



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT/CEO

# Thankful for our **COMMUNITY**

In the heart of the holiday season, everyone usually takes a few moments to think about what we're grateful for. Probably like you, I am thankful for good health, wonderful family and friends, and the freedom our country provides. I am also thankful for the job of serving the great people of Holmes, Wayne, and surrounding counties.

I appreciate being part of Holmes-Wayne Electric Cooperative. Our employees are the most dedicated workers I know. Our mission at Holmes-Wayne Electric is to safely provide reliable, competitively priced electric service for our member-owners and to enhance the quality of life in the communities we serve, while embracing cooperative principles and values. It's a mission we all take seriously.

One of those principles is concern for the community. HWEC serves as a vibrant force in the local economy — partly because we are local. That means your cooperative is invested in the future of our communities. We are actively involved on the economic development council, local chamber of commerce, and other community boards to support the growth and development of our little corner of the world.

That also means your cooperative cares. From giving \$15,000 a year in scholarships to local high school seniors to reaching out to members with information that will help them save energy and money, we care about the people we serve.

Concern for our community also is displayed by our staff, who volunteer at local community events and serve various charitable organizations. We also enjoy assisting the coordination of the Holmes-Wayne Veteran Honor

Trip. Although COVID-19 delayed this past year's trip, we celebrated veterans this year by offering a free meal on Veterans Day. Those meals were paid for through the generous donations of the HWEC staff.

Concern also extends to the safety of our staff and community. Monthly safety meetings and inspections are cornerstones to the HWEC safety program. We also give freely of our time to educate the community and local first responders about the dangers of electricity.

But it's not just our staff who's giving — you, the HWEC members, help us give back, too. Through the Operation Round Up program, members can round up their energy bills to the next dollar amount and the extra change goes toward helping those in need, right here in our community. Since we established the program in 2006, over \$750,000 has been given back to individuals, families, and organizations in need in our community.

Thank you for your commitment to our mission of making a great community even better. No matter how great or small the act, every time we give back, we strengthen our community. We truly have many reasons to be thankful. On behalf of our board and staff at HWEC, it is an absolute pleasure to work in such a wonderful, caring community where there is always a sense of kinship and desire to help others. Blessings to you this Christmas and in 2021!



Glenn W. Miller  
PRESIDENT/CEO

COMMUNITY  
*Thankful*

# The differences between overhead and underground power lines

Have you ever wondered why some power lines are visible and some are not?

**T**here are two methods of installing the power lines that carry electricity to your home: overhead and underground. Holmes-Wayne Electric Cooperative members sometimes ask why we use one versus the other, or more to the point, why all power lines aren't installed using the underground construction method. Isn't one method better than the other? These are great questions, and the answer is that each method has its place.

Overhead line construction starts with setting utility poles. Poles can be set in nearly any type of terrain, even rocky. In the case of heavy rock, special equipment is used to auger out the hole. If placement occurs in boggy or wet terrain, many techniques are available to set poles securely. Once the poles are in place, we can string wires and then install equipment, like transformers, fuses, and reclosers. Power can now flow.

Underground line construction requires digging a trench that is deep enough to keep the lines well away from surface activities. Where the terrain is extremely rocky, underground lines may not be an option. Next, wires are laid in the trench directly or placed in conduits for protection. The trench is filled in, and the surface is restored to its original condition. Pad-mounted transformers and additional equipment is installed as needed. Now the system is ready to deliver electricity.

Let's take a look at some of the advantages and disadvantages of each construction method, beginning with overhead lines.

## Overhead construction

### Pros:

Quicker construction, easier to spot damage and faults, less expensive to repair and upgrade, can be built anywhere, any voltage can be placed overhead.

### Cons:

Susceptible to wind, ice, and snow; more vulnerable to damage from trees and vegetation, which requires right-of-way trimming; vulnerable to blinks when

animals and branches contact lines; susceptible to damage from vehicle collisions; less attractive.

## Underground construction

### Pros:

Not vulnerable to damage from tree branches; no right of way trimming required; less susceptible to damage from vehicle collisions; not impacted by wind, ice, and snow; less vulnerable to blinks.

### Cons:

Susceptible to flooding; difficult to locate faults; expensive to repair; fed by overhead lines at some point, making the lines vulnerable to outages and interruptions; limitations on voltages that can be buried underground; can be vulnerable to dig-ins; significantly more expensive; rights-of-way must be maintained the same as for overhead lines, so that maintenance and repairs can be completed.

Determining if power lines should be overhead or underground boils down to what is best for the situation. Underground lines might be ideal in situations where there is a desire to keep the poles and wires out of sight, such as a residential neighborhood, park, or historical area. There are many cities and towns that construct only underground lines for a variety of reasons.

Overhead systems work well when appearance is not a major concern. Examples include extremely long line distances across the country, where the voltages are higher than the limitations set for underground lines.

The ultimate mix of underground and overhead construction used by Holmes-Wayne Electric Cooperative provides you, our members, with the highest possible quality of service at the lowest possible price. Cost, appearance, reliability, maintenance, and future upgrades will drive which is the better approach — overhead or underground.



## 2021 GRADS



*Are your parents  
Holmes-Wayne Electric members?*

If so, you could win more than  
**\$6,300** in scholarships from



Holmes-Wayne  
Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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To obtain rules and applications for the  
**Children of Members Scholarship**

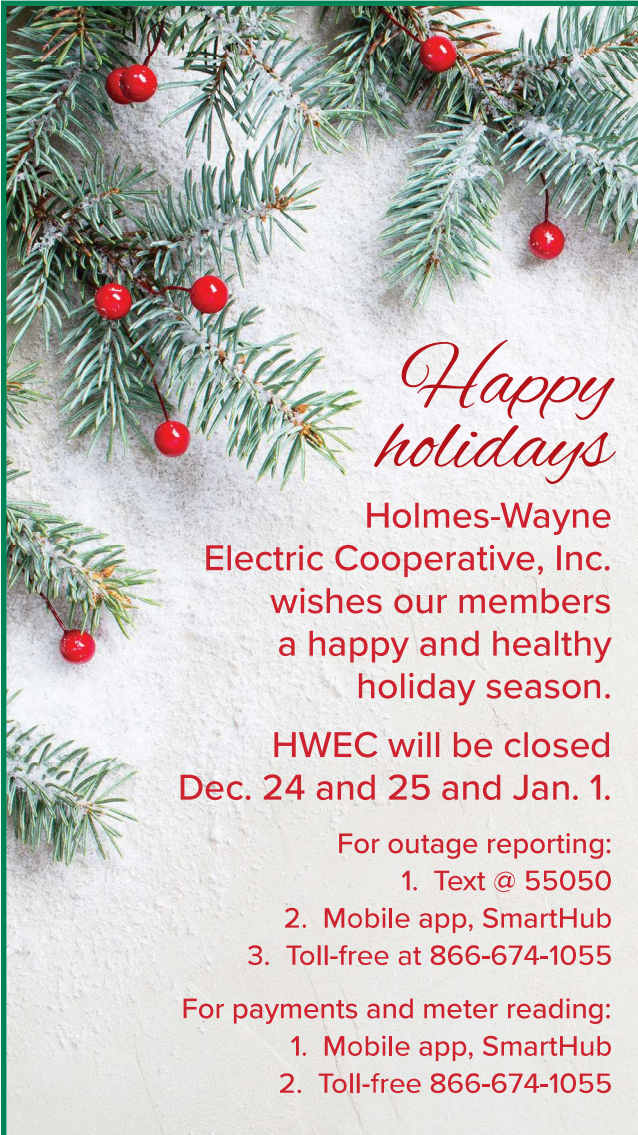
- Visit [www.hwecoop.com](http://www.hwecoop.com)
- Call the co-op at 866-674-1055
- Ask your high school guidance counselor

**Deadline to apply: Jan. 29, 2021**



## Holmes-Wayne Electric holiday gift cards

The holidays are quickly approaching, and it's been a tough year for everyone. Many have reached out asking to help neighbors and loved ones with their utility bills. A gift certificate to assist a Holmes-Wayne Electric Cooperative member might just be the ideal present for your parents, grandparents, children, or someone in need. If you're looking for a useful present for someone you know who is a member of Holmes-Wayne Electric Cooperative, contact us toll-free at 866-674-1055. You have the option of remaining anonymous when giving a gift card.



*Happy holidays*

**Holmes-Wayne  
Electric Cooperative, Inc.**  
wishes our members  
a happy and healthy  
holiday season.

**HWEC will be closed  
Dec. 24 and 25 and Jan. 1.**

For outage reporting:

1. Text @ 55050
2. Mobile app, SmartHub
3. Toll-free at 866-674-1055

For payments and meter reading:

1. Mobile app, SmartHub
2. Toll-free 866-674-1055



**Holmes-Wayne  
Electric Cooperative, Inc.**

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### CONTACT

866-674-1055 (toll-free)

[www.hwecoop.com](http://www.hwecoop.com)

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