

# Norris Electric *News*

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## Norris Electric Cooperative participates in Youth Day

**R**epresentative David Reis met with students representing Norris Electric Cooperative during the Illinois Electric and Telephone Cooperatives Youth Day on Wednesday, March 29 in Springfield. More than 240 students from around Illinois had an opportunity to visit the State Capitol, view state government in action and question their legislators on key issues.

During lunch, Comptroller Susana Mendoza addressed students and chaperones and challenged them to take an interest in the political process and encouraged them to use their voice and reach out to their

representatives and senators. Sophia Marcolla, the 2016-17 Illinois Youth Leadership Council Representative from Adams Electric Cooperative, spoke about her experience on the Youth to Washington tour and the importance of leadership. While in Springfield, the students also visited the Old State Capitol and Abraham

Lincoln Presidential Museum.

At the end of the day the students were interviewed for the chance to participate in the Youth to Washington Tour from June 9-16, 2017.

Youth Day is designed to introduce young rural leaders to state government. There were 25 co-ops from across the state represented at the event.



# Meet Norris Electric's Forestry Men.

Last month we introduced you to our Linemen...this month we would like you to meet our Forestry Line Clearance men. These are the men that keep the right-of-ways cleared so that Norris can supply reliable electricity. Trees too close to power lines are a major cause of outages for members.

Tree trimming is one of those things where we try to find a balance. With tree trimming there are really four issues that we care about and we pay attention to.

The first is safety. Safety is the primary reason we trim trees. Electricity and trees don't get along. It creates a very dangerous situation. We trim trees to make sure our employees don't have to work in a more dangerous zone than they

already have to during a storm, or even normal operations. We trim trees to make sure the public isn't at risk. Safety is a real issue we should never, ever forget.

Reliability is also important. We talk about making sure that the trees are trimmed so the lights stay on. Norris Electric Cooperative has a great tree trimming program and we are striving to make it even better.

The next is economic efficiency. We don't want to waste a lot of your money having the tree trimming crew go cut two feet of branches off the line and come back the next year and cut another two feet, and so on. We are out there to trim the right-of-way so the line can stay in service for at least five years. That means 10 to 15 feet of clearance, and possibly

even more than that depending on the tree variety.

Finally, we trim trees to meet the industry standards. We trim trees so that it causes the least amount of damage to the tree. It may not always be pretty, but it is done to industry standards. Sometimes there are certain varieties of trees that will never coexist with the electric lines. They simply need to be removed.

The four criteria: safety, reliability, economic efficiency and trimming to industry standards, is the policy we follow. It is not cheap. We are spending more money today trimming trees than we have in the past. In a couple of years we will have the first trimming cycle complete and then we will be able to maintain the system more efficiently.



*Chris Hildebrand*



*Connor Walters, Matt Mulvey, Brad Davidson*



*Dylan Davidson, Brian Hemrich*



*Blake Kuhl, Ronnie Newkirk, Matt Maxon*

# Efficiency tips for outdoor shops and barns

There are many benefits to having an energy efficient outdoor shop or barn. Aside from saving energy, an efficient outdoor building can keep the environment around your structure healthy and safe; save money on your water bill; keep your animals happier and healthier; and save you from costly structural repairs.

Whether you are looking to build a new structure, or make changes to an existing structure, there are many ways you can make your outdoor shop or barn more energy efficient.

## ***Are you planning to build a new structure on your property? Follow these tips to achieve energy efficiency:***

- Location matters. If possible, carefully consider where you build your shop or barn. Consider drainage, sun exposure and how the building may affect your neighbors.
- Start with a sustainable design plan. A sustainable design plan, according to the U.S. General Services Administration, includes the ability to use environmentally preferable products; protect and conserve water; enhance indoor environmental quality; and optimize operational and maintenance practices.
- If you are hiring a contractor to help build your structure, make sure you look for companies who specialize in “green” buildings and energy efficient practices.
- Choose efficient building methods. Pole barns offer reliable shelter without costly excavation, concrete foundations or general site disruption.



## ***Follow these tips to make energy efficient upgrades to an existing structure:***

- Replace indoor lighting with energy efficient LED bulbs.
- Ensure your existing structure has adequate insulation levels.
- Choose outdoor lighting designed to be energy efficient, and install motion detectors to reduce energy consumption when not in use.
- Plant trees around your metal shed or barn. In colder climates, trees act as a windbreak, and in warmer climates, trees have a natural cooling effect that can reduce temperatures in your metal building 3 to 6 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Consider adding a ceiling fan to circulate air. Typically, there is a 2-degree Fahrenheit temperature increase for every one-foot increase in ceiling height. A ceiling fan can help keep warm air close to the ground in the winter, and circulate fresher, cooler air in the summer. Not only will this help with energy costs, it will also help keep the air in the building from becoming hot and stagnant, which will keep harmful bacteria from building and will keep insects at bay.

*Meghaan Evans writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.*

# This May, take the time to plug into safety

By Anne Prince

**T**his month, we would like to take a moment to reflect on the importance of safety. May is Electrical Safety Month, and Norris Electric Cooperative will be sharing safety tips and reminders throughout the month to help raise awareness about the dangers of electricity. We all depend on electricity to power our lives, but accidents can happen when electricity is improperly used.

## *Our responsibility to you*

Norris Electric's concern for safety extends beyond our employees. We care deeply about the safety of our members, and this month, we encourage you to plug into safety. According to the Electrical Safety Foundation International, thousands of people in the U.S. are critically injured and electrocuted as a result of electrical fires, accidents and electrocution in their own homes.

We frequently provide electrical safety content in Illinois Country Living, and we encourage the public to contact us if they see a downed power line or any other type of dangerous electrical situation. We strive to provide our communities with safe, reliable and affordable electricity and to serve as your trusted energy advisor, now and well into the future.

## *Our responsibility to employees*

It is no accident that safety is a top priority at Norris Electric. We are committed to a culture of safety that is integral to our daily operations. In fact, Norris Electric is part of the Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program (RESAP) that follows specific guidelines and protocols for electrical safety that are considered leading practices. Our lineworkers are required to wear personal protective equipment at all times when on the job. This includes special fire-resistant

clothing that will self-extinguish, limiting potential injuries from burns and sparks. Insulated and rubber gloves are worn in tandem to protect from electrical shock. Our safety team regularly discusses important safety issues pertaining to work within the building as well as out in the field.

At Norris Electric Cooperative, we believe it is our duty and responsibility to raise awareness about the importance of electrical safety. Take a moment to plug into safety. Please visit <http://www.esfi.org> for tips about how to keep you and your loved ones safe.

Anne Prince writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

## May is National Electrical Safety Month

We're committed to electrical safety excellence – for our members and employees.

