



# news & views

from Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc.

## ROW maintenance

LEC will be doing right-of-way work starting in May

**S**OME of our members will soon receive certified letters informing them that Lincoln Electric Cooperative (LEC) will be performing right-of-way (ROW) maintenance on or near their property. This maintenance is crucial to maintaining the safety and reliability of LEC's power system.

Our overhead powerline system is divided into eight roughly equal sections for right-of-way maintenance. Each year, we focus on one or more of these sections, in addition to performing tree trimming in and around the town of Eureka. This rotation ensures that no part of our overhead system goes longer than eight years without ROW maintenance.

### ROW inspection area

This year, our work will focus on several lines out of the Eureka and Trego substations. Starting in May, LEC will begin inspecting lines, removing hazard trees and clearing 12 miles of ROW in the West Kootenai area. After completing this section, we will move south, beginning at the Trego Substation and clearing 5 miles along Trego Road and into the South Side of Dicky Lake. Once finished there, we will move southwest through Trego, continuing from the Trego Substation to the BNSF Tunnel, inspecting and clearing 40 miles.

In addition, LEC will collaborate with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), which will be conducting a "Fuels Reduction" project in areas along



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**

Before and after right-of-way maintenance. Lincoln Electric Cooperative will be working on ROW maintenance starting in May. Members will be notified if work will be required near or on their property. | **LEC PHOTOS**

Glen Lake Road, Mud Creek Road and Sinclair Creek. As part of this effort, all powerline corridors on USFS-managed land will see an increase in ROW clearance from 30 feet to 60 feet to help reduce fuel loads and mitigate wildfire risks. This increased corridor width will only apply to USFS-managed land and not affect private property.

### ROW management

To maintain an adequate ROW, LEC's

ROW crew removes or mulches trees and brush within the powerline corridor. We also proactively inspect areas outside the ROW for potential hazards. Trees with branches encroaching into the ROW will typically be felled. LEC ROW crews will also remove any dead or dying trees that present a fire hazard or could fall onto the lines, even if they are located outside the ROW but

**See RIGHT-OF-WAY, page 8**

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW	YEAR TO DATE FEB. 2025	YEAR TO DATE FEB. 2024
KWh SALES	35,561,975	34,148,460
REVENUE	\$3,351,181	\$3,007,766
COST OF POWER	\$1,771,509	\$1,736,060
OPERATING EXPENSE	\$955,310	\$856,463
MARGINS	\$309,561	\$149,550
NUMBER OF MEMBERS	5,308	5,218
NUMBER OF METERS	6,733	6,543
MILES OF LINE	1,019	1,014
TOTAL UTILITY PLANT	\$42,275,349	\$39,451,449
MEMBER EQUITY	\$16,112,412	\$14,893,660
FEBRUARY AVERAGE RESIDENTIAL USE (KWH)	2,278	1,934
FEBRUARY AVERAGE RESIDENTIAL BILLING	\$212.85	\$177.68

### BUSINESS AND BOARDROOM BRIEFS

**The regular meeting of the board of trustees was conducted on March 17. A quorum of trustees was present, and the board took the following action:**

- Approved policies 102, 301, 302, 304, 409, 419, 503, and 515
- Approved Rules and Regulations, and the Fees Schedules
- Approved the donation request for \$750 for Rendezvous
- Approved the donation request for \$2000 for Sunburst Foundation
- Approved trustees to attend the Flathead Electric Co-op 2025 Annual Meeting
- Approved Rodney Kane as the voting delegate for the InterBel Telephone Co-op 2025 Annual Meeting

# KEY REMINDERS

- Right-of-way clearing will take place in select areas between the Trego Substation and the Eureka substation. For more details, please refer to the featured article.
- Lincoln Electric Co-op now has a "Safety Demo Trailer." Contact LEC at 406-889-3301 for more information about the trailer.
- If you or your dependent won a "Luck of the Draw Scholarship" at the 78th Annual Meeting, please check your email for a confirmation message and follow-up instructions to claim your scholarship.
- Planning any digging projects this summer? Remember to call Montana 811 before you dig to locate underground utilities. Call 811 or visit [www.Montana811.org](http://www.Montana811.org) for more information.
- The 6th Annual Member Appreciation BBQ is on June 26 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the LEC North Lawn. See you there!
- Have questions about LiDAR Drones? Give us a call at 406-889-3301 to learn more.

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE** at [www.lincolnelectric.coop](http://www.lincolnelectric.coop) for information on member services, billing, outages and safety, job postings, energy efficiency, community and general cooperative updates.

## LINCOLN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

### CONTACT

1-406-889-3301  
[info@lincolnelectric.coop](mailto:info@lincolnelectric.coop)  
[www.lincolnelectric.coop](http://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

**Joel Graves**  
Vice President

**Sandi Mason**  
Secretary-Treasurer

**Myra Appel**  
**Rodney Kane**  
**Rick Peterson**  
**David Purdy**  
**Marianne Roose**

**Matt Quinn**  
General Manager

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 4 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, MAY 19, 2025**



**Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc.**

### HAVE A STORY SUGGESTION?

**SEND YOUR IDEAS TO:**

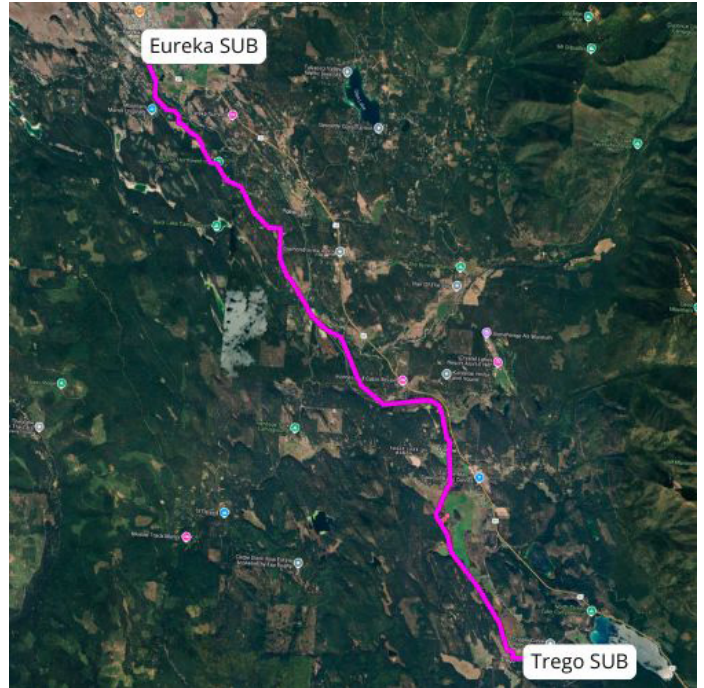
[memberservices@lincolnelectric.coop](mailto:memberservices@lincolnelectric.coop)

# LEC partners with Big Sky Aerial Solutions for power line inspection using LiDAR drone

**L**INCOLN Electric Cooperative (LEC) is partnering with Big Sky Aerial Solutions to conduct a comprehensive powerline inspection using an Arcskey X55 LiDAR drone. This inspection will cover the transmission line from the Trego substation to the Eureka substation, and will remain above the powerline right-of-way during flight. The route follows the BNSF Railroad tracks north through Trego toward Fortine, then continues along Tobacco Road into Eureka.

Utilizing advanced LiDAR technology, the drone will help LEC prioritize maintenance areas, identify hazard trees and

*See DRONE, next page*



## Meet Jeremy Persson

RIGHT-OF-WAY FOREMAN

**J**EREMY is a true local with deep roots in the Tobacco Valley. A proud fourth-generation Eurekan, he graduated from Lincoln County High School in 2008. After high school, he worked alongside his father in the woods, logging, running heavy equipment and always keeping a trusty chainsaw close by.

Before joining LEC, Jeremy was an independent contractor, clearing the right-of-way for the cooperative. In 2021, the opportunity aligned perfectly, and he was hired as a full-time right-of-way foreman.

"I can't imagine doing anything else — I love this job. I love the people I work with and the town of Eureka," Jeremy shared. "It's a blessing to work in the same woods where my ancestors did, and to help keep the lights on for the community. Being able to have a



### The faces of LEC

Introducing our Lincoln Electric family of employees to all our members

meaningful career in my hometown, work alongside people I've known since grade school, and raise my daughters here means the world to me."

When he's not on the job, Jeremy enjoys spending time outdoors with his wife, Kaitlin, and their two daughters, Natalie and Nicole. Whether it's hunting in the backcountry, fishing the local lakes and streams, snowmobiling with friends or gathering with family, they make the most of everything the valley has to offer.

*Thanks for all your hard work, Jeremy, we're lucky to have you!*

# RIGHT-OF-WAY

*Continued from page 5*

pose a risk.

## Clearing and debris

After our crews complete the cutting, trimming and mulching in an area, they will manage the debris. For brush and limbs not mulched within 50 feet of accessible roads or drive-ways, we will chip them. If the debris is further than 50 feet from vehicle access, it will either be scattered or piled depending on the situation. If you have any special requests or preferences after receiving your ROW notification letter, please contact LEC's right-of-way foreman.

## Member duties

Regular ROW maintenance is an essential part of keeping our overhead powerlines running smoothly and ensuring reliable service for everyone. We're all in this together, and while LEC crews are responsible for maintaining the ROW, landowners play an important role in helping to prevent potential hazards by keeping the area clear of obstructions, such as trees.

To keep things running efficiently, easements for the overhead lines give LEC crews the right to access and maintain the ROW, while landowners kindly help by avoiding planting trees within the corridor. When trees are planted in the ROW, it can sometimes lead to additional maintenance work for our crews, which may result in extra costs.

To keep things fair and minimize costs for everyone, these additional maintenance expenses can be billed directly to the landowner involved. This helps prevent the costs from being spread across the entire community.

Our proactive ROW maintenance program is key to ensuring safety and reliability for all, and we truly appreciate the support and cooperation of our members in making this program a success. RM

JOIN US FOR OUR

6TH ANNUAL  
MEMBER APPRECIATION  
BBQ

• LET'S CELEBRATE •

ON THE LEC NORTH LAWN

THURSDAY, JUNE 26, 11 A.M. - 2 P.M.

312 OSLOSKI ROAD, EUREKA

## DRONE

*Continued from previous page*

vegetation, detect electrical components in need of service and assist with wildfire mitigation planning. The high-resolution data collected will also streamline future project management by simplifying workflows, tracking hazards, monitoring progress and enhancing reliability for our members.

By integrating this cutting-edge technology, LEC aims to strengthen infrastructure resilience, minimize service disruptions and ultimately reduce outages for our community.

Flights will begin the week of May 5, with the project expected to be completed by the end of May. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our office at 406-889-3301. RM