

LINEMAN APPRECIATION:

Recognizing the Unsung Heroes of Our Electrical Grid

Lineworkers are the unsung heroes who keep the lights on in our homes and businesses. They work tirelessly to ensure that our electrical grid remains operational, no matter the weather or challenge. San Isabel Electric is thankful to employ a qualified team of lineworkers who are committed to serving the needs of our members.

What is Lineworker Appreciation Day?

Lineworker Appreciation Day is a day to honor the brave and hard-working individuals who keep our communities connected; it is celebrated annually on April 18. This day is an opportunity to thank the men and women who work on the front lines of our electrical grid, ensuring we have access to reliable and safe electricity.

History of Lineworker Appreciation Day

Lineworker Appreciation Day was first celebrated in 2013 when the U.S. Senate passed a resolution to recognize the contributions of lineworkers. The resolution was introduced by Senator Lamar Alexander of Tennessee, who wanted to recognize the hard work and dedication of lineworkers in his state and across the country.



Shining under the full moon's glow, San Isabel Electric's dedicated lineworkers scale towering poles, alone, and in the dark, tirelessly restoring power to our communities.

Since then, Lineworker Appreciation Day has become an annual event, celebrated by communities and organizations across the United States. Colorado will sign a bill resolution on April 10 declaring April 18 as the official recognition of Lineworker Appreciation Day.

Why do we need to appreciate lineworkers?

Lineworkers are the backbone of our electrical grid. They work in all types of weather conditions, often in hazardous environments, to ensure that we have access to electricity. Without lineworkers, we would not be able to power our homes, businesses, hospitals, and schools.

Lineworkers also play a critical role in responding to emergencies such as natural disasters and power outages. They work quickly and efficiently to restore power to communities often during the harshest of conditions.

Unfortunately, the work of lineworkers often goes unnoticed and unappreciated. Lineworker Appreciation Day is an opportunity to change this and to show our appreciation for the hard work and dedication of lineworkers.

How can we appreciate lineworkers?

There are many ways that we can show our appreciation for lineworkers on April 18 and throughout the year. Some ideas include:

1. **Say Thank You:** Take the time to thank a lineworker for their service. Whether it's a simple wave or a handwritten note, these small gestures can go a long way in showing appreciation. But please, never approach any of our field crews. Linework takes intense thought, focus, and concentration to solve complex problems quickly and safely. Everyone getting home safely at the end of the day is the most important thing for San Isabel Electric employees and their families.
2. **Spread Awareness:** Use social media or other platforms to raise awareness about the important work of lineworkers. Share stories of lineworkers in action to highlight their contributions to our communities.
3. **Donate to Charities:** Consider donating to charities that support lineworkers and their families. These organizations provide financial assistance and other support to lineworkers who are injured or unable to work.
4. **Support Safety Measures:** Advocate for safety measures that protect lineworkers. This includes supporting regulations that require proper safety gear and training for lineworkers, as well as ensuring that their work environments are safe.

Linework Not to Be Taken Lightly

Electric lineworkers cannot take their job lightly or rush through one task to get to the next. A bad day at the office may mean a lost document or a boss' wrath. But a bad day for an electric lineworker could mean serious injury or even death. There's a lot of satisfaction in the job, but it's also a potentially hazardous profession that consistently makes "most dangerous jobs" lists based on U.S. Bureau of Labor statistics. The purpose of having well-trained and properly equipped lineworkers is to mitigate the hazards.

Whether due to extreme weather conditions like an ice storm or caused by a hungry critter who chomped its way through a power line, outages do happen. Because we live in a society where a microwave oven or the internet can seem to take forever, we sometimes expect power to be restored instantly. But that's not always possible.

Restoration time depends on the source and complexity of the issue causing the outage. We work hard to create and maintain a culture of safety to prevent injuries and protect our employees. Although prompt restoration is the goal, safety of our workers is priority number one.



BECOMING A LINEWORKER

It takes years of training to become a journeyman lineman.

- Many linemen start out as tree trimmers. Tree trimmers gain experience working near energized lines, climbing trees and learning the hazards of high voltage electricity. Many co-op tree trimmers have already received a certificate for completing line school.
- The next step in a linecrew is apprentice lineman. Apprentices assist linemen in building, repairing and maintaining power lines. The apprentice phase requires four years of on-the-job training and completion of training courses.
- After successfully completing the apprentice phase, workers take a test to become a certified journeyman lineman. This worker is expected to know all aspects of installing, repairing, and maintaining electrical lines and auxiliary equipment. A journeyman lineman can be promoted to supervise an entire crew as a lead lineman, foreman or superintendent.



▲ SIEA lineworker works safely to clear a massive fallen tree from downed power lines using a truck winch.

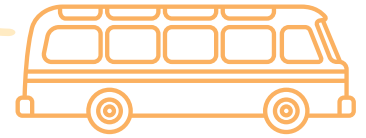
SAFETY FIRST

Among other safety requirements, electric lineworkers must always:

- Stay aware of their surroundings
- Use their tools appropriately
- Take their time and work methodically
- Wear proper safety equipment

Source: U.S. Dept. of Labor

PRIMERO WINS GRANT FOR CLEAN, ELECTRIC BUSES



Funding from the Environmental Protection Agency is helping a local school district hit the accelerator on a cleaner, greener, healthier, and more affordable way to bus kids to school.

Primero Reorganized School District Number 2 is one of only four Colorado school districts to receive funds from the EPA's Clean School Bus Rebates program.

Once the buses hit the road, students will have a quiet, fume-free ride. The buses will also save the district thousands of dollars each year on fuel and maintenance costs. The buses reportedly perform better than their diesel counterparts, too.

Electric school buses have a lot of advantages, but let's start with the health benefits. Studies have found children riding on traditional school buses breathe in as much or more bus-generated emissions than is inhaled by the entire surrounding community.

They're not just better for our kids' health. Electric buses can also save districts and taxpayers money. Fellow electric cooperative Mountain Parks Electric partnered with West Grand School District in Kremmling to fund an electric school bus in March 2021.

According to Mountain Parks' Energy Manager, Chris Michalowski, the cost of fueling the electric school bus is about \$0.16 per mile versus about \$0.43 per mile for a comparable diesel bus. This means that

fuel costs of an electric school bus could be almost three times cheaper than operating a diesel bus.

Primero is anticipating long-term fuel savings with their electric buses totaling approximately \$30,000 over the buses' lifetime. As a bonus, electric motors have no moving parts. No moving parts means less frequent maintenance and maintenance-related expenses.

Primero will receive \$700,000 from the EPA to purchase and replace a full-sized, 65-passenger bus for its Cokedale route, a 14-passenger bus for the Stonewall route, and the necessary charging infrastructure.

Because an electric bus has a 20-year expected lifetime, the operating and maintenance savings are often anticipated to compensate for the higher upfront costs. Savings can also be realized from more consistent electricity prices compared to more volatile diesel prices.

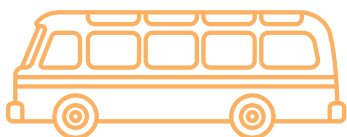
San Isabel Electric has been supporting Primero throughout the process by assisting with make-ready infrastructure quotes, performing cost-benefit analyses, and connecting them with other school districts and regional experts who can answer technical questions. By placing these chargers on SIEA's Time of Day rate and charging the buses in between routes and overnight when power is cheaper, the co-op forecasts meaningful fuel savings for the district.

The electric bus works in steep mountain passes much better than a traditional diesel bus. "The electric school bus has great torque and performs well in cold-weather climates, like the one that we experience around Granby and Grand Lake," Michalowski says.

Primero Superintendent Blake Byall says they didn't go after the funding purely for money-saving or environmental reasons. "Electric vehicles are the next evolutionary step in transportation, and Primero wants to be on the leading edge of this technological advancement, instead of playing catch up at some point in the not-too-distant future."

Nationwide, funding from the EPA's new Clean School Bus Program will provide \$5 billion through 2026 to replace existing school buses with zero-emission and low-emission models. The initial funding opportunity through the EPA closed on August 19, 2022. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment encourages all school districts and school transportation providers to complete an online electric bus interest form at their earliest opportunity. The form is available at cdphe.colorado.gov/electric-school-buses.

If you would like to visit with us at San Isabel Electric about electric buses or funding opportunities, please reach out to Laura Getts, business development manager, by emailing laura.getts@siea.com or calling 800-279-SIEA (7432).



UNCLAIMED CAPITAL CREDITS

In the center of this magazine, you will find a list of names of people who have an unclaimed capital credit from San Isabel Electric.

The electric cooperative publishes the unclaimed capital credit list every April in an attempt to notify member-owners that the co-op issued them a capital credit check for at least \$10, and that check has not been cashed.

Now, searching and claiming your capital credits is quick and easy. You can look for your name in the printed list, or you can now search an online database to check if we owe capital credits to you or one of your family members. If you're a current or former member and find your name, you can fill out an online claim, email capitalcredits@siea.com, or give us a call at 800-279-SIEA (7432) to start a claim.

Capital credit is money back, based on how much electricity is purchased by the member-owner. Most utilities pocket leftover money as profit when revenues are more than expenses. Electric co-ops set aside that money for members as capital credit, based on the amount of energy each member purchases. When it's financially safe to do so, the co-op retires (returns) the money to members. Members receive their share as a check right in their mailbox.

In September 2022, SIEA members from 1990, 1991 and 2021 received capital credits checks in the mail, reflecting their ownership of the cooperative during those years. More than 22,115 capital credit checks mailed to San Isabel Electric members, returning \$1,473,266 in capital credits to the co-op's membership.

A full list of members with capital credits in their name will be published on the co-op's website at siea.com/capitalcredits by June 1. If a member-owner has not claimed their unclaimed capital credit after three years, the co-op uses the money to fund scholarship programs and area service efforts approved by the board of directors, supporting hospitals, fire stations, county fairs, school sports, local chambers of commerce, and more.

Unlike investor-owned utilities, electric cooperatives are exempt from writing off any money that is returned to the community as a tax write off.

Members are encouraged to leave forwarding addresses with San Isabel Electric should they move off the system. In the case of a member's death, a representative of the estate should contact San Isabel Electric to determine the status of the member's capital credit checks, both now and in the future.

HOW CAPITAL CREDITS WORK

Because electric co-ops operate at cost, any excess revenues, called margins, are returned to members in the form of capital credits.

