

Powerline Press

NEWSLETTER



A Supplement of Oklahoma Living Published by Lake Region Electric Cooperative for its members.

October 2026

The Power of Prevention

Why Vegetation Management Matters

An August storm left some Lake Region members without power for several days. Uprooted trees and broken limbs brought down power lines and poles throughout the service territory. Fallen trees also blocked roadways and access through easements, making it difficult for crews to reach damaged equipment and begin repairs. Our crews worked alongside mutual aid and contractor crews around the clock in triple-digit heat.

Three construction crews from Liberty Electric Line Builders joined mutual-aid crews from Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative and Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative to assist with restoration efforts. Right-of-way crews from Riggs Tree Service and Gray Tree also worked alongside Lake Region's right-of-way crews across our system, clearing trees and debris so line crews could safely reach damaged equipment. Together, these crews replaced

broken poles, repaired damaged lines and safely restored power. The extensive damage left behind by the storm is a powerful reminder of why vegetation management is so important.

“At a time when storm restoration costs are at an all-time high, keeping electric lines and right-of-way clear is more important than ever,” said LREC CEO Glen Clark.

LREC's easement is typically 30 feet wide, extending approximately 15 feet on each side of the electric line. Many trees throughout our service territory grow well beyond that distance. During severe weather, trees and limbs outside the maintained right-of-way can fall into power lines, breaking poles, damaging equipment and creating dangerous conditions. “Severe storms can cause hundreds of thousands of dollars in damage in a matter of minutes,” Clark

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You Asked, We Listened!

SMARTHUB UPGRADE COMING IN NOVEMBER

This November, a SmartHub upgrade will allow Lake Region members and fiber subscribers with both services to manage their electric and fiber accounts under one login. Existing notification preferences are expected to transfer to the upgraded system. **Please log in to your electric and/or fiber account this month to make sure your contact information is current and that you have a valid email address registered to your account.** If you have both electric and fiber service, the email address associated with your electric account will become your login for the merged account after the upgrade. More details, including important dates and what to expect during the transition, will be shared on our website, social media and in next month's newsletter.



ABOVE: Just a few of the thousands of downed trees that caused widespread damage throughout Lake Region's service territory during the August storm. **BELOW:** Working Foreman Frank Teague and Lineman Brendan Smith work to untangle power lines, a transformer and broken poles from a large tree that fell in Cherokee County.

Vegetation Management Matters

added. "Those restoration costs do not simply disappear. Maintaining, repairing and rebuilding the electric system ultimately affects the cost of providing electricity to our members."

Effective vegetation management within the existing right-of-way helps protect the electric system while respecting members and their property. That work includes right-of-way maintenance, tree trimming, clearing and targeted herbicide application. Herbicide is one of the most cost-effective tools available for controlling unwanted vegetation and slowing regrowth beneath and around electric lines. "We understand that some members have concerns about herbicide application, and we take those concerns very seriously," Clark said. "Vegetation management requires us to carefully balance the needs of our members and their property with our responsibility to maintain the electric system." Proactive vegetation management helps reduce outages, improve crew access and limit storm damage while protecting the natural beauty of our service territory. **2706203** Our goal is to maintain a safe, reliable and affordable electric system for our members.

How Can you Help?

- ▶ Report trees or limbs near LREC power lines or equipment by calling 918-772-2526 or submitting a tree work request at lrecok.coop/right-of-way.
- ▶ Never plant trees beneath power lines or near electrical equipment. Consider mature tree size and plant small trees at least 25 feet, medium trees 35 feet and large trees 45 feet from power lines. Always call 811 before you dig or visit okie811.org.



Safety Training in Action

Education, Training & Information

COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE #5

Safety is always a top priority at Lake Region. The Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives recently joined our electric and fiber lineworkers and right-of-way crews for hands-on bucket rescue and escape training. The training helps ensure our employees are prepared to respond safely and quickly when every second counts. Investing in employee training puts Cooperative Principle #5, Education, Training and Information, into action while helping build a safer, stronger cooperative for everyone we serve.



Pictured above: Tyler Rowland, LRTC Lineman/
Fiber Tech.

Small Acts **BIG** Impact

COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE #7

Concern for Community



LREC hosted the Dog Days of Summer Blood Drive at our Hulbert Headquarters, giving employees and community members an opportunity to help save lives. Working Foreman Supervisor Jason Youngblood, pictured to the left; was among those who rolled up a sleeve to donate.

A single blood donation can help two or more patients because whole blood can be separated into components, including red blood cells, plasma and platelets. The need for blood is constant. Someone in the United States needs blood every two seconds, yet only about 3% of the population donates each year. Each person who took the time to donate at LREC helped support the lifesaving blood supply and proved that a small act can make a big impact.

Safety in Sight: *Hunt Smart. Hunt Safe.*

As hunting season gets underway in Oklahoma, Lake Region reminds hunters to never shoot at or near power lines, poles, transformers, fiber lines or other utility equipment. Damage to electrical or fiber infrastructure can cause costly repairs, power or internet outages and, most importantly, serious safety hazards. Enjoy the hunt, stay safe and always know what's beyond your target. Visit the **Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation** for season dates, regulations, licensing information and more.





YOU'RE A MEMBER

October is National Co-op Month!

Powered by Purpose, *The Cooperative Difference*

October is National Co-op Month, a time to celebrate what makes cooperatives different and recognize the people at the heart of Lake Region Electric Cooperative: our members. Ever notice we call you a member instead of a customer? That's intentional. When you receive electric service from LREC, you become part of a member-owned, locally-controlled cooperative. We don't exist to serve outside shareholders. We exist to serve you, your family and the communities we all call home.

As a member, you have a stake in over 3,000 miles of power line stretching across our service territory. Every mile is maintained and improved with one purpose: providing safe, reliable and affordable electricity to

the people who own the cooperative. That commitment extends beyond the power lines. LREC supports local schools, invests in youth programs, strengthens our communities and works to meet the changing needs of the people we serve.

National Co-op Month is a good time to REMEMBER what being part of a cooperative really means. Every mile of line. Every outage restored. Every improvement made. It all comes back to our members. **RE:MEMBER** You're not a customer. You're a member. You own it.



POP IN FOR POPCORN

Pop in to our Hulbert headquarters every Friday in October for a **FREE** bag of popcorn! Stop by, say hello and grab a tasty Friday treat while you're here. We'd love to see you!

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The amount increases by \$10 with each issue your prize goes unclaimed to a maximum of \$50.

Cooperative bylaws are available upon request at Lake Region Electric Cooperative's office in Hulbert or at lrecok.coop.