

## THE POWER BEHIND YOUR POWER

### #ThankALineman

You've likely noticed SCI REMC's crews out and about, working on power lines and other electrical equipment in our community. It's no secret that a lineman's job is tough--but it's a job that's essential and must be done, often in challenging conditions. As we celebrate National Lineman Appreciation Day on April 18th, we wanted to share some interesting facts about electric linemen.

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 six gallons of water. Linemen are required to climb poles ranging anywhere from 30 to 120 feet tall.

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 require a lot of dedication and expertise to perform the work safely, especially when working at night in harsh weather. In fact, being a lineman is listed as one of the top 10 most dangerous jobs in the U.S.

Linemen often work non-traditional hours outdoors under challenging conditions. Being a lineman requires a high degree of technical skills, years of training, and hands-on learning. Did you know that becoming a journeyman lineman requires more than 7,000 hours of hands-on training (or about four years)? That's because working with high-voltage equipment requires specialized skills, experience, and ongoing mental toughness. Shortcuts are not an option, and there is no room for error in this line of work.

Despite the many challenges, SCI REMC's linemen are committed to powering our local communities. During severe weather events that bring major power outages, linemen are usually 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 the lineman's family is also dedicated to service. They understand the importance of the job to the community.

South Central Indiana, SCI REMC has 31 linemen that are responsible for keeping power flowing 24/7, 365 days a year. To do this, they maintain nearly 3,900 miles of power lines across 7 counties. In addition to the highly visible tasks linemen perform, their job today goes far beyond climbing utility poles to repairing a wire. Today's linemen also use laptops, tablets, and other technology to obtain work, pinpoint outage locations, troubleshoot, and much more.

Next time you see a lineman, please thank them for the work they do to keep power flowing, regardless of the time of day or weather conditions. After all, linemen are the power behind your power.



# COMMON CAUSES OF OUTAGES

**WEATHER:** The most common cause for power outages is Mother Nature. High winds can cause widespread damage to facilities. Extremely hot or cold weather can also cause power outages, as unusually high heating or cooling energy demand can overburden transformers and other electrical equipment, causing them to fail. Lightning strikes can cause significant damage to electrical equipment, wires, and poles.

**TREES:** During high winds, tree limbs can snap and fall into the lines causing an outage, or entire trees can topple onto power lines which may even break the conductor or the utility poles.

**ACCIDENTS:** A vehicle hitting a utility pole can break the pole and knock lines from their overhead perch. Excavation work can damage buried electric lines causing an outage.

**ANIMALS:** Squirrels, snakes, and other small animals and birds can climb on poles and electrical equipment, which may cause a short circuit or equipment to shut down.

**VANDALISM:** People shooting at insulators and transformers is a sad cause for power outages in rural areas. Thieves also steal copper wire and other pieces of electrical equipment, which can cause outages. Both acts of vandalism can be extremely costly and deadly.

**PLANNED OUTAGES:** If a cooperative is performing maintenance or upgrading its equipment, it may need to temporarily turn off the power. SCI REMC will try to notify affected members in advance of a planned outage.

# STEPS TO RESTORING SERVICE

When SCI REMC restores electric service after a storm or other major outage event, it follows a plan to ensure power is back on for the greatest number of people in the shortest amount of time and in the safest manner possible. To do that, SCI REMC typically prioritizes restoration efforts per below.

## PRIORITY 1: TRANSMISSION LINES

These high voltage lines carry electricity a long distance from generating plants to substations (or between substations). Since tens of thousands of people could be served by one transmission line, damage to these lines is usually prioritized first. Typically, repairs to these facilities are made by our Power Suppliers (Hoosier Energy or Duke). SCI Crews and our System Operations focus on transferring power to other substations that are not impacted.

## PRIORITY 2: SUBSTATIONS

These electrical facilities contain equipment that transforms the high voltage supplied from the transmission lines to a distribution voltage level (for SCI REMC, this is 12,470 Volts). If problems are taken care of at the substation, power to a large number of people can be restored by a single repair.

## PRIORITY 3: MAIN DISTRIBUTION LINES

These lines carry electricity from the substations to groups of consumers, like towns or housing developments. These lines can be overhead or

underground and are often located along roadways. When power is restored to a distribution line, all members served from this line will see their power come on unless there is a problem farther down the line.

## PRIORITY 4: TAP LINES

These lines tap off the main distribution line to utility poles and underground transformers outside houses or buildings. They usually serve smaller numbers of members.

## PRIORITY 5: INDIVIDUAL SERVICE

These lines run from the transformer to the individual consumer's electric meter. A problem here usually only restores a single member.

## WAYS TO REPORT AN OUTAGE:

1. Visiting [sciremc.com](https://sciremc.com) and clicking "Report an Electric Outage."
2. TextPower, [sciremc.com/textpower](https://sciremc.com/textpower)
3. Calling (800) 264-7362 or (765) 342-3344

For outage map, visit [sciremc.maps.sienatech.com](https://sciremc.maps.sienatech.com)

