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4 RIVERS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

CURRENTS

4 RIVERS

Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



4 RIVERS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

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FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER/CEO

Prepare Your AC Now for a Cooler, More Cost-Effective Summer



Dennis Svanes

As summer approaches, I find myself revisiting an important topic: keeping your air conditioning system in top shape. A little maintenance

now can make a significant difference in both your comfort and your energy bills when the summer's heat arrives.

We all feel the sting of those summer electricity bills, largely due to our hardworking AC units battling the rising temperatures. When these units aren't running efficiently, they become energy hogs, consuming more energy and effectively draining your wallet in the process. The good news? A simple tune-up can help.

Think of your air conditioner as a vehicle. You wouldn't subject your car to a year of continuous use without an oil and filter change. Your AC needs the same care to perform at its best. A proactive checkup from a qualified HVAC professional can:

► **TACKLE THOSE FILTERS:** A simple cleaning or replacement can drastically improve airflow, reducing the strain on your unit, allowing it to run more efficiently.

► **REPLENISH REFRIGERANT LEVELS:**

Think of it as a revitalizing boost for your AC, ensuring optimal cooling performance.

► **CONDUCT A COMPREHENSIVE INSPECTION:**

They'll identify and address any potential issues, preventing costly breakdowns and ensuring smooth operation.

Taking these steps now means a cooler home, lower energy consumption, and — most importantly — reduced electricity bills. Your electric cooperative encourages responsible energy use, and by keeping your AC system efficient, you're helping to ease demand on the power grid.

So, I urge you to take action. Contact your local HVAC company and schedule a tune-up for your air conditioning system. Your future self and your bank account will thank you. Let's work together to make this summer, not only cool, but also cost-effective.



ARE YOU READY FOR SUMMER?

Ensure your air conditioner is inspected and cleaned by an electrician before use.

PHOTO ABOVE SHOWCASES A PASTORAL BARNYARD IN WILSON COUNTY, PHOTOGRAPHED BY CO-OP MEMBER KIRA FRANKENBERY OF RURAL FREDONIA.

4 Rivers Holds 5th Annual Meeting of Members



General Manager/CEO Dennis Svanes reports to the members on cooperative business.

4 Rivers Electric Cooperative held its 2025 Annual Meeting of Members March 24 at Burlington High School. A total of 121 registered members, as well as many guests, gathered to review cooperative business, hear reports from leadership, and confirm trustee election results for the coming term. Before the meeting, attendees enjoyed a meal catered by Olpe Chicken House, served by BHS's Wildcats Care student group. The talented BHS Jazz Band entertained the crowd prior to the start of the meeting.

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

President Larry Felts called the meeting

to order at 7 p.m. Trustee Gene Huston led the invocation, followed by a heartfelt rendition of the national anthem by BHS student Jaycee Belcher. Trustee Robert Converse then led attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance. Throughout the evening, members enjoyed three rounds of prize giveaways.

Secretary Warren Schmidt confirmed that meeting notices were sent in the March 2025 edition of *Kansas Country Living* magazine, and a quorum was established with 121 registered members present. The meeting agenda and minutes from the 2024 Annual Meeting were approved.

FINANCIAL AND BUSINESS REPORTS

Treasurer Loren Dickens reported a strong financial year in 2024, with revenue totaling just under \$28.6 million — slightly above forecasts. The cooperative returned \$715,000 in capital credits to members and secured a \$2 million zero-interest rural economic development loan from the USDA on behalf of Secured Semiconductor Manufacturing. Independent auditor Eide Bailly issued a clean financial report for 4 Rivers Electric.

General Manager and CEO Dennis Svanes provided key updates, acknowledging veterans, employees and special guests, including co-op member and Kansas Representative Doug Blex. Mr. Svanes addressed member concerns regarding the cooperative's base fee, explaining that 4 Rivers' rural service area results in higher fixed costs. He also highlighted the cooperative's response to Hurricane Helene, to which 4 Rivers dispatched six linemen and one mechanic to assist Aiken Electric Cooperative in South Carolina.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS AND LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Keynote speaker Reagan McCloud, director of government relations for Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. (KEC), discussed federal and state energy policy. He highlighted

CELEBRATING YOUTH PROGRAMS

4 Rivers Electric remains committed to investing in the next generation. President Felts recognized **COOPER SPRINGER** and **JAYCEE BELCHER** for their selection to the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp in Colorado. **KALEB ARNOLD** and **LONDON PETITJEAN** were recognized as the cooperative representatives in the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. Additionally, Trenton Sleichter received the 2024 Lineman Scholarship.



Landon Petitjohn (left) and Kaleb Arnold will represent 4 Rivers Electric at the 2025 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour this summer.

legislation proposed by U.S. Senators Jerry Moran, Roger Marshall and Josh Hawley to stabilize energy rates in the Southwestern Power Administration region. McCloud also touched on Kansas state issues, including budget concerns, property tax relief, and an upcoming constitutional amendment regarding the election of Kansas Supreme Court justices. Other topics included consumer protections for rooftop solar, land acquisition for high-voltage transmission lines, and wildfire prevention efforts.

TRUSTEE ELECTIONS AND BYLAW AMENDMENTS

Trustee election results were announced by General Counsel Tim Larson. **DAVID KUNKEL**, District 1; **STACY HEINS**, District 2; and **LOREN DICKENS**, District 3; were all elected unopposed. Three bylaw amendments were also passed by a strong member majority:

- ▶ Reducing the quorum requirement from 75 to 50 members.
- ▶ Removing outdated language from the 2020 consolidation of Lyon-Coffey and Radiant Electric Cooperatives.
- ▶ Correcting minor grammatical errors in the bylaws.

A FOND FAREWELL AND A WELCOME

President Felts expressed appreciation for Tim Larson's 42 years of service as general counsel, wishing him well in retirement. He introduced Will Wohlford of Morris Laing Law Office in Wichita as the cooperative's new legal counsel.

ADJOURNMENT

With no new business, the meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m. President Felts thanked members for attending and wished everyone a safe drive home.

4 Rivers Electric Cooperative appreciates the continued support and engagement of its members and looks forward to another successful year.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:

4 Rivers staff greeted and registered arriving members.

Lineman Jeff Reed demonstrates power line safety to interested members before the meeting begins.

Board President Larry Felts recognizes the 2025 youth program winners during his address.

Keynote speaker Reagan McCloud, KEC's director of government relations, addresses 4 Rivers members.

WELCOME NEW EMPLOYEE!



Mary Mader

MARY MADER joined our team April 7 as 4 Rivers' newest customer service representative. Mary joins us with a strong background

in customer service and has a utility background which will be a great asset to our team. Mary lives on a farm in Burlington with her grandmother and two dogs. Mary is based out of the Lebo office.

Welcome, Mary!

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11 Electrical Safety Tips for Seniors

Electrical safety is crucial for everyone, but especially important for seniors. Adults over the age of 65 are at the greatest risk of death from fire, and this risk increases with age, according to the National Fire Protection Association. As we age, our reflexes slow, eyesight decreases and senses become less acute, making it essential to take extra precautions when handling electrical appliances.

We at 4 Rivers Electric Cooperative care about our senior members and want to offer the following tips to help maintain a safe living environment:

- 1** Ensure that electrical appliances are in good working condition. Regularly inspect cords and plugs for damage or wear and tear.
- 2** Don't overload sockets or extension cords. Plugging too many appliances or devices into a single outlet can cause overheating and increase fire risk.
- 3** Limit the use of carpets and rugs, which are tripping hazards, and avoid placing extension cords under them to prevent overheating. To help prevent trips and falls, cords should not stretch across a room. For a safer and more permanent solution, consider having an electrician install additional outlets where needed.
- 4** Unplug appliances when not in use and before cleaning or repairing them.
- 5** Keep electrical appliances away from water and wet surfaces to prevent electric shock.
- 6** Install ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs), which are designed to prevent electric shock by shutting off power when a ground fault is detected. Install them in areas where water and electricity are close in proximity, such as kitchens, bathrooms and outdoor spaces.
- 7** Ensure proper lighting in all areas of the home, especially in hallways and staircases, to prevent trips and falls. Consider installing nightlights

in bedrooms and bathrooms for better visibility.

- 8** Set water heaters to lower settings to prevent scalding.
 - 9** When cooking on the stove, never leave pots and pans unattended, and avoid wearing loose clothing when cooking. Never open the oven door if something catches fire inside the oven. Consider using toaster ovens and small appliances that come equipped with an auto shut-off feature for added safety and convenience. This feature is designed to turn off the appliance automatically after a set amount of time or when a task is completed, reducing the risk of overheating or fire.
 - 10** Use space heaters with caution. Space heaters can offer added warmth to a senior, who may get cold due to circulation issues that are common with aging. Use space heaters with built-in safety features such as an automatic shut-off switch. Keep space heaters on a steady surface and at least 3 feet away from flammable objects such as curtains, bedding or furniture. Plug them directly into an outlet — do not use an extension cord or power strip — and unplug them when not in use.
 - 11** Install smoke detectors on every floor and carbon monoxide detectors near all bedrooms. Test and replace the batteries twice a year — once in the spring and once in the fall.
- BONUS TIP:** If someone in the home uses a medical device that requires electricity, have a backup power source ready in case of a power outage, and be sure to alert 4 Rivers that you have a medical necessity.
- By following these safety measures, seniors can significantly reduce their risk of electrical accidents. Family members and caregivers can assist older adults in implementing these precautions to ensure their homes are safe and comfortable.