

**ROLLING HILLS
ELECTRIC CO-OP, INC.**

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CONTACT US

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Beloit, KS 67420
785-534-1601 or 800-530-5572

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK

For outage updates,
energy efficiency tips and
cooperative news.

Electric Grid Reliability Risks Increasing

Part I: Raising awareness of our fragile national electric grid



Jason Rabe

I have had the privilege of working in the utility space for over 15 years and the electric utility world for nearly a decade. Like many aspects of life, there have

been massive changes and shifts in our energy policy during that short time. Some of these have been positive, while others have had negative impacts, and some have had unintended consequences — many of these shifts are just now impacting our daily lives.

Winter Storm Uri in early 2021 highlighted the fragility of our electric grid, which has only been weakened by national energy policies in the last 20 years. These policies are focused on intermittent energy forms (which are not inherently bad), created over

investment driven by greed through government incentives, and are not improving reliability. This flawed approach has been exposed by increased electricity usage without the readily available capacity increase needed to ensure affordable and, most importantly, reliable power.

The Southwest Power Pool (SPP) is the grid operator for the middle section of the United States, covering most of the Great Plains from North Dakota to North Texas. The SPP utilizes a grid condition graphic to declare the current status of the grid. Each level outlines different utility requirements and Energy Emergency Alert (EEA) levels requiring public participation.

Winter Storm Uri showcased the energy capacity vulnerability stewing for many years. This extreme storm caused unprecedented events to occur, such as frozen gas wells in Texas. These events may have been avoided if better

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Summer Line Crew Hours

Rolling Hills Electric Cooperative's line crews will begin working summer hours, 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m., on May 28 and will continue through Aug. 30. Each year during this period, the line department switches to summer hours in an effort to complete most of the day's work before the major heat of the day arrives. The office will retain normal business hours from 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday-Friday. If you have questions or need to report an outage, call 785-534-1601 or 800-530-5572.

Rolling Hills Staffing Changes

SAYING FAREWELL TO KNOX AND MOORE

Rolling Hills journeyman linemen, **RILEY MOORE** and **TYSON KNOX**, both from our Belleville district, have left the cooperative for new positions.

We appreciate all they have done for the cooperative over the years, and they will be greatly missed. Each played an integral role in the development of the Belleville Outpost and will be difficult to replace. We wish you the best of luck with your future endeavors, Riley and Tyson!

BIERY TRANSFERS TO BELLEVILLE OUTPOST TEAM

THOMAS BIERY has transferred to the Belleville Outpost from the Beloit office, where he is sure to be missed. Biery's exciting move presents an excellent opportunity for further professional growth and development. His skills will undoubtedly make him a valuable addition to this team. Congratulations, Thomas!

PAYEUR JOINS RHEC BELOIT CREW

BLANE PAYEUR has joined RHEC's Beloit location

as a journeyman lineman. For the past six years, Payeur worked for the City of Belleville.

We are thrilled to welcome Payeur to the cooperative and look forward to his valuable contributions.

Linemen play a crucial role in maintaining and repairing our electrical

infrastructure and ensuring reliable power for our communities. We are confident that Payeur's skills and passion will be a great asset.

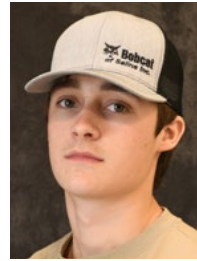
In his spare time, he enjoys fishing and going to the lake. Congratulations, Blane, welcome to the RHEC family!



Riley Moore



Tyson Knox



Thomas Biery



Blane Payeur



WE ARE HIRING

JOIN OUR TEAM!

JOURNEYMAN LINEMAN
BELOIT HEADQUARTERS

Grow your career in a stable industry while receiving excellent pay & benefits that include 100% employer-paid BCBS health insurance for employees & dependents, a defined pension plan, plus so much more!

SCAN FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

➔



Candidates must have completed an approved lineman apprenticeship program as well as have & maintain a valid Class A Commercial Driver's License.

📞 785-534-1601
✉ areed@rollinghills.coop
🌐 www.rollinghills.coop/careers

APPLICATIONS ACCEPTED UNTIL POSITIONS FILLED



RHEC is an equal opportunity employer.

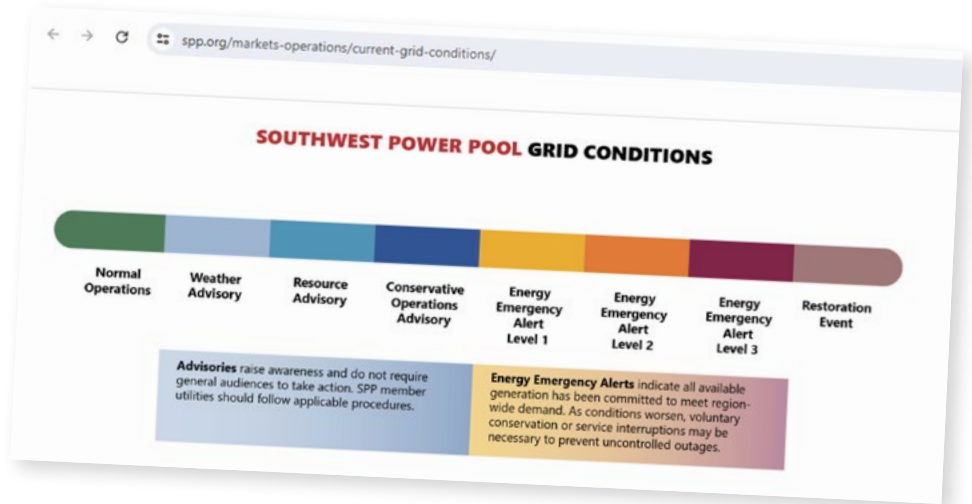
Electric Grid Reliability Risks Increasing

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decisions had been made decades prior to invest in more diverse, callable, hardened energy sources.

Prior to 2021, there were little to no SPP advisories or EEAs (see chart at right), however, in 2021 there were 10. In 2022, there were 24 grid condition notifications. In 2023, there were over 30 grid condition notifications. Ten days into 2024, we had our first grid notification due to an arctic blast storm named Winter Storm Gerri. In March, on a rather normal, cold winter day, the most recent advisory was released.

This is a concerning trend and unfortunately, it is getting worse, not better. Despite billions in subsidies and investment



SPP Energy Emergency Alert (EEA) levels indicate all available generation has been committed to meet region-wide demand. As conditions worsen, voluntary conservation or service interruptions may be necessary to prevent uncontrolled outages.

in intermittent energy generation, our unreliability and exposure to blackouts is increasing.

Look for the second part of this series in the June issue.



CONGRATULATIONS SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Congratulations to our four scholarship winners! Each student will receive a scholarship to the school of their choice. **JOLIE GIRARD** will also attend the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., and **CLAY GUTTERY** will travel to Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp (CYLC) near Steamboat Springs, Colorado.



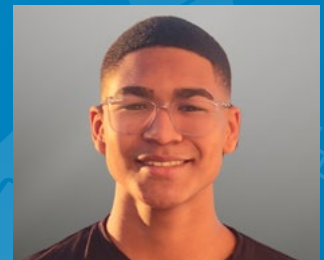
JOLIE GIRARD
Clifton-Clyde High School
Scholarship Recipient
Youth Tour



CLAY GUTTERY
Osborne County High School
Scholarship Recipient
CYLC



COOPER RATHBUN
Lincoln Jr./Sr. High School
Scholarship Recipient



GATLEY WICHYOAH
Beloit Jr./Sr. High School
Scholarship Recipient

HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT THE RESIDENTIAL BUDGET PAYMENT PLAN OPTIONS AT ROLLING HILLS ELECTRIC?



We offer a **VARIABLE** and a **FIXED BUDGET** option for the **RESIDENTIAL BUDGET PAYMENT PLAN**. Both plans are based on a 12-month average, and both plans still require the member to pay their bill on time each month. We feel both plans can be beneficial to our members should they choose to participate. The fixed option uses a set 12-month average and has a catch-up month that is due in May each year. The variable plan recalculates the 12-month average each month, with no catch-up month unless the member is removed from the plan or moves from our lines.

If you are interested in either of these options, please call the office during normal business hours of Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. and we would be happy to determine which plan fits your needs best.

CALL 800-530-5572 TO REVIEW OPTIONS AND FIND THE PLAN THAT FITS YOUR NEEDS TODAY!

Do Not Overlook Overhead Power Lines

It can be easy to overlook things that we see every day, including overhead power lines. However, failure to notice overhead lines can be deadly. If you or an object you are touching contacts or gets too close to a power line, you could be seriously injured or killed.

Overhead power lines require 20 feet of clearance in all directions. This distance rule applies to the power lines draped from pole to pole that line roads (distribution lines), as well as the drop-down lines that service homes or other structures.

If your job requires you to operate equipment in the vicinity of large transmission lines and towers, they require even more clearance than distribution and drop-down lines. That clearance is determined by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). OSHA mandates line clearance distances for all types of power lines.

Be mindful of overhead power lines when completing the following tasks:

HOME MAINTENANCE

Always be aware of the location of power lines, particularly when using long tools, such as ladders, pool skimmers and pruning poles. Lower long tools and equipment before moving or transporting them. Other safety tips include:

- ▶ Carry ladders and other long items horizontally whenever possible.
- ▶ Be careful when working on or around your roof.
- ▶ Never go on a roof in windy or bad weather.

YARDWORK

When trimming trees, do not allow yourself or trimmers to come within 20 feet of overhead power lines, including service lines to your home or outbuilding. Also:

- ▶ Do not trim trees near power lines; instead, leave this to certified line clearance tree trimmers.
- ▶ Do not use water or blower extensions to clean gutters near electric lines.

FARMING

Review power line locations and other potential electrical hazards with all workers at morning safety meetings. Equipment that could get too close or contact a power pole or line includes sprayer tips, tall equipment, dump trucks, augers and other extensions.

AT WORK

Follow all OSHA distance requirements when operating dump trucks, cranes, concrete pump truck extensions and when working on a roof or in a bucket.

OTHER REMINDERS

- ▶ Do not come within 50 feet of a downed or damaged power line. Warn others to stay away. Call 911 to report it.
 - ▶ Never climb trees near power lines. Even if the power lines are not touching the tree, they could come in contact when weight is added to the branch.
- Look up and look out for overhead power lines. Contact can happen in an instant. For additional electrical safety tips, go to www.SafeElectricity.org.

