications pushed to meters to meet new needs.
- Faster processor.
- Increased memory.
- Longer-lasting batteries.



Member Benefits



- Better integration of distributed energy resources.
- Ability to combine a standard meter and a net meter into a single unit.
- Improved customer awareness of consumption, pricing.
- Real-time home energy management, load control and outage/usage alerts.



Co-op Operations

- Better data acquisition and analytics.
- Improved member engagement.
- Integration and tracking of DERs.
- Design innovative energy programs.
- Evaluate, measure and verify cost/energy savings.
- Improved power quality and resilience.
- Quicker outage restoration.
- AMI network self-healing capabilities.
- Load disaggregation programs.
- Virtual power plants.

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