



SALT RIVER ELECTRIC

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

A Monthly Publication For The Members Of Salt River Electric

Zachary Epperson, Editor



Aftermath: The March 2023 Windstorm

Salt River News

A monthly publication for the 55,669 members of the Salt River Electric Cooperative Corporation, serving Bullitt, Nelson, Spencer, and Washington County, plus portions of six surrounding counties, since 1937.

Headquarters Office:

111 West Brashear Avenue
Bardstown, KY 40004

Office Telephones:

Bardstown: (502) 348-3931
Shepherdsville: (502) 543-3083
Springfield: (859) 336-5080
Taylorsville: (502) 477-5133
Outages: 1-800-221-7465
www.srelectric.com

Board of Directors:

Chair - Linda West
Vice Chair - David Stevens
Treasurer - Darrell Tingle
Secretary - Wm. George Maddox
Director - John Hutchins
Director - Joe Osbourne
President & CEO
Tim Sharp

On Our Cover

On March 3, hurricane-like winds descended on the state of Kentucky and our region, knocking out power to over 300,000 Kentucky co-op members. At its peak, the winds caused outages for over 25,000 of our members, snapping numerous poles and downing hundreds of wire spans. Photo: Dooley Mattingly

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Tim Sharp, President & CEO



A thank you to our members and cooperative family

As I finished my column about springtime weather for our March local section in *Kentucky Living*, I wrote that, hopefully, the only madness we would experience last month would take place on the basketball court.

Unfortunately, that was not the case.

On Friday, March 3, a windstorm blew into the state, causing widespread damage to electrical systems all across the region. That included us here at Salt River Electric, where the hurricane-like winds knocked out power to over 25,000 members at the storm's peak.

As the winds died down, our team began to assess the damage to our system. It was widespread and historic, with hundreds of wire spans on the ground and numerous broken poles. It was clear from the beginning that we'd need assistance in restoring power to affected members.

Almost immediately, electric cooperatives from neighboring states answered our call for help, sending some of their crews to aid us in our restoration efforts. On Saturday, mutual aid crews began to arrive, and by Monday afternoon, we had nearly 100 lineworkers in the field, doing everything they could to restore power to our members. I'd like to recognize those co-ops who helped:

Central Florida Electric Cooperative (Fla.), Clark County REMC (Ind.), Daviess-Martin



ZACH EPPERSON

County REMC (Ind.), Edgecombe-Martin County EMC (N.C.), Gibson EMC (Ky./Tenn.), Irwin EMC (Ga.), Snapping Shoals EMC (Ga.) and South Rivers EMC (N.C.).

In our time of need, these sister cooperatives answered the call and lent a helping hand. That is the power of electric cooperatives: We're one big family, linked through our shared interest in providing and caring for the members we serve.

I'd also like to thank you, our members, and the communities we serve for your support during the event. Thank you for treating our lineworkers well and giving them support, whether through casual conversation as they worked on your street, or by offering food and drinks to help them push on. I cannot express how lucky we are to serve you.

In the end, restoration efforts took six days and a lot of manpower from us here at Salt River and our visiting cooperative families who provided mutual aid. Once again, thank you for your support and patience during this event.

Windstorm causes destruction, power outage for thousands

On Friday March 3, the full strength of the day's high wind warning was realized when hurricane-like winds descended upon our state and region, breaking numerous poles and bringing down hundreds of spans of wires. The destruction to our system was widespread as the outage map lit up with red lights everywhere.

As soon as it was safe to do so, our crews hit the ground running in their restoration efforts. Working long shifts, these dedicated men went to work for our members. Retired lineworkers were also called in to assist with restoration. But even with their incredible efforts, it was still obvious that in order for us to get everyone up and running as quickly and safely as possible, we needed help.

This is where being an electric cooperative is valuable.

As early as Friday night, we had numerous co-ops answer our call for help, from Georgia, North Carolina, Indiana, Tennessee and even Florida, offering to send crews our way. In the co-op world, we call that mutual aid. When one co-op is down, the rest step up and see how they can help, usually in the form of sending crews and vehicles.

It was a much-needed boost to our efforts.

As Monday's work began, we had over 100 lineworkers in the field, doing their best to restore power to, at that time, roughly 2,500 members who were still in the dark. Once some of the larger, more accessible pockets of our members were squared away, the work of restoring some of our remote, hard-to-reach spots began.

That's why it's so difficult to estimate how long it will take to restore



ZACH EPPERSON

service. While it might take just an hour to free a wire from a fallen tree and restring it, it can be another 2-3 hours before the line can be reenergized, all because a pole is broken in a field some 200 yards off the road. It's a long process.

Another thing that's long? The hours that these lineworkers put in, away from their families. It's easy to dismiss this as just being part of their job, but when your little one is holding on to you as you head out the door or asks when you're coming home, it makes the days even longer.

On Wednesday, March 8, after six grueling days of raising wires, setting new poles, and driving all around our service territory, Salt River Electric restored power to the last restorable members affected by the storm.

While it certainly did take time and patience to get it all done, it would have been longer had we not received the support from our cooperative family and you, our members and communities. Thank you again for your patience and understanding as our lineworkers did what they do best: working on the line for you.

Aftermath: The March 2023 windstorm

Over 100 lineworkers from several states, co-ops and companies came together last month to restore power to more than 25,000 Salt River Electric members who were affected by the historic and widespread windstorm. We hope these photos help show just how destructive the storm was, and how hard crews worked for you, our members.





ZACH LEPPERSON



ZACH LEPPERSON



ZACH LEPPERSON



ZACH LEPPERSON



ZACH LEPPERSON



DOOLEY MATTINGLY



DOOLEY MATTINGLY

Last call for 2023 scholarship applications!

The final days of Salt River Electric's 2023 Scholarship Program are fast approaching. Eligible students have until Friday, April 14, to submit a completed application, along with any other documents needed for the scholarship they're applying for.

Two high school students from each Salt River Electric district will be awarded a one-time \$1,000 scholarship. One scholarship will go to a graduating senior planning to attend a traditional college or university, and one to a graduating

senior planning to pursue a career through a trade or vocational program at an accredited school.

Also available is the Larry Hicks Memorial Scholarship. Named in honor of Salt River's former President/CEO, this one-time \$2,000 scholarship will be awarded to a current college student from our service area who is actively pursuing a degree in accounting or finance at an accredited college or university. A completed essay is required for this special scholarship.



BELOZERSKY/ADOBESTOCK

Applications for both scholarships can be found on our website, srelectric.com, or at any of our four office locations. Applications must be turned in to Diana Edwards at our main office in Bardstown. Scholarship recipients will be announced during the annual business meeting in June. More information can be found on our website. Good luck!

Three Salt River board members earn national credentials

Three Salt River Electric directors recently became the co-op's latest recipients of certificates from NRECA's Credentialed Cooperative Director program.

Directors George Maddox (Bullitt), Joe Osbourne (Bullitt), and David Stevens (Spencer) have completed the required training courses to earn their CCD certificates from our national association, another step in making sure that these directors are up to date on the most recent trends in the world of electric co-ops.

An ever-changing business environment has imposed new demands on electric cooperative directors, requiring increased knowledge of changes in the electric utility industry, new governance skills, as well as a solid and sound knowledge of the cooperative principles and business model. Salt River Electric has



George Maddox



Joe Osbourne



David Stevens

PHOTOS: ZACHEPPERSON

been committed to working with our statewide association, Kentucky Electric Cooperatives, and NRECA to sharpen this body of knowledge for the benefit of our electric co-op members.

The NRECA Credentialed Cooperative Director program requires attendance and demonstrated understanding of the basic competencies contained in five

core courses:

- Director Duties and Liabilities
- Understanding the Electric Business
- Board Operations and Process
- Strategic Planning
- Financial Decision Making

We're proud of these three directors and their commitment to bettering the member-driven leadership of Salt River Electric.

Safety Matters

Warm weather brings out scammers

Your electric cooperative will never send anyone to your house to ask you if you need work done. And when someone does come for a legitimate reason, they'll always have valid identification with them.

Unfortunately, springtime is scam season. Don't be surprised if you get telephone calls, uninvited visitors looking for work and loads of door hangers offering landscaping, roofing, painting and home repair services.

Your best bet: Say no to all of them. If you need work done around your house, visit the website of the state agency responsible for licensing contractors or join a contractor referral network that recommends only contractors who are licensed, insured, bonded and experienced. A few other tips:

- Be wary of contractors with out-of-state license plates or detachable, magnetic company signs on their trucks. These could be "travelers," who follow the warm weather from state to state and hire themselves out as home improvement



contractors. They're almost always unlicensed in your state, and if you discover a problem with their work later, they will be long gone.

- Do not pay in cash, and do not pay up front. Instead, work out a payment schedule that allows you to pay in increments as the work is completed.

- Get bids from three reputable companies before you start. If you get one offer that's way lower than the other two, something is probably amiss.

- Don't fall for these two lines: "I just finished a job at your neighbor's house and I'll give you a good price if you hire me today because I'm already in the neighborhood," or "I have leftover materials from a job I just did, and I'll sell/install them here for a deep discount because I don't need them."

Hiring contractors can be expensive. Don't waste your money on one who's not licensed and legitimate.



Lineworker Appreciation Day is April 10

When the power goes out in the middle of the night, a phone call usually gets made.

More than one, generally speaking.

Before you know it, a uniform is being put on, boots are being tied, and a weary worker starts into the darkness to bring light back into the world for someone.

Lineworkers are an essential part of our communities, often working behind the scenes to keep the lights on without much recognition. Here at Salt River Electric, we're proud of our lineworkers and the job they do for our members, which is why we're happy to celebrate them along with our sister co-ops across the nation as part of Lineworker Appreciation Day on April 10. Being a lineworker may not seem like a glamorous job, but it is absolutely essential to the life of our community. Without the exceptional dedication and commitment of these hardworking men and women, we simply would not have the reliable electricity that we need for everyday life.

So, the next time you see a lineworker, please thank them for the work they do to keep power flowing, regardless of the time of day or weather conditions. After all, lineworkers are the power behind your power.

*Salt River
Electric
offices will
be closed
April 7 for
Good Friday*

KENNETH SPONSER/ADOBE STOCK

A big “thank-you!” to all of our members and communities for your support and patience during the restoration of service following the March windstorm, as well as to these co-ops for their mutual aid support:

- ***Central Florida Electric Cooperative (Fla.)***
- ***Clark County REMC (Ind.)***
- ***Daviess-Martin County REMC (Ind.)***
- ***Edgecombe-Martin County EMC (N.C.)***
- ***Gibson EMC (Ky./Tenn.)***
- ***Irwin EMC (Ga.)***
- ***Mitchell EMC (Ga.)***
- ***Snapping Shoals EMC (Ga.)***
- ***South Rivers EMC (N.C.)***



STOCKPHOTO - GRAF/ADOBE STOCK