

Safety training saves lives

Safety is the top priority at Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC). We take the time to educate crews and office employees to provide a powerful culture of safety in the workplace.

In addition to our in-house Safety Committee that meets monthly to review incidents and potentially unsafe scenarios, job-specific safety training is given to NPEC's employees on a regular basis.

This spring, lineworkers participated in an annual educational course conducted by Mike Koenig, a safety instructor with the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC), on pole-top rescue. Each lineworker was tasked to climb a pole, secure a rope around the waist of a 200-pound mannequin and lower the "body" to the ground.

Regularly reviewing what they already know can make the difference between life and death in a critical situation for lineworkers, who sometimes work long hours in extreme weather conditions to restore electric service following an outage.

We hope our lineworkers never have to perform a rescue, but if they do, they will be prepared. ■

*Northern Plains Electric Cooperative Foreman **Trevor Wick** takes his turn during a pole-top rescue training exercise.*

JULY 2025

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Planning a do-it-yourself project?



Homeowners, are you planting a tree? Digging a hole for a mailbox? Installing a fence? Remember to contact North Dakota One Call!

There are several utility lines buried on your property: electric, telephone, gas or propane, water, sewer and cable TV. The first step to any project is safety. Damaging an underground facility can cause injury or even death. Contact North Dakota One Call and it will contact the utility line owners, including Northern Plains Electric Cooperative, to locate their lines. It's free, it's simple and it's the law. ■

How does 811 work?



1. Call 811 or go to ndonecall.com a few days before digging to request that buried utilities in your yard be marked.
2. Wait a few days for all utilities to respond to your request.
3. Confirm that all utilities have responded.
4. Respect the utility marks or flags.
5. Dig carefully around buried utilities.

Always contact 811 before digging to avoid service disruptions caused by damaging buried utilities.



KX/Co-op Day at the North Dakota State Fair

Wednesday, July 23
10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Drawings for cash & prizes throughout the day

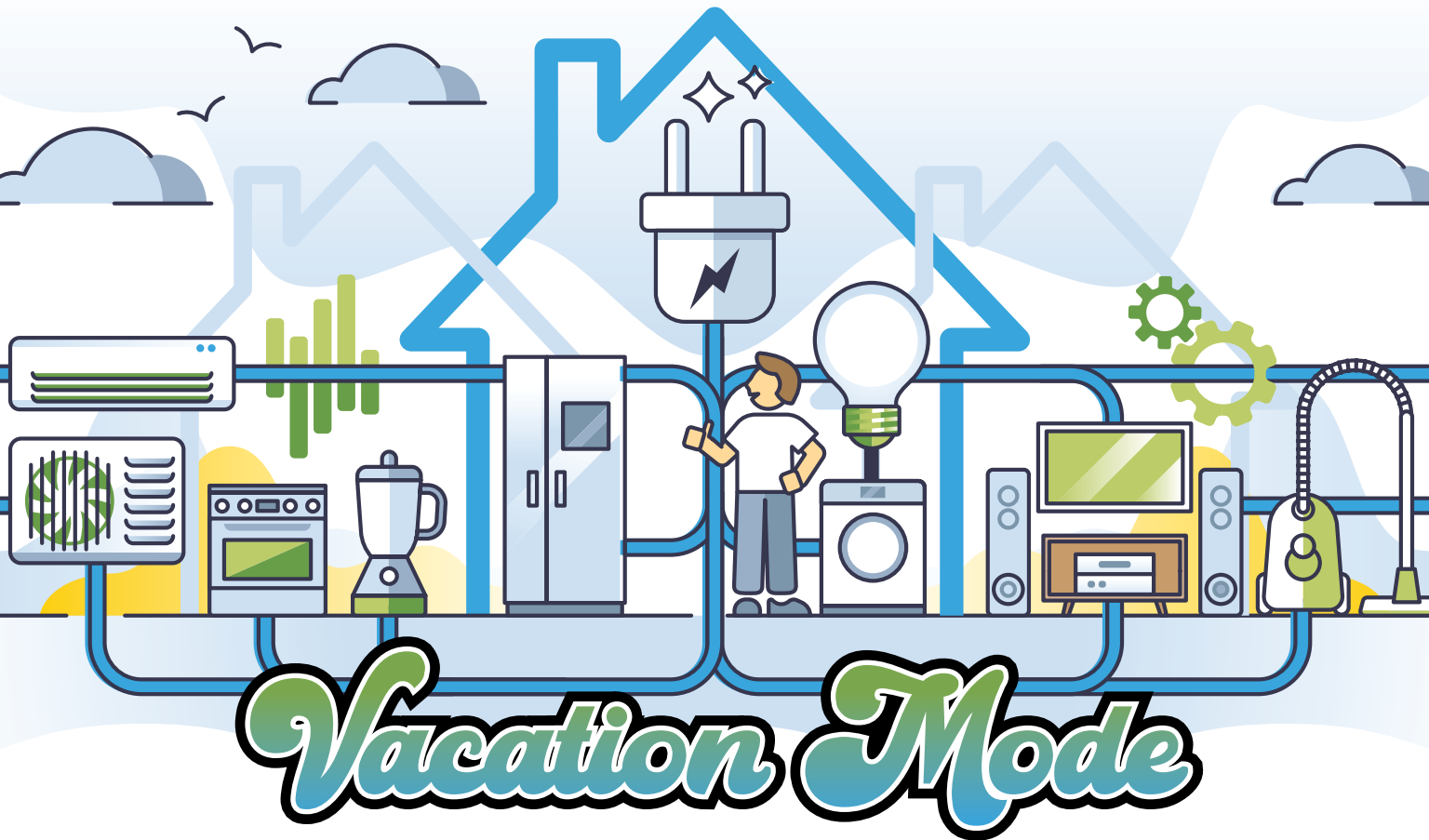
Discounts available by calling
Northern Plains Electric Cooperative:

- \$1 off daily admission
- \$5 off unlimited ride wristband
- \$1 off Ranch Rodeo

Sponsored by:

- North Dakota Coordinating Council of Cooperatives (NDCCC)
- KX News
- North Dakota State Fair

Free breakfast 7:30 - 9:30 a.m. | Ice cream social 1:30 - 2:30 p.m.



A vacation is a great way to get away from it all. While you're away, put your appliances and electronic devices in vacation mode as well. With a few simple adjustments before you leave, you'll come home to a lower energy bill.

WATER HEATER

If you have a tank unit, your water heater will continue heating water while you are away. Adjust the temperature setting as low as possible to reduce standby heat loss.

REFRIGERATOR

Your refrigerator is one of the biggest energy users in your home. If you are leaving for a short period, conserve energy by adjusting the thermostats on your refrigerator and freezer to a higher setting. For trips lasting four weeks or more, consider emptying your refrigerator and unplugging it.

AIR CONDITIONER

Why cool an empty house? Turn off your air conditioner or set the thermostat to 85 degrees or higher. If you have a programmable thermostat, set it to vacation mode; it will

conserve energy while you are away and cool your house shortly before you return.

LIGHTS

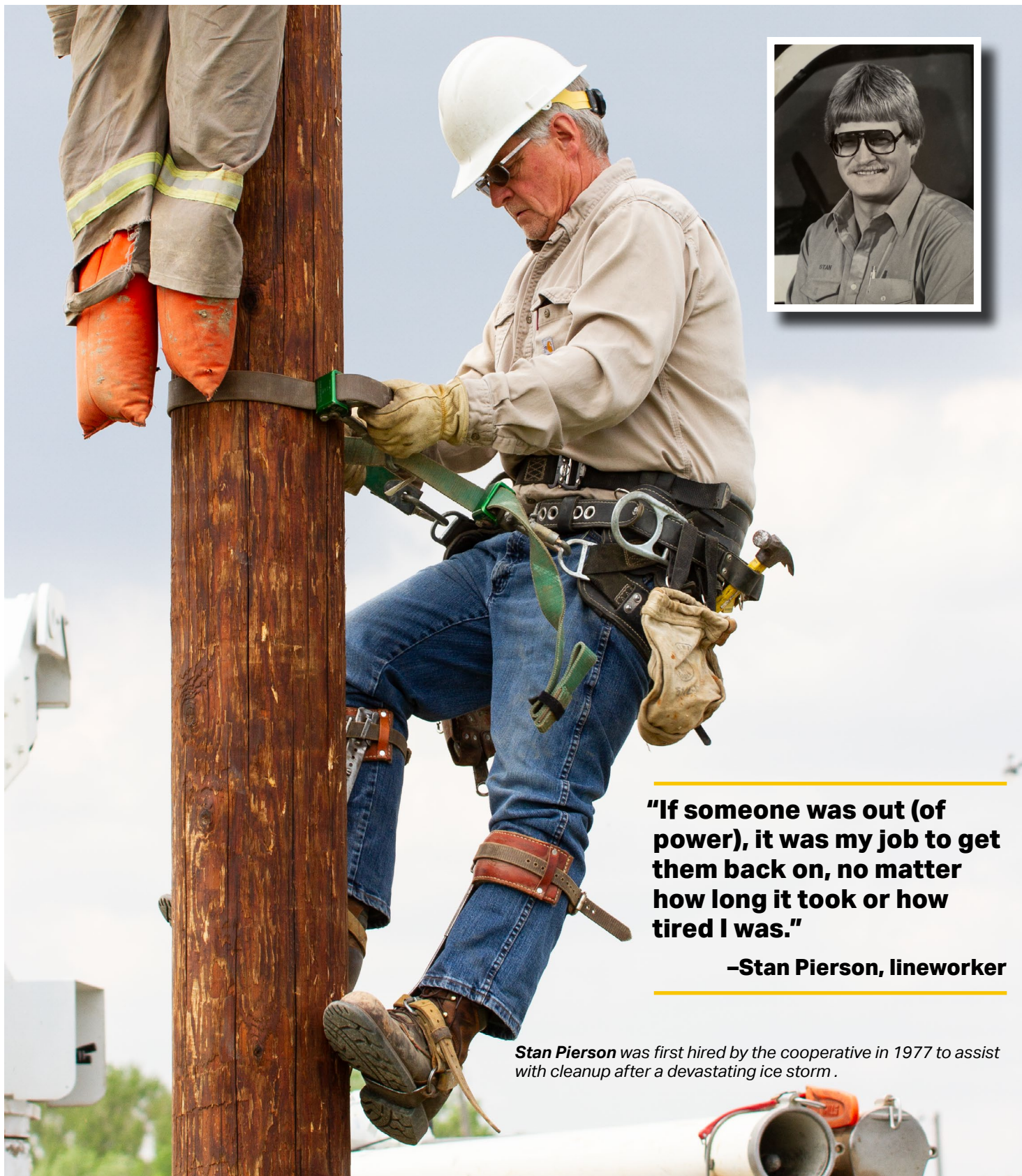
Install timers on indoor and outdoor lights and set them to turn the lights on for a few hours each night. This will conserve energy and provide added security by creating the illusion someone is at home.

ELECTRONICS

While turning off electronic devices saves energy, digital displays and instant-on features continue to use energy whether you are at home or not. Unplug all electronic devices before you leave. Advanced power strips make it easy. They will automatically shut off power to plugged-in devices whenever they are not in use.

AT YOUR DESTINATION

Conserving energy is important no matter where you are. If you are staying in a hotel, turn off the lights and adjust the thermostat when you leave your room. To conserve energy and water, reuse bath towels whenever possible. ■



"If someone was out (of power), it was my job to get them back on, no matter how long it took or how tired I was."

—Stan Pierson, lineworker

Stan Pierson was first hired by the cooperative in 1977 to assist with cleanup after a devastating ice storm.

A legacy on the lines: Stan Pierson retires

BY BRITTNEE WILSON

After 46 years of dedicated service, Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) bids a grateful farewell to one of its most experienced lineworkers, Stan Pierson. With a career that spanned generations, weathered countless storms and lit the homes of thousands, Pierson's retirement marks the end of an era defined by commitment, skill and community spirit.

Pierson grew up near Knox and graduated from Leeds High School. Though he originally began studying refrigeration at the state school of science in Wahpeton, fate had other plans. In 1977, after a devastating ice storm, Pierson was hired as temporary help to assist with storm cleanup for Baker Electric Cooperative (BEC). That initial role sparked a lifelong career in the electric cooperative world, right along the same lines where he grew up.

In the summer of 1978, Pierson joined BEC's Rugby crew. By 1979, he was officially hired as a full-time apprentice lineworker. Without a formal lineworker school education under his belt, Pierson took the long road – four years of on-the-job apprenticeship training. His first six months were spent at the Cando outpost before moving to the Leeds outpost, where he worked under Foreman Rip Hanson and alongside Journeyman Cal Schlieve. Pierson credits much of his success to the mentorship he received from seasoned lineworkers like Hanson, Ed Kring and Leo Vetter.

"They taught me so much, the tricks of the trade, just ways nobody thought of," Pierson shares.

When the Leeds outpost closed in the early 1990s following Hanson's retirement, the team dispersed. Schlieve went to Cando and Pierson moved to Rugby to work under Foreman Jim Tuchscherer. In 2011, when Tuchscherer retired, Pierson took over as foreman of the Rugby crew.

For 14 years, Pierson worked alongside Journeyman Dave Jaeger, building a strong bond rooted in trust, hard work and a shared commitment to the members. In 2022, their two-man crew welcomed an apprentice lineworker, James Rosencrans, to round out their team. As foreman, Pierson took pride in mentoring others and standing as a loyal teammate through every challenge, which is a role he embraced with dedication until his retirement.

Line crews from neighboring areas like Rolla, Maddock and Cando often called him during difficult outages, knowing he could guide them with insight only decades of hands-on experience could bring. Brian St. Germaine, Rolla line crew foreman, recalled a time when his crew was struggling to resolve an outage in the middle of the night. At 2 a.m., he called Pierson for help and, of course, Pierson answered.

"He knew exactly what the problem was and walked

us through it," St. Germaine says. "We're losing a lot of knowledge with his retirement."

Pierson always had a passion for storm work, whether it was local or helping other cooperatives across North Dakota and even into South Dakota through mutual-aid efforts. He found meaning in the long, exhausting hours, fueled by camaraderie and purpose. For Pierson, being a lineworker was never just a job. It was a calling. He remembers losing power himself and thinking about how that felt. That empathy fueled his work.

"If someone was out, it was my job to get them back on, no matter how long it took or how tired I was," he says.

When BEC and Tri-County Electric consolidated in 1997 to form NPEC, Pierson often volunteered to help the south line crews. He recalled spending three months in Carrington, living out of a hotel during the weekdays to help rebuild the system and clean up after a winter storm rocked the cooperative.

Now, in retirement, Pierson is looking forward to catching up on lost time with his wife, Sheila, their adult children and grandchildren. He's excited to travel, attend grandkids' sports and activities, and simply stay at family functions without being called away.

As he reflects on his time with the cooperative, Pierson is full of gratitude for the work, the members and, most of all, the colleagues who made the job worthwhile.

"I've worked alongside so many great people over the years," he says.

NPEC thanks Stan for 46 years of unwavering service. His legacy will live on through the countless lineworkers he mentored, the communities he served and the light he helped keep burning – both literally and figuratively.

Enjoy your well-earned retirement, Stan. You've earned it. ■



*As the Rugby line crew foreman, **Stan Pierson** (middle), enjoyed working with line crews in different cities and states, no matter the weather or situation.*



Jaeger named foreman

Dave Jaeger has been named foreman of Northern Plains Electric Cooperative's (NPEC) Rugby outpost, Operations Manager Josh Cabler announces.

Jaeger has worked for NPEC as a journeyman lineworker for 19 years. He was first hired to the cooperative in 2006, working with the New Rockford crew. Before being hired at NPEC, Jaeger worked for NPEC's allied cooperative, Dakota Valley Electric Cooperative, for six years.

Jaeger, a Rugby native, transferred to the Rugby area in 2011 and worked under Stan Pierson until Pierson's retirement in May. In his new position, Jaeger will continue to provide safe and reliable service to the Rugby and surrounding areas as well as be responsible for providing field supervision and assuring safety practices for himself and the Rugby crew.

Congratulations, David! ■

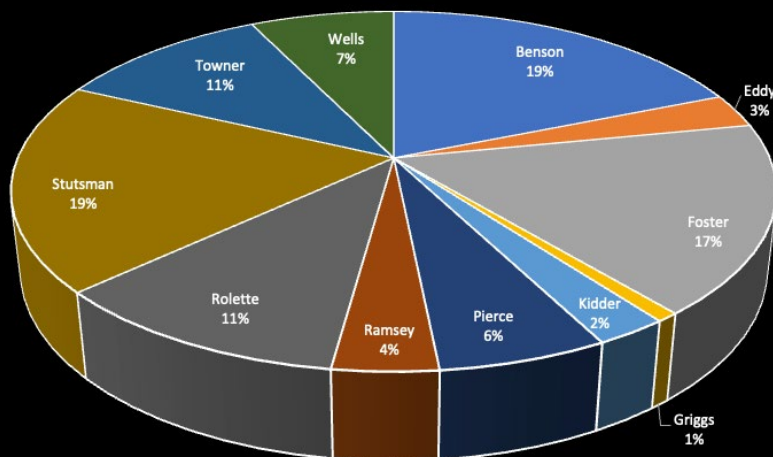
Co-op paid \$353,383 in taxes this year

Eleven counties served by Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) are the beneficiaries of taxes the cooperative pays yearly.

In 2025, NPEC paid \$353,383 in taxes to the 11 counties in our service area. The tax money comes from the electric distribution tax, which taxes how much electricity we sell. The electric distribution taxes are paid in lieu of property taxes on the cooperative's overhead

and underground power lines. The money is distributed to counties based on electricity sales and miles of power line in each county. This ensures each county receives a fair share of the taxes.

In addition, NPEC pays property taxes on the headquarters and outpost buildings it owns in Rolla, Cando, Maddock, Rugby, Carrington, Robinson, Woodworth and Jamestown. ■



Kilowatt-hours sold:
441,729,300

Miles of power line:
6,632.05

Counties served by NPEC: Benson, Eddy, Foster, Griggs, Kidder, Pierce, Ramsey, Rolette, Stutsman, Towner and Wells

Annual poster contest winners announced

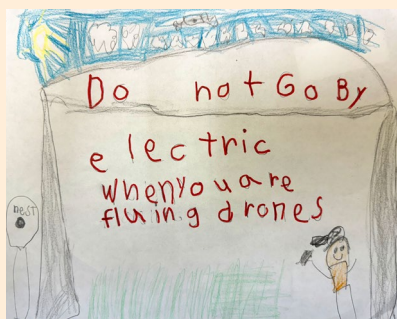
Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) hosted its seventh annual safety poster contest, asking for members' children to depict "how to stay safe around electricity."

Nearly 50 children entered their drawings, with a wide variety of scenes showing safety precautions taken at their home or on the farm. The posters were judged by NPEC employees, and winning entries are displayed here. ■

Kindergarten-first grade



First place
Benjamin Heinle, Buchanan



Second place
Wyatt Lunde, Cando



Third place
Josie Frey, Cando

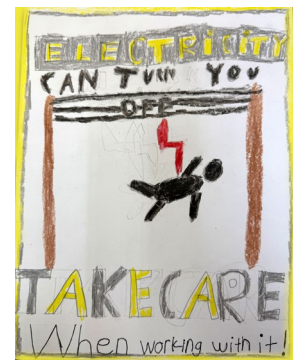
Second-third grade



First place
Avery Gysbers, Cando



Second place
Phineas Poitra, Cando

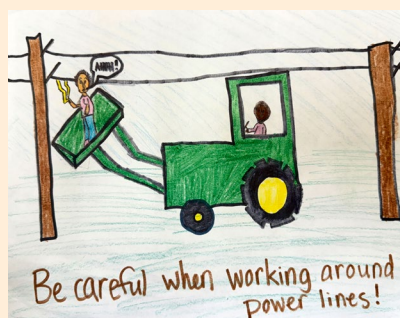


Third place
Weston Myhre, New Rockford

Fourth-sixth grade



First place
Chloe Pierson, Carrington



Second place
Noelle Heinle, Buchanan



Third place
Moe Jackson, Harvey

FOR EVERYONE YOU LOVE
COME HOME SAFE TONIGHT

**IF YOU'VE COME INTO CONTACT WITH A POWER LINE -
STAY INSIDE THE TRACTOR!**

AND CALL US AT 1-800-882-2500 OR CALL 911

**ONLY EXIT IF YOUR VEHICLE IS ON FIRE.
HERE IS HOW TO DO IT SAFELY:**

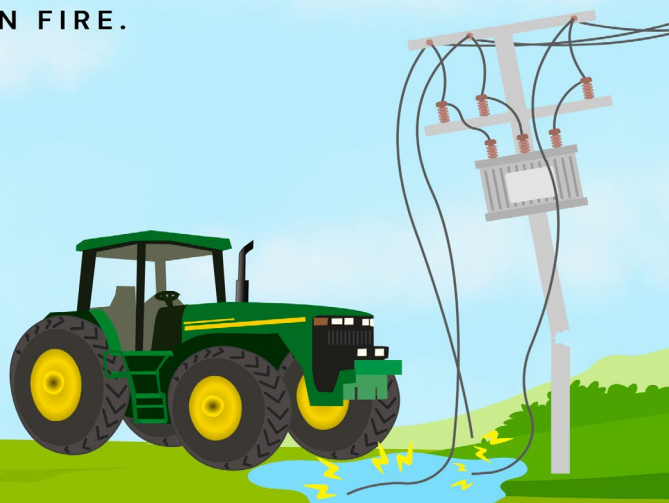
**1. CHECK AND MAKE SURE NO
WIRES ARE IN YOUR WAY.**

**2. STAND IN THE DOORWAY,
AND PUT FEET TOGETHER.**

**3. JUMP AS FAR AWAY AS
POSSIBLE AND LAND WITH
BOTH FEET TOGETHER.**

4. DON'T TOUCH THE VEHICLE.

**5. KEEP FEET TOGETHER AND
HOP OR SHUFFLE AT LEAST
40 FEET AWAY TO SAFETY.**



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