



Daylight Saving Time Ends Nov. 6

Remember to set your clocks **back** one hour before you go to bed Saturday, Nov. 5. It's also a great time to change the batteries in your smoke detectors.



BARC Offices Closed for Holidays

BARC offices will be closed for the following holidays:

- Thursday, Nov. 24, and Friday, Nov. 25, for Thanksgiving;
- Monday, Dec. 26, for Christmas; and
- Monday, Jan. 2, for New Year's.

BARC directors and employees wish you a safe and happy holiday season.

BARC ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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Come join us on Facebook
facebook.com/BARCElectricCooperative



Chief Executive Officer
Bill Buchanan

BARC Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Power from the Heart



This is the time of year for giving thanks, but it's also a time for giving. To call the past couple years challenging would be an understatement. With the addition of inflation and supply chain issues, many BARC members are experiencing financial hardships like never before.

Some families are unfortunately forced to choose which bills they can actually pay, which often leads to past-due balances piling up and even disconnection of services.

YOU CAN HELP

Built upon the foundation of members helping members, BARC's community service program Power from the Heart is designed to help members keep the lights on when times are tough.

Power from the Heart was created to help those members in emergency situations who have fallen on hard times and require assistance paying their energy bills. The program is available when traditional sources of assistance fall through.

By choosing to participate, members agree to have their electric bill rounded up to the nearest dollar, costing a maximum of only 99 cents each month. Funds raised



Manager's Message

Courtney Perdue

Chief Financial Officer
BARC Electric Cooperative

through Power from the Heart may be individually small, but cumulatively make a significant and positive difference in our members' lives.

Roughly 15% of people in our area struggle to pay their electricity bills.

BARC member service representatives work diligently each day to find ways to help members avoid disconnection of service. Now, qualified members facing financial hardship can also find help through Power from the Heart.

Ashley Hash, human resources generalist for BARC, says the program pulled at her heartstrings when deciding to come to work for the co-op. All BARC employees share her sentiment toward the program.

All funds raised through Power from the Heart are exclusively used to meet extraordinary local needs. Help fellow members keep the power on with funding coming from small heartfelt contributions.

Enroll in Power from the Heart today by scanning the code above with your smartphone camera or sign in to the customer portal and select "Services" at ebill.barcelectric.com/onlineportal.



Scan code to start giving.

Generator Safety



Portable or permanently installed standby generators are beneficial during long-term power outages. However, if used improperly, they can be dangerous. Contact a qualified vendor or electrician to help you determine what generator best suits your needs. Before using, read and follow manufacturer's instructions.

When installing a permanent generator, a transfer switch is required. It prevents electricity from leaving your generator and going back onto the utility electrical equipment and potentially causing a fatal injury to line crews or others. A qualified electrician should install your generator and transfer switch.

BARC Electric Cooperative suggests the following tips for safely using portable generators:

Operate it outdoors in an area with plenty of ventilation. Never run a generator in a home or garage. Generators give off deadly carbon monoxide.

Never plug a generator into a wall outlet. Use heavy-duty extension cords to connect appliances to the outlets on the generator.

Turn the generator on before plugging appliances to it. Once the generator is running, turn your appliances and lights on one at a time to avoid overloading the unit. Remember, generators are for temporary use; prioritize your needs.

Generators pose electrical risks, especially when operated in wet conditions. Use a generator only when necessary during wet or damp conditions. Protect the generator under an open, canopy-like structure on a dry surface away from puddling. Always ensure your hands are dry before touching the generator.

Be sure the generator is turned off and cool before refueling it.

Keep children and pets away from portable generators. Many generator components are hot enough to burn you during operation.

BARC Electric Cooperative suggests these safety guidelines and basic operating instructions be posted in the home and with the generator.

Co-ops Host Rural Fiber Expo



BARC CEO Bill Buchanan participates during a CEO panel discussion at the 2022 Rural Fiber Expo.

In mid-September, the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Broadband Cooperatives hosted its second Rural Fiber Expo and association annual meeting. The event, held in Norfolk, Va., attracted industry professionals and legislators from across Virginia, Maryland and neighboring states.

A variety of topics were covered during several sessions. BARC CEO Bill Buchanan participated on a panel of Virginia and Maryland electric cooperative CEOs to discuss challenges, best practices and the future.

Thanks to the leadership of VMDABC, Virginia is set to become one of the first large states in the country to deliver total broadband access statewide. Since 2017, cooperatives have worked to connect more than 30,000 Virginians. In just the last year, they've also established plans for approximately 210,000 homes to receive fiber over the next three to five years.

Despite tremendous success in closing the digital divide, much work is left to be done to deliver broadband to the remaining 200,000 Virginians — a point that Buchanan made crystal clear in saying, "We're problem solvers, we'll fight to get it done."

BARC Energy Efficiency TIP OF THE MONTH

PREPARE FOR HEATING SEASON

Is your home heating system ready for the winter chill? One of the easiest ways to keep your system running efficiently is to regularly replace filters. If your central air system has a furnace filter, it should be replaced about every 90 days.

If your home is heated through warm-air registers, baseboard heaters or radiators, remember to clean regularly to boost efficiency.

Source: [energy.gov](https://www.energy.gov)



Keeping Pets and Energy Bills Comfortable

During the winter months, make sure your whole family, including your four-legged members, is cozy without taking a big “bite” out of your budget.

Many people consider their four-legged companions to be part of the family and can't imagine life without them. During the winter months, make sure your whole family, including your four-legged members, is cozy — without taking a big “bite” out of your budget.

Following are a few simple ways you can make your home more comfortable this winter, which can ultimately help you save on energy bills.

At the onset of the cold weather season, replace the HVAC filter for better air quality and to help the unit operate more efficiently. You can also keep your home cozier by replacing caulk and weatherstripping around windows and doors. If your home is particularly chilly, you can tape or affix heavy, clear plastic to the inside of your window frames to create an additional barrier against the cold. Ensure that the plastic is tightly sealed to the frame to help reduce infiltration.

Winter can be “ruff,” so consider setting your thermostat at 68 degrees or as low as comfortably possible, a “purr-fect” temperature for people and pets. This is especially important for smaller, short hair and older pets — not just for warmth, but for their general health. Puppies, kittens and older pets with arthritis or other ailments may have a harder time controlling their body heat and need the additional warmth when it's chilly out.

Pets that sleep close to the floor can be subject to cold drafts that enter your home through windows and exterior doors. If your pet's bed is near a window or door that feels drafty, tightly roll up a towel and place it near the bottom of the door or window to eliminate the draft. Cutting down on cold drafts helps everyone feel more comfortable during colder months.

If possible, elevate your pet's bed so it's not placed directly on a cold floor. An old chair or sofa cushion works well. If you don't use a dog bed, take some old blankets and create a donut shape on the cushion so the dog can snuggle and “nest” within the blanket. You can do the same for cats but on a smaller scale. Blankets enable pets to nestle into them, even when they aren't tired, and provide a comfortable place for dogs and cats to curl up.

During the day, open your blinds and curtains to allow sunlight to warm your home. Close window coverings at night for an added layer of insulation.

At BARC Electric Cooperative, we want to help you save energy and money. Check out the Energy Usage Tool at barcelectric.com for additional energy-saving tips.

We can't control the weather, but we can provide advice to help you save energy and keep your family and furry friends more comfortable during the winter season.



Right-of-Way the Right Way

Recently reclaimed right-of-way leading down to Lake Robertson, where most of the terrain was inaccessible by vehicle and required a large amount of hand-clearing.



Most power outages occur when tree limbs make contact with power lines. Maintaining clear rights-of-way helps reduce the frequency and duration of outages. Throughout the year, contracted crews can be seen trimming trees or brush back to a safe distance along BARC's 1,700 miles of overhead line.

Historically, the cooperative plans on an eight-year cycle to maintain these miles of overhead line; that is 212.5 miles of right-of-way clearing per year or just over four miles per week. That type of mileage is possible with a right-of-way that has a well-established, non-woody vegetation base but when reclamation work is necessary, such as what BARC is experiencing in many areas, attaining those milestones are not realistic.

BARC is making great efforts to establish a comprehensive vegetation management program. Some areas of the co-op's service area are requiring ground-to-sky clearing to reestablish a non-woody vegetation base that is conducive to a healthy right-of-way.

Once the desired base is established, right-of-way maintenance efficiency is increased and allows for species-specific herbicide application targeting undesirable woody vegetation within the right-of-way, mitigating the need to bring in heavy equipment to maintain it. Equipment will still be needed in certain sections occasionally, but once the non-woody vegetation base is established, the right-of-way corridors make accessing our electric infrastructure much easier for our field personnel when responding to outages or overall maintenance of the BARC system.

The majority of the BARC system consists of line miles through areas of wooded vegetation. Additionally, there are certain areas within the BARC service territory that have woody species, such as the autumn olive, that grow at a significant rate and will require shorter intervals between herbicide application and/or machinery-based clearing.

SAFETY

Trees interfering with power lines not only interrupt service, they can be dangerous — even deadly. Since wood is an excellent conductor of electricity, anyone who touches or is close to a tree contacting a power line is at risk of electrical shock injury. If you notice a tree contacting a power line, stay away and keep others at a safe distance from the tree — including the roots. Call 911 to report it.

Never attempt to trim a tree near power lines. Remember to “Look Up and Live.” Contact a professional to complete the job safely.

RELIABILITY

As your electric cooperative, BARC's main priority is to provide safe and reliable electric service to its members. Severe weather and windy conditions most often cause tree limbs to come into contact with power lines, leading to service interruptions.

Keeping existing trees trimmed back from power lines, removing unhealthy trees that pose a risk, and educating members about where to plant new trees safely all contribute to increased service reliability.

AFFORDABILITY

BARC's proactive approach to maintaining clear and healthy rights-of-way helps keep your electric rates affordable. Line crews are able to spend more time on planned maintenance and construction and fewer hours restoring power and repairing damage from tree limbs.

These are all factors that go into our revamped vegetation management program. BARC has contracted forestry experts from Davey Resource Group to assist in the development of the program. Just over a year into this relationship with Davey Resource Group, the vegetation management program is nearly complete and will start resulting in a more coordinated effort to maintain BARC's rights-of-way.