



**Sumner-Cowley
Electric Co-op., Inc.**

Building on our past. Lighting the way to the future.

P.O. Box 220, Wellington, KS 67152
888-326-3356
www.sucocoop.com

**SUMNER-COWLEY
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

NEWS FROM THE **WHEAT CAPITAL**

SUMNER-COWLEY ELECTRIC CO-OP, INC.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

John Schon
President, District 7

Keith Leddy
Vice President, District 4

Jeff Swanson
Secretary-Treasurer, District 2

John Beard
Director, District 3

Craig Knudsen
Director, District 1

Jim McMullin
Director, District 5

Gabe Schlickau
Director, District 6

STAFF

Coni Adams
CEO

Jordan Creed
Director of Operations

Stacy Wiley
Director of Finance

Abbi Jo Moulton
Member Services/
Communications Specialist

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FROM THE CEO

Clearing the Path to Reliability

Trees are majestic, beautiful and good for the soul. And, we know our members depend on us to deliver reliable power to their homes and businesses. That's why Sumner Cowley Electric strives to balance maintaining the beautiful surroundings we all cherish with ensuring reliable electricity. You might not realize it, but there are several benefits to regular tree trimming.

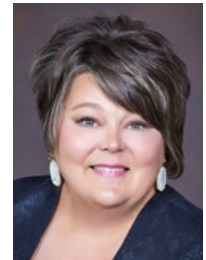
In 2023, we elevated our efforts in vegetation management by leveraging data from our outage management system. This allowed us to identify specific areas with increased outage frequencies attributed to vegetation interference. Our budget allocation for tree and brush control in 2023 exceeded \$426,000, marking an 11% increase from our year-end figures in 2022. We believe that our dedicated commitment to right-of-way clearing will result in enhanced reliability for our valued member owners.

RELIABILITY

Keeping power lines clear of overgrown vegetation improves service reliability. After all, we've seen the whims of Mother Nature during severe weather events with fallen tree limbs taking down power lines and utility poles. While many factors can impact power disruptions, about half of all outages can be attributed to overgrown vegetation. This is why you see Circle G

out in our service territory trimming trees near power lines and keeping our right of ways clear.

In fact, all U.S. electric utilities are required to trim trees that grow too close to power lines. Scheduled trimming throughout the year keeps lines clear from overgrown or dead limbs that are likely to fall, and we are better able to prepare for severe weather events.



Coni Adams

SAFETY

Working near power lines can be dangerous, and we care about your safety and that of our lineworkers. For example, if trees are touching power lines in our members' yards, they can pose a grave danger to families. If children can reach those trees, they can potentially climb into a danger zone. Electricity can arc, or jump, from a power line to a nearby conductor such as a tree.

Any tree or branch that falls across a power line creates a potentially dangerous situation. A proactive approach lessens the chances of fallen trees during severe weather events that make it more complicated and dangerous for lineworkers to restore power.

Continued on page 12D ►

2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION RESULTS

In the heart of rural south-central Kansas, a crucial process unfolds every year that shapes the direction of the rural electric future — the election of directors for the Sumner-Cowley Electric Cooperative.

As a member of this cooperative, you have the unique opportunity to influence the leadership that guides the organization, ensuring that it aligns with the needs and aspirations of its membership.

The election of directors is more than just a routine event; it is a cornerstone of democratic governance within the cooperative structure. These directors play a pivotal role in making decisions that impact not only the day-to-day operations of the cooperative but also its long-term vision and commitment to delivering reliable and affordable electricity to its members.

Pursuant Bylaw IV Section 4: “The open petition period of the Sumner-Cowley Electric Cooperative closed on the last day of business in January (Jan. 31, 2024).”

Accordingly, Section 2 of the same bylaw provides that “if the number of qualified candidates nominated by petition for election as a director in each district is equal to the number of vacancies in each district, then the election of directors shall automatically be dispensed with, and the nominees shall be deemed elected.”

Districts 4, 6 and 7 each had one petition submitted for election. Therefore, the election is complete and **KEITH LEDDY**, District 4; **GABE SCHLICKAU**, District 6; and **JOHN SCHON**, District 7; have been re-elected to serve three-year terms.



The Sumner-Cowley Board of Directors: (back row from left) Gabe Schlickau, director, District 6; Keith Leddy, vice president, District 4; John Beard, director, District 3; and Jim McMullin, director, District 5. (front row from left) Jeff Swanson, secretary-treasurer, District 2; John Schon, president, District 7; and Craig Knudsen, director, District 1.



DISTRICT 6

GABE SCHLICKAU has served two terms on the board. He and his wife, Emily, reside near Danville with their two children, Harry, 14, and Lena, 12. They are active in the local schools and youth sports activities. He is a longtime volunteer of the Harper County Fair Board and 4-H program. Schlickau is employed by CoBank, where he works with agribusiness throughout the state to meet their credit and banking needs. He is an advocate for agriculture, rural development and the importance of the cooperative business model for our quality of life in south-central Kansas.



DISTRICT 7

JOHN SCHON was elected to the board in 2003 and will enter his eighth term. He currently serves as board president. He has earned his Credentialed Cooperative Director and Board Leadership certificates, and received his Director Gold Credential for continued cooperative education. Schon and his wife, Tommie, live in the rural Argonia area.



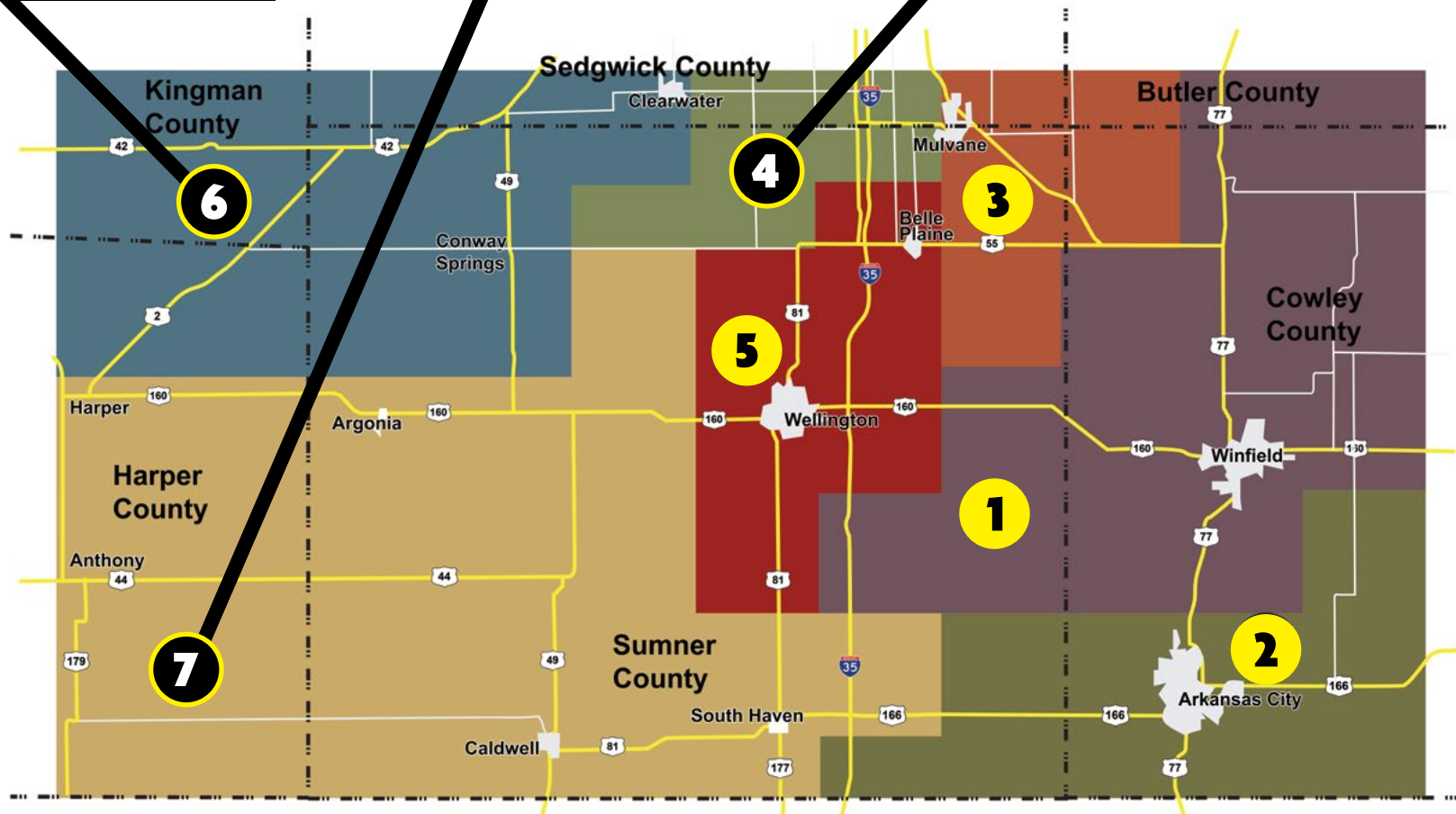
Sumner-Cowley Electric Co-op, Inc.

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DISTRICT 4

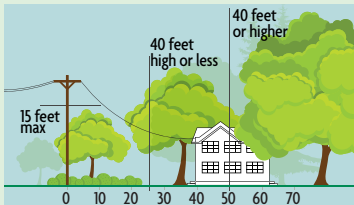
KEITH LEDDY was originally elected to the board in 2012 and will enter his fifth term. He currently serves as board vice president. Leddy has obtained his Credentialed Cooperative Director and Board Leadership certificates and has also earned his Director Gold Credential for continued director training. He and his wife, Michelle, live in the rural Conway Springs area.



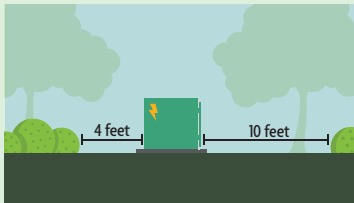
3 Ways to Help Limit Tree Trimming

Did you know electric utilities are required to trim trees and other types of vegetation that grow too close to power lines? We do everything we can to avoid trimming them, but **here's how you can help:**

1. Plant trees in the right place. Trees that will be less than 40 feet tall should be planted at least 25 feet away from power lines (greater than 40 feet tall should be planted at least 50 feet away).



2. Don't block pad-mounted transformers. Plant shrubs at least 10 feet away from transformer doors and 4 feet from transformer sides.



3. Report dangerous branches. If you spot a tree or branch that is dangerously close to power lines, let us know.



Trimming improves safety for all. Let's work together to enjoy the beauty of trees AND reliable electricity.

Clearing the Path to Reliability *Continued from page 12A* ▶

AFFORDABILITY

As a co-op, Sumner Cowley Electric Cooperative always strives to keep costs down for our members. If trees and other vegetation are left unchecked, they can become overgrown and expensive to correct. A strategic vegetation management program helps keep costs down for everyone.

When it comes to vegetation management, there are ways you can help too. When planting new trees, make sure they're planted a safe distance from overhead power lines. Medium-height trees (40 feet or smaller) should be planted at least 25 feet from power lines. Taller trees (over 40 feet) should be planted at

least 50 feet from power lines. You can also practice safe planting near pad-mounted transformers. Plant shrubs at least 10 feet from the transformer door and 4 feet from the sides. If your neighborhood has underground lines, remember to contact 811 before you begin any project that requires digging.

Additionally, if you spot an overgrown tree or branch that's dangerously close to overhead lines, please let us know by contacting Mitch McComb at 620-326-3356.

We have deep roots in our community, and we love our beautiful surroundings. It takes a balanced approach, and our vegetation management program is a crucial tool in ensuring service reliability.

Class of 2024

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Sumner-Cowley Electric Cooperative will award academic scholarships to high school seniors pursuing a post-secondary degree or certification program in the fall of 2024. Recipients must meet the eligibility requirements and will be selected by the scholarship committee. Apply online at www.sucocoop.com or mail directly to Sumner-Cowley Electric, 2223 North A Street, P.O. Box 220 Wellington, KS 67152.

APPLICATIONS ARE DUE MARCH 11, 2024.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Each applicant must meet the following requirements to be eligible for scholarships under this program.

- ▶ The applicant's parents or legal guardian must be a member of Sumner-Cowley Electric Cooperative receiving electric service.
- ▶ Applicants must meet the academic and any other requirements for entrance into the accredited school of their choice.

NOTE: A family member (as defined by SCEC's Bylaws and Policies is a person who, by blood or in-law, including half, foster, step and adoptive kin is either a spouse, child, grandchild, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, nephew or niece) of SCEC Board of Directors and employees are not eligible to participate in the scholarship competition.