Y-W ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

APRIL 2022

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Y-W Electric Association Inc. is dedicated to providing high-quality, reliable electric service and related products to our members at competitive prices. Our members deserve and shall receive quality service unexcelled in our industry. We are committed to maintaining an environment where the Board of Directors and employees can perform at maximum potential to benefit our Y-W community.

THE POWER **BEHIND** YOUR POWER

Lineworker Appreciation Day is April 11

BY **TRENT LOUTENSOCK** GENERAL MANAGER

TRENT LOUTENSOCK

You've likely noticed Y-W Electric Association Inc. crews out and about, working on power lines and other electrical equipment in our community. It's no secret that a lineworker's job is tough — but it's a job that's essential and must be done — and often in challenging conditions. This month, as we celebrate Lineworker Appreciation Day on April 11, I thought I'd share some interesting facts about electric lineworkers with you.

The work can be heavy, in more ways than one. Did you know the equipment and tools that a lineworker carries while climbing a utility pole can weigh up to 50 pounds? That's the same as carrying six gallons of water. Speaking of utility poles, lineworkers are required to climb poles ranging anywhere from 30 to 120 feet tall. Needless to say, if you have a fear of heights, this likely isn't the career path for you.

Lineworkers must be committed to their career — because it's not just a job; it's a lifestyle. The long hours and ever-present danger can truly take a toll. In fact, being a lineworker is listed in the top 10 most dangerous jobs in the U.S.

Lineworkers often work nontraditional hours, outdoors and in difficult conditions. While the job does not require a college degree, it does require technical skills, years of training and hands-on learning. Did you know becoming a journeyman lineworker can take more than 7,000 hours (about four years) of training? That's because working with high-voltage equipment requires specialized skills, experience and an ongoing mental toughness. Shortcuts are not an option, and there is no room for error in this line of work.

Despite the many challenges, Y-W Electric Association's lineworkers are committed to powering our local community. During severe weather events that bring major power outages, lineworkers are among the first ones called. They must be ready to leave the comfort of their homes and families suddenly, and they don't return until the job is done, often days later. That's why the lineworker's family is also dedicated to service. They understand the importance of the job to the community.

Nationwide, there are approximately 120,000 electric lineworkers. Here in Washington and Yuma counties, Y-W Electric Association has 26 lineworkers who are responsible for keeping power flowing 24/7, 365 days a year. To do this, they maintain 3,951 miles of power lines across two counties and 4,800 square miles. In addition to the highly visible tasks lineworkers perform, their job today goes far beyond climbing utility poles to repair a wire. Today's lineworkers are information experts who can pinpoint power outages from miles away. Line crews now use laptops, tablets, drones and other technologies to map outages, survey damage and troubleshoot problems.

Being a lineworker may not seem like a glamorous job, but it is essential to the life of our community. Without the exceptional dedication and commitment of these hard-working men and women, we simply would not have the reliable electricity that we need for everyday life.

The next time you see a lineworker, please thank them for the work they do to keep power flowing, regardless of the time of day or weather conditions. After all, lineworkers are the power behind your power. Please join us as we recognize them on April 11 and follow #ThankALineworker on social media to see how others are recognizing lineworkers. [Jeff Reneau–5573009007]

OUR LINEWORKERS KEEP THE POWER FLOWING

When people flip a light switch, they may not give much thought about why or how the light comes on.

Electric lineworkers provide an essential service: They work hard to install and maintain overhead and underground power lines that keep electricity flowing. These specialized workers are on call 24/7 in case of severe storms or other circumstances that cause the power to go out.

Lineworkers work with high-voltage electricity, often at great heights, in all kinds of weather conditions such as snow, wind, rain, ice and extreme heat and cold. The work required to maintain the power grid is physically demanding. To become proficient, most lineworkers go through a technical training program and then learn on the job as apprentices under the careful eye of seasoned lineworkers who have earned journeyman status.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, electric power line installers and repairers typically:

- Install, maintain or repair the power lines that distribute electricity.
- Identify defective devices, voltage regulators, transformers and switches.
- Inspect and test power lines and auxiliary equipment.
- String (install) power lines between poles, towers and buildings.
- Climb poles and transmission towers and use truck-mounted buckets to get to equipment.
- Operate power equipment when installing and repairing poles, towers and lines.
- Know and implement safety standards and procedures.

[Ralph W. Rogers–2055003002]

When a problem is reported, lineworkers must identify the cause and fix it. This usually involves diagnostic testing using specialized equipment before they can begin their repair work. To work on poles, they usually use bucket trucks to raise themselves to the top of the structure, although all lineworkers must be adept at climbing poles and towers when necessary. Workers use specialized safety equipment to keep them from falling when climbing utility poles and towers.

Storms and other natural disasters can cause extensive damage to power lines. When power is lost, line repairers must work quickly to restore service to customers.

Although everyone at Y-W Electric Association works hard to provide reliable service, we salute our lineworkers who work around the clock to keep the power on. Their safety, as well as yours, is our top priority.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

WHAT DOES A LINEWORKER DO?

On any given day or night, in all kinds of weather conditions, lineworkers install and maintain overhead and underground electrical systems.

We entrust our lineworkers with your safety, so they hold a very important job. We also rely on their expertise to power our world.

SAFETY COMES FIRST

Lineworkers must commit to safety above all else for the benefit of those they serve (you!), fellow crew members and themselves. They spend thousands of hours in safety trainings each year and must learn and apply numerous safety regulations.

THEY ARE SPECIALLY TRAINED TO:

- Climb poles to service power lines in areas inaccessible by trucks.
- Stand in an elevated bucket to assess and repair overhead lines.
- Install poles, overhead lines and other equipment.
- Work on both energized and deenergized lines.
- Install and service underground lines.

SafeElectricity.org®

DIAL 811 BEFORE YOU DIG

Digging without locating underground utilities could leave neighborhoods in the dark, cause thousands of dollars in damages or cause severe electrical shock. This is true regardless of how much area your project will cover or whether you consider the job to be large or small. To help stay safe, make use of the free national underground utility locating service by calling 811.

The 811 "Call Before You Dig" number will route you to your local utility's locating service. Make sure to tell the operator where and when you plan to dig and what type of work you will be doing. From there, it takes a few business days for a professional to come mark your public utilities with flags or spray paint.

There are different colors of paint and flags that mark underground utilities, and each color is universal to what utility is buried:

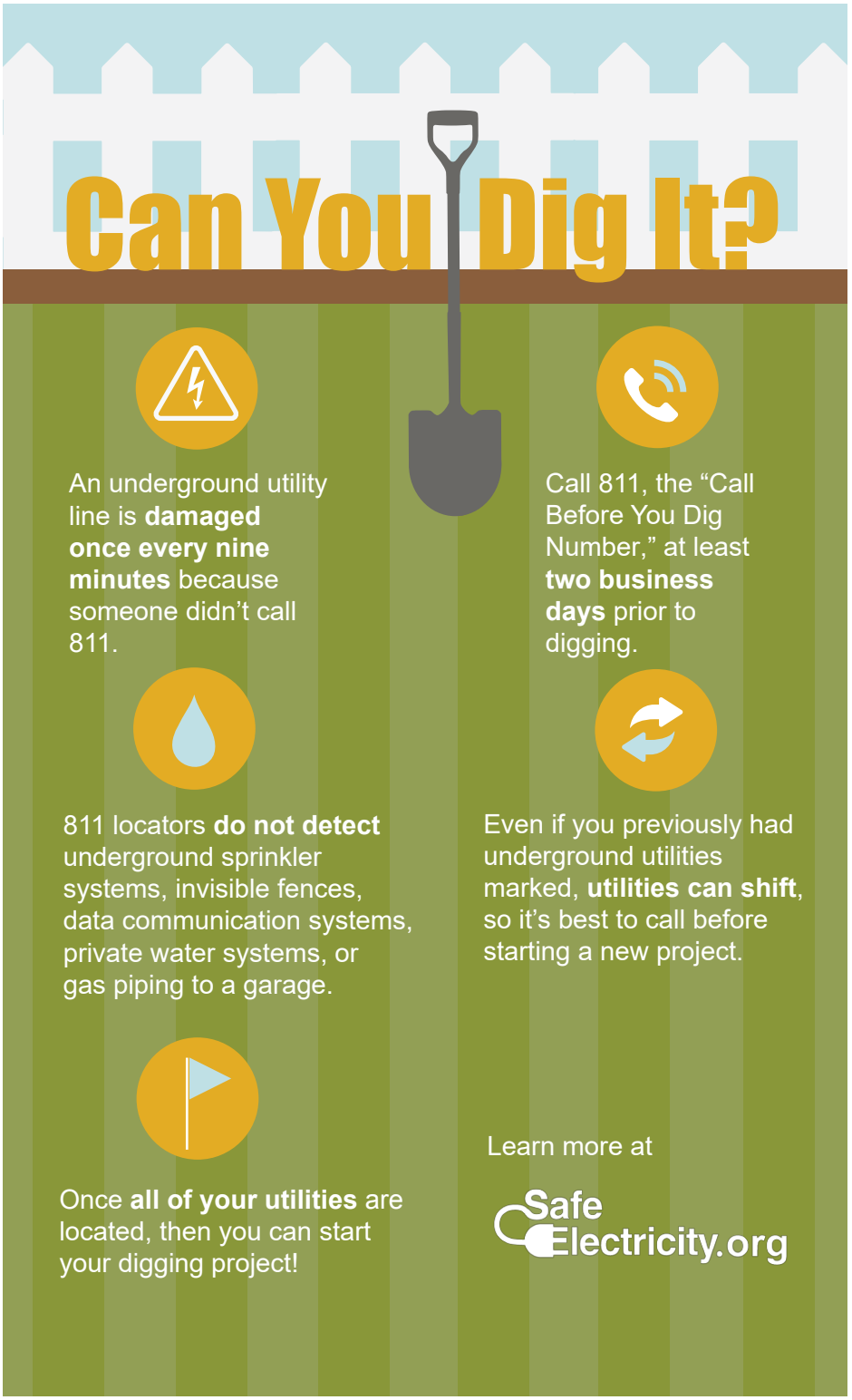
- **Red** – Electric
- **Orange** – Communications, Telephone/CATV
- **Blue** – Potable Water
- **Green** – Sewer/Drainage
- **Yellow** – Gas/Petroleum Pipeline
- **Purple** – Reclaimed Water
- **White** – Premark site of intended excavation

Even if you previously had utilities located by calling 811, it is best to call before every digging project. Underground utilities can shift, and it is important to be certain of where they are before putting a shovel in the ground.

It is also important to understand that 811 locators do not locate privately installed facilities. If you have any private utilities, you will need to hire a private utility locator. Examples of private utilities include underground sprinkler systems, invisible fences, data communication systems, private water systems or gas piping to a garage.

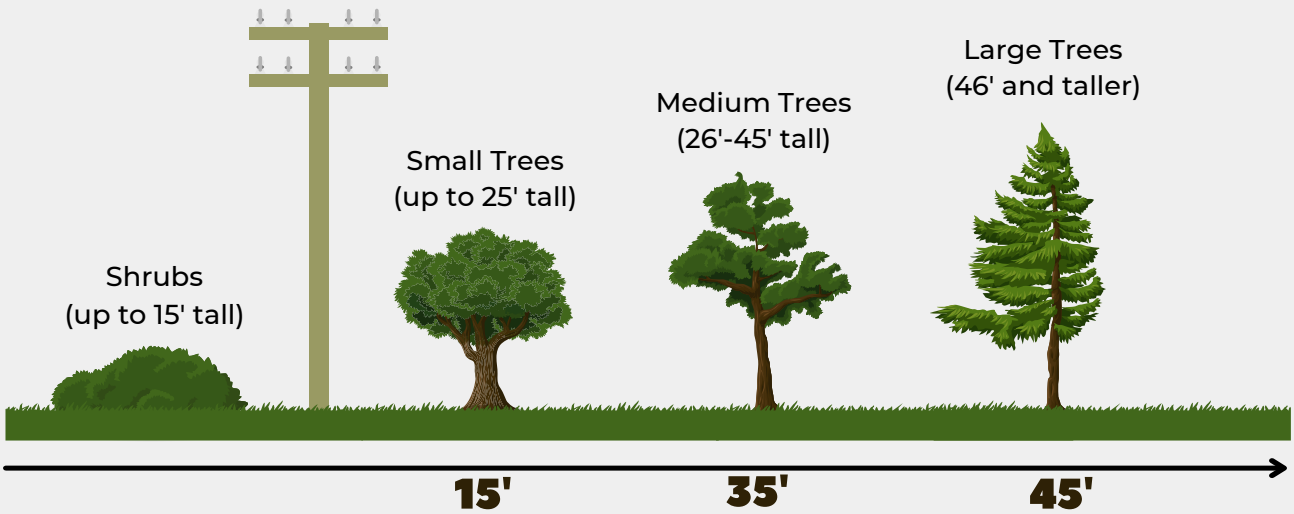
Once all of your underground utilities are located, it is time to start digging. Be sure to wear all of the proper protective gear before putting the shovel into the earth.

For more information about 811 and digging safety, visit Call811.com and SafeElectricity.org. [Evan and Kacey Morris–2301009604, Goldie Harman–552201801]



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.



Planting trees can provide a wind break, shade, reduce carbon in the environment and bring beauty to your landscape. Safe Electricity reminds everyone that it is important to plant tall-growing trees safely away from power lines. Get more tree planting tips at safeelectricity.org. [Lori Willis–3305008404]

Remember, know what's below by calling 811 before you dig. SafeElectricity.org®

BILLING CORNER

IRRIGATION BILLING

This time of year, our irrigation consumers are getting ready for the growing season. As we've done in the past, below is a review of how the irrigation rate is billed.

Irrigation usage is based on the calendar year, with a declining rate. The peak kilowatt (demand) is the basis for calculating the kilowatt-hour costs. Each month, a kW reading is recorded and stored for comparison throughout the year. Please remember that this kW (demand) will reflect usage of all equipment turned on at one time. Multiple equipment (grain bins connected to the same meter as an irrigation well, for example) running at the same time could increase your annual costs.

Please post any warnings of chemical applications for the safety of our personnel.

If you have any questions about how your irrigation account is billed, please call the office at 1-800-660-2291 or in the Akron area at 970-345-2291. Have a safe summer.

CLAIM YOUR CREDIT

Each month, Y-W Electric offers consumer-members a chance to earn a $20 credit on their next electric bill. If you recognize your name and account number in this magazine, call 800-660-2291 and ask for your credit. It couldn't be easier.

Get acquainted with your account number, read your *Colorado Country Life* magazine and pick up the phone. That's all the energy you'll need to claim your energy bucks.

You must claim your credit during the month in which your name appears in the magazine. (Check the date on the front cover.)

Winner claiming $20 from the February 2022 issue:

- Edmond and Nancy Gelvin