

News Release



**Woodruff Electric
Cooperative Corporation**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Woodruff Electric Encourages Burning Safety

Controlled, or prescribed, burns can be an important tool for managing and restoring natural areas. Woodruff Electric encourages those thinking of undertaking a controlled burn to follow all regulations and make safety a priority—including the considerations that need taken around power lines.

It is important to first research laws and regulations. The U.S. Fire and Wildlife Service recommends that those conducting a burn have a plan that includes intended irrigation methods, the necessary weather conditions for the fire to take place, smoke management procedures, what protective equipment you will use, and natural characteristics of the site. Avoid burning near public roads or airports, as this can create dangerous visibility hazards.

Keep in mind that despite the best-laid plans, environmental conditions are subject to change, and burn conditions are altered by wind speed, temperature, and humidity. Check the actual conditions on the day of the planned burn before deciding whether to proceed.

Take special note of the location of power poles and lines. Burning a power pole could result in a widespread power outage and be costly for the individual responsible for the fire. The damage to poles depends on the duration of the fire but also on past weathering.

Before you begin your controlled burn, cut all grass and weeds near power poles to reduce fire hazards. The U.S. Department of Agriculture advises the removal of all dead trees within 20 feet of the planned blaze. Water the area near the poles. Be careful to keep water streams out of power lines.

Poles that have sustained any amount of damage must be replaced. If a power pole catches on fire, call the fire department and alert your utility to handle the possible electrical dangers. A pole that catches on fire could create shock or electrocution hazards to those who may be nearby or spark fires in unintended directions from downed lines. Even if you think you have been able to put out the fire yourself, alert the utility to the fact that it caught fire.

Woodruff Electric Cooperative, headquartered in Forrest City, is a member-owned electric utility. Woodruff Electric serves electric power to more than

19,000 homes, farms, and businesses in parts of Woodruff, Prairie, Monroe, Cross, St. Francis, Lee, and Phillips counties in eastern Arkansas. The District offices are located in Augusta, Moro and Barton.

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