

## Congratulations to Scholarship Winners

Recently, the Kootenai Electric Trust Board awarded \$2,000 scholarships to the ten Kootenai Electric Cooperative (KEC) members or their children pictured below. The scholarships were made possible this year with proceeds from the KEC Golf Classic. Winners were selected by members of the Kootenai Electric Trust Board of Directors, which disburses Operation Round Up® funds contributed by Kootenai Electric members. The Trust Board has awarded more than 160 scholarships since 2007 and plans to offer the scholarship program again next year. Congratulations to the winners! Watch for details about the 2022 scholarship application deadline in late 2021 at [www.kec.com](http://www.kec.com).

### Are you interested in serving on the Trust Board?

The Trust Board is made up of KEC members who serve on a voluntary basis. They receive and evaluate all grant requests and scholarship applications and determine how funds will be distributed. Trust Board positions will be open this year. If you're interested in serving, please email [eneff@kec.com](mailto:eneff@kec.com) or call 208.292.3270.



**Hayden Carroll**  
Hauser



**Katelynn Hayden**  
Post Falls



**Francine Koziol**  
Coeur d'Alene



**Stephanie Koziol**  
Coeur d'Alene



**Carson Magee**  
Coeur d'Alene



**Laura Moler**  
Post Falls



**Eric Rabello**  
Hayden



**Quincy Rigg**  
Post Falls



**Madison Whitehead**  
Hayden



**Matthew Womelduff**  
Coeur d'Alene



# Get smart about electrical safety. May is National Electrical Safety Month.



Electricity plays many roles in our lives, from powering baby monitors, cell phones and lighting, to running HVAC systems and appliances. No wonder we get so comfortable with its instant availability that when we flip a switch, we expect most systems or devices to do the job.

May is National Electrical Safety Month, and here at KEC, we think it's a great time to look around your home and check for potential safety hazards. Remember, every electrical device has a purpose and a service lifespan. While we can extend their operations with maintenance and care, none of them are designed to last or work forever. When electricity is involved, failures can present electrical hazards that might be avoided with periodic inspections. According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, approximately 51,000 electrical fires are reported each year in the United States, causing more than \$1.3 billion in annual property damage.

KEC is committed to providing safe, reliable and affordable power to all of our members. For more information or safety tips visit [www.kec.com/safety](http://www.kec.com/safety).

## NEWS BRIEFS

### KEC CLOSED ON MEMORIAL DAY

KEC will be closed on May 31, 2021 in observance of Memorial Day.

### 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.

**1831731, 1786121, 1845422, 1287474, 1841578,  
1842315, 1818010, 1799713, 1381044, 1657381**

### ALWAYS 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.

### KEC BOARD MEETINGS

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

**Kootenai Electric Cooperative is an Equal Opportunity-Affirmative Action Employer**

## Employee Spotlight:

### Doug Cardinel

Doug Cardinel is a foreman. He has worked for KEC for 25 years.

#### **What made you interested in line work and how did you train to work in this field?**

I was young and broke and looking for new career option. I had a few friends in the line construction trade and decided to give it a try. To start, I was hired as a temporary groundman at KEC and then worked my way into an apprenticeship. Following that I worked as a journeyman lineman for ten years and then moved into the foreman role.

#### **Tell us about KEC's new System Maintenance and Inspection Plan.**

KEC put the finishing touches on a new System Inspection and Maintenance Plan in late 2019. The plan outlines a methodical approach to how we inspect and maintain every piece of equipment on our system. This includes major equipment and other minor components on overhead transmission lines, substations, and overhead and underground distribution lines, inclusive of vegetation management and all KEC infrastructure up to the meters installed at each KEC service point.

To perform on this plan is no small task. KEC operates 2,300 miles of line. Of this, nearly 1,300 miles are underground with the balance, just under 1,000 miles, being overhead. The plan and its implementation are a collaborative effort between KEC's Engineering and Operations departments.

Prior to the plan development, KEC conducted routine maintenance and had a comprehensive right-of-way or vegetation management program in place. However, the new plan provides specific targets for inspections and maintenance based upon frequency schedules and the assessment and priority of equipment condition. In the pilot year of the new plan, we selected areas on the KEC system that have been the most problematic to system reliability for inspection and maintenance. Our goal is to inspect each part of our system every 12 years for maintenance. Additional staff were needed for plan implementation, including a full-time system inspector (or Service Lineman) and one full-time maintenance crew. In addition, we dedicate one full-time field engineering technician to review the findings from each inspection and coordinate any follow up maintenance



work. My crew takes those plans and completes the replacement and construction work.

#### **What is your role in this process?**

I am the foreman responsible for maintenance construction. My crew works to replace equipment that has reached the end of its useful life to improve safety and reliability. This work is also important as it helps keep our crews safe by removing possible hazards on the electrical system. When I get to work each day, I start by reviewing engineering or staking sheets for the jobs we need to complete. Next, I work with the crew to collect and load the materials and equipment needed for the jobs. I then meet with my crew to share the day's job details, directions and protective or safety equipment needed.

#### **What is the biggest challenge in your job?**

We might have 3-4 projects going at a time. Ensuring we are tracking all the materials accurately can be a challenge. However, I really enjoy maintenance work, which largely involves overhead construction across KEC's service territory.

#### **Where are you conducting maintenance work now?**

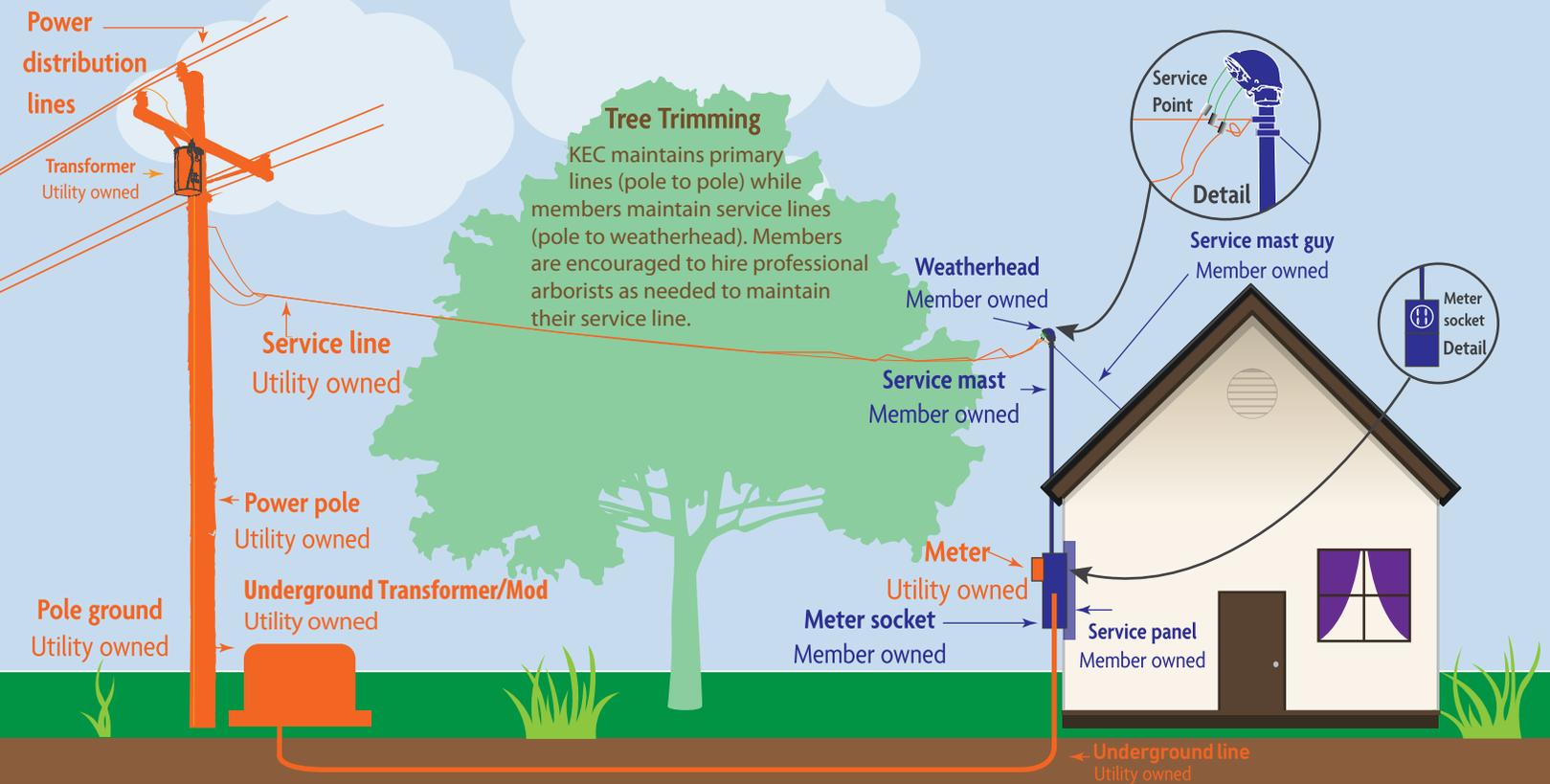
We are currently working in the Rimrock area and have also recently been in the Harrison area.

#### **What is the best part of your job?**

Working with a group of like-minded coworkers who take their trade seriously and have good work ethic and safety standards. We are fortunate to work for a company that provides quality equipment and tools for us to do our work. In addition, I'm happy to do work that helps improve reliability for our members. That's good for everybody.

# 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 on doing electrical work, contact KEC and we will send certified personnel to your site. 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](http://www.kec.com).