

# Northwestern Rural Electric Cooperative Association, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives  
serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

## Northwestern REC

P.O. Box 207

22534 State Highway 86  
Cambridge Springs, PA 16403  
www.northwesternrec.com

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Kathy Cooper-Winters, District 5**  
Chair

**Lisa Chausse, District 9**  
Vice Chair

**Michael Sample, District 3**  
Secretary

**Earl Koon, District 2**  
Treasurer

**Karl Ebert, District 1**

**Robert G. Agnew, District 4**

**Kim Docter, District 6**

**David "Earl" Snyder, District 7**

**Marian Davis, District 8**

**Lanny Rodgers, District 10**

## Staff

**Bill Buchanan, President & CEO**  
**Thomas Dimperio, VP –**  
Information Technology  
**Kathy Lane, VP & CFO**

**Linda King, VP – Communications &**  
Energy Solutions

**Connie Sovisky, VP – Member Services**  
**Kerri Fleet, HR Manager**

**Clarissa Schneider, Executive Secretary &**  
HR Assistant

## Main Access Number

1-800-352-0014

## Emergencies/Outages

1-800-352-0014

## FAX

814-398-8064

## Office Hours

Monday through Friday

7 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

**Amy Wellington, Editor**

**Linda King, Managing Editor**

## From the President & CEO



## The crews behind the lines

By Bill Buchanan, *president & CEO*

APRIL 12 is National Lineworker Appreciation Day — a day set aside to thank those men and women who work countless hours in all kinds of weather to keep the lights on. Your cooperative employs 24 of the finest lineworkers in the industry. With our reliability averaging nearly 99%, the proof is in the pudding.

“Lineworker” is listed as one of the top 10 most dangerous jobs in the U.S. This is understandable as they perform detailed tasks near high-voltage power lines. Regardless of the time of day, having to brave stormy weather and other challenging conditions, lineworkers must climb 40 feet in the air, often carrying heavy equipment to get the job done.

Being a lineworker is not a glamorous or easy profession. It takes years of specialized training, ongoing education, dedication, and equally important, a sense of service and commitment. How else can you explain the willingness to leave the comfort of your home to tackle a challenging job in difficult conditions, when most are sheltering comfortably at home? This dedication and sense of service to the community is truly what sets them apart. That's why we set aside the second Monday in April to celebrate and recognize the men and women who work around the clock to keep the lights on.

While lineworkers may be the most visible employees at Northwestern REC, it's important to note that there is a team of highly skilled professionals working behind the scenes. Engineers provide ongoing expertise and guidance

on the operations side of the co-op. Member service representatives are always standing by to take your calls and questions. Our information technology (IT) experts are continuously monitoring our system to help safeguard sensitive data. And these are just a few of the folks who work together to ensure we can deliver the service and reliability you expect and deserve. Without them, our lineworkers wouldn't be able to “bring the light” to our community.

The 24 lineworkers you have working for you are people who live in, volunteer for and give back to your shared local communities. These men are proud dads like me. Some are now grandfathers. All are someone's son, someone's significant other, someone's brother or uncle.

Let's give them a Lineworker Appreciation Day they will never forget. On page 14b you will find a form our mini members can send in thanking our crews, or a special lineworker, for keeping the lights on. Posts can also be shared on our Facebook page. All kudos to our line crews will be approved and shared on our social media pages.

I would like to personally thank Aaron, Alvey, Blaze, Chris, Corey, Dylan, Gary, Jay, Jim, Joe, John H., John M., Jordan, Justin D., Justin S., Kyle, Mark, Matt, Mike, Mitch, Norb, Ross, Ryan and Tim for their dedication to Northwestern REC. They deserve all the appreciation and accolades that come their way on Lineworker Appreciation Day.

Cooperatively yours,

Bill Buchanan, President & CEO

# THANK A LINEWORKER!

This month, we're recognizing lineworkers for the amazing job they do to make sure we have electricity! Think about all the ways you use electricity every day. Do you use a phone, watch TV, play video games or turn on lights? You're able to do *all* of these things because of lineworkers.



Below is space to write a short thank you note to your local lineworkers. Write your note, then ask an adult to help you send it back to us so we can share it with our crews.



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

WE ♥ OUR  
LINEWORKERS

Send your note to the mailing address below, or snap a photo with your phone and email it to us!  
Northwestern REC  
#ThankALineworker  
P.O. Box 207  
Cambridge Springs, PA 16403  
Or email to: [info@northwesternrec.com](mailto:info@northwesternrec.com)

800/352-0014    
NORTHWESTERNREC.COM

# Clearly Brighter Teacher Grants open May 1

AT NORTHWESTERN REC, we recognize that the children of today are the members of tomorrow. The Clearly Brighter Teacher Grant Program was designed to reach these kids by helping their teachers better afford innovative and effective educational curriculum that is not covered by traditional school financing.

Individual teachers can apply for grants up to \$250, while teams of teachers (two or more) can


apply for grants up to \$500. Each year, Northwestern REC will award a total of \$4,000 through this grant program.

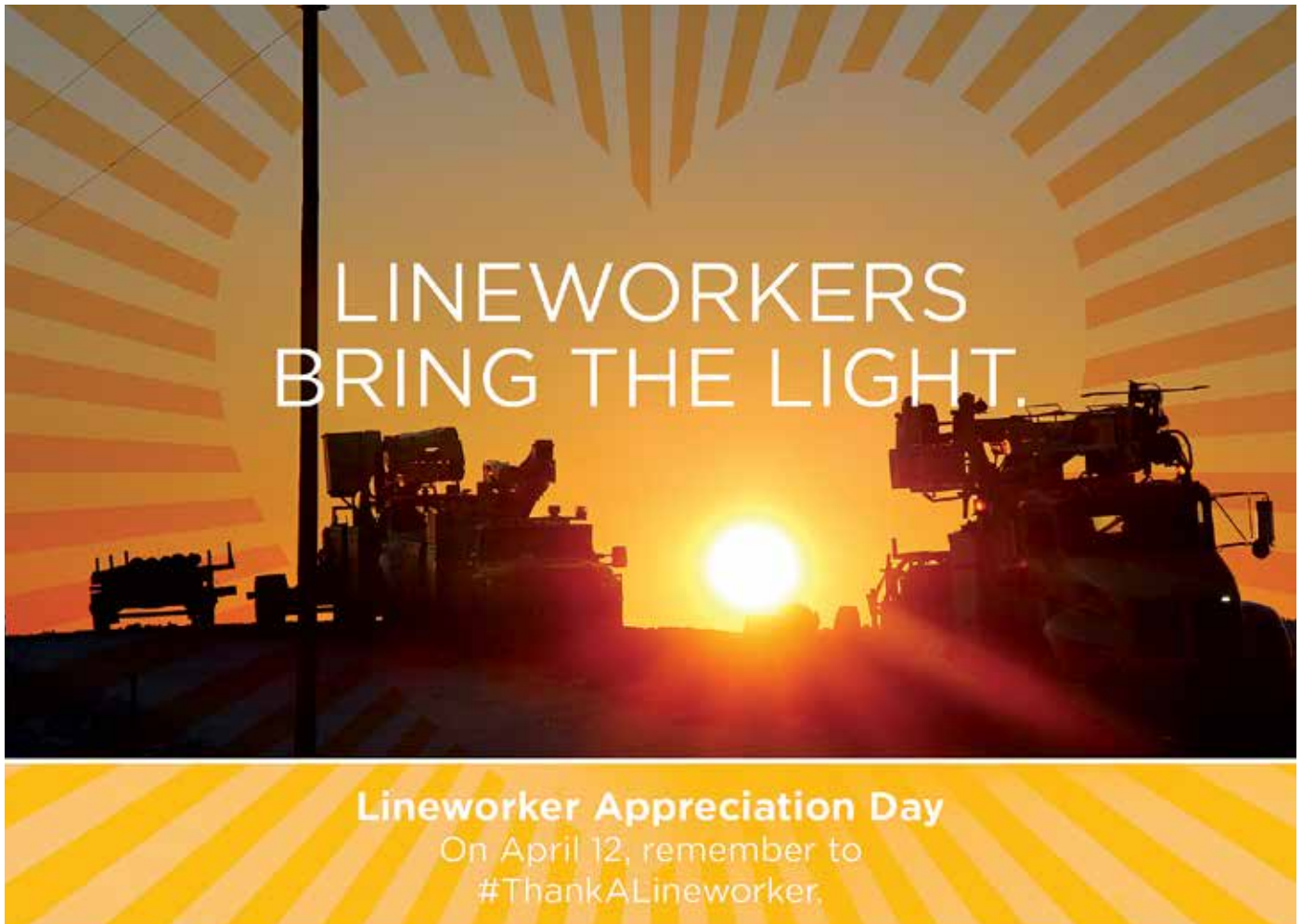
## Clearly Brighter Teacher Grants

Educators in public and private schools, pre-K through 12th grade, as well as home school organizations within Northwestern REC's service territory are eligible to participate. It is not required for teachers or schools to receive electric service from Northwestern REC. Grants are awarded for projects

in any discipline and are intended to help teachers bring special, hands-on projects to the classroom. Projects for special needs adults will also be considered.

Grants are awarded annually in a competitive evaluation process. Applications are accepted online beginning May 1, and will be awarded in October. The deadline to submit grant applications is 5 p.m. Sept. 15, 2021.

For more information, call Amy Wellington, manager of communications, at 1-800-352-0014 or email [awellington@northwesternrec.com](mailto:awellington@northwesternrec.com). Applications are accepted online only; visit [NorthwesternREC.com](http://NorthwesternREC.com). 





## Know what lies below: steps for safe digging

SPRING HAS SPRUNG, and there's never been a better time to get outside and enjoy the fresh air. Perhaps you're making plans for a new garden or a lawn makeover. However you're planning to revamp your backyard oasis, remember to keep safety in mind for all projects — especially those that require digging near underground utility lines.

Most of us never think about the electric, gas, water and other utility lines buried below the ground, but hitting one of these lines while digging is not the reminder you'll want — trust us! Northwestern REC reminds all members who are planning a digging project to call 811 at least three business days before you start. Or you can submit a request to dig by going online to [call811.com/811-In-Your-State](http://call811.com/811-In-Your-State).

### Here's how the process works

After you call 811 or submit your request online, all affected utilities will be notified of your intent to dig. It may take the utilities a few days to get to your request, so please be patient. The affected utilities will send someone out to mark the buried lines with paint or flags. Before you break ground, confirm that all the utilities have responded to your request. If you placed your request by phone, use the process explained by your 811 call center representative. If you submitted your request online, refer to your 811 center ticket to confirm everything.

By taking this important step before you break ground on your project, you can help protect not only yourself but our community. Disrupting an underground utility line can interrupt service, cause injuries, and cost money to repair, so remember to call 811 first and know what lies below. 🕒

**Not only is calling 8-1-1 a good practice, IT'S THE LAW.**

## 5 STEPS FOR SAFE DIGGING

Working on an outdoor project? Careless digging poses a threat to people, pipelines and underground facilities. Always call 8-1-1 first. Here are five easy steps for safe digging:



### 1. NOTIFY

Call 8-1-1 or make a request online two to three days before your work begins. The operator will notify the utilities affected by your project.

### 2. WAIT

Wait two to three days for affected utilities to respond to your request. They will send a locator to mark any underground utility lines.

2-3

### 3. CONFIRM

Confirm that all affected utilities have responded to your request by comparing the marks to the list of utilities the 8-1-1 call center notified.



### 4. RESPECT

Respect the markers provided by the affected utilities. The markers are your guide for the duration of your project.



### 5. DIG CAREFULLY

If you can't avoid digging near the markers (within 18-24 inches on all sides, depending on state laws), consider moving your project location.



Source: [call811.com](http://call811.com)

## RIDDLE: What's hot or cold and makes a big impact on your electric bill?

WHAT ACCOUNTS for almost half the energy use in a typical U.S. home?

It's not that fridge in the garage that predates texting (although that's a good guess). And it's not your hot water heater that heats the water your teenagers like to hog.

It's your HVAC, or heating, ventilation and air conditioning system. Keeping your home cool in the summer and warm in the winter draws a mighty share of your energy budget. According to the Department of Energy, a typical home uses a whopping 48% of the energy pie just to heat and cool it.

Aside from replacing your furnace and central air unit with newer, higher-efficiency versions, there are some things you can do to increase HVAC efficiency, which can help reduce your energy bills.

Northwestern REC offers the following tips:

### Overall HVAC


1. Get a pre-season checkup by a professional HVAC technician, which could help HVAC components run more efficiently.
2. Change all filters regularly for increased efficiency. Invest a little more in filters that trap smaller particles.
3. If you have energy-intensive, large systems that get a lot of use, consider retrofitting, which means adding or replacing certain parts. Homeowners can save up to 35% annually by retrofitting, according to the Department of Energy.
4. Get a programmable or smart thermostat. You can save up to 10% a year on heating and cooling by adjusting your thermostat 7 to 10 degrees from its normal setting for eight hours a day, according to Energy.gov.
5. Consider a professional energy audit to reveal where your home is inefficient, including air leaks and exposed duct work.

### Air-conditioning

1. Keep heat-producing appliances and lamps away from your thermostat, which can cause the system to run longer and work harder.
2. Keep curtains and blinds closed during the hottest part of the day.
3. Make sure your outdoor condenser unit is clean and free from debris. Ideally, the unit should be in the shade.
4. Use your clothes dryer and oven during the cooler parts of the day.

### Furnace

1. Instead of turning up the thermostat, use blankets and wear sweatshirts or sweaters to keep you warm.
2. Don't let warm air escape. Keep your windows and doors shut, and if you have a fireplace, make sure the flue is closed and glass doors are shut when not in use.
3. Reverse the direction of your ceiling fans to force the warm air that rises downward.
4. Make sure your vents and radiators aren't blocked by rugs or furniture. Air will circulate better and it's safer.
5. If there are rooms you're not using regularly, shut the vent and close the door.
6. Keep curtains and blinds closed at night to help insulate your house; conversely, open curtains and shades on south-facing windows during the day to let the sunlight in.

To schedule an energy audit, contact Rian Doubet, energy solutions representative, at 800-352-0014 or by emailing him at [rdoubet@northwesternrec.com](mailto:rdoubet@northwesternrec.com). For more information on electrical safety, go to [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org). 

## ENERGY SAVINGS tips from the

[EnergyEdCouncil.org](http://EnergyEdCouncil.org)

**Thermostat Smarts** - Save up to 10 percent a year when you schedule your programmable thermostat to automatically adjust the temperature by 7 to 10 degrees (higher on warm days and lower on cool days) for at least eight hours a day.

**Stop Air Leaks** - Don't let the air that you've paid to heat or cool your house escape. Seal leaks around windows, doors, and spots where wiring, plumbing, and ductwork come through walls, floors, and ceilings. Also, don't forget to insulate your attic, exterior walls, basement, and crawl spaces.

**Nature's Climate Control** - Open curtains and blinds on south-facing windows to allow sunlight to naturally heat your home on cool days, and leave them closed on summer days to help keep the heat out.

**Lighting** - Switch to light-emitting diode (LED) bulbs, which use 75 percent less energy than traditional light bulbs. If American homeowners switched entirely to LED lights over the next 20 years, this would reduce electricity lighting consumption by nearly 50 percent!

**Appliances** - When shopping for major appliances, lighting, windows, and home electronics, look for the Energy Star label. These energy efficient products use between 10 and 50 percent less energy than standard appliances.

**Home Electronics** - Unplug electronics when they are not in use. If you plug multiple electronic devices into a power strip, then the power can be cut off from these devices with a simple flip of a switch. More advanced smart strips can help you automatically conserve energy.

**Water** - To cut energy costs, wash clothes in cold water and make sure to do full loads in the washing machine and dishwasher. Also, consider air drying clothes and dishes. Lowering the thermostat on your home's water heater to a setting of 120°F can additionally help cut costs and save energy.

**System Maintenance** - Remember to schedule regular service for your heating and cooling systems. Keep the units clean and free of debris, while also replacing the filters monthly. Consider an upgrade to a more efficient model.

Research collected from [energy.gov](http://energy.gov) and [energystar.gov](http://energystar.gov).