



The power behind your power

You've likely noticed Sumter EMC's 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, often in challenging conditions. This month, as we celebrate Lineworker Appreciation Day on April 11, we'd like to 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 lineman carries while climbing a utility pole can weigh up to 50 pounds? That's the same as carrying 6 gallons of water. Speaking of utility poles, linemen are

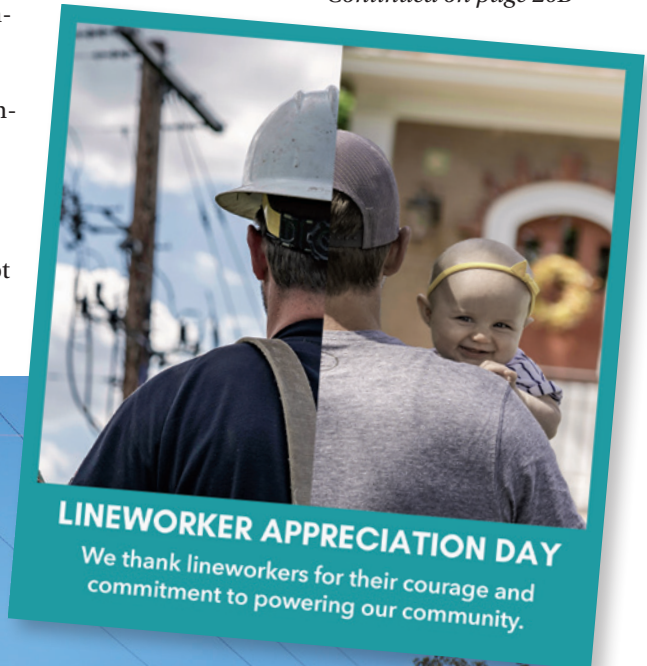
required to climb poles ranging anywhere from 30 to 120 feet tall. Needless to say, if you have a fear of heights, this likely isn't the career path for you.

Linemen 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.

Linemen often work nontraditional hours and outdoors 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 that to become a journeyman lineman, it can take more than 7,000 hours of training (or about four years)? That's because working with high-voltage equipment

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LINWORKER APPRECIATION DAY

We thank lineworkers for their courage and commitment to powering our community.

Elaine Schramm retires from Sumter EMC after 45 years

Elaine Schramm was born and raised in Preston to the late Arnold and Callie Dacus. Elaine and her husband, Jeff, have been married for 44 years and are blessed with two children, Judd and Callie, and three grandchildren, Kennedy, Laine, and Caleb.

Elaine was attending South Georgia Technical College when one of her teachers recommended her for an open position at Sumter EMC. She fondly recalls her daddy saying to her, “This is a great opportunity you have to take. No matter what, people will always need power, and you will always have a job.” With that said, she began her career with Sumter EMC more than 45 years ago. Her sweet demeanor and kind spirit made her the perfect addition to the customer service team at Sumter EMC.

Elaine will miss meeting and getting to know the many people she has interacted with in customer service,



Elaine Schramm

along with her co-workers and the friends she’s made through the years. She says, “While here, I have worked with great, easygoing people, and that

made my time here fun.”

Because of the longevity of her career, Elaine had the opportunity to work in all three of Sumter EMC’s offices and experienced many advances in technology along the way. One particular example Elaine recalls is the transition of physically reading meters and keying each entry by hand to a fully automated system.

In retirement, Elaine is looking forward to spending more time with her family, especially her three grandkids. She’s also looking forward to traveling—she has four sisters, and they love taking road trips together.

“Elaine’s dedication to our members has had a profound impact on our Cooperative, and we are grateful for her years of service,” says Rene Smith, President/CEO of Sumter EMC.

Congratulations, Elaine! We wish you many years of happiness in retirement.

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requires specialized skills, experience, and mental toughness. Shortcuts are not an option, and there is no room for error in this line of work.

Despite the many challenges, Sumter EMC’s linemen 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 home and families unexpectedly, and they don’t return until the job is done—often days later. That’s why a lineman’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 rural south Georgia, Sumter EMC has more than 40 linemen and support personnel who are responsible for keeping power flowing 24/7, 365 days a year. To do this, they maintain 3,835 miles of power lines across 11 counties. In addition to the highly visible tasks linemen perform, their job today goes far beyond climbing utility poles to repair a wire. Today’s lineworkers are also information experts who use technology as an essential component of their tool kit. Line crews use laptops, tablets, GPS, and other technologies to map outages, survey damage, and troubleshoot problems.

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

So, 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.

Sumter Electric Membership Corporation is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

April is Safe Digging Month

Call before you dig: It's the law!



It's that time of year when people begin digging all kinds of holes in the ground for new trees, shrubs, fence posts, mail boxes, you name it. These days, we just don't know what we are digging into, though.

The federally mandated national Call Before You Dig number, 811, was created to help protect you from unintentionally hitting underground utility lines while working on digging projects. Excavation damage can cause injury, loss of life, and environmental damage. It interrupts vital electric, phone, and cable services, and it can involve costly repairs.

Before you dig—even to plant trees or shrubs in your own backyard—please follow these four simple steps:

- 1. Call the nationwide 811 number.** From anywhere in Georgia, calling 811 will connect you to Georgia's Call Before You Dig phone line. Your call will generate a notice to your local utility companies to mark the location of their underground facilities, and the service is free.
- 2. Wait the required amount of time for the utility companies to mark the location of underground facilities.**
- 3. Respect the marks.**
- 4. Dig with care.**



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**



Ham with Coca-Cola Mustard Glaze

Courtesy of Georgia Grown

6-8-pound smoked ham

4 cups Coca-Cola

2 tablespoons mustard (spicy brown, yellow or Dijon)

Preheat grill to 350 degrees.



GEORGIA GROWN

Using an aluminum foil pan or metal pan lined with foil, place ham in pan and score the top with a sharp knife, making shallow cuts about 1 inch apart, then repeat in the opposite direction making a crisscross pattern.

Place on grill and cook for about 1 hour. While ham is cooking the first hour, reduce Coca-Cola and mustard mixture in a saucepan over medium heat until reduced to 1 cup. After 1 hour, liberally baste ham with glaze. Repeat glazing about every 10 minutes, using drippings in the pan as well. Cook an additional 45-60 minutes or until nicely glazed.

Let rest for 10 minutes before slicing. Serves 12 with leftovers for sandwiches.

Visit Georgia Grown's website, www.georgiagrown.com, for information on farms and producers across our state.

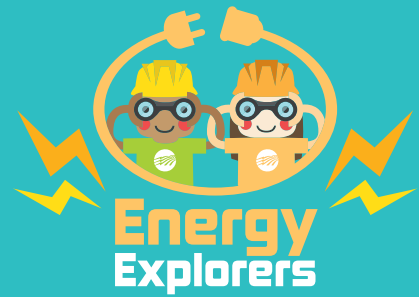
DO YOU KNOW ABOUT LINEWORKERS?

Every April, we celebrate lineworkers and the hard work they do to make sure we have electricity to power our lives.

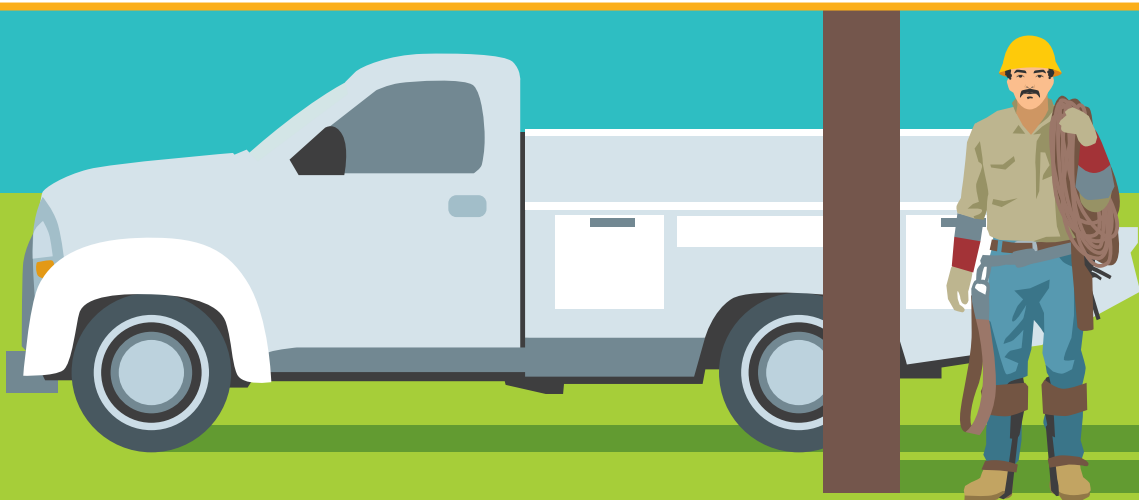
How much do you know about lineworkers?

Take the quiz below to find out!

(Use the answer key to check your work.)



- Lineworkers have to wear a lot of gear to do their jobs. A lineworker's gear can weigh up to _____.
 - a. 15 pounds
 - b. 50 pounds
 - c. 80 pounds
- Lineworkers maintain and repair electrical lines, but they do not install them.
 - a. True (no installation)
 - b. False (They maintain, repair *and* install lines.)
- There are approximately _____ lineworkers in the United States.
 - a. 50,000
 - b. 90,000
 - c. 120,000
- Lineworkers must wear _____ clothing to protect them from a possible electric arc while working.
 - a. Fire-resistant
 - b. Extra thick
 - c. Leather or rubber
- Lineworkers must wear special conductive boots when climbing a steel structure.
 - a. True
 - b. False



Answer key: 1) b. 50 pounds 2) b. False 3) c. 120,000 4) a. Fire-resistant 5) a. True