



First Electric Cooperative

Improving quality of life

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



## Maintaining rights-of-way keeps people safe and helps prevent power outages

Keeping trees and other vegetation away from First Electric Cooperative's more than 10,000 miles of power lines is necessary to keep people safe and to help minimize power outages.

"All lines are maintained on at least a five-year schedule," said Tim Felty, right-of-way maintenance supervisor. "In more populated areas, First Electric employees and contractors maintain the 15-foot clearance on either side of the line on a four-year schedule."

Trees and other vegetation touching lines conduct electricity and can cause power quality issues, such as blinking lights. Trees also cause outages when they fall and take down lines and damage equipment. Most importantly, trees touching lines pose a safety hazard to anyone who comes into contact with them.

Members are asked to call First Electric at 800-489-7405 if they notice a tree or other vegetation in or close to lines. A right-of-way crew will evaluate the situation and determine if tree removal or branch trimming is necessary.

In 2015, right-of-way maintenance is scheduled in the following areas: Drasco, Tannebaum, Romance, Rosebud, Seaton, Cabot and Mountain Springs. Our employees and contractors always appreciate your cooperation when working in your area.



First Electric maintains our rights-of-way in an effort to keep members of the public safe and to help minimize outages.



## Co-op educates children, adults on electrical safety

Safety is the top priority at First Electric — not only for our employees, but also for those in the communities we serve. Each year, co-op employees educate hundreds of people — both children and adults — on how to stay safe when near electricity. Two free programs are key to the cooperative's efforts:

### ELECTRICAL SAFETY MAGIC SHOW

Elementary students learn about electrical safety during the "Making Accidents Disappear" magic show that features magician Scott Davis. They are reminded to stop, look and think when near electricity.

### HIGH-VOLTAGE SAFETY DEMONSTRATION

Armed with their protective gear, co-op employees show teenagers and adults the dangers of coming into contact with energized power lines. They also discuss the basics of electricity, from why maintaining the right-of-way is important to why lights occasionally blink.

Call 800-489-7405 for more information on the programs or to schedule a presentation.

## DID YOU KNOW?

# Co-op crews follow system when restoring power

Restoring power during widespread outages involves much more than flipping a switch or removing a fallen tree off a line. At each stage of the restoration process, First Electric crews work to restore power safely to the greatest number of our members in the shortest time possible.

Remember to report an outage, even if you think a neighbor already has. This helps co-op employees isolate and repair the problem. Just call 888-827-3322 or use SmartHub.

Here are the steps we take when restoring power:

## 1. High-voltage Transmission Lines

Transmission towers and cables that supply power to transmission substations (and thousands of members) rarely fail. When damaged, though, these facilities must be repaired before other parts of the system can operate.

## 2. Distribution Substation

First Electric has 43 substations, each serving up to thousands of members. When a major outage occurs, line crews inspect the substation to determine if problems stem from transmission lines feeding into the substation or the substation itself or an issue down the line.

## 3. Main Distribution Lines

If the problem cannot be isolated at a distribution substation, distribution lines are checked. These lines carry power to large groups of members in communities or

housing developments. When power is restored at this stage, all members served by this supply line could see the lights come on, as long as there is no problem farther down the line.

## 4. Tap Lines

If an outage persists, supply lines, also called tap lines, are inspected. These lines deliver power to transformers, either mounted on poles or placed on pads for underground service, outside businesses, schools and homes.

## 5. Individual Homes

If a home remains without power, the service line between a transformer and the home may need to be repaired. This can explain why you have no power when your neighbor does. This illustrates why it is important for you always to report an outage.

Sometimes an outage is caused by a problem with the service installation on your home, business or other building. First Electric can't fix anything beyond our equipment, so a licensed electrician is needed in those cases.

Individual households may receive special attention if loss of electricity affects life support systems or poses another immediate danger. If you or a family member depends on life support, please call 800-489-7405 before an emergency arises. When widespread outages occur, First Electric crews will fix the problem as soon as possible.

## Notice of Annual Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Meeting of the members of First Electric Cooperative will be held on Friday, June 26, 2015, in the Office of the Cooperative at 1000 South J.P. Wright Loop Road, Jacksonville, Pulaski County, Arkansas, beginning at 10 a.m. for the following purposes:

- To pass on reports for the previous fiscal year;
- To elect one (1) director for the cooperative to serve a term of six (6) years; and,
- To transact such other business as properly may come before the meeting.

Any member planning to attend the annual meeting, who has special needs, is asked to contact the cooperative at 800-489-7405 prior to the annual meeting for assistance.

Respectfully,

Robert Maertens, Secretary/Treasurer

## April 13 honors those who keep members' lights on



America's electric cooperatives have designated the second Monday of April as National Lineman Appreciation Day.

On April 13, electric co-ops will honor the linemen who often work in challenging conditions to keep the lights on.

First Electric proudly recognizes all linemen for the services they perform around the clock in dangerous conditions to keep power flowing and protect the public's safety. Please join us in thanking them for their service.