

CLEARING THE WAY FOR SAFETY



By Kurt Harris, General Manager

At Jump River Electric Cooperative, we are continuously striving to improve the safety, reliability, and overall performance of our business. Accomplishing those improvements requires regular examination of the goals

of the cooperative, the changes in the industry, and the needs of our membership.

Recently the board of directors, along with members of management and our financial partners at CFC, participated in a two-day strategic planning session during which goals were defined that will provide the framework for the continued improvement of the cooperative. We know that electric reliability is important to our members. Improving that reliability will continue to be a top priority along with implementing ways to better utilize technology to communicate with our members.

Ensuring Safety and Electric Reliability

With 1,810 miles of distribution line and over 8,750 members who rely on JREC for power, focusing on vegetation management is also essential. Considerable progress was made on line clearance this year, with plans to continue that effort in the future. JREC works with Zielies Tree Services on a vegetation management plan that helps mitigate the risks caused by overgrown vegetation. Proactive tree trimming, pruning, and brush removal will keep powerlines clear and reduce the frequency of downed lines that cause many power outages.

In addition to interfering with reliability, unmanaged vegetation poses a risk to safety. If trees are touching power lines, they can potentially cause grave danger to children who could unknowingly be playing in a danger zone. During severe weather events, fallen branches and trees make power restoration more dangerous for lineworkers.

Cleared Lines = Better Service

When you see crews clearing trees and brush near power lines, know that we are doing so because:

- Tree and foliage overgrowth can interfere with power distribution.
- Power lines can give off a spark or arc that may ignite a touching or close branch.
- The lights in your house may flicker when tree branches brush power lines during high winds.
- Stormy weather, like we saw in December, can cause nearby limbs to break off and land on power lines.
- Unobstructed power lines make it quicker and safer for lineworkers to maintain equipment and restore power within the ROW.

What are Rights-of-Way?

This is a corridor or pathway of land that Jump River's lines follow. These rights-of-way provide JREC an operational safety zone between the wire and trees, buildings, or other objects. When ROWs are kept clear they also provide safe access for line crews to maintain, repair, or improve the lines (above and below ground) and poles.

Affordability

JREC is a not-for-profit cooperative and that means we strive to keep our costs in check in order to keep our rates affordable. If trees grow too close to power lines, the potential for expensive repairs also increases. Effective tree trimming and vegetation management efforts keep overall costs down for everyone.

What Can You Do to Keep Costs Down?

The simple answer is, plant the right tree in the right place. The larger the tree, the farther it should be from a power line. Avoid planting beneath power lines, near poles, or close to electrical equipment.

The overall goal is to provide safe, reliable power to members while maintaining the beauty of our community. Through this management program, we are better able to keep the power lines clear, prepare for future weather events, and secure the reliability of the grid.

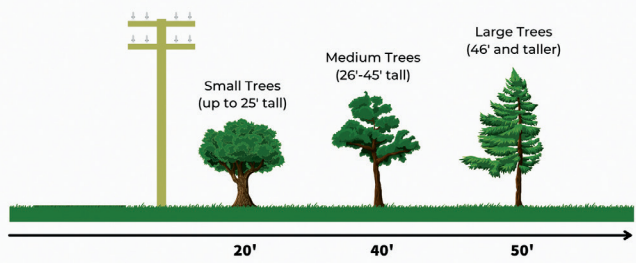
Plan Ahead

Remember, you need to know what's below before doing any digging. Even if you think that digging one or two small

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Plant the RIGHT TREE in the RIGHT PLACE

The larger the tree, the farther it should be from a power line. Avoid planting beneath power lines, near poles or close to electrical equipment.



20'
40'
50'

Remember, know what's below by calling 8-1-1 before you dig.

Learn more at: [SafeElectricity.org](https://www.safeelectricity.org)

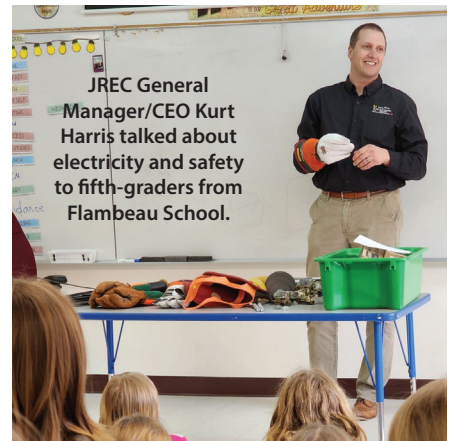
STAYING SAFE AROUND ELECTRICITY

March and April found some of our employees teaching area youth about being safe around electricity. We were excited to be able to get back into the classrooms of many of our local schools this year, providing a live electrical safety demonstration to approximately 600 students.

“They say, ‘knowledge itself is power’ and that is one reason why we feel it is so important to educate our children on how to be safe around electricity,” said General Manager/CEO Kurt Harris. “Not only are we educating them, but

the hope is that these same children are sharing their new safety knowledge with their siblings, parents, and grandparents. There’s no better feeling then knowing we are doing everything we can to help keep our community safe.”

Neon Leon, Lightning Liz, and Oscar join our linemen in demonstrating how important it is to stay clear of downed power lines, why you shouldn’t fly a kite or climb a tree near power lines, and how to handle various situations inside and outside the home. These three characters don’t always make the right safety choices, providing an opportunity for the children to learn from the characters’ mistakes. The demonstration drives home our message of how important it is to treat



electricity with respect and shows children what dangers could potentially occur if electricity is not handled with care.

If you have a student in elementary school, ask if they took part in one of our demonstrations and what they learned.



21ST ANNUAL ELECTRICAL SAFETY POSTER CONTEST FOR KIDS

May is electrical safety month, but the importance of practicing safety is something that needs to be done year-round. If you or your student would like to learn more about what to do in a car accident involving downed power lines, go to jrec.com and watch the “This is Your License to Live” video. You can find more education resources at jrec.com/kids-safety-zone.

Our electrical safety poster contest is being held again for area youth ages 5 to 12. This is a great opportunity to put

what was learned at school or online onto paper. Follow the guidelines below for a chance to win a prize. Students in third grade can enter one poster into two contests.



What you need

- Sheet of paper or poster board at least 8-1/2x11 inches, but no larger than 11x14 inches.
- Art supplies: crayons, colored pencils, or markers.
- Create an original poster supporting electrical safety.
- Complete entry ticket below and attach to back of poster.
- Submit poster by **May 31, 2023**, to the Ladysmith office.

What you could win

JREC’s poster contest:

- \$50 cash prize for first place and \$25 cash prize for second place.
- Prizes to be awarded per age category: 5–7 and 8–12.

WECA’s third-grade-only contest:

- \$25 gift card plus a chance to win statewide prizes:
 - First place: Chromebook
 - Second place: \$100 Gift Card
 - Third place: \$75 Gift Card

JREC Poster Entry Ticket

Name _____

Member Acct. _____

Grade _____ Age _____ Phone _____

Return to JREC, P.O. Box 99, Ladysmith WI 54848

Same form can be used for the third grade-only WECA poster contest.



HAVE A BACKUP PLAN IF YOUR HEALTH RELIES ON ELECTRICITY

It's impossible for JREC to guarantee uninterrupted power as outages occur due to a variety of reasons. We all need to have a backup plan, but it is especially important for those who depend on life-support equipment. Your backup plan should include:

- Obtain a backup source of power recommended by the manufacturer of any critical care equipment.
- Keep a full charge on battery-operated devices or have extra batteries on hand and check these batteries periodically.
- Keep your cell phone charged and be sure this number is also listed as your primary contact number with JREC.
- Mailing in (or calling) a completed life-support equipment form (right) so JREC is aware of your needs.
- Have a plan of where you can go in the event of a long-term outage.

Yes, I depend on life-support equipment

Name _____

Phone No. _____

Account No. _____

Type of Equipment _____

Do you have an emergency standby generator to operate this equipment?

YES _____ NO _____

If you're on oxygen, how many hours of back-up do you have?

Mail this form to Jump River Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 99, Ladysmith, WI 54848

ELECTRICAL SAFETY

Don't always believe what you hear

MYTH

VS

FACT



Electricity always takes the path of least resistance

Although the path of least resistance is the easiest to take, an electrical current can take any conductive path.



Voltage has to be high to kill

Although the voltage plays a role in how strong the current flows, exposure to the current itself is what's deadly. Even lower voltages can kill.



Heavily insulated tools will always protect against shock and electrocution

Don't let a tool give you a false sense of security; take all precautions even if a tool is marketed as safe or insulated.

May is Electrical Safety Month

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New High-Speed Internet Packages Now Available

Three new package options have been made available to both new and existing Viasat subscribers, with packages starting at \$49.99. Subscribers can now select from six different packages that offer up to 30 Mbps and 150 Gigs of priority data.

Along with new package options, subscribers can once again take advantage of the Buy More program. The Buy More program is available on new and existing packages to help extend subscribers' priority data without needing to change the package itself.

Go to jrec.com/viasat-high-speed-internet or call 715-532-5524 for details.

May

I REMIND YOU...

Here is what's happening on these dates:



Students interested in attending the Youth Leadership Conference (held July 11–13 at UW-Stout) need to have contacted JREC or their local guidance counselor of their

interest by this date. Students incur no cost and deadlines may differ by school. Watch this video to get a peek at what this conference is about: vimeo.com/769814388/f59e7c3be7



Family Fishing Day is part of the Wisconsin Governor's Fishing Opener. This event will be held in Price County this year, at Elk Lake Park. Regardless of where you fish during the opener (May 5–6) be sure you don't become part of a tragic fishing story. Keep an eye on weather conditions and know when to call it a day. Seek shelter if you see or hear signs of weather rolling in and wait 30 minutes once the storm has passed before you head back outside. Remember to always look up for overhead power lines before casting.



Mother's Day

Final day to submit your photos for our spring photo contest. Prizes for top three photos. Go to jrec.com/photo_contest for guidelines and a consent form.



Offices will be closed in celebration of Memorial Day. We remember and honor those who served our nation and are no longer with us.

Deadline for Electrical Safety Poster Contest – see page 16.



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holes won't matter, don't take for granted what lines might lurk beneath the soil in your yard or easement. The impact of making contact with an underground utility line could be huge, potentially even lethal.

Before getting out your post hole digger or shovel, you need to take some precautions to keep you and others safe. Call 811 or go to call811.com at least three-business days before your planned digging date. Once you've reported where you plan to dig and what work will be completed, public utilities will be notified of your request. Locators will mark all buried lines in or near your yard. The service is free.

Remember, 811 locators do not detect private underground facilities, like sprinklers, invisible fences, propane lines, and private electrical lines running to your house or outbuildings. You can find a list of locators online (diggershotline.com) who can help you with locating your private lines.

MEMBER APPRECIATION DAYS

Fun! • Food! • Games!

June 21 – Jump River; June 22 – Hayward office;
and June 23 – Ladysmith office

Details to be included in next month's issue of this magazine and online at jrec.com.

STAY SAFE

ON AND OFF THE BOAT

Never go swimming near boats plugged into shore power or docks with electrical service.

Safe Electricity.org

National Safe Boating Week
is May 20 – 26



1102 West 9th Street North • P.O. Box 99, Ladysmith, WI 54848
715-532-5524 (Ladysmith); 715-634-4575 (Hayward) • www.jrec.com

After-hour emergency service, call 866-273-5111

Pay by Phone: 888-255-6489

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Denise Zimmer, Editor



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