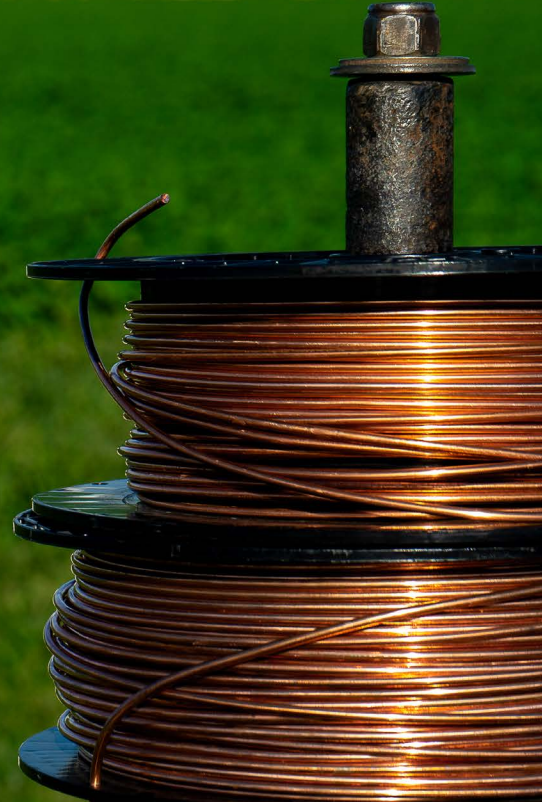


# SWRE POWER SOURCE

*A Supplement to Oklahoma Living*



## WHATEVER IT TAKES: \_\_\_\_\_ POWERING LIFE, FROM A LINEWORKER'S PERSPECTIVE



*By Austin Huff, Construction Foreman*

I'm one of 19 lineworkers at SWRE who work every day in all weather conditions to make sure our community has the power to live their lives. I love my job. It's hard work, but it's very rewarding. I hope this will give you a better look into what we face and more importantly, why we do it.

### THE DANGER

A lot of people know linework is dangerous because we work near high-voltage electricity. Move just the wrong way or lose focus for a split second, and it could be deadly. You have to be aware of your surroundings and the safety of the person next to you. We often work on energized power lines, and you can't always tell they are energized by just looking at them. You're working with an element of danger that requires concentration, and there is no margin for error. The environment compounds the pressure, because when you need power most is usually when the weather is worst. I'm often working in storms with rain, wind, extreme heat and cold, in the dark, or on the side of the road next to fast-moving traffic. Yes, it's dangerous, but that's what we're trained to do.

Many may not realize it, but we undergo years of training before we can officially be called a lineworker. We typically start as a groundperson, helping crews with tools and keeping job sites safe, then we transition to apprentice status, which typically spans four years. After an apprenticeship, with more than 7,000 hours of training under our belts, we transition to journeyman lineworker status—that's when we're considered officially trained in our field.

But the education is ongoing. Lineworkers continuously receive training to stay mindful of safety requirements and up to date on the latest equipment and procedures.

*(continued on next page)*



# WHATEVER IT TAKES

*continued*



## THE PHYSICAL DEMAND

The daily expectations of a lineworker are physically demanding, but you won't hear any of us complain about that. I know what I signed up for—loading heavy materials, climbing poles and in and out of buckets. A lot of times, we go places the trucks can't, so I might be hiking through the fields loaded down with 40 pounds of personal protective equipment. But that's the job. Most of us are just glad to be outside.



## THE SACRIFICES

There are some sacrifices to being a lineworker. I'm often first on the scene of an emergency, seeing things that are devastating like car accidents, structure fires and damage from severe storms. You don't know what type of situation you're going to face or when you're going to face it. We get calls all hours and in the middle of the night. I've missed a lot of games and family dinners, but my family is very supportive, and it pays off in the end. We make sure there is nothing standing in the way of helping our friends and neighbors get back to normal life.

## IT'S WORTH IT

One thing that makes this job worthwhile is the camaraderie. My cop is my second family, and the line crews are a brotherhood. In this work, you have to depend on the person beside you in life-or-death circumstances. It's a culture of trust, teamwork and service. It's all about keeping the teammate beside you safe and the lights on for everybody else.



I have a lot of pride my work. Even when it's cold and wet, I know I'm working to keep people warm. There's a lot of satisfaction in hearing someone yell "Thank you" from the window after the lights come back on or seeing people flipping the light switches on their porches after an outage is restored. No matter how tired I am or how long I've been working, that feeling always makes it worth it.

SWRE and its employees are members of this community. We live in the same neighborhoods. We shop at the same stores. Our kids go to the same schools. If your lights are off, there is a good chance ours are off too. So, you can trust that we are doing our best to get the lights back on as quickly and safely as possible— so you can get back to normal life.

# GOLF SCRAMBLE

APRIL 23 • 9 A.M. START

RIVER CREEK IN BURKBURNETT, TX

\$600 TEAM ENTRY

4-MAN TEAM • 18 HOLE COURSE  
LUNCH PROVIDED

MULLIGANS (LIMIT 2) \$10/PLAYER

## PRIZES

DOOR PRIZES

1<sup>ST</sup> & 2<sup>ND</sup> PLACE TEAM (2 FLIGHTS)

LONGEST DRIVE MEN & WOMEN

CLOSEST TO THE PIN MEN & WOMEN

ENTER  
TO  
WIN

CALLAWAY DRIVER RAFFLE  
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SCAN THE QR CODE TO  
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OR BECOME A SPONSOR



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ACCEPTING THE FIRST 20 TEAMS!



## THE BROTHERHOOD

- James Auldridge** - District Lineman
- David Ball** - District Lineman
- Kelby Boyd** - Journeyman Lineman
- Justin Faulkner** - Apprentice Lineman
- Calvin Flood** - Warehouse Coordinator
- Rece Gribble** - Apprentice Lineman
- Austin Huff** - Construction Foreman
- Keith Jonas** - Meter Technician
- Justin Marsh** - District Lineman
- Jim McPherson** - Project Manager
- Justin Nash** - Journeyman Lineman
- Jeremiah Overman** - Journeyman Lineman
- Rick Risinger** - Staking Technician/Lineman
- Chris Schreiner** - Apprentice Lineman
- Cory Schur** - Apprentice Lineman
- Gerald Simpson** - District Lineman
- James Stephens** - Journeyman Lineman
- Tyler Weathers** - Journeyman Lineman
- Mike Wolfe** - Operations Manager

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### Bill Pay Options:

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### Outage Reports:

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SWRE is an equal opportunity provider and employer. SWRE *Power Source* is published monthly for distribution to members of SWRE and is produced by Rebecca Chambless.

## LINeworker APPRECIATION DAY APRIL 8, 2024

*Lineworkers are ranked as one of the 10 most dangerous jobs in the country. The lineworkers at Southwest Rural Electric work rain or shine, in often challenging conditions to ensure you have reliable electricity. Join us in thanking them on social media by using #ThankALineworker.*

# WE'RE PROUD TO POWER YOU.

