

2023 Scholarship Winners

The Kootenai Electric Trust Board awarded \$2,000 scholarships to the 14 students pictured on this page. Congratulations to the winners! The scholarships were made possible this year with proceeds from the KEC Golf Classic. The Trust Board has awarded more than 180 scholarships since 2007 and plans to offer the scholarship program again next year. Watch for details about the 2024 scholarship program in late 2023 at www.kec.com.



Lauren Bergendahl
Coeur d'Alene



Evan Bradshaw
Athol



Alizea Daniels
Post Falls



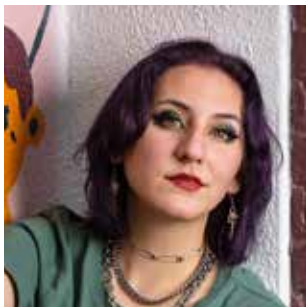
Isabella Fajardo
Athol



Eric Gray
Athol



Eliona McElderry
Plummer



Hannah Myers
Coeur d'Alene



Markus Noble
Coeur d'Alene



Joseph Perry
Athol



Myiah Pooni
Post Falls



Makenzie Ryan
Post Falls



Ariya Stanis
Hauser



Abigail Stephens
Coeur d'Alene



Karson Vordahl
Rathdrum

Rathdrum HQ Update

The construction of our headquarters in Rathdrum is proceeding well, on schedule, and within budget. We anticipate construction being completed in September of this year and look forward to opening the doors to members soon thereafter. As you recall, KEC has outgrown its headquarters in Hayden. The construction of this facility was necessary to accommodate the growth our cooperative has experienced since originally constructing the Hayden facility 40 years ago. The new headquarters is designed to accommodate our needs for the next decade and is designed to be expanded as and when needed. Above is a photo of the progress made to date.



NEWS BRIEFS

CALL 811 BEFORE YOU DIG

Before you start any digging project be sure to call 811. Digging without calling can disrupt service to an entire neighborhood, harm you and those around you and potentially result in fines and repair costs. Calling 811 gets underground utility-owned lines marked for free.



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

MAY IS ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH

At KEC, we recognize Electrical Safety Month every May, but we also know the importance of practicing safety year-round. From our crews to you, the members we serve, we recognize that everyone has a part to play in prioritizing safety. According to the Electrical Safety Foundation International, thousands of people in the U.S. are critically injured or electrocuted as a result of electrical fires and accidents in their own homes. Many of these accidents are preventable. Electricity is a necessity, and it powers our daily lives. Please talk with your kids about playing it safe and smart around electricity. Help them be aware of overhead power lines near where they play outdoors.

Our top priority is providing an uninterrupted energy supply 24/7, 365 days per year. But equally important is keeping our community safe around electricity. For more information or safety tips visit www.kec.com/safety.

KEC BOARD MEETINGS

Members are welcome to attend monthly board meetings. Meeting dates vary—call 208.292.3211 for details.

WIN A \$50 ENERGY CREDIT

Below are 10 KEC account numbers. If you find your number, contact us at 208.765.1200 and receive a \$50 credit on your bill. **1845784, 1354463, 1247952, 1848491, 1833517, 1855145, 1542392, 1857486, 1733562, 1389646**

KEC OFFICE CLOSED ON MEMORIAL DAY

KEC will be closed on May 29, 2023, in observance of Memorial Day.

Employee Spotlight: Casey Walton

Casey Walton is a Project Engineering Technician and has worked for KEC for seven years.

How did you train for work in this field?

After I graduated from high school, I worked in the construction industry building roads and installing municipal water and wastewater systems. Later, I decided to pursue higher education and graduated from the University of Idaho with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering. From there I started working for a local civil engineering firm. This education and experience prepared me for most aspects of my role as a Project Engineering Technician. In addition, KEC's dedication to investing in employees with continued training has helped fill any gaps.

What made you interested in working for KEC?

The culture. Talking with the crews in the past I could tell they enjoyed where they worked. This was also evident in the long tenure the employees have at KEC. I figured this only happened because of good culture and appreciation KEC has for its employees.

What does a day look like for you as a Project Engineering Technician?

In my role, I am responsible for electric distribution line design, preparation of construction drawings, setting of field stakes and mapping services. My typical day consists of communicating with new and existing members regarding their projects, reviewing maintenance data that is collected by our field inspectors and preparing the necessary paperwork for our crews to complete construction work.

Tell us about the FEMA grant KEC received to put overhead lines underground in the Spirit Lake East subdivision.

In January 2021, a severe windstorm swept through the Inland Northwest causing extensive damage and widespread power outages. The damage to KEC's system was staggering. At its height, more than half of KEC's members were left without power. The storm caused nearly \$2 million in damages including numerous broken poles, lines and other damaged equipment. After the storm, a federal emergency was declared for Kootenai County which allowed KEC to apply for a mitigation grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency



(FEMA). We recently learned we were awarded the grant to convert approximately 22 miles of the most problematic overhead lines in the Spirit Lake East subdivision to underground. The purpose of this project is to mitigate risk and improve power reliability during extreme weather events. The grant will reimburse KEC more than \$10 million or 90% of project construction costs.

My role in this project includes designing the new underground electric distribution lines, staking the project area and later ensuring the construction process is smooth. I coordinate with KEC staff from various departments to obtain the necessary paperwork requested by FEMA to make this project possible. I am also responsible for communicating with our membership in the area to ensure they are aware of the project and how it will affect them.

What is the biggest challenge in your job?

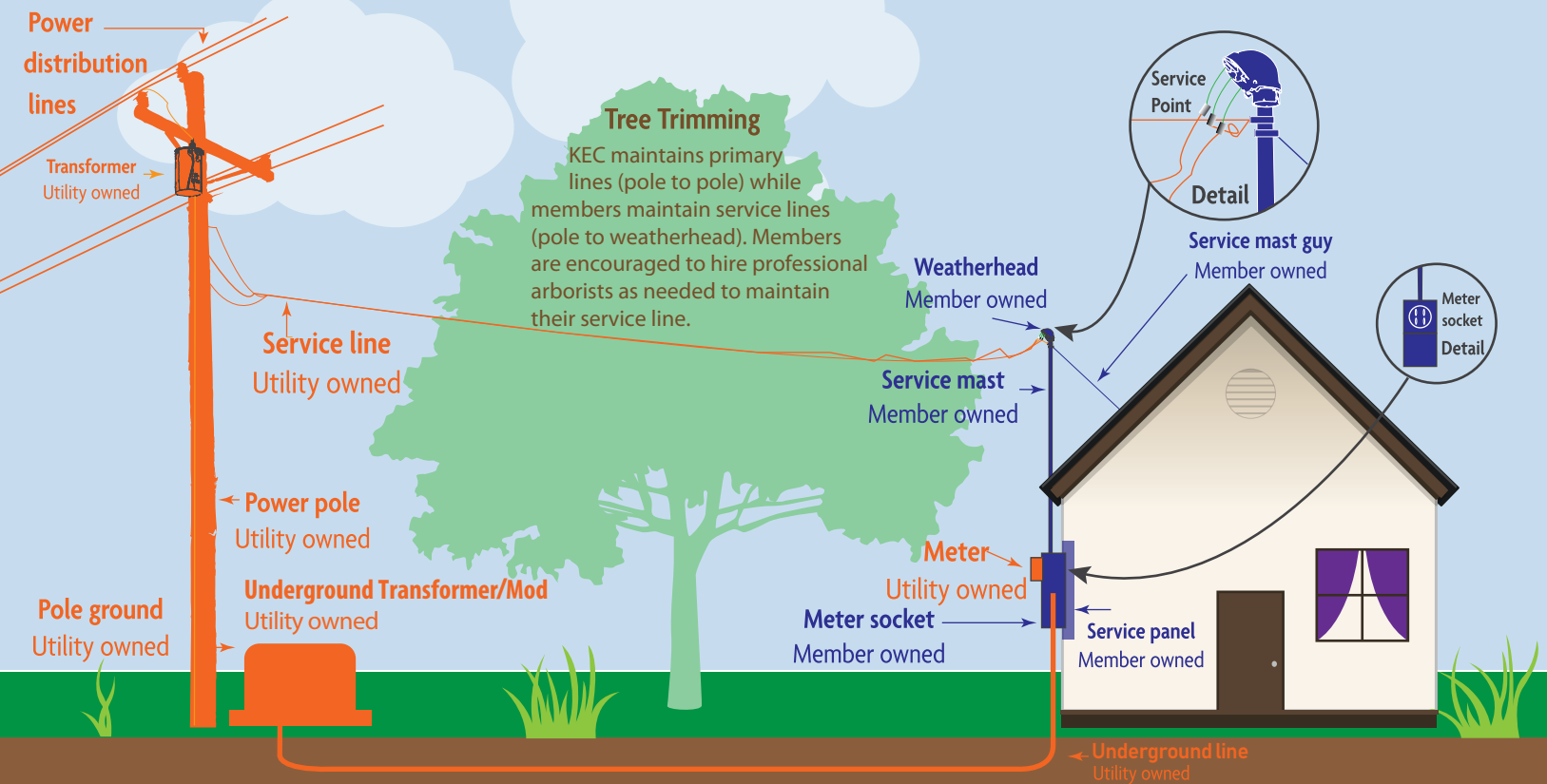
I would say the biggest challenge is balancing all the projects that are going on at any given time. As you are aware, our area is experiencing rapid growth. With this growth, there are a lot of new members being added to the KEC system and upgrades to existing infrastructure to ensure KEC's electrical system is reliable. It is my job to assist a team of individuals to make sure all this work is being done in an organized and efficient manner.

What is the best part of your job?

The best part of my job is interacting with the membership. Whether it is staking maintenance projects or large capital projects, the membership is always welcoming and appreciative of all the work it takes to keep the lights on.

Who Owns What?

Kootenai Electric vs Member-Owned Electric Equipment



Knowing the safety precautions and legal responsibilities of your electric service is important for all KEC members. You may not be aware which equipment is the homeowner's responsibility and which is KEC's responsibility. Electric meters are the property of KEC. Removing the meter with current flowing through it can lead to an electrical explosion. The person working with the meter could be injured or killed. If you're planning electrical work, contact KEC and we will send certified personnel to your site to disconnect the meter. Under no circumstance should meters be removed or relocated—temporarily or permanently—by anyone other than authorized KEC employees.

For overhead service, KEC is responsible for the cable that runs from the utility pole to your home. This wire is called a "service line." The service line connects to your house at the "service mast," a vertical pipe-like structure attached to the top of the box that houses your electric meter. The service mast and the box that holds the meter are the homeowner's property and responsibility. Please keep the area around your meter box clear so KEC employees can access it if needed.

For underground service, KEC is responsible for the transformer, the underground wire from the transformer to the meter and the meter. If you have any questions about your electric service responsibilities, please call KEC at 208.765.1200. You can also view the Electric Service Handbook at www.kec.com.