



# Our family tree

## Responding to Hurricane Maria



**By Romeo Correa, Project Manager**

On September 20, 2017, the island of Puerto Rico was hit by a devastating hurricane that caused an island-wide power outage. This single event left more than 3.3 million people without power.

After Hurricane Maria made landfall and ravaged her way through Puerto Rico, Wright Tree Service (WTS) was enlisted to help with restoration efforts. I received notice at the end of October 2017 that I would be headed to Puerto Rico for what was initially a 4-month duration. I was chosen in part because I have experience working in disaster situations both as a WTS project manager in Southeast Texas and as a former active duty member of the U.S. military. I have had the chance to respond to and work several storm and emergency events in my immediate area and abroad.

As soon as we were notified of this mission, we started moving equipment towards three staging areas to get them shipped to Puerto Rico. Unlike our normal stateside storm response, we could not just convoy or drive to the area that was impacted by the storm. There were only two ways for us to get the equipment there; by barge or plane. Either transportation method had its own difficulties. Before we could load the equipment onto a barge, we had to make sure the fuel was a certain level. We also had to grease the bare metal on the hydraulic cylinders in order to avoid rust build up during the eight days at sea. This process was new to WTS and we went through an interesting learning curve. Preparing for the storm restoration reminded me of the military's response to an emergency — the dates and times of equipment deployment were ever changing but were still expected to be met.

*(continued on page 12)*



## Hurricane Response

More than 200 WTS employees were deployed to the Southeast to help with restoration efforts following Hurricane Florence in September and Hurricane Michael in October.

### ¿USTED PREFIERE LEER ESTA REVISTA EN ESPAÑOL?

Esta en nuestra página de internet! Escanee el código QR con su teléfono inteligente o dirijase a **[www.wrighttree.com](http://www.wrighttree.com)** y haga clic en **Newsletter**.



## NEW, ON THE MOVE & CERTIFIED

Congratulations to the following WTS employees who were recently appointed, promoted and certified!

### NEW

- ▶ Anthony Brown, General Foreman (GF), Southwest Division
- ▶ Phillip Kelley, Safety Supervisor, All Divisions
- ▶ Kelsie Ketchum, Payroll and Billing Specialist, Corporate Office
- ▶ Adam Larson, Regional Manager, North Division and Minnkota Division
- ▶ Sarah McFadden, Payroll and Billing Specialist, Corporate Office
- ▶ Chelsea Medearis, Payroll and Billing Specialist, Corporate Office
- ▶ Ricardo Perez Serrano, GF, Division 25
- ▶ Edward Ritter, GF, Southwest Division
- ▶ Heather Zook, Payroll and Billing Specialist, Corporate Office

### ON THE MOVE

- ▶ Markus Allison, GF, Division 55
- ▶ Byron Amaya, GF, Division 45
- ▶ Anna Arritola, GF, Pacific Division
- ▶ Michael Banks, GF, Southwest Division
- ▶ Brian Christensen, Safety Supervisor, North Division
- ▶ Rafael Garcia, GF, Lone Star Division
- ▶ Jeff Gilmore, Division Manager, Division 45
- ▶ Wilman (Daniel) Gonzalez, GF, Mountain States Division
- ▶ Rodney Hartline, GF, Division 45
- ▶ Justin Henson, GF, Southeast Division
- ▶ Juan Hernandez, GF, Division 45
- ▶ Jack Hill, GF, Southwest Division
- ▶ Marco Lopez, GF, Southeast Division
- ▶ Ricardo Luis Perez, GF, Division 25
- ▶ Chad Miller, GF, Pacific Division
- ▶ Julio Morales, GF, Southeast Division
- ▶ Josh O'Connor, Assistant GF, Pacific Division
- ▶ Brad Parks, GF, Lone Star Division
- ▶ Nick Rohrbaugh, GF, Division 25
- ▶ Mathew Ryman, GF, Division 80
- ▶ Mark Smeltzer, GF, Division 45
- ▶ Chris Sutton, GF, Division 55
- ▶ Francisco Villasana, GF, Division 80

### CERTIFIED

#### New International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborist®

- ▶ Michelle Chaffee, Foreman, Pacific Division
- ▶ John Cheeseman, Foreman, Division 65
- ▶ Mark Dugan Jr., Foreman, Division 65
- ▶ Emanuel Hernandez, GF, Mountain States Division
- ▶ Dan Klein, GF, North Division
- ▶ Luke Miller, Foreman, Southeast Division
- ▶ Micheal Myers, Foreman, Division 65
- ▶ Philip Radel, Foreman, Minnkota Division
- ▶ Wendy Richardson, Foreman, Pacific Division
- ▶ Christopher Selover, GF, Division 65
- ▶ Dale Silbernagel, Foreman, Mountain States Division
- ▶ Scott A. Smith, GF, Mountain States Division

#### New ISA Certified Utility Specialist™

- ▶ Dale Silbernagel, Foreman, Mountain States Division
- ▶ Scott A. Smith, GF, Mountain States Division
- ▶ Erik Terwey, GF, Minnkota Division

#### Retirees

- ▶ John Bigham, GF, Central Division
- ▶ Larry Bryant, GF, Southwest Division



## From the Treetop Setting the Pace



### By John Church, Regional Manager

Since I joined WTS twenty years ago, we have had record growth nearly every year and have continued to top our achievements with an almost unheard-of consistency. That being said, this past year was one that deserves recognition and reflection.

WTS responded to three hurricanes again, as we did in 2004, but this year we had a truly staggering number of employees respond. More than 700 of our brothers and sisters worked safely for weeks and months on end to restore power to areas ravaged by the hurricanes in multiple states and Puerto Rico. Our response to Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico allowed us to establish a new extension of our company on the island and we look forward to continuing to help the areas affected by storms and rebuild their communities. What truly impresses me about our company and family is not just our willingness to work in a storm and assist with restoration, or take over a portion of a contract, but rather our desire to invite the people we encounter to be a part of our family. We go out of our way to take care of each other and be each other's Brother's and Sister's Keeper.

Our entire management team has worked in the field, and therefore understands what is required to succeed and stay safe at every level. Our management team works closely with the people currently in the field because we know that the person in the field doing the work has the most valuable insight into the job.

Many of our departments are leading the way in the vegetation management industry. Our fleet, risk, safety, and training & development departments continue to be on the cutting edge and set the pace for our competitors to follow. Our programs dedicated to continued education, like the GF School we host at our corporate office multiple times a year, ensure that WTS will stay a leader. We encourage our employees to continually look into ways to improve their jobs and our company in general.

I believe we should all look back at 2018 with pride in what we have accomplished together and trust that WTS will continue to set the pace for the industry in 2019.

### SUBMIT A SAFETY SUGGESTION!

#### At Wright Tree Service, safety is our number one value.

If you have a safety suggestion, compliment, concern or general comment, we invite you to submit it to our safety suggestion box. Find it online at [www.wrighttree.com](http://www.wrighttree.com), or use your smartphone to open the QR code on the right. The code will direct to the safety suggestion box, allowing you to submit your suggestion easily from your mobile device.





## Safety Education & Training TRAINING TOOLS SPOTLIGHT:

# The Future of our Safety Program



**By Phillip Kelley, Safety Supervisor**

I decided to come back to WTS after a two-decade hiatus because I strongly believe WTS has well-trained and motivated employees whom positively impact the vegetation management industry. I am so excited by the opportunities and changes that I have seen within WTS during the short time since my return. As a new safety supervisor, my main responsibilities differ from others in this role as I am not assigned a division but serve and support training and development in all divisions in the WTS family, from upper management to the crew level.

For the last 25 years, I have climbed trees, been a production arborist, and experienced all aspects of arboriculture. I worked on line clearance in Iowa, managed crane removals in Georgia and worked with historic tree preservation in New York City. I have volunteered and judged numerous tree climbing competitions, worked as a contract climber, and have spent the last nine years as a professional trainer for arborists while working as vice president for North American Training Solutions. These unique experiences have allowed me to travel the U.S. and the world, provided an opportunity to work with a wide range of people and companies, and gave valuable insight into many different operations. Now that I have returned to WTS, I plan to use my experiences to facilitate positive change and growth throughout the organization.

We will provide better and consistent leadership training to the Safety, Education and Training (SET) team and the general foremen. We will empower them with knowledge, resources and support so they can perform at the highest level and communicate in a positive way to their crew members. We will also work closely with crews in the field to discover the obstacles they face on a regular basis and determine the training needed to overcome them. Our main goal is to equip each crew member with the tools needed to provide excellent service to our clients.

These changes will not happen overnight, but we hope the systems and techniques that we develop over the next year will make each crew safer, more productive and happier.

## Corporate DOT Audit Award

Through the Corporate Department of Transportation (DOT) Audit Program, Risk Manager Rocky Palmer recognizes employees with branded duffle bags when they have successfully completed a random DOT audit on a WTS truck and have received written documentation from a DOT officer.

Those deserving of the recognition since the last fall include:

- ▶ Casey Bowman, Foreman, Central Division
- ▶ Clayton Bruch, Foreman, Mountain States Division
- ▶ Victor Chavarria, Foreman, Central Division
- ▶ Santos Corado Campos, Foreman, Lone Star Division
- ▶ Lee Crites, Foreman, Minnesota Division
- ▶ Aleksander Echelle, Foreman, Southeast Division
- ▶ Noe Fierro, Foreman, Central Division
- ▶ Brady Hillegas, Foreman, Division 25
- ▶ Jonathan Hornback, Trimmer, Minnesota Division
- ▶ David Johnson, Foreman, Minnesota Division
- ▶ Jesse Jones, Foreman, Southeast Division
- ▶ James Kohls Jr., Trimmer, Southeast Division
- ▶ Dalvin Padilla-Ardon, Foreman, Central Division
- ▶ Christopher Pardee, Foreman, Southeast Division
- ▶ Thomas Pearson, GF, Central Division
- ▶ Tyler Rima, Foreman, Central Division
- ▶ Robert Wotring, Trimmer, Division 25
- ▶ John Zwart, Foreman, Southeast Division



## Spring Safety Challenge

**Congratulations to the 2,610 employees who won a pair of gloves during the 2018 Spring Safety Challenge!**

Over the three-week long Spring Safety Challenge, over 800 employees participated in submitting 227 safety hazard photos. All of the hazard submissions fall into one of six categories: PPE, DOT, Equipment, Trees, Utilities, or Home/Office.

**"We had good examples of incidents, including a description of what went wrong and worked well regarding handling an incident once it occurs. It is also helpful to see the photo submissions to better understand the hazard."**

– Anonymous employee (survey response)

We look forward to the future of our safety culture at WTS and will continue to look at feedback from our employees to improve our challenges year after year.

## Saluting Branches

On September 19, WTS employees across the U.S. participated in the 4th Annual Saluting Branches Day of Service. Saluting Branches is a non-profit organization that organizes volunteer tree and landscape care for U.S. veteran cemeteries. Each volunteer donated more than 10 hours to beautifying the cemeteries.

### North Division

- ▶ Aaron Crawford, Foreman
- ▶ Dakota Blakeney, Trimmer

### Division 45

- ▶ Abel Guerrero, Foreman
- ▶ Jose Perez, Trimmer
- ▶ Pedro Condado, Trimmer
- ▶ Ron Gibson, Work Planner
- ▶ Salvador Torres, Foreman
- ▶ Sean Kovatch, Foreman

### Southwest Division

- ▶ Afton Stanko, Division Supervisor
- ▶ David Lee Coffelt, Foreman
- ▶ Dewey Wayne Fare Jr, Foreman
- ▶ Randall W Thomas, Trimmer

### Division 25

- ▶ Brad Shearer, Project Manager
- ▶ Chris Gaston, GF
- ▶ Dakota Taylor, Trimmer
- ▶ Daniel Kennan, Foreman
- ▶ Jeff Blackburn, Trimmer
- ▶ Joe Summers, Trimmer
- ▶ Ken Venzke, Division Manager
- ▶ Thomas Miller, Trimmer
- ▶ Tim Roberts, Foreman



## Responding to Hurricane Maria

*(continued from page 9)*

The next phase of action was to prepare the employees for deployment to the unknown. I was tasked with organizing travel to the island for 55 employee-volunteers, including myself. This was challenging at first because we were all from different divisions across the United States. That meant that in addition to preparing for seven-day work weeks and being far away from their families, the employees also had to adjust to my management style, which was likely different from the style they were used to.

Employees arrived in Puerto Rico on Nov. 13, 2017 — 47 days after the hurricane struck the island. We immediately faced difficulties setting up crews, communicating with our home office in West Des Moines, Iowa, and contacting the utility company. Cell phone usage was just about nonexistent at first and electricity was limited. Generators had been the primary source of power on the island since September. The restoration effort was also in its infant stage and we had arrived a few days before most of our equipment and trucks. Once all our equipment arrived in Puerto Rico, we began working with the linemen to set up a staging area and coordinate a plan for the work ahead of us.

In addition to planning, setting up equipment and making good contacts on the island, we also had to make sure the employees adjusted to life in Puerto Rico as smoothly as possible. We experienced all the issues a crew of 55 men in a new country can experience. Some of these guys had never been away from their homes for such a long amount of time. We had to deal with stress, issues at home, a hectic seven-day work week and homesickness. I sometimes felt like I wore many hats; I was a preacher, marriage counselor, psychologist and father. My time in the military prepared me to help with a lot of the challenges my employees were experiencing, because I had either been through them myself or knew someone who had.

Once all the logistical issues were worked out, we started the grind of storm restoration work. Our main focus was to trim trees around power lines, but we also did an array of other things to help the operation. The team of employees did whatever was necessary to keep the operation moving forward without sacrificing safety. We maintained the safety culture that has been instilled in us from our very first day at WTS even though we encountered hazards daily. Driving in Puerto Rico was one of the most concerning safety challenges that we noticed early on. Wrecks and fatalities happen frequently here on the island due to the unsafe driving conditions. We often must drive through broken traffic lights and around fallen trees. The mountains also have steep inclines, tight roadways and uneven pavement. A lot of the power lines run through the hills, so we had to deal with these obstacles every day.

Since we have been on the island, the local population has been very inviting. We have felt welcomed by the Puerto Rican people, also known as the Boricua. Whenever I have personally spoken to land and homeowners, they have always been very thankful to us for the sacrifices we have made to volunteer to help them. I admire the people and culture there, because even in their darkest times, they show a determination to press forward and keep the island moving. Hurricane Maria had destroyed many things on the island, but she could not destroy the perseverance of the Boricua people.

# News from the Branches

## CENTRAL DIVISION

"The workers that were at my residence today were very courteous and professional! They did a very nice job on our trees and bushes and such fine cleanup that I wouldn't know they had been here had I not seen them. Fantastic job! I so appreciate the respect they showed. This crew is an asset to your company!"

**An Omaha Public Power District (OPPD) customer complimenting GF Bill McDowall, Foremen Sheldon Scheibeler and Hector Armendariz, and Trimmers Hector Armendariz Jr., German Castaneda, Edwin Cepeda and Jaden Beaverson**

"The tree-trimmers from WTS were here at my home this afternoon to trim tree branches and limbs away from the power lines. These gentlemen did outstanding work. I am impressed with their competency, focus on their work, and their excellent communication with one another. I am grateful for their high level of professional skill."

**An OPPD customer complimenting several crew members**

"I'd like to single out the men who delivered excellent service yesterday. WTS GF Bill McDowall and his crew helped sort out a few miscommunications that ultimately resulted in WTS taking down a dead tree on my property near pole-to-pole power lines. The entire crew from WTS did an excellent job. Thanks!"

**An OPPD customer complimenting GF Bill McDowall and several crew members**

"Earlier this week, I contacted you about issues with a tree trimming job and ruts left in my yard. The very next morning I was contacted by Bill from WTS. He agreed to make things right by having his crew repair some other tree damage on my property. Bill's crew was here today, and they did an outstanding job! Thank you to Bill, his crew, and WTS for a job well done! I'd also like to thank OPPD for their continued good responses to customer problems and for contracting with a truly professional tree company."

**An OPPD customer thanking OPPD and WTS GF Bill McDowall, Foremen German Castaneda and Victor Ibarra, and Trimmers Luis Maya, Jacob McDowall and Travis Scheibeler**

"Due to storm damage that resulted in power outages and branches in the power lines, we have used the services provided by WTS twice in the past 4 months. I was impressed with the

professionalism of the crew each time. It's a hard, dangerous job and I'm so thankful for the services provided by the young men employed by WTS."

**A Kansas City Power and Light customer complimenting several crew members**

"In late May or early June, your crew trimmed and took down a tree on my property that was shorting the power lines to my home. Because of the landscaping and fencing it was hard to maneuver around the tree. The crew demonstrated finesse and skill in dropping the tree sections to avoid any damage. It was a well done and timely performed job."

**A Westar Energy customer complimenting several crew members**

## NORTH DIVISION

"I would like to commend the WTS trimming crew that worked on my property. Dustin Hart, Charles Moyer and Brian Emert did a "tree-mendous" job in stubbing off a tree leaning over Ameren's power lines. The clean up they did when the job was complete was exceptional. The entire crew was so courteous and efficient, and I wanted to compliment them for their efforts."

**An Ameren customer complimenting Foreman Dustin Hart and Trimmers Charles Moyer and Brian Emert**

"One of the WTS crews has been working in Decatur, Illinois all day and these guys are awesome. They have done such a good job. There's not a stick laying anywhere! They were courteous, professional and as quiet as they could be with chainsaws and chippers. They have just been unbelievable."

**An Ameren customer complimenting Foremen Robert Yette and Jeremy Nailer, and Trimmers Matt Lofland, Charlie Thompson, Josh Longhta, Kris Furness, Jared Wells and Thatcher Rodmaker**

"Your crews are great! They were very professional, and safety minded. They did a very thorough job trimming and nice job cleaning up when they were finished. They also announced themselves before starting the job, which was appreciated. Foreman Jason Heddy was extremely professional, and I was very impressed on his and the entire team's focus on safety."

**An Ameren customer complimenting Foreman Jason Heddy and Trimmers John Keisler and Jeremy Tedford**

## CENTRAL DIVISION

### Good Samaritan

On the morning of July 19, Work Planner Jordan Sutherland was driving through a neighborhood in Omaha when he noticed a man in a safety vest standing at the top of a ladder using a stick saw cutting a large branch without being safely tied to the tree.

Before Jordan could approach the man, the branch swung down, taking out the ladder and landing on top of the man as they hit the ground. Jordan pulled in the driveway and immediately called 911. He then moved the branch away from the man and comforted him as best he could until the police and ambulance arrived. The man's leg was twisted badly but that seemed to be his only injury.

Congratulations to Jordan Sutherland for being a Brother's and Sister's Keeper even outside of work!

## CENTRAL DIVISION

### Arbor Day

WTS gifted two trees to the children at Piper Elementary School in Kansas City, Kansas to plant during Arbor Day. ▼





## NORTH DIVISION

# Fighting Dehydration

Foreman Jason Nibbe was picking up his job site when he was approached by a 56-year-old female. The female stated she was thirsty and possibly becoming dehydrated. Jason was previously employed as an EMT and noticed the signs of dehydration and possibly heat exhaustion. He walked the woman over to a shaded area and had her sit down, gave her some cold water and contacted EMS. Jason remained with the female on site until EMS arrived and provided care for her. Great job, Jason!



## NORTH DIVISION

# Peoria Zoo

Wright Tree Service and Ameren Illinois partnered together to provide freshly trimmed tree and shrub branches to the animals at the Peoria Zoo.

## DIVISION 25

# Dale Carnegie Graduates

Recently, General Foremen Chris Gaston and Guy Miller graduated from the Dale Carnegie Immersion Seminar. Chris earned two "Outstanding Performance Awards." Guy earned two "Breakthrough" awards and an "Outstanding Performance Award." Congratulations, Chris and Guy!



"I received a letter in the mail and read about how Ameren and WTS partnered together to donate the trees and branches they cut down to the Peoria Zoo. I think that is absolutely wonderful!"

**An Ameren customer complimenting WTS North Division**

"I had the absolute best tree service workers ever! Damon, Devin and the team of guys were so professional and polite. They definitely exceeded my expectations."

**An Ameren customer complimenting Foremen Devin Muscarella, Tyler Bechtold and Josh Stephens, and Trimmers Joe Magurany, Robert Noll and Aaron Bushrow**

"Last week, your tree trimmers came to our home to trim trees near our power lines. The crew was polite and very professional in the way they explained what they were going to do as well as when they cut the limbs. When they were finished they cleaned all the debris from the trimmings, even using a blower to remove the wood dust. This group gave us excellent service and are a credit to your company!"

**An Ameren customer complimenting GF Sam Hott, Foremen Andrew Siensem and Nate Polson and Trimmers Danny Lunny and Colton Lyons**

"The two employees assigned to our lane, Sam Gatley and Trevor Taylor, did a superior job. They went out of their way to make sure they contacted the homeowners and lane traffic was never halted and they were meticulous in their clean up."

**An Ameren customer complimenting Foreman Sam Gatley and Trimmer Trevor Taylor**

"WTS did really good while on my property. They were really fast, extremely polite and they did a good job cleaning up. It was a pleasure to have them here."

**A Menard Electric customer complimenting Foreman Kyle Wallace and Trimmer Cody Smith**

## DIVISION 25

"WTS employees showed up at my house last night around 9 p.m. to clean up a downed tree. They were so professional, polite and made safety a priority! I want to say thank you to the crew that was here. They were great guys!"

**An FirstEnergy customer complimenting Foreman Tyler Green and Trimmer Logan Bechdel**

◀ Left to Right: Chris Gaston and Division Manager Ken Venzke; Project Manager Brad Shearer, Guy Miller and Ken Venzke.

## MOUNTAIN STATES DIVISION

"WTS employees Patrick and Waylan just finished a job in our alley clearing the power line from a forest of gangly elm trees that had rubbed the insulation from the line. They did an awesome job and they were very professional. The area was very clean and tidy when they were done. A big thank you to both!"

**A Black Hills Energy (BHE) customer complimenting Foreman Patrick Evans and Trimmer Waylan Hedine**

"A crew from WTS came to our home to remove tree limbs that were in areas near electrical lines. We were very impressed with their work effort and good results."

**A BHE customer complimenting GF Scott Smith and several crew members**

"I was very pleased with the service that you provided to me. The WTS crew that worked on my property were great."

**An Xcel Energy customer complimenting Foremen Juan Sanchez and Gerardo Gonzalez, and Trimmer Gabino Guereca**

"The crew working the Cripple Creek Colorado area is one of the most professional and polite support units around. They follow the local speed limits and always attempt to give civilians walking a wide berth. They're well-trained and have an outstanding 'can do' attitude."

**A BHE customer complimenting Foremen Patrick Evans and Dillon Doaust, and Trimmers Christopher Hinman and Kenneth Peek**

"WTS employees Raul & Saul took care of the Right of Way in my back yard perfectly. It was very clean and well cut. They were very polite and respectful. Hopefully they keep coming back!"

**An Xcel Energy customer complimenting GF Jarrod Johns, Foreman Raul Serrano and Trimmer Saul Torres**

"Jose Herrera and his crew were working on my property and in the alley trimming the trees around power lines. They were a very nice group of young men. They were polite, answered all my questions and were careful not to step on the plants in my yard. They did a great job trimming and cleaning up. I am so happy at how nice it looks!"

**An Xcel Energy customer complimenting Foreman Jose Herrera and several crew members**

"I had a great experience with your crew! They took down a giant tree and had to create a large safety zone in the process. They were very helpful, friendly and responsive!"

**An Xcel Energy customer complimenting GF Emmanuel Hernandez, Foreman Juan Sanchez and Jose Palacio, and Trimmers Ricardo Reyes and Hugo Sanchez**

"One of the WTS crews came to my house to remove my neighbor's tree that had been blown over by a very strong wind. The tree was on the power lines and on my neighbor's shed. The crew members did a great job."

**An Xcel Energy customer complimenting Foreman Juan Herrera, trimmer Jose Alvarenga and groundmen Eduardo Lira and German Guereca**

"Daniel came to my house to look at the piles of brush that were left in the woods. His crew came the next morning to remove them. I appreciate the quick response!"

**An Xcel Energy customer complimenting GF Daniel Gonzalez and several crew members**

## PACIFIC DIVISION

"I'd like to compliment the arborists working at our house today. As they pulled up this morning, they very politely requested that we move our vehicles from under the trimming area, so they wouldn't get scratched by any falling branches. They also removed all brush from the street, lawn strip and sidewalk. Thank you."

**A PacifiCorp customer complimenting several crew members**

"WTS has been working in my neighborhood for the last few days. Yesterday my neighbor's house was broken into and the guys from WTS heard the window break, called the police, and confronted the intruder. He ran off. I wanted to pass along this information because the WTS crew went way above and beyond to help. Just wanted to say, thanks for being a positive part of the community!"

**A PacifiCorp customer complimenting Foreman Cameron Zatterberg and Trimmers Eric Anderson and Mitchell Adair**

## WTS OF THE WEST

"I saw a crew working in my neighbor's yard. I mentioned to them that I would like some chips if that was possible. One of the crew members said the truck had just been emptied, but that he could dump some in my yard in a couple of days. The next day when I came home, there was a large pile of chips right where I wanted it. Thank you so much. I will put those to good use. I really appreciate it."

**A Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) customer complimenting GF Josue Herrera, Foreman Jorge Cisneros and Timmer Candido Mariscal**

## SOUTHEAST DIVISION

"This is by far the best crew AEP has partnered with for clearing their power lines. The men are very professional, courteous, and eager to answer any questions one may have. They leave the work site looking neat and clean. I'd recommend them to anyone. Jeff and the crew were very informative, so I knew what to expect. Thanks guys! Great job!"

**An American Electric Power (AEP) customer complimenting GF Kevin Brown, Foreman Jeff Mullins and Trimmers Richard Curry and Charles Ooten**

"The WTS employees that worked on my property were three of the hardest working young men I have seen in a long time. They were courteous, efficient, and ran a no-nonsense operation. They removed four trees in my yard and you can hardly tell anyone has been here."

**A Blue Grass Energy customer complimenting GF Joey Williams, Work Planner Devin Lynn and Groundmen Daniel Lannum and Austin Reed**

"The two guys working at my home did a nice job. They have been very nice, respectful and have not left a mess."

**A Blue Grass Energy customer complimenting GF Marco Lopez and Trimmer Cameron Burgess**

### PACIFIC DIVISION

## Putting out fires

On July 26th, a Wright Tree Service crew was heading back to the show-up yard at the end of the day when they saw smoke rising in the air. The crew pulled over and got out to check the situation. A homeowner was struggling to put out a large fire in the field next to his house and garage. The crew quickly called 911, then ran back to their trucks to retrieve their fire extinguishers to help control the fire. One crew member found a hose in front of house and used that to spray the fire. When the firemen arrived, the two flaggers on the crew then helped direct traffic away from the hazard. Without the help of the crew, the fire could have been a lot worse, potentially resulting in the loss of a house or garage. Thank you to Foreman Derek Bedford, Flaggers Leslie Mills and James Kruger, Trimmer Scott Heiner and Apprentice Matt Carter for going out of your way to help others and being Brother and Sister's Keepers!

### PACIFIC DIVISION

## The Future Generation

Foreman Charlie Fassett's son, Jackson, pretending to be a WTS employee while his father completed tree work for a family member. ▼

### WRIGHT TREE SERVICE OF THE WEST

## Hazard Training

WTS of the West employees participated in an Electrical Hazard Training event on May 30 in Sacramento, California. The training was hosted by SMUD. WTS of the West Safety Supervisor Erik Sveum also held an arc flash demonstration and training during the event.



"WTS did a great job. They were very nice, professional, quick and efficient!"

**A Gulf Power customer complimenting Foreman Kyle Driggers and Trimmer Clayton East**

"I initially contacted WTS about damage to my fence that occurred while they were working on my property and they sent their employee Damon to repair the fence. Damon was very courteous and worked extremely hard to make sure the fence was the same type as the original. Thank you!"

**A Gulf Power customer complimenting Foreman Damon Allen**

"I just want to say thank you and an amazing job well done! Your crew was called out to remove a tree limb from a power line in my area. The crew went above and beyond to make sure the job was quick, organized and quickly cleaned up afterwards which helped me tremendously! I only wish there were more places to leave a positive review, so other people could see how thrilled I am with your tree company, and the crew members that work for you."

**A Louisville Gas & Electric (LG&E) customer complimenting several crew members**

"WTS was taking down a large tree on a property next to mine and several large branches fell down on my property. I left a voicemail on the WTS customer line asking to talk with the local supervisor in charge of the job. Within minutes I had a call back from Alex, the local foreman. He said he would make sure his crew cleaned up the branches. By the time I hung up the phone and walked over to the next block to confirm my request with the crew, they were already in the process of cleaning up. What wonderful, rapid, and responsive service for someone who isn't even a client! You have my gratitude and my admiration."

**A LG&E customer complimenting several crew members**

## DIVISION 45

"Some of your employees trimmed our tree near power lines this afternoon and it was the first really positive experience I can remember having with a tree company. Your workers were professional, courteous and respectful, and best of all, they left our tree looking full and good. We appreciate that."

**An AEP customer complimenting several crew members**

"Your crew did a great job clearing out trees in my backyard. Not only did they rationalize the area, but they cleaned up so nicely. Thanks!"

**An AEP customer complimenting several crew members**

"While I was driving, I noticed that a woman's car had died in the middle of an intersection. I saw one of your trucks pulled over and two WTS employees jumped out to help her. In this day and age, when everyone is quick to complain, I wanted to be quick to sing your company's praises. Well done to the guys who jumped out of the truck to help!"

**A Duke Energy customer complimenting several crew members**

"The crew working next to my house did a great job today. They checked my yard to see if anything needed to be cleaned. They also asked to take a break in my yard under a tree and I told them they absolutely could. When they were finished, there was no sign that they had been there. They worked very hard in high heat and humidity."

**A Duke Energy customer complimenting GF Hector Vazquez and several crew members**

"We had a serious tree problem in our back yard, mostly caused by old trees and bad weather. We noticed that the trees were hanging over electrical wires so we contacted Indianapolis Power & Light. They agreed that the work had to be done, so they sent WTS to us and we were glad they did. The crew was lead by a fine man named Torrijos, who was courteous, friendly, and obviously very experienced. We are so glad he and his crew did the work and we are very pleased and satisfied with the job."

**An Indianapolis Power & Light customer complimenting Trimmer Miguel Torrijos Alcantara and several crew members**

## SOUTHWEST DIVISION

"I want to personally thank WTS for bringing out a truly professional group of men. They have treated us with respect and are very skilled in their work."

**An Oklahoma resident complimenting GF Scott Ogden, Foreman Roman Iwanski and Trimmer David Haddox**

## LONE STAR DIVISION

"I want to thank WTS for going way out of their way and proving that there are still wonderful people out there. A very special girl I hold close to my heart started college at Midwestern University this year. She was trying to get home to visit her family when her alternator went out on her car and broke down. These lovely gentlemen stopped everything they were doing to help her. They not only changed her alternator, but also noticed that her car had a bad belt and changed that for her too, so she could make it home safely for the holiday weekend. It's scary enough to break down in your hometown, but to break down in an unfamiliar city so far away from family is terrifying! These men made her day and will never be forgotten! They were heroes for the day!"

**An Oncor customer complimenting GF Brian Crowe, Foreman Wayne Larsen and Trimmers Chad Wallace and Martin Jones**

"WTS did an amazing job trimming behind my home. The workers were very nice and respectful. They rang my door bell and asked permission before they entered my backyard to pick up debris."

**An Oncor customer complimenting multiple WTS crew members**

"Our neighborhood suffered a power outage that began about 1 a.m. on Sunday. We learned around 8 p.m. that the issue was caused by 40 - 50 trees interfering with power lines at the back of someone's property. WTS sent in a small army of trucks, crews and equipment at approximately 9 p.m. to trim the trees in the dark. Shortly after midnight on Monday, our power was restored. Your team responded promptly and efficiently, and it is very much appreciated!"

**An Oncor customer complimenting GF Jose Rodriguez and several crew members**

"WTS was at my house today trimming trees and it looks absolutely wonderful! I want to thank the four young men who worked in a timely fashion to trim the multiple trees on my property. They did a great job and now I know I don't have to worry about my power going out due to trees touching the lines. I am extremely satisfied!"

**An Oncor customer complimenting GF Reymundo Hernandez, Foreman Ruben Sanchez, Trimmers Genaro Martinez, Javier Lozano, Juan Chamu and Cipriano Zarate**



"I want to thank you and your crew for doing such a great job trimming the live oak tree in my yard. Everything was completed as you said it would be and we appreciate the care you gave to the tree that we love!"

**An Oncor customer complimenting GF Donaldo Ortega, Foremen Alvaro Mejia and Jose Alvarez and Groundman Javier Jurado**

## DIVISION 65

"The WTS tree trimmers that worked in my yard were careful, industrious and professional in all aspects of their work. The oak tree in my yard was a challenge because the branches had grown through the high voltage wires. Removing this tree was dangerous and delicate work. I watched your crew and they carefully climbed the tree, then roped up, cut and lowered various branches to the ground. It was difficult work and it took some time, but finally they were able to remove the trunk. I was impressed with how well they worked as a team. After the tree was removed, the crew carefully collected all the branches and related debris and the men were careful to not trample the flower plantings in my yard, which I appreciated."

**A DTE Energy customer complimenting several crew members**

"The WTS employees were awesome. They were doing utility tree work in the yard behind us while we were doing some trimming in our yard. They helped us safely trim a couple of high branches and chipped the branches we had trimmed! They were a very personable group of guys."

**A DTE Energy customer complimenting several crew members**

"Your employees have been terrifically courteous all day long as they took down four trees at our next-door neighbor's house. They hand-sawed when they could have been power-sawing, turned off the noisy chipper when they weren't chipping something and spoke to one another in what the elementary school would call level 2 voices, not level 4 (outside) voices, even though they were talking tree to tree. They also took their time, were courteous and patient with each other and worked safely."

**A DTE customer complimenting several crew members**

"WTS was contracted by our utility company to remove a large tree branch that had fallen on our house just above a power line and rested on a thin tree. We were originally told it could be weeks until someone could come out, so we called some tree removal companies to give us bids. However, WTS showed up the day after we reported the tree to DTE. They were able to get their massive truck back into a tight spot in my backyard and had the branch down safely and quickly through a systematic approach using pulleys, ropes and safety equipment. Both workers were friendly, professional, and beyond helpful. Thank you so much. The work you did could not be more appreciated."

**A DTE Energy customer complimenting several crew members**

"Michael and Clayton did an awesome job. They were very professional, and they cleaned everything up when they were finished."

**A DTE Energy customer complimenting Foreman Michael Merglewski and Journeyman Clayton Zielinski**

"WTS was in our area recently and the crew members were working next door to me. We had some burning bush limbs that my husband trimmed laying in our yard to be taken away. However, my husband ended up in hospital, so they never were disposed of. I politely asked one of crew members if he could take them from our yard. The gentleman was very kind and generous. He disposed of the branches for us and even cleaned up the area where they had been. I want to thank you so much for having very kind and generous workers. Thank you so much."

**A DTE Energy customer complimenting GF Chris Posten and several crew members**

"Cornelius and Coty did an excellent job trimming trees that were becoming a problem around our power lines. They were polite, efficient, professional and represented your company well. I am very satisfied with the service they provided."

**A DTE Energy customer complimenting Foreman Cornelius Smith and Trimmers Coty Griffin and Matt Anderson**

"Ted worked hard on my property and did a very good job."

**A DTE Energy customer complimenting Trimmer Ted Doan**

## DIVISION 65

# Fire Rescue 911

On August 14, WTS Foremen Nicholas Polhamus and Tyler Joehlin noticed a teenage girl crying and yelling while they were parked outside her house. She told them that her house was on fire. Nicholas and Tyler quickly called 911 and asked permission to put the fire out if possible, which they were granted. They entered the home to see a very small fire in the microwave caused by an aluminum coffee cup. With clear communication, teamwork, quick thinking and training, the men were able to safely put out the fire and remove all children and animals from the residence. Fire and rescue officials arrived several minutes later and thanked the men for their help. Great job, Nicholas and Tyler!

## DIVISION 65

# Clara's Hope

In February, Clara's Hope, a nonprofit organization that supports foster and adoptive families in Livingston and Genesee Counties in Michigan, held their Third Annual Auction fundraiser. WTS donated a day of service for the Clara's Hope auction. The homeowner that won WTS's donation was pleased with the work done and grateful to WTS for participating in the auction.

*Left to right: Trimmer Thomas Pacheco, Foreman Joseph Young and Trimmer Tom Sievewright (Not pictured: Foreman Andrew Spreeman)▼*



"From the moment the big clean WTS trucks pulled up in front of our home until they pulled away after two days of hard work in high humidity, the team of trimmers, climbers and groundmen performed their jobs with professionalism and efficiency. It is obvious from the results of their work that they take great pride in what they do. Their attention to detail and safety is highly commendable and their affable personalities and coordinated teamwork made having them around a truly enjoyable experience. They were courteous, friendly, and approachable; the crew made sure that we, as homeowners, understood what they were doing at every step of the clearing and trimming project. They even made sure we got a heads up when the shredder/mulcher was about to start so we could close our windows and protect our hearing, and they politely asked us to move to safer areas when we got too curious. My compliments also to the foreman and to those who are responsible for training, as these arboriculturists, aka "suburban lumberjacks" were a pleasure to watch and to meet. Thank you for a job well done!"

**A Lansing Board of Water and Light customer complimenting several crew members**

"Yesterday I spoke with Brandon about a tree in my yard. He was very pleasant to talk to and he said that he would have a crew take care of the tree. The crew came by today and did exactly what he said. I want you to know how nice and respectful he was. You should be proud to have such a nice young man to represent your company."

**A Rochester Hills, Michigan resident complimenting GF Brandon Szyska**

## MINNKOTA DIVISION

"Thank you for taking our tree down! Your crew did a great job."

**An Alliant Energy customer complimenting Trimmers Tony Merritt, Crystal Moon and Kim Skrabel**

"One of WTS crews has been working at my house over the past few days. They have been extremely respectful and polite, and I wanted you to know how lucky you are to have them as employees."

**An Alliant Energy customer complimenting Foreman Justin Strobusch, Trimmers Ian Schehr, Kim Skrabel and Josh Brunner**

"The crew was professional, friendly and courteous, performed quality work, and treated me and my property with care and respect. They did a great job trimming and cleaning up after they were finished."

**An Alliant Energy customer complimenting GF Boyd Rasmussen, Foreman Joey Sanswald and Trimmer Tony Merritt**

"Your crew did an excellent job while working at our home. We have a large maple tree in our front yard with an extensive garden under it. We're having a wedding reception for our son here in August, so I was concerned about damage to our plants. The crew came when there wasn't anyone home and yet when I got home I was thrilled to see that there wasn't any damage to the garden. Thank you for being so careful!"

**An Xcel Energy customer complimenting several crew members**

## DIVISION 85

"Joel Rendon and his crew are doing a perfect job. They are all great guys."

**A Cobra Energy Services customer complimenting Foreman Joel Rendon and several crew members**

### ALL DIVISIONS

## GF School

GF School is a weeklong program held multiple times a year. Attendees participated in various trainings and presentations to learn more about elements that affect their jobs as employees of the company, such as accounting, safety, risk, human resources processes and procedures, payroll, bids and contracts, fleet, marketing and communications, and more. Several corporate office employees and departments present throughout the week to provide each attendee with information to help them do their jobs.

The goal of GF School is to always provide valuable information on how to be an effective manager and leader while learning current industry best practices and regulations. Whether you've been in your role for a few months or for years, there is always something new for attendees to learn. GF School is a great opportunity to network with other employees and learn what is working with their crews and what's not.

In September, 23 employees gathered at the corporate office in West Des Moines, Iowa, for GF School. Congratulations to all participants!



▲ (Left to right) Back: Darrell Pardoe (Division 25), Tyler Armstrong (Minnkota Division), Esquiel Mendoza (Lone Star Division), Jeff Ziebell (Central Division), Jack Hill (Southwest Division), Byron Amaya (Division 45), Mitch Burchard (WTS of the West), Mike Allen (Pacific Division), Perry Banta (Division 65), Larry Ratliff (Wright Tree Service of the West), Francisco Villasana (Division 80), Matt Brown (Central Division), Jason Yost (North Division), Scott Moorshead (Mountain States Division), Risk Manager Rocky Palmer, Daniel Gonzalez (Mountain States Division), Safety Manager Wes Tregilgas, Anthony Brown (Southwest Division) Front: Corey Olcheske (Division 45), Josue Berricel Ramos (Division 85), Carl Speaker (North Division), Josh O'Connor (Pacific Division), Josue Palacios (Division 80), Alexis De Los Santos (Southeast Division)