



news & views

from Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A COMMUNITY PARTNER

LEC INVESTS WITH GRANTS, SCHOLARSHIPS, EDUCATION

AS we reflect on the past year, Lincoln Electric Cooperative is proud to once again be an integral part of our communities. As a member-owned cooperative, we invest in our local communities to help ensure a brighter future for us all.

Lincoln Electric was incorporated in 1948 by local residents who desired the higher quality of life provided by electricity. They wanted the benefits that came with electric and all the ways it could improve their lives and provide efficiency for their homes, farms and ranches.

Since landowners were spread out, for-profit electric companies had no interest in running miles and miles of powerlines to reach just one customer. The density of our rural communities gave them little hope for making a profit in a reasonable amount of time, espe-

cially considering the upfront cost it would require.

So, like true Montanans, folks rolled up their sleeves and did it themselves. When President Franklin D. Roosevelt enacted the New Deal, rural areas were given the opportunity to electrify their worlds. As part of the New Deal, the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) was created to provide low-interest funding for rural electrification.

To qualify for REA funding, areas had to provide startup equity. For our communities, founders of Lincoln Electric went door to door collecting new cooperative member signatures and the initial membership pledge. For each member, that was either \$60 cash or six days of labor clearing right of way.

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2023 DONATION RECIPIENTS

- Town of Eureka Park
- Zero to Five
- Eureka Ambulance Service
- TFS Community Hall
- Eureka Early Childhood Development Foundation
- Big Hearts, Open Arms
- Tobacco Valley Food Pantry
- Two poles and labor for installation for the new football scoreboard at LCHS
- Eureka Robotics Team A.L.E.R.T.
- Tobacco Valley Animal Shelter
- Eureka-Tobacco Valley Lions Club
- Friends of the Library Kidsville
- Labor for mounting a flagpole and flag near LC Fairgrounds
- Shakespeare in the Park
- Lincoln County Library Foundation
- 4-H Livestock Auction
- Log Jam



BUSINESS AND BOARDROOM BRIEFS

A special meeting of the board of trustees was conducted on September 27. A quorum of trustees was present and the board took the following action:

Authorized President Tina Taurman and legal counsel Mark Hash to address a personnel issue.
Appointed Kylie Larson interim General Manager for October.

A special meeting of the board of trustees was conducted on October 5. A quorum of trustees was present and the board took the following action:

Authorized President Tina Taurman to negotiate on a personnel issue.

A regular meeting of the board of trustees was conducted on October 16. A quorum of trustees was present and the board took the following action:

Approved seating Rodney Kane as a trustee to District 6 - Upper.
Ratified a vote to approve a \$1,000 sponsorship to the River Governance group meeting.
Approved Resolutions 2023-9, assigning Tina Taurman as a Director of PNGC and 2023-10, assigning Tina Taurman as the designated PNGC membership representative and Myra Appel as the alternate.
Approved Resolutions 2023-11 through 2023-17 to assign check signers on the checking accounts held at Glacier Bank.
Approved a donation of \$5,000 from unclaimed capital credits to the Eureka Childhood Development Foundation.
Authorized the interim manager to distribute discretionary spot bonuses.
Assigned Kylie Lason to contact NRECA to hire an interim manager for a minimum of six months.
Authorized Kylie Larson to remain interim manager until the NRECA interim manager takes over.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW	YEAR TO DATE SEPTEMBER 2023	YEAR TO DATE SEPTEMBER 2022
kWh SALES	92,991,078	91,994,367
REVENUE	\$9,713,781	\$9,200,692
COST OF POWER	\$3,740,978	\$4,252,826
OPERATING EXPENSE	\$3,561,640	\$3,176,689
MARGINS	\$1,262,524	\$540,940
NUMBER OF MEMBERS	5,183	5,053
NUMBER OF METERS	6,514	6,483
MILES OF LINE	1,012	1,001
TOTAL UTILITY PLANT	\$39,176,537	\$37,860,836
MEMBER EQUITY	\$14,234,227	\$12,544,552
SEPTEMBER AVERAGE RESIDENTIAL USE (KWH)	824	803
SEPTEMBER AVERAGE RESIDENTIAL BILLING	\$113.81	\$99.44

ARE YOU INTERESTED
IN BECOMING A

LINCOLN ELECTRIC TRUSTEE

CALL TO ACTION

Trustee nomination packets are available for three trustee seats in District 6 - Upper, that are up for election in 2024. For a nomination packet or more information, please visit lincolnelectric.coop, stop by the office at 312 Osloski Road, Eureka, or email memberservices@lincolnelectric.coop. **Nomination petitions are due by noon December 27.**

LINCOLN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

CONTACT

1-406-889-3301
info@lincolnelectric.coop
www.lincolnelectric.coop
Secure Payments: 1-833-890-6258

ALWAYS REPORT OUTAGES TO:

1-406-889-3301

OFFICE

312 Osloski Road
PO BOX 628
Eureka, Montana 59917

OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Thursday
7:00 AM - 5:30 PM

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Tina Taurman
President

Becky Evins
Vice President

Sandi Mason
Secretary-Treasurer

Myra Appel
Joel Graves
Rodney Kane
Rick Peterson
Marianne Roose
Ethel White

Lincoln Electric's Board of Trustees holds regular monthly meetings at the boardroom in the cooperative office. These are typically scheduled on the third Monday of each month at 6 p.m. Members are encouraged to attend. If you have any items of interest, please contact the general manager prior to the meeting.

NEXT MEETING DATE:
MONDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2023



**Lincoln Electric
Cooperative, Inc.**

HAVE A STORY SUGGESTION?

SEND YOUR IDEAS TO:
memberservices@lincolnelectric.coop

COMMUNITY

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Although \$60 may seem inexpensive, it represented quite a serious commitment at the time. Due to inflation, \$60 in 1950 had the same purchasing power as about \$750 would today.

After collecting enough initial members and pledges, Lincoln Electric received funding from the REA and began the hard work of installing electricity. It took some time, but the first Lincoln Electric service was finally connected in the spring of 1951. And our area was forever changed.

One of the most crucial pieces of information in our origin story is that we are a cooperative. Had residents not cooperated with each other, it likely would have been decades before our service area got electricity. And, as a cooperative, we try to always remember that Lincoln Electric exists because of our members.

Our initial framework was to benefit our communities in ways large and small. Although we continue to provide reliable electricity at reasonable rates, we also ensure that we continue to provide other benefits to our communities.

Each year, your Board of Trustees approves Lincoln Electric's budget,

including a donation budget. These funds are set aside to be used toward the improvement of our lives. Dozens of organizations make donation requests to the board each year for programs and services that enhance our collective quality of life. In addition to the regular donation fund, there is also money from unclaimed capital credits that is allocated for education donation requests.

However, a large portion of unclaimed capital credits is awarded as Luck of the Draw scholarships. These scholarships to local students use an unbiased award method to ensure all applicants have the opportunity to win. Winners are randomly drawn at the Annual Meeting each year from all qualified applications. This program is also unique because the scholarship can also be used at trade and vocational schools, and can be given to students of any age pursuing their first undergraduate degree or certificate.

We also administer other educational programs to enrich the lives of our children. Each year, we send a high school student on a FREE Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., trip. This week-long educational trip allows the student to experience government, visit museums and monuments, and have the trip of a lifetime.


Educating on safety is always a top priority for Lincoln Electric. Each year,

we perform a tabletop safety demonstration with local fifth graders to promote safety around electricity. This year we also added a new age-appropriate safety event with elementary students when we joined them for lunch.

We recently hosted a high-voltage safety training for local first responders in our warehouse. Thanks to a cooperative effort between Montana cooperatives, we once again have a mobile high-voltage safety trailer to provide this essential education. Due to the popularity, we will host another first responder training in the spring.

There are many other ways Lincoln Electric is ingrained in our communities. Employees and trustees volunteer, serve on boards, coach sports teams, have kids and grandchildren in our schools, and support local events.

That's because your employees and trustees live and work right here in our communities. We invest in our communities as an organization because that's what being a cooperative is all about. We donate our time as individuals because we care about helping improve the lives of our families, friends and neighbors.

For more information on any of Lincoln Electric's programs, please visit www.lincolnelectric.coop or call us at 406-889-3301. 

MERRY CHRISTMAS

AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR

FROM OUR FAMILY AT
LINCOLN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
TO YOURS

LINCOLN ELECTRIC CO-OP OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED
MONDAY, DECEMBER 25 AND MONDAY, JANUARY 1

5 ways to safeguard your home this winter

AS the temperatures drop and the days grow shorter, there's a natural inclination to create a warm and cozy haven at home. Unfortunately, as we see increased use of heating equipment, candles and electrical items, the number of home fires tends to increase during winter months.

Here are five ways you can safeguard your home for the winter season.

Ensure carbon monoxide and smoke detectors are working properly.

If your detectors are battery-operated, replace the batteries annually. Test the detectors once a month and give them a good dusting to ensure the sensors are clear of dirt and debris.

Inspect electrical cords.

We depend on more cords during winter, whether for holiday lighting, extension cords or portable heaters. Before using any corded items, double check to make sure cords aren't frayed or cracked. If you use portable space heaters, remember to keep them at least 3 feet away from flammable items. Use models that include an auto shut-off feature and overheat protection. Space heaters can take a toll on your energy bills. Use them efficiently (to heat smaller spaces) and safely. Never plug a space heater into a power strip. Speaking of power strips...

Avoid overloading electrical outlets and power strips.

When overloaded with electrical items, outlets and power strips can


overheat and catch fire. If you use power strips for multiple devices, make sure the strip can handle the electrical load. For a safer bet, look for power strips that include surge protection.

Clean the fireplace to improve safety and efficiency.

There's nothing better than a warm fire on a chilly night, but it's important to maintain your fireplace for safety. As wood burns, a sticky substance known as creosote builds up in the chimney. When creosote buildup becomes too thick, a chimney fire can ignite. The chimney should be cleaned at least once a year to reduce fire risks. Regular cleaning also improves air flow and limits the amount of carbon monoxide that seeps indoors.

Practice safety in the kitchen.

As we spend more time in the kitchen during the holiday season, be mindful of potential fire hazards. Never leave food that's cooking on the stove-top unattended. Clean and remove spilled foods from cooking surfaces and be mindful of where you place flammable items like dish towels.

Lincoln Electric wants you and your family to stay safe during the winter season. Visit www.esfi.org for additional safety tips. 



Avoid overloading electrical outlets and power strips. When overloaded with electrical items, outlets and power strips can overheat and catch fire. | **PHOTO BY KELLY SIKKEMA, UNSPLASH**



There's nothing better than a warm fire on a chilly night, but it's important to maintain your fireplace for safety. | **PHOTO BY CLINT PATTERSON, UNSPLASH**