

# BARC Restores Power After Hurricane Helene

On Sept. 27, Hurricane Helene tore through several southern states before hitting western Va. The damage endured by communities across the commonwealth and beyond was devastating. BARC Electric Cooperative’s entire service territory was impacted, with widespread outages affecting nearly 5,000 members.

For multiple days, during and leading up to the storm, BARC’s service territory had moderate-to-heavy precipitation,



followed by an extended period of sustained winds with occasional intense gusts that caused trees to uproot and fall into power lines. The cooperative had close to 115 individual outages to respond to, with several broken poles needing to be replaced and installed.

BARC crews immediately headed into the storm to tackle outages, and it was all-hands-on-deck from start to finish. After nearly 72 hours of continuous effort, power was fully restored. “The dedication of BARC’s employees is unsurpassed,” says Jonathan Hines, BARC supervisor of electrical operations. “They went above and beyond, working all weekend — day and night — to get the lights back on for our members.”

While crews worked in the field, BARC staff stayed at the office, preparing meals, answering outage calls and coordinating dispatch. They worked tirelessly to support our crews, and the cooperative’s collective effort paid off.

“Although we weren’t expecting the damage we received from hurricane Helene, I had the opportunity to spend time working with our line crews and was impressed by their responsiveness



and hard work under the difficult weather conditions,” says BARC CEO Bill Buchanan.

BARC was also fortunate to receive mutual aid assistance from our sister cooperatives, Central Virginia Electric Cooperative and Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative, to help with storm restoration.

“Understandably, most of the available mutual aid crews from our association cooperatives were sent to NC, SC, and GA” says Buchanan. “We were thankful to have two crews from SMECO and CVEC join our team in the restoration efforts. I’m extremely grateful and pleased with the efforts and support of our entire staff, and especially thankful to the patience of our members as well as their thoughts and prayers for the safety of everyone restoring the damage at BARC and all the locations impacted by this tragic storm.”



Crew members not pictured on the cover: Derek Smith, Patrick Chaplin and Jonathan Hines

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Chief Executive Officer  
Bill Buchanan

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# The Power of Giving

As we begin the holiday season and look forward to gathering with friends and family, BARC is looking forward to adding more ways to give back to the community.

BARC's Power from the Heart program may be little known in the community it serves, and we want to change that. Power from the Heart is designed to help members keep the electricity on when times are tough. When a member experiences an unexpected financial hardship, paying the electric bill can become a challenge. Power from the Heart is intended to help those members in emergency situations who have fallen on hard times and require assistance paying their energy bills.

Funds for the program are raised from members who opt-in to have their electric bill rounded up to the next dollar each month. The maximum contribution by a member would be \$.99 each month. The money raised from Power from the Heart is individually small, but cumulatively significant, and will make a tremendous difference in members' lives.

A new initiative to the cooperative this year is becoming a Community Champion with CarePortal, a platform that is driving action for local children and families in crisis by sending an alert to partner churches and organizations. These



Community Champions can then respond to the need and fulfill all or a part of the family's need. BARC was recently able to assist a member through the Power from the Heart Program and then direct them to CarePortal to receive assistance with the remaining need. This was a great opportunity for the cooperative to see how the two programs can work together to meet the needs of the community.

For more details on the Power from the Heart program or how to enroll to support the program, visit our website at [barcelectric.com/power-from-heart](http://barcelectric.com/power-from-heart). If your church or organization is interested in being a Community Champion with CarePortal, sign up at [accareportal.org](http://accareportal.org).

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# BARC Communities

## BARC Hosts 2nd Annual All-Employee Safety Day

On Sept. 26, BARC employees gathered for the second all-employee Safety Day to focus on our No. 1 priority, safety.

All BARC employees had a full day receiving training on situational awareness, hazard recognition and defensive driving. This training is critical in all aspects of the electric cooperative industry due to the high-risk nature of the work involved. Thorough, consistent training ensures that employees are well-prepared to handle dangerous situations, protecting both themselves and the communities they serve.

“This has been an unusually difficult year for storms and outages,” says BARC CEO Bill Buchanan. “We appreciate everyone stepping up and working so hard to keep the lights and internet on. I’m proud of the culture here and how we consistently make safety our number one priority.”

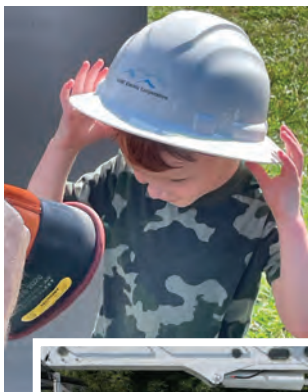
In short, this essential education helps our team continue to provide the high quality service our members expect, while ensuring that every employee returns home safely to their families each day. Through this annual training, prioritizing safety allows us to meet both goals without compromising either.

## Allegheny Mountain Radio Hosts BARC for Discussion on Outages



BARC CEO Bill Buchanan and Forester Cody Shifflett sat down with Allegheny Mountain Radio’s Danny Cardwell to discuss the challenges BARC faces during outages, right-of-way maintenance, and how to improve our employees’ work daily to maintain and improve reliability to members.

## BARC Electric and Connects Attend Bath County Events



September was a busy month for Bath County. On Sept. 21, Millboro Elementary School hosted the Bath County Fair. An annual event that brings the community together. BARC Electric attended with a bucket truck and lineman gear on hand for kids to get a better idea what it takes to work on a line crew. BARC Connects’ mascot, Butch, was also in attendance and enjoyed meeting all our young members!



On Sept. 26, after Helene struck Bath County and the surrounding areas, the chamber did a phenomenal job of pushing through and hosting the first annual Harvest Festival. This community event was hosted in downtown Hot Springs and was supported by several vendors, attendees, musicians and sponsors.

BARC Connects helped vendors connect to our Wi-Fi, making their sales connections more effective and efficient. “Community Wi-Fi is a great tool to help allow our rural businesses to thrive and grow through the power of rural broadband,” says BARC Connects Business Manager Billy Reid.

Want to boost the Wi-Fi for your next event? BARC Connects can help! Call 1-800-846-2272 to learn more.

## Tips for a Safe and Efficient Holiday Season

### SAVE ENERGY

- Use smaller appliances like slow cookers instead of the oven.
- Lower the thermostat when hosting friends and family.
- Decorate with energy-saving LED lights.

### PRIORITIZE SAFETY

- Never leave candles burning unattended.
- Ensure all smoke alarms are working properly.
- When decorating, inspect all light strands and cords for damage.

## Daylight Saving Time



Daylight Saving Time ends Sunday, Nov. 3. Remember to set your clocks back one hour!

## Holiday Closings

BARC's offices will be closed for the following holidays:

### THANKSGIVING

Thursday, Nov. 28

Friday, Nov. 29

### CHRISTMAS

Wednesday, Dec. 25

### NEW YEAR'S DAY

Wednesday, Jan. 1

Your BARC family wishes you a safe and joyous holiday season!

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