

Northern District
2731 Milo Terr.
Lebo, KS 66856

Southern District
9346 Jewell Rd.
Fredonia, KS 66736

Payment Center
2501 W. 18th Ave., Ste. B
Emporia, KS 66801

4 RIVERS

Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

4 RIVERS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

CURRENTS

4 Rivers Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Board of Trustees

Michael Springer
President

Robert Converse
Vice-President

Gene Huston
Secretary

David Engelman
Treasurer

Tom Ayers
Trustee

Randal Bunnel
Trustee

Larry Felts
Trustee

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Robert Harkrader
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Stacy Heins
Trustee

David Kunkel
Trustee

Warren Schmidt
Trustee

Sandy Smith
Trustee

Carol Wehmeyer
Trustee

Staff

Dennis Svanes
General Manager/CEO

Mark Doebele
Assistant General Manager/COO

Dennis Duft
Manager of Operations

Roger Cole
CFO

Ken Caudell
Manager of Member and Corporate Services

BECOMING 4 RIVERS

The Time is Here — 4 Rivers Electric



Dennis Svanes

Happy New Year! 4 Rivers Electric Cooperative is now a reality. The employees of Lyon-Coffey and Radiant have done an enormous amount of work to get us to

this point — consolidating mapping, billing, accounting, safety rules, computer systems and more. The board of trustees has also worked to get the bylaws and policies in place for 4 Rivers. We still have work to do to get everything finalized, but it's exciting to see our plans falling into place.

PLEASE NOTE THAT WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO TAKE PAYMENTS JAN. 13-15 WHILE THE BILLING DATABASES ARE BEING MERGED.

Our website, 4RiversElectric.com, is up and running. Please check it out and let us know your thoughts on how we can make it better. We are continuing to add and update the content and will strive to make our website a good resource for all our members to

use. We use our social media to communicate in more of a real-time basis — look for 4 Rivers Electric Cooperative, Inc. on Facebook and Twitter.

Of all the tools I recommend our members to use, SmartHub is the most important and useful. If you are not using SmartHub to manage your account, I highly recommend signing up for that service. On our website, click on the SmartHub link. On a smartphone, go to the App Store or Google Play and download SmartHub. Starting in mid-February, if you call us to make a payment, SmartHub will be taking the payment securely.

We have always strived to be open with our members. In keeping with that goal, the board of trustees has decided to open the board meetings for members to attend. A comment period will be open at the beginning of each meeting for members to make comments to the board. The board policies will also be posted on our website, following their approvals at the first board meeting of 4 Rivers in January.

I hope all of you have a blessed and safe 2020.



Holiday Office Closing

Happy New Year from your electric co-op. We will be closed on Wednesday, Jan. 1 and will re-open on Thursday, Jan. 2.

Becoming 4 Rivers — Moving Forward in 2020

As we start the new year as 4 Rivers Electric Cooperative, we want to keep you up to date on changes in the organization that may affect you.

ON JAN. 13-15, our computer servers will be unavailable as we bring our consolidated 4 Rivers database online. **SMARTHUB ACCOUNT ACCESS VIA COMPUTER OR MOBILE APP WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR MEMBERS AT THAT TIME**, which means we will not be able to accept payments over the phone on those days. We can accept checks or cash only in the office, and mailed payments will be processed when our consolidated servers are online.

BEGINNING IN FEBRUARY, call 620-364-2116 or 800-748-7395 to report outages or make payments. All mailed payments will be processed at our northern district office in Lebo, though we will continue to accept walk-in payments at the Fredonia office and our payment center in Emporia. We will no longer use the lockbox service in Kansas City for payments, so please mail your payments to our Lebo office. For members who use their bank's payment processing service to pay electric bills, make sure the bank is sending the payment to our Lebo address.

IN MID-FEBRUARY, members calling the office to make a payment will use our Interactive Voice Response (IVR) phone system to submit payments. To comply with PCI banking rules, businesses that accept credit cards can use an IVR to accept phone payments and comply with PCI requirements. Another convenient payment option is SmartHub, our easy-to-use account management system providing mem-



Our trucks and buildings have been updated with our new signage and cooperative name.

bers with secure account access right at their fingertips via computer or mobile app.

OFFICE HOURS ADJUSTED AT FREDONIA; LEBO AND EMPORIA REMAIN UNCHANGED. In January, the Fredonia office will observe office hours from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday. The Lebo office will maintain 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. office hours Monday-Friday, while the Emporia office will be open from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. (closed 1-2 p.m. for lunch) Monday-Friday. As always, linemen are on call 24/7 for outages and electrical emergencies

NEW WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA PAGE. Visit us at www.4riverselectric.com for your co-op information and access to your account via SmartHub. Follow 4 Rivers Electric Cooperative, Inc. on Facebook and Twitter for co-op news, energy tips and outage updates.

While we work hard to streamline this transition process for our members, we want to reassure you of what is not changing — and that's our commitment to you, our members. Please let us know if you have any questions about the changes and how they may affect you.

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Fredonia Office Remodel Adds Security and Functionality

In January, we will begin remodeling the Fredonia office. Members will be directed to use the door on the south side of the building during the construction. Parking will be available and signs will indicate where to enter the building.

These updates will provide better security in the office, along with more space in our large conference room used for board and employee meetings. We appreciate your patience during this building update!

Burns and Tindle Retire in January

Longtime employees **MARVIN BURNS**, serviceman, and **LEAH TINDLE**, administrative manager, are both retiring this month after many years of service.

Burns started with Coffey County Rural Electric Cooperative in 1979. He has seen many changes to the way linemen do their jobs from equipment to technology, but always with the same goal of taking care of our members.

Tindle has served Radiant Electric members for more than 44 years, also experiencing some major changes in the way cooperative business is conducted from regulations to automation. She has always kept the members' best interests in mind whether she was budget fore-



Marvin Burns



Leah Tindle

casting or organizing the annual meeting of members.

As we bid farewell to Marvin and Leah, we wish them the very best in this exciting new chapter and thank them for their dedication to serving the cooperative and our members.

LIEAP Benefits — Do You Qualify?

The Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) is a federally funded program helping keep families safe and healthy by assisting eligible households with a portion of their home energy costs through a once-per-year benefit.

The 2020 LIEAP application period is now open, and applications must be received in a Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) office by **5 P.M., MARCH 31, 2020**, to be considered for eligibility. All applications received after the deadline will be denied.

Benefit levels vary according to household income, number of persons living at the address, type of dwelling, and type of heating fuel.



DO YOU QUALIFY? HAVE YOU APPLIED?
LIEAP: HOME ENERGY COST ASSISTANCE
 APPLICATION DEADLINE: MARCH 31.

To qualify, applicants must meet the following requirements:

- ▶ An adult living at the address must be personally responsible for paying the heating costs incurred at the current residence, payable either to the landlord or the fuel vendor.
 - ▶ Applicants must demonstrate a recent history of payments toward purchase of the primary heating energy.
 - ▶ The combined gross income (before deductions) of all persons living at the address may not exceed 130% of the federal poverty level according to the guidelines listed below.
- For more information about the application process or to request an application, call 1-800-432-0043 or visit www.dcf.ks.gov.

2020 Income Eligibility Guidelines

Maximum Gross Monthly Income for Persons Living at the Address

# of People	Income	# of People	Income
1	\$1,354	8	\$4,705
2	\$1,832	9	\$5,184
3	\$2,311	10	\$5,663
4	\$2,790	11	\$6,142
5	\$3,269	12	\$6,621
6	\$3,748	+1	\$479 for each additional
7	\$4,227		

WE'VE COME **TOGETHER.**
YOU
 STILL COME **FIRST.**

Lyon-Coffey and Radiant Electric have officially merged to become

4 RIVERS
 Electric Cooperative

NEW NAME.
 NEW BOARD.
SAME
HIGH
QUALITY
SERVICE.

Please call our office if you have any questions.

Encourage Students to Apply!

The Electric Cooperative Youth Tour program builds leadership, community and memories



During the KEC Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., students meet with our elected officials. This year's tour will be June 18-25, 2020.

If you are a member of 4 Rivers Electric Cooperative, and your student is a junior in high school, encourage them to apply to **WIN AN ALL-EXPENSE-PAID TRIP TO WASHINGTON, D.C., JUNE 18-25, 2020.**

The Electric Cooperative Youth Tour is truly a trip of a lifetime where students will join 1,800 youth from across the nation in our nation's capital for a week, visiting with Kansas' senators and congressional representatives. Students will visit the monuments and memorials at the National Mall, as well as tour Capitol Hill to learn more about how our government works, leadership and the co-op industry.

Contest packets for the 2020 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour are available online at www.4riverselectric.com or can be picked up at any of our office locations. Students are asked to compose an essay about their thoughts on beneficial electricity due by 4:30 p.m., Jan. 22. Three winners and one alternate will be selected. Additional information is included in the packets. Visit us online for more information or call Mike Tweedy at 620-364-2116 or 800-748-7395 with questions or to request a contest packet for your student.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Let the sunshine in! For additional warmth, open drapes over windows that receive sunlight during the day. Close them at night, which can reduce heat loss by up to 10%. **Source: energy.gov**



Why is My Power Out?

We hate it when the power goes out just as much as you do. When there is an outage, we work hard to resume service as quickly and safely as possible.

Many times, the reasons for outages are beyond our control. Here are the main reasons the power goes out:

- ▶ **STORMS** — Conditions brought on by storms such as high winds, ice and lightning can interrupt service. Lightning itself does not impact outages as much as people think, but it can strike trees and cause branches or even whole trees to fall on distribution lines. Lightning can cause a problem if it strikes substation equipment, such as a large transformer. Strong high winds and ice that accumulates on lines can also impact distribution.
 - ▶ **TREES AND VEGETATION** — Branches, limbs or trunks can fall on lines and vegetation (such as vines) can grow around poles, lines or other equipment. Ice and wind can make matters worse, which is why we continuously work to keep rights of way near power lines and equipment clear.
 - ▶ **ANIMALS** — It is estimated that 11% of all outages are caused by our furry friend the squirrel. They love to chew on the weatherproof coating around lines. Other critters like raccoons, snakes and hawks can interfere with service too. A bird on a wire is harmless and safe if it touches the line and nothing else.
 - ▶ **ACCIDENTS** — Cars, trucks and farm equipment that collide with a utility pole can cause an outage.
 - ▶ **PUBLIC DAMAGE** — Unsafe digging, equipment or line damage, vandalism or theft can all cause interruptions in service.
 - ▶ **OVERLOAD** — This happens where demand spikes, such as when too many air conditioners run on a hot summer day, causing blackouts or brownouts.
 - ▶ **EQUIPMENT ISSUES** — We maintain and inspect all our lines and equipment regularly; however, sometimes equipment malfunctions, and we address those problems as soon as they happen.
- Please contact us with questions about outages or to learn more about the steps we take to provide reliable service.