

# SOUTHEAST ELECTRIC Cooperative



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## SPRING IS IN THE AIR

### Change in the season brings changes at SECO

By **TYE WILLIAMS** | *Manager*

**S**PRING has sprung. This is my favorite time of year, and not just because I am an April Fool's baby. I like the cool days, rain, and seeing all the vegetation green up and grow throughout the region.



With spring comes changes at Southeast Electric Cooperative (SECO). The operations line crew will start working four 10-hour days a week, so half of the crew will work Mondays, the other half will work Fridays, and full crews will work Tuesday through Thursday. The longer days help to cut down on crew travel time, and allow more time working at job sites.

SECO is also moving full steam ahead on our large transmission and substation project. This project will bring greater electrical capacity into our territory, as the substation will be located along the Mill Iron Camp Crook Road. The increased capacity is needed as an industrial load seeks 9 Megawatts more capacity by the summer of 2025. In 2023, SECO peaked at 11 MW, so this exponential growth will provide SECO financial stability moving forward. To protect the membership from financial hardships due to building the project, SECO has the large industrial member pay Contributions in Aid to Construction (CIAC), in other words, the industrial member that has requested the additional capacity is paying for the entirety of the project.

As mentioned, the transmission line and substation will lead to SECO selling more power, and that growth will continue to keep electricity rates steady. In 2023, SECO received 63 percent of its revenue from industrial load sales, while residential made up 32 percent and the rest was from small commercial, irrigation

and lighting. Once this large project is completed, we forecast industrial loads will comprise 75 percent to 85 percent of our revenue. The increased revenue growth will enable SECO to continue to invest in the utility plant, with our largest planned investment being our pole change-out program.

This project also presents SECO opportunities to further improve the reliability of the system. The new transmission line is going to be built with a twisted wire, which has proven to be more resistant to wind and ice throughout our region. This means it will be able to hold up against extreme weather better than our older transmission line along Highway 7.

The new transmission will also allow SECO to have a loop feed to Ekalaka. With a loop feed, we will have different options to feed some of our substations. If there are issues on the old transmission line, or we need to perform maintenance, we will be able to feed the Ekalaka and Boxelder substations from the new transmission line. Over the next decade, we plan to implement the ability to sectionalize the old transmission line to perform longer maintenance outages, while also reducing member outage time.

This old curmudgeon (he knows who he is) has told me many times with business, "If you are not growing, you are dying," and I believe this to be very relevant, especially in the current business environment. With the continued industrial growth we have seen, Southeast Electric has been able to absorb a lot of the inflationary costs, while still being able to invest over \$1 million a year back into the utility plant. Southeast will continue to strive to provide safe, dependable, affordable energy and innovations for the betterment of all our members — to improve the quality of life and create a brighter future for all. 

# THANK YOU!



**Jake Hammel**  
Foreman  
14 years



**Adam Kuntz**  
Journeyman  
13 years



**Sam Erfman**  
Journeyman  
9 years



**Dave Loudermilk**  
Apprentice Lineman  
2 years



**Trenton Reinhart**  
Apprentice Lineman  
1 1/2 years



**Wilson Venhaus**  
Apprentice Lineman  
1 year



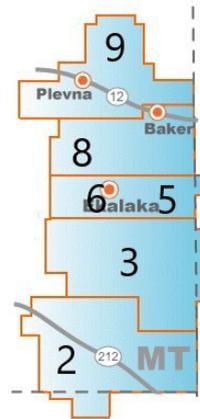
**Carson Hilliard**  
Apprentice Lineman  
3 months

## NOTICE OF ELECTION OF BOARD MEMBERS

**T**HE Annual Meeting is June 14, 2024. A nominating committee will be appointed this month. Trustee positions up for re-election are:

- **District No. 3:** Mike Hansen
- **District No. 6:** Karen Kreitel

Further nominations may be made by petition of 15 or more members, acting together not less than 15 days prior to the Annual Meeting. Nominations by petition, received at least five days before the meeting, shall be included on the official ballot. Later nominations received by petition shall be treated as nominations from the floor. The chairman shall also call for nominations from the floor for a period of one minute during the time for nominations. No member may nominate more than one candidate. RM



### CURRENT DIRECTORS:

- **District 2:** Doug Gardner
- **District 3:** Michael Hansen
- **District 5:** Clayton Jardee
- **District 6:** Karen Kreitel
- **District 8:** Dave Hayden
- **District 9:** Albert Paul

## Pole testing = reliability

**S**TARTING around April 1st, you may see a man traveling the powerlines in a side-by-side or Southeast Electric Cooperative vehicle. This is not an April Fool's joke, but I am sure if you asked him, he would tell you a good "dad" joke or two.

Dave Johnstone has worked for Southeast Electric for almost 28 years. He has been to every pole on our line more than once. Dave's job is to use a testing machine to make sure that the poles are not rotten, and will withstand the elements. He then reports those findings to the foreman, who puts the pole number on the replacement schedule.

If Dave reports that the pole is in extremely poor condition, the linemen will go change the pole immediately. Many cooperatives hire an outside source to evaluate poles, but we know that Dave has the knowledge and skill level to do an outstanding job. RM

