



OPERATIONS UPDATE

Out with the **OLD...** *in with the* **NEW**

Crews make progress on rebuild projects

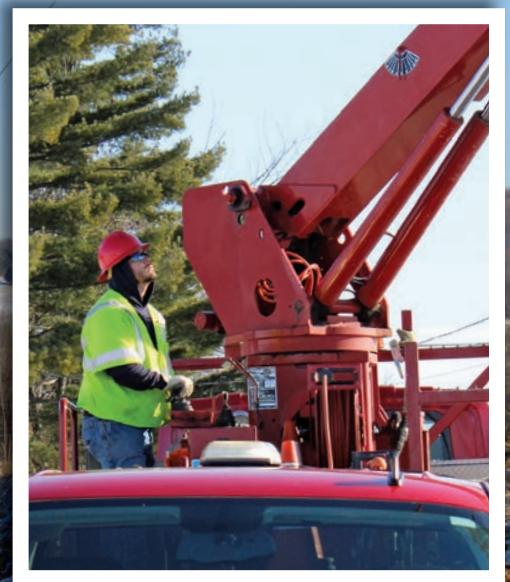
Over the past several months, Firelands Electric crews and third-party contractors have made considerable progress on the cooperative's current system construction work plan. These projects will help maintain and improve reliability, add more backfeed capability between substations, and increase load capacity for members' future electricity needs. The plan also includes the replacement of aging poles, conductors, and other outdated equipment to reduce safety concerns and prevent power interruptions.

As of November, 37 of the 43 decaying or damaged poles identified during Firelands' most recent pole inspection have been replaced. An additional 50 poles were retired along a 3.6-mile span on Township Road 856 in Clear Creek Township, Ashland County. Replaced with 62 new poles and a heavier grade aluminum conductor steel reinforced wire (ACSR), this updated section of three-phase service will provide members in the area with improved reliability, while also increasing voltage for future growth. The installation of additional poles during this and other recent line rebuild projects are part of the co-op's efforts to make our equipment more resistant to storms and extreme weather events.

Additional work was also recently completed in southern Ashland County, in the Green Township area. This particular project involved updating 4.2 miles of line and 128 poles. Wherever possible, power lines and

poles set a significant distance from the roadway, or in other hard-to-reach areas, were relocated closer to the road for easier access in the event of an outage. The new poles are also taller to improve ground clearance for farm equipment and provide space for the future attachment of telecommunications lines. While completing the rebuild in this area, crews also cleared trees in several densely wooded sections to reduce the risk of future power interruptions.

As spring approaches, Firelands continues to move forward with its work plan, including rebuilding an additional 18.2 miles of line located in Mifflin, Mohican, and Vermillion townships in Ashland County and Mifflin and Monroe townships in Richland County. Having a work plan in place is essential for supplying our members with safe, reliable power today — and for years to come. Whether this plan includes routine maintenance and upgrades, or addresses an unexpected outage, you can rest assured that Firelands Electric Cooperative is working hard to keep your lights on.





Lead Lineman Rick Bowers (left) replaces a utility pole with the help of Apprentice Lineman Zach Hart (opposite page), who operates equipment to hold the new pole in place. Bowers, Hart, and Lead Lineman Phil Pickering (cover) are just one of several co-op and contractor crews completing Firelands' current work plan.

To view additional photos of recently completed work plan projects, visit www.flickr.com/photos/firelandsec/albums.

IMPORTANT PAYMENT METHOD INFORMATION

*Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards (PCI DSS)
are changing on March 31, 2024.*

In order to protect consumers' sensitive information, the global financial regulation group PCI Security Standards Council has updated the requirements for taking credit and debit card payments made over the phone.

To adhere to these new regulations, Firelands Electric will be making changes to our procedures for processing phone payments over the next several months. Once in place, members who wish to make a payment by phone who do not already have a card saved to their electric account will be forwarded to an automated payment system.

We thank you for your patience and understanding as we transition to procedures necessary to follow the new mandated guidelines.

