

SOUTHEAST ELECTRIC Cooperative



Manager's Notes - By Jack Hamblin

Consider . . . The Lineman!

Scholarships Available!

Every youngster has been asked the question, what do you want to be when you grow up? The usual response is an occupation of danger and adventure, like, "I want to be a fireman or a policeman." Young people dream of jobs that are exciting, full of risk and thrill.

A teenager's answer usually leans more toward the pragmatic and lucrative, albeit lacking in adventure, "I think I want to be a doctor or a lawyer or an engineer." Some career goals lie on the fringes, such as a scientist or an astronaut. Maybe there are those who want a career recycling aluminum cans. But most want something...in between; something with a little adventure and excitement that pays well enough to live comfortably.

You rarely hear a child say, "I want to be a lineman." Not many dream that dream. But maybe they should.

Consider the lineman. If you want a job with excitement and adventure, a lineman has it. If you desire stability and a good wage, a lineman has that also. Being a lineman, well, it has it all. Listen to what the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) has to say about linemen:

- Earnings are higher than in most other occupations that do not require postsecondary education.
- A growing number of retirements should create very good job opportunities.
- Linemen often work outdoors, and conditions can be hazardous.
- Most linemen require several years of long-term on-the-job training.

In describing what a lineman does, the BLS continues:

- Linemen install and maintain the networks of power lines that go from generating plants to the customer. They construct new lines by erecting utility poles and towers, or digging

underground trenches, to carry the wires and cables. They may use a variety of construction equipment, including digger derricks, trenchers, cable plows and borers.

- They install and replace transformers, circuit breakers, switches, fuses, and other equipment to control and direct the electrical current.
- They are responsible for maintenance of lines, periodically traveling in trucks, helicopters and airplanes to visually inspect the wires and cables.
- Bad weather or natural disasters can cause extensive damage to networks of lines. Linemen must respond quickly to these emergencies to restore critical utility services.
- Linemen must climb and maintain their balance while working on poles and towers. Their work often requires that they drive utility vehicles, travel long distances and work outdoors under a variety of weather conditions.
- Linemen encounter serious hazards on their jobs, so they must follow safety procedures to minimize potential danger. They use electrically insulated protective devices and tools when working on power lines. Since power lines are typically atop tall poles or towers, the risk of severe injury due to falls is great.
- Linemen repair damage from storms, so they may be asked to work long and irregular hours. They can expect frequently to be on-call and work overtime.
- Physical fitness is important because linemen must be able to climb, lift heavy objects and do other physical activity that requires stamina, strength and coordination. Linemen often must work at a considerable height above the ground so they cannot be afraid of heights.

As far as education goes:

- Linemen usually need at least a high-school diploma. Employers look for people with basic knowledge of algebra and trigonometry, and good reading and writing skills. Some employers prefer to hire people with technical knowledge of electricity or electronics obtained through vocational programs, community colleges or the Armed Forces.
- Most linemen require several years of training, most of which they will receive on-the-job. They often must complete formal apprenticeship programs. These programs, which can last up to five years, combine this on-the-job training with formal classroom courses.
- Working with power lines requires specialized knowledge of transformers, electrical power distribution systems and substations.
- Linemen often need a commercial driver's license to operate company-owned vehicles, so a good driving record is important.

And what about wages:

- Earnings for line installers and repairers are higher than those in most other occupations that do not require postsecondary education. Median hourly earnings for a journeyman electrical power lineman are between \$29 and \$38 per hour. Southeast Electric Cooperative will very soon be looking for new apprentice linemen. We are currently offering two \$1,000 scholarships to an approved lineman training school. Details of these scholarships are available by calling the office and talking to Vicki Fix, or on our website, www.seecoop.com. So, if you're looking for a career that promises some adventure and thrill, with a little safe danger included; a career that is secure and pays well, give us a call.

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Reminder: Set clocks ahead on March 12th

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SECO Safety Corner

Driving blindfolded on the highway

Would you drive on a highway blindfolded? Of course not! However, if you text or Snap Chat while driving 55 miles per hour on a highway, you are essentially doing just that.

Five seconds is the average time your eyes are off the road while texting. When traveling at 55mph, that's like driving the length of a football field while blindfolded. In our digital world, people feel pressure to remain in constant contact, even when behind the wheel. As mobile technology use increases, distracted driving — talking, texting, sending emails, Snap Chats — is a growing threat to community safety. Drivers don't realize the dangers posed when they take their eyes off the road and their hands off the wheel, and focus on activities other than driving.

Talking on a cellphone also carries significant risks. We have all seen distracted drivers, and most likely we have used a phone while driving. According to the National Safety Council, drivers can miss seeing up to half of what's around them — traffic lights, stop signs, pedestrians — when talking on a cellphone.

The Centers for Disease Control reports that each day in the U.S., more than nine people are killed and more than 1,153 people are injured in crashes that involve a distracted driver. The National Highway Administration notes that 3,179 people were killed and an estimated 431,000 were injured in motor vehicle crashes involving a distracted driver in 2014.

The percentage of drivers text-messaging or visibly manipulating handheld devices increased from 1.7 percent in 2013 to 2.2 percent in 2015. Texting and cellphone use behind the wheel takes your eyes off the road, your hands off the wheel and your focus off driving — putting the driver and others in danger, including passengers, pedestrians, other drivers and bystanders. On the tragic end of the spectrum, the victims' families, friends, co-workers and community are impacted.

At Southeast Electric Cooperative, safety is a core value. Our goal is to raise awareness and spur conversation about the dangers of distracted driving. Talking on a cellphone quadruples your risk of an accident — about the same as if you were driving drunk. Risk doubles again if you are texting while driving. We are committed to eliminating this unnecessary risk and believe that no conversation or text is worth the potential danger.

St. Patrick's Day Wear it and Share it!



Spring has sprung, the grass is getting green and we are looking forward to summer. Summer is full of fun activities such as riding bikes, hiking, boating, golf, swimming lessons and swimming. For Ekalaka's young people (and adults) the swimming pool is a hot spot. Emswiler Pool was built in 1961. Countless Ekalaka and Carter County residents (and even non-residents) have swam, had swimming lessons or participated in water aerobics there. However, the 56-year-old pool is slowly deteriorating. In 1995, a committee was formed to raise funds for a new pool. As we all know, building is expensive. The committee has been slowly raising funds to help with this project. As of January 2017, the committee has raised \$167,834.05 toward a goal of \$750,000. A Land and Water Conservation Fund grant application for Ekalaka's swimming pool project has

been preliminarily approved for \$150,000. Obviously, more funds are needed.

Southeast Electric Cooperative encourages you to celebrate St. Patrick's Day by Giving Green. If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation to the swimming pool fund, write a separate check to the "Town of Ekalaka" marking it as a swimming pool donation and include it with your Southeast Electric March payment. The checks will then be given to the town of Ekalaka and added to the swimming pool fund. If you have made a monthly pledge, please feel free to send those with your Southeast Electric monthly payments also, just don't forget it needs to be a separate check to the "Town of Ekalaka."

We encourage everyone to celebrate St. Patrick's Day by wearing and sharing GREEN!

Spring Cleaning?

Spring cleaning check list

KITCHEN:

- Clean refrigerator and freezer and behind them if possible
- Clean oven, remove & clean stove burners and knobs and behind it if possible
- Clean out & wipe down drawers & cupboards
- Discard old spices
- Mop floors and baseboards (on your hands & knees)

BEDROOM:

- Wash all bedding, including mattress pads, bed skirts and comforters.
- Replace or wash pillows
- Go through closet, switch out seasonal clothing

LAUNDRY:

- Clean behind washer & dryer
- Remove front lint plate and clean thoroughly

GENERAL:

- Dust ceiling fans
- Dust ceilings and corners of walls
- Dust/clean vents & fans
- Clean blinds
- Wash windows, inside & out and vacuum out sliding glass door tracks
- Vacuum out windowsills and rinse screens
- Dust/clean all light fixtures
- Wash walls & baseboards
- Vacuum or wash draperies & curtains
- Wash or beat rugs

- Wash down doors & light switch plates
- Clean/shampoo carpets
- Change air filters and have furnace/air conditioning units inspected
- Safety inspection: smoke & carbon monoxide detectors, fire extinguishers on all levels of the home
- Vacuum out couches & chairs
- Vacuum/use lint roller on lamps
- Clean out medicine cabinets, safely discard old prescriptions

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