

## THIS ISSUE:

- Call before you dig
- Undeliverable capital credits
- Planting safety tips



Journeyman lineworker **Cody Braaten**, checks meters.



Journeyman lineworker **Brad Schmitt** and working outpost foreman **Jeff Boynton**, gather for a tailgate before starting a substation project.



Journeyman lineworker **Jon Lawhead**, gets ready to unload material for a project.

## NATIONAL LINEWORKER APPRECIATION DAY: A day in the life of a lineworker

Ask any lineworker why they do what they do, and you'll hear a mix of pride, purpose and a sense of responsibility that stretches far beyond the infrastructure itself. For a cooperative lineworker, dedication is woven into every part of the day. From the early morning safety checks to the late-night outage calls, each moment is driven by a commitment to serve the Slope Electric Cooperative members.

As we recognize Lineworker Appreciation Day April 13, we want to take you behind the scenes with the team who keeps our communities flowing with safe, reliable electric services.

### Starting the day with safety

Every morning, the Slope Electric line crew is in the shop, gearing up for the day ahead. The shop is filled with a sense of purpose, as the crew reviews the work

ahead with the foreman. Piece by piece, they gather the material they'll need for the day, ranging from insulators to tools, and load the trucks.

Before the engines start and the doors roll open, the crew circles for a "tailgate" safety briefing. This daily routine sets the tone for each day, and ensures everyone understands the potential hazards of the upcoming projects. Additionally, the crew does a 360-degree check of the trucks to ensure everything is running properly and materials are safely secured.

For Slope Electric, safety isn't just a checklist. It's the culture that guides every decision. Whether lineworkers are replacing a pole, making repairs or performing system maintenance, they approach each task with careful planning and teamwork.

"Safety is important so my coworkers and I can go home to our families," says Cody Braaten, journeyman lineworker.

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From there, the lineworkers grab the work plan, their lunches and head to the field for the day. Once on the road, the lineworkers use tablets to help them navigate directions to the jobsite, although most lineworkers know the service area like the back of their hands. Many Slope Electric lineworkers grew up in the area or have lived here for many years and are familiar with the landscape as well as the membership.

“I enjoy working in a rural community because things are not as busy and people know who you are,” says Brad Schmitt, journeyman lineworker.

### **Collaboration at the jobsite**

When they arrive at the jobsite, the lineworkers gather once more to run through the plan for the project. During these “tailgates,” everyone has the chance to ask questions and offer suggestions before any work begins. The culture of trust and collaboration is something the crew members take seriously. They understand clear, honest communication is essential on every job, ensuring the work is done safely and everyone goes home at the end of the day.

“I value my crew’s reliability and commitment to safety and hard work. In this line of work, we depend on each other,” says Mark Frank, working foreman. “Clear communication and teamwork are important in our line of work. Everyone needs to understand the plan before we start any job, and no one should be afraid to speak up if they see a hazard or have any questions.”

### **Serving rural communities**

As an electric cooperative, Slope Electric serves rural communities. It’s no surprise many of the jobs happen near a cornfield or your home or in the pasture. Out here, neighbors look out for each other, and that spirit is what makes Slope Electric members truly unique.

Slope Electric members help our line crew beyond guiding the cooperative through voting. They are also there for the crew during unplanned situations.

“The membership is willing to help by moving snow and reporting problems on the line that helps minimize outage time. They also help pull us out if we get stuck,” says Jeff Boynton, outpost working foreman.

Often, Slope Electric line crews face instances out of their control. Factors such as weather, animals and even accidents impact our system and may require pivoting in a moment’s notice. Outages don’t always wait for working hours, and Slope Electric lineworkers are ready to respond, even on weekends and holidays, and offer help to those outside of our service area and



*Cooperative employees are ready to respond to outages no matter the time or weather conditions.*

even the state.

“One unique storm I went on was October of 2005. The South Dakota statewide organization of electric cooperatives asked for volunteers to restore power in Louisiana after Hurricane Rita. We left in a convoy of trucks headed for Beauregard Parish, Louisiana. We had letters from each state governor along the way giving us emergency permission to go through way scales and toll roads. Upon arrival at an airport, the military set up huge tents for sleeping in cots, eating and showering. Hundreds of trucks and men were in one place,” says Jon Lawhead, journeyman lineworker.

### **Restoring power, together**

When storm outages roll in, it is all hands on deck, from our member services to our operations

department. When the power goes out, Slope Electric employees are analyzing and working toward restoration as efficiently and safely as possible.

Our member services team fields calls and ensures all outages being reported are put into our system, while our operations department is working with technology in the office to troubleshoot where possible. Slope Electric employees work as a team to ensure an efficient process is in place to get electric services safely restored to homes and businesses.

“The office receives the outage information from the members, then inputs that information onto our software and assigns it to the line crews. The line crews can view that information on an app on their mobile device. The office also dispatches the crews and keeps track of where they are located. This ensures the safety of the line crews and helps to restore the power efficiently,” says Dusty Hoff, senior staking technician.

## Returning home

Lineworkers are no strangers to working long hours to ensure the job is done and members have a consistent, reliable flow of electricity. But after the job is complete, they look forward to going home to their families.

“I look forward to coming home from work at the end of the day and sitting down with my wife and family for dinner to eat and relax,” says Shay Olson, journeyman lineworker.

Linework is a demanding, yet rewarding, career

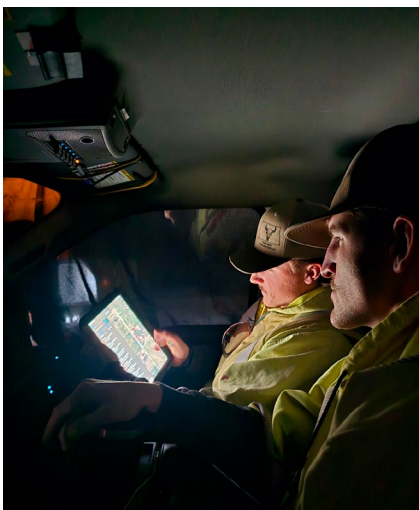
that takes heart and a commitment to members, communities and their families. This commitment keeps lineworkers going to restore electric services to cooperative members during a windy, cold night.

A lineworker’s job is essential, their service is steady and their heart is woven into every line they build.

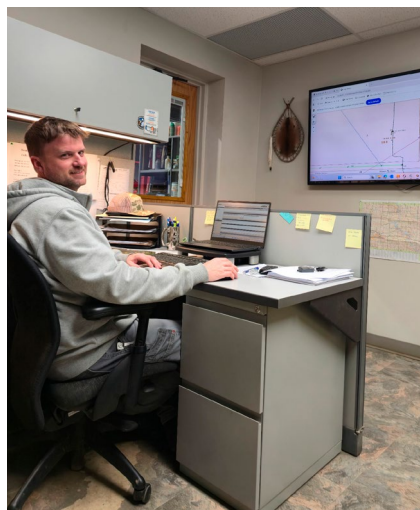
“I became a lineman because it is a profession with many different career paths which you can excel in. It’s an outdoor job which gives you different job tasks and different scenery every day. To me, being a lineman means working safely while delivering a reliable power source to the community,” says Logan Schriock, apprentice lineworker. ■



Working foreman **Mark Frank**, visits with members.



Journeyman lineworker **Shay Olson** and apprentice lineworker **Logan Schriock**, respond to an evening outage.



Senior staking technician **Dusty Hoff**, navigates cooperative maps and gathers information for upcoming projects.



Cooperative employees take part in monthly safety meetings.

## MANAGER'S MESSAGE: **Call before you dig**



**Jason Bentz**

*Co-General Manager/CEO*

Spring is just around the corner, and there's never been a better time to get outside and enjoy the fresh air. Perhaps you're making plans for a new shop or a yard makeover. Wherever your spring projects take you, remember to keep safety in mind for all projects, especially those requiring digging.

Most of us never think about the electric, gas, water and other infrastructure buried below the ground, but hitting

one of these lines while digging is not the reminder you'll want. Trust us! Slope Electric Cooperative 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 online by visiting [ndonecall.com](http://ndonecall.com).

Here's how the process works:

- **After you call 811 or submit your request online, all affected utility companies will be notified of your intent to dig.** It may take the utility companies a few days to get to your request, so please be patient.

- **The affected utility companies will send someone to mark the buried lines with paint or flags.**
- **Before you break ground, confirm all the utility companies 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.

Please keep in mind only public utilities will be marked. As a homeowner, you are responsible for locating private utility lines.

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's below. ■



## **Carlson earns Director Gold Credential**



*Slope Electric President **Angela Carlson**, recently earned her Director Gold Credential.*

Slope Electric Cooperative announces Angela Carlson, who represents District 1, has earned the Director Gold Credential from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

This credential is the highest level in NRECA's director education program. This is a special recognition for directors who continue learning and growing in their role so they can better serve our members.

To earn the credential, directors complete NRECA's earlier training programs, then choose to go even further by taking additional courses to strengthen their leadership and understanding of cooperative work. It's a sign of dedication and a commitment to doing the job well for the members they represent. ■

# Undeliverable capital credits

Slope Electric Cooperative is looking for updated addresses to mail members capital credit allocation statements and/or capital credit checks from the past year. The following list of Slope Electric members and their current address on file (last known address) were mailed allocation statements and/or checks, which were returned from the post office because it was “not a deliverable address,” “unable to forward” or “attempted not known.”

If you know of a current address for someone on this list, please call the Slope Electric office at 701-579-4191 or 800-559-4191 or email [comments@slopeelectric.coop](mailto:comments@slopeelectric.coop). ■

David A. Adams, Casper, WY  
 Donna Adams, Casper, WY  
 Mark Askerooth, Luverne  
 Steven Aubrey, West Plains, MO  
 Gary P. Bailey, Williams, MN  
 Wanda Belland, Bowman  
 M.L. Blickensderfer, Rapid City, SD  
 Trudy Bradac, Marmarth  
 Sheri L. Breen, Bowman  
 Alton Bruce, Regent  
 Luckey Cameron, Sheridan, WY  
 Michael D. Carroll, Hettinger  
 L.C. Cassell, Bowman  
 Chaparral Energy, Oklahoma, OK  
 Michael C. Costa, Reeder  
 Robert W. Crawford, Prescott Valley, AZ  
 L.D. Crooker, Rapid City, SD  
 Ivabelle Dahl, Jamestown  
 Kevin Dangerud, Rapid City, SD  
 Lois Dewey, Buffalo WY  
 Debbie L. Doest, Bowman  
 Pat Drescher, Culbertson MT  
 Bradley Duffield, Marmarth  
 Neyl Eagon, Bowman  
 Eien Farms, Scranton  
 Jessica Eisenbarth, New England  
 Encore Energy Partners Operating, Houston, TX  
 Encore Operating, Baker, MT  
 Lynn E. Erickson, Hettinger  
 Jonni B. Erickson, New England  
 Mark and Sue Erickson, Bismarck  
 Daniel Eubanks, Starkweather  
 David Foltz, Mott  
 Fossium Rentals, Bowman  
 Autumn French, Carlsbad, CA  
 Getz Contracting, Bowman  
 Devin Good Shield, Bowman  
 Mitchel Gross, Bowman

Hilda Gruebele, Bismarck  
 Tom E. Gunderson, Pollock, SD  
 Lorraine Habiger, Fargo  
 Fran Hagel, North Platte, NE  
 Bruce Halleen, Bismarck  
 Tim Halls, Amidon  
 Robert W. Hanson, Rozet, WY  
 Edward A. Haugen, Sturgis, SD  
 E.B. Himebaugh Jr., Arlington, WA  
 Donovan Hollis, Soap Lake, WA  
 Chism Holt Cordel, OK  
 C.J. Horner, Wasilla, AK  
 Wilma M. Huber, Carson  
 Jeff C. Hultgren, Lakeville, MN  
 Larry Ihle, Moffit  
 Alton Ivey, Regent  
 Mark Jacobs, Hanover, MD  
 Jodee Jacobs, Bowman  
 Patrick James, Lebanon, IN  
 Christine Jobe, Cypress County, Alberta, Canada  
 Denelle Johnson, Bowman  
 John L. Johnson, Bowman  
 Gary R. Jone, Elkhart, TX  
 Tonia Jordan, Williston  
 Tony L. Jordan, Williston  
 C.R. Kadrmas, Fargo  
 Claire Kaiser, St. Louis, MO  
 Dellroy Kalina, Yuma, AZ  
 Lee Kathrein, Dickinson  
 John Kessel, Belfield  
 Vivian Kilwein, New England  
 Bruce G. Klein, Garrison  
 Jeff Larry, Mobile, AL  
 Lynn J. Magelky, Buckeye, AZ  
 Joseph Mattson, Littleton, CO  
 Susan May, Scranton  
 Chelsea McCreery, Kiowa, KS  
 Betty Jean Mesling, Bismarck  
 Joe Miller, Fargo  
 Kari Miller, Fargo  
 Nadel & Gussman  
 Rockies, Tulsa, OK  
 Katie Nasset, Regent

Ashley Nelson, Bowman  
 Victoria Nelson, Rapid City, SD  
 Nelson Farms c/o Lelyn Nelson, Spokane, WA  
 Derek Nordahl, Dickinson  
 Denelle Olson, Bowman  
 Joseph M. Omodt, Fargo  
 Kimball Parker, Orem, UT  
 Helen Peters, Woodbury, MN  
 Peterson Orlando & Joyce Revocable Trust, Hettinger  
 Marge Reiger, Scranton  
 Paul Reimer, Bowman  
 Edward A. Reisenauer, New England  
 Jane Reisenauer, Ellendale  
 Louise Roemmich, Pipestone, MN  
 Jordan Rustad, Bowman  
 Melissa Rustan, Big Timber, MT  
 Steven Saylor, Bowman  
 Ernest Schafer, New Leipzig  
 Lou .A Schatz, Dickinson  
 Sandra Schlenvogt, San Jose, CA  
 Ron Schmalz, Killdeer  
 Peter Schmatlz, Baker, MT  
 Dale Schoeder, Reeder  
 Sequel Energy, Billings, MT  
 John Skartved, Hettinger  
 SM Energy Company, Denver, CO  
 Stallion Oil Field, Dickinson  
 Edith Steier, Dickinson  
 Leah Stetzner, Carlsbad, CA  
 Cutris Strand, Anchorage, AK  
 Jackie Streck, Marshall, OK  
 James Streck, Marshall, OK  
 Strehlow Family Partnership, Moundsview, MN  
 Marth J. Stuber, Bowman  
 D. Summers, Dickinson  
 Norma G. Swenson, Hettinger  
 The Dam Marina Grill, Bowman  
 Ross Thomas, Dickinson  
 Allan Tomac, Buffalo

Tri State Comm Inc., Bismarck  
 Twin Butte Liquor, Bowman  
 United Site National Services, Miami, FL  
 Elizabeth Valencia, New England  
 Brad Wahl, Huntington Beach, CA  
 Don Wandler, Racine, WI  
 Natalie Wandler, Dickinson  
 Westport Oil & Gas, Dallas, TX  
 Gary Wetzstein, Mott  
 Patricia M. Williams, Quincy, WA  
 Jay Wolf, Spearfish, SD  
 Daniel R. Zahn, Mandan



Capital credits can also be searched by scanning the QR code or visiting our website.

## MESSAGE FROM OPERATIONS: Co-op takes part in WSI Grant



**Andrew Sonsalla**

Operations Manager

Safety is a top priority at Slope Electric Cooperative, where each cooperative employee takes safety to heart and plays an important role. From daily “tailgates” or safety briefings before each job to monthly safety committee meetings and yearly safety audits, cooperative employees continue to embrace safety practices.

Each year, Slope Electric participates in a safety audit through N.D. Workforce Safety and Insurance (WSI). WSI

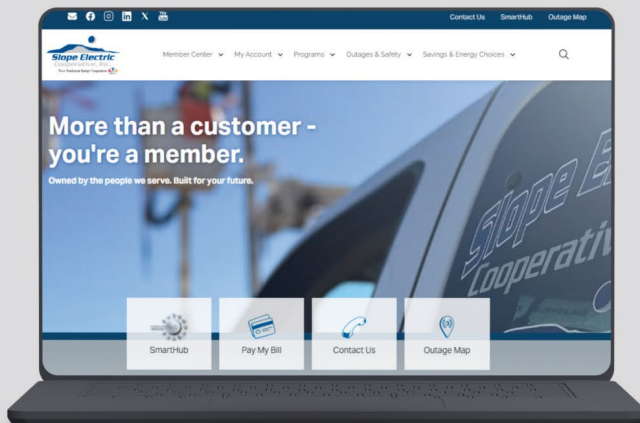
offers a safety management program that benefits the whole cooperative, from operations to member services personnel. The program aims to help reduce workplace injuries and improve ergonomics and safety technology. Slope Electric uses the ergonomic grants toward equipment to reduce employee fatigue and help eliminate injuries.

Slope Electric has taken part in WSI's safety incentive program for 13 years, saving the cooperative over \$32,000. In addition, workplaces are eligible for up to a 25% discount on insurance by adhering to WSI's safety management program. To be eligible for these discounts, Slope Electric reviews and meets annual goals set by Slope Electric's Safety Committee. The Safety Committee, which includes employees from each department at the cooperative, meets every month.

Slope Electric also participates in the safety management program, Safety Committee program, drug-free workplace program and certified safety management systems. Yearly safety goals vary from performing a 360-degree check before moving trucks, being aware of surroundings when driving and using the proper tool for the task at hand.

The WSI program helps our cooperative employees continue to keep safety top of mind to deliver safe, reliable electric services to our communities, while also saving costs for our membership. ■

# REDESIGNED WITH *you* IN MIND



Our website has a new look with the same reliable content. Check it out by visiting, [slopeelectric.coop](http://slopeelectric.coop) or scanning the QR code below.

SCAN  
ME



## SAFETY STARTS WITH ME: Planting safety tips



**Jeff Boynton**

*Outpost Working Foreman*

As spring approaches and fieldwork begins, our rural communities gear up for another busy planting season. Farm machinery has become larger over the years, increasing the risk for contact with electrical equipment. During this busy time of year, staying aware, working carefully and understanding potential risks can make all the difference in keeping everyone safe.

“Planting season moves fast,” says Jeff Boynton,

outpost working foreman. “Even when you know the area like the back of your hand, it’s crucial to slow down, stay alert and pay attention to what’s around you.”

To help ensure a safe planting season, here are a few tips to keep in mind while in the field and traveling on road:

- **Use spotters when operating large machinery near power lines.** Ensure the spotters do not touch the machinery while it is moving near power lines. An 18-foot clearance is recommended under power lines.

- **Be aware of the clearance of equipment extensions and materials you are hauling before moving or transporting.** Do not raise equipment, such as ladders, poles or rods, into power lines. Remember, nonmetallic materials, such as lumber, tree limbs, ropes and hay, can conduct electricity, especially when damp, dusty or dirty.
- **Never attempt to raise or move power lines to clear a path.** Doing so could result in electric shock or death. If you need power lines to be raised or moved to help with moving large machinery this season, call our office at 800-559-4191 so we can safely assist you.

Remember, if your equipment comes into contact with an energized or downed power line, call 911 immediately. Stay inside until the power line is de-energized. If there is smoke or fire, exit by jumping clear of the cab without touching the equipment and hop away to safety. We also urge you to contact Slope Electric Cooperative for additional assistance.

We know accidents happen, so please do not hesitate to call us if you come into contact or damage Slope Electric infrastructure. The quicker we become aware of the issue, the sooner we can send a crew to assess and repair the damage. Our No. 1 priority is safety for members, employees and the communities we serve.

On behalf of all of us at Slope Electric, we wish you a safe and prosperous planting season. ■

# JOIN SLOPE ELECTRIC FOR THE CAREER TOUR JUNE 24-25

**FROM COAL MINES TO POWER PLANTS AND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES  
YOUTH ARE INVITED TO DIVE INTO THE HEART OF NORTH DAKOTA'S ENERGY SECTOR.**

Limited spots available. Learn more by visiting: [www.slopeelectric.coop](http://www.slopeelectric.coop).

**Application deadline is May 1.**





## SLOPE ELECTRIC BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS JAN. 29

The regular meeting of the board of directors of Slope Electric Cooperative was held on Jan. 29 at the Mott Health Care Center in Mott. President Angela Carlson called the meeting to order at 8 a.m. A quorum was present. Slope Electric's General Counsel Jennifer Grosz was appointed recorder for the meeting. Also present were Slope Electric's co-General Managers/CEOs Travis Kupper and Jason Bentz, Chief Financial Officer Alex Craigmile, Chief of Staff/Member Relations Manager Brooke Waltner, Operations Manager Andrew Sonsalla and Board Liaison Connie Hill. Tyler Richter with Brady Martz joined a portion of the meeting as a guest.

**Consent agenda:** The consent agenda was approved as proposed.

**Strategic items:** Bentz and Kupper presented the co-general managers' report, which included updates on an internal cybersecurity policy, employee awards and updates, housekeeping and other items. Several additional Basin Electric Power Cooperative reports and board documents were available for review.

**Department reports:** Craigmile provided a financial report, which included an executive summary, an audit update, investments and other items. Sonsalla provided an operations report, which included updates on line crew projects, recent outages, safety recognition, the 2026 work plan and other items. Waltner provided a member relations report on youth programs, text message notifications

for outages, donations and other member service and communication efforts. Waltner also provided a chief of staff report, which included staff training, job postings and project progress. Chief Information Officer Charlie Dunbar provided a written information technology report. Grosz provided a legal counsel report on the status of projects and updates on federal projects and policy discussion.

**Action items:** The board reviewed and approved the 2026 mutual aid agreement and board bank authorization. The board approved donations to the eleven emergency services department located within the Slope Electric service territory and donations in lieu of taxes to the city of New England and the New England Fire Department. The board also reviewed the North Dakota Rural Electric Political Action Committee membership.

**Discussion/general information:** Richter provided the board with an annual pre-audit discussion. The board also discussed the exposure control plan, construction work plan, bonds and the strategic plan strategy dashboard.

**Executive session:** The board entered an executive session during the meeting.

The meeting concluded with adjournment. Secretary Charlotte Meier certified the accuracy of the Dec. 18, 2025, minutes.

**Next meeting date:** The next meeting is at 8 a.m. on April 23 in New England. ■



116 E. 12th St.  
New England, ND 58647

Phone: 701-579-4191  
or 800-559-4191

Email us:  
comments@slopeelectric.coop  
UNDERGROUND LINE LOCATES  
800-795-0555 or 811

## SLOPE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Angela Carlson, President  
Anthony Larson, Vice President  
Charlotte Meier, Secretary  
Chip HJ Fischer, Treasurer  
Ryan Jacobson, Director  
Kevin Thompson, Director  
Cheryl Van Daele, Director  
Steven Wegner, Director

## MANAGEMENT

Jason Bentz  
CO-GM/CEO

Travis Kupper  
CO-GM/CEO

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