



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

APRIL 2026

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Celebrating National Lineworker Appreciation Day

Ask any lineworker why they do what they do, and you'll hear a mix of pride, purpose and a sense of responsibility that stretches far beyond the infrastructure itself. For a cooperative lineworker, dedication is woven into every part of the day. From the early-morning safety checks to the late-night outage calls, each moment is driven by a commitment to serve the Roughrider Electric Cooperative members.

As we recognize Lineworker Appreciation Day April 13, we highlight our lineworkers who diligently bring a reliable flow of electric services to homes and businesses throughout our communities. ■

Get to know our dedicated lineworkers:



BRANDON BRAUN, journeyman lineworker, 1 year

The job of a lineworker is to construct and maintain power lines.

What interested you in becoming a lineworker? Working outdoors

What do you value about your crew members? We are always looking out for one another

What do you appreciate about Roughrider Electric's membership? Members are understanding and patient during outages

What do you enjoy outside of work? Spending time with family, golfing, fishing and hunting.

"Lineworkers have a brotherhood"



JORDAN BRAUN, journeyman lineworker, 12 years

What interested you in becoming a lineworker? Working outside and helping people

What do you value about your crew members? The friendship and trust

What do you appreciate about Roughrider Electric's membership? Members are understanding and willing to help where they can when we have been working all night

What's the most memorable outage? Responding to fire calls, or all night and the next day, where there are multiple outages one after another and it seems like you will never catch up

What do you enjoy outside of work? Spending time with family, racing at Southwest Speedway and snowmobiling

"Lineworkers are determined"



JOHN BEYER, journeyman lineworker, 1 year

What interested you in becoming a lineworker? Being outside and being able to help people

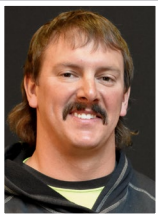
What do you value about your crew members? All the jokes and camaraderie

What do you appreciate about Roughrider Electric's membership? When members are willing to give us a hand when we need it

What's the most memorable outage? When I worked 18 hours straight on a summer storm

What do you enjoy outside of work? Hunting with my dog and fishing

"Being a lineworker is rewarding"



KADEN FICEK, journeyman lineworker, 12 years

What interested you in becoming a lineworker? Knowing every job is something different

What do you value about your crew members? The camaraderie and being able to work safely

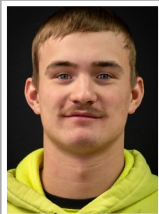
What's the most memorable outage? Having to drive the side-by-side 47 miles to the shop in a blizzard after our truck broke down

What do you enjoy outside of work? Spending time with family

"Being a lineworker is exciting"

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ALEX FREDERICK, apprentice lineworker, 2 year

What interested you in becoming a lineworker? Working outside

What do you value about your crew members? The safety and dedication to each other and the members

What do you appreciate about Roughrider Electric's membership? The cooperation and dedication to one main goal of a reliable system

What's the most memorable outage? Providing mutual aid to the fires around Williston

What do you enjoy outside of work? Farming and ranching

"Being a lineworker is exciting"



DION GEFRE, journeyman lineworker, 21 years

What interested you in becoming a lineworker? It's a good-paying career

What do you value about your crew members? Their humor and hard work

What do you appreciate about Roughrider Electric's membership? They are understanding

What's the most memorable outage? Outages that occur on holidays

What do you enjoy outside of work? Spending time with family and friends

"Lineworkers have grit"



CLAY GERHARDT, apprentice lineworker, 1 year

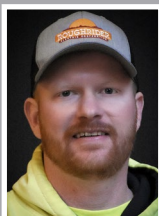
What interested you in becoming a lineworker? It's a good-paying career

What do you value about your crew members? They are all great to work with

What's the most memorable outage? Any of them

What do you enjoy outside of work? Refereeing wrestling and rodeoing

"Being a lineworker is exciting"



TANNER GOETZ, general foreman, 13 years

What interested you in becoming a lineworker? Working outside

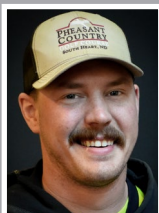
What do you value about your crew members? How committed and safe they are

What do you appreciate about Roughrider Electric's membership? Their willingness to help when needed

What's the most memorable outage? This past summer's storm where we lost multiple transmission poles due to high straight-line winds

What do you enjoy outside of work? Spending time with family, fishing, hunting, snowmobiling and golfing

"Lineworkers are skilled"



CODY HINTZ, journeyman lineworker, 13 years

What interested you in becoming a lineworker? Working outdoors

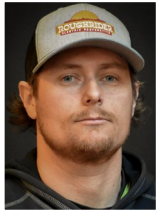
What do you value about your crew members? They're a great group of guys

What do you appreciate about Roughrider Electric's membership? Their willingness to do what they can to help us with whatever they can

What's the most memorable outage? They're all memorable in their own way

What do you enjoy outside of work? Hunting, fishing, golfing and spending time with family and friends

"Being a lineworker is challenging"



KYLE IRWIN, journeyman lineworker, 15 years

What interested you in becoming a lineworker? Working outside

What do you value about your crew members? They are easy to work with

What do you appreciate about Roughrider Electric's membership? Their understanding of our job

What's the most memorable outage? While on an underground fault outage at 3 a.m., we pulled a calf. The cow was tangled in a barbwire fence.

What do you enjoy outside of work? Hunting and helping out with my kids' sports

"Lineworkers are original"



MITCH KREBS, journeyman lineworker, 11 years

What interested you in becoming a lineworker? The career opportunities

What do you value about your crew members? The fact that we all share common interests and values

What do you appreciate about Roughrider Electric's membership? Their willingness to help us out in our time of need

What's the most memorable outage? Every outage is its own adventure, with unique and sometimes challenging situations

What do you enjoy outside of work? Spending time with family and friends, hunting, fishing and golfing

"Being a lineworker is challenging"



CONNER KUNTZ, journeyman lineworker, 3 years

What interested you in becoming a lineworker? Being outdoors

What do you value about your crew members? Their sense of humor

What do you appreciate about Roughrider Electric's membership? Their willingness to help when needed

What do you enjoy outside of work? Ranching and hunting

"Being a lineworker is good"



SCOTT LEINTZ, working foreman, 31 years

What interested you in becoming a lineworker? Working outdoors and daily challenges

What do you value about your crew members? The trust we have for each other

What do you appreciate about Roughrider Electric's membership? I appreciate the membership for being friendly and understanding

What's the most memorable outage? During a Good Friday storm years ago, our whole system was down

What do you enjoy outside of work? Coaching baseball, fishing and spending time with family

"Being a lineworker is rewarding"



MICHAEL STEIER, journeyman lineworker, 17 years

What interested you in becoming a lineworker? Helping people

What do you value about your crew members? The laughter

What's the most memorable outage? Watching the blue flame of death be released by a downed wire and lighting up the sky at night

What do you enjoy outside of work? Watching my kids play sports and hunting

"Lineworkers have endurance"



JORDAN PFEIFER, apprentice lineworker, 2 months

What interested you in becoming a lineworker? I enjoy the work we do

What's the most memorable outage you've responded to? The most memorable outage I've been on when I worked for 3C Construction was an ice storm for KEM Electric, I was able to help restore power to a lot of family and friends I grew up around

What do you enjoy outside of work? Traveling, hunting and spending time with family

"Lineworkers are authentic"



BROCK SWENSRUD, general foreman, 20 years

What interested you in becoming a lineworker? Working outside

What do you value about your crew members? The ability to work as a team

What's the most memorable outage you've responded to? When we got all the power back on after the 2010 ice storm

What do you enjoy outside of work? Spending time with family and fishing

"Being a lineworker is challenging"



COLTON WALTERS, journeyman lineworker, 2 years

What interested you in becoming a lineworker? Working outdoors

What do you value about your crew members? The trust and brotherhood

What's the most memorable outage you've responded to? Cable hit at the bottom of a water filled pit

What do you enjoy outside of work? Woodworking

"Being a lineworker is a brotherhood"



AARON YANTZER, journeyman lineworker, 3 years

What interested you in becoming a lineworker? The adventure every day brings

What do you value about your crew members? Their dependability

What's the most memorable outage? Helping a member get back into his wheelchair and then replacing his transformer pole in the middle of the night

What do you enjoy outside of work? Fishing

"Being a lineworker is rewarding"



**SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR
2026 ANNUAL MEETING
JUNE 3 IN HAZEN**

MANAGER'S MESSAGE: Call before you dig



Jason Bentz

Co-General Manager/
CEO

Spring is just around the corner, and there's never been a better time to get outside and enjoy the fresh air. Perhaps you're making plans for a new shop or a yard makeover. Wherever your spring projects take you, remember to keep safety in mind for all projects, especially those requiring digging.

Most of us never think about the electric, gas, water and other infrastructure buried below the ground, but hitting

one of these lines while digging is not the reminder you'll want. Trust us! Roughrider Electric Cooperative reminds all members who are planning a digging project to call 811 at least three business days before you start. Or you can submit a request online by visiting ndonecall.com.

Here's how the process works:

- **After you call 811 or submit your request online, all affected utility companies will be notified of your intent to dig.** It may take the utility

companies a few days to get to your request, so please be patient.

- **The affected utility companies will send someone to mark the buried lines with paint or flags.**
- **Before you break ground, confirm all the utility companies have responded to your request.** If you placed your request by phone, use the process explained by your 811 call center representative. If you submitted your request online, refer to your 811 center ticket to confirm everything.

Please keep in mind only public utilities will be marked. As a homeowner, you are responsible for locating private utility lines.

By taking this important step before you break ground on your project, you can help protect not only yourself, but our community. Disrupting an underground utility line can interrupt service, cause injuries and cost money to repair, so remember to call 811 first and know what's below. ■




Roughrider Electric President **Greg Steckler** (left), was presented with his Director Gold Credential by Co-General Manager/CEO **Travis Kupper**.

Steckler earns Director Gold Credential

Roughrider Electric Cooperative announces Greg Steckler, who represents the Central District, has earned the Director Gold Credential from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

This credential is the highest level in NRECA's director education program. This is a special recognition for directors who continue learning and growing in their role so they can better serve our members.

To earn the credential, directors complete NRECA's earlier training programs, then choose to go even further by taking additional courses that strengthen their leadership and understanding of cooperative work. It's a sign of dedication and a commitment to doing the job well for the members they represent. ■

MESSAGE FROM OPERATIONS:

Strengthening employee safety and functionality



Shawn Olson
Chief of Staff/
Operations Manager

Safety is a top priority at Roughrider Electric Cooperative, where each cooperative employee takes safety to heart and plays an important role. From daily “tailgates” or safety briefings before each job to monthly safety committee meetings and yearly safety audits, cooperative employees continue to embrace safety practices.

Each year, Roughrider Electric participates in a safety audit through N.D. Workforce Safety and Insurance (WSI). WSI

offers a safety management program that benefits the whole cooperative, from operations to member services personnel. The program aims to help reduce workplace injuries and improve ergonomics and safety technology. Roughrider Electric uses the ergonomic grants toward equipment to reduce employee fatigue

and help eliminate injuries.

Roughrider Electric has taken part in WSI’s safety incentive program for 13 years, saving the cooperative over \$80,000. In addition, workplaces are eligible for up to a 25% discount on insurance by adhering to WSI’s safety management program. To be eligible for these discounts, Roughrider Electric reviews and meets annual goals set by Roughrider Electric’s Safety Committee. The Safety Committee, which includes employees from each department at the cooperative, meets every month.

Roughrider Electric also participates in the safety management program, Safety Committee program, drug-free workplace program and certified safety management systems. Yearly safety goals vary from performing a 360-degree check before moving trucks, being aware of surroundings when driving and using the proper tool for the task at hand.

The WSI program helps our cooperative employees continue to keep safety top of mind to deliver safe, reliable electric services to our communities, while also saving costs for our membership. ■

SAFETY STARTS WITH ME: **Planting safety tips**



Clay Gerhardt
Apprentice Lineworker

As spring approaches and fieldwork begins, our rural communities gear up for another busy planting season. Farm machinery has become larger over the years, increasing the risk for contact with electrical equipment. During this busy time of year, staying aware, working carefully and understanding potential risks can make all the difference in keeping everyone safe.

“Planting season moves fast,” says Clay Gerhardt, apprentice lineworker. “Even when you know the area like the back of your hand, it’s crucial to slow down, stay alert and pay attention to what’s around you.”

To help ensure a safe planting season, here are a few tips to keep in mind while in the field and traveling on road:

- **Use spotters when operating large machinery near power lines.** Ensure the spotters do not touch the machinery while it is moving near power lines. An 18-foot clearance is recommended under power lines.
- **Be aware of the clearance of equipment extensions and materials you are hauling before**

moving or transporting. Do not raise equipment, such as ladders, poles or rods, into power lines. Remember, nonmetallic materials, such as lumber, tree limbs, ropes and hay, can conduct electricity, especially when damp, dusty or dirty.

- **Never attempt to raise or move power lines to clear a path.** Doing so could result in electric shock or death. If you need power lines to be raised or moved to help with moving large machinery this season, call our office at 800-748-5533 so we can safely assist you.

Remember, if your equipment comes into contact with an energized or downed power line, call 911 immediately. Stay inside until the power line is de-energized. If there is smoke or fire, exit by jumping clear of the cab without touching the equipment and hop away to safety. We also urge you to contact Roughrider Electric at 800-748-5533 for additional assistance.

We know accidents happen, so please do not hesitate to call us if you come into contact or damage Roughrider Electric infrastructure. The quicker we become aware of the issue, the sooner we can send a crew to assess and repair the damage. Our No. 1 priority is safety for members, employees and the communities we serve.

On behalf of all of us at Roughrider Electric, we wish you a safe and prosperous planting season. ■

Karges selected as Youth Tour representative



Cora Karges

Each June, students are immersed in a one-of-a-kind experience in Washington, D.C., through the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. Roughrider Electric Cooperative chose one local applicant to represent the cooperative on the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. Applicants are asked to answer the essay question: "As member-owned organizations,

electric cooperatives are always seeking new ways to engage their members. What are some ways electric cooperatives can better communicate and connect, especially with students and young adults?"

Roughrider Electric is proud to announce that Cora Karges, daughter of Daryn and Sarah Karges, will be representing Roughrider Electric on the exciting week-long trip. Cora is a sophomore at Hazen High School and is active in One Act play and is on the speech team.

"I want to travel when done with high school," says Cora. "I thought this is a good opportunity to start."

She is looking forward to seeing new places and meeting new people.

Cora and other North Dakota electric cooperative representatives will take off in June. You can follow Cora's journey by following Roughrider Electric on Facebook and Instagram.

Cora's essay

Several ways community-owned electric cooperatives such as Roughrider Electric can reach out to teens and young adults are by going to schools to give presentations about what people working

for electric cooperatives do, hosting tours at facilities and hosting outdoor field trips. Most teens and young adults do not understand the process of having electricity brought to their homes and do not know the role electric cooperatives play in their lives.

Schools are where most preteens and teens are most of the time, and most teens do not like to sit at a desk all day. When we are given the opportunity to go on a field trip or participate in a hands-on learning experience, we are more attentive and open-minded. Electric cooperatives could go to schools and give presentations. They could talk about how they measure electricity and bring it into our homes and what the different job opportunities are. They could also talk about all the different things that fall under the jurisdiction of electric cooperatives. They could explain that electric cooperatives are member-owned and how members can be involved in the cooperative. Teaching about dividends at an early age could be very beneficial as young adults become independent.

Electric cooperatives could host field trips where students are allowed to go out and watch some of the interesting aspects of being a lineworker. They could also host tours of the different machinery used to build power lines. Another way that electric cooperatives could also create interest is by visiting elementary schools and providing tours and field trips. Younger kids have more enthusiasm for large equipment and fun projects.

Social media accounts would, however, not be very successful at reaching out to young adults and teens. The reason for this is because there are not very many teens that would follow or watch social media accounts that do not interest them. There are some better ways to garner interest, but social media accounts would fail because of the lack of content relevant to a teen's social life. ■



**APPLY FOR THE
CAREER TOUR
JUNE 24-25**

**JUNIORS, SOPHOMORES AND
FRESHMEN ARE INVITED TO APPLY FOR
THE YOUTH CAREER TOUR!**

EXPLORE NORTH DAKOTA'S ENERGY SECTOR WITH US

Limited spots available. Learn more by visiting:
www.roughriderelectric.com.

Application deadline is May 1.

Roughrider Electric board meeting highlights Jan. 30

The meeting of the board of directors of Roughrider Electric Cooperative was held on Jan. 30 at Roughrider Electric's Dickinson office. The meeting was called to order at 9 a.m. MT (10 a.m. CT). A quorum was present. Also attending were co-General Managers/CEOs Travis Kupper and Jason Bentz, CFO Alex Craigmile, Chief of Staff/Operations Manager Shawn Olson, Legal Counsel Jennifer Grosz and Board Liaison Connie Hill. Accounting Manager Michaela Perbix attended portions.

Consent agenda: Amendments were proposed to the agenda. The agenda was approved as amended.

Strategic items: Bentz and Kupper presented the co-general managers' report, which included updates on an internal cybersecurity policy, cooperative employee awards and housekeeping items. Basin Electric Power Cooperative, Upper Missouri Power Administration and other updates were also discussed.

Department reports: Craigmile provided a financial report that included a review of the December financials, covering operating revenue and key ratios. He noted the audit is underway. Olson provided

an operations report, which included an update on projects, mutual aid inquiries, recent outages, new employees, construction requests, 2026 construction and other items. Perbix provided a member services report, which included Nominating Committee updates, youth programs and the member satisfaction survey. Chief Information Officer Charlie Dunbar provided a written report. Grosz provided an update on the status on legal topics and projects, including easements and federal loans.

Action items: The board reviewed and resolved various items, including the operating budget, 2026 mutual aid agreement, meeting delegates and other items.

Discussion/general information: The board discussed the exposure control plan. Tyler Richter, with Brady Martz, provided an annual pre-audit discussion.

The meeting concluded with adjournment. Secretary Troy Sailer certified the accuracy of the minutes.

Next meeting date: The next meeting is at 10 a.m. CT (9 a.m. MT) on April 24 in Hazen. ■



www.roughriderelectric.com

HAZEN OFFICE

701-748-2293 or 800-748-5533
800 Highway Dr., Hazen, ND 58545
7:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. CT Monday-Friday

Payments may be deposited in the deposit box by Roughrider Electric's main office entrance or in the drop boxes located at Krause's Super Valu in Hazen or Bronson's Super Valu in Beulah.

DICKINSON OFFICE

701-483-5111 or 800-748-5533
P.O. Box 1038, 2156 4th Ave. E.
Dickinson, ND 58602
7 a.m. - 4 p.m. MT Monday-Friday

Payments may be deposited in the deposit box west of Roughrider Electric's main office entrance or the west and south locations of Family Fare supermarkets.

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Greg Steckler, President, Dunn Center 548-8122
Roger Kudrna, Vice President, Dickinson 483-8377
Troy Sailer, Secretary, Golden Valley 948-2427
Bruce Darcy, Treasurer, Golden Valley 983-4222
Jesse Flath, Hazen 880-0386
Darell Herman, Beulah 873-4371
Arnold Kainz, Dickinson 483-8207
Dan Price, Hensler 794-3779
Callen Schoch, New England 290-3836

MANAGEMENT

Travis Kupper Co-GM/CEO
Jason Bentz Co-GM/CEO

SMARTHUB | Track energy use

Simplified

Want to show how the heat of summer or a cold spell affects your home's energy use? With SmartHub, you can **track usage** and pinpoint when and why usage spikes occur.



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