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National Lineman Day: Getting to know our Linemen

Linemen are heroes. They risk their lives every day to make sure our members have electricity in their homes and businesses. EnergyUnited is proud to have nearly 60 linemen who work hard 365 days a year, and we honor them every year in April. In celebration of National Lineman Day, we sat down with a few of our EnergyUnited linemen to get to know them a little better and share their stories with you, our members.



Levi Fagan

Levi Fagan, who has been working with EnergyUnited since June 2014, has always had

an interest in electricity. At the age of 16, he started working with a local electrician who, over the next eight years, encouraged him to pursue a career as a lineman. In that time, he received training and certification from the Electrical Lineman Institute at Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute. As one of our youngest linemen, Levi is a part of our next generation of cooperative employees.

Levi enjoys the work involved with being a lineman, as well as the positive effect he has on the community. He recalls, "As we were leaving a small area after working on outages left by Hurricane Matthew, there was a group of people that gathered at the end of the road to wave and send off our crew. That is the thing that makes me proud to be an EnergyUnited lineman."



Daryl Renegar

In his 31 years working as a lineman for EnergyUnited, Daryl Renegar

has helped restore power after several major disasters both here in North Carolina and across the country.

"One of the best things about being a lineman is the fellowship and camaraderie you share with the people you work with," says Daryl. He credits his dedication as a lineman to his two mentors: James Shore and James McCurdy. "These two linemen taught me how to withstand hard times both on the job and in my personal life. They both have a significant influence on how I do my daily job and they inspire me to be the best lineman possible."

One thing that stands out about Daryl's long career is his commitment to EnergyUnited. He's spent every day of his career supporting the members of our community. "I'm proud to be an EnergyUnited lineman," says Daryl. "There's no place I'd rather work!"



Bud Laws

Bud Laws grew up watching his father restore power to his family's

community. While it was hard to have his dad leave on Christmas Eve or during a ball game to work an outage, Bud was proud knowing that his dad was restoring power to his friends and neighbors. Today, Bud has over 18 years of experience as a lineman in the area, and he has worked with a number of crews including Pike Electric and the City of Lexington.

One moment Bud will always remember is restoring power to an elderly EnergyUnited member who was having issues with voltage. She used an oxygen machine to breathe, and Bud was able to get her plugged into a working receptacle and return her access to oxygen. "EnergyUnited has made me a better lineman," says Bud. "Working alongside great people to serve this community makes it easy to go to work."

Manage & Save Energy

In our "Power for the People" series, EnergyUnited examines how being a part of an electric cooperative betters our members' lives. This month, we're going to take a tour of the Robinson family home to see how EnergyUnited has helped them manage and save energy.

Down a quiet street in the southern part of the EnergyUnited service area sits an idyllic ranch-style house. Separated from the new construction and hustle of the city, it was the perfect spot for Marie and Simon Robinson to raise their two children. Purchasing an older home comes with its challenges, and there's been plenty of work to do in the two years since the family moved in, like putting a new coat of paint on the walls and remodeling an outdated bathroom. Then came the other challenge of owning an older home – it wasn't as energy efficient as the newer, well-insulated houses with modern HVAC systems. After receiving a higher-than-expected energy bill, the Robinson family turned to EnergyUnited, their local energy advisor, for advice on how to save energy.

"One of the best decisions we've made since moving into our home was getting in touch with EnergyUnited," said Simon. "We weren't sure which project would have the biggest impact on our electric bill, so we called the cooperative for advice. The customer care representative was friendly and had plenty of knowledge about our area and our style of home. They explained that homes as old as ours typically have extremely inefficient heating and air conditioning systems, so that's where we decided to start."

EnergyUnited recognizes that a new HVAC system is costly and represents a huge investment for the homeowner. To assist in this purchase, the cooperative offers a rebate program for high-efficiency heat pumps and recommended this to the Robinson family. This program provides a rebate when members switch from old, outdated HVAC options to a safe and efficient 15 SEER (seasonal energy efficiency ratio) or higher heat pump.



This upgrade alone potentially saves the family an average of 25% on their yearly heating and air conditioning costs and may also qualify them for tax credits for installing the system.

Beyond updating their HVAC systems, the Robinson family continues to turn to EnergyUnited for many of their home improvement projects. "The launch of the new online EnergyUnited Energy Efficiency Store has been great for our home projects," said Marie. "We've changed all of our lighting to LED bulbs and installed a smart thermostat that gives us even more control over our energy usage – all with products from the online store."

The online EnergyUnited Energy Efficiency Store has a variety of products suitable for both renters and homeowners, including energy efficient light bulbs, water-saving, low-flow shower heads and innovative controls that help you manage and save energy.

Remember, if you're planning on undertaking any improvements to your home to save energy, visit **EnergyUnited.com**. We are here to help you manage and save energy by advising you on which projects will make the biggest impact and guide you through every step of the process to help you save on your monthly energy bill.

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Save on Energy Efficient Technology

EnergyUnited.com/energyefficiencystore

The online EnergyUnited Energy Efficiency Store offers:



LED LIGHT
BULBS



SMART HOME
CONTROLS



FREE
SHIPPING



WEATHERIZATION
PRODUCTS



The Cooperative of Today and Tomorrow

If you've spent your life in and around our service area, then you may already be aware of the rich history of our cooperative. I'm proud to both honor that legacy and work to build the cooperative of the future.

Many years ago, hardworking men and women banded together to bring the life-changing power of electricity to their friends and neighbors in rural communities. Places where large, for-profit electric companies were unwilling or unable to provide service were suddenly illuminated with electric light as cooperatives, and their structure, were born. While that story is a core part of our history, the energy challenges you currently face are very different from those of the earliest cooperative members. We understand that as life in rural communities has evolved to meet present-day challenges, so too have your expectations for your energy services provider. EnergyUnited works hard to adapt to your changing needs and to provide our members with the highest possible level of satisfaction.

When cooperatives ran the first power lines into our service area, electricity was a luxury. Today, electricity is a necessity that powers businesses, homes and life-saving medical devices. Our members expect near 100% reliability to power the technology that has improved their lives. Our team at EnergyUnited works hard every day to provide that reliability.

Energy providers today are tasked with more than just maintaining reliable service; we are also here to ensure that you have the most up-to-date information available to better manage your energy usage. We understand that energy consumption is not always at the top of your mind. Our goal is to provide practical energy advice on a range of topics such as home heating and air conditioning, energy-efficient appliances and renewable energy, whenever you need it.

The key to staying connected to our members is communication. Cooperatives of the past communicated through neighborhood gatherings, newsletters like *Connect* and the postal service. While we still use many of these techniques to reach out to our members today, technology allows us to connect to the community with new online tools. Information provided on our website, **EnergyUnited.com**, such as the new EnergyUnited Energy Efficiency Store, provides interactive ways for our members to explore energy-efficient technologies. When online research isn't enough, our knowledgeable customer care representatives can be reached at 1-800-522-3793. With an updated voice response system for phone calls, completing common transactions has never been easier. We are committed to providing you, our members, with access to as much information as possible, because we know how large of a role energy plays in your daily life.

Looking toward the future, we understand that emerging trends, such as electric vehicles, renewable generation, home battery storage, internet-connected devices and the ever-expanding energy needs of local businesses, will impact the way our community consumes energy. We plan for the future so that our members and our community are prepared for whatever new developments these innovations may bring. We're excited to watch these new technologies take hold in our communities and we are committed to providing the high-quality service you have come to expect from EnergyUnited.



CHECK THE LIST FOR UNCLAIMED CAPITAL CREDITS

Once you sign up for service with EnergyUnited, you are more than just a customer – you're a valued member. Unlike investor-owned utilities, cooperatives operate as a not-for-profit business. This means that instead of returning excess margins to distant investors, we allocate and periodically retire capital credits to our member-owners.



Because our formula for capital credits distribution is based on current and previous years, often members who are entitled to capital credits have moved away from our service area and are difficult to locate. When



this happens, the capital credit checks are returned back to us, and we make every effort to locate the person entitled to the refund.

We encourage our members to check our returned checks list at **EnergyUnited.com/capital-credits-check** for family members and friends who may not have received their capital credits check for 2016. If you see anyone you know on this list, please have them call **1-800-522-3793** or email **answers@energyunited.com** for more information.



SPRING PLANTING & VEGETATION GUIDE

Spring has officially sprung, and it's natural to start thinking about plans for gardening and planting around your yard. We like to remind our members to make good decisions by planting the right species of tree in the right location to ensure vegetation does not disrupt power.

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Please Plant Responsibly

Before deciding where to plant trees and shrubs around your home, look up and down to determine where the trees will be located in relation to overhead and underground utility lines. If a tree is planted too close to an overhead power line, it will pose safety hazards, require costly pruning and could result in power interruptions. We recommend consulting a local nursery to discuss the mature height of trees you are interested in planting.

When planting trees in your yard, we ask that medium trees, which are considered to be less than 40 feet tall, be planted 25-plus feet away from utility lines. Tall trees, which are more than 60 feet tall, must be planted at least 50 feet away from overhead power lines.

Also, if you intend to plant a shrub to help conceal a pad-mounted transformer or pedestal, remember that

EnergyUnited requires a 3-foot buffer on three sides and a 12-foot buffer on the front of the device (the padlock side of the cabinet). This allows our crews to access these cabinets for maintenance and service restoration.

When trees encroach into the right-of-way (ROW) area around power lines, EnergyUnited must trim or remove them to ensure the safety and reliability of our system. We schedule tree trimming in your area every six to seven years, using only Line Clearance Certified contractors. Members are notified prior to any tree trimming that must occur.

Vegetation Management

The selective use of EPA approved and environmentally friendly herbicides allows EnergyUnited to control undesirable undergrowth from growing into power lines and causing a power interruption, while at the same time allowing grasses, vines, wildflowers, shrubs and legumes to flourish.

With the return of the low-growing plant community comes increased food and cover for wildlife habitats such as deer, wild turkey, mice, rabbits and more. Bees, butterflies, beetles and small mammals pollinate the plants, which are essential for our food supply as well as the beautiful landscapes we enjoy every day.

EnergyUnited is committed to being an environmental leader in our industry and helping to protect our environment today and for future generations. We appreciate your cooperation in supporting our vegetation management program and your commitment to planting and gardening responsibly.

Our crews will be performing integrated vegetation management to selected ROWs in mid-May and will continue through September. If you have any questions, please contact EnergyUnited. Always remember, before you plan to dig, contact 811 at least three days before your intended activity so that they can mark your utility lines and keep you safe!

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Please send questions, comments and story ideas to **Maureen Moore**, Communications Manager, at maureen.moore@energyunited.com.



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H. Wayne Wilkins, Chief Executive Officer

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