



fairfield.coop

MAILING ADDRESS

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 Blythewood, SC 29016

BLYTHEWOOD OFFICE

701 Blythewood Road
 Blythewood, SC 29016

WINNSBORO OFFICE

3129 U.S. Hwy. 321 North
 Winnsboro, SC 29180

OFFICE HOURS

8 a.m.–5 p.m.
 Monday through Friday

CUSTOMER SERVICE

Toll Free: (800) 628-0336
 Blythewood: (803) 754-0153
 Winnsboro: (803) 635-4621
 Camden and Lugoff: (803) 425-1059

POWER OUTAGE REPORTING ONLY

(800) 499-7862
 Outages are handled by an automated outage reporting system. Please follow instructions. The system will automatically report the outage and a crew will be dispatched.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Staying plugged in

IN THE PAST, we've advised you to unplug to reduce unnecessary energy use. However, this month I want to explain how Fairfield

Electric stays plugged in on your behalf. Of course, I'm not referring to the power outlets around your home. I'm talking about being connected at the South Carolina State House. What happens there has a significant impact on your community and your wallet.

Your voice at the State House

Frequently, state lawmakers consider bills that affect electricity costs and our ability to provide power safely and reliably.

That's why having and maintaining a good working relationship with the men and women you've elected to represent you is a critical part of our role as your electric cooperative. We're your voice at the State House when it comes to energy-related matters.

Last year, the General Assembly passed the Energy Security Act, which addressed the growing strain on our state's electric

“Having a good working relationship with the men and women you've elected to represent you is a critical part of our role as your electric cooperative.”

grid, opened the door to additional power generation, streamlined regulatory processes and placed long-term grid reliability at the forefront of South Carolina's energy planning. These were changes we'd advocated for a long time, and we're grateful that lawmakers listened and recognized the need for a new, smart energy policy.

Co-op employees are your neighbors

As former U.S. House Speaker Tip O'Neill famously said, “All politics is local.” For Fairfield Electric members, that means the people speaking on your behalf are co-op employees who live and work in your community.

It's why your board of trustees, members of our staff and some of our lineworkers participate in Co-op Day at the State House each February. We are joined by hundreds of others from South Carolina's electric cooperatives, thanking lawmakers and expressing a vision for a future that keeps electricity safe, reliable and affordable.

Rest assured, we'll continue to nurture the vital relationships we have with our elected officials to advocate for your interests.

BRUCE G. BACON
 Chief Executive Officer



Fairfield Electric Trustees Ronald Friday (center) and Keith Lewis (right) discuss industry issues with Rep. Randy Ligon (left) at last year's Co-op Day at the State House.

Save the date—Annual Meeting

The 87th Annual Meeting of Members will be held May 11-15. There will be several days of early drive-thru registration and voting before the business meeting portion, which will be on May 15 at 6 p.m.

Registration, voting for trustees and receipt of a registration gift will all be conducted from your vehicles. Look for additional details in the Official Annual Meeting Notice in April.



JOSH P. CROTZER

Ellen Robinson (left), GRASP's volunteer coordinator, and Executive Director Shelley Price bag food items for their clients at the downtown pantry in Great Falls.

A bridge between crisis and stability

GRASP serves those in need in Great Falls

BY JOSH P. CROTZER

IT STARTED a half-century ago when the closure of local mills led to widespread need in the Great Falls community. Ever since, one local organization has been proof that here, neighbors take care of neighbors.

In 1974, local schoolteacher Rebecca Lowry initiated a community response to the growing number of children who were coming to school hungry. That group of caring citizens became the Great Falls Referral Assistance and Service Project (GRASP), supporting families in the area with groceries, utility assistance and help with prescription purchases.

“Neighbors helping neighbors, that’s the core of who we are,” says Shelley Price, executive director of GRASP and a member of Fairfield Electric Cooperative. “By helping those who are struggling, we’re strengthening the whole community.”

Many in Great Falls have needed that help over the years. A few years after GRASP began, the town’s textile mills closed, eliminating jobs and economic stimulus that have not been replaced in the proceeding decades.

“We have a high poverty rate, a lot of generational poverty,” says Price. “That’s not to say that people aren’t working. Most of the people that we serve are. It’s just that they are not earning enough money to keep them above the cost of living.”

In addition to helping with power, water and gas bills, GRASP’s food pantry—located at 802 Dearborn St. in Great Falls—is open to its clients each month. It provides essential food items such as eggs, frozen meats, cereal and shelf-stable staples. GRASP also operates a thrift shop (601 Dearborn St.) that provides discounted essentials and emergency goods for families.

“The majority of us are just one or two paychecks away from a financial crisis,” Price says. “We’re a bridge between crisis and stability.”

To serve approximately 100 households per month, GRASP spends an average of \$8,119 on utility bills and \$3,400 on food. The organization receives support from neighbors throughout the community—churches, clubs, school groups, civic organizations and local families—along with grants from community

Fairfield Electric Trust 2025 Report

Through Operation Round Up, more than 17,000 Fairfield Electric Cooperative members have joined together to help neighbors by rounding up their monthly electric bill to the nearest dollar. Since 1993, that extra change has accumulated to more than \$3.1 million in donations to fellow members in crisis, local charities and community service organizations.

The volunteer Fairfield Electric Trust Board administers member donations for Operation Round Up.

Operation Round Up 2025 Grants

Organizations (14)	\$101,000
Individuals (28)	\$51,595
Total	\$152,595

Organizations assisted include:

- ▶ American Red Cross
- ▶ Christian Assistance Bridge
- ▶ Christian Community Ministries (Kershaw County)
- ▶ Elgin Benevolence Fund
- ▶ Fairfield County Fire Service
- ▶ GRASP (Great Falls Referral Assistance Program)
- ▶ 4 WW (Four West Wateree)
- ▶ Fairfield County Sheriff’s Department
- ▶ Harvest Hope Food Bank
- ▶ Good Samaritan House (Fairfield County)

and corporate foundations.

One of those neighbors is Fairfield Electric Cooperative. Through its Operation Round Up program, Fairfield Electric has donated \$10,000 to GRASP each year since 2017.

“Fairfield Electric is a huge partner for us,” Price says. “Operation Round Up helps ensure that families don’t have to choose between keeping the lights on and putting food on the table.”