



Cooperative Update

from

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Co-ops: By and for the community

When you think of October, pumpkins, Halloween and beautiful fall foliage naturally come to mind. But October is notable for another reason—it's National Co-op Month! This is the time of year when cooperatives across the country, including Fairfield Electric Cooperative, celebrate who we are and more importantly, the members we serve.

Cooperatives are different than other types of businesses. When the market declines to offer a product or service, or does so at a very high price, co-ops intervene to fill the need.

Similar to how Fairfield Electric was built by members who came together to bring electricity to our community, cooperatives are conveners for the common good. Your electric co-op exists to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to you, the members of the co-op. Equally important is our mission to enrich the lives of the members we serve.

As a co-op, we are well-suited to meet the needs of the community because we are locally governed. Fairfield Electric's leadership team and employees live right here in the community. Our board of trustees, who helps set long-term priorities for the co-op, live locally on co-op lines. These board members have been elected to the position by neighbors like you.

We know our members—that's you!—have a valuable perspective. That's why we are continually seeking your input. Whether through community events, our social media channels or the annual meeting, we want to hear from you.

Our close connection to the community ensures we get a first-hand perspective on local priorities, thereby enabling us to make more informed decisions on long-term investments, such as community solar programs, equipment upgrades and technology.

Another feature that sets our co-op apart from a traditional utility is one of our core principles, "Concern for Community." We support many local service organizations through our Operation Round Up® program. We provide programs for the young people of our communities. We support our local economic development organizations.

Ultimately, the larger community benefits from these programs because of you and your neighbors. You empower the co-op through your membership and through your participation in and support of these programs.

We hope you will think of Fairfield Electric Cooperative as more than your energy provider, but instead, as a local business that supports this community and powers economic development and prosperity for the people.

We will continue to learn from our members about their priorities so that we can better serve you—because your electric co-op was built by the community, for the community.

Right-of-way maintenance is vital

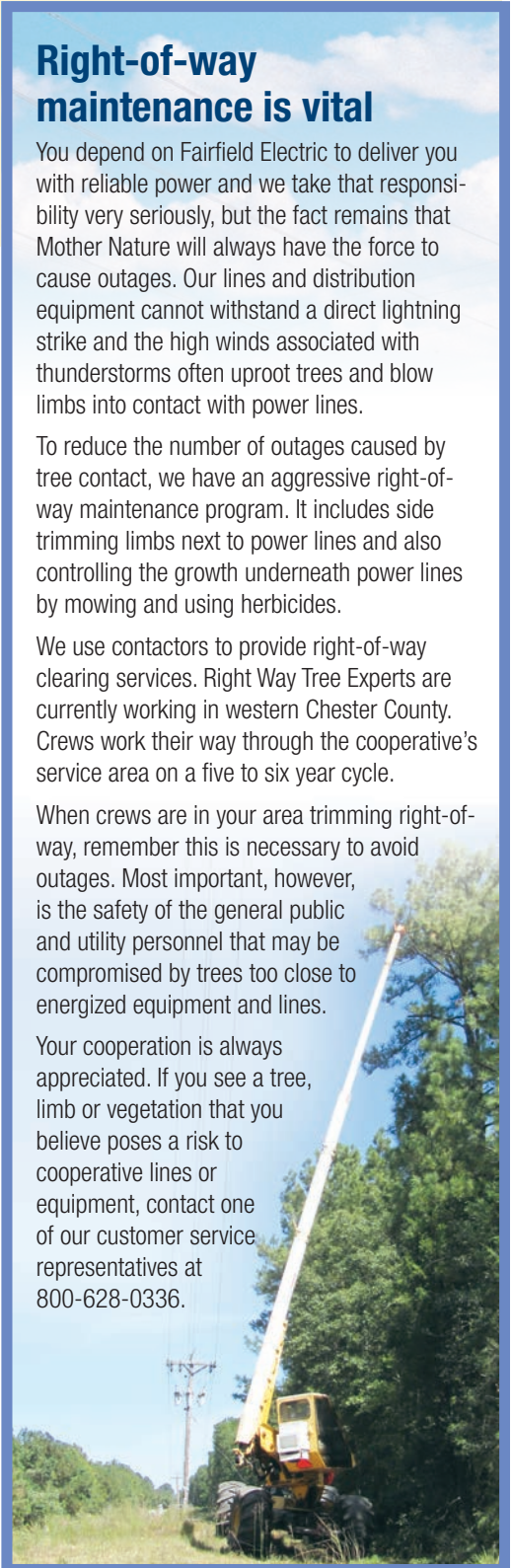
You depend on Fairfield Electric to deliver you with reliable power and we take that responsibility very seriously, but the fact remains that Mother Nature will always have the force to cause outages. Our lines and distribution equipment cannot withstand a direct lightning strike and the high winds associated with thunderstorms often uproot trees and blow limbs into contact with power lines.

To reduce the number of outages caused by tree contact, we have an aggressive right-of-way maintenance program. It includes side trimming limbs next to power lines and also controlling the growth underneath power lines by mowing and using herbicides.

We use contractors to provide right-of-way clearing services. Right Way Tree Experts are currently working in western Chester County. Crews work their way through the cooperative's service area on a five to six year cycle.

When crews are in your area trimming right-of-way, remember this is necessary to avoid outages. Most important, however, is the safety of the general public and utility personnel that may be compromised by trees too close to energized equipment and lines.

Your cooperation is always appreciated. If you see a tree, limb or vegetation that you believe poses a risk to cooperative lines or equipment, contact one of our customer service representatives at 800-628-0336.



An aggressive right-of-way maintenance program is the key to reducing outages. Right Way Tree Experts are currently working in western Chester County.

Fairfield Electric Board Members Earn

DIRECTOR GOLD CERTIFICATION



Derial L. Ogburn and Peggy D. Swearingen recently earned the Director Gold Certificate from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

In order to obtain the Director Gold Certificate, directors must first earn NRECA's Credentialed Cooperative Director Certificate (CCD) and Board Leadership Certificate (BLC) plus three additional credits from the BLC courses. Director Gold demonstrates to co-op members and other stakeholders, a directors' ongoing commitment to advancing their knowledge and performing their fiduciary duty to the best of their ability.

An ever-changing business environment has imposed new demands on electric cooperative directors, requiring increased knowledge of changes in the electric utility business, new governance skills and a solid knowledge of the cooperative principles and business model. Fairfield Electric Cooperative has a commitment to work through NRECA to sharpen this body of knowledge for the benefit of their electric cooperative consumer-owners.

NRECA represents the nation's more than 900 private, consumer-owned electric cooperatives, which provide electric service to more than 42 million people in 47 states.

Simplify The Way You Pay Your Electric Bill By Enrolling In

This free, easy and convenient payment option allows you to pay your bill on time every month without writing a check or calling in to the payment line.

BANK DRAFT

- When you sign up, Fairfield Electric will begin automatically drafting your checking or savings account for the amount of your monthly electric bill on the due date.
- You will continue to receive statements showing the kWh use and the amount due, but will not have to write a check or visit the office.
- There are no convenience fees

To sign up, call (800) 628-0336 to speak to a member service representative.

FALL ENERGY SAVING TIPS

The seasons are changing and there are opportunities to save energy in your home or business this fall. Here are some tips to help you lower your usage.

- ▶ **Take advantage of heat from the sun.** Open curtains on your south-facing windows during the day to allow sunlight to naturally heat your home, and close them at night to reduce the chill you may feel from cold windows.
- ▶ **Cover drafty windows.** Use a heavy-duty, clear plastic sheet on a frame or tape clear plastic film to the inside of your window frames during the cold winter months. Make sure the plastic is sealed tightly to the frame to help reduce infiltration. Install tight-fitting, insulating drapes or shades on windows that feel drafty after weatherizing.
- ▶ **Adjust the temperature.** When you are home and awake, set your thermostat as low as is comfortable. When you are asleep or out of the house, lowering the thermostat can save energy. A smart or programmable thermostat can make it easy to set back your temperature. If you have a heat pump, maintain a moderate setting or use a programmable thermostat specially designed for use with heat pumps.
- ▶ **Find and seal leaks.** One of the fastest and easiest upgrades you can make to save energy is adding, replacing and increasing weatherstripping around gaps in your home. The areas around windows, doors, and places where utilities enter your structure are prime sources for letting in cold drafts. Use a quality caulk and the proper weatherstripping for the application.
- ▶ **Check your home's insulation.** If you haven't checked your insulation in a few years, take the time to do it now. Believe it or not, insulation does wear out. Over time it settles and loses the air pockets that make it effective. Manufacturers are always working to improve their products, so you have plenty of new attic insulation types that are worth the investment of time and money. Adding to or replacing existing material can help you with attic insulation cost savings that make your entire home more efficient and comfortable year round.
- ▶ **Maintain your heating systems.** One of the best fall energy saving tips is to have an expert HVAC professional inspect your heating system. Regular seasonal inspections let you address issues before they become a problem, preventing things like a middle-of-the-night breakdown. HVAC inspections keep your system running efficiently all year. Another classic energy saving tip is to change the filter regularly. Dirty filters make your furnace work harder than it needs to heat your home.
- ▶ **Lower your water heating costs.** Turn down the temperature of your water heater to the warm setting (120°F). You'll not only save energy, you'll avoid scalding your hands.
- ▶ **LED Lighting.** Fall energy saving tips include replacing inefficient incandescent light bulbs. LED lights use far less energy. When you connect them to smart home systems that automate their operation, you can really save money. Use LED holiday light strings to reduce the cost of decorating your home for the winter holidays.

For more information, visit fairfield.coop



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