

Tennessee CONNECTIONS

SUMMER 2022 | CUSTOMER FOCUSED ⚡ COMMUNITY DRIVEN

Safe, Reliable Power

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**Eighth Graders Prepare
for the Future**

**Two Longtime
Employees Retire**

PHOTO BY
ERIN SMITH



RP₃

Ripley Power and Light Again Achieves the Highest Standard for Safe, Reliable Public Power

Ripley Power and Light Company once again has earned the Reliable Public Power Provider Diamond Level designation. This prestigious award is a testament to RPL's commitment to its employees, customers and community by providing safe and reliable electric service, said Ripley Power and Light President and CEO Mike Allmand.

The RP₃ designation is awarded by the American Public Power Association, which supports not-for-profit, community-owned utilities in more than 2,000 cities and towns throughout the country. The Diamond Level is the highest honor in the RP₃ awards. Only 106 out of 2,000 public power utilities across the United States have earned that designation. Overall, 275 public power utilities nationwide hold the RP₃ designation at all levels.

Ripley Power and Light completed a rigorous application process to achieve this distinction. A panel of utility experts examined RPL's operations in four key disciplines: reliability, safety, workforce development and system improvement. Throughout the process, Ripley Power and Light demonstrated its dedication to exceeding industry standards of practice, Allmand said.

"The utilities receiving the RP₃ designation have proven that they are committed to running a top-notch public power utility by implementing industry best practices," said Aaron Haderle, chair of APPA's RP₃ review panel and manager of Transmission and Distribution Operations at Kissimmee Utility Authority in Florida.

"We couldn't be prouder to be honored with this designation," Allmand said. "This is the culmination of a lot of work from a lot of people who really care about powering our community. But this designation is not a final destination. We are committed to continuing to look for ways to improve our operations and service to our customers."

The RP₃ designation lasts for three years. This is the fifth consecutive time Ripley Power and Light has achieved this distinction. ■



Mike Allmand
President and CEO
Ripley Power and Light



On the cover:

Lineworker Scott Ozment repairs a utility line.

At far left, from bottom, Lineworker David DeLoach, Groundsman Caleb Wright and Lineworker Ronnie Hunter (in seat) prepare to install a utility pole. At left, Groundsman Ty Buckner examines power lines.

PHOTOS BY ERIN SMITH, PURCHASING

Two Longtime Employees Retire

Lucy Harrison: Started as teller & accountant, retires as Ripley office manager

In 1982, Lucy Harrison submitted a job application with Ripley Power and Light Company, not knowing if a job opening even existed. Forty years later, on May 31, Harrison retired as Ripley's office manager.

Born in Ripley, the youngest of eight children, Harrison graduated from Ripley High School and attended Dyersburg State Community College, intending to pursue a career as a school teacher.

She transferred to Memphis State University after one year. She worked at American Greetings while attending college. A layoff from that company led Harrison to Ripley Power and Light, where she was interviewed by then-Office Manager Jane Meadows. She was hired as a teller and began doing the accounts payable.

For a while after starting at the utility, "I still had in the back of my mind that I wanted to be a school teacher," Lucy said.

After substitute teaching a few times, she decided she preferred



accounting. Harrison continued to pursue her degree and graduated in 1986 with a bachelor's in accounting.

She was Ripley Power and Light's accountant for more than 20 years. When Meadows retired, Harrison was promoted to Ripley office manager.

Lucy and her husband, Mark, have three daughters: Christie, Caitlyn and Carly.

Lucy is excited about

retirement because that means she will have more time to travel and enjoy her other interests: hiking, daily workouts trying to stay fit, scrapbooking, gardening and helping with her grandchildren.

"I have a lot of things planned," she said.

Her first trip is to Washington and Oregon this summer with Caitlyn and Carly. She and her husband travel to Boston this fall.

Working at Ripley Power and Light "has been a good job for me," Lucy said. "It's been great to work here." ■

Lynnwood Jackson: Purchasing agent also handled inventory control and warehousing operations

With the encouragement of a family friend, Lynnwood Jackson reached out to Ripley Power and Light Company when his workplace closed. That was nearly 30 years ago. Jackson retired May 31 as the utility's purchasing agent.

Jackson, who was born in Ripley and graduated from Ripley High School, was traffic manager and distribution logistics consultant for Maremont Corp. in Ripley, Loudon and Nashville until 1989. He was working at CR Services in Memphis when that company shuttered in 1993.

"I wanted to stay local," Lynnwood said. "I knew the power company was a good company, stable, would always be in Ripley, and offered potential for growth."

With encouragement from Morris Worlds, Ripley Power and Light's operations superintendent, Jackson applied and got the job working field operations for a line crew. He was promoted to purchasing agent in 1997, also handling inventory control and warehousing operations.

Lynnwood and his wife, Dianna, have four children: Leslie Carter, who has two children, Mady and Jackson; Lindsey Cooper, who has one child, Raleigh; Torrie Morris; and Zach Carver.



Lynnwood's last day of work comes just in time to enjoy the summer with his family in their new swimming pool. He calls himself "an active person" and will devote time to yardwork, gardening, running and going to the gym. He and his wife also like to travel.

While he "absolutely" will miss working at Ripley Power and Light, he appreciates the opportunity to retire.

"I'm still in good health," he said. "I want to spend some years doing what I want to do when I want to do it." ■

More from Ripley Power and Light, pages 20-21



The 2022 West Tennessee Pathways2Possibilities was held in Ripley Power and Light’s multipurpose complex.

Career Expo Gives Eighth Graders a Look at Possibilities

With the intention of developing a future workforce pipeline, the Second Annual West Tennessee Pathways2Possibilities Career Expo was held for eighth graders in March. Merging student interests with corresponding activities, more than 250 exhibitors demonstrated to students that there is a path to a successful career close to home.

HTL Advantage—an economic development initiative of Haywood, Tipton and Lauderdale counties, and a founding sponsor of the P2P event in 2020—once again helped welcome more than 3,000 eighth graders to Ripley Power and Light’s multipurpose complex in Ripley.

The students—who traveled from public, private and homeschools across 10 counties in West Tennessee—were introduced to the opportunities that await them at the many businesses and post-secondary schools in the region. With the help of more than 100 community volunteers, students encountered 85 interactive activities designed to promote awareness of the link between their educational

choices and future employment.

Many community programs target early literacy and elementary school students or hold career fairs for high school seniors. This career expo—modeled on a similar P2P exhibition that has been held in Mississippi since 2013—targets eighth graders, said Robin Sealy, Tipton County Workforce Development Coordinator.

“These students are about to register for high school classes and start planning a path that they can take to assist their successful careers,” Sealy said.

“We’ve learned through studies that if students can connect their curriculum to a career, they’re going to be much more likely to be successful in those classes.”

The expo featured 18 career sectors that are in high demand in West Tennessee, including energy, health care, transportation and manufacturing. Exhibits were provided by private businesses, municipal and public services, and post-secondary schools, such as Dyersburg State Community College and Tennessee College of Applied Technology.

This “shows that you can start a path to every career sector at a community college,” Sealy said.

Many of the attendees visited Ripley Power and Light’s exhibit, where President and CEO Mike Allmand was on hand to talk with students.

Ford Motor Co. also generated excitement as the future construction of Blue Oval City coincides with this targeted age group.

The interactive exhibits helped students engage in simulations of how their talents might be used at



Ripley Power and Light employees, from left, Groundsmen Caleb Wright and Ashton Land, Lineworker Chris Conrad and Groundsman Ty Buckner dress a student (orange shirt) in lineworker’s gear.



Groundsman Matthew Bell, right, explains his job to students at the career expo.

work, including wearing firefighting gear and performing a mock rescue, reviving patients in an ambulance, flying drones and piloting a plane.

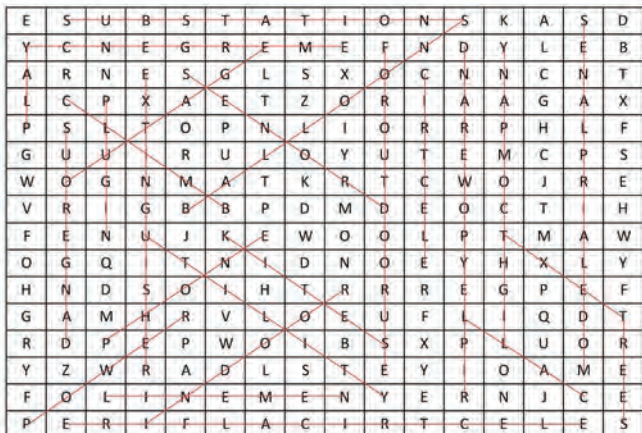
Five-year studies of the P2P event in Mississippi have shown the clear impact it has on the career path of eighth grade students, Sealy said.

Surveys were conducted in the weeks after the West Tennessee expo. Students responded that the expo was a good use of their time. Exhibitor surveys showed a 100% response rate that students were engaged in their displays and asking questions. Teachers and guidance counselors responded to their surveys with the most-discussed topics among their students after the expo. Every one of the 18 career sectors represented was mentioned as a favorite by at least one school.

The P2P Career Expo grew in size and interest this year, after being postponed in 2021, Sealy said.

“We are planning for this to be an annual event. It really exposes these kids to careers that they might not have known we had here in West Tennessee.” ■

Answers to Safety Seek 'n Find from back page



Always working with safety in mind, Lineworker Chris Sanders puts insulated tubing on a power line before starting work.

Safety Practices Earn First-Place National Award

Ripley Power & Light was honored with the American Public Power Association’s Safety Award of Excellence for safe operating practices in 2021—the company’s seventh consecutive win.

In the category for utilities with 60,000 to 109,999 worker-hours of annual exposure, Ripley Power & Light earned first place for safety practices among its electrical workers. The utility had 65,284 worker-hours of exposure in 2021—an increase from past years—and still maintained the fewest number of work-related injuries or illnesses for the year.

The annual safety awards had 318 entrants from across the country. Categories were determined by the number of worker-hours during 2021. Entrants were ranked by the most incident-free records for the year. Those are reports filed by employees who work directly with electrical lines and equipment. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration keeps track of work-related reportable injuries and illnesses, and uses those numbers to determine which utility companies have the most effective safety practices for their workers.

“Ripley Power and Light values employee safety above all else,” said Ripley Power and Light President/CEO Mike Allmand. “We all recognize the importance of going home to our families each day. This is what drives our dedication to safety.”

APPA has issued its annual safety awards for more than 65 years. ■



RIPLEY POWER AND LIGHT COMPANY

www.ripleypower.com

Ripley Office

731-635-2323

150 S. Main St. • Ripley

Halls Office

731-836-7595

409 S. Church St. • Halls

Office Hours

We are open 47 hours a week to serve you better!

7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Monday-Thursday

7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Friday

You can pay your bill ...

- at www.ripleypower.com
 - through bank draft
- at our Ripley and Halls offices
 - in the office night deposit boxes
- at the kiosks at our offices

If you have not been receiving your bills, please call our office immediately so we can verify your mailing address.



Ripley Power and Light offices will be closed

- Monday, July 4, for Independence Day
- Monday, September 5, for Labor Day

TN-200

Seek 'n Find Summer Safety

Hunt for electric safety tips as you learn how to protect yourself and others when you head outside this summer. Find and circle the 25 words or phrases that are listed below in bold. Words can be horizontal, vertical, diagonal or backward.

- Make sure **Ripley Power and Light Company** has your correct **phone** numbers in our **outage** management system.
- **Call** or **text** Ripley Power and Light to report a power outage.
 - Do not go near **substations** or downed **electric** lines.
 - Do not climb **trees** that are close to **power** lines.

- Never **climb** or **play** around **utility** poles.

- Play in open spaces or fields away from power lines so **kites**,

model airplanes, **balloons** or **drones** do not get stuck in the lines.

- Posting flyers on utility poles can be **dangerous** for you and the **linemen** who may need to climb them in an **emergency**.
- Make sure any extension cords that you **plug in** outside are marked **for outdoor use**.
- Never pour water on an **electrical fire**. A fire **extinguisher** that is rated for use on electrical fires should be used instead.
- Do not use **indoor** lights for **outdoor** purposes. *(Answers on Page 21 inside.)*



E	S	U	B	S	T	A	T	I	O	N	S	K	A	S	D
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