

# LIFELINE

COMPANY NEWS AND INFORMATION



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#### Equal Employment Opportunity Policy:

It is the policy of Nelson Tree Service, LLC, and its management to work continually toward improving recruitment, employment, development and promotional opportunities for minority group members and women.

It is the Company's intent to provide equal opportunity to all areas of its employment practices and to ensure that there be no discrimination against any applicant or employee on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, national origin, veteran status, marital status or sexual orientation.

This policy extends to recruiting and hiring, to working conditions, training programs, use of Company facilities, and all other terms, conditions and privileges of employment.

As a field employee, complaints may be made to your immediate supervisor (general foreperson, supervisor), or regional manager. As an employee, complaints may be made to your immediate supervisor, department manager or the Executive Director of Administration. If you cannot report to your supervisor or manager, or if a complaint you have made has not been promptly addressed, you should call the Executive Director of Administration at 1-800-522-4311.

Management will continue to be guided and motivated by this policy, and with the cooperation of all employees, will actively pursue the related goals of equal and affirmative action throughout the Company.


**JEFF JONES, PRESIDENT**

3300 Office Park Drive  
Dayton, Ohio 45439



We completed our Employee Focus meetings last October. As most of you know, we focused on better information and transparency around our safety successes, failures and new commitments.

Our primary focus was to share the WHY behind our safety program and specifically practices preventing Serious Injuries & Fatalities (SIFS). I believe it was important to meet with every Nelson employee to signify the importance of that message and personally deliver our values as clearly as possible.

In our meetings last fall we committed to two new programs to better communicate (listen and talk) with all employees. These new programs are the EverBridge texting program and the Crew Leader Ride Alongs:

- **EverBridge** – EverBridge, as a reminder, is a software app that allows safety and operational leaders to communicate directly with crews. This app gives the ability to text group messages to Mobile Time Clock phones on every crew. By now all crews should be seeing daily updates about weekly safety results (both regional and company-wide) as well as safety reminders specific to the most urgent hazards we face.
- **Crew Leader/GF Ride Alongs** – we began these shortly after last fall's meetings. These entailed each crew leader spending a day with their GF observing positive and sometimes negative behaviors. The idea is for both the GF and Crew Leader to better identify safe practices. While successful, nothing happens 100% in one lesson and we intend to repeat this practice again this Spring.

While all aspects of safety are important, two programs are particularly urgent in my view:

- **Drop zone/danger zone** (trimming and felling) – the work we are doing in many areas of the country is changing. In these areas we are working on more large trees and felling many more trees than we have historically. This change has been gradual and took some time to recognize. Our job observation and near miss data confirms the trend. Given this trend extra emphasis has been placed on tree felling and otherwise dealing with large trees in many times difficult terrain.
- **All Stops** – the best way to get better at something is to practice it. As stated over and over in our Employee Focus meetings, most incidents were witnessed by multiple people who chose not to speak up. Encouraging and practicing all stops BY ALL EMPLOYEES is key to stopping serious incidents.

We will soon begin a follow up series of meetings to continue our efforts for better communication. I look forward to seeing many of you there. In the meantime, I want to thank you for the hard work you've already done in keeping us safe. 🍏

Jeff Jones  
President



## Kevin Forgue Transitions From Safety Director to Part-time Project Manager Role

**KEVIN FORGUE has transitioned to a semi-retirement mode starting this year (2020); he has accepted a part-time position as a Project Manager.**

Kevin began his career with Nelson Tree Service in 1972 in Harvey, Illinois (Commonwealth Edison property). He was 18 years old and started out as a groundperson. He climbed (pun intended) through the ranks of Journeyman and then Foreperson.

In 1982, he accepted a request to transfer to Cincinnati/Dayton Ohio area with the opportunity in being promoted to management. Over the next decade, he led a team of excellent general forepersons managing the Cincinnati Gas & Electric contract.

In 1994, Kevin accepted the position of Safety Director. He maintained that position for the next 25 years.

Kevin will be in the field spending time mentoring general forepersons. "I have spent a great deal of my time in the safety world, which required a focus on incident investigations, tracking OSHA metrics, contributing to the development of Nelson's Safety Culture, utility meetings, etc. I wish to get back into the field (operations) and impact the successful of our front-line supervisors.

A result of my experience in the safety department, I have acquired strong computer/technical and organizational skills and will happy to transfer this knowledge to our new leaders as they enter the management arena.

In addition to one-on-one interaction with general forepersons, I look forward in participating in the development of a Leadership Development program that begins at the Foreperson level. Far too often, an individual is promoted into the general foreperson position without a firm foundation of basic skills required to be successful.

There are at a minimum six categories of basic skills required of a GF: Administration, Management/Leadership, Fleet/Tools Mgt, Operations, Safety/Training and Technical Skills. Each of these categories have numerous sub-topics – all requiring various level of understanding and/or an ability to execute.

My goal is to organize current resources available, identify the gaps and develop a list of options to round out a comprehensive apprenticeship program for the management position." 🍎

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*Kevin, thank you for your years of service  
and commitment to Nelson Tree Service!*

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## Effective October 1, 2019 the following organizational changes took place:

Nelson has a strong history of promotion from within as you can see from the impressive track records of the employees below. It is that strong leadership and long standing knowledge of the organization that makes Nelson Tree stand out as the solid organization we are known to be.



**John Reis** – John started his career at Nelson Tree back in 1982. He has risen through the ranks as he successfully managed crews and provided excellent service to our customers. John is currently responsible for Region 468 including Ameren IL, Ameren MO, ATC in WI, Consumers in MI as well as several smaller utilities. He is also responsible for Region 473 in FL. In total, John manages over 700 employees. **John is being promoted to the position of Sr Vice President.**



**Kip Erickson** – Kip has been at Nelson since 1994 when he was hired as the Regional Manager for NY. Under his direction over the past 26 years, Region 463 has expanded and become a leader in Nelson's success as an organization. At this point in his career, Kip has requested to take more of a leadership and less of a day-to-day role in the operation. Kip will continue as Vice President where he will oversee general management of Regions 463 and 464.

## Region 463 has been divided into two regions.



**Joe Proko** – Joe has been with Nelson since 2000 where he worked his way from a Groundman on a crew to a Regional Supervisor before his promotion to **464 Regional Manager**. He has demonstrated tremendous operational leadership over the years and we look forward to many more years of growth in Region 464 under his guidance.



**Mike Taylor** – Mike has been with Nelson since 2004 and he too came in as a Groundman and has worked his way through the ranks to a Regional Supervisor before his promotion to **463 Regional Manager**. Mike will be responsible for Region 463 with a focus on one of Nelson's largest customers, National Grid.



**Doug Bryden** – Doug began his Nelson career in 2007 as a Groundman. Doug worked his way up the ladder to GF and has been a GF on National Grid in NY for the past 6 years. **Doug was promoted to Supervisor in Region 463.**



**Stephen Bongiorno** – Stephen has a long history with Nelson. He was first hired in 2008 as a Foreman on a crew. He worked in NJ and NY over the years before becoming a GF on NYSEG in 2012. **Steve was promoted to a Supervisor in Region 464.**



**Inspection Day**  
Our team in California on PG&E.

## California here we come!

On Thursday November 7th, seventy two employees from region 472 headed to Cali. This group included myself Mike Turner and Brandon Ayers, the two supervisors, we took four Gf's , Shaun Williams, Kris Hylton, Jeff Gardner, Dave Hurley, 24 crews and headed to Cali for the experience of our working careers. Most of us had been on some extended storm trips, but nothing like this. We were headed to Cali as the first crews to ever represent Nelson in California. No Pressure!

It took us 5 days just to get to California. Then another day to get to where we needed to be in California. Keeping everyone focused on the drive was a difficult task, but we made it incident free. Step one completed.

Now we had to complete 2 days of orientation. This included the California Wild Fire planning, setting up our work site with all the additional tools we needed just in case a fire did break out. Roping and rigging that needed to be done on just about every limb to be cut. Dealing with different varieties of trees that aren't native to what we were used to back home. Far more intense than what we were used to doing on the home utilities. The training was helpful and had us prepared for the work we were about to get into. Step two completed.

Next, the reason why we made the trip, getting to do some real tree work. The trainers in the orientation were accurate in their assessment of the work we would be doing. We were removing trees up to 120 feet in height

and 60" DBH MONSTERS, while roping and rigging every bit of them. Most had experienced trees of this size in the past, but no one was used to doing these types almost every day. The terrain was mountainous and just about all of our work was done manually, so the buckets we brought along were mostly used to shuttle our people and equipment. No accidents or incidents. Step three completed.

Finally, one last task to complete. Getting everyone home safely for Christmas. One full day's drive in California. Then 5 more days drive across the country. We made it home safely. Our 45 day road trip was completed.

There are many individual's that need to be thanked for making this a successful trip. Dave and Bev Emmons for their onsite ground support preparing our equipment and employees for the long trip and helping our employees with log books, Jo Ann in Dayton who spent hours on rosters and many other things. We need to thank Barry for all his help with payroll, and everyone else in Dayton who contributed to the California project. Michael Colantuono, Don Gumble and our entire safety group. Jeff, Tim and Bob for all their support during this project.

This again shows how Nelson Tree Service LLC works as a team. This was truly a team effort and would have not been a success if everyone on the team didn't do their part.

## Above & Beyond



Lou Martel (GF), Pete Wanczyk (FA), Jason Berg T-1, Tim Erickson



Members of the Nelson Tree Service family have a long history of going out of their way to help others even when it's not their job. In October of 2019 these men saved the life of a man in Monroe, New York. It's this kind of compassion that defines our organization. **We are proud you are part of the NTS team!**

## A Job Well Done!

1/30/2020

To: Regional Manager  
Regions # 464 & 709

Dear Nelson Tree Service,  
We had a couple of your tree crews on our property removing dead ash trees a couple of days ago. These gentlemen were very professional and knocked on my door, explained what they were doing, and did I have any questions about the removals. I told them I was a former employee, and I am now retired, and I respect good employees for what they do. Then they started to perform their work, and I watched them perform their job in a very professional way, wearing all their safety gear, and also being respectful for my property at the same time. At the end of their job, I thanked them and told them they did a very nice job, and that I saw they took pride in the work they did. I will include their names, and Hope a copy of this letter goes to them, and I am also contacting the person in charge of your lifeline magazine, hoping to get some of this information into their next issue. I will put all their names onto the next page.

Again, I would like to Thank Nelson Tree Service for training their employees to respect other people and their properties, and doing their job in a safe manner.

Former Nelson Employee:  
Steve Monica

### Employees from Regions # 464 & 709

Chad Wright – General Foreman

Christopher Tompkins – A Foreman

Matthew Kerr – A Foreman

Donald Seguin

Gavin Lincoln

Damien Smithers

Jake Cryderman

Jake Regan

Hunter McPherson

Ryan Sidodi



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## A Mobile Time Clock & Emergency Notification Tool

Everbridge functions much the same as these types of notifications. When a company or government agency needs to get information out fast, this is the tool. Many cities, counties, states and the federal government use Everbridge as a tool for notification of emergency situations, weather updates and routine communication. EverBridge, is a software system that allows safety and operational leaders to communicate directly with crews. This app gives the ability to text group messages to Mobile Time Clock phones on every crew.

You have likely had a text or phone call with a message from your region manager, the safety director or the president.

This system allows us to get a message direct to the crew leader and reduces the length of time information gets from the company headquarters to the crew leader and trimmer in the field.

The Mobile Time Clock phone will routinely get these messages from your region manager, safety director, or the company president to share pertinent information that applies to your work task. This may be an alert about high winds coming to the area that will increase the chance of an outage, a special alert, a recall on equipment, strategic safety messages or congratulations for an incident free week.

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*When a company or government agency  
needs to get information out fast, this is the tool.*

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## ATC Light Up the Holidays

The City of St. Francis has well-lit proof that working with American Transmission Co. helps keep the lights on for the holidays.

Two tall evergreen trees near an ATC transmission tower on city property needed to be removed to ensure the safety and reliability of the electric grid. The city and ATC met to discuss possible options and decided to time the work for early December so that the City could use the trees for their official city Christmas trees.

“While we can’t allow trees or tall-growing vegetation in our transmission rights-of-way, we with work landowners and municipalities to find positive solutions whenever possible,” said ATC Vegetation Management Manager Michelle Stokes.

ATC vegetation management contractor, Nelson Tree Service, removed the lower branches and moved the treetops to the two locations the City requested.

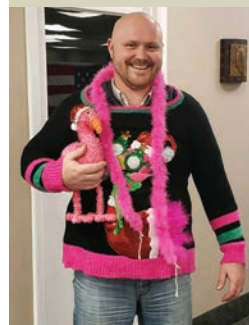
“Thank you for your assistance in topping the trees under the wires at the Library. It was a huge success,” said City of St. Francis Director of Public Works Melinda Dejewski. “The tree top outside the Civic Center is now our official City of St. Francis Christmas tree and we are getting so many compliments on it. Thank you again for working with us on this project.”

ATC works to balance its obligation to operate its facilities safely and reliably with its commitment to be a respectful neighbor. For safety and reliability reasons, trees and other vegetation are controlled and managed around electric transmission lines and facilities. 🍎

*Pass along my sincere thank you to those on your team involved with this effort.*

**Michelle Stokes**  
Manager - Vegetation Management  
American Transmission Company

## Christmas Fun



This picture was taken of Jon McConnell when he visited the Dayton Office in December. It was ugly sweater day in the office and he was a good sport and agreed to wear Barry’s sweater while he was there.



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**Mandy Okrez**

p: 440.384.3340

e: [aokrez@arborwear.com](mailto:aokrez@arborwear.com)





3300 Office Park Drive  
Dayton, Ohio 45439

## AUTOMATED FLAGGING DEVICES



Nelson Tree is in the process of making our work sites less hazardous by separating you from the distracted driver. Flaggers are at risk of being struck by a distracted driver every second of every day when flagging. To reduce this hazard, and keep our employees away from traffic, Nelson will begin providing these AFD units (automated flagging devices) to crews involved in areas with a high occurrence of flagging.

Some locations may not yet see these devices because not all state DOT offices approve of their use. Both AFD systems remove the employee who currently flags from the traffic area, and allow that crew member to return to tree trimming tasks out of harm's way. In the near future, some of you will likely see these devices added to the fleet in your area. 🍏