



Cooperative Update

from

Bruce Bacon

Chief Executive Officer
Fairfield Electric Cooperative

The EPA's Bad Call

Like many of us around here, I'm a big football fan. And while I admit my Tigers sometimes frustrate me, it's the guys wearing stripes who can drive me up a wall.

Don't get me wrong, I respect the referee's role in protecting the players and the integrity of the game. However, some seem to think they are the main attraction, rather than the athletes. Their intervention can ruin a good game.

I think of the Environmental Protection Agency the same way. The role they fill is a critical one, but

their recent set of regulations on power plants is a bad call. Unfortunately, the consequences will be much worse than merely losing a ballgame.



The EPA's latest interference in the energy industry threatens our access to reliable, affordable electricity. It's one more reason our cooperative's energy costs are rising, along with inflation and the increasing price of wholesale power from one of our primary power sources, Santee Cooper.

In May, the EPA issued a rule targeting existing coal and new natural gas power plants. The rule requires those plants to either greatly reduce their output or install carbon capture and storage, a technology that could one day minimize greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuel power plants.

In theory, carbon capture and storage, or CCS, might sound like a neat idea. A power plant's carbon emissions could be injected deep underground rather than released into the atmosphere. But in practice, CCS is unproven and unbelievably expensive.

No utility in the country has successfully pulled off CCS at the level the EPA is requiring for America's fleet of power plants. And our experts estimate adding CCS to a single new or existing plant could cost billions of dollars. Those added costs mean higher power bills for everyone.

The EPA's timing couldn't be worse—think fourth down in the last two minutes of a game. South Carolina urgently needs more power supply, not greater restrictions on our existing power plants or the ones our state needs to build.

Our state has already struggled to supply sufficient electricity during the coldest hours of the winter, such as when freezing weather led to rolling blackouts in parts of South Carolina during Christmas 2022. And South Carolina's power needs are only increasing amid the state's rapid population and economic growth.

Renewable energy sources, such as solar farms, can help meet that need. But they aren't always available, especially on cold winter mornings and evenings when the sun isn't shining.

To keep up, we will need to be able to rely on 24/7 energy sources including natural gas and, at least for now, coal. Yet the EPA seems intent on throwing its yellow flag and ejecting those reliable power plants from the game. The job of keeping the lights on is hard enough during a challenging time for the energy industry. We don't need the government making it any harder or more expensive for you.

Rest assured, we aren't sitting on the sidelines on this issue. We are joining electric co-ops across the country to fight these regulations in court and in the halls of Congress.

When we're giving the referee an earful, we're speaking for you.



Looking



Applications for our youth programs and scholarships available January 1, 2025

For An

ADVENTURE

We have trip opportunities for students in our area.

...for high school juniors!

June 15-20 **25**



- A Trip to Washington DC
- Meet juniors from across SC and the country
- Meet lawmakers
- Tour all the sights
- Round-trip plane ticket and meals
- All-expenses paid

...for high school sophomores!

July 14-17 **25**



- A Trip to South Carolina's capital
- Tour the Statehouse
- Meet the state's lawmakers
- See how the co-ops are preparing for our state's energy future
- Visit popular Columbia attractions like Riverbanks Zoo & Garden
- All-expenses paid

The deadline to apply for both trips is February 28, 2025. More information is available at fairfield.coop/youthtour and fairfield.coop/youthsummit.

Take Advantage of Our Youth Scholarships



Eight \$1000 Touchstone Energy Scholarships will be awarded to high school seniors who are active in their communities. Special consideration is given to financial need, extracurricular activities, community involvement, letters of recommendation and the student's personal achievements.

The deadline for applications is February 28, 2025.

Go to fairfield.coop/scholarships to learn more.

May the spirit of the season power you throughout the year!

Fairfield Electric Cooperative is grateful for our members at the holidays and every day. May your home radiate peace, comfort, joy and warmth always.

We look forward to 2025, continuing to provide you with more energy saving programs and developing services that will benefit the communities we serve.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year
from all of us at...



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Fairfield Electric will be closed for the holidays
Dec. 24-25 and Jan. 1.

For more information, visit fairfield.coop



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