



news & views

from Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc.

UPDATE

Right-of-way maintenance

SOME members in upcoming right-of-way (ROW) maintenance areas may have already received, or will soon receive, certified letters notifying them of planned work on or near their property. This work is a routine and essential part of maintaining the safety, reliability and efficiency of LEC's electric system.

LEC's overhead powerline system is divided into eight sections for maintenance. Each year, we focus on one or more of these sections, along with ongoing tree trimming in and around the town of Eureka. This rotation ensures that every part of our system is maintained on a regular cycle, and that no area goes more than eight years without attention.

2026 Work Areas

Beginning in May, LEC crews will focus on lines served by the Trego and Eureka substations.

Work will begin in the Glen Lake area, including: Glen Lake, Sinclair Creek, Sherman Drive, Therriault Pass Road and Indian Creek north to Burma Road.

After completing this area, crews will move south along: Therriault Creek Road, Mud Creek and south to Graves Creek.

Work will begin in higher elevations along Therriault Pass Road and gradually move down into the lower valleys.

Partner Projects

LEC will once again collaborate with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) on fuels reduction efforts in areas along Glen Lake Road, Mud Creek Road and

BEFORE

RIGHT-OF-WAY MAINTENANCE WORK



AFTER

RIGHT-OF-WAY MAINTENANCE WORK



Sinclair Creek. As part of this work, powerline corridors on USFS-managed land will be expanded from 30 feet to 60 feet to help reduce fuel loads and lower wildfire risk.

This expanded clearance applies only to USFS-managed land and will not affect private property.

If a member requests the removal of a hazardous tree or additional widening of the ROW on private property, LEC will evaluate the situation on a case-by-case basis. Our team will work with the member to determine whether the cost will be covered by LEC or the landowner.

What to Expect

During ROW maintenance, LEC crews will:

- Remove or mulch trees and brush

within the powerline corridor.

- Trim or remove trees encroaching on powerlines.
- Identify and remove dead or hazardous trees that could fall onto lines — even outside the ROW if they pose a risk

This proactive approach helps prevent outages, improves system reliability and reduces wildfire hazards.

Debris Cleanup

After trimming and clearing work is complete:

- Debris within 50 feet of accessible roads or driveways will be chipped.
- Material farther from access points will be scattered or piled, depending on site conditions.

See ROW, page 8

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW	YEAR TO DATE FEB. 2026	YEAR TO DATE FEB. 2025
kWh SALES	30,306,758	35,561,975
REVENUE	\$3,156,172	\$3,351,181
COST OF POWER	\$1,453,316	\$1,771,509
OPERATING EXPENSE	\$1,048,892	\$955,310
MARGINS	\$337,457	\$309,561
NUMBER OF MEMBERS	5,397	5,308
NUMBER OF METERS	6,853	6,733
MILES OF LINE	1,041	1,019
TOTAL UTILITY PLANT	\$43,149,730	\$42,275,349
MEMBER EQUITY	\$16,616,688	\$16,112,412
FEBRUARY AVERAGE RESIDENTIAL USE (KWH)	1,735	2,278
FEBRUARY AVERAGE RESIDENTIAL BILLING	\$185.45	\$212.85

KEY REMINDERS

- Right-of-way clearing will take place in select areas from Glen Lake to Burma, and south to Graves Creek. For more details, please refer to the featured article.
- If you or your dependent won a "Luck of the Draw Scholarship" at the 79th 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 for more information.
- 7th annual Member Appreciation BBQ Thursday June 25th 11am – 2pm at the LEC North Lawn. See you there!

BUSINESS AND BOARDROOM BRIEFS

The regular meeting of the board of trustees was conducted on March 16. A quorum of trustees was present, and the board took the following actions:

- Approved Policy 402, 404, 412, 413, 417, and 509 as presented.
- Approved a donation of \$1,500 for Team Eureka Robotics
- Approved Myra Appel to attend the CFC Forum in June
- Approved Tina Taurman and Sandi Mason to attend the NRECA Legislative Conference in April
- Approved the headquarter expense for heating/cooling unit



FIND AND FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM under Lincoln Electric Cooperative, to stay up to date on breaking news, LEC events, promotions and local news.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE at 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

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 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

Rick Peterson
 President

Joel Graves
 Vice President

Sandi Mason
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Myra Appel
Rodney Kane
David Purdy
Marianne Roose
Tina Taurman

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 18, 2026



Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc.

HAVE A STORY SUGGESTION?

SEND YOUR IDEAS TO:
memberservices@lincolnelectric.coop

How electricity gets to you

WHY OUTAGES AFFECT SOME MEMBERS DIFFERENTLY

ELECTRICITY is something we rely on every day – but most of us never think about how it actually gets to our homes. Behind the scenes, there's a carefully designed system that moves power across long distances and delivers it right to your doorstep. At Lincoln Electric Cooperative (LEC), that journey happens in several steps, each playing an important role in keeping your lights on.

Here's a closer look at how electricity travels from its source all the way to your home.

Step 1: Transmission Lines

Out here in northwest Montana, electricity often starts its journey far beyond our valleys and timbered hills. It travels across high-voltage transmission lines owned by the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) – stretching for miles over mountains, forests and open country. These lines carry power long distances until it reaches our corner of the state and arrives at Lincoln Electric Cooperative's substations.

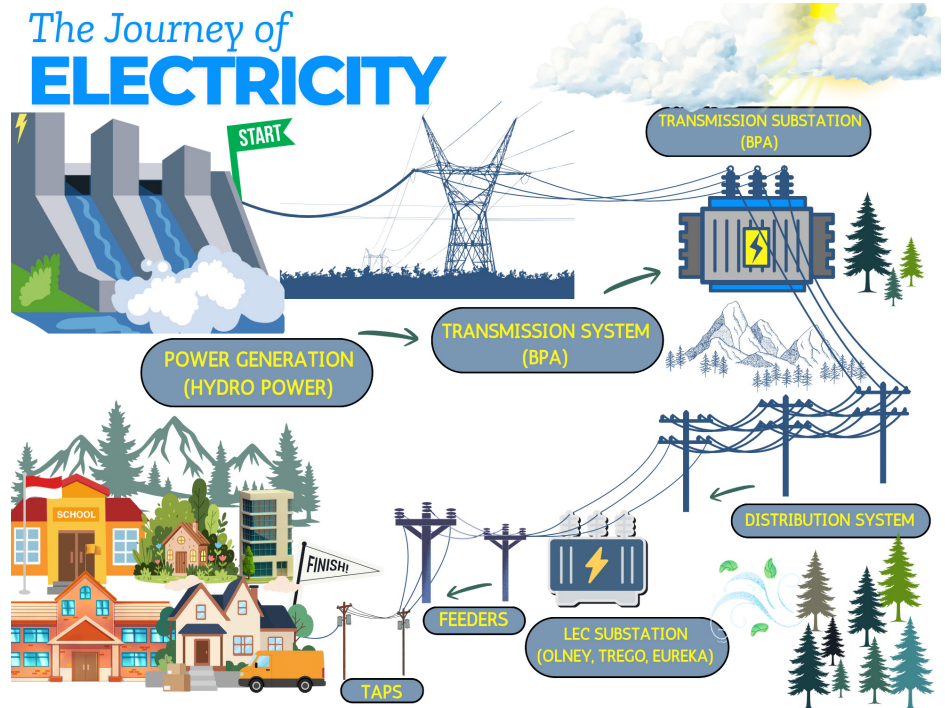
Step 2: Substations (Stillwater, Trego and Eureka)

When that electricity reaches one of our three substations – Stillwater (outside Olney), Trego or Eureka – it's still too strong to safely power a home. Inside each substation, that energy is stepped down to a usable level. From there, it's ready to be sent out across our communities – from town limits to the most rural backroads.

Step 3: Feeder Lines

From the substations, electricity travels along feeder lines – the main roads of our electric system. These lines stretch across the landscape, running past forests, fields and highways, delivering power to larger sections of our service area.

The Journey of ELECTRICITY



Step 4: Tap Lines

As electricity gets closer to where people live, it branches off onto tap lines – like gravel roads turning off the highway. These taps carry power into smaller neighborhoods, down country roads and out to homes tucked among the trees.

Step 5: Service Lines to Your Home

The final leg of the journey is the service line that runs from the tap directly to your home. Whether you're in town or miles out on a quiet road, this is the line that delivers power to your meter – keeping the lights on, the heat running and daily life moving forward.

Outage discrepancy

Why Some Outages Are Bigger Than Others:

- **Tap Line Issue:** If a tree falls on a tap line, only the homes connected to that specific tap will lose power. These are typically smaller, more localized

outages affecting a limited number of members. The culprit is usually a tree, a branch or sometimes related to wind.

- **Feeder Line Issue:** If a feeder line is damaged, all the taps connected to that feeder will be affected. This can result in outages for multiple neighborhoods or a larger portion of the service area. Again, trees are the main reason for feeder line damage.

- **Substation Issue:** If a substation goes down, every feeder and tap supplied by that substation will lose power. These outages impact a much larger group of members and can take longer to restore due to the complexity of the equipment involved.

- **Transmission Line Issue:** If BPA's transmission line experiences a problem, one or more substations may lose power. This is what we refer to as a system-wide outage, and it can affect a large portion – or even all – of LEC's

See **OUTAGE**, next page

ROW

Continued from page 5

Members with specific cleanup preferences are encouraged to contact LEC's right-of-way foreman after receiving their notification letter.

A Member's Role

Maintaining a safe and reliable electric system is a shared responsibility.

While LEC crews maintain the ROW, landowners play an important role by helping keep these areas clear of obstructions.

Easements allow LEC access to maintain the powerline corridor, and members can help by:

- Avoiding planting trees within the ROW.
- Keeping easement areas free of obstructions.

Trees planted within the corridor

can create additional maintenance needs. To keep costs fair for all members, any extra work required due to obstructions may be billed directly to the landowner rather than shared across the entire membership.

Regular ROW maintenance is key to providing safe, reliable electric service to our communities. We appreciate your continued cooperation and support in helping keep LEC's system running smoothly. RM

OUTAGE

Continued from previous page

service area. Because these lines are owned and maintained by BPA, their crews are responsible for making repairs before power can be restored to our system.

Who Fixes What?

Different parts of the electric system are maintained by different crews. The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is responsible for the high-voltage transmission lines that deliver power to our substations. When an issue occurs on those lines, BPA crews must locate and repair the problem.

Lincoln Electric Cooperative (LEC) crews are responsible for everything beyond the substations – including the substations themselves, as well as feeder lines, tap lines, and service lines to homes and businesses. When outages occur on our system, our crews work quickly and safely to restore power to affected members.

Working Together

From the high-voltage transmission lines to the service line at your home, every part of the system plays a role in delivering reliable power to our community. When outages occur, understanding where the problem originates helps our crews respond quickly, work safely and restore power as efficiently as possible. RM

JOIN US

**7TH ANNUAL
MEMBER APPRECIATION
BBQ**

• LET'S CELEBRATE •

ON THE LEC NORTH LAWN

THURSDAY, JUNE 25, 11 A.M. - 2 P.M.

312 OSLOSKI ROAD, EUREKA