



POWERLINES

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Official Newsletter of Tri-State Electric Membership Corporation

Tri-State EMC Accepting Essays for 2025 Washington Youth Tour

Tri-State EMC is now accepting applications from area high school juniors to compete for an all-expenses-paid spot on the 2025 Washington Youth Tour (WYT).

The weeklong leadership trip offers participants an opportunity to experience our national government and history up close, while also having fun, making friends and gaining leadership skills.

Three delegates sponsored by Tri-State EMC will join teens from other EMCs to participate in the 2025 WYT.

The fast-paced, high-energy program is designed to give students a taste of democracy in action, expose them to the nation's rich history through visits to national monuments and museums, and encourage them to become politically aware citizens.

The trip is an unforgettable journey that includes face-to-face meetings with state and national leaders, leadership training and discussions on important issues with students from other states.

The group travels to Washington, D.C., to connect with more than 1,500 students from across the country. The students cruise down the Potomac River, visit the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery, meet with U.S. senators and representatives, and tour the U.S. Supreme Court Building, Bureau of Engraving and Printing, George Washington's Mount Vernon, Washington National Cathedral and Ford's Theatre.

Students will visit memorials and monuments honoring Presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln and George Washington, and veterans of World War II, as well as the wars in Vietnam and Korea.

They also will watch the U.S. Marine Drum and Bugle Corps and the Silent Drill Platoon perform at the U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial, in addition to spending time at the Smithsonian Institution, Newseum and U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.

One student from each of the three local high schools (Fannin County High School, Copper Basin High School and Hiwassee Dam High School) will be chosen.

Interested students can submit essays at their high schools. The deadline to turn in the essay is Friday, March 14, 2025.



From left, Emma Wood, a Copper Basin High School teacher and chaperone with Tri-State EMC's 2024 delegates Josie Adams, Bella Patton and Olivia McNabb, and Tri-State EMC Human Resources Manager Chris Hulsey.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Tree Trimming Improves Service for All

One of the things we love best about our community is the natural beauty that surrounds us. We are fortunate to have so many trees that offer beauty, shade and a habitat for all sorts of birds and other wildlife. We know that you appreciate our community for many of the same reasons.

At Tri-State EMC (TSEMC), we strive to balance maintaining beautiful surroundings and ensuring safe, reliable, affordable power supply by keeping power lines clear in rights-of-way (ROW). While we recognize and appreciate the beauty of trees, there are three main benefits to tree trimming in ROW areas. However, before touching on the main reasons, you should know what a right-of-way is and how it may affect you.

ROWs are the land we use to construct, maintain, replace or repair underground and overhead power lines. The 20-foot ROW on either side of the line enables the co-op to provide clearance from trees and other obstructions that could hinder the power line installation, maintenance or operation. ROW areas are typically on public land or located near a business or home. TSEMC must be able to maintain the power lines above and below the ROW.

The goal of our vegetation management program is to provide safe, reliable, affordable power to our members, while also maintaining the beauty of our community. Proactive vegetation management benefits co-op members in three tangible ways:

Safety

We care about our members and put their safety and that of our lineworkers above all else. Overgrown vegetation and trees pose a risk to power lines. For example, if trees touch power lines in our members' yards, they can pose grave danger to families. If children can access those trees, they could climb into a danger zone. Electricity can arc, or jump, from a power line to a nearby conductor like a tree.

A proactive approach also diminishes the chances of branches or trees falling during severe weather, which makes it more complicated and dangerous for lineworkers to restore power.



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Reliability

One of the biggest benefits of a smart vegetation management program is reliability. Strategic tree trimming reduces the frequency of downed lines causing power outages. Generally speaking, healthy trees don't fall on power lines, and clear lines don't cause problems. Proactive trimming and pruning keep lines clear to promote reliability.

Affordability

Tri-State EMC is a not-for-profit cooperative, which means we strive to keep our costs in check to keep our rates affordable. This extends to our approach to right-of-way management. If trees grow too close to power lines, the potential for expensive repairs also increases. Effective tree trimming and other vegetation management efforts keep costs down for everyone.

Our community is a special place. We appreciate the beauty trees afford, but we also know our community depends on us to provide reliable energy. In and around your neighborhood you might notice crews spraying, mulching, side-trimming and removing trees. These are crews that TSEMC contracts to clear ROW areas. Cleanup crews will follow two to three days after their initial cutting to clear the debris left behind.

Through right-of-way maintenance, we are better able to keep power lines clear, prepare for future weather events and secure the reliability of the grid.