



Cooperative Update

from

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Cooperative

Powered by purpose

This month, electric cooperatives across the country take time to celebrate National Co-op Month and reflect on the unique advantages of being part of a cooperative. For us, it's a chance to reaffirm the values that guide everything we do.

As the CEO of Fairfield Electric Cooperative, I see our purpose in action every single day. Unlike investor-owned utilities, our co-op doesn't exist to make profits for distant shareholders. We exist to serve you—our members. Our purpose is to provide safe, reliable power and enhance lives in our communities. That purpose is what sets us apart. It's why we were founded, and it's what continues to drive every decision we make.

At its core, being a cooperative means we are member-owned and locally controlled. It is at the very heart of our business model. Members have a voice in how our co-op operates. You elect board members who live in our service area and understand the unique challenges and opportunities our communities face. Decisions aren't made in corporate boardrooms hundreds of miles away; they're made here at home, by people who care about the same things you do.

This local accountability means we can stay focused on what matters most: delivering reliable, affordable electricity and providing real value to the people we serve.

We do that by investing in essential infrastructure upgrades and technologies that strengthen our local grid and improve electric service. We work hard to manage costs and keep rates as low as possible—because we know how much rising prices affect families and small businesses in our area. And when storms hit or outages occur, Fairfield Electric Cooperative crews are ready to respond quickly, because we live here, too.

But our commitment doesn't end at the power lines.

Co-ops were built to meet community needs, and that purpose extends well beyond delivering electricity. Whether we're supporting local schools, sponsoring youth programs, or partnering with volunteer organizations, we are always looking for ways to improve the quality of life in the places we serve. Our commitment to community is a principal part of our mission.

We're also planning for the future. As electricity demand grows due to new technologies and economic development, South Carolina electric co-ops are working to ensure we continue to meet those needs with a balanced, reliable energy mix. We know our members care about affordability and dependability, and we're dedicated to delivering both.

That's the power of the cooperative difference. That's what it means to be powered by purpose.

This National Co-op Month, I encourage you to take pride in your cooperative membership. You're not just a consumer—you're an owner, a stakeholder and a vital part of a larger effort to keep our community strong, connected and energized.

Thank you for the trust you place in us. We're proud to be your local electric cooperative.



FALL ENERGY SAVING TIPS

The seasons are changing and there are opportunities to save energy in your home this fall and winter. 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 heat loss.

68°

Lower the thermostat. One of the best ways to save energy is to lower the thermostat setting to the lowest possible comfortable temperature. Wearing an extra layer of clothes can help.



Install a programmable thermostat. A programmable thermostat allows you to put your home on a "temperature schedule" so you can control the temperature even when you are not home.



Run a humidifier. When indoor air is too dry, moisture from the skin evaporates at a rapid rate. This lowers the skin temperature. With properly humidified air, you can set your thermostat a few degrees lower and still feel comfortably warm.



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.



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. Adding to or replacing existing material will make your entire home more efficient and comfortable year round.



Maintain your heating system. 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.



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.



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