

THE OUTLET

The Official Member Newsletter of CORE Electric Cooperative

June 2023

PROTECT & PRESERVE



Always looking out

Much of CORE's 5,000-square-mile service area is at high risk for wildfires. We follow a comprehensive wildfire mitigation plan that safeguards you, our employees and the electric grid. Our plan includes:

- Safe, sound **operational practices** backed by advanced situational awareness tools and system settings designed for high-risk conditions.
- **Inspection programs** that identify, prioritize, address and monitor issues that pose fire risk throughout our system.
- Continuous, proactive **vegetation management** that mitigates hazards such as trees touching our lines and ground brush catching fire.
- **System hardening** with improved engineering, equipment and facilities.

- **New technology** such as advanced satellite imagery, non-expulsion fuses, covered conductors, line sensors and panoramic cameras.

- Procedures and protocols that facilitate quick **emergency response and restoration**.

"Preventing wildfires is our primary work every day," said Jordan Ambrogi, Utility Wildfire Mitigation Coordinator at CORE. "Over the last several years, attention to this issue has increased and we've ramped up resources to support our mitigation efforts."

See the other side of this newsletter for additional information, including tips for how you can help mitigate fire risk, and visit www.CORE.coop to read more about our wildfire mitigation plan and programs.

A fresh start

CORE is partnering with Colorado-based FarmBox Foods to grow evergreen saplings in a Vertical Hydroponic Farm housed inside an insulated shipping container to rehabilitate wildfire-affected forests in our service area.

The controlled-climate hydroponic farm we purchased is FarmBox's first to be solely dedicated to tree propagation. FarmBox will operate the indoor tree farm at its home base in Sedalia and conduct research on drought resistance, nutrient dosing, lighting and other growing parameters. The trees will then be transferred to hoop houses to allow the root systems to grow out before they are planted in locations identified with local organizations. In the first three years of the initiative, CORE will plant 15,000 blue spruces and ponderosa pines, both native species in Colorado.

"CORE's partnership with FarmBox to support reforestation efforts in our service territory advances our work to be responsible stewards of the environment," said Jeff Baudier, CORE Electric Cooperative CEO. "As a member-owned cooperative, protecting the natural resources of the communities where we live and serve is a cornerstone of our mission."



Pay by phone number changes Monday, June 19

Effective Monday, June 19, **CORE's pay by phone number will change to (877) 704-2014**. This number will accept payments 24/7. We encourage members to also use the SmartHub account management platform, available 24/7 at www.CORE.coop and as an app for iOS and Android devices. SmartHub recently added more options for phone notifications for many account events.

How you can help mitigate wildfire risk

If you are served by overhead lines, survey them from the meter to the edge of your property and:

- Call our Utility Forester at (719) 412-2182 to report any vegetation that touches lines, transformers or other CORE equipment or facilities. Also report any vegetation that appears singed, browned or scorched by lines and equipment, even if it doesn't appear to make contact at the time you report.
- Report any fully dead trees – evergreens that are completely brown, or trees that have no leaves or needles – or trees that appear to have rot and/or insects in them and appear to be tall enough to hit our lines and other equipment if they fall.
- Let CORE know about excessive vegetation around poles topped by transformers.
- Do not attempt to trim or clear vegetation near or touching CORE equipment. We will mitigate it free of charge.

Colorado's Department of Regulatory Agencies offers these tips to protect your property:

- Use fire-resistant materials in the structure of your home, especially the roof, which is most vulnerable.
- Clear a safety zone around your home and remove trees, leaves, brush and pine needles. Create a zone of at least 100 feet, but know that 200 to 500 feet is often recommended.
- Be sure propane or fuel tanks are at least 30 feet away from all structures.
- If you do not have access to a community water system or water hydrant, get a water storage tank. Make sure your garden hoses reach all areas of the property and keep them visible and in accessible areas.
- Be sure your entrance road is accessible so emergency responders are not delayed. The street address should be easily visible from the entrance to the property.