

Co-ops Power Communities with Purpose

Communities come in all shapes and sizes. Some are based on geographical proximity, some are based on shared interests or hobbies, and some communities can even be found in virtual spaces like social media groups. Regardless of where or how they are formed, communities can bring people together and create a sense of belonging.

BARC Electric Cooperative is deeply committed to our consumer-members, and we're glad you are part of the electric cooperative community.

This month, more than 30,000 cooperatives across the U.S. are celebrating National Co-op Month. It's a time to reflect on all the aspects that set cooperatives apart from other types of businesses, but more importantly, it's a time to celebrate the power of co-op membership.

Electric cooperatives are not-for-profit utilities that are built by the communities they serve. For BARC, our mission has always been to provide you with reliable power. We care about your quality of life, and because we are locally operated, we're uniquely suited to meet our members' evolving energy needs.



Beyond the business of electricity, our employees and directors are equally invested in our local community. Why? Because we live here, too. That's why we work hard to support local economic development projects, youth programs and scholarships, charitable giving initiatives and additional programs that make our community a better place to call home.

All co-ops, including BARC, are guided by seven cooperative principles that embody the values and spirit of the cooperative movement. These seven principles are a framework to help all co-ops navigate challenges and opportunities while remaining true to our purpose:

1. Open and Voluntary Membership:

Co-op membership is open to anyone who can use the co-op's services.

2. Democratic Member Control:

Members make decisions that shape the cooperative. Why? Because co-ops are created by the members, for the members.

3. Members' Economic Participation:

Members contribute money to the co-op to make sure it runs smoothly now and in the future. At BARC, this happens through paying your energy bills.

4. Autonomy and Independence:

Co-ops are independent and can operate on their own, which ultimately benefits the members.

5. Education, Training and Information: Co-ops continuously focus on education to ensure employees have the training and information they need to make the co-op successful.

6. Cooperation Among Cooperatives:

Co-ops share with and learn from other cooperatives. We help each other out in times of need because we want other co-ops to thrive.

7. Concern for Community: All cooperatives work for the greater good of the local communities they serve. Co-ops give back to their communities to help them thrive and grow.

This month, as we celebrate National Co-op Month and the power of membership, we hope you will recognize the many aspects that set electric cooperatives apart. Our mission is reliable power. Our purpose is people — the local communities we're proud to serve.



BARC ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

P.O. Box 264
Millboro, VA 24460-0264
1-800-846-2272

Office Hours: M-F, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
barcelectric.com
barconnects.net

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Chief Executive Officer
Bill Buchanan

Local Pages Editor
Amanda Cunningham

BARC Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Cybersecurity for a Safer Digital World

Did you know the average household with internet access owns about 17 connected devices? That figure covers a wide range of electronics, including smartphones, computers, streaming devices, smart speakers, home assistants and more. Given our increasing reliance on internet-connected technologies, the likelihood of new cyberthreats is ever-present.

BARC is deeply committed to ensuring our local system is safe and secure. We routinely monitor and manage cyber risks, and we work together with other co-ops to share the latest advancements in cybersecurity measures that make us stronger. But you can help, too.

When we all work together to stay safe online, we lower the risk of cyberthreats to our systems, online accounts and sensitive data.

October is National Cybersecurity Awareness Month, and while good cyber hygiene should be practiced year-round, we'd like to share a few cybersecurity tips to help you bolster your online safety.

Learn how to spot and report phishing attempts.

Phishing occurs when criminals use phony emails, direct messages or other types of digital communications that lure you to click a bad link or download a malicious attachment. If you receive a suspicious email or message that includes urgent language, offers that seem too good to be true, generic greetings, poor grammar or an unusual sender address, it

could be a phishing attempt. If you spot one, report it as soon as possible — and don't forget to block the sender. (If you receive a suspicious work email, report it to the appropriate IT contact. Suspicious messages that are delivered to your personal email or social media accounts can also be reported.)

Create strong, unique passwords. When it comes to passwords, remember that length trumps complexity. Strong passwords contain at least 12 characters and include a mix of letters, numbers and symbols. Create unique passwords for each online account you manage and use phrases you can easily remember.

Enable multifactor authentication when available.

Multifactor authentication (also known as two-factor authentication) adds an extra layer of security to your online accounts. These extra security steps can include facial recognition, fingerprint access, or one-time codes sent to your email or phone.

Update software regularly. Software and internet-connected devices, including personal computers, smartphones and tablets, should always be current on updates to reduce the risk of infection from ransomware and malware. When possible, configure devices to automatically update or notify you when an update is available.

Let's all do our part to stay cyber smart and create a safer digital world for all. Visit staysafeonline.org to learn about additional cybersecurity tips.



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BARC Communities

BARC Helps Support Palmer Community Center

In mid-August, the Effinger Ruritan Club hosted the 36th Palmer Ice Cream Supper. The evening drew 1,000 patrons of all ages to enjoy music, good food and delicious homemade ice cream.

BARC Connects helped with the event by providing internet support.

“I just wanted to reiterate how good of an experience I had with BARC as the point of contact from the Palmer Board. From the first conversation I had with Billy Reid, he was very perceptive to the ideas we had expressed with the very much-needed internet service at Palmer,” says Mark Fontenot, member-at-large.

“The internet provided will entice families and groups to continue to rent the Palmer Community Center to keep the much-needed money coming in to ensure its existence.”



Apprentices Complete Four-Year Journey

Congratulations Kevin Bryant (center) and Jess Pritt (third from right) for their recent completion of the Substation Technician Apprenticeship Program through the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives. The four-year journey included attending week-long workshops every six months and thousands of on-the-job-training hours.



Local Boy Scouts Earn Electricity Merit Badges

For the last two years, BARC Electric has assisted with the Electricity Merit Badge by providing a facility to meet, a lineman and truck for demonstrations, and subject matter experts for the theory and safety requirements. In all, over 30 scouts have been able to earn the Electricity Merit Badge with the help of BARC and scouting leaders.

Troops 29 and 92 from town surrounding Lexington, met Aug. 26 to earn this badge. Youth must earn 21 merit badges at a minimum to earn the highest rank of Eagle Scout.

“BARC Electric Cooperative not only serves its community daily with reliable electricity and high-speed internet services, but it extends its commitment to the local community by supporting groups like the BSA. By aiding in the Electricity Merit Badge, BARC helps to light the way for future leaders and reinforce the fabric of our community.”

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Billy Reid at 1-800-846-2272
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Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

If you recently made or plan to make energy efficiency improvements to your home, you may be eligible for federal tax credits. The Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 empowers homeowners to save money on energy efficiency improvements and upgrades. Homeowners can save up to \$3,000 annually to lower the cost of efficiency upgrades by up to 30%.

A few upgrades covered through the IRA include new exterior doors, windows, insulation, heating/cooling equipment and other major appliances. If you completed an upgrade this year or you are considering one, visit energystar.gov/federal-tax-credits to learn if you qualify for a tax credit.

Source: energystar.gov

