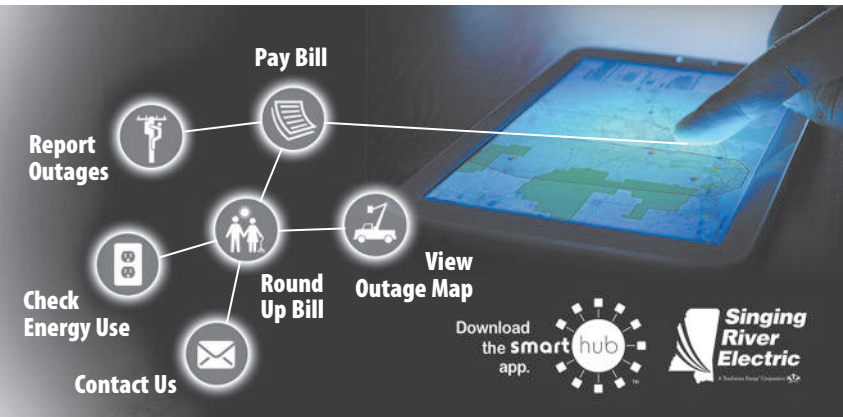


# Singing River Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Brian Hughey, General Manager & CEO  
 Lorri Freeman, APR, Manager of Public Relations  
 Amanda Parker, Public Relations Specialist  
 For more information, call 601-947-4211, 228-497-1313 or visit our website at [singingriver.com](http://singingriver.com). SRE is an equal opportunity employer and provider.



## CEO's Message

# Stay Focused



Brian Hughey  
 General Manager and CEO  
 Singing River Electric

It is easy to get distracted. Our minds can linger while walking or driving somewhere only to realize later that you either cannot remember where you were headed, or you do not remember the last two miles driven. Sometimes we even take shortcuts on tasks that could possibly result in unintended risks to our safety or the safety of others.

Linemen do not have the luxury of this distraction. They must stay focused and keep their minds on their task at all times. Their lives and the lives of their coworkers depends on it. Linemen need to know the overall objective of their current job, as well as where their coworkers are and what they are doing at all times. For this reason, there is nothing more important to our cooperative than safety education and training.

During May - Electrical Safety Month - and every month of the year, Singing River Electric employees participate in monthly safety meetings to review and discuss various safety topics and how our safety rules address these topics. We also have safety committees, a two-man safety department, and a safety manual that is kept updated and distributed to all employees.

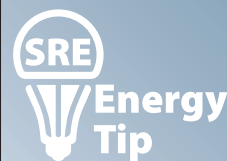
However, safety is a concern for all, and this month, we ask you to take time to discuss safety with your family. Consider electrical safety and all hazards around your home or business. Take advantage of resources on our website located at [www.singingriver.com](http://www.singingriver.com), as well as the Electrical Safety Foundation International's website located at [www.esfi.org](http://www.esfi.org).

It's important to stay focused on safety at all times. Singing River Electric is your source for power and information. We partner with local schools for safety education and are available through our online resources to partner with you for safety education for your family.

## Energy Fair slated June 28 for Lucedale



Nick DeAngelo, CEM  
 Manager of Member Services and Facilities  
[deangelo@singingriver.com](mailto:deangelo@singingriver.com)



Thank you to all Singing River Electric members who joined us first at our Knobtown Energy Fair in State Line, and second at the Energy Fairs held in the East Central and Vanleave communities. We enjoyed meeting everyone and are always ready to discuss efficiency.

Our next Singing River Electric Energy Fair will be at our Lucedale office located at 11187 Old 63 South. It will be held on **Thursday, June 28, from 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.**

Singing River Electric members who attend the fairs will receive one-on-one advice from our trained professionals about many efficiency subjects including lighting, insulation and infiltration, and more. Tips shared at the Knobtown, East Central and Vanleave Energy Fairs included:

- Flip the switch on ceiling fans to blow air down to make you feel cooler in the summer.
- Replace your five most used bulbs with LED bulbs, which use 70 percent less energy.
- Caulk and use foam sealants around penetrations in your home to prevent infiltration.
- Install an Energy Star heat pump for maximum energy savings.

For more energy efficiency tips, visit [www.singingriver.com](http://www.singingriver.com) and join our Ways To Save conversations on social media including Facebook/ Instagram ([SingingRiverElectric](https://www.facebook.com/SingingRiverElectric)) and Twitter ([SRECooperative](https://twitter.com/SRECooperative)).

# Annual Meeting set for June 28

## New proxy design makes mail-in simple

Singing River Electric (SRE)'s annual membership meeting will be held Thursday, June 28, at the SRE office located at 11187 Old 63 South in Lucedale.

The Energy Fair will begin at 9 a.m. and continue through 6 p.m., with annual meeting registration beginning at 4:30 p.m. The business portion of the annual meeting will begin at 6 p.m.

In addition to the pre-meeting Energy Fair, the business session will include the cooperative's financial, management and board reports, as well as the annual board of directors elections. SRE has a nine-person board of directors elected from the membership in the three geographic districts. Three Post No. 3 candidates are to be elected and will hold the office for a period of three years. In addition, a Post No. 4, District 3 candidate will be elected for a three year term and a Post No. 2, District 2 candidate will be elected to fill a one-year, unexpired term.

Nominations for election to the board of directors are made by petition. Interested members must acquire signatures of 25 Singing River Electric members on a form provided by the cooperative.

Applicants must complete and return a director candidate packet to the Lucedale office and be certified by the credentials and election committee before being placed on the ballot. The deadline for nomination by petition to be placed on the annual meeting notice was March 29, 2018. This deadline was posted in the January and February issues of the 2018 *Today in Mississippi* member publication.

This year's candidates include: District One, Post Three – Cary Williams; District Two, Post Three – Travis Baxter; District Two, Post Two – Ronald R. Wilson, Daniel "Dan" Anderson, and Jack Albritton, Jr.; District Three, Post Three – Eddie Thornton; and District Three, Post Four – Karen Gregory and Mark W. LaSalle. The slate of nominees was approved by members of SRE serving on the credentials and election committee. According to cooperative bylaws, the candidates' names were placed in nomination for election to a three-year term (except for the one-year unexpired term) beginning June 28 at the cooperative's annual meeting.

To conduct business at the annual meeting, a quorum of at least 10 percent of the membership is necessary. The quorum is derived by adding the number of members present at the meeting, the valid online votes and the

number of valid proxies received.

Annual meeting notices and proxies will be mailed on May 16 to all members. SRE members also have the opportunity to vote in director elections online beginning May 16.

**(The deadline for returning proxies and voting online ends on June 20 at close of business.)**

Any member may vote in person at the June 28 meeting, online or by proxy. Each member is entitled to one vote regardless of the number of accounts in the member's name.

A proxy may be assigned to either a member of the current board of directors or to another SRE member.

A member can vote up to 200 assigned proxies at any membership meeting. The presence of a member at the meeting, or in the case of a joint membership, the presence of a spouse, shall revoke the proxy. All proxies must be received by SRE's Lucedale office by close of business on June 20.

Members returning their proxy, voting online, as well as those who attend the meeting, may qualify to win valuable prizes. Those returning their proxy or voting online may qualify to win up to \$500 cash. Those attending the annual meeting will receive an attendance prize and are eligible for a door prize drawing.

For more information, visit [www.singingriver.com](http://www.singingriver.com). SRE bylaws are available online.

## OFFICIAL SRE PROXY

IF YOU DO NOT PLAN TO ATTEND THE ANNUAL MEETING, PLEASE VOTE ONLINE OR USE ONE OF THE PROXY OPTIONS BELOW.

BY APPOINT the board of directors of Singing River Electric Cooperative, as my agent and proxy, to represent me at the Annual Meeting of the membership to be held at the cooperative's George J. Lucedale office located at 11187 Old 63 South in Lucedale, MS, at 6 p.m. on June 28, 2018, with full authority to cast my vote upon all matters coming before the said meeting or any adjournment thereof.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

DO NOT APPOINT the board of directors as my agent and proxy but instead appoint:

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

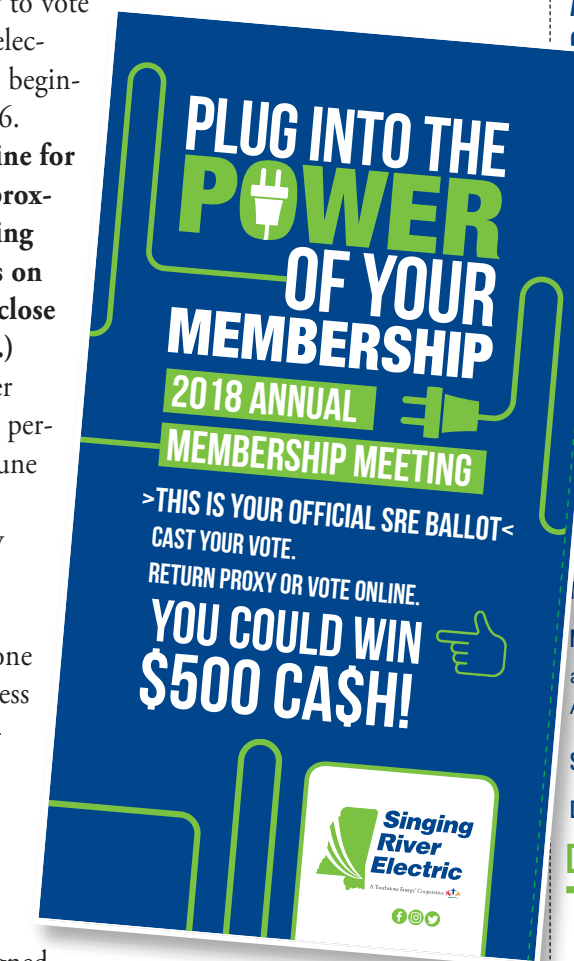
MEMBERSHIP ID NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

as my agent and proxy, to represent me at the Annual Meeting of the members aforesaid.

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**DROP IN THE MAIL FOR A CHANCE TO WIN \$500 CASH!**



## CAST YOUR VOTE BY PROXY MAILER

1. DETACH PROXY TO MAIL
2. NO ENVELOPE NEEDED
3. NO STAMP NEEDED
4. DROP IN THE MAIL

## Upcoming Right-of-Way Clearing Projects



Singing River Electric clears trees, limbs and underbrush from areas around and under power lines, called the right-of-way. Right-of-way clearing helps decrease the number of power outages and reduces the risk of someone coming in contact with power lines.

Here are the substations and surrounding areas that are either currently being cleared, or will be cleared soon:

- **McLain Substation**  
Highway 57, Neely Road, Highway 98 and surrounding areas.
- **Benndale Substation**  
Highway 57, Highway 26, Deep Creek and surrounding areas.
- **Wade Substation**  
Highway 614, Highway 63, Hurley-Wade Road and surrounding areas.
- **Helena Substation**  
Highway 613, Saracennia Road, Wildwood Road and surrounding areas.

*Clearing means safer and more reliable electric service to you.*

**2018 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

RETURN PROXY OR VOTE ONLINE BY JUNE 20 DEADLINE TO BE ELIGIBLE TO WIN UP TO \$500

THURSDAY, JUNE 28 — MEETING BEGINS: 6 P.M.  
 WHERE: LUCEDALE — 11187 OLD 63 SOUTH



# PLUG INTO THE POWER OF YOUR MEMBERSHIP

## 2018 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

### 100% MEMBER-OWNED

At Singing River Electric, you are a Member, not just a customer, and there is power in your membership, power in your vote, and power in your participation. We encourage you to attend the 2018 membership meeting because **YOUR VOTE IS CRUCIAL TO THE SUCCESS OF YOUR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE.**

### SAVE THE DATE

THURSDAY, JUNE 28

WHERE: LUCEDALE

– 11187 OLD 63 SOUTH

REGISTRATION OPENS: 4:30 P.M.

MEETING BEGINS: 6 P.M.

ENERGY FAIR: 9 A.M. – 6 P.M.



### ONLINE VOTING

BEGINS WEDNESDAY, MAY 16, AT 8 A.M. & CLOSSES AT 5 P.M. WEDNESDAY, JUNE 20.

## YOU ARE A MEMBER!

VOTE AND ENSURE YOUR VOICE IS HEARD.

### CAST YOUR VOTE ONE OF THREE WAYS

- 1 IN PERSON AT THE ANNUAL MEETING.
- 2 RETURN YOUR PROXY MAILER.
- 3 VOTE ONLINE USING THE MEMBER NUMBER LOCATED ON YOUR MEMBERSHIP CARD.

**YOU COULD WIN \$500 CASH!**



[SINGINGRIVER.COM/MYMEMBERSHIP](http://SINGINGRIVER.COM/MYMEMBERSHIP)

FIND OUT WHY YOUR MEMBERSHIP MATTERS – POWER IN MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION. ACCESS OUR SMARTHUB APP.

**LOOK FOR YOUR OFFICIAL PROXY IN THE MAIL MID MAY!**



### CAST YOUR VOTE BY PROXY MAILER

Included in the mailed annual meeting notice will be your proxy form.

1. Complete the Proxy.
2. Sign and date.
3. DETACH PROXY TO MAIL.
4. NO ENVELOPE NEEDED.
5. NO STAMP NEEDED.
6. Drop in the mail.
7. MUST BE RECEIVED BY JUNE 20.



### VOTE ONLINE OR USE THE SMARTHUB APP

1. VISIT [SINGINGRIVER.COM](http://SINGINGRIVER.COM) ON YOUR COMPUTER, OR GO TO OUR SMARTHUB APP ON YOUR MOBILE DEVICE.
2. Click "VOTE HERE" button.
3. Enter Membership ID located on your membership card & zip code.
4. Cast your vote.

IT ONLY TAKES A MINUTE, AND IT'S AN OFFICIAL 2018 VOTE



# Energy Fairs

## Save the Date

Lucedale Energy Fair  
Thursday, June 28, from 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.  
SRE's Lucedale office at  
11187 Old 63 South

### Energy Fairs Reach Out To Members

Members who attended the Knobtown, East Central and Vancleave Energy Fairs left equipped with knowledge and skills to conquer many energy-efficiency projects in their home. The three DIY

demonstration stations discussed LED lighting, insulation and infiltration, and many other projects both large and small that will help these SRE members save energy and money in their home.



### Tip of the Month



Periodically inspect your **dryer vent** to ensure it is not blocked. This will save energy and may prevent a fire. Manufacturers recommend using rigid venting material – not plastic vents that may collapse and cause blockages. #energyefficiency

Source: U.S. Department of Energy



# Safety Gear

**From Stetson hats to fire-retardant clothing and tablets, an illustrated look at the evolution of line equipment**

Modern bucket trucks rolled into the electric industry starting in the 1950s, but it wasn't until the mid-1960s that Singing River Electric Cooperative saw its first hydraulic vehicles.

"Jack Ware was hired by Singing River Electric in 1968 as chief engineer and shortly after that began implementing linemen safety training allowing them to work the lines hot," said Singing River Electric retired general manager and CEO Lee Hedegaard. "Prior to that, members would be without power while the line-

men completed their work." Ware also helped expand the hydraulic truck fleet. When he arrived the cooperative had only one bucket truck and two digger derrick trucks that had been purchased in 1965 and 1967 respectively. The addition of hydraulic vehicles allowed the linemen to work more efficiently and safely.

Hard hats, rubber gloves, hot sticks and other safety equipment were already available at this time. "I remember being assigned gloves and a hard hat as a co-op student in 1970," said Mike Smith, who recently

retired as general manager and CEO in January 2018. Looking back at those early years, times were different. Though the equipment was available, it was not always used. "There wasn't the emphasis on safety in the early days that we have today," said Smith. Many factors were at play. Most electric cooperatives did not have safety manuals and safety training or education when they first started building power lines. Humid southern summers discouraged the rubber sleeves. Difficulty climbing up and over pole structures made harnesses hard to sell.

Take fall equipment. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) now requires employees working at heights of more than 4 feet on a pole or similar structure to wear a body belt or wood pole fall-restriction device that attaches to the lineman's belt and the pole.

One hundred years prior to the OSHA ruling, someone thought high-climbing linemen needed extra protection. While writing *The American Lineman*, an exhaustively researched look at the history of line work in the United States, Alan Drew discovered a patent

drawing showing the same fall-restraint concept. "We could not confirm they were ever produced, but it shows that they were thinking about mitigating pole falls way back in 1914," Drew says.

As daily demands and common voltages grew in the electric industry, job site dangers did as well. The creation of OSHA in 1971 had a big impact. But as co-op safety experts point out, so did access to safety training and education, with a proliferation of lineman schools and programs.

Singing River Electric began working with Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College in 1999 to create an Apprentice Lineman Program that to date has graduated 508 linemen. This community partnership was initiated by the cooperative after noticing a shortage in trained linemen and a trend toward a retiring workforce. The cooperative now hires all apprentice linemen through the local program.

The evolution of equipment not only increased safety, but also the efficiency of line work. Hurricane Frederic in 1979 was one of two storms in Singing River Electric's history to knock out power to all co-op

members. At the time, the cooperative had six hydraulic trucks and four A-frame or manual trucks. Much of the work replacing poles and the more than 3,000 miles of power lines after the storm was done manually. After Frederic, Singing River Electric would only purchase hydraulic trucks with buckets and diggers. The diggers as the name implies help to dig holes much faster and deeper than traditional shovels. Today we daily deploy 17 bucket trucks, 15 digger derrick trucks and two track machines, which have tracks instead of tires to maneuver the muddy terrain of southeast Mississippi. This equipment allows our linemen to safely restore power and maintain responsive electric service to the more than 74,000 meters served.

The key to any good safety program is consistency and training. "You can have all the equipment in the world, but if employees are not trained to operate it safely, you have not achieved your goal," said current general manager and CEO Brian Hughey. Today, Singing River Electric has monthly safety meetings for

employees, a two-man safety department, the latest in fall protection/harness equipment, both outside and inside employee safety committees, and a safety manual that has been recently revised and reprinted.

"We want all our employees, not just our linemen, to arrive home safely just as they came to work," said Hughey. "Safety must always be top of mind."

*This article includes sections of an article, "Safety Gear - From fedoras to thermoplastics, an illustrated look at the evolution of lineworker equipment" written by NRECA's Victoria A. Rocha and illustrated by Bud Branham and Robert Harris. It was used with permission and originally printed in the April 2018 issue of the Rural Electrification magazine.*

## 1991-present

**Watching out for workers**  
OSHA begins requiring utilities to provide lineworker clothing to protect from arc flashes and "fall protection" devices like body harnesses and fall-arrest lanyards.

### 1939-1950

#### Safety training improves

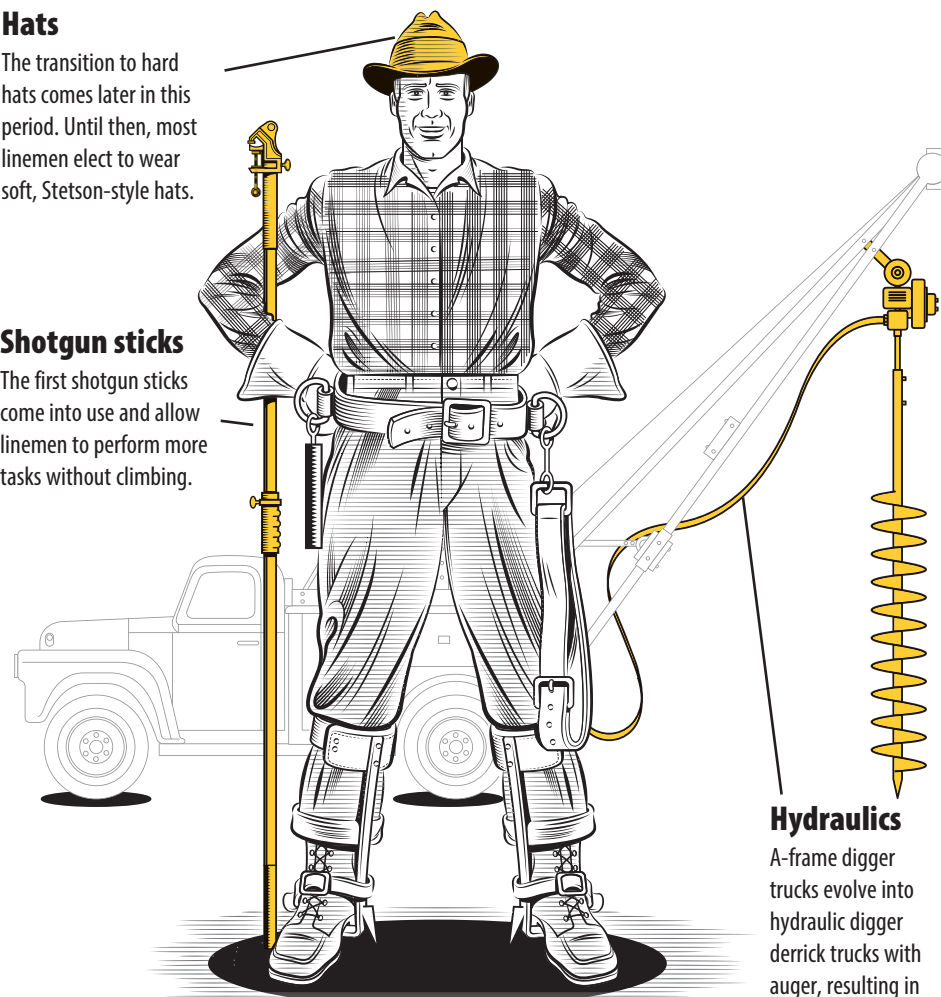
The electric industry develops more formalized safety rules and procedures to protect lineworkers. In the late 1930s, apprentice programs with stricter standards also begin.

#### Hats

The transition to hard hats comes later in this period. Until then, most linemen elect to wear soft, Stetson-style hats.

#### Shotgun sticks

The first shotgun sticks come into use and allow linemen to perform more tasks without climbing.



#### Hydraulics

A-frame digger trucks evolve into hydraulic digger derrick trucks with auger, resulting in safer, more efficient work.

### 1951-1970

#### New heights and faster communication

Fiberglass sticks evolve to "rubber gloving," with more formalized rules and training. The advent of the bucket truck, utility undergrounding, and improved communications are major steps.



#### Rubber glove protectors

Linemen wear two pairs of gloves—leather on top of rubber—for more protection.

#### Bucket trucks

Insulated buckets on trucks with fall protection come into use.

#### Two-way radios

New applications of radio technologies improve communications during emergencies and storm restoration.

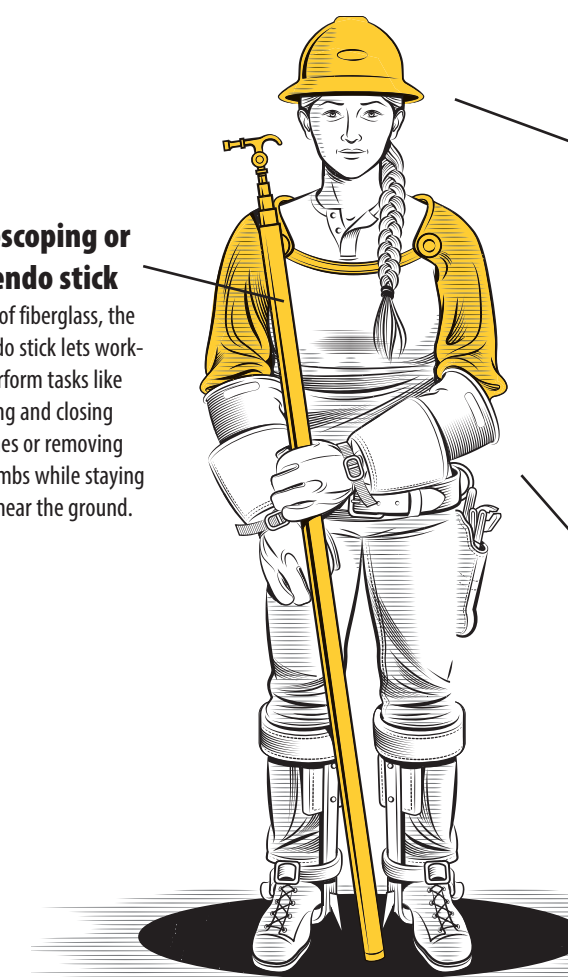
### 1971-1990

#### New law of the land

President Nixon signs the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) law. Underground line installation gains widespread use. Material-handling bucket trucks and hydraulic and mechanical compression tools also improve work conditions.

#### Telescoping or extendo stick

Made of fiberglass, the extendo stick lets workers perform tasks like opening and closing switches or removing tree limbs while staying on or near the ground.



#### Hard hats

Head protection made from thermoplastics gains widespread use.

#### Rubber sleeve improvements

New sleeves extend to the shoulders for extra protection.

#### Clothing

Arc-rated clothing is written into OSHA-required Personal Protective Equipment.

#### Harnesses

Linemen aren't climbing as much, so body harnesses and lanyards are valuable backup support.

#### Insulated hard hats

Linemen now wear hard hats insulated with a special polyethylene that protects against blows to the head.

#### Tablets

Mobile devices help lineworkers troubleshoot problems using SCADA and meter data instead of climbing a pole or going up in a bucket.



- (1939-Present)** Prominent events in electrical lineworker history.
- Early 1940s** - Concept of digger derrick truck emerges.
- 1955** - Lineman pay in some regions hits \$2.25 per hour.
- 1967** - NRECA's Rural Electric Safety Accreditation Program (RESAP) begins.
- 1970s** - Insulated aerial lifts become more popular.
- 1984** - First International Lineman's Rodeo is held in Kansas.
- 1996** - First seminar for NRECA's Certified Loss Control Professional Program (CLCP).
- 1998** - SRE began meeting with MGCCC, and the Apprentice Lineman Training Course was created.
- 2010** - Revamped rural Electric Safety Achievement Program begins.
- 2014** - OSHA issues rules requiring the industry to provide arc-rated clothing and fall protection equipment.