



**DAVID VONDRAN**  
CEO/GENERAL MANAGER

## May is Military Appreciation Month



Service. Mission. Country. These three words describe our nation's veterans. They also succinctly describe our core cooperative culture.

While veterans are innately motivated to serve, in a similar vein, electric cooperatives are guided by foundational principles that put our community first. After all, co-ops were founded to bring electricity to rural areas where there was none. In doing so, co-ops powered local economies and helped them to thrive. We believe this close connection to an essential mission is why so many veterans work in the utility industry and why they are such a great fit for us.

Today's veterans are highly skilled because everyone who joins the military is either trained in a tech career field or exposed to advanced technology during their years of service. Many veterans have skills in advanced disciplines such as engineering, electronics or mechanics, which are all beneficial for the utility industry.

Working for an electric co-op is more than a job. There is a clear mission in the work — to help our members and the community. When we work so closely with the community, we can't help but feel a sense of commitment and responsibility to our members. It's like the sense of duty and responsibility that our veterans experience in the military. They feel a deep, personal responsibility and commitment to their co-op team members and to the members we serve.

At C & L Electric, we are grateful to have veterans within our ranks, and we are proud to honor them and their families within our community.

May is Military Appreciation Month, and we hope you'll join us in recognizing the sacrifices veterans have made to our great country — and the many contributions they continue to make to our wonderful community. Veterans, we salute you!



# Simple tips to keep you safe

At C & L Electric, safety is our top priority, every minute of every day. We care about your family's safety at home, too. Each May we celebrate National Electrical Safety Month, but safety is something that should be practiced every day. Please remember these simple, practical steps to ensure your home is safe year-round:

- Overloaded outlets can cause fire hazards. Use smart power strips or hire a licensed electrician to install additional outlets.
- Inspect extension cords for damage before each use. Check for cracked sockets, bare wires and loose connections. Never use indoor extension cords outdoors.
- Keep electrical cords hidden from pets. Never let pets chew on electrical cords, which could cause electrical shock or fire hazards.
- Make sure your electrical outlets are up to code. If you must replace any old outlets, ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs), arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs) and tamper resistant receptacles (TRRs) increase the safety of your home.



MARK GILLILAND

- If you have young children in your home, use safety covers on unused outlets.
- Clean out your dryer duct to improve efficiency and prevent fire hazards.
- Check your electric panel to make sure breakers and fuses are properly labeled and rated for the circuits they are protecting. When replacing a fuse, use the same size.
- Do not replace light bulbs with higher wattage than recommended.

For more electrical safety tips, visit [safeelectricity.org](http://safeelectricity.org).

## Keep lineworkers safe: *Don't attach anything to utility poles*

When C & L Electric lineworkers climb utility poles, they depend on having solid structures underfoot. Political signs, yard sale signs, flags, satellite dishes, fencing, basketball goals and other attachments to utility poles can be dangerous — even life-threatening — to the lineworkers who maintain our vital lines of electricity, communication and other services.

Sharp objects, like staples, tacks and nails, all present dangers for co-op crews, who climb poles all hours of the day and night and in the worst of conditions. Not only can sharp objects cause serious cuts, but if a nail tears an insulated glove, the lineworker is no longer protected from the high-voltage power lines they are working on. In addition, nails and staples may cause a lineworker's boot to slip from the pole, causing a serious fall from a dangerous height.

Under Arkansas law, posting a sign to a utility pole is unlawful and subject to a fine for each day the violation continues. We appreciate your help in keeping our lineworkers safe!



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900 Church St.  
870-628-4221  
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### SHERIDAN OFFICE

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Hours:  
Monday-Friday  
8 a.m.-11 a.m.,  
12:30 p.m.-5 p.m.

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C & L ELECTRIC  
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**Our offices will close on Monday, May 29, in observance of Memorial Day.**



## Benefits of replacing old equipment, appliances

BY MITCH ROSS

Growing up, we had a patriarch in our church whose home we would visit. It was a very traditional environment with traditional values. One such value was posted as a sign in the kitchen, “Use It Up, Wear It Out, Make It Do or Do Without.” The wisdom of that sign has stuck with me into adulthood. While I do believe in this axiom, I have since been able to spend time with engineers, and there is another sort of wisdom that you’re likely to hear if you ever ask an engineer a question. Instead of a straightforward answer, you’ll likely hear something like, “It depends.”

As an energy-efficiency advocate, one of the barriers to improving a home’s energy efficiency is homeowners who share the same beliefs that were so succinctly stated in that sign. It’s a belief I share as well, with the caveat of “it depends.” When doing energy audits, I have been shocked to find HVAC equipment from the 1970s still in operation, as well as refrigerators and freezers from pre-1950! While I am always impressed to find such hardy equipment, I recommend that homeowners with systems more than 20 years old replace them as soon as possible for four reasons:

**1. All good things come to an end! You can count on those units going out sooner rather than later.** If you preemptively plan and budget for a change-out, you can avoid a nasty surprise.

**2. If you wait for the unit to go out before updating, you will be in the position where you must replace it as soon as possible.** For appliances like refrigerators, this means potentially missing great sales that could have shaved hundreds of dollars off the replacement cost. For HVAC equipment, this means the unit will likely fail on the hottest or coldest days of the year — when home comfort is of the utmost importance and when HVAC contractors are at their busiest. Instead of reacting to an emergency, preemptive planning can let you get multiple quotes in the fall or spring with less pressure and get a better deal.

**3. You’ll experience an immediate reduction in energy usage.** If you replace an older HVAC system with a 16 SEER heat

pump or other efficient system, you can often expect to shave 15-25% off your annual energy usage. For other appliances, savings can be significant as well. Look for appliances that are ENERGY STAR® certified, which are rated to be the most energy-efficient.

**4. As a part of the Inflation Reduction Act, many homeowners can qualify for unprecedented tax credits on heat pumps and other efficient systems; in some cases, the credit could cover nearly the entire expense of the new unit.** There has never been a better time to upgrade home systems, and doing so will help lower costs for your family and help us all as we strive to deliver affordable, reliable and responsible energy.

For more information on ENERGY STAR® and the Inflation Reduction Act, visit [energystar.gov](https://energystar.gov) or [rewiringamerica.org/app/ira-calculator](https://rewiringamerica.org/app/ira-calculator). *Mitch Ross is the Energy Efficiency Manager for the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas.*



Look for the ENERGY STAR® symbol on appliances, which are rated as the most energy-efficient.



Manufacturers’ Energy Guide labels provide information on energy consumption and savings.



New energy-efficient appliances can decrease your home’s energy usage and save money on your electric bill.