

# POWER LINE

May 2020



## Redwood Electric Cooperative

60 Pine Street • Clements, Minnesota 56224

## \$1,000 Basin Scholarship Recipient

Katherine Hawton, of Redwood Falls was selected to receive the 2020 \$1,000 Basin Electric scholarship.

Katherine has plans to attend the University of Minnesota Duluth to pursue a degree in chemistry. After that, she would like to get a doctorate in Pharmacy. She plans on becoming a pharmacist and working in-state at a hospital or clinic.

Katherine has been active throughout her high school career at Redwood Valley High School with National Honor Society, Praise Band at the Methodist Church, Drumline MN Ambassadors of Music, Jazz Band, SWMBDA Honor Band, Pep Band, Pit Band, Concert Band, Ditch clean-up for church and school.

***Congratulations, Katherine!***



**Our office will  
be closed on  
May 25th**

# Need help paying your energy bills?

Emergency energy-assistance funds are available. You must **apply by July 1st** and it's first come first served. **Additional funds (even if you previously received energy-assistance dollars) and higher limits exist now.** Apply if you are newly unemployed, households with young children, people with disabilities, veterans and seniors. Visit the state's website <https://mn.gov/commerce/media/news> or call your local agency to see the program details.

**Redwood County and Lyon County residents** should contact United Community Action at any of the following numbers: 507-537-1416•507-637-2187•320-235-0850.

**Brown County residents** should contact Minnesota Valley Action Council (MVAC) services at: 1-800-767-7139 or 507-345-6822.

*Redwood Electric is committed to helping our members. We are currently suspending late fees and have made changes to our disconnect process. We do ask that you work with our office by continuing to make your payments, if you are able, and to contact us if you need to make other arrangements. If you have any questions about your bill or about any notices you are receiving, PLEASE contact our office so we can help answer your questions. Redwood Electric is here to help you!*

Please contact our office by calling 507-692-2214 or email us at [sgroebner@redwoodelectric.com](mailto:sgroebner@redwoodelectric.com)

## COOPERATIVE'S COVID-19 RESPONSE *Staying SAFE and RELIABLE* WHAT IS REDWOOD ELECTRIC DOING?

**Redwood Electric Cooperative has implemented these changes to help keep our staff and members safe :**

- Our business office is closed to the public. No walk-in traffic is allowed.
- Our Annual Meeting of the Members has been postponed until further notice.
- Line crews are mostly working independently or in small groups depending on the job.
- All Redwood Electric business meetings have been canceled, or conducted via web-based technologies.
- The Coop continues to conduct our monthly Redwood Electric Board meetings via conference calls.
- Our member service department is ready to discuss payment options with members who are facing financial hardship. In some cases, the Cooperative can direct members to available crisis funds. Should you face financial hardship, staying in communication with our office is important as we work together through this difficult time.
- Redwood Electric is waiving all late fees at this time.

*Redwood Electric wants our members to know we will continue to provide you with reliable and safe electrical services.*





## Don't Put Safety on Autopilot

Accuracy and consistency when planting make for impressive straight rows that also help maximize potential productivity. Global Positioning System (GPS) technology is helping farmers do just that. It can provide farmers with real-time, accurate location data about a field, which can be used for crop planning, map making, navigation assistance, and tractor guidance. While it can help with driver error, it does not mean that safety can be put on autopilot. Safe Electricity provides tips to help keep farm workers safe.

GPS systems with auto-guidance allow drivers to have their hands off the steering wheel as the tractor maneuvers itself through the field. Thanks to this technology, farmers can more easily and efficiently maintain accuracy even during low light conditions, which enhances productivity.



"It's important to remember that farming equipment is vulnerable to hitting power lines because of their large size, height, and extensions," says Rich McCracken, member of the Safe Electricity Advisory Board. "Every farm worker should especially look for low-hanging lines when entering a field, turning in end rows, leaving the field, and driving the equipment home or to a barn."

In equipment with auto-guidance systems, less focus is needed on steering, which may lead some drivers to think that they do not need to be as aware of navigation issues. However, even while using a GPS with automatic steering, farm workers need to keep safety top of mind and stay focused on their surroundings.

Putting safety first requires alertness, focus, and knowledge of potential hazards and appropriate safety steps. Varying pass-to-pass accuracy levels (sub-meter, decimeter, or centimeter) and potential issues, such as power poles not being correctly plotted in the system, reinforce the need for drivers to stay focused on the location of the tractor and its equipment while in the field and to be ready to take action themselves if necessary.

Regardless of what technology you use on the farm, keep the following electrical safety guidelines in mind:

- Use a spotter when operating large machinery near lines. A driver's vantage point from the cab may not be sufficient.
- Keep equipment at least 10 feet from lines—at all times, in all directions.
- Look up and use care when raising any equipment such as ladders, front-end loaders, or augers.
- Inspect the height of the farm equipment to determine clearance.
- Always remember to lower extensions to the lowest setting when moving loads.
- Never attempt to move a power line out of the way or raise it for clearance.
- If a power line is sagging or low, contact your utility.
- If your equipment does make contact with a power line, do not leave the cab. Immediately call 911, warn others to stay away, and wait for the utility crew to cut the power.

The only reason to exit equipment that has come into contact with overhead lines is if the equipment is on fire, which is very rare. However, if this is the case, jump off the equipment with your feet together and without touching the ground and vehicle at the same time. Then, still keeping your feet together, hop to safety as you leave the area.

For more information on electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

### Springtime Electrical Safety Tips

The weather is getting nice and people are spending more time outside, it's important to be safe around electrical equipment both inside and outside.

According to the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI), thousands of people in the United States are critically injured or electrocuted as a result of electrical fires and accidents in their homes.

Here are some simple safety tips to remember:

- \* Teach kids the importance of electrical safety while playing outside. Make sure they know the dangers of flying kites, climbing trees and jumping on trampolines around power lines. A kite string or tree branch can conduct an electrical current, which can cause serious injuries or death.
- \* Call 811 before you dig so all underground lines can be properly marked. This service is free and is a state law. This should be done at least 2 business days prior to digging.
- \* Check all power tools for damaged cords. Avoid any power tools with frayed cords or damaged plugs. Also, make sure all unused power tools are unplugged to avoid any overheating and cause a fire.
- \* Keep a 10 foot distance from all overhead power lines. This is for any ladders or any other tools.
- \* Avoid wet areas while using any electrical items. Be aware of your surroundings, being sure to check for a running hose or sprinkler.



**All electrical lines and equipment should be treated seriously and with caution. Use these simple and easy to follow tips to stay safe this summer.**

## Be Alert for Scammers



As it seems with every crisis there will be someone trying to take advantage of the situation.

Don't fall for scammers trying to take your personal or account information. Redwood Electric **will NOT** call to threaten disconnection of service and ask for your credit or debit card information or banking information.

### How do you manage your account with Redwood Electric Cooperative?



If you're not using **SmartHub**, you'll want to sign up for a free account after finding out what it can do for you.

To sign up for a free **SmartHub** account, visit [www.redwoodelectric.com](http://www.redwoodelectric.com) or download the free app from your app store on your smart phone or device. Have your electric account number handy.

- Make a payment or schedule a future payment.

- Enroll in automatic bill payment using a bank account or credit card.
- Review current electric account balance and your energy usage.
- Receive emails and/or text notifications.
- View past and current bill statements, payment history and energy usage.
- Go paperless
- Report power outages



## WASH ONLY FULL LOADS OF DISHES AND CLOTHES

*Your clothes washer and dishwasher are designed for full loads. And more than that, if you run them only when full, you run them less often, which really cuts energy use.*

### Office Hours & Contact Information

Monday-Friday 7:00 AM-3:30 PM

Phone: (888) 251-5100

Email address: [office@redwoodelectric.com](mailto:office@redwoodelectric.com)

Web: [www.redwoodelectric.com](http://www.redwoodelectric.com)

Pay By Phone: 844-846-2696

**SmartHub Link:** <https://redwoodelectric.smarthub.coop>

### OUTAGES

(507) 692-2214 or (888) 251-5100  
24 HOURS A DAY

### \*CALL BEFORE YOU DIG\*

#### Gopher State One

Call 811 or (800) 252-1166

### General Manager

Ronald Horman

### Board of Directors

Werner Fischer

Dick Nelson

Michael Baune

Dan Tauer

Leo Mertens

Dean Fultz

Jill Weber VanDerWal

### STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

Redwood Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer. If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#) found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter by mail to:

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).