

Powerlines

March 2022



New construction and your electric service

by General Manager Steve Strohane

The saying goes, "There are two seasons, winter and construction season!" (Three if you count hunting season.) Well, construction season is ramping up again. Our linemen start the co-op's construction work plan just after the frost is out. This year, we will invest \$5.9 million in the electric system, with a focus on upgrades to ensure reliable power during summer and winter peaks. We're seeing a lot of member construction projects, too, including new homes and garages, remodels and renovations. In 2021, we installed 350 new electric services, and we anticipate similar numbers in 2022.

If you are building this summer and need electricity installed or upgraded, we encourage you and your electrician to work closely with us to meet your needs for a timely installation. We know that building can be stressful. We are here to assist you with electric service for your lights and appliances, AC and heat, power tools, electronics, computers and all the things that power your life.

If you're ready get started or curious about how electricity is installed, we've developed this simple, 10-step checklist to help you through the process:



STEP 1: Complete and sign the application form for new construction. You'll find this form on our website, polkburnett.com, where you can complete and submit it online. Or if you prefer, paper forms are available at Polk-Burnett offices in Centuria or Siren. We'd also be happy to send them to you by regular mail or email.

STEP 2: Complete and submit the right-of-way easement form, with the legal description and parcel ID number of your property. Your signature must be notarized.

STEP 3: If you'd like a security light or propane service, you'll also find these forms on our website. Or give us a call. All paperwork is available at co-op offices in Centuria or Siren, or can be mailed or emailed upon request.

STEP 4: Once all your forms have been completed and submitted, an engineering technician will contact you or your contractor to review your project. White staking flags then will be placed to designate the route for the new power lines to your building.

STEP 5: Once your electric service lines are marked, you'll need to pay Polk-Burnett's line extension fee. The fee is based on the length and route to extend power. Just like you have seen in your own cost increases in groceries and other necessities, our material prices are impacted by current supply chain issues. Compared to 2021, underground cable prices are up 30%, transformer prices 85% and smaller material 10%. As a result, the cost to install new services will increase in 2022.

STEP 6: Next, you'll want to work with your contractor or electrician to wire your meter socket according to the electric code and co-op specifications.

STEP 7: An electrical inspection certificate is required for all new electric services. This should be signed by your local building inspector.

STEP 8: Make sure the grade and landscaping of your property is ready to go, and the path is clear for Polk-Burnett to bring the electric service into your property. You'll want to locate the septic system and any private underground facilities on your property. Examples include an electrical line to your detached garage or yard light, an underground sprinkler system or security system, or walkway lights connected by underground cables. Keep in mind that Diggers Hotline does NOT locate private facilities. To have private facilities marked, please contact a local electrician.

STEP 9: Once your checklist is complete and all your paperwork and fees are turned in, Polk-Burnett will contact Diggers Hotline to locate public utilities on your property. Marker flags will appear on your property.

STEP 10: Your project will now be scheduled and our crew will arrive to install your new electric service.

Don't forget to consider these programs for co-op members:

1. Off-peak electric service
2. Lighting and appliance rebate
3. Electric water heater incentive
4. Electric heat pump-HVAC rebate
5. SmartHub online account portal
6. Auto pay and prepay bill options

We're here to help you find the most reliable and energy efficient way to power or heat your home.



It all starts with a phone call

We look forward to assisting you with electric service for your new home, remodel or existing home.

Call us at 800-421-0283, ext. 308 or 365, and look for our new construction checklist and video on polkburnett.com.

Move your electric service line from overhead to underground to avoid future damage from storms

Members of Polk-Burnett Electric Cooperative may convert individual electric service lines from overhead to underground. Your service line connects your home to the transformer and primary power lines. This is an option for an additional fee.

Benefits of underground service:

1. Reduces outages, blinks, and damage to your meter socket and mast caused by tree branches and severe weather.
2. Eliminates the need for right-of-way clearing under individual service line on your property.
3. Looks better! No more power lines over your yard.

Your power may still be affected by an underground fault or outage down the line, but overall reliability improves.

Members pay for the service line to your home. Installation requires trenching or plowing, and may require a padmount transformer box.

Contact us to get started

A co-op staking engineer will determine the best route for an underground power line on your property, and we will quote a cost for conversion.

800-421-0283, ext. 308 or 365



What to know before installing solar at your home or business
Shine On! SOLAR ENERGY SEMINAR

Tuesday, April 12, 5:30 p.m.

Polk-Burnett Electric Cooperative, 1001 State Road 35, Centuria

Guest Speaker: Kris Schmid, Legacy Solar

Register on polkburnett.com or 800-421-0283, x318.

Home of SunToria Solar. View energy tracker on polkburnett.com.

CO-OP MEMBERS: GET A REBATE ON SOLAR & WIND ENERGY SYSTEMS UP TO \$750 FOR QUALIFYING INSTALLATIONS

Contact us for details: 800-421-0283, x318 or polkburnett.com



It's dangerous to build or landscape near utilities

Do you have building plans this spring? **Warning:** Gardens, landscaping, decks, fences and buildings are a safety hazard if built too close to underground transformer boxes, power poles and other utility equipment:



- ✓ Life-threatening contact with high-voltage equipment can occur when landscaping and structures are too close to electrical equipment.
- ✓ Obstructions limit access for linemen working to keep the power on at your home or business. Co-op crews need access to utility equipment to perform routine maintenance and emergency repairs.
- ✓ Decks, fences, dog kennels, structures and landscaping built too close to utility equipment could be damaged when crews and trucks need access to work on electrical equipment. All structures and landscaping should be a safe distance from utilities to prevent damage.

For your safety, keep away from electrical equipment, and please prevent children from playing near utilities. Thank you!



A power surge is an unexpected increase in voltage, typically caused by lightning, electrical overload to your home's circuits or faulty wiring such as damaged or exposed wires. (If your circuits are overloaded or your wiring is faulty, please contact an electrician for repairs to keep your home and family safe!) Power surges can also occur when

electricity is restored after an outage. It's best to unplug equipment during a lightning storm and during power outages, then wait to plug in after power is restored. Power strips with surge protection can also help keep your electronics safe.



Operation Round Up awarded \$19,500 to 19 local nonprofits, including \$1,000 to the Friends of Larsen Family Public Library in Webster to purchase books for preschool children at local daycares.

THANK YOU, CO-OP MEMBERS for rounding up your electric bills. Your generosity makes a difference for local youth, families and seniors.

See winter Operation Round Up grant winners and learn how your nonprofit can apply on polkburnett.com.

Electric grid and meter upgrade

We're upgrading 26,000 meters in 2021-22 to improve member service and reliability.

Learn more about the project on polkburnett.com/electric-grid-meter-upgrade.



Clip & Save

Phone extension directory

Dial 800-421-0283, then enter extension number:

- Billing, Electric Accounts, 335
- Board of Directors, 313
- Capital Credits, 335
- EV Chargers, 595
- Evergreen Renewable Blocks, 595
- Heating & Cooling, 595
- Load Management, Off-Peak, 595
- Member Services, 595
- New Construction, 308/365
- News Media, 333
- Operations, 308/365
- Operation Round Up, 333
- Propane, 378/411
- Rebates, 318
- Right-of-Way, 329
- Scholarships, 333
- Security Lights, 308
- SmartHub, 335
- Solar & Wind, 595
- Water Heaters, 595



❄️ March can be our snowiest month! ❄️

ENROLL TO RECEIVE OUTAGE TEXT ALERTS

If the power goes out at your location.



IF YOU RECEIVE AN EMAIL SURVEY, WE APPRECIATE YOUR FEEDBACK TO HELP US IMPROVE.

All members who submit a survey will be entered in a drawing for a \$50 bill credit.

Polk-Burnett is your local Touchstone Energy Cooperative. Reliable power with efficiency and extraordinary service.

Like us on Facebook. Follow us on Twitter.

800-421-0283 • polkburnett.com



Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer | Member Owned | Community Focused

