

# PARK SPARKS

MAY 2021

PARK ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.



## POWER TO THE PEOPLE *by Sarah Boyle*

Many have noticed the growth we've seen in Park Electric's service area over the last few years. In our office, one of the people most effected by that growth is Tom Kersbergen, our Staking Coordinator. As the Staking Coordinator Tom helps plan system upgrades such as replacing existing underground lines (replows) or planning replacements for poles that were tested and need changed. He also helps to keep our mapping system updated by adding new services as they get electrified. And he is the main point of contact for new or upgrading services and because of that he is a very busy person these days. Below is Tom's explanation of the process to get a new or upgraded service.

When people call needing an electrical service to a new property or if they need more power at an existing service, Tom strongly recommends they start by reaching out to a licensed electrician before contacting Park Electric. A licensed electrician can help determine the service size and overall needs. After determining the service size, making an appointment with Tom is the next step. He will schedule a site visit and plan where to run the power line. He recommends knowing if additional buildings, structures, fences or other things may be added in the future to avoid potential conflicts with the new service. Planning for the future can save money and headache in the long run. The site visit requires a \$200 deposit and this deposit will be credited towards the final cost of the job.

Prior to the site visit, it will make Tom's job much easier and save you time later to visit our website at [www.parkedelectric.coop](http://www.parkedelectric.coop) and complete the New Services application. By completing the form before the site visit, Tom has the information about your service size and requirements as well as the contractors you have chosen to work with in advance. The property should also be clearly marked with flags or marking paint where you plan to build. Some of the things he looks

for while visiting is where the nearest power is located and what the logistics of bringing it to the site might be, whether that would be overhead or underground or a combination of both. Tom works hard to ensure the path is right the first time. Any changes after his visit may add cost and time to the project. Something else to keep in mind is the path the power has to travel. A proposed service that has to cross private property requires an easement. Easements sometimes require lengthy negotiations that can make the process longer and in some cases easements are not granted therefore we must look for alternate routes.

After gathering the information in the field, Tom comes back to the office and works up a plan. This plan includes cost estimates, any easements or permits that may be necessary and membership contracts. The paperwork is then sent out with a request for payment of the estimated cost. No estimates can be given without a site visit and Park Electric will not start any electrical project until it is paid in full. It generally takes 3-4 weeks for the job to get on the schedule once paid, but depending on the time of the year and the size of the project this can vary greatly.

Something important to remember is that because we live in a mountainous region, most of our work is completed in April through late October before the snow flies. Because of this, we see a spring and summer rush of service requests. To ensure that we are able to install the service on your proposed schedule, please start this process two to three months before you need power. Tom is currently booked out 3-4 weeks for the initial site visit. If you cancel this site visit, you must reschedule another one with Tom.

Many resources exist on our website [www.parkedelectric.coop](http://www.parkedelectric.coop) such as the New Service Checklist and the Application for Electrical Projects that can answer any further questions you may have. As Tom says when he leaves the office, headed to a project, "I'm bringing power to the people!" Ready to start a project? Call Tom today!



## Managers Comments *by Matt Haggerty*

With warmer spring weather comes all the projects you've been thinking of since the end of last summer. As you prepare for these please keep electrical safety on your mind as you proceed. I like to review these tips each year as a reminder of how to stay safe around electric lines. As always, don't forget to call 811 before you dig and get all underground utilities located. You need to do this two full working days before you plan to start. That means if you're going to dig on Saturday you better call before the end of business hours on Wednesday.

We have already had numerous incidents where people have dug into our lines. Not only is this very dangerous but it can also be very expensive. Park Electric bills those who dig into our lines for the cost to repair the damage. Most of those bills are well over \$450 and some have been even more than \$1,000. Locating the cable would have prevented ALL of these, and it doesn't cost you a dime!

Keep an eye out for overhead power lines while working on the projects as well. If you see lines in or very close to trees, give us a call. We trim trees in our right-of-way that are in conflict with our power lines for free. Also be on the lookout for low hanging lines while you're out recreating or working. It's not common but occasionally hikers, fisherman, or our members come across overhead power lines nowhere near roads or homes that have been pulled down by trees or come off

of the insulator and are hanging very low. Sometimes even if the line is laying on the ground it's still energized. Obviously, these are all dangerous situations. If you come across one of these situations stay at least 30 feet or more away and direct anyone else in the area to stay back and call us. We will send a crew out 24/7 to figure out the hazard and make it safe.

Another typical issue that comes

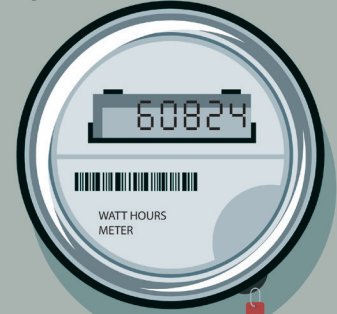


up this time of year can be exposed underground lines. Raging rivers, streams and even road ditches can erode a great deal in a very short time. Occasionally this can expose buried lines of all kinds. Sometimes people plow snow in the winter and unknowingly hit a cubical. This will leave lines exposed when the snow melts off in the spring.

It is very difficult for an untrained person to determine what type of line they are looking at in a trench. Don't hesitate to give us a call. We certainly want to know about the hazard so that we can make repairs to be sure safety and reliability are maintained. And remember treat every line as it is energized. If you do this you will stay out of harm's way.

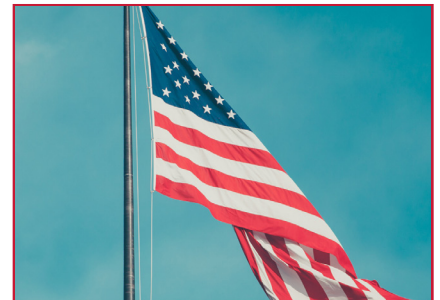
### DO NOT TAMPER WITH YOUR ELECTRIC METER

Meter tampering can result in electric shock, is illegal and increases electricity rates for other co-op members.



- ⊘ Never break a meter seal.
- ⊘ Never open a meter base.
- ⊘ Never remove a meter or alter an entrance cable in any manner.

If you know or suspect that someone has tampered with their meter, please contact us immediately.



NEVER FORGET

MEMORIAL DAY 2021

WE HONOR ALL THE SACRIFICES MADE BY OUR HEROES

The Park Electric office will be closed Monday, May 31st in observance of Memorial Day.