

**ROLLING HILLS  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

# NEWS

## Rolling Hills Electric Co-op, Inc.

### Board of Trustees

**Michelle Brokes**, President  
Wilson — District 1

**Paul Wilson**, Vice-President  
Burr Oak — District 2

**Justin Trost**, Secretary  
Concordia — District 3

**Corey Dlabal**, Treasurer  
Wilson — District 1

**Eric Andersen**, Trustee  
Jamestown — District 3

**Mike Brzon**, Trustee  
Courtland — District 3

**David Dubbert**, Trustee  
Beloit — District 2

**John George**, Trustee  
Lebanon — District 2

**Sarah Goss**, Trustee  
Kanopolis — District 1

**Tom Marr**, Trustee  
Formoso — District 2

### Staff

**Douglas Jackson**, General Manager

### Contact Us

3075B U.S. Hwy. 24 P.O. Box 339  
Beloit, KS 67420  
785-534-1601 or 800-530-5572

## Like us on Facebook

For outage updates, energy efficiency tips and cooperative news.



## Board Elections in Final Stages

The election process is not only a privilege, but also a civic duty and a responsibility that we, as citizens of the United States of America, should take seriously.

As a consumer-member of Rolling Hills Electric, you also have this privilege and responsibility. Being a cooperative has its benefits, especially for its consumer-members, who have a voice in choosing who serves on the board. Trustees are elected representatives and act in the best interest of the cooperative's consumer-members.

A trustee candidate submits a nominating petition that contains at least 20 signatures of current members of the cooperative who reside within the candidate's district. The petition had to be filed at the Rolling Hills office in Beloit on or before Nov. 30, 2021. The nominating petitions were submitted to the secretary who determined that the candidates met the qualifications to be nominated and the petitions were valid.

The ballots are currently being finalized and will be mailed on March 25,

### 2022 Board of Trustees Nominees

#### District 1, Position 2

**MICHELLE BROKES**, Wilson

#### District 2, Position 2

**JOHN GEORGE**, Lebanon

#### District 3, Position 2

**MIKE BRZON**, Courtland

2022. Upon receipt of the ballot, please mark your choice or write in a candidate, sign the back of the ballot envelope (certificate of membership), and return your ballot immediately. Ballots must be received in Beloit by April 22, 2022.

The names listed above will appear on your ballot. A complete biography along with a picture of each candidate will be included with the ballot. If you have any questions or need a replacement ballot, please call our office at 800-530-5572 or 785-534-1601.

### Annual Meeting: Save the Date!

The Rolling Hills Electric Cooperative, Inc. Annual Meeting will be held on **FRIDAY, APRIL 22, 2022**. With the current pandemic situation, please look for more details in next month's *Kansas Country Living* issue!

April 2022						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	<b>22</b>	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

# Historical Windstorm Brings

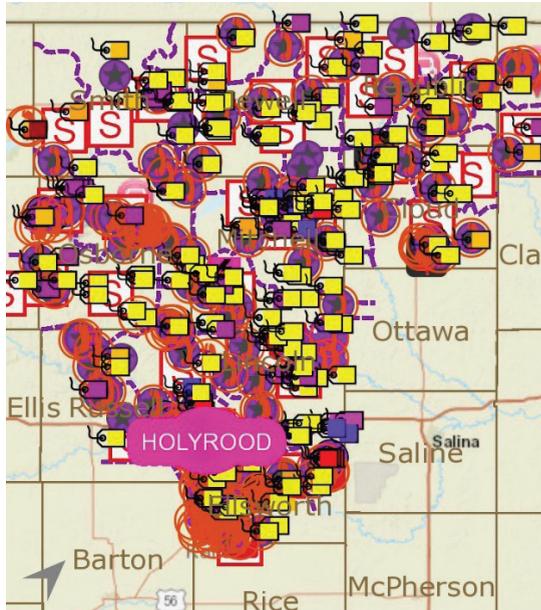
The dangerous sustained high winds roared across Kansas, gusting over 100 mph in some areas in the central part of the state.

What started out as a forecasted high wind warning a few days prior to Dec. 15 ended up a record-breaking and historic wind event that caused widespread damage across much of the Midwest.

Most of us can say, when these type of weather warnings come along, we heed the warning and do a little prep work thinking and assuming that the weather won't quite do what is predicted. On the morning of Dec. 15, it seemed that weather warning prediction was way off — it was a gorgeous morning with only a slight breeze and unseasonably warm temps. However, shortly after lunch the weather broke loose and proved those warnings true.

Turning day into night, the sustained high winds blowing dirt and debris seemed and looked almost apocalyptic — like we were reliving the days of the “Dirty Thirties.”

The dangerous sustained high winds roared across Kansas, gusting over 100 mph in some areas of the state. The high winds caused severe damage to fences, windows, trees, power lines, sheds and barns, homes, businesses, churches and some historical buildings in the area. Vehicle crashes due to



Here is a snapshot of our entire service territory and what our system looked like during the peak of outages; the tag images are broken poles and downed lines. The purple lines and red icons are the lines that were without power.



JUSTIN ZERBE

the winds were also reported across the state. The conditions spawned wildfires that burned almost 400,000 acres in Ellis, Osborne, Rooks and Russell counties. They burned almost everything in their path — including homes, farms and livestock.

At the worst point during the storm, Rolling Hills had approximately 5,900 meters off at one time in our entire service area — that's A LOT of meters! Multiple substations were down across our territory as there was much damage to not only our line and equipment, but also to our power supplier's transmission line, poles and equipment.

As our linemen were out in the elements fighting the wind and debris to try to keep members' power on, our office staff was answering calls, recording outages and taking reports of broken poles and downed power lines as quickly as they could. Members were alerted early that evening on our Facebook page to prepare for extended outages as most of our system was without power.

By the end of the following day, 639 meters remained without power as crews worked as quickly and as safely as they could to restore power to our service territory. A couple of our substations remained without power at this time due to severe storm damage, but were restored the following day on Friday, which was top priority for our power suppliers and our line crews. By the end of the day Saturday, power was restored to most of the residential services.

Mutual aid crews from **ARK VALLEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE** and **DSO ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE** arrived on Sunday to assist with restoration efforts

# Territory-Wide Outages



Left: A broken pole from the windstorm.

Middle: Replacing a broken pole on a member's property.

Right: Rolling Hills linemen repair line damaged by a fallen tree.

for the remaining residential services without power. Having additional crews rebuilding downed lines massively boosted our restoration efforts. We send them a big **THANK YOU** for their willingness to lend a hand!

This is the kind of storm that residents of Kansas will remember for years. The figures continue to change daily as data and damage reports are still coming in, but as of mid-January, there were 350 poles that were damaged or replaced and the cost of damages are still being calculated.

We would like to thank all of our employees who worked

long hours as part of the restoration and response efforts. And lastly, a huge thank you to our wonderful members for your kindness, patience, support and understanding during this monumental storm. Your kind words, encouragement, and even offering to provide our linemen with a warm meal at night were appreciated and mean more than you know.

Our thoughts and prayers are with those who were affected by the storms and wildfires. Thank you to the hard-working and generous people who are helping all of those who have been hit hard by this disaster. Our hearts are with you all.

## THANK YOU for Windstorm Mutual Aid

Rolling Hills Electric would like to extend a sincere **THANK YOU** to the mutual aid crews from **DSO ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.** and **ARK VALLEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE** who assisted in restoration efforts during the historical December windstorm. One of the many benefits of the cooperative system is the willingness and desire of other cooperatives to help lend a hand when another is in need. This is a perfect example of Cooperative Principles No. 6 Cooperation Among Cooperatives and No. 7 Concern for Community.

"They did a fantastic job, and we hope to be able to return the favor someday," said Marc Martin, operations manager.

- DSO ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CREW:** MIKE GFELLER, ERIC BAIER, KYLE WOMOCHIL and KIFF SWISHER
- ARK VALLEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CREW:** JUSTIN TANKERSLEY, CAMERON HORESKY, ARYN WALTON and GARTH GRAHAM



Left: The DSO Electric Cooperative crew works to restore power. Right: The Ark Valley Electric Cooperative crew assists in restoration efforts.

# In Your Community

## Belleville Christmas Lighted Parade

A big shout out and thank you to **SCOTT SPLICHAL**, journeyman lineman in our Belleville District, for dressing up our safety demo trailer to get in the Christmas spirit for the Christmas on the Square Lighted Parade in downtown Belleville.



Our safety demo trailer all decked out in the Christmas spirit.

## First Responders Safety Demo

Rolling Hills Electric crew members were invited to perform an electrical safety demonstration for first responders (EMTs, firefighters, local police deputies and sheriff's department) in the Belleville and surrounding areas held at our Belleville outpost. There were approximately 50 people in attendance.

This demonstration is pertinent lifesaving information for first responders to be aware of and use caution around power lines. If they ever find themselves in an emergency situation that involves power lines, this training and knowledge can help prevent further injuries/fatalities at the accident scene.



Kendall Strutt (left), outpost foreman, and Scott Splichal, journeyman lineman, demonstrate the dangers of approaching an energized object.

If you have an upcoming event, meeting or group function that you would be interested in having Rolling Hills host a **FREE** electrical safety demonstration, contact Catie Mellies, member services, at 785-534-1601 to get one scheduled! This demonstration is excellent knowledge for **ANY** group and for **ALL** ages!

## Low Income Energy Assistance Program

Rolling Hills Electric receives requests for assistance with member electricity bills throughout the year. The Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) is a federally funded program that helps eligible households pay a portion of their home energy costs by providing a one-time per year benefit.

An online application will be available Jan. 3, 2022. To qualify, applicants must meet the following requirements:

- ▶ An adult living at the address must be personally responsible for paying the heating costs incurred at the current residence, payable either to the landlord or the fuel vendor.
- ▶ Applicants must demonstrate a recent history of payments toward purchases of the primary heating energy.

The combined gross income (before deductions) of all persons living at the address may not exceed 150% of the federal poverty level.

The benefit levels vary according to the following factors:

- ▶ Household income
- ▶ Number of persons living at the address
- ▶ Type of dwelling
- ▶ Type of heating fuel

For more information and/or to apply online, go to [www.dcf.ks.gov](http://www.dcf.ks.gov), select the **"SERVICES"** tab at the top, then scroll down to click on **ENERGY ASSISTANCE (LIEAP)**. Applications must be received at the designated DCF office **PRIOR TO 5 P.M., MARCH 31, 2022**. Late applications will not be considered for assistance. The state will contact Rolling Hills Electric to verify payments are being made on the account and the account is active in the applicant's name. LIEAP payments will be sent directly to Rolling Hills Electric and applied to the member's account.

For more information or assistance in completing the application, please contact Catie at 785-534-1601 or 800-530-5572, Monday-Friday from 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

### 2022 Income Eligibility Guidelines

Persons Living at the Address	Maximum Gross Monthly Income
1	\$1,610
2	\$2,178
3	\$2,745
4	\$3,313
5	\$3,880
6	\$4,448
7	\$5,015
8	\$5,583
9	\$6,150
10	\$6,718
11	\$7,285
12	\$7,853
13	\$ 8,420
14	\$8,988
+1	\$568 for each additional person