



**PIONEER ELECTRIC  
COOPERATIVE**

# NEWS

## Pioneer Electric Cooperative, Inc.

### Board of Trustees

**Melvin Winger**  
President

**Alfred Alexander**  
Vice President

**Perry Rubart**  
Secretary/Treasurer

**Jim Bell**  
Trustee

**Mike Brewer**  
Trustee

**Fred Claassen**  
Trustee

**Martie Floyd**  
Trustee

**John Jury**  
Trustee

**Charles Milburn**  
Trustee

### Staff

**Steve Epperson**  
CEO

**Randy Magnison**  
Executive Vice President, Assistant CEO

**Lindsay Shepard**  
Executive Vice President and General  
Counsel

**George Bushnell**  
Vice President of Engineering and  
Operations

**Chantry Scott**  
Vice President of Finance and  
Accounting

**Anita Wendt**  
Vice President of Energy Services

**Drew Waechter**  
Editor

### In Case of an Outage

If your electricity is off for more than a few minutes, call 888-551-4140. After-hours calls will be answered by dispatch and forwarded to standby personnel.

## Pioneer Humbled by Overwhelming Support

When Winter Storm Ursa swiftly devastated areas of southwest Kansas the last weekend in April, restoration crews were swiftly dispatched to assess the damage. The storm deposited 8-foot-tall snow drifts due to 55 mph winds and an accumulation of 17 inches of heavy, wet snow.

Throughout the state, Ursa knocked out power in an estimated 42,000 homes.

Pioneer Electric reported more than 2,000 downed-poles and an estimated 6,000 meters lost power.

Crews from around the state were quick to pitch in and help with the restoration following the whiteout. Pioneer Electric would like to extend a special thank you to its sister co-ops who selflessly sent assistance: Ark Valley Electric, Hutchinson; Butler Rural Electric, El Dorado; Lyon-Coffey Electric, Inc., Burlington; Flint Hills Rural Electric, Council Grove; Ninescah Rural Electric, Pratt; Sedgwick County Electric, Cheney; and The Victory Electric, Dodge City.

"Throughout the course of Ursa restoration, we have been honored to have some outstanding support from our fellow co-ops around the state of Kansas," said Pioneer Electric Energy Services Supervisor Rae Gorman. "We appreciate the line crews that took time away from their lives and families to come help us rebuild miles and miles of our system."

In addition to its neighboring Kansas co-ops who lent helping hands, Pioneer would also like express thanks



Crews from Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska assisted Pioneer Electric in the restoration process following Winter Storm Ursa.

to co-ops from Missouri and Nebraska.

"The support our members show during times like these is simply amazing," said Gorman. "Many were without power but were taking hot coffee and homemade meals to our line crews. Many of the linemen that came to help with restoration were pleasantly surprised at how grateful our members were and how they were treated. It goes to show there truly is a silver lining in every challenging situation!"

Despite the overwhelming show of support and assistance, the storm impacted a path far larger than could be quickly repaired. Nearly a month later, the snow long melted giving way to spring thunderstorms, line crews are still working to repair the damage Ursa left in her wake.

Due to the storm's massive reach more than 150 transformers still need to be rebuilt in more than 70 locations. The line crews are still churning out 10-hour days, traversing what was once snow-packed and unreachable, repairing damaged areas as quickly as possible.

# What Lies Below

The transition into summer has many of our members enjoying the outdoors and tackling those elusive outdoor projects on their honey-do lists. However, a change of season is no excuse for members to let electrical safety go by the wayside. Under backyards and back forties are labyrinths of wires, pipes and utility lines that bring in modern amenities to our homes, farms and businesses. One misplaced scoop from an excavator or a slice from a shovel could cause serious damage to you and your property. Before breaking the earth, be sure to get the dirt on what lies below.

## Plotting Out a Plan

One of the easiest ways to avoid finding yourself in a precarious position is do your research and get to know the details of your property. How do you heat and cool your home/business? Do you have gas or electric appliances? Do you have a sewage line or a septic system? A great place to start is by referencing the blueprints or build notes of your home/business. These documents may include the location of utility and communication hookups and shed some light on where the lines used



Pad mount transformers are great in identifying whether your home or property uses underground electrical lines. Be sure to call 811 to help identify any underground lines around your home.

for these services are located. If you haven't the access to these documents your next step may be to do some investigating. Take inventory on the type appliances you own and check basements, crawl spaces and backyards for meters or hookups.

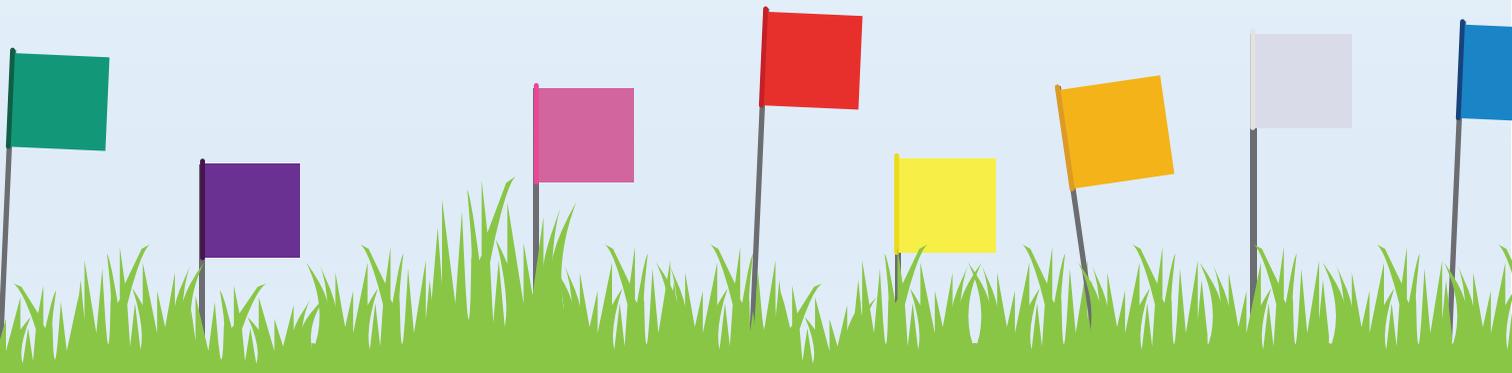
Tools like Kansas One Call are also available to gain some valuable information. These types of services contact local utilities, who in turn send out representatives to come and mark the location of underground utility lines. **This service is free to all and can be accessed with a simple call to 811.** "We are always happy to help out and hope that our members take advantage of these types of services," said Pioneer Electric's Safety and Compliance Specialist Mike Salsbury. "Due to the type of soil we have in our area, it's important to have someone check the location of lines. Even if you have an idea of where a line is located, erosion and dirt moved from previous projects can bury or reveal underground lines."

Once you've established what's below the ground, it's important to make sure you have the proper tools for your project. There are many great resources available online and at your local building supplier that outlines all equipment needed to get a job done. If you need to rent a larger piece of equipment (a trencher, front loader, auger or excavator) make sure you are aware of all safety information concerning its usage. Improper use or the use of the wrong piece of machinery could put your project on hold, cause serious damage to you or your property and burn away money from your budget.

## Seven Shades of Safety

The American Public Works Association suggests that surveyors use flags and spray paint to mark the location of underground utility lines. The color used helps identify the type of line in that area. These colors should be easily distinguishable and visible to all working on the project.

- ▶ **Red:** Electrical lines, connections and hookups
- ▶ **Blue:** Potable water lines
- ▶ **Orange:** Telecommunications lines and alarm systems



# APWA Color Code

The American Public Works Association suggests that utilities use the following colors to mark underground lines

<b>Red</b> Electrical Lines	<b>Blue</b> Potable Water	<b>Orange</b> Communication Lines	<b>Yellow</b> Gas, Oil & Petroleum Lines
<b>White</b> Proposed Excavation	<b>Green</b> Sewer & Drain Lines	<b>Purple</b> Reclaimed Water & Irrigation	

- ▶ **Yellow:** Petroleum, gas, propane and oil lines
- ▶ **White:** Proposed excavation site
- ▶ **Green:** Sewage and drainage lines
- ▶ **Purple:** Reclaimed water, slurry and irrigation lines

If you are unsure of what a specific color or marking means, just ask. A surveyor will be able to give you the information you will need before you start a project.

## Dealing with Accidents:

If an accident does occur; it is important to stop work immediately, evacuate the work site and remain cautious. First, alert your local utility and emergency responders and explain the situation. Be sure to share how the line was damaged and the type of line damaged. Keep others away from the site until cleared by the utility worker or

first responder. Depending on the type of line hit, you will need to adjust your plan accordingly in order to remain safe.

- ▶ **Telecommunications Lines:** In damaging a telecommunications line, it is important to stop work immediately and to secure the area for public safety. Do not examine, stare into or attempt to move the broken cable. Notify your telecommunications provider of the accident and wait until they give the clear before resuming work at the site.
- ▶ **Natural Gas, Petroleum and Propane Lines:** In hitting a gas, petroleum or propane line you need to alert everyone on the premises to evacuate the area. Don't do anything that could potentially cause a spark and try to stay upwind of blowing gas. Keep public and traffic away from the surrounding area and wait until the worksite is cleared by a utility worker. If you notice a fire, do not try to extinguish it, unless there is threat to a life and you have the proper training to address it.
- ▶ **Electrical Lines:** Much like their overhead counterparts, underground electrical lines should be treated as if they are still energized once damaged. Stop work immediately and warn all in the vicinity that the ground and objects near the line may be energized. If you are on a large piece of equipment, remain on it. Contact Pioneer Electric by calling 888-551-4140 and alert them of the situation. Once the site has been cleared by the cooperative employee, you may evacuate the equipment and move to a safe area away from the contact site. If you must evacuate the equipment due to threat of fire or explosion, jump off the equipment and land with both feet together. Then move a safe distance away (at least 30 feet) from the site by either shuffling in short steps or by using short hops. While moving, take small bunny-hops while keeping both feet together at all times.

Your safety is of the utmost importance to us at Pioneer Electric. We hope that you take time to do a little research before your next outdoor project, whether that's building upward or digging underground.



# Your Source For All The Best Deals On Main Street!

Co-op Connections® Card



No sign-up, no paperwork and no fees! Just great local savings!

[www.connections.coop](http://www.connections.coop)



### Affordable Hearing Aid Solutions, Liberal

- ▶ 40% off retail on hearing aids & free hearing tests

### AJ Graphics, Garden City

- ▶ 10% off all products

### Bank of Ulysses, Ulysses

- ▶ First box of checks free with new checking account

### Corporate East Hotel, Ulysses

- ▶ Any length of stay in a standard room at the rate of \$69

### Farm Bureau Financial Services, Ulysses

- ▶ Free insurance consultation

### Grant County Bank, Ulysses

- ▶ .10% above APY on threeyear or greater term CD

### Grant County Furniture, Ulysses

- ▶ 5% off lowest marked price on items in store

### Grant County Senior Center, Ulysses

- ▶ Discounted rates for seniors on various services offered

### Hamilton County Museum, Syracuse

- ▶ Free Admission

### Inner Balance Massage, Ulysses

- ▶ \$5 off an hour-long massage

### J & M Paint & Decorating Center Inc., Garden City

- ▶ 15% discount on any item in store or special orders

### Katie's Goody Shop, Ulysses

- ▶ Lunch special of popcorn chicken and french fries for \$3.50 or buy a snow cone and get a second snow cone for half price

### Key Office, Garden City

- ▶ For every \$100 spent, Key will donate \$5 to the PEAR Program

### Main ARTery Frame Shop, Ulysses

- ▶ 10% off complete framing services, not valid with any other offer

### Northrup Theatre, Syracuse

- ▶ \$1 off medium or large special (tub of popcorn and two drinks)

### Optical 20/20, Liberal

- ▶ 20% off OTC sunwear

### Paper Graphics Inc., Garden City

- ▶ \$25 off graphic design services

### Perry's Tire & Supply, Ulysses

- ▶ 10% off alignment on passenger and LT vehicles, 10% off set of four passenger and LT tires, does not include labor

### Professional Business Systems, PBS Computers, Liberal

- ▶ 10% off labor for new home/personal computer system and repair

### Puffy's Pizza, Ulysses

- ▶ Large, single topping pizza for medium pizza price

### Revolt Technology Group LLC, Garden City

- ▶ 10% discount on networking, security and computer services

### Seward County Historical Society - Dorothy's House, Land of Oz, Coronado Museum, Liberal

- ▶ One free child admission when accompanied by a paid adult

### The Movies, Ulysses

- ▶ Buy a large popcorn and large drink combo for \$5

### Ulysses Veterinary Hospital, Ulysses

- ▶ \$40 off pet dental procedures

### United County Real Estate, Ulysses

- ▶ Free use of trailer within 30 mile radius.

**Lost your Co-op connections Card?  
Stop by our office and pick  
up a new one today!**