



April 2024

Fast Facts About Lineworkers

You probably don't think about them until your power goes out, but electric lineworkers protect our homes and communities 24 hours a day. Like other first responders who keep us safe, lineworkers endure all kinds of weather and challenging conditions.

On April 8, we celebrate Lineworker Appreciation Day to honor the men and women who power life. Here are some quick facts about lineworkers and the work they do.

Lineworker History

Lineworkers first appeared during the 1840s rush to spread telegraph service across the U.S., stringing wires between trees and other natural objects. It didn't take long for everyone to realize tall poles were safer and more practical.

What Electric Lineworkers Do

Restoring electricity after a power outage is just one of the many duties of lineworkers, who also:

- Install and connect new power lines to homes and businesses
- Maintain and perform upgrades to improve our electric grid
- Diagnose and pinpoint power delivery issues
- Plan and manage large-scale projects
- Ensure safe work practices in often challenging conditions

Lineworkers are responsible for maintaining and upgrading the nation's electric grid that connects more than 7,300 power plants to 145 million consumers through 60,000 miles of high-voltage lines, millions of miles of distribution lines and more than 50 million transformers.

Geared for Safety

Lineworkers climb with up to 40 pounds of safety gear and tools. That's like carrying a 5-gallon water jug! Here's what they typically wear to stay safe while working:

- Hard hats
- Safety glasses
- Flame-resistant clothing

- Arc flash protective clothes
- Rubber gloves & sleeves
- Climbing belts
- Fall-protection harnesses

The Wild Side of Work

Squirrels, birds and racoons are a major cause of power outages, and lineworkers encounter plenty of them while working. When your office is the great outdoors, you never know what you'll find on the job.

On-the-Job Training

Described by the Energy Department as one of the nation's highest-paid professions that doesn't demand postsecondary education, becoming a journeyman lineworker typically requires a high school diploma or equivalent, training and a paid apprenticeship, which typically spans four years. In our area, Minnesota West Community and Technical College in Jackson offers a lineworker program. Apprentice lineworkers receive hands-on training and experience in the field before advancing to "journeyman" status. Lineworker salaries range from \$40,000 to \$144,000, depending on location, skillset and experience.

Inspiring Safety

Roughly 60,000 lineworkers hit the road annually to respond to devastating storms and the damage they leave behind. In addition to extreme weather exposure, lineworkers face a variety of dangers, including electric shock, falls from elevated work locations and roadside traffic accidents. High injury rates among early lineworkers led to the creation of apprenticeship programs and organized labor throughout industry.

Safety is always the number one priority, which is why lineworkers continuously receive training to stay mindful of safety requirements and up to date on the latest equipment and procedures.

Lineworkers power our lives. The next time you see one, remember to thank them for the essential work they do.





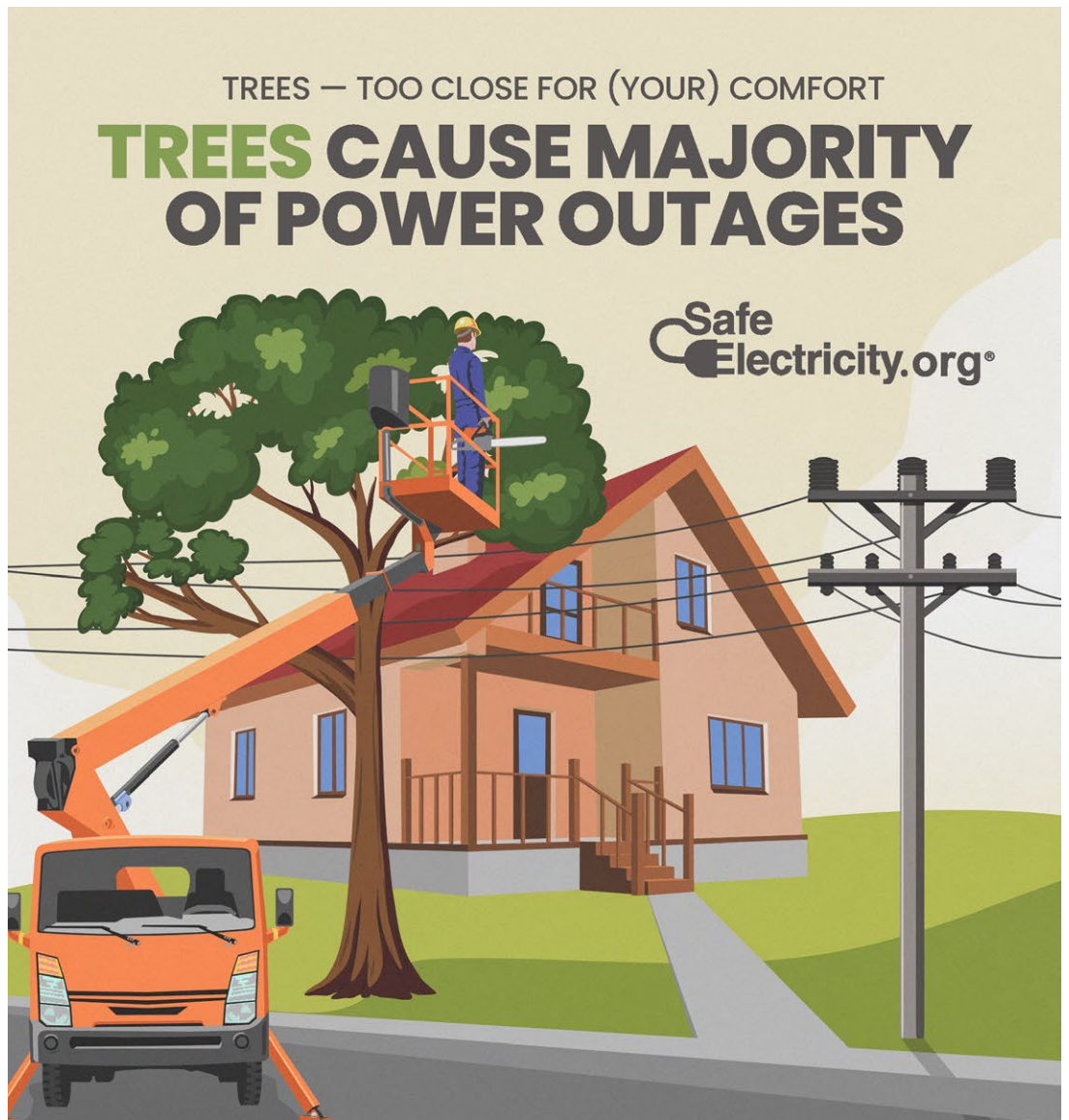
SCEA WATER HEATER PROGRAM

SCEA's peak shave water heater program provides members with a Marathon water heater at a discounted price for participating in the load management program.

The cost for water heaters is **\$750**. This is a great value for members. SCEA pays the cost of the electrician to wire the water heater and radio control. The member would pay any costs incurred by a plumber.



**ALWAYS CALL
BEFORE YOU DIG**



TREES — TOO CLOSE FOR (YOUR) COMFORT

TREES CAUSE MAJORITY OF POWER OUTAGES




Safe
Electricity.org®

WHY DOES YOUR POWER PROVIDER TRIM TREES?

Although most trees do not present a problem, some of them grow into or crowd power lines, poles or other utility equipment and cause service issues. Unruly and overgrown trees can:

-  **Cause outages.**
-  **Create fire hazards.**
-  **Break off and land on power lines.**
-  **Cause lights to flicker during high winds.**
-  **Get weighed down with ice and cause issues.**

Proper pruning techniques are used to preserve tree health, although sometimes a tree must be removed. This is a last resort, but it can be necessary if there are:

-  **Fast-growing trees directly under power lines.**
-  **Trees that are leaning into lines.**
-  **Trees that are declining, cracked or split.**

Unobstructed power lines make it easier and safer for utility crews to repair or service lines.

 **Power companies trim trees to better serve you.**

Learn more at: SafeElectricity.org

Join Us for the 2024 Energy Tour

We are taking reservations for the 2024 Energy Tour to North Dakota. The tour will be June 18-20. We will travel by bus from St. James and Jeffers to Bismarck, North Dakota. The trip will include tours of Antelope Valley Station (coal fired power plant), Great Plains Synfuels (turn coal into natural gas and fertilizers) and Freedom Mine (coal mine). The cost is \$175 per person. The cost per person includes bus, hotel (2 nights), some meals and snacks. We will be sharing this trip with members of Redwood Electric. Call us now to reserve your spot on the tour! We have limited space. Call our office 507-375-3164 to reserve your spot.

NORTH DAKOTA ENERGY TOUR

June 18-20, 2024

\$175/person

SIGN UP TODAY!

call 507-375-3164 or email
jhaler@southcentralelectric.com



Protect your home and family with a Briggs & Stratton home standby generator

You can be confident that South Central Electric works hard every day to keep your lights on. For those times when mother nature strikes, we still have you covered with our generator program. You can purchase a whole home Briggs & Stratton Power Protect generator from South Central Electric. If you lose power, the generator automatically takes over. When power is restored, it automatically shuts down. Power when you need it without the hassles of portable or PTO generators.

Estimated Cost of \$8,500 to \$12,000 includes the following:

- Briggs & Stratton® Power Protect DX with industry leading 10-year warranty.
- Minnesota winter ready with battery warmer, oil heater & battery charger.
- Automatic transfer switch.
- **Electrician installation.**

Generators run on LP or Natural Gas. Estimate does not include costs of gas installation from your gas provider.



STANDBY GENERATORS

Call our office to learn more at
(507) 375-3164

Generators run on LP or Natural Gas. Estimate does not include costs of gas installation from your gas provider.

Beware of Damaged Power Equipment: Energy can spread like ripples on a pond

The transmission and distribution of power is safe and reliable much of the time.

However, storms, critters and car accidents can damage energized utility equipment such as power lines, poles and padmount transformers (green boxes). Not only can this cause minor inconveniences, like service interruptions and road closures, it can also create life-threatening situations when energy invisibly spreads like ripples on a pond.

Here is what can occur when utility equipment is damaged:

- **Step potential** happens when a person walks from one voltage “ripple” to another and their feet experience a difference in voltage.
- **Touch potential** happens when someone touches something at one voltage and steps on or contacts something else at a different voltage.

Both types of potential can cause serious internal and external injuries and death, since electric current enters the body at one point and exits at another.

How to stay safe

Take precautions near downed power lines, poles or other damaged power equipment. Always assume damaged power equipment is energized; it can look lifeless and harmless and still be live.

Besides accidents, storms and animal interferences, another hazardous situation may occur when equipment or extensions get too close to or contact power equipment. To stay safe around damaged utility equipment:

- Stay inside your vehicle or cab.
- Call 9-1-1.
- Report damaged power equipment to a dispatcher.
- Only exit if you see smoke or there is a fire.



If you must exit due to a fire, carefully do the following:

- Cross your arms and make a clean jump out.
- Do not touch the vehicle and the ground at the same time.
- Make solid hops with your feet together as far away as you can.
- If you are unable to hop, shuffle away without lifting your feet.
- Do not return to the vehicle.

If you are near the scene:

- Do not approach the scene to help.
- Stay at least 50 feet away.
- Do not lean on or touch anything.

Never approach a downed power line or pole or a damaged padmount transformer.

For more electrical safety tips, visit SafeElectricity.org.



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South Central Electric

71176 Tiell Dr., PO Box 150
St. James, MN 56081-0150
(507) 375-3164

Outages: (888) 805-7232

E-mail address:

sce@southcentralelectric.com

Web:

www.southcentralelectric.com

Office hours:

7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

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The Board meets the fourth Tuesday of the month at South Central Electric's building at 71176 Tiell Dr., St. James, MN.

Please see our website for a summary of the board meetings.

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