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Manager's Message:

J. Michael Davis
General Manager



The Power Behind Your Power

Lineworker Appreciation Day is April 11

You've likely noticed Tri-County EMC's 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 Lineworker Appreciation Day on April 11, I thought I'd share some interesting facts about electric lineworkers with you.

The work can be heavy, in more ways than one. 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 isn't 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.

Lineworkers often work non-traditional hours, outdoors in difficult conditions. We are a 24/7, 365 days per year operation and as a lineworker you're always ready for the call. 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 to become a journeyman lineworker can take more than 7,000 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, Tri-County EMC'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 Tri-County EMC, we have 30 lineworkers that are responsible for keeping power flowing 24/7, 365 days a year. To do this, they maintain 2,652 miles of power lines across seven 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 him 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 11, and follow ["#ThankALineworker"](#) on social media to see how others are recognizing lineworkers.



Teachers, Apply for a Bright Ideas Grant

Tri-County EMC is partnering with outstanding educators to bring creative learning to life! Starting this month, teachers can apply for a Bright Ideas education grant of up to \$1,000 to fund projects that enhance student success in K-12 classrooms and would otherwise not be possible. Applications and more information about the program can be found at ncbrightideas.com.

Grants are available in all curriculum areas including art, science, history and mathematics, Tri-County EMC expects to award approximately 80 grants to local teachers during the 2022-2023 school year. Over the past 28 years, Tri-County EMC has issued more than \$1.7 million for 1,891 projects that have benefited students in Duplin, Lenoir and Wayne counties.

Bright Ideas grant applications will be accepted through Sept. 15, but teachers are encouraged to apply early. Those who submit their application by Aug. 15 will be entered to win one of five \$100 Visa gift cards.

Supported by all 26 electric cooperatives in North Carolina, Bright Ideas grants have contributed \$14.3 million to N.C. classrooms, funding a total of 13,536 projects that have benefited well over 2.8 million students statewide since 1994.

Support for youth and education is part of our continued commitment to building a brighter future for the communities we serve. Visit tcemc.com or ncbrightideas.com for learn more.

Calling All Student Design Artists!

Think you have what it takes to design Tri-County EMC's 2022 Annual Meeting bag?

We are inviting students in PreK-12 to show off their talents by creating a one-of-a-kind electricity related design for our 4th Annual "Design our Bag Challenge!" Below are some ideas to help you brainstorm:

- What Tri-County EMC means to you
- Using electricity efficiently in your home
- Power/energy
- Electrical safety



Once submissions are received, the top 10 finalists' designs will be posted to Tri-County EMC's Facebook page, where individuals will vote to select the four winning designs.

The top four artists, voted on by Tri-County EMC Facebook community, will have their designs printed on our annual meeting bags, which will be given away at this year's Annual Meeting in November.

Winners will receive a \$100 cash prize and non-finalist winners will receive a \$25 cash prize.

CONTEST CRITERIA

- Open to students grades PreK-12.
- Students must live or attend a school in Tri-County EMC service area.
- Theme of design should be related to Tri-County EMC and must be your own original, unpublished work.
- Designs with the most likes at 12:00PM on May 13 will be chosen as the winner.
- Include your name, parent's name, age, grade, school, address and phone number with your submission.

CONTEST TIMELINE

April 4: Contest opens for submissions.

May 2: Submission deadline. After the closing date for submissions, on May 2 at 5 p.m., ten (10) finalists will be selected for the contest.

May 9: If your design is selected as a finalist, it will be posted on Tri-County EMC's Facebook page members/community will vote for the winning designs.

May 13: Deadline for voting on Facebook at 12 p.m.

Mail Artwork to: Tri-County EMC Design Bag Challenge
Tri-County EMC
PO BOX 130
Dudley, NC 28333

If you have questions, you may contact Deidra Grantham, manager of Marketing and Communications, at 919-735-2611 ext. 621 or Deidra.Grantham@tcemc.com.

TCEMC Annual Scholarship Golf Tournament

May 12, 2022 | 8:00 AM and 1:00 PM Shotgun Starts
Southern Wayne Country Club | Mount Olive, NC
Breakfast & Lunch Provided



Tri-County EMC employees will host the Annual Scholarship Golf Tournament Thursday, May 12, 2022, at Southern Wayne Country Club in Mount Olive. We invite members and friends of Tri-County to join us for a morning or afternoon of fun and fellowship to benefit the Employee-Funded Scholarship Program.

The tournament will offer two start times, morning and afternoon, with breakfast biscuits and lunch catered for all players. Team entries will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Individuals are also welcomed to participate. Individual participants will be assigned to a 4-player team. There will be cash prizes for the winners.

If you are unable to play golf with us this year, please consider being a Hole Sponsor. Money raised through this event will be used to award college scholarships. Tri-County EMC employees appreciate your assistance with this benefit, and believe that it is important to enhance the education in our community of students and members who will be the future leaders of our communities.

Registration deadline is May 6, 2022. To obtain a registration form and hole sponsor form, or if you have questions, please contact Deidra Grantham (deidra.grantham@tcemc.com) or Mike Davis (michael.davis@tcemc.com) at 800-548-4869 or 919-735-2611.

REGISTRATION FORM

Name of Team or Team Sponsor: _____

Name of Team Sponsor/Contact Person: _____

Address: _____

Phone (day): _____ Phone (evening): _____ E-mail: _____

Names of Players & Handicap *(Required-Very important! Average score if HDCP not established):*

Preferred start time: (check one): 8:00 AM 1:00 PM

Please indicate which options you are selecting:

Sponsor \$500 (Hole sponsor & 4 players) \$ _____
 Team Participant \$400 (4 players) \$ _____
 Hole Sponsor \$100 (Hole Sponsor only) \$ _____
 Individual Participant \$100 (Will be assigned to team) \$ _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Please make check payable to Tri-County EMC Scholarship

Mail check and registration to: Tri-County EMC Scholarship Tournament, PO Box 130, Dudley, NC 28333

Please return registration form to arrive **no later than May 6**

Club Rules: Shirts with collars, no cut-offs, no metal spikes.

Tri-County EMC Phone Numbers: 919-735-2611 or 800-548-4869. Fax Number: 919-734-6277.

Cut registration form along line

Don't Fall Victim to Utility Scams

Every day, millions of Americans are targeted by scammers through phone calls, emails, text messages, online or in person. Scammers' tactics can change daily, which is why it's important for consumers to stay on top of the latest scam reports from local and national news outlets, as well as your local utility companies.

Recently, we have had an increase of Tri-County EMC members being targeted through a phone scam where the scammers demanded immediate payment and threatened to shut off power if the money was not received. Remember, Tri-County EMC will never call you and demand immediate payment without notice.

We want you to be aware of two trending scam tactics. One is the overpayment trick, where a scammer contacts you and claims that you have overpaid your utility bill. The scammer will say they need your personal banking information to deposit the credit back to your checking account. Don't fall for this scam! If you make an overpayment on your energy bill, Tri-County EMC will automatically apply the credit to your account, which will carry over to your next billing cycle.

Another trending scam is smishing (short for SMS phishing). Many consumers know to watch out for suspicious emails, but we tend to trust text messages sent to our smartphones. Always question suspicious texts, especially from someone claiming to represent a utility. Tri-County EMC will only send you important updates regarding outages in

your area via text if you've signed up for our text alerts. These are just a couple examples of trending scams, so it's important to watch for any red flags.

Here are a few reminders on how to take control of the situation when you've been targeted by a scammer:

- ➔ **Take your time.** Utility scammers try to create a sense of urgency so that you'll act fast and hand over personal information, especially over the phone. Take a moment to think about the situation before acting.
- ➔ **Be suspicious.** Scammers typically request immediate payments through prepaid debit cards or third-party apps. Unusual requests like this should raise red flags. Remember, if the request seems strange and out of the ordinary, you're likely being targeted by a scammer.
- ➔ **Confirm before you act.** If you're contacted by someone claiming to represent Tri-County EMC or another utility but you're unsure, just hang up the phone and call the utility directly. You can reach us at 919-735-2611 or 800-548-4869 to verify the situation.

Our increasingly connected world provides scammers with more opportunities to connect with unsuspecting consumers. Be vigilant, and please report any utility scams to Tri-County EMC so we can let others in our community know. Together, we can help prevent our friends and neighbors from being victimized.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

When streaming content, use the smallest device that makes sense for the number of people watching. Avoid streaming on game consoles, which use 10 times more power than streaming through a tablet or laptop. Streaming content with electronic equipment that has earned the ENERGY STAR rating will use 25-30% less energy than standard equipment.

Source: Dept. of Energy



**Tri-County Electric
Membership Corporation**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Tri-County EMC Membership Corporation in Dudley, N.C., was chartered May 8, 1940.

Mission Statement:

Tri-County Electric Membership Corporation is a member-driven cooperative committed to providing reliable electric power at a reasonable cost, to offering superior service, and to taking an active role in supporting the communities it serves.

**We are here to serve you 24 hours a day,
7 days a week and 365 days a year.**

For Outages or Emergencies:
919-735-2611 or 1-800-548-4869

tccmc.com

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Worth Overman

Employee Ready to Serve You



Anthony Denning

Anthony Denning is one of 50 employees ready to serve you. Anthony has worked with Tri-County since August 17, 1998, and is a Foreman for the cooperative. Anthony resides in Four Oaks with his wife, Donna.